The book explores the power of ekphrasis in modern and contemporary English poetry, analyzing its power and significance through selected poems by British, American, and Irish poets. It aims to understand how poets engage with ekphrasis and its significance in poetry. The study concludes with recommendations such as including ekphrasis in academic courses and promoting interdisciplinary studies between literature and other fields.

Dr. Amjed Lateef Jabbar, interested in English literature, linguistic translation, contemporary English poetry, and contemporary literary studies. Fluent in three languages.

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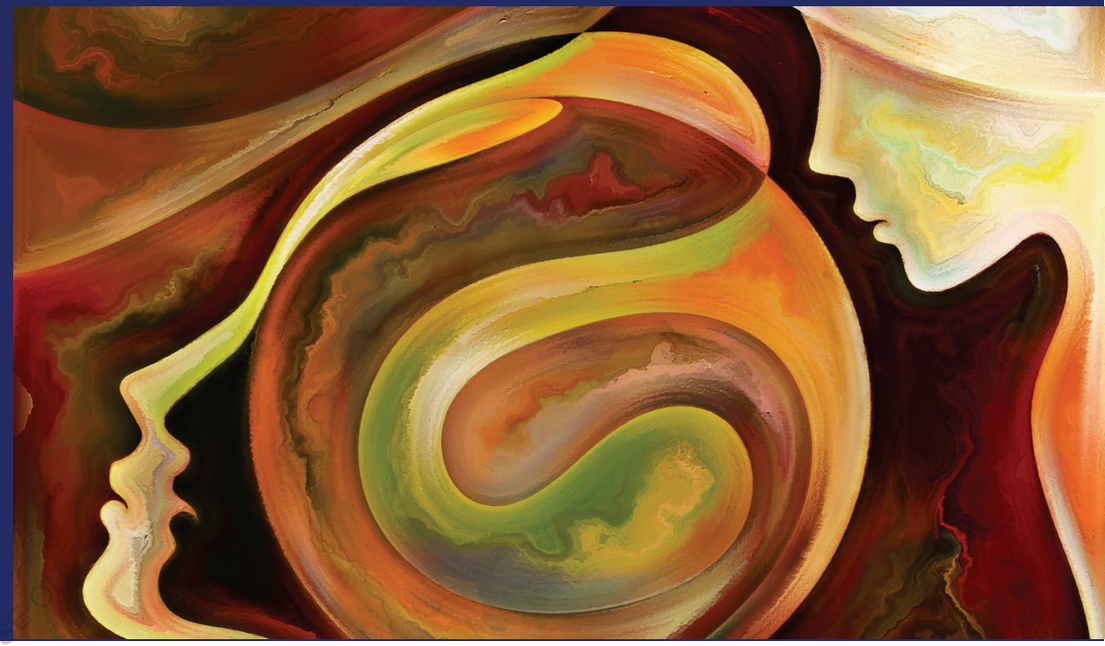

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Cover image: www.ingimage.com

Publisher:
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120 High Road, East Finchley, London, N2 9ED, United Kingdom
Str. Armeneasca 28/1, office 1, Chisinau MD-2012, Republic of Moldova, Europe
Printed at: see last page
ISBN: 978-620-7-48461-4

Writing about Art or Confronting Art: A Study of the Power of Ekphrasis in Modern and Contemporary English Poetry

Amjed Lateef Jabbar

2019 A.D. - 1440 H.

Dedication

To my parents,

To my wife,

To my lovely kids: Ruqayya, Omar, Ali, and Elaf

With respect, love, and compassion.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, all thanks are due to Allah the Almighty for endowing me with the ability, strength, mind force, and health to finish this work.

I am grateful to my highly esteemed supervisor, Prof. Dr. Mahmood Ali Ahmed for his endless support and assistance along with his remarkable remarks and corrections during all and every step of writing this dissertation.

I would also like to express my gratefulness to the library staff members of the following universities; Al-Neelain University, University of Baghdad, Diyala University, Khartoum University, Al-Mustansiriya University, Tikrit University, and Koya University for their kindness and assistance.

Gratitude is also extended to Mohammed Hashim from USA, Saja Faris and Noor Hashim from Iraq, Yasir Allawi from Britain, and Rebin Tahseen from Canada for providing me with invaluable primary and secondary sources which were of great use and benefit to me in conducting this study.

I would not forget to thank all my colleagues at the University of Diyala for their endless cooperation in reviewing and proofreading this work.

Table of Contents

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the power of ekphrasis in terms of modern and contemporary English poetry so as to shed light on the significance and delineation of this term by various poets. This purpose is achieved through an explication and analysis of selected modern and contemporary poems in English composed by British, American, and Irish poets of the two periods traced in this study.

Most poets in various literary epochs have engaged with the genre of ekphrasis, which is often narrowly defined as a poem about painting or broadly defined to comprise any verbal encounter responding to a visual source. In many ways, ekphrasis is about encounters, the poet's or artist's personal encounter with a work of art or poem usually has impacts far beyond the local or private aesthetic experience. Such poems frequently involve larger social issues, comprising ideologies which contribute to nation building.

The ekphrastic examination of poetry and painting is based on cognitive research and is closely related to theories of creativity. Therefore, this dissertation explores the foundations and the development of the interartistic analogy between poetry and painting in ekphrasis, the verbal representation of a visual work of art. In ekphrasis, poems and paintings mediate between objective reality and the subjective worlds of the artist and the reader/viewer. Via ekphrasis, both paintings and poems mirror private feelings and/or ideas aroused by the perceptual domain into the cognitive and emotional level. As works of art, they both explore the relations of percepts to objects and feelings, therefore, they inspire the perceiver's cognitive reactions.

Moreover, since poetry and painting belong to the humanities, it is significant to point out the role of ekphrasis as the reflection of changing

social interactions. Though there are differences between these two modes of art it is worth mentioning that there occurs an analogical relationship between them in which their distinctions become relative. Poems use words while paintings are made with brush strokes on a canvas. Thus, the combination of sounds in a poem, similar to the arrangement of colors on a painting, evokes a unity which moves the readers'/viewers' aesthetic feeling.

Consequently, most of the poems analyzed in this dissertation are both referential and self-referential, because they comment on the process of their own creation and that of the paintings to which they refer. The artist's imagination and interior insights ought to meet the viewer's inner world to allow for communicative interchange to take place.

This dissertation comprises five chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter presents an introduction to the topic under scrutiny, aims of the study, significance of the study, research questions attempted to be answered throughout the study, hypotheses of the study, limits of the study, and the adopted methodology. Chapter two falls into two sections; the first of them offers a conceptual background, whereas the second concentrates on previous studies dealing with ekphrasis. Chapter three outlines the methodology followed in this study as well as the samples selected for analysis and explication.

Furthermore, chapters four and five represent the core part of the study in which a literary analysis is attempted of the selected poems to highlight the power of ekphrasis in them. The fourth chapter focuses on ekphrastic poems composed in the modern period of English literature, while the fifth is allotted to ekphrastic poems written in the contemporary epoch of English literature. The study ends with a conclusion which sums up the findings of the study.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Chapter One

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Ekphrasis is a significant concept to study, both in terms of ekphrastic works as well as in terms of the curious and continuous history surrounding theories of ekphrasis. The term ekphrasis, being an interartistic comparison, mirrors the aesthetic customs of the period in which it is composed. This suggests that the ekphrastic artifact provides an ideological map of values given to the particular artistic media it employs in any specific period. Moreover, artists, critics, and theorists have begun to recognize that ekphrasis is also a tool manipulating transformative power. This recognition comes on the tails of new understandings of ekphrasis that break away from a long tradition grounded in the Renaissance humanism and seventeenth century empiricism that defined the term according to a contest between the visual and verbal arts.

In ekphrastic poetry, when poets choose to compose an ekphrastic poem about a piece of visual art, what is chosen is often not the most famous, or iconic piece of art. Rather, they choose the piece of art which has something to tell concerning the poet's unexplored thoughts. Therefore, one can look to representations of art in the work of specific poets, as one looks to the repeated images from which they form their metaphors. The impulse to look and to describe is vital to the surface of the ekphrastic poem, but it is also revealing the currents which run

beneath it. Hence, these images become inescapably a metaphor for a formerly hidden theme.

Consequently, writing about art or confronting it in ekphrastic poems becomes a method of writing about poetry itself and the representational methods of the consciousness fabricating it. In turn, this process allows the poet to probe into very problematic and sensitive layers of thought without the need to depend on direct expression. The depiction of visual arts in literature is not a new phenomenon as it is found in poetry since Homer. Its evolution has been documented from the viewpoints of both literary criticism and art history. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, as modernist and postmodernist art increased its emphasis on abstract form and rejected traditional modes of demonstration, the made image has become greatly focal to poets as a reflection of their image-creating method and as a beneficial mirror to study the self as image-maker.

Hence, ekphrastic poems present an artistic observation of a visual artwork which turns out to be the poet's objectivized reference. The level of metaphor which resembles the converted painting defines the artwork as an entity, standing in a tense delicate equilibrium between the reality it refers to and its ability to represent. The reader's/ perceiver's pleasure in ekphrasis is mainly resulting from his consent to follow the poet's discovery of the liveliness of the painting as it is moved to the poem which is deeper than that of indirect depiction. When the ekphrastic poet copies the canvas into a poem, he/she enhances a human aspect to the painting. The ekphrastic interaction between the poem and canvas

magnifies the reader's/ perceiver's aesthetic appreciation and may inspire his/her creativity. Ekphrastic poems explore the ekphrastic relation as a dynamic and developing process between the poet, the painter, and the reader/ perceiver.

Modern and contemporary ekphrasis combine verbal and pictorial elements through imagery. In ekphrastic poems, the painting's enargeia or its authenticity, is created by the poet's images and his/her personal projections. The history of art is a humanistic discipline based on the contextual values of respect, compassion, and tolerance which are valid in every era. Thus, works of art have communicative and functional purposes, which have been the case of the ekphrastic poems in this dissertation accompanied by the importance of the viewer's freedom of perception in appraising a poem or painting.

In order to define a work of art as a man-made object which requires aesthetic experience, the art historian has to commit himself to the synthesis of recreating his perception of a work of art in a subjective way. Moreover, he/she needs to explore its history archeologically, to endow it with meaning, and to appreciate it as he should. The perception of a work of art relies on how poets recreate it according to the artist's intention and the viewer's/ reader's aesthetic values. Nevertheless, when speaking of recreation, it is important to emphasize the prefix 're'. Artworks are both manifestations of artistic intentions and natural objects, sometimes being difficult to separate from their physical surroundings and always subject to ageing. Therefore, in experiencing a work of art in an aesthetic method, ekphrastic poets build up their aesthetic object both

by recreating the artwork according to the intention of its painter, and by freely creating a set of values (Blackhawk,2000:53).

Consequently, in both modern and contemporary ekphrastic poems, the viewer adopts the position of an art historian who reconstructs the artwork via an organic synthesis of his subjective and intuitive aesthetic recreation based on his perception and his evaluation of the artwork's quality according to the artist's original intention. The viewer's and the reader's recreation of an ekphrastic work of art relies on his/her subjective understanding and his/her historical explication based on his/her cultural education. As such, the ekphrastic experience has the value of an educational experience.

The painter plans and converts his knowledge of the canvases he has seen into his painting, whereas the viewer tests those contents against his views and his understanding of the visible world. Then, the ekphrastic poet, composing about pictorial reality, is confronted with multi-layered reality. The painting signifies a reality that has been filtered through the sensitivity of the painter, and altered by these projections which the poet then expounds with his personal symbolic vision. In an ekphrastic poem, the reader attempts to figure out the mimetic relation which links the poem to the painting, the ekphrastic dimension which suggests the impact of the painting on the poet, and the difference which result in the painting's transcription into the poem. Thus, the job of the reader of ekphrastic poetry is to fill the gaps left open by the transcription of the painting into poem so as to perceive its meaning and intention.

As a result of the linear nature of language, each poem comprises a temporal dimension inherent in the nature of the medium itself. Reading takes place in time. Throughout this dissertation, a particular attention has been given to the different manners, in which temporality codetermines the selected ekphrastic poems, or is established in them, as a central problem of literary and artistic representation. In this dissertation, painted units and works are associated as sign systems. Language is a system of conventional signs reliant on the achievement of a linguistic code. Painting is nearer to the objects of the outside world and embodies them with iconic signs. Because of the intrinsic properties of each medium, and of the nature of their individual codes, the way pictorial and linguistic signs are delineated, and their decoding vary.

Like painting, poetry is an art of creative mixtures. Poetic language relies on a highly elaborate code, mainly symbolic. The poetic message or the self-referential foregrounding of the poetic dimension of language, is more significant in poetry than its referential dimension whereas the opposite is true in quotidian speech. The ekphrastic poet mixes the synonymic similarities between sounds, words, lines, and syntactic units in an innovative and symmetrical fashion. Therefore, ekphrastic poets produce new synonymic relations which they incorporate into the sequence of the poetic message. Thus, in ekphrastic poems, the poetic message is based on the referential background exemplified by the painting, but through the creative dimension, it also exceeds the reference. Since ekphrastic poems refer to the paintings which inspired them, the tension between the referential power of words and their

creative potential is foregrounded in all the ekphrastic poems selected and explicated in this dissertation.

During the course of this research, ekphrastic poetry is defined as the verbal representation of a visual work of art. When painting is intended to inspire the composition of modern and contemporary ekphrastic poems, the interaction of the verbal and the visual dynamics comprises both the spatial and the temporal dimensions. The depiction of painting encompasses a sequential action; which first unfolds in the successive order of seeing and, then, in its record to the linguistic realm. Therefore, the ekphrastic poems which are chosen and analyzed in this study fit Derrida's notion of the parergon's ambivalence and the frameless modern and postmodern aesthetics grounded on the lack of closure, and the multiple variability of meaning.

Derrida's aesthetics are defined by a lack of a determined frame, so, adding a multiplicity of meaning to the work of art which is explicated freely by reader or viewer. The deconstructive features of the poem, to Derrida, are indeterminacy, the ambiguous use of the frame, decentering, multiple meanings, and lack of closure. The readers' and viewers' ontological certainties are put into question due to the fact that in ekphrastic poetry the frame is and is not in the poem.

As a result, like all other artworks, the ekphrastic work of art makes the reader experience the illusory power of words which are able to refer creatively to a combination of painted signs, whose flexibility partly relies on the flexibility of the painter's and the perceiver's vision, without which the painting would merely be a flat colored surface. In the

ekphrastic poem, the strength of the illusion is directly correlated with the strength of the description. The large frontal approach characterizing the painter's style, and the poem's figurative dimension denote that both the ekphrastic poet and the painter are essentialists who work on creating indirect links between art and reality.

1.1 Aims of the Study

1. This study aims at investigating how poets composing in different literary backgrounds delineate the poetics of ekphrasis in their poems.

2. The study labors not only to shed light on how the term is used by various poets. It also tries to dig deep in the literary contexts of the chosen ekphrastic poems to figure out why ekphrasis is powerful and beneficial for the selected poets in the study.

3. It also aims at emphasizing the interartistic relation between poetry and painting through a review of philosophical insights on the term and also via analyzing the selected ekphrastic poems.

1.2 Limits of the Study

The study is limited to ekphrastic poems composed during the modern and contemporary eras of English poetry. Furthermore, the study is going to be limited to the following selected poets: William Carlos Williams; Hilda Doolittle; Wystan Hugh Auden; Elizabeth Bishop; Anthony Cronin; Angie Estes; Michael Hamburger; and Joy Harjo.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

1. There is a notable connection and relation between poetry and painting in the form of ekphrastic poetry.

2. There are notable differences among modern and contemporary poets composing in English in their delineation of ekphrasis and the ekphrastic object in their poems. Such differences are due to variations in the autobiographical, literary, social, and political backgrounds of their respective times of writing.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study stems from the growing interest in the poetics of ekphrasis in the modern and contemporary epochs by poets, philosophers, and researchers. This study is also of significance as it presents an interdisciplinary study of literature, philosophy, philology, and linguistics regarding the correlation between poetry and artworks. Additionally, it is significant to both readers and students of literature who are enjoying the discovery of interartistic relations between the verbal and the visual.

1.5 Research Questions

The study attempts at finding answers to the following questions:

1. How did ekphrasis develop throughout the course of English literature, and what is its significance?

2. What is the interartistic relation between poetry and painting, and what are the major philosophical concerns dealing with the poetics of ekphrasis?
3. How are ekphrasis and the ekphrastic object delineated by modern and contemporary English poets via their poetry?

1.6 Hypotheses of the Study

The researcher assumes the following hypotheses in dealing with ekphrasis in Modern and Contemporary English poetry:

1. Ekphrasis is of enormous power and significance which enabled it to draw the attention of poets as well as literary and art critics, and to replicate the place of museums and paintings in them.
2. There is notable interartistic relation between poetry and painting apparent in the major similarities in their treatment of the ekphrastic object despite the difference in their mediums of expression.
3. Ekphrasis is delineated by modern and contemporary poets in a way which allows them to deal with the most difficult and sensitive areas of thought without the pressure of direct expression.

1.7 Methodology

An analytical, critical research methodology is adopted in this study in order to demonstrate the delineation of ekphrastic poetics in modern and contemporary English poetry. The first task of the

researcher of this dissertation will be to develop a good understanding of the term ekphrasis. This task can be achieved by referring to the definitions, development and functions attributed to ekphrasis. Then the researcher will deal with the philosophical modern notions attached to the term ekphrasis. After that, as is suggested by the title of the dissertation, the researcher will engage in an in-depth analysis of modern and contemporary ekphrastic poems chosen in this study to shed light on the use and power of the poetics of ekphrasis.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Chapter Two

Conceptual Framework

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a conceptual background on ekphrasis, as well as its definitions, functions and development. It is subdivided into two sections. The first section is concerned with a theoretical overview of ekphrasis, the definition of ekphrasis, its historical background, the major modern theories of ekphrasis and its functions. Then, the second section sheds light on the literature review of previous studies on ekphrasis.

2.1 Theoretical Background

This section shows the literary roles attributed to ekphrasis as being the hidden cause behind writing about art or confronting art. A growing tendency towards re-visiting ekphrasis within modern theoretical norms has found out that ekphrasis is related to different literary, intellectual, philosophical and artistic fields of study. It is a well-manifested and precious literary tool for poets of all periods. Hence, the study of the power of ekphrasis in modern and contemporary English poetry is interdisciplinary; ekphrasis has long been a preoccupation of various disciplines, including philosophy, visual arts, history, archaeology, philology, mythology, literature as well as linguistics. Such interdisciplinary issues make the field of ekphrasis studies rich, diverse and full of controversial debates.

In this respect, the reappearance of ekphrasis as a proper writing form which belongs back to the distant past, has created a new tendency of grasping ekphrasis through a magnificent figure of poetry writings, outstanding pamphlets and remarkable theoretical essays. Ekphrastic poetry is based on responding to the visual stimulant that has been offered by the art works. Bosveld (2008:1) shows that ekphrasis is a literary device that gives vivification to the mute image of graphics and paintings through utilizing the poetical words and offers "two imaginations at work" simultaneously. In broad terms, Hollander (1995:6) assumes that the cavity amidst picture and utterances has been the theme of an adequate deal of recent theoretical consideration. Therefore, it has renewed a new interest in this ancient artistic form and to contribute to the ongoing debate whether ekphrasis is enhancing art or confronting it. Since poetry and painting have been regarded as sister arts in the ancient past, discussing the area of overlap between poetry and painting has become remarkable.

The revival of ekphrasis in the last two decades has generated a modern mode of recognizing ekphrasis along with an amazing figure of literary and academic practices and a great number of theoretical books, articles and poetry collections. Shapiro (2007:13) depicts that it is an "image-driven time." The investigation of ekphrasis has turned out to be so widespread that it is nearly reaching now to the status of "literary industry" (Scott, 1991; Heffernan, 1993:1). Blackhawk (2000:3) comments that ekphrasis has become common among the works of contemporary poets; they put the ekphrastic poetry to be as "an astonishing variety." In that way, the expansion of such collaboration

between arts and literature, or painting and poetry in particular, depends upon the sequential and persistent experiences between the image and the word.

Roughly speaking, ekphrasis is regarded as a combination notion which still has an influence on the Western tradition and literary theory. Thence, before exploring any issue related to ekphrasis, we should first dig deep to comprehend a definition of what ekphrasis follows and what its function is. Additionally, how its definition and its function differ from one epoch to another.

2.1.1 Definitions of Ekphrasis

Modern and contemporary British and American poetry have mirrored a fresh interest in reconsidering ekphrasis from classical Greece to the twentieth century. It is an old-fashioned, yet always renewed genre of writing about artwork in the Western canon. ‘Ekphrasis’ means the depiction of a real or imaginary painting or statuary into words. Several dictionaries have translated the word as one of the oldest Greek practices in the literary works that means "description". The Merriam-Webster dictionary (2016) defines the concept of ekphrasis as an artistic description or an explication of a visible artistic work. However, the most recent edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (1970) manifests ekphrasis as an expanded and exhaustive artistic portrayal of any item, factual or fictitious. It figures out that ekphrasis can be defined as "the rhetorical description of a literary work". As well, the *Oxford Companion to Western Art* (2001) remarks that ekphrasis has been "a Greek rhetorical idiom for a kind of description." Its origins render back to the

combination of the Ancient Greek ekphrazein: to recount, describe, to point out, explain (Krieger, 1992). It is an incorporation of "ek" denoting "out" and "phrasis" denoting "to speak", in order to signify, to utter out, to depict, to inform somebody about something, to describe something clearly (Wagner, 1996:12).

In other words, ekphrasis is a writing that describes another art form. It comes from Greek as a rhetorical and representational tool. Ekphrasis is regarded as an oratorical practice; it meant, intelligibly, to depict any matter, normal or made, realistic or fictional and to change the visible images into words. Carruthers (1998:130) illustrates ekphrasis as a depiction of an architecture work or any other type of artwork, whether real or imaginary that designs for as "a textual set-piece and 'site' for mental-painting". In the ancient ages, the definition of ekphrasis has focused not only on portrayal of art works but also contained wider scopes of subjects like shields, clothes, and armors.

As a result, ekphrasis is a profundity description of visual things such as shields, buildings, urns, clothing, cups, statues, frescoes, paintings, cartoons, photographs, tapestries and any objects that are accurately crafted. Ekphrasis is, frequently, recognized as the literary description or explanation of a fanciful or real work of art. It is a mimetic description and practice that is based upon the existence or illusion of a visual artwork. Many scholars try to define the term ekphrasis in different ways. Consequently, the definition of ekphrasis has varied over time; it is unstable. In effect, there has not been solitary criterion in laboring to

define the term. Ekphrasis definitions have been miscellaneous, and are, to a considerable degree, self-identified.

Comparatively, scholars limit ekphrasis definition as a writing tradition that is used to describe an artistic product. Actually, ekphrasis fulfills the desire to recall powerful images in the minds of its spectators. According to Webb (1999: 11), who is one of the most remarkable scholars focusing on ekphrasis in the old ages, claims that the classical definition of ekphrasis is a statement that presents the subject matter in an animate way. Webb affirms that ekphrasis is an utterance which fetches the subject matter in an animated and clear-cut way before the eyes (ibid.:1). Verdonk (2001:233) considers ekphrasis as any elaborated depiction of any object, literary or non-literary. This is in accordance with Hermogenes's *Progymnasma* which deals with ekphrasis as a detailed description or narration of actions, persons, places, seasons, times, and numerous other objects (qtd. in Baldwin, 1928:35).

In this view, Scott (1991:315) claims that, ekphrasis is every characterization which obliges an individual, a location, or an object in a crystal-clear method "before the mind's eye". In the same way, Piltz and Astrom (1998:11), affirm that ekphrasis is an adjectival dialogue that plainly provokes the persons, objects, or activities which are being depicted before our eyes and thus, according to them, it comes to perform as a word-picture. Appropriately, Hollander (1995:5) illustrates the notion that ekphrasis was, till the previous decennium, an artistic expression exercised by art historians and classicists to propose a verbal depiction of an art work, of a spectacle as rendered in a painting or sculpture, or even

of an imaginary scene which unacknowledgedly describes images that are majorly derived from scenery portrayals.

On the other hand, Hagstrum (1958:17) utilizes a narrow definition of ekphrasis as a description that gives speech to a work of art. However, he points more generally to descriptions of artwork as "iconic". Hagstrum assures that the outgrowth of the Greek noun ekphrasis comes from the verb "ekphrazein", to imply speaking out and fully telling of something (1958:18). This comes in harmony with Parry's declaration that the term ekphrasis is basically a declarative instrument by which a created object in a type of art begins to be the essence of another object (1989:467). Otherwise, ekphrasis gathers all the rhetoric efforts to depict artistic expression into mental images. This develops Hagstrum's limited domain of ekphrasis that, merely, indicates to that written work which attributes voice to voiceless and silent things. In point of fact, ekphrasis is defined as an elaboration of artwork; it sketches a figure of speech to make the receiver imagines a theme vividly.

Formally speaking, Robillard and Jongeneel (1998:IX) present the definition of ekphrasis claiming that ekphrasis is a rhetorical style; it is a part of the *"ut pictura poesis"* convention that hails back to the Greek schools which points to the way in which literary works arouse existing or imagined works of art. In this way, ekphrasis is, normally, shown as a fragment of a text or a text that is involved with visual arts (ibid).

Besides that, the writings of Leo Spitzer have revived ekphrasis in its place in scholarly controversy. Spitzer observes that ekphrasis has been a recreation of a fresh term style which is reformed "through the

medium of words" (1962:72). In his commentary on the ode as ekphrastic poetry, Spitzer pinpoints that ekphrasis is just as the lyrical elaboration of a work of art that is majorly a painting or sculpture (qtd. in Webb, 2009:33-34). Most definitions after Spitzer have in common the notion that ekphrasis can be understood to be "the verbal representation of a graphic representation" (Mitchell, 1994:151-152). Since Spitzer's limitation puts that ekphrasis belongs to the range of description, Murray Krieger (1992) critiques Spitzer's definition. Krieger (1992:9) attempts to enlarge the area of ekphrasis to what he calls "word-painting." Unlike Spitzer, he believes that these descriptions are consecrated on the visual rather than to the limited field of works of art.

Nevertheless, Heffernan (1993:2) points out that Krieger "stretches ekphrasis to the breaking point." He observes that Krieger's definition is too wide and denominates "too large a literary body". Accordingly to that, the latter half of the twentieth century has witnessed a great attention in defining this old artistic tradition. Heffernan (ibid:262) observes that ekphrasis is used in different ways and variously defined by ancient Greek rhetoricians, before almost two thousand years, and recently revived by distinguished literary theorists. Heffernan (ibid:3) states that when it comes to define ekphrasis as a mode, the definition ought to be intense enough to correspond a remarkable form of literature and, also, flexible enough to spread from the classical to postmodern eras, from Homer to Ashbery. Therefore, Heffernan puts a simple definition in its form, yet complicated in its suggested meanings. He defines ekphrasis as the "verbal representation of visual representation." Moreover, Heffernan (ibid.) declares that ekphrasis is nothing but the art of putting into words

the works of art, of transforming into a verbal representation something that belongs to the visual representation. Expressing something silent into something verbal (or written) is similar to the contraction of the term in the classical notion of "*prosopopeia"* – the technique of having silent objects express themselves in the absence of the author.

Leaning on Krieger's and Heffernan's definitions, Mitchell (1994:152) defines ekphrasis as "a curiosity: it is the name of a minor and rather obscure literary genre and of a more general phenomenon." This supports Mitchell's view that ekphrasis is "the literary representation of visual art" (1994:150). He confirms that ekphrasis is depicted principally as "a paragonal energy." It drives together two "rival forms of representation." Mitchell (1986) estimates that the visual and the verbal, image and text, are undoubtedly distinct devices of representation and this is the main difficulty of ekphrasis.

Carrier (1993:8-104) holds the same idea, in *Principles of Art History Writing*, claiming that ekphrasis is noticed as the "verbal re-creations of the visual artwork." This meaning is in accordance to Cluver (1989:35-36) who observes that ekphrasis might be understood as the shifting of an actual or imagined text that is written in a non-verbal sign system into a verbal one. Moreover, Bruhn (2000:296) a theorist who merges musicology with literary theory gives a very broad definition of ekphrasis, calling it to be the demonstration in certain specific medium of an actual or imaginary test that is written in another different medium. Marsico and Capa (2009:204) indicate that ekphrasis is "responding intellectually and emotionally to art".

Hence, ekphrasis is the verbal description of visual works of art. It is the mere effort of portraying visual artworks, in order to display in text an object that is mainly imagined, or demonstrated in pictures. Ekphrasis, originally, means a full or vivid description. Simply put, it is bearing the implication of exemplifying in written or spoken words an object that is illustrated visually. It is a descriptive speech that enables the audience to imagine a subject visibly. Consequently, the discussions about the definition of ekphrasis have become a real controversy. Scholars working and writing in the field of ekphrasis are still hesitant about defining this issue. The term ekphrasis is defined in many different ways. It is an "umbrella term" (Yacobi, 1995:599) that conforms to the theorist's needs and concerns.

2.1.2 Historical Background

Ekphrasis is of an old tradition before the twentieth century. It is not a twentieth-century convention. Ekphrasis has a vast historical presence in Greek literature. Heffernan (1993:9) explains that ekphrasis is as ancient as inscription itself in the western literary canon. Ekphrasis has a long historical trend which stretches back to the foundation texts of Western literature. According to (Heffernan, 1993:7), ekphrastic writings are having a history of at about three thousand years. The oldest appearance of ekphrasis as a term has been recorded in works composed by Dionysius of Halicarnasus (Wagner, 1996:12). It performs in the rhetorical writings; then became a school of exercise in rhetoric. Ekphrasis is, therefore, initiated in the area of eloquence and is specified by art historians and literary critics (ibid.: 12-13).

Himerius (ca. 315-86), Simonides of Ceos (556 – 468 BC) and Horace (65 – 8 BC) are the most major representatives of demonstrating the relationship between literature and art through the ancient decades. It is manifested through the remarkable writings of the Greek poet Simonides of Ceos in Plutarch's *De Gloria Atheniensium* (Lessing, 1962:xii; Harvey, 2002:1; Heffernan, 1993:1-2; Méndez-Ramirez, 1999:24). Ekphrasis attains its formation through statements of Simonides's account of the relation between painting and literature as he asserted that painting can be regarded as mute poetry and poetry, in turn, can be considered picture that is speaking to readers (qtd. in Mendez-Ramirez, 1999:24; Henryk Markiewicz, 1987:535-58), In addition to Horace's phrase "as is painting so is poetry" that assures poetry resembles painting (Plutarch, 1927:55), Braida and Pieri (2003:1-14) say that ekphrasis has progressed through Horace's imagery in his comparative statement "ut pictura poesis". They employ ekphrasis through which poetry acts like painting. They adopted ekphrasis as a rhetorical technique to write literature. Their statements assert that, since poetry is acting like painting, it has been the code of the relationship between the verbal and the visual.

Plato's (ca. 428-348 BC) proposed similarity between poets to painters in terms of drawing of words in their poems, accompanied by a phrase that was coined by Aristotle (ca. 384-322 BC) when commenting on the relation between poetry and art, stating that "[poetry] is the same with painting" (qtd. in Hagstrum, 1958:60), both participate in the combination between these arts of poetry and painting. In his *The Phaedrus*, Plato notices that when placing poems and paintings together,

they will look like bearing a sense of intelligence in addressing the reader directly (qtd. in Foster and Prevallet, 2002:xv). Since Plato has innovated his theory of poetry, he initially indicated to images in a mirror and then to the work of a painter; finally, he has applied "the distinctions drawn from both these illustrations to define the mimetic character of poetry" (Abrams, 1953:33). In this way, Ricoeur (1981) points out that Plato attempts to make a comparison between writing and images. Since writing is compared to painting, those works present themselves "as if they are alive", and they will then continue to signify the same thing forever. This supports Himerius's view, who is one of the most noticeable Greek rhetoricians. He illustrates ekphrasis when assuring his readers and audience that he is capable of drawing a poem with words and thus to see images in poetry through their ears not their eyes (qtd. in Baldwin, 1928:18).

Thenceforth, the term ekphrasis is rooted whereas its origins render back to the Greek, to give both voice to a mute object and to describe a visual object vividly (Hagstrum, 1958:65). Since ekphrasis is found in a lot of origins bearing the shape of an elaborated narration concerning works of art, ekphrasis is regarded a popular tradition in Greek and Latin literature. As for instance, various ekphrastic modes appeared in Euripides's *Ion and Phoenissae*, and *Electra*, Apollonius's *Argonautica*, Moschus's *Europa*, Heroda's *Mimes,* Theocritus's *Idylls*, Naevius's *Bellum Punicum*, Virgil's *Eclogues*, *Georgics*, and *Aeneid*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* Longus's *Daphins and Chloe*, Achilles Tatius's *Leucippe* and *Clitophon*, and Claudian's *Panegyrics* and are considered to be a comprehensive group of works by scholars who revisit the tradition.

These ekphrastic styles are either semi-critical appreciations employed by rhetoricians or lyric ekphrastic poems; which were about architectural ornaments, weapons, goblets, urns, vases, chests, cloaks, or armours (Marsico and Capa, 2009:204). Furthermore, names like Matthieu de Vendome, Lucian, Philostratus, Virgil, Vida, Daniello, Alberti, Geoffroi de Vinsauf Robortello, Fracastoro, Minturno, Diderot, Dante, Callistratus, and Chaucer are outstanding poets, literary critics and art historians who are concerned with ekphrasis in that period. Their writings are concerned with either drawing comparisons between poetry and plastic arts, or employing ekphrasis in the role of a literary instrument for extended depictions or narrative discourses and poetics in lyrical and allegorical poetry (Lessing, 1962:xv, 5).

The first debates about ekphrasis as rhetorical practices are found in the pamphlets of ancient Greek rhetoricians from the second to fourth centuries. These pamphlets of rhetorical practices are called progymnasmata. Progymnasmata are a set of preliminary rhetorical practices that began in ancient Greece and extended during the Roman age. Progymnasmata display ekphrasis as a preceding rhetorical practice to inform students how to recount events and to speak articulately. Among these rhetorical practices are Hermogenes's Tarsus (second-century BC), Aelius's Theon (first-century BC), Nikolaus's Myra (fifth-century BC) and Aphthonius's Antioch (fifth-century BC), have been sustained noteworthly from the Hellenistic time to the present (Becker,1995:24; Piltz and Astrom, 1998:50; Marsico and Capa, 2009:215) .

As aforementioned, western literature has witnessed the first and the most influential ekphrastic model through Homer's depiction of the shield of Achilles in his books the *Iliad and Odyssey*. His description of Achilles's shield in the *Iliad* is considered just as "the locus classicus of ekphrasis" (Haberer, 2006:1). In fact, ekphrasis is a tradition that charts a long course with greatest ancient Greek writers such as Homer and Horace. Whereas, The *Iliad* shows the track how ekphrasis could be applied in verse, by virtue of homogeneities between drama, dance, poetry, music, painting or any kind of arts in general. Horace's work puts the trend of ekphrastic criticism for both poets and painters. Horace in his *Ars Poetica*,"The Art of Poetry," uses the ekphrastic style, drawing it from Plutarch's scripts, to show the conception of painting in the guise of a silent poetry and poetry as an image that is speaking to its readers (Harvey, 2002: 228). Horace's writings have become the sign for ekphrastic exercises. Works of Horace and Homer are often recognized as the fundamental examples of ekphrasis in the ancient ages.

In the ancient times, ekphrasis is sentimentally associated with *enargeia*, which means the standard of vividness and powerful description. In his comment on this notion, Elsner (2002:1) interprets *enargeia* as a status of visibility that focuses on a correlation between visually and vibrant depictions, to display how intimately these expressions are related. As Webb (2009:195) puts it, studying ekphrasis and *enargeia* affords highly significant historical evidence about the reading habits of ancient peoples as well as their profoundly rooted approaches concerning the study and scrutiny of texts, that are regarded as direct invitations for a textual connection that is both emotional and

imaginative. Many roots from that antiquity of ancient classical heritage before and during the Middle Ages, which are translated into colloquial languages, have become common and prevalent (Lessing, 1962:5-6; Becker,1995:4; Parry, 1989:469).

The interest in these classic ekphrasis writings leads to its flourishing in the middle ages as well as the Renaissance. It is revived in the role of a poetic usage. In the Renaissance, since the notion of depiction of narrative texts is preserved in painted artworks, the obsession with allegory in painting is accompanied by a similar degree of obsession with description in poetry (Lessing, 1962:xv-5). Moreover to the point, a growing amount of ekphrastic poems is formulated, and the concept of "as is painting so is poetry," which is deemed to be the core of renaissance theoretical formulation, has become predominant (Witemeyer, 2009:33). This idea has emerged in old ages has been popular among artists and sophists in the Renaissance. The theorist W.G. Howard shows that ekphrastic practices began to be conceived as the amusing and clever antithesis during that epoch (qtd. in Mendez-Ramirez, 1999:24).

In the Renaissance, Leonardo da Vinci comprehends the reality that painted and poetic works are connected; however, painting is the highest art shape (Harvey, 2002:118). Even so, ancient artworks' ekphrastic depictions served as a source of inspirations to Renaissance artists. They present a precise sensation of the artwork of the ancient Greeks and Romans to Renaissance culture which was highly esteemed by them. They are attracted to the scheme of a written language that is made and

composed from pictures. It has been investigated that the language of poetry and images in painting are not distinct from each other; since both are able to illustrate and work as mediums for sense and meaning. Mitchell (1994) observes that there is nothing to be called as pure visual arts or pure verbal ones. During the early fourteenth century, ekphrastic writings are employed in Dante's epic tales. Dante is, heavily, inspired by Virgil, a fact that leads him to write ekphrasis. Actually, Dante composes ekphrastic works to imitate the poet he so esteemed up to the extent that he creates Virgil a persona in his *Divine Comedy,* functioning as the Pilgrim's conductor through Purgatory and Hell (McGregor, 2003:25). As well, Dante uses ekphrasis in his masterpiece to describe works of art he experienced in the course of his quest.

In the fifteen and sixteen centuries, since Leon Battista Alberti reinserted the *inventio* and *elocutio* questions into painting and poetry in his significant *Della Pittura*, ekphrasis turned out to be a focal theme of literary criticism. In addition, The La *Poetica* of Luigi Daniello (1536) greatly conforms to the famous controversial notions of Horace. As well, Shakespeare's "The Rape of Lucrece", Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Garcilaso de la Vega's *Eglogas,* and Guillaume de Lorris's *Le Roman de la Rose* and Castiglione's "Cleopatra" are but few examples of the significant ekphrastic poetry during Renaissance lyric poetry (Parry, 1989:469-70). These poets display a concern concerning the connection amidst word and image in the shape of ekphrastic and figurative poetry, as accordingly noticed in John Dryden's "A Song for St. Cecilia's Day", "Alexander's Feast", Robert Herrick's "Upon His Departure Hence" and George Herbert's "Sighs and Grones", "Easter Wings" and "The Altar".

(Brooks, 1991:85). Since John Dryden translated Dufresnoy's *De Arte Graphica* into English, the interest in ekphrasis attained its ultimate in 1695.

In 1715, the poetics of ekphrasis become predominant and their manifestation is recognized as an explicit proclamation of explication of any object (Marsico and Capa, 2009:204). Poets are influenced by the detection of obelisks and hieroglyphic writings that have been transported from Egypt to Rome in addition to portrayals of certain specific painters of the period such as Poussin and Lorrain. Parry (1989:470) depicts the fact that the enormously widespread symbolism books, over 3000 editions were published from the period of time ranging between 1531 and 1700, may be regarded as an artistic composition that shows the scene of poetry and painting as sister-arts. A new sense to the relationship between verbal and visual has been brought by Uvedale Price's *An Essay on the Picturesque, As Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful; and on the Use of Studying Pictures, for the Purpose of Improving Real Landscape* (1794), William Gilpin's Three Essays: *On Picturesque Beauty, On Picturesque Travel, and On Sketching Landscape* (1792), Richard Payne Knight's *The Landscape* (1794), and *An Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste* (1805).The term speedily moves all over the centuries throughout the Augustan Age, the Restoration Epoch and the Romantic Era. Its glory was celebrated via John Keats's archetypal "Ode on a Grecian Urn" during the Romantic era. William Blake also points out to the idea that both art and poetry are methods enabling him to enjoy a heavenly speaking with paradise (Farrell, 1996:6).

Unlike the preceding periods of time, both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries attested a strong change in their ekphrastic realization. Ekphrasis became the object of intense academic scrutiny during the 1980s, as part of cultural theory's emergent of 'visual turn' and its attendant concentration upon image-text relations. Praz (1956) and Davidson (1989:29) believe that, ekphrastic studies, "ut pictura poesis" have proved themselves to formulate the most significant canon prevalent in the narrative structures during those two centuries. Lessing's well-known study entitled *Laocoon: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry* (1962) received that controversial relation between poetry and painting in unfamiliar way (Mitchell, 1994:106; Hagstrum, 1958:9-10).

Moreover, setting up of public museums led to the increased interest in ekphrasis in the eighteenth-century. The art works are kept and conserved; they have turned out to be obtainable for each person. Ekphrasis has become a prevalent practice among poets through going to museums. Ekphrastic poetry is then deemed as a museum-centered type of poetry. It was viewed as an act of artistic artworking which is tempting various poets of the period to confront visible actions of art with the aim of recreating artworks in mind. Scott (1991:316) disputes that competitions made to select and decide which the best composed poem that is dealing with ancient artworks as its subject have flourished the interest of poets in terms of plastic arts amongst literary canons. According to Heffernan, "museums not only regulate our experience of works of art and certify their value, but also determine what they mean" (qtd. in Wagner, 1996:280). This is due to the fact that museums have

provided art with an "aura of importance where symbolic fragments were rescued from the destructive forces of time" (Scott, 1994:15).

Accordingly, ekphrasis has become a well-formed and popular literary performance. In the nineteenth century, therefore, poetry has become closer to painting. Writers are impacted by the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood members who are interested in paintings. A great extent of interest regarding the sentimental relationship that is now taking place between images and words is produced during the Victorian period. Among the well-celebrated ekphrastic works of this period are Robert "The Bishop Orders His Tomb", "My Last Duchess," "Andrea del Sarto", and "Fra lippo Lippi," which were composed by Robert Browning, as well as Danti Gabriel Rosetti's "A Venetian Pastoral", and "For Annunciation". The first part of this era was, as is recorded by Henry James, the era in which it is a focal point to search for a hidden story behind an image in a painting before anything else (qtd. in Mitchell, 1980). Further, Sumi (2004:12) puts it clearly that the literary works of Leo Spitzer highly contributed to the popularity of ekphrasis. This is because in the year 1962, when he republished his famous essay which is entitled "Content vs. Metagrammar", he influentially, revisited and revived the practice of ekphrasis in its place in scholarly debates.

In this way, ekphrasis begins with Homer, culminating with the romantic English poets Percy Bysshe Shelly (1792-1822) and George Byron (1788-1824) and mounting to its apex with the contemporary American poet John Ashbery (b.1927). Heffernan (1993:4) argues that ekphrasis is an identifiable mode that provokes an efficient method which

helps to trace and link together ekphrastic writings from the time of Homer up to that of John Ashbery. Ekphrasis is found in verse writings since Homer, and its improvement is legalized from the estimations of both art history and literary criticism. Suitably, this term, ekphrasis, begins with the ancient literature and comes to the climax with the contemporary literature. Writers employed the term as a rhetorical conception from classical to modern literature. Heffernan (1993:135) states that:

> *The salience of ekphrasis in modern and contemporary poetry becomes still more striking when we consider that at least one poem about a work of visual art has come from almost every major poet of our time. And the best-known ekphrastic poems of the twentieth century are like many peaks rising from surrounding foothills.*

In this regard, the form is vastly recognized and "commonly practiced" by the beginning of the twentieth-century (Bruhn, 2000:14). Instances of ekphrasis saw a significant increase following the impact of Imagism during the twentieth century. Since the boundaries between arts disappeared with Cubistic and Imagist discussions, writers form extra ekphrastic poetry everyday (Mitchell, 1986:25). Rainer Maria Rilke, William Carlos Williams, Elizabeth Bishop, John Ashbery, Robert Lowell, Seamus Heaney, Donald Hall, Derek Mahon, Paul Muldoon, and Paul Durcan; are remarkable poets who presented poems that are dealing with this ancient but very common literary type (Francis, 2009:1). According to Haberer (2006:1), the utmost renowned twentieth- century

treatment of ekphrasis is W.H. Auden's poem "Musee des Beaux Arts"; which did really assist in making poems dealing with ekphrastic images to be more popular.

Today, ekphrasis is a widespread known and proficient literary notion that is being taken into consideration in many anthologies, journals, and volumes of poetry. Many of the contemporary poems found it tepting and alluring to approach artworks and to experience them on a personal level. Some of the outstanding examples of contemporary ekphrastic poetic compositions are; Ann Sexton's "The Starry Night" that is deriving it title from a painting bearing the same name by Vincent Van Gogh, W.H. Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" which is based on Pieter Breughels the Elder's *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*, John Ashberry's "Self Portrait in a Covex Mirror," Willaim Gipson's "Count Zeo," and Ann Carson's "Hopper: Confessions." (Di Yanni, 1998:587- 584).

2.1.3 Modern Theories of Ekphrasis

Contemporary decades have noticed a distinguished growing of interest in ekphrasis, and many studies of the theory and practice of the tradition have provided a deep understanding of the function and nature of it. Since ekphrasis was treated as excursive digressions, Wagner (1996:18) says that it is necessary to have further studies, in both ekphrasis and visual poetics, in order to examine those charming works that merge together visual art and prose fiction. Such studies, then, form an attempt to attain a realization of the ekphrastic practices and conventions. As a consequence for that, it is essential to trace the most significant and influential modern theories and notions concerning

ekphrasis to recognize the sisterly relationships between painting and poetry and the complex literary and philosophical correlations of ekphrastic exercises. Hollander (1995:5) interprets that, by contemporary literary theory, investigations of ekphrasis are majorly interested in the routes in which there is an engagement between time and space are via various mutual formalizations images in paintings, words in poems and the actuality behind them.

During the modern and contemporary ages, several theoretical approaches and methodologies have been employed to ekphrastic passages in literature (Webb, 2009). Theories of Narratology, Intertextuality, Intermediality and cultural poetics have been employed in the study of ekphrasis with considerable benefit (Becker, 1995:25). It is urgent, then, to rethink and review ekphrasis, which is taken into consideration as one of the ancient literary and rhetorical shapes. According to a survey for the term ekphrasis made by Laura M. Sager (2008:9) in MLA bibliography, she proclaims that it appears in 468 sources, of which 177 are published only in the course of the last five years. Consequently, it is observed that more than 50.000 poems concentrating on ekphrasis have refreshed since the classical time of Homer (Bruhn, 2008:3). Scott and Hiffernan both agreed that ekphrastic literature in general and poetry in specific has almost reached the status of being an industry due to its popularity (Scott, 1991:316; Heffernan, 1993:1).

Many eminent art historians, poets, philosophers, and literary critics such as Roland Barthes, Erwin Panofsky, Nelson Goodman,

Jacques Derrida, E.H. Gombrich, Michel Foucault and others have embraced the critical discussions regarding the practices of ekphrasis during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Modern approaches of theories have strived to theorize a further intellectually effective parallel between word and image. Image-making and speech are connected to each other as rhetoric and figurative methods. Since artistic images are inspired to evoke verbal reactions; the core of this approach is 'rhetoric' (Baxandall, 1971:15). Bann (1989:28) believes that ancient examples of ekphrasis are flexible. He says that ekphrasis is a category of artistic composition that is based upon the perilous hypothesis that it is possible to translate the visual artwork into verbal discourse with no need for a remainder. As claimed by Bann (ibid.), the words about painting or sculpture are supposed to have the ultimate competence to the objects which are depicted by this painting or sculpture.

Correspondingly, among these twentieth century fundamental theories of ekphrasis and ekphrastic writings is *Ekphrasis: The Illusion of the Natural Sign*. It was written by Murray Krieger in 1992, which has been a reference for any examination of ekphrasis. It mainly theorizes the features and characteristics of ekphrasis and how to categorize ekphrastic poetry as descriptive and narrative via relying on the categorization of the temporal-spatial formulated by Lessing. Putting this matter in mind, ekphrastic poetry struggles for domination either by portraying an object or through narrative; whether concerned with historical narrative as in Lovelace's poem on Peter Lilly's painting or dealing with an invented object, as in, for instance, the objects dealt with in Shelley's "Ozymandias" or Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn." According to Krieger

(1992:284), ekphrasis is the utmost extreme and expressing example of the visual and spatial possibility of "the literary medium." He theorizes ekphrasis as an integral universal essence of poetics that is assured by each poem which is laboring to emphasize its integrity. According to the viewpoint of Krieger, words offer mediation whereas an image is "a visual substitute for its referent"(Krieger, 1992:2).

Furthermore, Krieger in his noteworthy book *Pictures into Words: Theoretical and Descriptive Approaches to Ekphrasis* published in 1998, theorizes that images are attributed to the rational world and are submitted to a need for the "natural sign," as the fundamental fountain of perception. As a matter of fact, he asserted again that it is compulsory to consider the visual sign as a "visual substitute for its referent" (1998:5). Besides, Krieger studies words to be inherently temporal and arbitrary. He supplies a mediated and coded access to representation. For Krieger, the tension between the "spatial fix" and "the freedom of the temporal flow" designates the issue of ekphrasis (ibid.). Krieger clarifies that the desire of ekphrasis is to afford an extraordinary task to language art which will enable it to represent what is literally unrepresentable so as to "freeze itself into a shape" (1998:4-5).

This is in accordance to Jacques Derrida's theories in his great pamphlets. It is essential to point to his intellectual ideas. He has depended, frequently, on paintings, images and words during examining the correlation between the visual and the verbal (1987). Derrida designs exclusive vital concepts while examining this correlation. One of these vital concepts is *effacer*. In another sense, the term *effacer* actually

denotes the process of erasing, rubbing out or obliterating an inscription. Derrida considers this notion as an allegorical perform of concealing, or reconciling, the ancient lines, emblems, and textures which are found on a painting. Distinctly, he theorizes that a painting may be considered as a text, or a text as a painting and that every alteration which is produced on the canvas or on the text is an effacing process of the text and, therefore, it is an endeavor to comprise, cover, cross out, and even going farther to omit the original text or painting (Derrida, 1980:19-20).

For Derrida, the ekphrastic poem refers to a previously modified visual image; it is an attempt to alter, clarify, and explicit this modified visual image into an additional adjusted method within a diverse style of sign system. That adjusted image, which is changed into text, continues to exist in a distinct manner and its presence replaces the preceding manner of expression and provides it with a converted and even distorted configuration (ibid.:23-26). Derrida explains that a spatial artwork, which cannot talk, is subject to be explicated in two manners. First, it is the notion that it is ultimately mute, the concept of its total unrelatedness or foreignness to the words in texts. On the other hand, it is possible for such artworks, to be received, read, or explicated as a prospective discourse. Hence, these mute artworks are, then, having the innate ability of speaking and are indeed pregnant with many sorts of virtual discourses (qtd. in Brunette and Wills, 1994:12-13).

Since dealing with the visual-verbal correlation, Derrida has not merely concentrated upon the message, symbol, or the exterior significance of word and image, however, he mainly concerns himself

with every language philosophy or conception which is placing Being as a mode of presence (Smith, 1995:29), and the most noticeable characteristic feature of such a presence, let it be verbal or visual, can be specified through names (ibid.:292). Applying this hypothesis of Derrida to the ekphrastic scope, it might be safe to affirm that ekphrastic poetry enables its audience to transfer the signs of its absent source, the unavailable painting during reading or studying it. In spite of the fact that, the visual is absent, it is able to contact during the poem, the poem-*effacer*. It is possible to achieve the presence of the painting, in its absence, by the poem's explicit indication, by naming the painting. As a result, this makes numerous poets who are composing ekphrastic poetry to recognize the necessity for the paintings that gave them the inspiration to write to be mentioned, named, either in the titles or texts of their poems.

Unlike Krieger and Derrida, Mack Smith, in his outstanding book *Literary Realism and the Ekphrastic Tradition* in 1995, thinks that the concern in the significant correlation which is relating poetry to painting is produced by paradigmatic shifts in our comprehension (1995:2); our ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses. Smith understands that Derrida is influenced by Edmund Husserl and his phenomenological discussions that are related to the concept of deferring a normal perspective to be serving as the basis of observation and comprehension, which are working hand in hand with the idea of *epoche* (1995:29). This idea is concerned with such essential concepts which are at the core of phenomenology like the two key concepts of "absence in presence" and "presence of absence." In line with Derrida, Smith declares

that any presence is subsequently stained by absence. For him, meaning occurs in the consciousness "as a presence only because of the graphemic, phonemic, perceptual and conceptual distinctions between it and absent terms" (ibid.). Correspondingly, ekphrasis is seen by him as a mimetic process at the intertextual level. He thinks that there are mainly two fundamental characteristics of ekphrasis which are, namely, coherence and a correspondence in textual terms (1995:22). Smith contrasts two modes of ekphrasis; poetic and prosaic to find out the conception that ekphrasis can perform as a narrative appliance (1995:26). Smith limits the concept of ekphrasis to refer to an artwork that represents, graphically, characters or objects from history, myth or daily life to supply a perfect and instructive comments regaeding a narrative (1995:10-11).

One more theorist, Grant F. Scott in his emphatic book *Word and Image* (1991) proposes astonishing theories regarding the notable relationships between word and image. In the light of his ideas, he suggests that the visual representation is based on the ekphrastic process by which the image brings into language; it is an inventive procedure that includes creating an art that is verbal from a visual one (Scott, 1994:1). He asserts that although there is a senior differentiation between art and poetry, yet still the two arts are able to transcend such borders through a collaboration that is eciprocal between the two (Bal in Scott, 1994:37). He stresses and organizes, strikingly, how visual image changes into verbal metaphor. According to him, ekphrasis is, simply, a mode of writing that is meant to depict artworks, to interpret the captured visual image into words which are characterized by fluid drive. He adds that

since the narrative ceases and the poet interferes, it is then a process of breathing words into the silent portrait; it creates paintings from deferred words in the text. It specifies and releases the picture for the sake of capturing and enabling it. (Scott, 1994:xii).

Previously, Scott has observed that ekphrasis is a process of seizure regarding the visual object with the aim of mastering it first, and then transforming it (1991:302). He adds that ekphrasis tries to convert and conquer the picture by means of prescribing it (ibid.). Moreover, he deals with the term as an instrument of manifesting power and domination (1991:303). This asserts his conception of ekphrasis which grants voice and life to the motionless art question which made him to believe that ekphrasis is a scheme that reveals "mutual exchange and enrichment as language appropriates the image" (Scott, 1994: 29). His theory handles, clearly, the questions of captivity and freedom via the formation of a verbal sort of art that is derived from the visual one.

Moreover, to the theories under scrutiny, the French philosopher and art-historian Louis Marin, in his salient book *Sublime Poussin*, theorizes that it is essential to devise, methodically, some certain inquiries so as to explore contemplative replies to the convoluted experience in ekphrastic practices (1999:4). He begins his theoretical inquiry of ekphrasis with a critical inquiry that regards these main arguments:

> *We read letters, poems, and books. What does it mean to read drawings, pictures, frescoes? After all, the term "reading" is immediately applicable to books; can we say the same for pictures? How valid or legitimate is it*

to extend the term's meaning and speak of reading in connection with pictures? (Marin, 1999:5).

This creates the reading of an image to be similar to an analysis system and consequently, this method of reading is able to become an approach of image translation and decoding. Furthermore, he supposes that meditating before the image for a considerable time generates magnificent emotions which are produced by the reciprocal action between the meditative eye and the painted picture (1999:163). This theorist has often had the sensation that the paintings are in suspense for the visit of any type of gaze of a poet during walking through the rooms of a museum. The paintings have neither purpose nor cause except to exhibit themselves. They extend reality in this festive show to be seen through the three processes of "invocation, convocation and provocation" (1999:171-2). Hence, he proclaims that this artistic status occurring between the art object and its viewer is a fabulous illustration technique of a work of art (1999: 209). According to his belief, it is better to launch examining the issue by inquiring about the capability of a visual language that is established firmly and deeply in paintings to be transformed into verbal signs (1995:7).

Furthermore, Marin imagines that painting has its particular modes to contact with its audience. On the authority of this theorist's thoughts, exactly such as texts, painting includes "metasemantics", and thus this one marvelous characteristic of painting that engages the wish of a poet to realize and decode the enigmatic mystery of paintings (ibid.:16). In Marin's view, a painting utilizes this enigmatic mystery whether by

means of self-referentiality, auto representation, or an integration of both (ibid.). Undoubtedly, a painting might be a factual one, obviously, through submitting its entire theme or allowing the figures, colors and landscapes express their presence. Marin accounts that, the image which is produced in the eye of audience's minds has, almost, been named "an idea." The "idea" that is made through words or metaphors, is often active due to its mobilization via signs (1999:153). As far as being successful in creating and maintaining the represented image in audience's minds, the painting is effective.

Henceforth, Marin accordingly sets a special importance on the efficacy, by which a painted picture impacts on the poet. An efficacy that can be more inspirational if the poet has not come across the painting beforehand. If a poet is not aware of the painting and if he, for the first time, confronts with the visual impact of the painting, he is capable of reading signs found in the painting in a formal and expressive way and of identifying the connection the painting shares with its appropriate setting and background (ibid.:102). Emphasizing the notion that ekphrasis is a mimetic form of writing on the pictorial level and that it is a tool of trans-textualization and translation, he illustrates that ekphrasis, which is an experimental technique of writers, labors to make the image to be present the text, the image itself to perform as text, and even more to formulate that specific theoretical hypothesis through which the painter builds his painting (1999:127). Therefore, he confirms that the magical manifestation through which the poet exposes singularizing, depends upon the metaphorical translation of the image. In his important study *To Destroy a Painting* in 1995, he proves that ekphrastic poetry

converts painting into a conversation, switches pictures into words. Therefore, what theorists and poets are dealing with is a form of fascination or eloquence which continuously bearing in its core a risk of shifting what is visual to all eyes into a sort of language that is purely private (1995:1), ekphrasis is subliminally, for Marin, based on an attractive metaphorical and a magical entity.

Last but not least, Andrew Becker is one of the few critics who have proven the theory that it is safe enough to read ekphrasis in terms of being a metaphoric poetry. Becker concentrates on three fundamental points, each of which is correspondingly significant: ekphrasis responds aesthetically; involves a reciprocal relation; and is fundamentally metaphorical (1995:37-8). He describes the interacting feature of ekphrasis as giving a legible allegory that desires an intense and cultivated eye from both reader and poet (1995:51).

Becker continues to proclaim that the situation that interests him is the verbal representation, the imagined visual representation, according to him, the provocation is stretched via visible pictures for it represents or experiments with the seen object (1995:2). Moreover, this theorist, who calls for a factual genre of ekphrasis, theorizes the notion that the principal goal of the correlation of ekphrasis has to be devolved into a straightforward and deliberated way to demonstrate the contents of the source in a loyal manner as much as possible so as to have the ability of shifting ekphrasis from a metaphor into a simile (Becker, 1995:2-3). Becker interests himself in the essence of ekphrasis that supplies an outline for those who desire to explore the notion. He assures that

ekphrasis promotes both the approval of the impression that readers are spectators and the realization of the describer who produces such impression (1995:35). Through containing the pictorial's feelings the impression has not been actually inoperative but to some extent colored (1995:29). For him, there is no discriminate kind of poetry that is visual, and that there is no type of poetry that is fully unique or distinguished in terms of its poetics. Since the term under scrutiny is capable of being more prevalent or easily stretched to responding modes, it might be critically and theoretically safe to reagrd any poem that is dealing with the visual and represented to be ekphrastic. Therefore, ekphrastic limitation ought to be mimetically, descriptively, and representationally controlled (1995:44).

As a consequence, as Becker, Marin, and the abovementioned theoreticians show, ekphrasis is indeed a problematic idiom during the modern and contemporary epochs more than being a system of rhetorics; that is, plainly, realized as an exhaustive means of depiction. This alteration has created the term to mount to the status of being a fundamental artistic instrument which is applied by glorious poets.

2.1.4 Functions of Ekphrasis

Various writers offer a detailed account of the functions of ekphrastic writing from classical Greece to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It is a concept rendering back to the ancient world to refer to a tool that is mainly functioning as a means delineated by poets to describe or write poems about the extraordinary works of art that are surrounding them. The traditional function of ekphrasis is considered as a literary

description of weapons, clothes buildings and works of art. Since the famous notion of Simonides in which he asserts that painting is mute poetry, and that poetry is a painting but it is endowed with the ability to speak, and Horace's celebrated phrase "ut picture poesis" through which he focuses on the correspondence and similarity between painting and poetry, ekphrasis is seen as one of the most significant tools that are employed in inter-artistic comparison of poetry and the visual arts. Therefore, in his *Dialogo della Pittura*, Ludovico Dolce concentrates on the suggestion that the primary purpose of ekphrasis is to afford the gift of seeing and hearing spectators and readers alike (Parry, 1989:469).

In the classic period (5th and 4th centuries BC), ekphrasis aims to persuade, to arouse the emotions, stimulate recollection, and to charm the audience to a particular subject fittingly. In the rhetoric theory and practices of those times, ekphrasis has not been limited only to poetry, but it was involved in every usage of speech through which writers tried to invite listeners to visualize scenery, and such scenery might be dealing with landscapes, people, beasts, combats, as well as visual arts (Webb, 2009:3). It functions as a demonstrative tool for imaginary purposes; to give a voice to a silent object and to portray a visual thing. In other words, it is considered as the act of describing images into words. Old ekphrasis tries to combine word and image, and to integrate reader and viewer. It is, therefore, an efficient device that is enabling poets, readers and audience to figure out the correlation which is connecting the visual to the verbal (Krieger, 1992).

Decidedly, the term ekphrasis is seen as a rhetorical technique; often used to write literature. As mentioned before, Himerius (ca. 315-86), a Greek rhetorician and sophist, explicates ekphrasis through his remark "I will draw this for you with words and will make your ears serve as eyes" (qtd. in Baldwin, 1928:18); is an attempt to represent reality through simulation. It is not only descriptive form, but also a form of storytelling of everything that is visibly created (Baldwin, 1928:18). Baldwin asserts that ekphrasis indicates to the effort to simulate and to use words to describe either a factual or fictitious thing that is derived from visual arts, usually from a canvas or a sculpture.

In this respect, ekphrasis is related to poetry through Horace's famous phrase "ut pictura poesis"; which proposed that poetry participated the characteristics of painting. This type of writing is practiced by ancient writers for different tasks ad functions. For example, the depiction of Achilles' shield by Homer in his epic poem the *Iliad* is the precocious and the ultimate renowned model of artistic ekphrasis. The speaker accurately depicts the shield of Achilles in nearly 150 poetic lines where the function of ekphrasis is to enable audience to have the capability and inspiration of re-imagining that shield via the delineation of their minds' eyes. Lessing (1962:126) praises Homer's depiction of Achilles' shield, because Homer recounts the method of its performance and thus, does not stall the narrative. The narrative of how Hephaestus created Achilles' shield has often been explicated as a code for the shaping of poem itself; "each being the product of shaping skill" (Ford, 2002:116).

Noticeably, the famous ekphrastic depiction made by Homer concerning the sceneries that are focusing on Achilles' shield is an attempt to produce an animate image with his words. Via describing that shield, the poem speaks, and a picture is produced. It enables the listener to envision a dynamic image. So, the poet paints with his words. Homer tries to produce a spirited depiction with his words. Since Homer wants to make his poem speaks when he describes the shield, a picture is created. Homer allows his listeners to visualize a particular, powerful image. Then, it is confirmed that ekphrasis functions as a type of language that is principally descriptive, in order to bring to the eyes of the audience what is obviously pictured. It is an ekphrasis of activities, individuals, periods of time, proceedings, historical events and locations (Patillon and Bolognesi, 1997:66).

Like Homer, Virgil, one of the ancient Roman poets in the Augustan period, describes ekphrastically the sculptures which are found in Juno's temple in his *Aeneid* in an influential style (McGregor, 2003:25). Nevertheless, Lessing comments on Virgil's use of ekphrasis when Aeneas views the paintings of Troy on the walls of Juno's Temple as "already- completed state" (1962:126). Lessing states that the depiction of Aeneas' shield is functioning as, in consequence, an interpolation, merely designed to flatter the national pride of the Roman people. It is a foreign stream turned by the poet into his main river to make the latter more stirring (1962:128).

In the middle Ages, some scholars consider ekphrasis as digression that renders the purpose of decoration. On the other hand, others have

observed middle Ages' function of ekphrasis to be, merely, a persistence of classical exercise of that trope. Ekphrastic poets are towed to "portraiture, landscape, pictures of people in a landscape, and still-lifes, and somewhat less to sculpture" (Spiegelman, 2005:8). In this way, Hagstrum (1958) identifies the effect of classical forms on scholars' descriptions of visual art, especially the employment of allegorizing and storytelling through descriptions of wall paintings in temples and palaces. He shows that ekphrasis is an organized instructive practice of employing language to make such powerful visual depictions through which an object is placed in front of the inner eye reader and listener; it is a form of vivid evocation. He determines the function of his employment of ekphrasis to be that particular characteristic of affording the silent art matter with the gift of speech and voice (1958:34).

Likewise, in a manner conforming to Carruthers (1990) who, in her work on medieval arts of memory, displays that medieval ekphrasis is, frequently, associated with descriptions of artifacts and painted stories that captured the audience's memory and contemplation on themes in a text. Memories are permanently stocked in the shape of images (Carruthers, 1990:16). Therefore, ekphrasis is one of the rhetorical techniques that promote reminiscence of images. The aim of medieval ekphrasis was not mimesis, despite its combination of mimetic elements (Barbetti, 2011:8-9). Also, she proclaims that ekphrasis demonstrates the perceptions of the speaker and alternatively leads the mind through meditation.

The Oxford Companion to Western Art (2001) limits Ekphrasis's function as a Greek rhetorical technique for a kind of description. Some critics noted that the old mission of ekphrasis, which is being an elaborated remark or depiction, was simply didactive, scholastic and rhetorical (Marsico and Capa, 2009:214; Karwoska, 2002:45; Piltz and Astrom, 1998:50-51; Becker, 1995:2). Traditionally, *Progymnasmata* which are a group of preliminary rhetorical practices, that started in ancient Greece and expanded during the Roman Empire, treat ekphrasis as one of these preceding rhetorical practices. This ancient practice of ekphrasis was adopted by scholars to assist them to educate their students on the way of recounting proceedings and the art of eloquent speech. Also, it is employed to help teachers or other more experienced readers to remember what they have read (Carruthers, 1998:180). This supports Karwoska's (2002:45-46) view as she considers that ekphrasis is perhaps used to sustain a fresh memory. For example, when counsellors, vastly, used it in courts for the defense to persuade the juries about their clients' innocence.

Thereby, ekphrasis is of greatly occupied significance in English literature. It is an outcome of the human desire to respond to what artists experience visually. Hollander (1995:32) points out that the gazer's existence to report what is perceived by him, to diversely describe what is available to be watched, is shaping a certain specific time of experience. In fact, this gazer is inspired by the artwork; it stirs his feelings and evokes contemplations. Encounters like these frequently seek some sort of means of expression. The gazer acts nearly as an interpreter, transforming pictures into words; to put what is viewed by him into

speech. Ekphrastic writers deal with the images they see in a sensory and imaginative language. Accordingly, ekphrastic works have been inventive investigations, subjective contemplations and interferences, and codes of legacy (Hirsch, 1994:9). Afterwards, poets write ekphrasis to make symbols for massive subjects. While, more recurrently, poets of modern and contemporary epochs, compose their ekphrastic poems with the function of art for the sake of art.

Honestly, ekphrasis has become always adopted by poets to find the complexities of the visual – verbal interrelationship in its modern sense. Through ekphrasis, writers explore and compare the ways in which both a verbal and visual art are worked out and complicated putting in their minds the aim of figuring out the outgrowth of an ekphrastic discourse amidst poetry and painting. Braida and Prieri (2003:18) indicate that it is the function of ekphrasis to examine the mutual, intrinsic relations between image and word, and the persistent inheritance of ekphrastic convention. Ekphrasis is nothing but the art of putting into words the works of art, of transforming into a verbal representation something that belongs to the visual representation (Heffernan, 1993:3). Ekphrasis is considered by *The Dictionary of Literary Rhetorical Terms* as an expanded and elaborated artistic depiction of everything, actual or fictional which is most generally applied to indicate the depiction of an image during a narration, and thus to create a prevalent shape of a meta narrative text.

Ekphrasis can function as a useful and adequate helpful device to find out numerous matters at the core of the correlation between the

visual and the verbal; matters that are focal to the hybrid trait of the poetry as well as its discourse. Ekprasis indicates to all what is visible and what is explicit. It is known that the descriptive mode, practices an entire function within the current and general contexts of the literary work, and within the cultural and social settings in which the text is found. Scott (1991:315) declares that ekphrasis is serving the function of any depiction that provokes a thing, a person or a place visually before the mind's eye.

As well, Sumi (2004:7) considers that the function of ekphrasis is predominantly the accurate depiction in order to fulfill portrayal clarity in the mental eye of the listener. Ekphrasis depends upon describing, in the utmost possible degree of clarity, a visual artwork or any other object so as to submit it to the eye of the audience (Robillard, Jongeneel, 1998:IX). Ekphrasis as a rhetorical convention affects upon the audience as a certain kind of speech with illustrative traits that is capable of clearly placing the the described object in front of our eyes (Race, 1993:320). Heffernan (1993:2) displays that there is not any other term which can replace the formula of literature that is chosen by ekphrasis due to its characteristic features of complication, liveliness and amazing survival which causes it to be recognized in a comprehensive and widespread manner.

Certainly, ekphrasis is delineated by writers to function as a rhetorical tool from classical antiquity through contemporary literature. So, it has been the subject of intensive academic examination by the 1980s, as part of cultural theory's emergent 'visual turn' and its inseparable condensation upon image-text relations. Furthermore, Becker

(1995:150) displays that by means of imagery, ekphrasis will be able to trigger the absent existent; and then it will simultaneously rearrange the absent and present images. Ekphrasis, as well, is capable of communicating via both the verbal and the visual. It assigns pictorial substance verbally so as to exemplify the image which is adopted to the text and its spectators by fascinating them in an attempt to turn readers into viewers (ibid.:152).

As aforementioned, ekphrasis is applied to point to writings of prose and poetry which concentrate on visual artworks. Becker (1995:5) notes that ekphrasis functions as an emblem which is signifying the essential aim of poetry, and is laboring to verbally constitute the physical existence, the normal correspondence to what it does refer to, and the static moment characterizing visual arts. Ekphrasis is delineated by authors with the aim of speaking about visual artworks in their narrative and poetic compositions in an attempt to limit the urge to conquer the verbal sign haphazardness by means of seeking the natural sign which is located in visual arts (Krieger, 1992:12-13). Ultimately, the notion of ekphrasis can be matched with "textualized images", in an effort "to equal in language the natural quality of the artwork" (Robillard, Jongeneel, 1998: IX). Ekphrasis is "a way to put into question the pictorial limits of the function of words in poetry" (Krieger, 1992:6).

According to Spitzer (1962:72), ekphrasis is rebuilding a systematic motto that should be new and is generated by means of words. Unlike Hagstrum, Spitzer and Krieger show that the main functions of ekphrasis are to emulate visual artworks, as well as to enable the mute

picture to speak. Furthermore, Scott (1991:303) finds that its function is to manifest power and supremacy. Scott mentions that ekphrasis has taken over as the visual side of the correlation in an effort to alter and overcome the ekphrastic object of the painting. As for Verdonk (2001:231), he determines that the term functions as a combination and connection of two modes of signs and a secondary type of poetry that is dealing with factual or imagined artworks. Moreover, Jakobson says that ekphrasis holds two functions: the conventional one which included the illustration of a visional artwork, and a writing technique that invades the entire text and simulates the traits of the painting for the sake of painting with words (Jakobson, 2002:114).

Since the *Ut Picture Poesis* metaphor was most widely and fruitfully exerted during the twentieth- century, ekphrastic writings have become a literary aspect that integrates painting with poetry. Hollander (1995) determines the poetic genre of ekphrasis as poems dealing with mute artworks while putting into his mind poetic compositions which are focusing on and dealing with fictitious artworks or actual constructions and monuments. Aside from that, Spitzer (1967:72) shows that ekphrasis is having the function of the metrical depiction of a painting or statuary artwork. Whereas Bruhn (2000:15) defines its function as a portrayal of an artwork in different poetic patterns. Cheeke (2008:2) elaborates this idea of ekphrasis as "poems about paintings". Thus, ekphrasis is a fully-formed and an exquisite artistic instrument for poets within all periods. Ekphrasis includes all forms of narrativity of the visual. Krieger (1992:265-6) shows that the function of ekphrasis is to halt and freeze the narrative stream for the sake of unfolding the ekphrastic object, an

artistic object which stands for the unmoving universe of plastic relevance that has to be composed upon the moving universe of literature aiming at 'freezing' it. So, ekphrasis is functioning as the 'voice' of the artwork.

Widely, in the introduction of the book which is entitled *Museum of Words-The Poetics of Ekphrasis from Homer to Ashbery* in 1993, a few reasons are presented by Heffernan, reasons that increased his interest in the study of ekphrasis. For him, it arouses the strength of the mute picture to afford it with a rival power of language (Heffernan, 1993:1). In Heffernan's opinion, ekphrasis is formed as a rhetorical convention to represent any matter, created or natural, and also to reconstruct the visual image by means of words. He describes ekphrasis as "both a miracle and a mirage". It is considered miraculous because the momentary visual image sounds like having the power of freezing the poetic language it is described through; yet still, it is also a mirage, in view of the fact that, only the delusion of such an unattainable image may be submitted by the language of the poem (ibid.:2). Heffernan suggests that the function of practicing ekphrasis is like a process of demonstrating representation itself, therefore, it ought to become representational (ibid.:4). Ekphrasis introduces a representational function of art and poetry, since the narrative responses to the pictorial products (Heffernan, 1993:5).

The purpose of ekphrasis is to use an artistic language when trying to turn into words a picture or a sculpture. It also mediates this relationship between a poem and a work of art, thus, being able to establish an interconnection between literature and visual arts. Word and

image can function as vehicles for meaning. According to Mitchell (1994:5) all known types of media are heterogeneous, and also all kinds of representation are mixed, and, as a result, there are no verbal or visual arts which are completely independent. The ekphrastic term is a symbolic discipline which is determining how efficient is the correlation between works of literature and visual art. In Calderwood's view, the poet himself seeks to "find an eloquence to account for the forms his words seek to turn them into, and has done well to turn to metaphors for the spatial arts" (Calderwood, 1968:325).

In the modern and contemporary literary form, ekphrasis is used to assign written works, particularly poems that handle artworks like paintings. Heffernan emphasizes that ekphrastic writing activates the image by technique of a narrative, whether such writing starts as "unadorned description" or not (Langas, 2010:82). Heffernan reflects ekphrasis as a sort of competition between image and word. The problem of the text depends on manifesting the power of an image; since ekphrasis simultaneously keeps this power under control (ibid.). Heffernan, also, reports that there is a magnificent difference between classical and contemporary ekphrasis. While classical writers endeavor to imitate an artwork through words, modernist writers do not involve this aspect into consideration. The work of art is read by the poet textually and explicates its aesthetics in an accurate endeavor to clear the content and the shape of the artwork, both verbally and visually. Therefore, "this consciously mimetic approach reflects a sense of responsibility to which modern ekphrasis no longer subscribes" (ibid.:83).

This tendency towards the revival of ekphrasis is an attempt to join painting with poetry in its widest sense. Ekphrasis has become continuously used by poets to find out the complexities of the visual-verbal relationship. Twentieth-century modernist and contemporary English poetry has turned, extremely, into two of the literary periods in which ekphrastic writings are manifested most widely and fruitfully. Since Apollinaire's *calligrammes* introduced the notion of visual poetry; a notion that transforming the style of approaching a poem, through paying due attention to the tangible premises of the poem. Therefore, visual poetry depends upon "the autonomy of the text, on its integrity as an expressive form" (Bohn, 1986:67).

Obviously, considerable movements like pound's imagism and Victorian poetry start to reach a climax through the new correlation that is associating visual artworks to poetry. Victorian authors aimed at allowing the reader to feel as if he is a participant in the visual practice. Presently, poetry begins to rely on those considerable movements that deserted emblematic painting for the ways of abstraction: "the poetry of the modernist avant garde shows a filial relationship with abstract art, especially with cubist painting" (patea, 2011:272). Some modern and contemporary poets such as William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, Mark Doty and Jorie Graham recognize the significance of modern art as a primary authority in their poetry. They were accurate gallery-goers, who have depended on relations with artists of the New York pictorial and photographic avant-garde. Henceforward, they wrote enormous essays and poems on art works. So, they interpret a poetic tendency which is regarded characteristic of English Modernism and

Postmodernism, an orientation which is also a distinctive feature of the Modernist poets like Eliot and Pound, who also acknowledge the importance of modern art for their own poetry.

Factually, the image which is formulated in ekphrastic poetry is considerably worthy to all poets for functioning as an echo of their mode of creating images and as a useful mirror to examine the self as image-maker. That rhetorical shape is always a significant category of literature and, in an astonishing and unexpected turning point, art creators started to to form visual artworks which depend upon composed depictions of art which did never exist. Moreover, Ricoeur disputes that spectators' participation in ekphrastic interrelation happens through the two phases of "divestiture and appropriation." The first phase is based on the admittance of the delusion and with the visual glamor, whereas the latter phase deals with the attention specified to the working delusion in the artwork as well as its self-awareness (Ricoeur, 1981:182-193).

More generally, ekphrasis has come to serve the function of being a tendency of convoying the ekphrastic object experience to a reader or listener by means of particularly elaborated expressive writing. It can, thus, function as a way of sharing the personal feelings of both painter and poet with readers who have never come across the works under scrutiny. Owing to its complication, ekphrasis has become a constant confrontation. It is variously dealt with as a reflection of a written work, a reflection in the written work, and/or an extra method of foreshadowing or expanding the narrative (Heffernan, 1993:2). Jointly, art and poetry address audiences' and readers' illusions via the strength and power of

expressed images. Numerous artists and writers remarked on the correspondence of these two expression modes up to the extent that critic Heard (1989:65) sees that language used by poets in ekphrastic poetry serves as their paint.

2.2 Literature Review

Little has been written on the notion of ekphrasis in general and on its power in modern and contemporary English poetry in particular. Extraordinarily, there have been merely a few deliberated hypothetical studies on the evolution of ekphrasis as an artistic technique. Many arguments and inspections are promoted about the quality, function and significance of ekphrasis, but, to the time being, no academic or theoretical studies have been made regarding its power in both modern and contemporary English poetry despite the fact that further critical and theoretical notions are increased during modern and postmodern literature and critical theory.

By reviving the argument dealing with painting/language, the studies which are concentrating on the interrelationship that is occurring between word and image have become widely prevalent; at least among some of the academic circles. Ekphrasis has been uncovered thanks to the outstanding works of art critics, theoreticians and scholars like Jean Hagstrum, James Heffernan, John Hollander, Murray Krieger, Peter Wagner, and W.J.T. Mitchell among others. They have revisited, commented and theorized on that old tradition "ekphrasis". As a result of this, there are studies that include their contributions to the ekphrasis term in Europe and America. Nevertheless, these studies mainly focused on the

literary issues and technical roles in both societies. The ekphrasis term is considered among these issues which are focused on by these studies.

For example, the theoretical presumptions which are stated by Mitchell in his famous study *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* in 1986; have been remarkable propositions that are included in critical and theoretical studies dealing with ekphrasis in the course of the twentieth century. The author approaches the domination of the image as a shift in terms of the pictorial level. This study tries to find new ways of possessing the human environment by an "image-driven culture" (Mitchell, 1986:150), as well as promoting a debate on the visual-verbal correlation which is always of impact on the suggestions and propositions found in ekphrasis based studies. Furthermore, Mitchell is also interested in the paragone which dismisses any fundamental variance to be found between painting and poetry as a result of the fact that they share similar depictive spaces of the represented ekphrastic objects (cited in Wagner, 1996:32).

Additionally, another important critic who contributes, heavily, to the ekphrastic studies is the renowned James Heffernan by means of his prominent publication *Museum of Words: The Poetics of Ekphrasis from Homer to Ashbery* in 1993. It mainly discusses the features and characterists of ekphrastic writings and how to establish ekphrasis as a gazing issue. It also tries to find new ways to survey the relationship which is connecting words and images from the perception of a museum goer Heffernan (1993:2). This study demonstrates a new modern formation of ekphrasis which is more completely distinctive and original

in its building and material than classical examples of ekphrasis. For Heffernan, ekphrasis is "intensely paragonal," positing a connection rivalry that rotates around the domination struggle which is practiced by the dichotomies of word and image, the verbal and the visual, poetry and art (ibid.:1).

Furthermore, comes Hollander's remarkable 1995 publication entitled *The Gazer's Spirit: Poems Speaking to Silent Works of Art.* In the course of this study, the author discriminates between two distinct types of ekphrasis, that is to say, actual and notional ekphrasis, which is adopted by the majority, if not all, of writers and poets composing on ekphrasis. For him, this distinction of actual and notional modes of ekphrasis is a natural consequence of building museums which expanded the notion and sense of protection and conservation. This study, in its commentaries and arguments on ekphrastic studies, principally focused on the poetry of Homer during the depiction of the Achilles's Shield as well as Hesiod's representation of the Shield of Hercules.

Likewise, Andrew Becker, in his influential 1995 study which is carrying the title *The Shield of Achilles and the Poetics of Ekphrasis*, sums up the major characteristic features that are attributed to the term. He depicts that ekphrasis is capable of inspiring and driving poets and painters as well as readers and audience to consider that representation is the function of the correlations between the describer and the viewer which are completing each other (Becker, 1995:35). In this way, he adds that ekphrasis is summoning readers and viewers to think of their responses to depictions which are visual, and after that to correspondingly

meditate on their responses to the literary forms of demonstration (1995:37-8). He continues to assure that the term ekphrasis keeps on reminding readers, listeners and audience alike of the fact that it has the power of representing and depicting human experiences, accompanied by a power to turn the visual into verbal, to shift images into words, and to change painting into poetry. This communication in which the dynamic correlation between images that are visual and their visual representations, and also in which the correlation between these same images and textual depictions are recognized and established thanks to ekphrastic poetry. It is worth mentioning that such visual images are capable of creating an essential part in ekphrastic formation (Becker, 1995:57).

Furthermore, Wagner, in his considerable study which is published in 1996 under the title *Icons-Texts-Iconotexts: Essays on Ekphrasis and Intermediality*, marks that it is theoretically and critically acceptable to consider ekphrasis to be the communication and interaction occurring between the arts, since expressive media make creative use of imagery and symbolism (Wagner, 1996:5). Art and poetry evoke their vision within a chosen format but while painting uses colour, line and form to conjure images, poetry uses words. The fact that it is possible to use terminology such as metaphor, allusion, image, collage, suggestion, colour and tone in both cases emphasizes similarities. When holding out an intertextual reading, Wagner puts poetic texts as connections or structures, in which the utmost enjoyable points are named allusions which combine other texts; it is actually an attempt to "open up an

endless universe… may be considered as archeological material, as textual layers," (1996:282).

Thus, Wagner notes that the poem invokes other poems and other paintings and it is these imaginations that make the "networks" of sense for a tapestry that concludes together verbal and visual conversation, a verse presentation of earlier visual and verbal "pretexts" (1996:302). To explain this Wagner holds out an elaborated, archaeological examination of Oscar Wilde's poem "Impression du Matin" where the title of the poem is regarded as both intertextual and intratextual (1996:284). Demonstration demands codes of recognition, reception and reading, and in this way, it is possible to expose deliberate and/or unintended similarities and differences between poetry and painting (Wagner, 1996: 35).

Another publication pinpointing the study of ekphrasis is, *Past Looking: Historical Imagination and the Rhetoric of the Image* (1996), by the renowned American art historian Michael Ann Holly. Holly often asserts that historical interpretation of the pictorial art is always the intellectual product of a dynamic exchange between past and present. Recent theory emphasizes the subjectivity of the historian and the ways in which any interpretation betrays the presence of an interpreter. Yet still, in this book, Holly challenges this view by arguing that historical objects of representational art are actively engaged in prefiguring the kinds of histories that can be written about them. She directs her attention to early modern works of visual art and their rhetorical roles in legislating the kind of tales told about them by a few classic cultural commentaries of

the nineteenth and twentieth centuries like; Burkhardt's synchronic vision of the Italian Renaissance, W. Lfflin's exemplification of the Baroque, Schapiro's and Freud's dispute over the meanings of Leonardo da Vinci's art, and Panofsky's exegesis of the disguised symbolism of Northern Renaissance painting.

Moreover, a specific study of ekphrastic practice in Herman Melville's works is carried by Douglas Robillard in his 1996 study, *Melville and the Visual Arts: Ionian Form, Venetian Tint*. In his study, Robillard highlights Melville's allusions to works of art which elaborate his poems and novels. In this study, Melville's delineation of the art analogy as a literary technique is traced, as well as the influence of his predecessors and contemporaries and how his sense of form was instructed by design in works of art. In addition to this, Robillard comments on the fact that Melville's understanding of Lessing's notions about the relation between poetry and painting resulting from ekphrasis led him to feel secure in pursuing the venture of making speaking pictures.

Another ekphrastic study of a specific writer is Neruda's *Ekphrastic Experience: Mural Art and Canto General* (1999) by Hugo Mendez-Ramirez. This study of Neruda's Canto General, which is set against a background of Mexican rural art, combines a rigorous strucutralist approach to the analysis of poetry and painting, with new distinctions of ekphrastic poetry and recent philosophical debates about logocentrism and oculocentrism. After a careful and detailed scrutiny of Neruda's ekphrastic writings during his years as Chilean consul in Mexico (1940-

1943), Mendez-Ramirez confirms that it is during this period that Neruda's poetic expression develops and achieves maturity, and his perspective widens from personal and local concerns to incorporate continental topics. According to Mendez-Ramirez, the Mexican mural movement which was at its climax during Neruda's stay in Mexico, was key point in the development of his ekphrastic poetry.

Ellen Spolsky's interesting study, *Iconotropism: Turning toward Pictures* (2004), is focusing on the essence of ekphrasis which is considered to be the first collection of word and image studies set within the perception of the cognitive study of interpretation. Spolsky's assertion that pictures and texts arise from the biological as well as the social interaction of individual artists, viewers, and readers with their environments is represented by the selection of original essays ranging from studies of Raphael, Titian, and Carracci to an emblematic portrait by Georgia O'Keeffe, and to drawings regained from German concentration campus. To Spolsky, it is this collection that begins the work of investigating what can be learned about the interpretation of pictures within their historical contexts when an innate iconotropism, or hunger for what can be known from pictures, is assumed.

A critical scrutiny of ekphrasis in Miguel De Cervantes' famous novel *Don Quixote* is published by Fredric A. De Armas in his study which is entitled, *Ekphrasis in the Age of Cervantes* (2005). This volume focuses on ekphrasis as being one of the many ancient techniques that shift or become problematized during the Renaissance and the Baroque periods. De Armas finds out that it is through the lens of experimentation

with the technique of ekphrasis that one can view Cervantes' texts and that *Don Quixote* can be studied through the constant contamination and agony between the verbal and the visual arts. De Armas also shows that prevalent in criticism of *Don Quixote* are notions of a self-conscious author, self-reflexivity, and the development of an active reader. After a careful reading and analysis of the novel, he states that it shows the concept of imitation, key to the idea of auctoritas which means the reliance on classical, biblical, and church authorities for the acquisition of wisdom, is alive and well.

In 2005, Roberta White published a study on the significance of ekphrasis in novels written by women writers. It carried the title *A Studio of Ones' Own: Fictional Women Painters and the Art of Fiction*. The study provides a critical study of the portrayal of women artists in nineteenth and twentieth century English novels, including British, American, Irish, and Canadian women writers. This study traces the gradual progression from amateur salon painters in the novels of Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, and others, to the serious professional painters depicted by contemporary fiction writers like Margaret Atwood, Mary Gordon, and A.S. Byatt. In her book, White is convinced that in fiction as in history, the woman artist's working space enlarges through time from a portfolio in a cupboard to a studio or atelier where work may be completed and prepared for sale or exhibition. This working space is a measure of the claim that the artist makes upon the world. She also stated that novels portraying women artists and their art invariably dramatize the risks women experience when they begin to work seriously as painters.

Furthermore, a group of essays which deal with the relation between word and image in general and ekphrasis in particular is compiled and published by Rui Homem and Maria Lambert in 2006 under the title *Writing and Seeing: Essays on Word and Image*. The essays in this study are informed by a variety of theoretical assumptions and critical methodologies, but they all share an interest in the connections between word and image in a variety of media. This uniting basis safeguards the central position of the collection of essays in the current critical context on ekphrasis, defined as it is by ways of reading that are based on a relational nexus. The intertextual, the intermedial, the intersemiotic are indeed foregrounded and combined in these essays, conceptually as much as in the critical practices which are favored by the various contributors in this book. Moreover, studies of literature in its relation to pictorial genres enjoy a relative prominence in this publication, but the range of media and approaches considered is broad enough to include photography, film, video, television, comic strips, animated films, public art, and material culture.

A very remarkable and innovative study of ekphrastic poetry is conducted by Jane Hedley, Nick Halpern, and Willard Spiegelman in 2009. These famous critics gave their publication the title; *In the Frame: Women's Ekphrastic Poetry from Marianne Moore to Susan Wheeler*. This study comprises of sixteen essays by various poets and critics focusing on poetic ekphrasis. The authors of these essays have a dual purpose; firstly, to call attention to the contribution of women poets to this significant genre of poetic composition and, secondly, to re-think ekphrastic poetry's motives and purposes. The poems discussed in this

study raise important questions, from a viewpoint that is often, but not always, gender-inflected concerning how art is made and displayed, experienced and valued, celebrated and commodified.

Additionally, each of the women poets discussed in this study, whether accosting, admiring, or simply paying close attention to works of art whose silent medium is paint or clay or stone is speaking out on behalf of their her their own aesthetic, political, and/or psychological commitments with particular force and clarity. In writing about someone else's art, these women poets are engaged concurrently and self-consciously with creation and interpretation, making and viewing, seeing and saying.

A study which focuses mainly on ekphrastic works in Spanish drama is published in 2010 by Elizabeth Drumm under the title, *Painting on Stage: Visual Art in Twentieth Century Spanish Theater*. This study is considered the first full length study of image-text relations in the twentieth century Spanish plays. In her publication, Drumm examines a series of plays that express the theatrical tension between images and verbal language through their interrogation of the visual artworks. The plays studied in this study, which are written by central twentieth century Spanish dramatists, stage a painting or series of paintings which then lead to a central tension that is predominant in twentieth century theater and plastic art, which is, the tension between visual images and language.

Additionally, *Text and Image in Modern European Culture* published in 2012 deals with the ekphrastic relation between word and image. The study is a collection of essays edited by Natasha Gregorian,

Thomas Baldwin, and Margaret Rigaud-Drayton. The essays in this study are transnational and interdisciplinary in their scope. Employing a range of original comparative approaches to reevaluate and challenge traditional boundaries between forms of art and national cultures. Following the tenets of comparative cultural studies, the essays presented in this study explore international creative dialogues between writers and visual artists, ekphrasis in literature, literature and design, hybrid texts, as well as text and image relations under the impact of modern technologies. The discussions presented in this publication include pivotal fin de siècle, modernist, and postmodernist works and movements in Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, and Spain.

More to the point, an ekphrastic study concentrating on the documentary diversity in the works of the twentieth century American poet, Muriel Rukeyser is published in 2013 by Catherine Gander carrying the title, *Muriel Rukeyser and Documentary: The Poetics of Connection*. This study explores the multiple avenues of her poetics of connection to reveal a profound engagement with the equally intertextual documentary genre. Moreover, this study focuses mainly on previously ignored photo narratives, poetry, prose and archival material and shows an enduring conversation between the poet's relational aesthetics and the similar interdisciplinary and creative approach to the world which is provided by her documentaries. Bearing in mind the sources of documentary in Rukeyser's works, this study delivers perception into her guiding poetic principles, situating her as a vital figure in the history of twentieth century American literature and culture, and a s a pioneering personality in the development of American studies.

Furthermore, in the year 2013, Leonard Barkan published his views on ekphrasis in a study carrying the title, *Mute Poetry, Speaking Pictures*. In this study, the author explores the ambiguous history of the relation between words and pictures, focusing on the period from antiquity to the Renaissance but offering insights that also have much to say about modern art and literature. Moreover, Barkan sheds more light on the notion that the apparent clarity of ekphrastic practices quickly leads to confusion about what properties of pictures are being urged upon poets or how pictorial qualities can be converted into poetical ones.

According to Barkan in this study, the history of comparing and contrasting poetry and painting turns out to be partly a story of attempts to promote one medium at the expense of the other. At the same time, analogies between word and image have enabled writers and painters to think about and practice their craft. Ultimately, Barkan argues, this dialogue is an expression of desire in which the poet longs for the direct sensuousness of painting, whereas the painter yearns for the rich signification of language.

Last but not the least, Ethan Knapp has published his notions on ekphrasis in a study entitled, *The Art of Vision: Ekphrasis in Medieval Literature and Culture* (2015). The collection of essays presented in this study offer a major contribution to the study of text-image relations in medieval Europe. Resisting any rigid definition of ekphrasis, this study is committed to reclaiming medieval ekphrasis, which has not only been criticized for its supposed aesthetic narcissism but has also been frequently portrayed as belonging to an epoch when the distinctions

between image and word were far less rigidly drawn. Furthermore, the essays in this study shed light on the entanglements which are suggested and/or rejected by ekphrasis; not only of word and image, but also of sign and thing, stasis and mobility, medieval and early modern, absence and presence, the rhetorical and the visual, thinking and feeling, knowledge and desire, in addition to many more.

Various studies dealt with the notion and practice of the poetics of ekphrasis as is presented in the literature review. Yet still, a research gap is figured out and dealt with in this dissertation. This makes it possible to deal with the power and practice of ekphrastic poetry more comprehensively than ever. In the above-mentioned studies, it is noticed that the authors dealt with the ekphrastic poetry of either one or two poets, either male or female poets only, or poets from one nation only. Therefore, the originality and novelty of this dissertation comes from the fact that it deals with a good number of poets, namely, eight poets. Moreover, the selected ekphrastic poems are composed by both male and female poets which might add more power and originality to this study. Also, this study is not confined to one nation only. Rather the analyzed ekphrastic poems are written by British, American, and Irish poets, which will again make this study richer and more comprehensive than all the studies before.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the research process and its overall approach. It explains the methodology, the research methods, and data collection followed in this study. To achieve the purpose of this study, both the analytical and critical characteristics of research are combined. It is analytical research because it analyzes the term ekphrasis in terms of its definitions and practices at the textual level, and explore the poets' tendencies when it comes to using and delineating the term. Moreover, the research is critical one because it explains the possible reasons and explications which are lurking behind the inclusion of ekphrasis and ekphrastic objects in the poems selected.

3.1 Data Collection

The primary data of this study were collected by analyzing a corpus of poetic texts composed by different and various modern and contemporary poets. These specific poems were intentionally chosen because the present a rich amount of different and varied ekphrastic practices which may pose a challenging task for researchers to indulge in critical investigation of ekphrastic ingredients in them. In addition, the

selected poems are composed by poets of distinct nationalities which is a fact providing the researcher a chance to investigate differences amongst them in tackling the term and its meanings.

Furthermore, the secondary data was customarily collected from the documented secondary sources such as critical books, analyses, articles, journal papers, theses, and websites as background support for this study.

3.2 Research Methods

This study employed literary analysis as a research method. It was the most appropriate method to test and generate hypotheses and to investigate the poets' tendencies when dealing with the ekphrastic term in the selected texts. This method allowed the researcher to scrutinize how each poet decided to illuminate the ekphrastic objects in addition to their implied connotations.

The use of literary analysis as a research method requires multiple sources of data. In order to examine the various poets' strategies when dealing with ekphrasis, and to identify their tendencies to delineate whatsoever possible meanings and notions behind the term.

Choosing this method enabled the researcher to discover whether there were differences in the chosen poets' tendencies over time

(modern-contemporary), and whether this variation in their delineation of the term is spontaneous or pushed up by some certain justification. Moreover, this research method enabled the researcher to decide whether poets were adopting the ekphrastic technique to enhance or to confront the original art, that is, painting.

3.3 Corpus-based Literature Studies

Baker (1995:225) defined corpus as a collection of writings by a specific author or authors. Generally, the advantage of a corpus-based approach is that it provides researchers with empirical data which enable them to make objective rather than subjective or intuitive statements about the topic under study. Additionally, the corpus-based approach enables the researcher to answer the research questions, investigate specific phenomena which are of interest to the researcher, and provide insight into these phenomena which can enhance future research. Moreover, the findings of the corpus can be used as a source for new hypotheses.

The corpus of this study is a body of poetic texts which are composed in the modern and contemporary periods of English literature by various poets who, in turn, belong to different nationalities. The aim of the study, hence, is to reveal how those different poets tackled ekphrasis in their poems at different times and highlight their tendencies

concerning the term and its implications. Textual-literary analysis is applied to the selected corpus of poems and the findings are used to present the reached to ideas and notions about the use of ekphrasis and ekphrastic objects in modern and contemporary English poetry.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE POWER OF EKPHRASIS IN MODERN ENGLISH POETRY

Chapter Four

The Power of Ekphrasis in Modern English Poetry

4.0 Introduction

In the twentieth century numerous poets created ekphrastic poems, and the main most of those interest factual, not fantastic artworks. Thus, this chapter aims to show how are ekphrasis and the ekphrastic object delineated by modern English poets via their poetry. In other words, this chapter traces and investigates the notable differences among modern poets, composing in English, in their delineation of ekphrasis and the ekphrastic object in their poems. Actually, ekphrastic poems composed in such era differ from Victorian and Romantic ones in their picturing of metaphors drawn from painted portraits.

In other sense, this chapter is an attempt to show how Modern poets are different in their treatment of the ekphrastic object due to differences in their backgrounds. The chapter labors not only to shed light on how the term is used by various poets, but also it tries to dig deep in literary contexts of the different chosen poems to figure out why ekphrasis is powerful and beneficial for the selected poets in this chapter. Therefore, this chapter tries to answer this question: How are ekphrasis and the ekphrastic object delineated by modern poets via their poetry?

During the Modernist movement, some poets recognized the significance of modern art as an essential effect in their poetry. They have been diligent gallery-goers, who preserved connections with painters of the New York illustrated and pictorial avant-garde and who compose

many poems and essays on paintings. Hence, they represent a metrical tendency which is a theorized feature of Modernism; an orientation which is moreover the characteristic feature of the modernist emigrants Pound and Eliot, who also recognize the significance of modernistic art for their versification.

Numerous prominent poets of the twentieth century have presented verses out of this highly ancient but much widespread genre (Francis, 2009: 1). Those poets arrange to compose about visual art pieces. They do not usually choose the greatly known or iconic segment of art but they choose the art that holds something to declare about the undiscovered concepts of the poets. In doing so, through such descriptions of art in the poets' work, poets can create their metaphors as indications of what will happen. The urge to see and to depict is significant to the poem's surface, but is evenly symptomatic of the trends that occur beyond it, and these pictures automatically turn into an allegory for a formerly entombed subject.

Examining the ekphrastic poetry of William Carlos Williams, Hilda Doolittle, W.H. Auden, and Elizabeth Bishop confirms that such poets drastically reconstruct the poetics of ekphrasis by finding their poetic speakers in museums and presenting to their decisive actions of gazing at art on show. In the procedure, their ekphrastic poetry transmits aesthetic significations that challenge the museum's exceptional wordings of societal history. Modernist ekphrasis is to be illustrative of the manners in which the modernist literary scope is comprised in unstable relevance to the shapes of institutional dominion and cultural principal against

which it is always realized. Therefore, this chapter attempts at tackling the power of ekphrasis in the poetry of these four modernist poets.

4.1 William Carlos Williams

William Carlos Williams (1883-1963) is an American poet who is highly interested in imagism and modernization. His poetry has a major cognation with painting; he has a lifelong concern with it. In one of his interviews with Walter Sutton, he declares that it is the painting design and poem styling he has tried to fuse, to create an identical thing (1976:53). His ekphrastic poems are concerned with pictures of Pieter Brueghel the Elder (c.1530-1569) which are supposed to become a touchstone for the realization of his enthusiastic relevance with the visible picture, the artwork. Williams once contemplates of being an artist: "Had it not been that" it is easy to transfer a script "than a wet canvas," the equilibrium may be inclined "the other way" (1954: XIV). Nonetheless, when Walter Sutton asks him a question connecting with Brueghel "for him, what is the convenient of an artwork or what is the relation among the artwork and the poem? Williams responses that it is "kind difficult to popularize" (1976: 53).

According to Williams, poetry is to a definite range a visible painting and has not got a fixed shape within which the terms may become restricted. Actually, Williams is more interested in expanding a personal explanation of the *ut picture poesis*. In his works, Williams is assured of painting's superiority over language and of its ability to contact more efficiently. Williams has been, permanently, yearning for methods of conveying meaning from visual art into language. Bonnie Costello

declares that Williams hates the subordinate density of language utilized as an emblem method. Modern artwork is unmediated, sumptuous. His considerable accomplishment has been to fetch some of its characteristics into poetic writings (1979: 1). Williams recognizes the significance of modern art as an essential influence in his poetry. He is a perseverance gallery-goer, who preserves the relationships with painters of the New York picturesque and graphical innovative. He writes many essays and poems on works of art. Therefore, he illustrates a poetic tendency which is regarded as a feature of American Modernism: an orientation which is the hallmark of the Modernist poets who, furthermore, acknowledge the significance of modernistic painting for their poetic writing.

Williams dedicated *Spring and All* to his painter friend, Charles Demuth. The book in which prose passages containing the author's literary concepts which are differing from poems illustrating these principles, elevates the imagination as the creative force behind all art. Hence, Williams' poem "The Pot of Flowers" (Litz and MacGowen, 1986: 184) is inspired by Demuth's still-life painting which is entitled Tuberoses. In this study, an ekphrastic poem responds to a canvas or a sculpture to which the poet reacts with his idiosyncratic poem. On an initial reading, the referential dimension of Williams' poem is dealing with the empirical reality of a plant. The second, more deep and sophisticated reading, draws the reader's attention to a reality that is observed and then transformed by both the painter and the poet.

According to Williams' notion, all writing draws its sustenance from imagination. As he asserts in his *Spring and All*:

> *First must come the transposition of the faculties to the only world of reality men know: the world of the imagination, wholly our own. From this world alone does the work gain power, its soil the only one whose chemistry is perfect to the purpose.*
>
> *The exaltation of men feel before a work of art is the feeling of reality they draw from it. It sets them up, places a value upon experience. (Williams in Schott, 1970: 129)*

"The Pot of Flowers" comprises the painter's vision of the plant through the creative medium of poetry. Despite the fact that the watercolor which the poet had acquired from the painter affords the general subject matter, there are some similarities and some differences between the painting and the poem. In the initial stanza of the poem, Williams finely denotes that the flowers are colored by a lamplight which brightens certain colors and forms whereas others stay in darkness. The lamp is absent from the painting. The poet mentions a single pot of flowers while in "Tuberoses" there are three.

Williams' ekphrastic poem does not describe the flowers exactly as they are represented in Demuth's watercolor. In a creative use of language, the poem rather describes the effect that the plants' colors, forms and movement in interaction have on the poet. Therefore, the ekphrastic dimension of "The Pot of Flowers" closely interwoven with the creative dimension originating in the poets' imagination. The

beginning stanza of the poem expresses the interplay of the plant's colors and shapes:

Pink confused with white
Flowers and flowers reversed
Take and spill the shaded flame
Darting it back
Into the lamp's horn. (1-5)

The whiteness of the tuberoses, partly tinged with pale pink, contrasts with the darker colors of the leaves, of the pot and the background. Among the darker colors, white expands, thus emphasizing the central elements of the composition. The olive brown and mauve of the leaves, the reddish brown of the terracotta pot, the greyish blackness of the soil and of the background stand in stark opposition to the whiteness of the flowers and to the lighter, more transparent olive green of their stems.

The white flowers absorb the "shaded flame" of the lamp which deepens the interaction of growing whiteness and diminishing darkness. The ascending white tuberoses "shaded" by the dark mauve and brown of the neighboring leaves are indicative of flames fed by the lamplight which they "spill" towards the erect tuberoses, the brighter stems, and the light colored leaves before "darting it back/into the lamp's horn" (4-5). The disparity between the colors is yet further highlighted by the opposing shapes of the full round blossoms and the erect stretched out ones in addition to their descending and ascending positions.

Furthermore, in the poem's second section, the interaction between color, light and movement spreads to a dramatic climax in which the colors come into an enthusiastic movement of rapid circular motion:

Petals aslant darkened with mauve

red where in whorls
petal lays its glow upon petal
round flamegreen throats. (6-9)

This second section starts with a long line with a calm, modest rhythm which serves as to enrich the mild, contemplative quality of the "darkened mauve". The leaning position of the petals stands in distinction to the curved and erect leaves. The darkening impact of the adjacent mauve leaves shades the brightness of the white petals, refraining their crosswise movement.

In the image of redness everywhere around shimmering green stems, the interplay between the colors is joined by the influences of light. The colors quickly move towards brightness, from "darkened mauve" to ardent red and the flaming green of the throats that are rendered luminous by the "shaded flame" of the lamplight. Each petal places its bright redness upon the next petal in "whorls", in winding spirals around the cores of the "flamegreen throats" which, similar to whirlpools, absorb and merge the contrasting energies of extension and shrinkage carried by the white as well as the darker colors. Through the metaphor of the throats implying their stems, the plants are personified.

Moreover, it is in this image and in the following line, "petals radiant with transpiercing light" (10), that the colors become more and more transfused with the light with which the petals are brightened. The colors filled with light from the transition to the final section of the poem:

Petals radiant with transpiercing
Light
Contending
Above
The leaves
Reaching up their modest green
From the pot's rim
And there, wholly dark, the pot
Gay with rough moss. (10-17)

In this last section of the poem, it has a general downward movement which directs readers' eye from the flowers and the petals crosswise towards the leaves and finally the pot. The pale green moss of the pot stands in agreement with the "modest green" of the leaves, much similar to the pink of the flowers in harmony with the mauve of the petals. The pot's round shape suggests "the lamp's horn", the roundedness of the throat-like stems and the petals which enter into a powerful rounded movement of color, light and shape.

Throughout the expressive qualities of the colors and the experience of light, color and motion in interaction, Williams arouses in

the mind of his readers the effect that Demuth's watercolor had on him. As Rudolf Arnheim suggests:

> *In a broader sense, it is the direct expressiveness of all perceptual qualities that allows the artist to convey the effects of the most universal and abstract psycho-physical forces through the presentation of individual, concrete objects and happenings. While painting a pine tree, he can rely on the expression of towering and spreading this tree conveys to the human eye, and thus can span in his work the whole range of existence, from its most general principles to the tangible manifestations of the principles in individual objects. (Arnheim, 1966: 69-70)*

Similarly, in his Spring and All, Williams voices much the same conviction of Arnheim that the artist, by endowing particular objects with expression, gives them a universal meaning. Thus, in "A Pot of Flowers" Williams focuses on the description of the impression that Demuth's perception of the tuberoses makes on him through the flowers' expressive qualities, conveyed by the interaction of their light, color, and form in the poem. Hence, Williams asserts the notion that:

> *In the composition, the artist does exactly what every eye must do with life, fix the particular with the universality of his own personality - Taught by the largeness of his imagination to feel every form which he sees moving within himself, he must prove the truth of this by expression. (Williams in Schott, 1970: 105)*

In Demuth's composition, the tuberoses and their petals are painted with utter accuracy. Pastel colors and their quiet tones are applied very delicately on the full white blossoms. In the "Tuberoses" the leaves on the upper part of the of the painting and the flowers on the left and lowest part of the composition are sketched with a pencil and remain unpainted whereas the tuberoses that reach down diagonally from the pot's edge are marked with pale yellow and pink. This technique in which definite parts of the plant such as the petals or even a complete full blossom are delineated by pencil only and left uncolored, demonstrates that Demuth's canvas does not signify the replica copy of a plant as it is found in nature but is an imitation of a natural plant which encompasses the artist's creative imagination, and his inventive powers.

The arts critic Peter Halter relates this technique of Demuth to the cubist attempt to make the viewers as co-creators of the painting's significance by letting them sort out the spatial locations of the objects in the canvas because Cubists commented that painting is:

> *As a fait pictural, an art work that foregrounded the problems of pictorial representation, such as depth, space, and artistic illusion. By thwarting the viewer's attempt to read and enjoy a painting as one enjoys the view from a window, the Cubists led him or her to experience a work of art as a made thing, highlighting both the interactions between its painted forms and the interactions between art and life. (Halter, 2009: 89)*

In their aesthetics, Charles Demuth and a set of artists close to him tried to attain an artistic equilibrium between objects as they exist in the world and their representation on the pictorial space. A painting is a piece of cloth stretched on a frame and whose flat surface is used for painting. In this "non-illusionary pictorial structure artists explore the tension between three-dimensional forms and the two dimensional picture frame" (Ibid.:83). By intentionally leaving certain parts of the "Tuberoses" unpainted as contrasting to the fully painted majority of the painting, Demuth's technique stresses the tension between the mimetic and the non-mimetic dimensions in art. The viewer cannot entirely recognize all the parts of the painting with the plant that it portrays because the unpainted parts move him from the referential to the self-referential.

From the surface, Demuth's "Tuberoses" might appear to be an objective interpretation of the plant's reality. Yet, the subtle presentation of color on the flowers, and the leaves, on the petals and the pots that are painted with utter precision on the canvas, as well as the deliberate exclusion of color, attract the viewer's attention to ambiguities and contradictions within the composition itself. Therefore, Demuth wants to validate that a totally objective rendering of reality on an artwork is an illusion. Therefore, Demuth's technique is an implicit comment on the artistic process behind the painting's creation, or, in ekphrastic terms, its Energeia. It also points out the transition from the mimetic to the non-mimetic dimensions in the composition by drawing the viewer's attention to the painted and unpainted parts of the canvas to assure that viewers take part in process of artistic creation.

Moreover, in the first stanza of "The Pot of Flowers", Williams alludes to Demuth's technique by the poetic principles of juxtaposition and contrast. The poetic extract "…white/flowers and flowers reversed" (1-2) points to the still-life which stands out against the white paper and to the opposition between the painted flowers and the unachieved, pencil sketched details. In this poem, Williams uses words which denote what they refer to but which cannot fully identify the objects to which they refer because they imply a variant portion of reality and acquire another meaning when they are read in relation to different syntactic units. In the opening lines, "pink confused with white flowers and flowers reversed" (1-2), for example, "white" here may be regarded a noun referring to a color like pink or it may be read as an adjective qualifying "flowers". In a similar sense, in "Petals aslant darkened with mauve" (6), the word "mauve" may be interpreted as a noun or as an adjective modifying "red".

Halter states that this 'syntactic openness' is further emphasized by the blank spaces above and below the line which cause a momentary pause after "mauve". In the ninth line of the poem, the word "round" can be taken as a preposition or as an adjective, like "flamegreen" qualifying "throats". The overlapping between the potential readings of these units creates an apparent linguistic ambiguity which, in turn, foregrounds the arbitrary, systemic nature of language and the self-referential dimension of the words used in the poem. In his Spring and All, Williams points out that "writing deals with words and words only and that all discussions of it deal with single words and their association in groups" (Williams in Schott, 1970: 145).

Hence, Williams "The Pot of Flowers" describes the effect of Demuth's tuberoses, of their forms, colors, and movement in interaction. Along with this description, the poem creates a field of action by means of words and focuses on how words create meaning. The tension between lineation and syntax which creates the poem's ambiguity demonstrates the precariousness of this meaning. By making words connote different things in relation to different syntactic units, the poet affirms their independent reality. This fact makes the poem an ekphrastic one, an artifact, a created object with an identity of its own that is different from the painting as an object, yet, it remains complementary to its reality in the ekphrastic relation.

The main tension underlying William's poetry is his convention of the separate existence of the work of art and his awareness of the artwork as an imitation of reality. For him, the work of art is animated by the same forces that animate nature and with which the reader empathizes:

> *The work of the imagination not "like" anything but transfused with the same forces which transfuse the earth – at least one small part of them. Nature is the hint to the composition not because it is familiar to us and therefore the terms we apply to have a least common denominator quality which gives them currency – but because it possesses the quality of independent existence, of reality which we feel in ourselves. It is not opposed to art but opposed to it. (Ibid.:121)*

Thus, the poem, for Williams, does not copy nature but rather re-creates an independent reality having the same status as that of a natural object. Therefore, a natural plant of tuberoses provides the subject matter of "The Pot of Flowers", a subject expressed by Williams with a creative poetic language made of symbols, metaphors, and homologues. From the linguistic perspective, the poem's symbolic dimension foregrounds the tension between the non-mimetic nature of words that belong to a conventional linguistic system and their mimetic potential through which Williams re-creates the effect of Demuth's painting.

Via the linguistic medium previously referred to as well as other poetic devices, the poet makes the reader to be a co-creator who participates in creating the poem's meaning:

> *With the absence of connectives; absence of punctuation, line breaks that do not correspond to semantic or syntactic units ("red where in whorls") – Williams loads his words to the utmost with energy. ... They have a potential to mean which is activated by the reader, who, in the act of ideation, tries them out as a continuous process of forming images ... the poem defies a definitive closure ... words are free from all previous significance. (Halter, 2009: 89-90)*

Williams' poetic language is not conventional, but fits a theory of which Gerard Genette, in his "Valery and the Poetics of Language", calls Cratylism or, as he calls it, "that great secular myth which wants language

to imitate ideas and, contrary to the precisions of linguistic science, wants signs to be motivated" (Harari, 1979: 360).

In the climatic extract of the poem:

Red where in whorls

Petal lays its glow upon petal

Round flamegreen throats (7-9)

the interplay of light and ecstatic movement is conveyed via symbols. The "flamegreen throats" personify the plants' stems which support and nourish the tuberoses. The contrast taking place between the painted and the unpainted parts in Demuth's canvas is partly mirrored by the creative use of antithesis in Williams' poem. The darkness of the pot in the last stanza is antithetical to the shining, radiant petals and to the lamp's flame. The adverbial phrase "and there" denotes the static position and the calm restfulness of the pot which is antithetical to the "petals aslant" (6) "contending/above/the leaves" (11-13).

Furthermore, in "The Pot of Flowers", Williams returns to poetic homologues which create structural affinities between the poem's images, words, and sounds. These homologues link the stanzas and add to the poem's unity. The "pot/gay with rough moss" (16-17) echoes the "petals radiant with transpiercing light" (10). Halter sheds light on the homologous significance of "gay" and "radiant" due to the fact that "the latter's figurative sense 'bright with happiness' so that the previous ecstatic experience of light and color is echoed in the more subdued but still 'gay' darkness of the pot with its 'rough moss' " (Halter, 2009: 92).

The homologous correspondence between the poem's sounds and its meaning is accomplished by the repetition of some certain sounds which reinforces the meaning expressed by the poetic phrase. The winding movement of the petals in a spiral motion of bright red around the luminous throats is emphasized by the soft alliterative "w" sounds in the phrase "red where in whorls" (7). The numerous "o" sounds which are predominant in the course of the poem; "horn", "glow", "pot", "moss", emphasize the roundness of the lamp's horn as of the throats and the pot.

In "The Pot of Flowers", the creative dimension is expressed mainly through symbolism and poetic homologues. The poem's homologues, in turn, demonstrate the central notion of Cratylism which considers poetry as a harmonious correspondence between sound and meaning. Critic Valery differentiates between quotidian language and poetic language in these terms:

> *Poetry is recognizable by the fact that it tends to reproduce itself within its form. As a result, between form and content, between sound and meaning, between the poem and the state of poetry, a symmetry is manifested that is not in prose. The essential principle of the poetic process – that is, of the conditions of production of the poetic state by the word parole is, to my mind, this harmonic exchange between expression and impression. (Harari, 1979: 369).*

Once more, in *Spring and All*, Williams asserts that "poetry has to do with the crystallization of the imagination, the perfection of new forms as

additions to nature" (Williams in Schott, 1970: 140). Williams' poetry, then, with its form on the page, its unconventional syntax and innovative lineation mirrors the relations of the poet's aesthetics with language and with external reality. For the poet, the creation of new forms in poetry foregrounds the fundamental tension between the state of words as mere words and their referential potential meanings. William's poetry shows that words, tied as they are to a given linguistic system, are the necessary intermediaries between the poem on the page and external reality which, in this case, is represented by Demuth's painting.

The referential power of words in interaction with their non-referential dimension is the poet's version of what Demuth does in his own medium, i.e., painting a still-life in which the object is powerfully evoked yet the colors remain as they are so that the painting refers as much to the objects painted as to itself as a painting, a work of art made of colors, penciled shapes and fully painted forms on a piece of paper. The interaction between the self-referentiality of words as words and their referential powers is William's homage to Demuth's painting and, more specifically, to the tension existing between its painted parts and its unpainted sections.

It is through breaking up the language that Williams is able to create a new language, new forms, a new poetry. As Halter refers to, in William's aesthetics, the contrast replacement of one poetic form by a new one leads to a consciousness of:

> *the difference between signifier and signified, and only such a fresh awareness will enable us to dis-cover or un-*

conceal the deeper connections between art and life. Or, as Williams repeatedly stressed, 'it must not be forgot that we smell, hear, and see with words and words alone, and that with a new language we smell, hear, and see afresh.' (Halter, 2009: 220)

The distinction established between word and world in William's poetry is an illustration of the tension which is mostly occurring between the re-presenting object and the re-presented subject. This difference also specifies the independent status of the artwork which becomes almost as any object in the world. The iconic dimension in "The Pot of Flowers" sets up a part of the poem's mimetic potential. Cratylism stands in direct contrast to the Saussurean theory which considers language as a conventional system of arbitrary signs. According to Cratylism, the mimetic potential of language is the specificity of poetry. In "Valery and the Poetics of Language", Genette refers to the difference between primary and secondary Cratylism as distinguished by Mallarme and later by Valery. According to these poets and critics, primary Cratylism is an inaccessible ideal due to the fact that discursive language "fails to coordinate the signifier and the signified, or the sound and the meaning. While secondary or poetic Cratylism tries to mend the non-mimetic or defective nature of quotidian language. Poetry exists only to remunerate, in other words, to repair and compensate for the defect of languages" (Harari, 1979: 364).

All art is based on the tension between the arbitrariness of its signs, like words which are tied to the systemic state of language and their

mimetic potential through which they try to re-create empirical reality. The poet's ideal is to heal the non-correspondence between empirical reality and the signs which are meant to represent it. Williams uses the iconic dimension in most of the ekphrastic poems in his *Spring and All* in which the form of the poem on the page enacts and reinforces its meaning. The poem's meaning is mimed via the visual form created upon the page by lineation, stanza form or the typographical arrangement of words in a line.

In the introduction to his essay "Iconicity in Literature", Max Nanny defines the semiotic term "iconicity" as "the non-arbitrary formal miming of meaning" (Nanny, 1986: 197). Further on, he refers to Bolinger to explain that the grammatical relations of words or word units can also iconically imitate the relations between the things to which those words refer:

> *Words are conventional and stereotyped units; it has been recently suggested by Bolinger that above the word, iconicity takes a "quantum leap", the syntactic relations between words characteristically imitating relations between the object and events which those words signify. (Ibid.:199)*

In William's "The Pot of Flowers", the iconic dimension is put into evidence by the poet via the typographical arrangement of the words in the final section, through the movement of the eyes down the span of the poem, and, finally via the repetition of certain sounds. The poem's gradual downward movement is stressed by the iconic image of the:

Petals radiant with transpiercing

Light

Contending

Above

The leaves

Reaching up their modest green

From the pot's rim (10-15)

The poem's general downward movement conveyed by the typographical position of the words and of the preposition "above" (12) directs the reader's eye from the flowers and the petals towards the leaves and finally to the pot. But the eye also moves in many different directions before it reaches the pot. Firstly, the eye is made aware of the relative spatial positions of the petals and leaves, then it moves downwards and laterally towards the leaves above the pot's rim before it reaches the pot at the lowest position. The poem, according to William's, is a reflection of "nature's energies" with which the reader's self empathizes. Williams thinks that we, thus, participate in imitating or re-creating nature and "we become nature or discover in ourselves nature's active part" (Halter, 2009: 239).

Additionally, in Williams' ekphrastic poem, the movement of the eye following the words depicts the process of moving from detail to detail and down the page conveys the kinetic impression of seeing. The iconic dimension in the poem is accentuated by the typographical position of the preposition "above" which constitutes a line by itself and is placed

in the middle of the stanza, literally above the leaves. The downward motion of the poem is carried by the icon of the petals just as the eye leaves the "whorls" of redness to move towards the leaves, and, next, to the pot. Hence, "The Pot of Flowers", being an ekphrastic poem, visually represents, in its iconic section, the process of the eye motion by the arrangement of its words. The iconic design, in turn, reflects the tension between the mimetic and the creative dimensions contained in the poem.

Since the significance of a poem relies on the linear nature of language which unfolds in time, the iconic dimension meets the temporal dimension in "The Pot of Flowers". The general downward movement of the eye and the multi-directional displacement of the reader's glance take place in time. The reader's eye movement ah he/she retraces the plant is rendered into the text via the iconicity of the poem. The poem is subject to the linear sequence of words, and, thus, embodies the temporal dimension in its own icon as the reader examines the images in succession. This progression down the page permits the reader to empathize with the poet's self-exploration of the plant down the pot.

The iconicity of the poem allows the empathetic identification between the reader's self and the iconic process is rendered possible because the movement is actually limited by the position of the words on the page:

> *In his "Quest for the Essence of Language", Jakobson demonstrates that it is less the iconic sign per se which resembles the signified than the sign whose relations reflect those of the object(s) referred to. This means that*

> *the icon is basically operative within the relational structures of language; within such oppositions as top – bottom – absence, coherence – fragmentation, and so on. (Ibid.:251)*

From the linguistic point of view, one of the ways in which the icon emphasizes the spatial relations between the objects is through the use of prepositions. In "The Pot of Flowers", the spatial position of the objects is denoted by prepositions like "aslant", "above", "up", "into", "upon", "round" which also correspond to the shape of the throat. The preposition "back" (4) indicates that the lamp is situated behind and slightly above the watercolor. The preposition "above" (12) which takes a line by itself denoting its concreteness, indicates the position of the petals and, by implication, of the leaves below.

The prepositional unit "and there" (16) suggests the static position of the pot at the lowest level. As it was noted earlier, the tension between the mimetic and the non-mimetic dimensions is emphasized by Williams via prepositions in the poem which highlight the iconic descent from top to bottom and, at the same time, belong to a conventional linguistic system. The grammatical function of "above" links the two stanzas and the two major propositions whereas its iconic position mimes the spatial relation between the petals and the leaves. Both the linguistic and the iconic aspects create tension and contribute to the poem's meaning.

Williams delineates the effect of Demuth's painting also through aural icons constituted by the repetition of certain sounds such as the "o" in "horn", "glow", "pot", and "moss". The impact of the "o" sounds is to

emphasize the roundness of the shapes of objects. In the poem's climatic extract, the iteration of the "l" and "w" sounds in successive sentences accentuate the ecstatic movement included in the circular motion of the petals. Therefore, iconicity refers to:

> *A language that is imitative by directly including visual and/or aural aspects of the signified. Auditory iconicity in that sense includes much more than onomatopoeia proper, once we look for it not only in individual words but include the relational or diagrammatic dimension – once we move, in Williams' words, from "single words" to their "association in groups". (Halter, 2009: 242)*

In "The Pot of Flowers", Williams' icon presents a kinesthesia that centers around the plant and renders the reader's eye movement easier as it follows the plant's undulating forms. The poem displays the spatio-temporal dimension embodied in the icon of the petals by the position of its words on the page and the relation of the words to other words. According to Williams:

> *To be faithful to the living world, the poet has to be faithful to the Janus-headed language which invariably points at one and the same time to empirical reality and back to itself. If the poet fails to do so, the reader will confuse the two dimensions, which is bound to lead to frustration. (Ibid.:119-120)*

Consequently, Williams highlights the doubleness of the literary sign and the paradoxical character of language, which uses signs that refer to reality; yet, at the same time, remain signs referring to themselves and having an independent status. In decreasing the gap between the mimetic and the non-mimetic, the signifier and the signified, or word and object, the poetic icon may be considered to come close to the ideal of Cratylism that, partially, surpasses the arbitrariness of linguistic signs.

Iconicity is also delineated by Williams in his ekphrastic poem to foreground the status of the poem as artifact. The typographical design created by the words provides the poem with an object status which, in turn, stresses the concreteness of the words on the page. Accordingly, for Williams art is imaginative creation. His concept of imitation comprises both mimesis and creation and, therefore, transcends the traditional concept of ekphrastic mimesis. In *Spring and All* which is dedicated to his friend Charles Demuth, he comments that:

> *The only realism in art is of the imagination. It is only thus that the work escapes plagiarism after nature and becomes a creation. In great works of the imagination a creative force is shown at work making objects which alone complete science and allow intelligence to survive. The picture lives anew. It lives as pictures only can: by their power to escape illusion and stand between man and nature as saints once stood between man and the sky. (Williams in Schott, 1970: 111-112)*

4.2 Hilda Doolittle (H. D.)

Hilda Doolittle (1886 –1961) is a female poet from America, memoirist and fictionist, connected with the precocious 20th century innovative group of imagist poets, involving Richard Aldington and Ezra Pound. She has published her works under the pen name H.D. She is one of the utmost substantial poets of the twentieth-century who worked in the British Museum's domed reading room in its Central Great Court, involving Karl Marx, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Virginia Woolf, and many of the imagist writers. In New York City, in the summer of 1960, H. D. received an elegant Award of Merit from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. She is the foremost woman poet to be chosen for this uniqueness. H. D. travels, orderly, towards Fifth Avenue from her hotel to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She utilizes the exposition as a spontaneous lounge for "at homes" in that era, amusing callers, containing Denise Levertov and Robert Duncan, two members of a younger generation of poets extremely affected by her mission, round *The Fountain of the Muses*, the Hellenic statuary pool therefore composited in the museum's major restaurant area.

Museums missions in H. D.'s poetry form staging grounds for her examinations of embodied, personal, and influential methods of recounting to art and culture that are allowed by the presence of galleries and museums. This undetermined connection is nowhere more noticeable than in H. D.'s ekphrastic depiction of art works and in those intentions in which H. D. vastly determine not to capture with this exercise or do in its restrictions for appropriately conveying pictures into language.

Institutions of Art supplies H. D. a place for checking such borders while displaying fundamental issues of potential for refinement of her own poetic style to depict both mystical and real aesthetic themes. The impact of museology and museums deploys H. D.'s poetry throughout her writing career, in spite of the fact that the accurate nature of this impact converts alongside her varying poetic styles. In her first collection of poems *Sea Garden* (1916), for example, a number of the early imagist poems has been motivated by Greek decorations she examined on exposition in the British Museum and which she and Aldington destined in the early 1910s.

The institution of this volume as a collection of outwardly independent bounded imagist lyrics affords a further apparent similarity to the separated, shaped art things that design walls of an exhibition museum. Comparably, despite the fact that H. D.'s later poetry avoids the imagist pattern for the wider domain of the epic, the syncretic making of myth of such extended poems, in which Greek, Christian and Egyptian myths are layered to show an unnoticed continuation in a palimpsestical way, significantly matches the extended occurrence of exhibition series and the relative structures upon which the so-called old-fashioned domestications have been always symbolized in them.

Nevertheless, whereas definite components of her poetry quietly invoke the exhibitionary and curatorial obligations of museums, H. D. has not quoted in an uncritical way from musicological ways; actually, her work presents the personal and aesthetic histories that establishments of this essence typically disregard, and which more of her work attempts to

regain. It has been claimed that H. D.'s at once creative and critical relevance to the art museum and its gathering exercises supplied power for her forays in ekphrasis, her depiction of artworks both imagined and real, and both absent and present in organizations of art. In H. D.'s roman à clef *Asphodel* (1921), and then additionally in her epic poem *Trilogy* (1946), museums often supply H. D. with originative probabilities and disclose her to the dominant styles of aesthetic experiment in museology, such impacts that she deliberates to obtain entry through them to histories and voices that early twentieth century museum possessions generally marginalized; particularly, those of females as both creators and observers in the artistic domain. In such works, H. D. recounts the ekphrastic scenery of art observation in a manner that is simultaneously revisionary and appropriative of museology, elevating issues about the mood of institutionally reasonable manners of viewing and, critically, the blind marks and alignments therein.

In *Asphodel*, surrogate of H. D., Hermione Gart, shows an influential necessity to modify particular expertise with museum objects in response to the background of a progressively mediated and commercialized art culture that conveys person exhibition-goers forming significant relationship with the art of the past. The style of aesthetic experiment that Hermione adopts repeats elevated elements of danger in *Trilogy*, where it approves the speaker's revival, by means of the cultivation of sensuous poetic speech-acts, of a mystical-yet-familiar woman from the borders of a male-standard imaginative convention that consistently decreases the cultural importance of feminine art, spirituality, and non-hierarchical manners of viewing.

H. D.'s concern in the preservation of cultural history in poetry, a mission that turns out to be imperious in her work which is formed during and in response to the World War II and the London Blitz, is entwined with an inclination for personal and private echoes to the separated objects that shape a culture. In *Trilogy*, this inclination outlines H. D.'s non-traditional attachment with the poetics of ekphrasis: whereas the apparent linguistic depiction of an aesthetic object is related to colonial manners of viewing, H. D.'s poetic speaker refines instead substitutional procedures of recording the aesthetic in poetry which are embedded in narrative interactions between the observer, the object, and her poetics. In H. D.'s ekphrastic works, a relational ekphrasis, separated from the phallocentric, paragonal conflict among the arts established in Lessing's *Laocoon*, and which instead conducts aesthetic meaning through the unrestricted dialogic accomplishment among the verbal text and its visual source, is considered needed for beholding and poetically performing the mystical episode that H. D.'s speakers often detect in the reasonable world and its establishments.

Lawrence Rainey, in reading H. D.'s work and its debate, holds H. D.'s "miniscule corpus of nonfiction" to point out that she grasped small motives to participate in an energetic and authentic conversation with her masculine contemporary who engaged to the output of hypothetical and critical works that focus on the formal, historical or dogmatic foundations for the modernist experience (1998: 154-5). Especially, H. D. is resistant to impose any undisguised political declarations in her poetry and evade away from immediate attachment with political and social issues. While paired with the reportedly autotelic trait of several of her poems, this

reservation about immediate politicization may appear to advocate the hypothesis that H. D. was allergic to the types of political and aesthetic considerations that authors at the core of the received elevation modernist icon, like Pound and Eliot, for instance, theorized as an integral element of poetic occupation, and which critics attempting to migrate modernism from patterns of social detachment have found fundamental to its reclamation.

H. D.'s ekphrastic poetics reading as a way of cultural criticism in *Trilogy* gets revelation from Susan Stanford Friedman's proposal that "a conventional definition of political engagement as public activism has obscured the significant role of politics in the development of H. D.'s post World War I modernism," and that for H. D. composing itself is an action "against the dominant culture" (1986: 94). It has been found profitable to convey codes and reflect the methods in which H. D.'s poetics estimate the cultural work of *Trilogy*. H. D. proposes a specific method of examining art which has the obstetric strength to assist in the scheme of cultural recuperation following the London Blitz, is constant with the narrative assurance and hypothesis that described her methods of obverting the infrequent world in other contexts.

In *Trilogy*, H. D. designs the cultural reclamation of the Lady against a typology of aesthetic impressions that in their intension adopts the role of the western cultural convention that the modern museum was instituted to keep in an attempt to pay attention to the systemic and methodic gender imbalances that silently support the supposedly classless space of museums. Also, she transfers an implicit controversy about the

cultural politics of ekphrastic depiction, by refusing colonial and dominating linguistic exercises in favor of an ekphrasis created from the experimental impacts of viewing and sensing the aesthetic, arrangements that her work evidently place alongside against the masculine assurance of museum discipline.

The ekphrastic poetics of H. D. problematize such masculine tendency of modern museum discipline through refining different means of replying to aesthetic themes beyond the museological dualism between subject and object. In *Trilogy*, the poetic demonstration of, and planned rejection to demonstrate, aesthetic themes based upon complete fictional interchanges without foundational interposition. Interchanges that produce concepts that fall beyond the sphere of advancement art discipline. While the gendered incarnations of this relational sample of art conception are most lively examined in *Trilogy*, the idioms of her modulation museology are also tackled in *Asphodel*, H. D.'s narrative telling in her early progression as a poet in one of Europe's influential emigrate artistic communities. H. D. might not yield a massive setting of poetic theory or criticism, but *Asphodel* may be reviewed for some premeditation into the personal doctrines, organizations, and experiments that prompt her later poetry. H. D.'s poetic experimentations of ekphrasis, in *Asphodel,* within a wider aesthetic scheme that operates aesthetic experiment with particular and quasi-mystical echoes that promote artistic expansion and revelation.

Essentially, *Trilogy* is H. D.'s triangular restraint to the London Blitz and the position of myth and observance in modernity, discovered in

the controversial pressure between the poet's individual knowledge of London and the larger historical and social forces that culminated in World War II. H. D.'s *Trilogy* comprises three long poems covered into forty-three free verse cantos that are mainly established in couplets, *The Walls Do Not Fall* (1944), *Tribute to the Angels* (1945), and *The Flowering of the Rod* (1946), each supplying views of the intervening of classical history and modernity with a specific focus on the destiny of female spiritualistic characters in western culture. The ethnic work of the three poems improves along a released path from theory to practice, as the corrupt status of modernity is estimated in the first, the probabilities for absolution with the renovation of female spiritualism found in the second, and a review of Biblical narrative to unlock a spiritual refuge undertaken in the third.

Therefore, a reading of ekphrasis and institutional criticism in *Trilogy* concentrates on its first two books, for in *The Flowering of the Rod*, H. D. designated her "peace poem" (Hollenberg, 1997: 37). The more pointed criticism of modernity assigns manner to the view of remedy for those who "have shown / that we could stand" and "have withstood //the anger, frustration, / bitter fire of destruction" of the Second World War, and can now "mount higher / to love—resurrection" (113-5). This very possibility for spiritual and cultural recovery that limits *Flowering* is intended to the cultural criticism sophisticated in the first two books. In *Trilogy*, H. D.'s crucial interest is the uncertainness and emergency of the artist during war, this possibility of women's definitive social role in wartime society is taken to modern art cultures,

permit her to theorize the prospects of female-authored art and aesthetic expertise in the wake of this devastation.

Furthermore, in such poems H. D.'s concern with the gendered ability of both art and war is intended into formal connections with the poetics of ekphrasis, as the meditation of artworks empowers her poetic speaker both to esteem the status of modern culture following the despairs of the Blitz and to pave the way for cultural recovery through the reinforcement and maintenance of female-authored art. *The Walls Do Not Fall* begins in London's shocked cityscape, an examination of the situations of probability for renewal beyond the negation, devastation and passivity epitomized by the war. To H. D.'s poetic speaker, World War II has the unplanned aftermath of centering around a conventional description of masculine modernity, opening scope for the improving of a set of formerly neglected estimates and exercises; involving alchemy, mutability and poetry, that can reestablish the immaterial sensibility to sensibility phenomena that she considered the war had repressed.

In *Tribute to the Angels*, these modern esteems permit H. D. to adjust the restoration of female spiritualism in the persona of the Lady, whose exemplification in the poem is motivated by H. D.'s sight, two decades earlier, of indescribable sparkling pictures on a wall in the hotel Angle terreet Belle Venise in Corfu. The Lady's display which is displayed against the hotel room's wall is understood against masculine requirements to thoroughly know and categorize her in continued epistemic classifications and aesthetic settlements. By the production of an ekphrastic depiction that describes her identity to language; the

speaker's visibility of the Lady opposes such figurations, and she affords a blank text to a combined spectator of three-woman poets, "the unwritten volume of the new" that scores the start of a modern historiography (1998: 103). The imaginary thought that provokes the poetics of *Trilogy* is frankly framed over and against notions of museum show and the narrow cultural principles that these practices support. Particularly, *Trilogy* confirms that such exposition designs have stained insights of the importance of female themes in cultural history, reducing females to no more than objects of artistic declaration who are preserved from active contribution in cultural ritualism like museum-going and art making.

In *Walls*, the lessening of expressive hierarchies allows for the spread of masculine symbology to display invisible signs of compensation and healing. H. D. asserts that she has evoked the behaviors of looking to be sensible to the inner lives of objects rather than to embrace the colonial, authoritative behaviors of seeing the poem which are associated with conventional museological activities and prospects. This necessitates the yielding of the empirical and rational to "surrender … trivial logic, sterile reason" (2014: 40) and to be receptive to the inexplicable and the transcendent. Via this path, the rebellious "Sceptre, the rod of power", with engagement of imperialism and the phallus order, and the very type of object one can usually notice in museum collections, permit change into the variable Caduceus of the messenger Hermes, the chemical symbol of unity that has been settled as a modern icon for medicine (2014: 7). Via the poet's attentive eye, an archetype of tough authority is enhanced into a reparative code that "among the dying ... bears healing," and in the poem it is the poetic meditation of ameliorative

opportunities unnoticed beneath modern symbols that has the power to reconstruct noteworthy life from the ruins of World War II.

The opening canticle of *Walls* institutes the miserable state of London during the Blitz and places the thematic idioms that the poem may follow. This canticle's design puts it apart from the larger poem and proposes that it should be understood as a preface to the rest of *Walls*. Whereas the rest of *Trilogy* is written in couplets, this canticle is set in triplets that invoke the terza rima of another three-poem epic, Dante's *Divine Comedy*. As well, similar to the opening of the *Comedy*, *Walls* quickly submerges its reader in the infernal conditions of London before planning the way towards ransom. H. D. finds the reader in the wrecks of the burnt-out and wrecked London cityscape during the air raids. The opening lines, "An incident here and there, / and rails gone (for guns) / from your (and my) old town square" (2014: 3), display a journalistic jargon to illustrate individual incidents while ironically softening their weightiness. The indifference of the qualifier "here and there" may function as an echo of the rigid upper lip in the face of the disastrous attitude spread throughout the war as mainly and characteristically British, efficaciously develops the realm of the incidences by not locating them within any potential model of incidents.

Alternatively, the "*zrr-hiss*" (2014: 58) of the air raids has been a persistent threatening of total termination during the poem, just as they must have appeared to a Londoner suffering them at firsthand. The "here and there," nevertheless, also produces an analogous picture between ancient Egypt and modern London, which is first suggested in the poem's

engraving, "*for Karnak* 1923 / *from London* 1942" (2014: 1). H. D. relies on her Egyptian visits with Bryher during 1923 to create a visual similarity within the remains of ancient Egyptian temples and London's bombed-out buildings: "there, as here, ruin opens / the tomb, the temple; enter" (2014: 3). Alongside the visual linking between destroyed temples and wrecked buildings, however, the "there"/"here" combination requires a thematic connection between London and Egypt, with the notion that the wrecked post-Blitz London is rehabilitated into something of an antique urbanization. The speaker and her partner, getting around in streets of London, stop "trembling at a known street-corner, / we know not or are known" (2014: 4). Here the street-corner as both a place "known" and of which they "know not," confirms the defamiliarization of the Blitz, its alteration of familiar places and spaces into the unnatural.

The representation of the modern capitals and their cultural history under hostilities during World War II which was also expected by the British war poet Sassoon in "A Premonition" repeats, with a difference worth noting, in H. D.'s portrayal of London during the Blitz in *Walls.* While Sassoon's description of the looming dissent of culture and art is conventionally First World War, it is the mustard gas of Sassoon's trench knowledge that is "tarnishing each gilded frame" in the National Gallery in his poem. H. D. centers her description of war on the home front through the specific surroundings of the Blitz and its influences on London's cityscape, a knowledge that is accessible to her but not yet to Sassoon. Writing her poems while the worldwide struggle was still going on in 1933, H. D. stops on the portrayal of a building that is repulsive by

a German bomb, its exterior wall blown open and its insides are distinguished in a strange description:

> *we pass on*
> *to another cellar, to another sliced wall*
> *where poor utensils show*
> *like rare objects in a museum (1986: 4)*

It can be noticed here that the epistemological and kinesthetic settings of museum inspections have been recorded onto the speaker's poetic meditation of London's damaging streets. The clause "we pass on" comprises the spectator in a way that involves systematic positioning from one setting to another in a manner that is identifying a pageant by means of the gallery of the museum. But another widespread use of "pass on" affords an interrelated suggestion here, suggesting that the poetic speaker and all those involved in the plural "we" have turned into spiritual existences that bear testimonial evidence to the remains of the Blitz. This metaphor centers around a belief of the museum as a cultural shrine, a belief not separate from Theodor Adorno's idea that museums "are like the family sepulchers of works of art" that "testify to the neutralization of culture" (2014: 175). H. D.'s London cityscape is pictured as museological as it is a scope that can no longer change the vivacity of vivid knowledge, and the viewers as bodiless ghosts that will simply look upon the displayed objects. The ekphrastic background of visual contemplation is here passively recollected via the metaphoric

association of the modern city in wreckage to the cultural activity of getting around a museum to watch objects in its succession.

Actually, that London is documented as a severe city and is displayed for examination foregrounds the essential homology between the basement and "rare objects in a museum." The vessels that seem to become on exhibit have been once prepared for utilitarian, national ends. Those vessels are objects chiefly designed to be used, stabled in the Latin adjective *utensilis* for "fit for use, useful". The simile H. D. makes between the vessels, molded for usage but now on display, and "rare objects in a museum" is tolerated by a reinforcement of museum objects as possessions that are principally separated from their authentic settings and backgrounds. Svetlana Alpers named this change as "museum effect" in reference to the museum's traditional preference to detach an object from its domain, to present it for insightful analysis and therefore alter it into art (1991: 27).

By constructing the similarity in this manner, H. D. counts on a parallel set of conventions about the essence of museum belongings; that the exercise of tracing an object on display in such a style inspires its alteration into an object of culture. By liberating them from their utilitarian position, such utensils are similar to museum objects to the extent that they look like signals of a historical purpose, and very accurately of an effective truth that has finally took place. In fact, one cannot own a historically actual significance to an object in a museum; as Tony Bennett proposes, seeing an object in a museum requires the spectator's engagement in "its verisimilitude" with the past (1995). H. D.'s

speaker is not in straight, unmediated link with the reality of the object and, accordingly, within the realistic vessels of the past (2014:146-7) but, instead, attaches to the object as describing the desolation of London.

Walls might begin with the anticipation of the modern city as a museum-demonstration covering the artifactual memories of a once-living community, but the poem displays the way in the direction of recovery through the renovation of a substitution ekphrastic poetics that permit revealing and preserving the inherent conventions, histories, and cultural exercises that the old order has belittled. Corresponding to the modernist wish to "make it new," H. D. has not called for the total reduction of the objects and relics that have fashioned the old; preferably, the cultural poetics of *Trilogy* revive the ineffective signifiers of a decadent modernity so as to deduce the overlooked substitutes of modern culture they contain. Instead of inspecting a new geography, the poem establishes the doctrine via which civilizations can be reconditioned by expressing "the old highways / for the true-rune, the right-spell" to recover ancient values" that are spoiled by modern culture (1998: 5).

To H.D., thus, art of poetry is essential to this requisition effort; whereas modern civilization has prosperous impose, encircled ichnographically all over the poem with the sword, as a symbol of authority, which is only continued in the near entire deconstruction of the establishments of a civilization. Culture, art, and poetry have been characterized by this ancient order, obvious in the books' blazing and the adapting for use in diverse aims of manuscript, folio, ancient parchment for symbol conditions (2014: 16). Hitherto, the decaying of the ancient

allows for the sorts of cultural knowledge that poetry ensues. Poetic language, then, affords the device of the sword and will even continue after the sword has been deprived of its strength, a concept that H. D. invests via the anagrammatic relation of "swords" and "words": "Without thought, invention, / you would not have been, O Sword, //without ideas and the Word's mediation" (2014: 18). Being sensible to the abilities of language, poets enjoy the cleverness to infer cultural suggestions for the implication that they make obscure. Her controversy for the cultural appraisal of poetry is established against an atmosphere of opposition in which poetry is disparaged for:

alleged frivolity:
we, authentic relic,
bearers of the secret wisdom,
living remnant
of the inner band
of the sanctuaries' initiate, are not only 'non-utilitarian',
we are pathetic (H.D, 1998: 14)

Furthermore, the profanation of the "Sword," which is like the "Sceptre" is another object that may be apparent in a museum to signify imperialism, colonialism, and other forms of hierarchical power, is allowed for the renovation of the poet, the "*Word*," and the non-hierarchical presentations of observing this slip among the verbal and the visual that are exemplified (2014: 17). Doolittle's awareness involves narrative methods to things which highlight descriptive authority in favor

of phenomenological knowledge, denoting that the most valuable cultural meanings result not from the butterfly's anatomy, but from our visibility of its flight. In *Tribute*, these mechanisms are crucial to Doolittle's engagement with ekphrasis to value the gender incarnations of such tendencies of viewing: her poetic speakers welcome the sensorial and phenomenological demonstrative practices established earlier in *Walls* to discord the control of the notionally thematic linguistic exercises which are significant to a male discussion that includes official institutional culture. This arises questions of gendered disparity to the center of the poem's broader attachment to art institutionalization in the museum and the scope of its certified ways of viewing.

Additionally, against attacks on poetry as "pathetic" and "non-utilitarian"," Doolittle emphasizes that the function and aim of the poet as a language interpreter is an essential cultural mission in the obviously haphazard surroundings of modern culture in the consequences of yet latter shocking costly war: "if you do not even understand what words say, // how can you expect to pass judgment / on what words conceal?" (1998: 14). Poets embrace this cultural significance because, in the absence of active power over the word and its implication, they can determine and induce hidden alternative denotations in a way that recalls Hermione's established doctrine in the meaningfulness of the museum's hidden substance "that people didn't see couldn't see or they would go mad with it" (1992: 19). Doolittle focuses on the poetic form itself to depend on a phonological level of this poetic awareness to the secrets of language, the intrinsic meanings that "words conceal."

The appropriate scheming in the lines mentioned above connects sonically between the praise of the poet as an "authentic relic" and public criticism of poetry as "pathetic." This approach places the boundaries between celebration and aspersion. By doing so it motivates readers to consider another appeal in the word "pathetic": from pathos, a sensibility to objects and their significant equivalences, the very type of allergy that the masculine call discard to conciliate. Additionally, Doolittle denotes the renewed implication of these exercises by describing words as utensils filled with potentials which are waiting for their inspiration:

We have had too much consecration,
too little affirmation, too much: but this, this, this
has been proven heretical,
too little: I know, I feel
the meaning that words hide;
they are anagrams, cryptograms,
little boxes, conditioned
to hatch butterflies ... (H.D., 1998: 39)

The anaphora "too little"/"too much" of the second and third lines, and the end-rhyme coupling of "consecration"/ affirmation" make displayed contrasts on both semantic and phonological levels. The diversity of pairs suggests exercises for appreciating the significance of phenomena to confirm, to consecrate, and for esteeming their frequency "too much", "too little" that have been very slip that a reader will struggle in setting them to firm norms; who is confirming or consecrating? How

can confirmation have been at once too much and too little? Such mystery has a precise rhetorical purpose, nevertheless, as it intellectualizes the steadiness of limited routes of emotion to afford a scope for bodily, affective, and determinatively personal artistic practices. Also, it is in these lines that the word to "know" is punctually enhanced via a principal sensual practice, to "feel," as the most direct approach to "the meaning that words hide." The poem's last line splits the couplet style and the "too much"/ "too little" attachment to display a third manner, the butterfly waving freed from its linguistic cover not through discourse or force, but by means of a union of feeling and knowing an affective, sensitive, or "pathetic" technique to language. So, the poem affirms that such variations are constant styles rather than compliable human activities.

Otherwise, in *Trilogy,* the indefinite might only be rivalled by the definite, by domestic methods that approve discretion: "my mind (yours), / your way of thought (mine), // each has its peculiar intricate map," which might go backwards from the "the intellectual effort // of the whole race" but yet move within their own connotations, following "its peculiar ego-centric // personal approach / to the eternal realities" (1998":51-2). That outstanding movement is often mentioned in the delineation of the participle "conditioned" to represent the transformative view of language "to hatch butterflies". Here "conditioned" reflects that what these terms own has gone through a process of development so that their covered butterflies may be motivated. The technique regarding the improvement of the messy extra meanings comprised by the modern use of symbols, the "abstract value" in "every concrete object" (2014: 24), is hinted to by outstanding exercises of excelled ways of understanding, which exploit

the viewer with the tools that enable him to be a presenter of cultural allusions. Poetic words are crucial to the redetermination of passing as special rather than inclusive poetry, grasped by Doolittle to be an act of the announcement of personal subjectivity, draws attention to the path by which this person notices the way to "eternal realities."

In *Walls,* Doolittle has treatment of the poetics of ekphrasis enables her to create a hypothetical context for the composition of poetry which, in *Tribute to the Angels*, knows how Doolittle's poetic speaker attempts to hypothesize the clarification of visual objects. In *Tribute*, these declarations on the spiritual and persuasive basics of the artistic knowledge approves the decision of Doolittle's speaker not to involve in elaborated and intellectual linguistic representations of accomplished phenomena, but rather to keep on being sensible to the metaphysical potentials hidden in the physical. Doolittle's *Walls* produces these meanings in a prevailing typical poetics which centers around the visual-verbal relation of this poetic style. Visual codes are made into language, as the "swords" are made into "words," and language adjustment into the representation of the butterfly. The fictional, non-binary slip among these expressive approaches enhances the poem's subversion of the dualistic and destructive masculine modernity that has stimulated the Second World War. Thus, in *Walls*, such war embodies the unavoidable end of a culture that has prosperous forms of informing over the sensible desire of the poet who incites denotation out of language.

In Doolittle's ekphrastic poetics, museums are not represented as places or spaces that must be abandoned if an individual wants to

encourage a genuine connection with his own culture. Actually, according to her, in the settings of modernity, museums represent one of the fewest remaining havens for cultural knowledge which are confirmed forcefully in *Asphodel* via Hermione's powerful inclination for personal connection with art in the galleries of Louvre. In the same vein, Doolittle believes that an amendment of the surroundings by which persons can access culture is more efficient than the reduction of museums, a re-delineation and use of the capacities which are performed by museums in the direction of the awareness of individual and personal aesthetic experiences.

4.3 Wystan Hugh Auden

The poetry of the well-known Anglo-American war poet W.H. Auden (1907-1973) is notable for its technical contributions, and its attachment with love, morals, politics and religion, and its stylistic variation in content, tone and form. Actually, Auden is among the twentieth century poets who, firmly, has become further biased to the view that allusions have been arbitrary and arts have not been as heavenly as it has been believed to be. Auden tries to avoid the earlier nineteenth century thought about the myth of the artist-hero. He illustrates that the notions of the nineteenth epoch have contributed to fashion a legend regarding a person who draws paintings or drawings as if being an artist and hero at the same time. This type of individual is pictured as one who is victimizing his prosperity and his pleasure to art. In return, he seeks and expects privilege and compensation from the cultural and social authorities, and patterns of behavior (2007:128). It is authentic that

Auden has a magnificent concern in artworks and pictures (Auden, 1959: 127). Comparable to the Romantic poets of the preceding centuries as well as various modern and contemporary poets who are engaged with ekphrastic poetry, Auden is a museum admirer since he has sustained the two considerable world wars; the disordered European mood that has prohibited him, against his desire, from attending further exhibitions (Carpenter, 1981: 4). Ultimately, his curiosity in artwork makes him the writer of the greatest vastly renowned and the utmost effective … ekphrastic piece of poetry, that is "Musee des Beaux Arts" or "Museum of Fine Arts." (Hollander, 1995: 249)

From the first beginning of twentieth-century ekphrastic poetry, the convention has been vastly renowned and "commonly practiced" (Bruhn, 2008: 14). Auden, like other ekphrastic poets, commonly ignores the depictive features of paintings and develops them as sources of revelation as he does in "Musee des Beaux Arts." In other words, he meditates on the visible painting and exceptionally turns to it as an indication of his inspiration. His ekphrastic poems could be named inspirational or meditative ekphrastic poems. For him, meditative poems typically concentrate on the image that, consequently, philosophizes on the impact the painting inspires as Auden's retrospective remarks about sufferance in this highly ekphrastic poem.

Precisely, this twentieth century poem is widely recognized as an ekphrastic poem which is majorly dealing with and based on Peter Brueghel's prominent drawing which is entitled "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus" as is specified through the obvious indication made by Auden

to the story of Icarus and the artwork itself; "In Brueghel's Icarus, for example: how everything turns away/ Quite leisurely from the disaster" (2007: 14-15). In fact, the painting is a poet-sniper work of art that inspired other famous ekphrastic poetic writings like William Carlos Williams' ekphrastic composition "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus" in addition to George Santayana's ekphrastic poem "Icarus". This painting, "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus," is viewed in the way of being a respectable release as this canvas has been the solitary mythic artwork of Brueghel the Elder, who is recognized with his religious topics portrayed in Flemish backgrounds (Stechow, 1990: 50). Carpenter stated that Auden is believed to have been engaged with this artwork while he paid a visit to Brussels in 1938 (1981: 99). As for the poem's chosen title, it is highly possible that when getting the inspiration of his poem, Auden has viewed the canvas's authentic version which is found out and obtained through the Royal Museum of Fine Arts of Brussels around 1912. As is this artwork, this ekphrastic poem is ultimately about the individual status in existence and the apathy of individuals to one another. While Icarus downs from the sky, the shepherd or the planter do not care:

As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green
Water; and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,
had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.

(Auden, 2007: 17-21)

Modern studies assume that both Brueghel and Auden have been recognized with the suffering, unawareness, and the jointly depressing framework of their times. Remarkably sufficient, the menace was the German in both conditions. Brueghel has experienced the plagues of Hapsburg Empire (Mayor, 1971: 424-425). He says that his country experienced various sorts of suffering "under the foot of foreign oppression" (cited in Auden, 2007: 3). Like Brueghel, Auden has distinguished the atmosphere of tension which accompanied the German threat prior the Second World War. In the same way, Auden suffers from the troubled mood of the German conditions before World War II in Europe. In point of view, Brueghel paints a marvelous painting about a book of proverbs that is named the *Netherlandish Proverbs* which is in accordance to the Flemish saying: "En de boerploegdeverder..." ("And the farmer continued to plough...") pointing thus towards the unawareness of individuals in terms of weakness and poverty due to social disorder and strange occupation. As well, Heffernan stated that there is still another proverb in German that has stimulated Brueghel in his canvas; "no plough comes to a standstill because a man dies" (1993: 220).

In whatever way, before shifting to the ekphrastic characteristic the poem offers, it is noteworthy to observe the fact that the poem's initial stanza deals with a comprehensive certainty whereas stanza two begins with a direct reference and an indication to Breughel's "Fall of Icarus". Actually, "Musee" is not only a contemplative ekphrastic poetic writing that merely treats with universal popularizations by involving Brueghel's painting as a beginning spot and the sole fountain of revelation. First of all, the capitalized "The Old Masters" points not to the previous

generations, the elderly experience, it rather refers to sixteenth and nineteenth century artists. Probably, this specific idiom is applied by Auden to direct the attention of his readers to distinctive artists such as Van Gogh and Michelangelo who were often mentioned inside some of his pivotal poetic works (Auden, 1959: 128-137). In his poem, the first fifteen lines of the poem direct the attention of readers towards a certain canvas by Brueghel as well, and not purely to "The Fall of Icarus". It has been argued that the artwork beyond the illustrated surroundings of Auden's opening stanza is a painting entitled "The Census at Bethlehem" of Brueghel the Elder (1566). The artwork, that is exhibited in the same gallery where "The Fall of Icarus" was displayed prior to the German assault in 1938, supplies all the pictures that are represented in the opening stanza, particularly from line three on:

About suffering they were never wrong,
The Old Masters; how well, they understood
Its human position; how it takes place
(While someone else is eating or opening a window or just
walking dully along;
How, when the aged are reverently, passionately waiting
For the miraculous birth, there always must be
Children who did not specially want it to happen, skating
On a pond at the edge of the wood).

(Auden, 2007: 1-13)

Contrasting the poem's stored details along with with the ones that are painted on the artwork, there is no sole detail can be taken out of it and the poem creates a very early perfect analogous connection with the artwork. As is displayed in the canvas, there have been individuals who were eating, others who were just "walking dully along," or others who were doing nothing but the simple act of window opening. As well, a few boys were skating on a pool at the forest's edge whereas dogs were pictured as roaming around here and there. In the center of the portrait and poem a horse was resting its back beyond a tree, perhaps with the aim to "scratch its innocent behind on a tree." Brueghel's fundamental interests are devout subjects, however his down-to-earth pattern no way forms devout doctrines that exceed his writings. Refusing the instructions of the church, his devout characters are often far from the idealized concepts about Mary or Christ (Hecht, 1993: 102).

It is necessary to observe that in spite of the fact that the designation of the artwork is "The Census at Bethlehem", yet the painting takes an ideally Flemish scenery, depicting the homeland of Peter Brueghel in which he presents a country survey where farmers gather opposite the house of the census-taker for the sake of boosting excises and registering in the list of the census. Anywise, as its denotation proposes, "The Census at Bethlehem" is mostly a devout artwork showing Joseph and Mary getting into the town. In the center of the artwork, Mary is depicted as riding a horse pulled by Joseph towards the crowd dwellers dashing haphazardly, children playing around, and census registration occupied rushing down and up. Since he portrays the biblical story of Mary and Joseph getting into Bethlehem through a setting which

is mainly Flemish, it is characteristic of Brueghel to display religious personae who are likely against the direction of the church. In addition, it is worth noting that, in a parallel approach to that of Auden, it is possible that Brueghel has converted to Protestantism as well (Stechow, 1990: 50-51; Mayor,1971: 424). Thus, his reformative vision in his descriptions is comprehensive. Davies assures that such image of ekphrastic poetry as the one which is displayed in "The Fall of Icarus" is in essence pointedly influenced by the emotional mass which is presented in the bottom corner of the painting, which denotes the notion that investigating the form of the ekphrastic poem is not to be separated from the narrative of the painting it refers to or the object symbolized; this is a matter which must not be gained from outside of the context; "not only must one know the title (and hence the story) to grasp the image, also the meaning of the work is inextricably wrapped up with the formal possessions of the artwork" (Davies, 2006: 63).

According to that hypothesis, it is regarded that "Musee" concentrates on more than one painting. Thence, it is preferable to discuss this highly and apparently ekphrastic poem by pointing to both artworks as just a survey of the two artworks can emerge correspondence and demonstrations for the misjudged and missing specifics. So, it is obliged to declare that the poem of Auden is not just a contemplative ekphrasis, meditating and commenting on people's unawareness towards others and the grievous consequences of disinterest, but also a poem that goes among meditative and imitative styles to clarify human conditions by displaying two specific works of the famous painter Brueghel.

The title of the poem gives an exceptional start for ekphrasis analysis. In contrast to many other ekphrastic poems which reveal details (artist, title of the artwork, position) about the art object in the titles they carry, W. H. Auden chooses a title that is more universal although he has the ability to afford his poem an open indication as is the case with his ekphrastic poem "The Shield of Achilles." Despite the fact that Auden was also able to entitle his poem "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus," like what has Williams done, yet still he chooses to encourage the demonstrative value of the museum and of his poem perhaps due to the fact that he contemplated on two artworks which existed in the same exhibition room of a gallery in Brussels. Moreover, there may be still another motive that could be said to influence Auden's choice of his poem's title. "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus" is an artwork which pictures and draws emphasis on the ploughman in the center; it does not center around the picture of the two small feet scattering in the sea in the bottom, right side of the painting. Distinctly, according to Heffernan's idea, it is difficult enough to recognize the mythical indication in this canvas; and therefore, to him, Auden should choose another different title for his ekphrastic poem, for instance "The Ploughman" or even "Landscape" (1993: 148). Thence, the poet here perhaps identifies such point and decides to involve an accurate indication to the painting. In "Brueghel's Icarus" (2007: 14), there is an attempt to keep away from the obscurity Brueghel's artwork has presented. Concerning the second painting, "The Census at Bethlehem," it is assumed that W. H. Auden may have not sensed the necessity of mentioning this canvas's title in order to make it more recognizable and principally excels a further

popular title such as the one he chooses, "Musee des Beaux Arts," that could be further comprehensive and fitting for assigning the two canvases.

This poem is made up of two stanzas and it has deployed metrical features according to traditional English lyrics with a unique metrical classification and several lengths of lines. As a consequence, it is inflexible to converse about parallelism of meter; the solitary rhyming couplets have been set in stanza two where all these extracts; "turns away/ the ploughman may" (2007: 14-15), "the green/ that must have seen" (2007: 18-19), "the forsaken cry/ out of the sky" (2007: 16,20), and "the sun shone/ calmly on" (2007: 15,21) are meant to rhyme together. Topically, as aforementioned, this poem centers on the indifference between nations across the proceedings that are happening around them if the accident is over a question of small or large significance. This is, as well, noticed in the artworks. Two of the proceedings in the paintings are records of ultimate significance that are not able to be curving a sightless eye regarding the "boy" who is "falling out of the sky" (2007: 20) or regarding the approaching Joseph and Mary who would ultimately drove towards the remarkable nativity (2007: 7).

Significantly, to create a harmonious relation between the ekphrastic poem and the paintings it refers to, Auden inspires the same influence through his engagement with lexicography in an antithetical manner. The feelings of anguish and pain formed through the lexical objects such as "disaster," "suffering," "torturer," "dreadful" and "forsaken cry" are being compared to the feeling of lifelessness produced

by adverbs such as "dully," "calmly," and "reverently." That type of lexical perversion has been also shown in the style, which is informal and free from anxiety or responsibility as if the storyteller is narrating an occasional tale about the normal existences of people referred to by informal use such as "Anyhow" and "How." As a result, in the canvases as in the poem, characters are not interested in the prodigious proceedings carrying on. In Auden's initial stanza as in "The Census at Bethlehem", animals or children have not been conscious of the coming of Joseph and Mary.

The resemblance though is, as well, represented in the final part of the poem. Since the Flemish saying "And the farmer continued to plough...," the tiller displays no responses. Corresponding to that state, the ship that Icarus downs nearby has to get to somewhere and sails discreetly on (2007: 17-21). Regarding "The Census at Bethlehem", it is obviously portrayed that no one of the characters recognizes Joseph and Mary, not just the four individuals alongside the sacred couple. The concept of disinterest is further represented in the mourning stated in the course of "The Fall of Icarus." With the tiller in its center, the shepherd and the shepherd's dog in the middle, the fisherman on the right corner are represented as being incurious to the sound of "the splash, the forsaken cry" (2007: 16). The seamen even appear as if they are deafening to the splash in the river only nearby the ship which is set against the symbol of sailors. It is motivating to observe that no one of the characters have been gazing in the direction of the movement of the feet of Icarus, also, the character of the fisherman seems very occupied to the extent that he did not pay attention to Icarus as he was sinking in front

of him. As well, the dog and herdsman were portrayed as totally unaware of the incident, whereas the tiller continues to plough with his head down. Subsequently, the sinking of the boy Icarus is "not" considered as "an important failure". Therefore, the only conclusion Auden derives is that, no matter what is happening around us, life will continue to go on:

They never forgot
That even the dreadful martyrdom must run its course
Anyhow in a corner, some untidy spot
Where the dogs go on with their doggy life
...the sun shone
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green
Water; and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,
had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.

(Auden, 2007: 9-14, 17-21)

Significantly, these paintings create an analogous stylistic parallelism in a distinguishing manner. Brueghel has smartly selected his characters to localize the paintings; the vertical and horizontal concentration of the paintings is not on the starring figures such as Mary or Icarus but on casual and irrelevant characters. For instance, the unconcerned shepherd with his dog look at a completely distinct tendency rather than Icarus, captures the precise parallel in the middle of the artwork. Brueghel's main character is further made figurative in "The

Census at Bethlehem." As existence goes on in its route in the artwork, Brueghel creates an employment of the Middle Ages icon of habitual life; the wheel of fortune. The fortune's wheel, with the twelve arms centralized round a circle, is utilized to symbolize the zodiac which in return symbolized individual life (Huson, 2004: 107-109). Allegorically, the wheel that is in the central position mirrors the notion that life goes on in its own route haphazardly regardless of how human beings are unaware to considerable alterations.

The two artworks echo their topical investigations. Just as the characters, the artworks explain Icarus and the heavenly couple at immaterial marks of the artworks. They have not been focused on; instead they have been absent in the worldly troubles of the embraced representations. In the poem, also, they have been ignored on verbal standard. Garrett declares that from the canvases of Brueghel, Auden selects as well as confirms the features that are moving away from the center, the aviation away from the widespread essence towards the different margin whereas nothing adheres (1986: 222-3). Garrett adds that Auden's poem, as the drawings that stimulated it, does not have centric focus around which the minimal considerable proceedings are marshaled; its utmost principal incident happens in its edges, "by the way" as it were (1986: 222-3). The style of resemblance concerning the notion of unawareness is reflected very efficiently in the course of the poem. Neither Mary nor Joseph are directly referred to in the text, but only in the context; the only indication regarding their analogy is formulated to Jesus Christ's "miraculous birth," and nevertheless, the name stays unstated (2007: 7). Auden has not used any pronouns such as "his," or

"he," save only when picturing "a boy" who was "falling out of the sky." The sole object pronoun in the poem, "him," is utilized to refer to the ploughman (2007: 17). Only the name of Icarus is mentioned once to refer to the worthlessness of the character or the event.

What's more, the grammatical strength of the poem is charmingly the most prominent. A number of twenty-one action verbs are delineated in the poem such as "turn away", "take place", "scratch", "run", and "fall", which are all suggesting total action. Some other verbs which are used in the poem are gerunds (three in a single line) so as to produce more vitality; "While someone else is **eating** or **opening** a window or just **walking** dully along" (2007: 4). It sounds very entertaining that many of the verbs of action are softened through the delineation of adverbs. The plurality of these nine adverbs have been utilized to breakdown the movement provoked by the verbs as in "**reverently**, **passionately** waiting," "walking **dully** along," and the "ship" which "sailed **calmly** on." All of the three time-adverbs manipulate a fundamental function in the reputation of this ekphrastic poem as a work of literature which focuses on a comprehensive phenomenon. The adverb "never" is mentioned twice and in both it is used to produce a sense of the poem's controversy which is an outcome of practice and understanding:

*About suffering they were **never** wrong,*

The Old Masters;

...

There always must be

Children who did not specially want it to happen, skating

On a pond at the edge of the wood:

*They **never** forgot*

That even the dreadful martyrdom must run its course.

(Auden, 2007: 1, 6-10)

Additionally significant to the ekphrastic inclinations of the poet, adjectives as well enhance the poem's semantic parallelism. A total of eleven adjectives involving colors as for instance "white" and "green" "on the white legs disappearing into the green water" (2007: 18). In opposition to the course of motion in the paintings, these adjectives do not address the sensation of hearing. Excluding the nouns "splash" and "cry", the poem, pays no due attention to the hearable features both canvases perhaps display. Disregarding the silent atmosphere in the poem that may result from the standpoint of the poem (ignorance); it gives the paintings an energetic and lively construction in addition to a verbal vitality which is enhanced through action-verbs and gerunds. Even the colors, as in the case of verbs, are evaded at some certain times.

In whatever way, Auden was not hesitant to take advantage of such adjectives. According to him, this poem has been a representatively confining ekphrastic poem designing lexicon-verbal squeeze on the artworks. As centric contextual characters in both artworks have been formerly unhappily neglected, Auden has not more troubled them with verbal domination; but did it in another way, the mode is frequently disclaiming and relaxed. Thereby, the verbal is not the predominant sister

any longer as pointed out in the words of Auden "poetry makes nothing happen" (cited in Kennedy,1996: 236).

4.4 Elizabeth Bishop

Elizabeth Bishop (1911-1979) is a modernist American prize-winning poet, translator, and fiction writer whose small body of verse during the 1960s perfected the intimate, observant voice of her earlier work and secured her place among the great American poets of the twentieth century.

While a senior at Vassar College in 1934, Bishop became friend to the poet Marianne Moore, who became an epitome for the young poet and stimulated her to pursue a life of writing. By nature, the shy and careful Bishop showed similar qualities as a writer, reviewing drafts endlessly and never hastening to publish, although her work was soon appearing in *The New Yorker* and *The Partisan Review.* During the 1940s, she began to spend summer in New York City and winter in Key West, Florida, a pattern her first two books of poetry, *North & South* (which won the Houghton Mifflin Poetry Award for 1946), and *North & South—A Cold Spring* (which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1955), mirrored in the diverse geographies and wisely thorough landscapes of those two parts of the United States.

In 1951, anxious to escape New York's competitive atmosphere, and frustrated after a scheduled trip to Italy to visit friend and fellow poet Robert Lowell fell through, Bishop sailed for South America on a journey around the world. In Petropolis, Brazil, while visiting the aristocrat Lota

de Macedo Soares, she suffered a violent allergic reaction to the local cashew fruit. Soares's care of Bishop during her prolonged illness generated a romantic relationship that would continue for fifteen years. Life in Brazil showed relaxing for the ever-wandering Bishop. By 1953, she had settled happily into Soares's rural estate, with its display of adoptive children and animals. Though detached from the social changes taking place back home, she kept herself updated of developments in poetry, but the trend towards free verse and confessionalism conflicted with her more classical sensibilities. Her experience of the Brazilian landscape and culture during the late 1950s and early 1960s assisted Bishop to write the ekphrastic poems that would form her third book, *Questions of Travel* (1965). Dividing the book into two sections, "Brazil" and "Elsewhere," she appeared to suggest that her new home, so unlike her childhood Nova Scotia and New England, had afforded her with the basis she wanted to discover regions of memory that nearness had denied her.

Bishop's distinctive eye for detail and her fondness for questions rather than answers in her poetry flourished on her experience of Brazil. In the poem "Questions of Travel," she asked of her lifelong wanderings, "What childishness is it that while there's a breath of life/ in our bodies, we are determined to rush/ to see the sun the other way around? / The tiniest green hummingbird in the world?" The second half of the volume digs into autobiographical elements which were avoided in her earlier work. "Sestina" evokes a moment with Bishop's maternal grandmother that entangles domestic comfort and sadness, probably at the absence of a daughter/mother. Typical of her ekphrastic poetry, Bishop often connects

the familiar with the strange to attain emotional tone, thus she described her grandmother's teacup as "full of dark brown tears." Though her stress on organized syntax and tone made Bishop's ekphrastic poetry sound conventional in comparison to other ekphrastic poetry of the modern epoch of time, the book *Questions of Travel* established a new richness of diction, an increasing curiosity at encounters with the natural world, and a relaxation with direct statement.

In the year 1970 Bishop's *Collected Poems* received a National Book Award, and Robert Lowell offered Bishop his teaching post at Harvard while he spent a year abroad. She accepted the offer and later chose to remain in Boston. While there, she finished a small volume of poems that would become her most critically praised book, *Geography III* (winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award in 1976), in which her representative gentle humor and clearness of vision were shown to have endured a lifetime of turmoil and loss. Bishop died of an embolism, and is buried in the Bishop family plot in Worcester, Massachusetts (Cone, cited in O'Neill, 2003:82).

Though physically and politically detached from the United States during the 1960s, Bishop composed during this time a body of ekphrastic poetry that not only gained the praises of contemporaries, but significantly impacted American poetry for the rest of the century. An easy mixing of precise sensory detail, lively phrasing, and complex prosody resulted in ekphrastic poems that permitted Bishop to reflect such personal issues as her own; alcoholism, sense of homelessness, and lesbian identity, without succumbing to the confessionalism that

dominated her time. For a time, the tribute "a poet's poet" detached Bishop from other poets of the age, but her ekphrastic poetry continues to show a capability for both speaking about and exceeding the topics of its period of time.

In her endeavors of ekphrastic poetry, when Elizabeth Bishop took out her watercolors and ink as she tended to do throughout her travelling life, it was often to capture some small-scale arrangement of ekphrastic objects like a liver-spotted croton leaf, a star cactus, a simple but graceful wildflower cluster, and wreaths in a cemetery. In her ekphrastic poetry, the subject is often a domestic interior, not home but a hotel room, a ship's cabin, or a hearth with no walls around it. Bishop's eye was often drawn to anything on a table; an oil lamp, a candleholder, tea placed for one person, or an untidy bouquet of daisies in a paint vessel. This attention to adjacent ekphrastic objects is hardly surprising in a poet who values useless concentration, and the emphasis on domestic interiors reflects her long meditation on the meaning and concept of home.

In her simple ink paintings and watercolor sketches, often unfinished but always enchanting, her readers can trace the ekphrastic style and manner of her ekphrastic poetry. An abundantly colored image of pansies besides a pile of books on an uneven tablecloth expresses her instinctive association of the ekphrastic connection of image and word. Bishop's words become visible in unusual angles of vision; the play with scale, the emotional language of colors, and a love for the humble. As with her ekphrastic poetry, her paintings sometimes represent a world, and a point of view, irregular to the viewer and, yet still, intimate. For

instance, Red Stove and Flowers is a wonderful piece of folk art in which the "magic" stove topped with pots of black beans and white rice is located on the same visual level and in the same scale combined with white and red flowers bursting from an unpolished jug.

Apparently in this intentionally simple, or let say "naive" image, the flowers are intended to be in the foreground, sized to point to their relative closeness in comparison to the background stove. Yet, without the perspective lines, the effect moves towards a psychological and emotional correspondence; aesthetic delight holds its place besides necessity. As if by "magic", painted in a Brazilian setting which preferred the occult, norms of amount and scale disappear and the stove and flowers fit in the same way on the picture plane as well as in the mind. The black background, which is a common tradition in Dutch and Spanish ekphrastic still life practices, creates intimacy to the extent that one cannot distance himself from this strange space. The wooden floor becomes a wooden table and the two objects become friendly gifts presented to the addressee "May the future's happy hours bring you beans and rice and flowers." Similar to the painting, the syntax of the greeting in the ekphrastic poem places the objects in equality, and it is the readers' job to regulate their position.

Rather than isolating the ekphrastic object in its poetic space, Bishop often presents her ekphrastic objects as arranged in shallow and intimate spaces. She loved to study people, and herself, via their things, removing her gaze from human purposes and labors to the ekphrastic objects in which they leave their trace. Her fondness for the domestic,

ekphrastic still life and the culture of the table gives her a similarity with the Dutch convention, yet while Dutch still life deals with the surfaces of things, Bishop's ekphrastic poetry analyses objects for the cultural and psychological knowledge they might comprise. From wild cliffs and coasts, she returned recurrently to more native, livable orders of "fish and bread and tea" (Bishop, in Giroux,1983:169). While she often deals with these ekphrastic objects in a familiar closeness and even biased detail, she carries at the same time the sense of an outsider, even an ethnographer.

Moreover, Bishop does not take up the subject matter of ekphrasis directly as a matter for formal experimentation as other poets do when dealing with ekphrasis as they tend to study pears, animate a pot of flowers, or emblematize a dish of nectarines. Instead, one finds within Bishop's portraits, domestic scenes, and travel poetics of ekphrastic moments in which objects are arranged and analyzed for their aesthetic and sensuous pleasure in addition to their silent cultural significance. In a manner characteristic of ekphrastic poetry, Bishop frequently foregrounds ekphrastic objects which are suspending human activity. Examples of such ekphrastic objects are; A begonia set on a doily, a scarlet fish in a frying pan, a wasp's nest on a pharmacy shelf, and an iron teakettle on a stove. These ekphrastic objects are treated as images belonging to stories and even, indirectly, to history. But Bishop moves these structures and narratives to the background and permits other ekphrastic objects to speak in the language of material culture.

Norman Byson identifies the matter of still life in ekphrastic poetry as:

> *the life of the table, of the household interior, of the basic creaturely acts of eating and drinking, of the artifacts which surround the subject in her or his domestic space, of the everyday world of routine and repetition, at a level of existence where events are not at all the large-scale, momentous events of history, but the small-scale, trivial forgettable acts of bodily survival and self-maintenance (1990:14).*

Bishop's ekphrastic imagery, the marginal stuff that she brings into concentration, conveys to her readers something significant that they could never see full-face. The hand-hewn blocks in "Questions of Travel" are the trace of Dutch presence in Brazil (Complete Poems:94), the "arctics and overcoats, lamps and magazines" in "In the Waiting Room" are things absent from the world demonstrated by her readers in their daily lives, but they look like, in an estranged gaze, just as "unlikely" (Complete Poems:159-161). This is the insignificant, transient, entropic material of the still life in ekphrastic poetry which art historians label as "rhopography," and Bishop's eye focuses on it not only to promote the ordinary, but also to read the everyday as the area in which the purposes of culture are carried or repelled.

Bishop knows that whereas humans may want materiality to precede culture, to be the ground of notions and the anchor of identity, they inevitably experience things within culture, within ideological and semiotic structures. Ekphrastic still life often suppresses the work of culture as it displays the goods of culture. These arrangements seem

given rather than made. The table is the principal site of material culture for the ekphrastic art of still life; even more than the household, it is the sign of home, the spot of conversion from nature to culture, raw to cooked. The table is also the sign of consumption and display, the two sides of cultural desire, the shelf being a related, prior location. In these relatively shallow spaces, as compared to the landscapes described by Bishop, local orders become defined in relation to material flux. Things convey the culture that precedes them, its relation to nature, and the place of individuals within that culture. Nevertheless, they preserve an alien aspect, an otherness.

Furthermore, in the seventeenth century, many examples of ekphrastic still life celebrated a wealthy, bourgeois existence and the national confidence of a productive culture able to import goods from distant places, a culture proud of its secular learning, but, as Simon Schama (1987) has expressed, also anxious about its spiritual health. Bishop greatly admired and imitated such art of description, but the cultures she represents are very different. Unlike the seventeenth century poets of ekphrasis, she often looks as an outsider at cultural positions different from her own and reflects, in an implicit way, on the ethics and politics of this outsider gaze. Thus, ekphrasis in her poems affords a refracted mirror, in which readers see themselves reflected, as well as the very different world to which these displays bear witness.

When Bishop's ekphrastic poetry represents and demonstrates worlds very different in class and region from that of her readers, a tension arises between the insights of social justice and aesthetic pleasure.

Bishop's imagination is drawn to the aesthetic impulse within poor and working-class life; she finds out the affective power of the minimal or tattered object. Actually, their poverty is part of the beauty of these arrangements for her, a relief from the extremes of first-world wealth. At the same time, one is stirred to pity the sufferings of these inhabitants and to see their arrangements in terms of the broader social and political environments.

Bishop's ekphrastic description of the Key West barbershop window in which she first sighted a painting by the Cuban folk artist Gregorio Valdes is itself a kind of frame painting:

> *the picture leaned against a cardboard advertisement for Eagle Whiskey, amid other window decorations of red and green crepe-paper ornaments and ribbons left over from Christmas and the announcement of an operetta at the Cuban school, all covered with dust and fly spots and littered with termites' wings (Bishop in Giroux,1984:51).*

The ornaments of culture here evoke a vanitas (the ekphrastic tradition which reminds readers, via symbols of time and erosion, of mortality). This society has little for sale and can give even less. But the colorful barbershop window forms a culture which rejects to be defined by necessity, which may escape into drink "Eagle Whisky", but may also elaborate its dark world with ornaments and operettas.

These descriptions are less pathetic than the house of the wealthier white woman in "Faustina, or Rock Roses" whose visitor, being the

narrator of the poem, is not embarrassed by "nakedness,/ though perhaps by its reverse," not by closeness to nature but by the power to refute it in the all-white ekphrastic display of "talcum powder,/ the pills, the cans 'cream'" which promise to ward off mortality. Nevertheless, readers of Bishop's ekphrastic poetry are often reminded of the vanity of human aspirations by the woman's pathetic display, her "clutter of trophies" (Complete Poems:72-74). An unambiguous vanitas, the poem recollects the entropy all cultures are subject to, even for those who are socially nominated masters, like the white woman who hires Faustina. Clearly, this white woman is racially as well as psychologically decorated, set as it is in chiaroscuro with a "black/ coincident conundrum (Complete Poems:73). There is no sense of home or hospitality in this gloomy environment being tense with race and class hierarchies undermined by mortality.

More to the point, Bishop's ekphrastic poetry can represent, then, poverty amid riches or riches amid poverty. It is a difficult moral balance that she would struggle with in her poetry, the equilibrium of "pity," even in the way and sense the word is used in "Questions of Travel" and how vague are its referent and pleasure (Complete Poems:93-94). As Margaret Preston has perceived, there are "so many tables of ekphrastic still life in modern paintings…because they are really laboratory tables on which aesthetic problems can be isolated" (Preston, qtd. in Lloyd,2005:6). For Bishop, these are ethical problems which make her think of how her readers can appreciate the aesthetic of the primitive without emotionalizing the minimal, or limited, situations which result in it, and how they can distinguish distinct regional conventions without

stereotyping their architypes. Via her ekphrastic poetry, Bishop represented a broader trend in American culture of the thirties when she turned her attention to rural and folk cultures in contrast to the sterile excesses of urban and dominant cultures. In ekphrastic poems like "Jeronimo's House" and "Cootchie" she represents the complex multicultural race and class oppressed local cultures of Key West. In this respect, she refuses to follow the dominant cultural tendency of the era to ignore the existence of difference. Nevertheless, she also domesticates and primitivizes racial variances and otherness, reifying her own privilege and reproducing the era's stereotypes (Roman,2001:51). Via probing into Bishop's ekphrastic representations of home objects within these regional cultures, one can see how she conveys this problem of cultural difference and aesthetic fascination.

"Jeronimo's House" (Complete Poems:34) was inspired by her observations of the Cuban emigres in Key West. Her letters imply a particular model:

> *down the street is a very small cottage I can look right into, and the only furniture it contains beside a bed and chair is an enormous French horn, painted silver, leaning against the wall, and hanging over it a pitch helmet, also painted silver (Giroux,1994:68).*

The poem is similarly an ekphrastic inventory of the Cuban's home belongings. Bishop brings the distant near in this small, shallow space via references to the radio and to the emigres cultural and political past, with the implication here of an aspiration lost to the ravages not only of

hurricanes but of political history itself. Yet, under the artifice of Jeronimo's voice, one can hear Bishop both universalizing his condition of living in frail shelters from the hurricane, and identifying with it personally by liking this minimal aesthetic and by sharing the desire for display. Particularly, Bishop exposes the scene of writing so that the near distances of Jeronimo become her own. In this poem, the narrow, primitive space of the Cuban's residence becomes interrupted with "writing paper/ lines of light," and the window through which the poet gazes into his home becomes an ekphrastic mirror, and his center-table becomes her desk. The "wasp nest" home of chewed up paper glued with spit reappears in "Santarem" as a figure for the poem (Complete Poems:186). The result of this ekphrastic practice is a linking of Bishop and her subject that neither subverts nor presumes full knowledge of the other.

Consequently, the combination of vanitas and festivity adds more complexity to the ekphrastic reading of "Jeronimo's House." He celebrates life even in the poorest conditions, and finds aesthetic abundance within spare circumstances. Nonetheless, as the poem delights in the visual exhibition and lively color, it climaxes the instability and brevity of this domestic order, the nearness of luxury to necessity, thus adding a note of melancholy. Bishop's readers do not see Jeronimo, who creates this order, but they hear of him, and his observation of the order he has made is different from their own. It is worth mentioning that the Roman word for ekphrastic still life, xenia, denotes both 'host' and 'guest', and he is both host and guest of this scene, thus he becomes the audience to his own theater. However, readers are also made to be guests and

audience to his performance by Bishop. They are aware of the energetic colors; scarlets, pinks, greens, blues, and aluminum, and the ornamental variety of shape as well; ferns, French horns, looping Christmas decorations, woven wickerwork and latticework on the veranda. As so often in ekphrastic poetry, all the senses are suggested within the visual field, smell and taste from the food, and sound from the radio, adding thus to the feeling of lavishness. Jeronimo's diction signifies his pleasure and pride in the order he has made; his "fairy place" which is "endowed" with spiritual value by himself as governor, although materially poor and small. Miniaturization makes this whole house along with its contents to be part of the ekphrastic still life of "little/ center table" (Complete Poems:3).

This variety of ornamentation and vitality which is addressed to the imagination, does not dismiss the material poverty of the "perishable/ clapboards," or the overall transience of the paper materials which mark the thin boundary between this house and the chaos of the weather, the hurricane. The consideration given to numbers in the course of the poem is in stark contrast to this domestic scene of an aesthetic of wealth. Here are four chairs, ten beads, two palm-leaf fans, four pink tissue-paper roses, and one fried fish. These are spare numbers against the "lottery numbers" and their dream of quick wealth, the same power of chance, in contrast to the weak, manmade order which brings the more expected hurricane.

Moreover, the lineation of the poem strengthens the fragility of the scene, yet at the same time permits the eye to register each item linked by

"and…and…and." (Complete Poems:167). The poem stresses the closeness of the culture of the table to the disordered and even threatening presence of nature, the sense of the raw is strongly merged here within the cooked. The house, as Jeronimo states, is a kind of "wasps' nest," an unplanned "affair" of "chewed-up paper/ glued with spit." The decorations preserve their origin in nature, the leaves planted in sponges, the palm-leaf fans. The little allowance for ornamentation at Christmas becomes the decoration that must sustain the inhabitants during the year. Jeronimo makes a space at Christmas for ornamentation, but not for Christ Child, the real child, the baby, is the significant one. Hitherto even here, demonstration and aesthetic pleasure, not only need and worth, order the objects.

Additionally, readers of Bishop's ekphrastic poetry feel that her ekphrastic objects are marked with an ethnic sense. The vibrant coloring and love of decoration sound to be part of a Southern baroque style that she contrasts with a more muted and colder northern culture. Similar to many ekphrastic examples of still life, this one evokes music, first with "an old French horn" redecorated with aluminum paint, and then with "flamencos" coming from the radio. The tastes suggested by the images clearly provide a contrast to the familiar diet of the Northern poet. Here one can finds a "scarlet sauce" for the classic still life fish, because it has been dressed, most likely, in red chili sauce. Jeronimo's house is obviously that of an emigre, his belongings are recording his frail connection to his origins. Objects are not universal or objective, they are instead ethnically coded, and Bishop enjoys this ethnic otherness even as

distinctions of class and political domination denote the difficult situations of Jeronimo's residence.

Consequently, one can read these ekphrastic images for their political pathos. Here is poor Jeronimo, barely getting by in Key West, touchingly celebrating the Cuban fight against Spain in the parade for Jose Marti. Marti, a Cuban poet, is a symbol not only of Cuba, but of exile and poetry as well. Bishop is obviously attracted to this aesthetic with its closeness to nature. She is attracted not as an insider but as an outsider who is coming from the world of excesses in New York and its hubristic "fantastic triumph" over nature (Complete Poems:13). Bishop sounds like aligning her ekphrastic art with Jeronimo's. in doing so she admits the limit of her knowledge, thus turning her ekphrastic poem away from ethnic description to metaphor. The poem calls attention to the order made by Jeronimo, the line "writing paper/ lines of light" recollects that all of this display depends on the ekphrastic poem itself. Ekphrastic poetry itself is something ad hoc, a papier-mache of the past. But if one direction of the poem is towards "rhopography", which is the display of the stuff of still life, what is transient, trashy, and every day, the other direction is obviously towards the "megalography", which denotes the conversion of poor materials to numinous riches. The poem, then, seems to float between these two impulses; rhopography and megalography, between economics and imagination, between the world of Jeronimo in the painting and that of Bishop in her poem.

The patriarchal Jeronimo manages his own private world, whereas the ekphrastic still life belongs to what is culturally defined as feminine

realm (Bryson,1990:136-178). It belongs to the space of the domestic, of nurture, of the table, of rest, of nature converted to culture, as opposed to the masculine space of the road, of the outdoors, of work and war, of movement and stress. Hence, her ekphrastic poem "Filling Station" (Complete Poems:127-128), follows the notion of this "dazzling dialectic" (Bryson,1990:185) in the concept of family. The poem recollects Walker Evans's images of American life along the roads of the South. More concretely, Bishop herself has seen Evans's photographs of small rural establishments which served as both home and business in the scenes of lonely barbershops and isolated gas stations which are backed by invisible private lives. The compositional delineation of Evans's advertising signs comes to mind as Bishop's speaker reads off the "ESSO-SO-SO-SO" printed on the oilcans at the end of the poem.

In Evans's interiors, as in Bishop's, the American ambitions are echoed back in dreadful yet somehow spirited and even cheerful circumstances of dwelling. The speaker, coming from the road, is marked by voice and attitude as different from her subjects, she is treated as more sophisticated and more urban than they. She approaches a male tableau, a father and sons handling fuel pumps, with anxiety. The "saucy" father and sons in their "monkey suits" are not yet human. They ought to be "civilized" by the feminine principles. However, as the speaker's look moves towards the entrance and the ekphrastic world of still life, the "disturbance" is calmed. The animal component which is now compassionately exemplified as a dog in a chair is made "comfy." Bishop stresses that the domestic realm is not an independent one, the wickerwork is "grease impregnated," but sensuality has become domestic.

The ekphrastic still life scene on the entrance adds a "note of color" to this poem in grays and blacks:

Some comic books provide

the only note of color-

of certain color. They lie

upon a big dim doily

draping a taboret

(part of the set), beside

a big hirsute begonia (Complete Poems:127).

The combination of books and flowers is a tradition of ekphrastic still life arrangement, but here there are comic books instead of serious bulky books, in place of a stylish flowery arrangement there is a "big hirsute begonia." "Hirsute" here means "hairy," reminding readers of the hairy males living there. The feminine "doily" drapes like a skirt, on it "lie" the fictional comic books. The conversion of nature to culture is temporary and artificial by definition. The ornamental element sounds indeed "extraneous" and a little ridiculous. However, this is a confirmation of both the comic spirit and the aesthetic impulse for calming the animal inside humans and providing a relief from the anxious drive of technology.

In this basic portrayal of Middle America, Bishop affirms Constance Rourke's observation that humor is an element of national

character. At first, the comedy of the poem condescending to the people who live at the filling station. But then the speaker is drawn to this aesthetic planning though it be "dim," she questions the planning, yet also distinguishes and enjoys it. Therefore, she becomes an insider, overcoming the high and low dissimilarity of cultural preferences. The speaker pauses to note detail, the parentheses in the poem "(part of the set") are affording a typographical equivalent to the ekphrastic stillness of still life, the arrangement which is deferred from the forward movement of travel. She seems to forget all about the road in the theater of the ekphrastic still life. The language of the speaker reflects the still life incongruities, introducing words like "taboret" and "hirsute," into the colloquial world of comfy and saucy or of "oily" and "doily," in a similar way to the baroque elements of Jeronimo's residence. Thus, the ekphrastic still life moment here has a calming function; the aesthetic norm quiets the "high-strung" life of the road.

Furthermore, the final stanza of the poem emphasizes two central characteristics of ekphrastic still life which are; the absence of agency and the intransitivity of the image. Bryson argues that still life is the world minus its narrative, or the world minus its capacity for generating narrative interest (Bryson,1990:60-61). Nevertheless, Bishop's ekphrastic poem awakens just this interest "somebody embroidered the doily." The poem moves to the present tense as if to merge the static "still moment" of life and the continuous presence of life "somebody/ arranges the rows of cans." Eventually, the poem suggests a third, transcendent temporality, "somebody loves us all" (Complete Poems:128). The last two stanzas of "Filling Station" induce temporal paradoxes in a method typical of

ekphrasis. If still life or a spatial art suppresses narrative, then the verbal art awakens it. The verbal here in this poem does not compete with the visual but complements it. This is particularly seen in the end of the poem where the visual and the verbal overlap in the oilcans lined up to read "ESSO-SO-SO-SO." The prompt may be advertising, the visual text is messy with brand names, but Bishop's "SO-SO-SO" reminds readers also of the way poetry alters instrumental language into pleasurable sounds.

If Bishop's ekphrastic poetry is of the everyday, she is also concerned with alterations of the conventional. As with the modern art of the ekphrastic object, Bishop's alterations often include uncanny disruptions of scale. Her ekphrastic poem "12 O'Clock News" (Collected Poems:174-175) provides a vocational still life as is apparent in the poem's treatment of; the philosopher's study, the artist's studio, the geographer's desk, and the musician's chamber. Whereas some of the ekphrastic poems of Bishop bring the distant culture near, this ekphrastic poem presses out from the personal. Bishop here defamiliarizes the artist's materials for the sake of both achieving an ethnographer's distance from her own work, and also for bringing her own scene of writing into contact with distant political realities in an ekphrastic manner. In this poem she describes her writing desk yet expands it to the scale of landscape while at the same time insisting on the closeness of the objects. On the left margin she gives, in italics, an inventory; to the right side of each item there is a prose block which converts the item into a feature in a landscape.

By describing the ekphrastic objects of her creative activity; typewriter, ink-bottle, and typewriter eraser, as characteristic of a third world war zone, she implies the confusion of the creative mind from the viewpoint of a rational mind. The voice of the news broadcast which echoes the voice of wartime organizations shifts the lyric voice. The rhetorical stance and viewpoint which line up as the "tiny principality" (Complete Poems:174) are perceived from the perspective of aerial investigation, though the intimate perception of the writer remains imbedded. Bishop releases ekphrastic objects from their quotidian, functional meaning and accordingly liberates the dream work of the personal and social psyche. The "superior vantage point" (Complete Poems:175) of the news report therefore uncovers the ekphrastic objects even while it distances itself from the spiritual influence. Bishop's typewriter eraser is "a unicyclist-courier" and "native" of the land of creativity which is located in a fallen, pathetic state, overcome by the powers of normative quality.

In this poem, as in many of Bishop's ekphrastic poems, she struggles against a steady, dichotomous regulation of small ekphrastic objects being converted to large ones. Instead, she unsettles the scale of small and large several times over. As she says of the typewriter eraser that is turned into native rebel "A live, he would have been small, but undoubtedly proud and erect, with the thick, bristling black hair typical of the indigenes" (Complete Poems:175). Various criteria of measure; political, spiritual, and physical, are at play here. As an incarnated ekphrastic object, the typewriter eraser has been converted by Bishop from a hand-sized thing to a human-sized thing. However, the "superior

vantage point" of the rationalist shrinks the cyclist figure as an ethnic subaltern, putting thus the human back into the enormous, unseen hand of the state. This ekphrastic object is at the middle of the public and the personal, the distant and the near. As an image of ekphrastic objects in an intimate, personal realm, it points towards the world of the individual, and being an ekphrastic image of vocational objects, it points to the social position of the artist. This ekphrastic poem refuses to stabilize the relation of tenor and vehicle, it protests an imperialist war, as Bishop returned and finished the poem during the Vietnam war, even if as it surveys the private war of the imagination.

The scene of writing functions, often in Bishop's ekphrastic poems, whether as figure or as ground. In "The Bight" the desk appears implicitly at the end of the poem where metaphor gradually moves from landscape to the ekphrastic still life and the "little white boats in the Key West harbor are "torn-open, unanswered letters" (Complete Poems:60). In all the examples of ekphrastic still life in Bishop's ekphrastic poetry one can notice her attraction to "untidy activity" over formal, static orders, whereas in "The Bight" she suggests that disorder is related to the absence of a key to all correspondences. As is observed by Rosemary Lloyd "often and increasingly so in modernist works, the ekphrastic still life objects convey a sense of messiness, of disorder, of chaos impinging on a world from which theological certainties were being eroded" (Lloyed,2005: xiii). In this poem the untidiness is "awful but cheerful" (Complete Poems:61), whereas in "12 O'Clock News" the disorder is the result of war rather than of neglect.

The vagueness of this ekphrastic poem increases at every level, and at every level it has manner on the play of distance and nearness. "12 O'Clock News" is an ekphrastic prose poem. The basic hybridity highlights a synthesis of animate and inanimate ekphrastic objects like the "gooseneck lamp" (Complete Poems:174). The list of ekphrastic objects on the left side of the poem sounds voiceless when compared to the clear public voice of the broadcaster on the right side. In this ekphrastic poem even time is itself ambiguous as it is not mentioned if it is 12 o'clock here in the scene of writing or there in the war torn country, or if it is 12 o'clock a.m. or p.m. Readers are provided with descriptions via a radio communicator whereas the poem is set in a completely different location. Dislocation, defamiliarization, difficulty of seeing, and vagueness of what readers are seeing are all features of Bishop's ekphrastic poetry, even though living in detail. Therefore, the "plain" in this poem is anything but not plain. Readers are never only "here" or "there," in the metaphoric constructions of life.

Subsequently, the dualities which are represented by Bishop in her ekphrastic poems are compounded rather than relieved as one try to enter the world described in the blocks in her poetry. The problem is not simply in the white space between items and descriptions or in the landscape's metaphoric relation to the desk. Within the description itself "visibility is poor: (Complete Poems:174). For instance, while identification is straightforward enough in the left-hand inventory, labeling is problematic throughout the right-hand prose writing. Bishop states that "our aerial reconnaissance reports the discovery of a large rectangular "'field,' hitherto unknown to us, obviously man-made. It is dark-speckled. An

airstrip? A cemetery?" (Complete Poems:174). Here the implied metaphors remove the recognized adjustment of scale and perception; the "typewriter," is enlarged to an "escarpment," and is then reduced to fish scales. The narrator's voice as well minimizes what the poet has extended; while the desk has become a geographic region, it is a "tiny principality" (Complete Poems:174). Similarly, "the typewriter eraser" which is enlarged to a fallen "unicyclist-courier" is then referred to in life to have been "small, but undoubtedly proud and erect" (Complete Poems:175). Difficulties of seeing and explanation in fact mark every paragraph, and much is said to be "undisclosed" as if there were some superior position of knowledge from which the speaker is quoting. Thus, from her desk, Bishop destroys the presuppositions of knowing the other even as she asserts that the other is her audience.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE POWER OF EKPHRASIS IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH POETRY

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The Power of Ekphrasis in Contemporary English Poetry

5.0 Introduction

Contemporary literary writings on ekphrasis, echoing the poetry of ekphrasis after modernism, intends not to follow the traditional idealism of an immediate exchange between the artwork and the poem to a concept of ekphrasis that comprises a broad realm of paintings in addition to their contexts. The respectful correlationship of the poet to the artwork is shattered and overthrown by the painting's privilege in the challenge of the modernistic moods of convenience and incarnation and the possibilities for regeneration; it has not been dealt with as a sacred object. This fresh frankness pushes towards the representation of further artistic shapes in poems. In addition to probing for imitative ekphrastic correlations with paintings and sculpture, contemporary poets use visible works from non-representational sources as well as core arts like graffiti and collage.

It is noteworthy that contemporary poets, during their writing into the 21st century, own a prosperous, complicated and, utmost basically, two-sided artistic inheritance. They receive their allusions from the visual art sphere. However, they have conformed with the explanations of artworks and the visual portraits, created by generations of American and British poets before them. Contemporary poetry is featured through its inquiries with exemplification and its thoughts about the picture's nature. Accordingly, modernity establishes a permanent fountain of revelation.

For example, Stevens' jar and Williams' wheelbarrow are most fundamental to contemporaneous poets while composing on visible art rather than the armors and vases of traditional ekphrastic convention.

Numerous critics have lately elucidated their annoyance with what Marjorie Perloff states as the tiresome contrast that has dominated the debate of poetics of "the twentieth century for much too long: that is among post-modernism and modernism" (2002:1). Since a variety of contemporary British, American and Irish poets continue to gather their revelation from modernist fountains, progressively as moving towards the 21st century, many of them have supposed that the flow of poetry perhaps turns once more towards the inventive models of modernism. It is observed that the refreshed modernist motive is considered not only as a shape of yearning or a withdrawal, but also as a permanence and restoration of those foremost, discontinuous motivations, emerging from the identical group of conditions. The critic Kevin Dettmar debates the notion of modernism as not being a mere method of composing but also a method of reading, in addition to the idea that the utmost remaining of those Modern versions sound obviously postmodern (1992:14). In a different expression, contemporary ekphrastic poets do not solely go back to the efficacious modernist poets for inspiration or ideas, rather, they try to be identified with their specific set of conditions, and viewing parallels with their own. They seek to create their sort of post-modernist inscription according to Marjorie Perloff's statement of a "second wave of modernism" (2002:5).

As a matter of fact, it is evident that 21st ekphrastic poetry is not merely a prominent genre amidst poets, for whom in every issue the interpretation of pictures into words becomes constantly a contemporary interest, but an aware continuation in numerous cases. In fact, particular versions and whole journals are devoted to the undertaking of the genre, besides Ekphrasis Prize every year which is given to the finest poem which deals with visible art. Knowing how to write an ekphrastic poem about a piece of art has been a fundamental part of inventive shaping curriculums, and a concerned survey exposes numerous academic surveys dedicated to the ekphrasis study as a literary pattern and as a critical concept. It has received numerous critical and inventive concerns, manifesting throughout books, articles, encyclopedia entries, magazines or weblogs. Those have been fascinating if just for affording an overview about trend conceptions regarding what seems like a rebirth of the convention of ekphrasis in contemporaneous poetic writings, as well as of responses concerning the manner which has been progressively becoming theorized and known as a theme.

This chapter, therefore, draws out more issues gathered about the ekphrasis development as an agency through investigating some of the well-acclaimed Contemporary British, American and Irish poets and examining their resumed expansion of definite ekphrastic thoughts. The aim is to explore why there appears to become an increasing case of composing about art in American, British and Irish poetry of the contemporary epoch, in addition to the renewed power of such writing, why the poets who symbolize visible art appear to act it further regularly and to provide it an important status in their poetry, and how and why it

has progressively turns into a medium for ideas on the art of poetry itself, besides for the social and political suggestions of the pictures with which it attracts. The works of contemporary British, American as well as Irish poets, contradict Michael Benton's declaration that almost all contemporary ekphrasis is "actual ekphrasis," built on actual pictures, through subverting and experimenting the borders of this definition (1997: 367).

This chapter asserts then that ekphrasis becomes greatly widespread accompanying each and every consecutive group of poets, not merely due to those poets' accord with other ekphrastic poets who preceded them in this regard, like the modernists, but also because they see in it the seed and the inspiration for their own absolutely contemporary thoughts. Becoming further free-flowing than a hypothesis, ekphrasis appears to conform to grasp the zeitgeist of the culture of every generation of ekphrastic poets, functioning as memory in its stable procedure of seeing again the antique and juxtaposing it with the up-to-date. Hence, the aim of this chapter is devoted to survey the power and the treatment of ekphrasis in four contemporary British, American, and Irish, male and female poets, namely: Anthony Cronin, Angie Estes, Michael Hamburger, and Joy Harjo respectively. It affords a further common vision of the probabilities of ekphrasis in the contemporary poets' works. It glimpses especially at such contemporary poets, discussing how they use pictures from paintings in their poems to symbolize individual chronicles by remembrance and manipulate time; that droves to an investigation of how they use ekphrasis to compete with and even to rival the deontology of demonstrating general themes.

5.1 Anthony Cronin

Anthony Gerard Richard Cronin (1928-2016) is a well-known contemporary Irish poet, novelist, biographer, and critic. He was, for more than half a century, Ireland's most prominent man of letters. As an Irish poet, Cronin was unusual in not writing about landscape, childhood or large questions of Irish identity. His poems were often formal in their structures and wry in their tones. He liked clear statements and paradox. He was concerned with fragility and human frailty, and also with public events. His interest in modernity, postmodernity and history culminated in an extended sonnet sequence entitled The End of the Modern World in 1989. His work and his engaging, brilliant, combative personality arose from a mixture of lyric feeling, a sort of awe at the complexity of the world, and a hard-edged rationalism (Bradley,1980:152).

As a poet who enjoys formal poetic structure, Cronin composed a number of ekphrastic poems which are concentrating on various themes and notions. Among his ekphrastic poems is "Lines for A Painter" (Abse, 1986: 149-151) which has its inspiration from Patrick Swift's painting entitled "Tree in Camden Town". In its title, Cronin's ekphrastic poem is itself dedicated to the painter Patrick Swift.

It is worth mentioning that Cronin and Swift were friends. Cronin's poem is about the differences between artistic and poetic creation from his point of view. In the first stanza of the poem, Cronin compares the process of artistic creation to a process of growth that is in harmony with the exterior world. According to Cronin, Swift paints the tree and the different shades of green of the foliage, as naturally as the light filters

through the leaves outside the window, and falls on the canvas inside his studio.

The poet's task is more toilsome because he may be restrained by a mental block that involves the processes of ideation, discursive thought, and the limitations of language. He is jealous of the painter's inspiration which unites his mind and hand, the communion he feels with nature and the mimetic correspondence of the tree and the painting:

And I sat on the bed trying unsuccessfully to write,
Envying you the union of the painter's mind and hand,
The contact of brush with canvas, the physical communion,
The external identity of the object and the painting you
Had planned (6-10)

Cronin thinks that the act of painting is more immediate while the poet depends on his memory which can play capricious games with him, and even be broken into "shards of memory". "The external identity of the object" is a clear reference to the iconic dimension inherent in the medium of painting which, according to Cronin, makes the act of painting more objective, and makes "the contact of brush with canvas" more immediate. It denotes the possible correspondence between the visual identity of the tree, on one hand, and of the painted tree on the other, implying that words, by comparison, have a much more indirect relation to external reality.

Furthermore, Cronin considers the painter more of a draughtsman than the poet; although both painting and poetry originate in the mind as mental images and/or ideas. Once the object of the painting is perceived, the artist paints it more easily than the poet seeking his words. Writing, for Cronin, depends on fragmented mnemonic activity and poetic words which carry symbolic connotations. On a more personal level, in this stanza Cronin also implies the difficulty of writing a commissioned ekphrastic poem about his friend's painting:

For among the shards of memory nothing that day would grow
Of its own accord
And I thought I could never see, as you saw, the tree on
The canvas,
One draughtsman's word. (14-16)

In the fourth stanza of Cronin's ekphrastic poem, he asserts the difference between poetry and painting by comparing poetry and prose. For Cronin, poetry springs from the "rubble of thought". Metaphorically speaking, rubble signifies a heap of wasted pieces of stone or brick which are fragmented yet solid enough to lead to poetry. For the poet, poetry is also different from prose which is based on dialectics, binary oppositions, and/or logical argumentation. The day he tried to compose his ekphrastic poem, Cronin was defensive and rational, seeking "the pro-and-con, prose-growing, all too argumentative / poems sought" (19-20).

Until the end of stanza four, Cronin is convinced that the painter's perception is based on the objectivity of seeing. The tree resembles any

other tree "inside and outside the studio, / something/ which was itself, not you" (24-26). One of Cronin's implications is that poetry cannot depend on an external referent or model as much as painting does. Poetic words signify their meanings through connotations, "In the petrol fumes and gold of a London summer was the / tree you drew" (22-23). Swift's tree is in Camden Town, a damp, polluted yet rich suburb of London. The "petrol fumes" signify pollution while "the gold of a London summer" clearly signifies richness.

Nevertheless, Swift's painting 'Tree in Camden Town' depicts a natural scenery which acquires a symbolic dimension when observed by the viewer through the painter's subjectivity. Swift's tree is central to the composition. Between the tree in the foreground, and the town's buildings in the background, there is a bridge which symbolizes the position of the artist as an intermediary between the tree, the symbol of life and regeneration, and the suburban town behind, symbolizing a civilized urban order. Since the painter views the tree from an open window, he also links the external world of nature to the internal world of the artist.

The empty blue-white spaces on the right and the pale pink space under the bridge accentuate the airy, ethereal quality of the scenery which stands in contrast to the rectangular shapes of the windows in the background. Swift's point of view in his composition is achieved by the merging of the two diagonals which represent the two tree trunks. The painter's open rectangular perspective adds depth to his composition by making the eye move through the two central tree trunks towards the remote space at the extreme limit of the background. The open

perspective allows the eye to move, initially upwards, rather than downwards towards the bridge, signifying a new order of growth, expansion, and regeneration.

Additionally, in this painting, the subdued pastel colors of the background are in contrast with the rich variety of the green shades of the foliage, adding yet more depth to the composition. Swift's usage of the different shades of green create a variety within the unity of the painting which is obtained by the repetition and the correspondences of color, tones, forms and lines. He achieves variety by the alternation of the warm colors of the tree trunks with the green shades of the foliage. Unity is gained by the delineation of the many harmonious shades of light and dark green and the repetition of the angular shapes of the tree, and the linearity of the bridge which opens up towards the town through the triangular point of view. Therefore, "Tree in Camden Town" is a symmetrical painting; there is a building on the left, one in the middle and another on the right side, hidden behind the tree. With the two tree trunks which almost meet on the bottom of the canvas, the painting presents a symmetrical perspective, with the round bridge adding depth to the composition.

Consequently, in his "Lines for A Painter", Cronin is more and more convinced that Swift's perception, like that of the poet and the viewer, is made up of objectivity and subjectivity. Cronin conveys his changing thoughts by including a story in the poem as the two friends walk to the local pub and speak. The anecdote included in this ekphrastic poem shows how a narrative content unfolds the notion of temporality. It

contains the temporal progression of Cronin's thought and implies the changes that accompany the passage of time. Cronin develops his thought and relates it to the past "Well envying I have said" (27). He tells his friend his present thoughts that evening. As Cronin speaks to Swift, the cause of his envy, and, as a result, his relation to the painter changes. The poet does not envy the painter because the latter is "released from any obligation" for the act of painting depends more or less on objectivity than "thinking the word". He probably does not envy the painter because the latter is free to paint the tree in Camden town which is not a commissioned painting. The poet envies the painter, mainly because the latter is free of the dichotomy of thought and feeling whereas the poet's thoughts, because they rely on memory, can sometimes be fragmentary.

Despite the fact that both the poet and the painter may depend on their eidetic memories through which they can store, remember, and reproduce their visual perceptions and, then, transform them into mental images, the poet, according to Cronin, is more apt to "think the word" and elaborate his images through language. To create in their respective media, both the poet and the painter must link their thoughts to deeply felt emotions. Through the poem's actions which describe the two friends walking while talking and through the anecdote, Cronin affirms Lessing's argument that the poem represents bodily forms indirectly through actions. In fact, the poet has the insight that the making of his poem occurs in "the cooling twilight" (29) while walking:

I saw what in truth I had envied –

Not in fact

That you were released from any obligation,

Or that the act

Of painting was less or more objective

Than thinking the word (31-36)

The dialogue between Cronin and Swift in the narration reveals the tension between the poet's prior perception of the painter and of his artistic activity and his present comprehension. By emphasizing that difference, Cronin goes even beyond Lessing's argument and shows how, through a narrative context, a poetic text can represent the impacts of time which imply change. In fact, by revealing the evolution of his thoughts and notions, Cronin demonstrates that the poem indirectly represents bodies or forms, not only through actions, but also via thoughts and perceptions.

Based on Lessing's premise that, both pictorial and poetic art, are based on mimesis. Charles O. Hartman explains the interrelations between language, prosody, speech, and mimesis for the poet and the reader:

> *On the one hand, the poem itself is made of words, or rather of language; it is a semiological artifact. This artifact is organized and made to mean, not only by the conventions that make all the acts of language mean, but by additional semiological systems that depend on further, specialized conventions. Many of these additional systems fall into the category of prosody. But yet, the*

> *poem imitates speech and, ultimately the dynamics of thought codified (or perhaps, imitated) by speech - - "the 'thing' whether subjective or objective." At times the imitation seems, to both poets and readers, gratifyingly close. Poetic language offers the poet a powerfully precise medium in which to present "the poetic fact"; it provides the reader with a precise guide for his own replication of the poet's experience of that "fact". (Hartman, 1980: 140)*

According to semiotics, the poem is an artifact made up of linguistic signs and/or symbols that carry codified and conventional meanings which also depend on the rules of prosody. Hartman contends that the poem imitates speech and is, in turn, regulated and imitated by speech, and the systemic codes of the cognitive processes, whether they refer to or internalize objective and subjective phenomena. According to this paradigm, the poem imitates concrete reality, and is, therefore, regarded as an artifact or a "thing" that can either be objective or subjective. Thus, the language of poetry gives the poet a strong medium with which he can re-present external or internal reality poetically, whereas the reader can imitate and re-produce his own experience of the poetic fact by interpreting and/or writing new poems or different poetic versions.

Nonetheless, in the last two stanzas of this ekphrastic poem, Cronin sees the act of creation as an insight; like his poem, Swift's painting is a gift of his true self, relinquishing its defenses, surrendering to appearances and, ultimately, to the ephemeral experience of love:

But that, like poems, your painting

Was of course the reward

Of the true self yielding to appearances

Outside its power

While still in the dominion of love asseverating

Its absolute hour. (37-42)

Therefore, the reader attends to Cronin's changing perception; from a first comparison between the painter's and the poet's individual manner of creativity, Cronin then moves to an introspective understanding of creativity, in general. Cronin's insight is that he composes the poem when he is led by a strong emotion like love which he attains while walking and talking with his painter friend Swift. Both the poet and the painter create through their true selves when seeming yields to being. The word "appearances" may signify the poet's external aspect, his social persona, and/or the circumstances of his commissioned poem. Cronin's emphasis is that the poet must abandon himself in order to create. Paradoxically, the true self can only assert itself and be linked to the absolute when it knows and declares that it has lost itself to love. Hence, creativity can be explained by the transfer of the poet's psychic energy into his poem when this energy is released by a strong emotion.

In Cronin's ekphrastic poem "Lines for A Painter", the notion of temporality is developed via the two friends' action and dialogue, included in the anecdote of the poem. Yet, when the poem is considered

in its entirety, its message becomes timeless and universal, transcending Lessing's limitations. Cronin and Swift's ekphrastic relation is social; their dialogue conveys the two friends' evolving relation, their differences and similarities.

Since it comments on the process of its own creation by referring to Swift's painting, Cronin's poem is both referential and self-referential, containing a meta-poetic dimension that reflects the poem's making. When reading the single words or phrases that stand out among Cronin's stanzas, "light – had planned – grow – the canvas – poems I sought – tree you drew – outside its power – its absolute hour", the reader will see that the poet's inspiration is a moment of enlightenment beyond the planned mental construct, the writing of the poem, involving the non-containment of emotion under the "dominion of love". Artistic creation would, then, be the abandonment of the self to the profound inner self where the boundaries between the exterior and the interior lie under twilight, and the self is energized by an emotion that re-shapes the world, by a strong universal emotion like love.

5.2 Angie Estes

Angie Estes (1950-) is a contemporary American poet. She is the author of six collections. Her first one, *The Uses of Passion* (1995) was the winner of the Peregrine Smith Poetry Prize. Her second book *Voice-Over* (2002) won the FIELD Poetry Prize and was also awarded the Alice Fay di Castagnola Prize from the Poetry Society of America. Furthermore, her *Chez Nous* was published in (2005), while *Tryst* (2009) was selected as one of two finalists for the 2010 Pulitzer Prize. Her book

Enchantee (2013) won the 2015 Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award, while her most recent poetry collection is entitled *Parole* and was published in (2018). She received many awards and her poems have appeared in numerous literary magazines. Estes got her M.A. and Ph.D. in English from the University of Oregon and worked for several years as professor of American Literature and Creative Writing at California Polytechnic State University.

Angie Estes is regarded one of the most ekphrastic poets in contemporary American poetry. However, because she is not composing narrative poetry, she challenges traditional theories and notions of ekphrastic art. For instance, Stephen Cheeke states that "the division between the rhetoric of art criticism and the poetry of ekphrasis is only a matter of degree" (2008:4). Cheeke's observation here would imply that the aim of ekphrastic poetry is to clarify the unnoticed or the unsaid in visual art. Nevertheless, the implication runs counter to the method in which art is employed in much of contemporary poetry. Despite the fact that Estes's poetry delineates the term "visible parlare" (Estes,2013:17). And often describes talking paintings, she is not trying to write poetry that simply speaks for the mute artworks she is referring to. Therefore, when Heffernan describes ekphrasis as "a verbal representation of pictorial representation" (1993:3), he oversimplifies the way a contemporary poet like Estes is delineating art. Estes uses works of art as images in lyric poems that are intentionally escaping the narrative structure that Cheeke's opinion and Heffernan's definition would suggest. In a recent essay, Stephen Burt refers to Estes's poetry as "nearly Baroque", emphasizing that "Estes's imagined motions, the serpentine

curves of her irregular lines, take her not only from artwork to artwork but also from place to place, stitching together in her imagination" (2014:64). Estes has said that she distrusts the narrative in poetry. Instead, she "thinks of a poem as…filled with 'divine details,' and the poem is an arranged place-like the golden chalices, rubies, emeralds, and stained glass windows of Abbot Suger's chapel-where experience happens" (Rigby,2014).

In her first book of poetry, *The Uses of Passion*, Estes explores the notion that poetry might speak for mute artworks, but while doing so, she moves beyond that idea to work with the ekphrastic object toward a sense of shared meaning. Her poems tend to complicate the vision presented by the painting via bringing other images and experiences of the poetic response to the visual artwork. Because of Estes's ekphrastic object in her poem "Giotto's Last Judgement," there is no difference between the literal and the anagogical, or as the speaker in the poem puts it, "in his painting / there is little or no distinction between the human and the divine" (54). Surprisingly, this is not true of the poem, which contains used carpet salesmen and senior yearbooks. Because Giotto does not delineate the Renaissance practice of perspective, the poet explains that "In rapture," the two-dimensional elect "do not know that they are almost / an artistic failure" (Ibid.). The two dimensions of this painting are similar to the dual dimensions of the earthly and the divine that work throughout the poem and the artwork, for just as Giotto's "Last Judgement' pictures the saved and the damned, so the poem compares the angel reciting history to a "used carpet salesman explaining how passion / first spilled onto life like a stain / and often stayed indistinguishable / from the color of the

fabric itself" (54-55). The play on the word passion introduces a theme of divine and earthly love, which is both in the painting and outside of it.

Moreover, the angels go on to demonstrate that they are in fact an artistic success, because:

Giotto's fresco lets the angel give
one last pitch: everything,

he continues to insist, reminds us
of something else, points
to something beyond

its own name: the way a spot
on the heart's mirror leaps once
and then lies flat forever

and absence, thin as air,
left alone long enough
turns to flame. (55)

The idea that everything reminds us of something else is a medieval aesthetic, recalling Dante's letter to Con Grande, so it implies a movement from the historical or literal level outside the canvas to the anagogical level within it. Hence, there is no doubt that this is Dante's visible parlare, or as Estes quotes "the painting is developing a voice"

(2013:31). However, even in this early work, Estes insists on doing more than simply describing the artwork as if she were an art critic. The painting is like everything else in the poet's experience. It reminds her of something higher, but it also reminds her of very earthly objects outside the canvas itself; a carpet salesman, a yearbook, a heart monitor and the absence of love. This movement to the higher state of being represented by Giotto's artwork requires some very earthly experiences that the speaker and audience of the painting bring to the experience of viewing it.

More to the point, "St. Francis Preaching to the Birds" is another ekphrastic response to Giotto and also a poem which is interested in thinking about how art might achieve speech. Despite the title of the poem, it emphasizes that "no one / in the painting speaks" (*Passion*:6). Yet, the painting moves from the literal to the anagogical with the structural elements of language:

So far, only one thing reaches
toward heaven, a tree whose spine curves
behind them like a comma, and in the space it frames
at the center of the painting is a pause
on which an evening grosbeak and a pigeon
still intend to land. (6)

In these lines, the shape of the comma connotes a silent speech, which reifies itself to the degree that it creates physical space on which birds can land. This dichotomy of silent speech occurring within art appears again

when St. Francis becomes an artist inside of the painting or at least inside the poet's imaginary view of it:

St. Francis drew them
a picture of the hole in the ground

where what was once the ground
used to be, and without speaking a word
before he turned to leave said, Let us
pray to this place that is not
a place, let the three toes
of this tree hold on

while the gold flecks of the sky
peel back; let us believe that we can say
what it will be like to stay put:
at first a flock of bushtits, nipping
at the heart; then overhead,
the unaccountable stars. (7)

In this extract, they dwell in this place that is no place, where the physical can become language and language can become tangible. Without uttering a word, St. Francis is able to talk to the birds and pray for them, as he prays for transcendence. Just similar to Giotto's painting which is meant to move his audience from their physical, historical space to the

anagogical space, St. Francis gold flecks peel back to reveal "unaccountable stars." The saint and his image perform to comfort the birds, while lifting his audience, both the audience of the fresco and the audience of the poem, up to a higher level.

Consequently, in the later books of Estes, her delineation of ekphrasis becomes even more complex. *Tryst's* "Takeoff" is a good instance of a poem in which she uses visual artworks as images to make a greater thematic point. The title of the poem offers a hint of its theme. The poet is concerned with emotional elevation and specifically the type that comes from love. Throughout the poem, Estes is interested in both divine and earthly love. This explication is indicated by Camille Saint-Saens's Samson and Delilah in which Delilah sings to Samson that her "heart opens / at his voice" (*Tryst*:7), and yet still she will betray him because of his loyalty to Yahweh. The concept of earthly love is also referenced by the lover, who is taking off on a plane, and the lifting up that occurs during sensual climax at the poem's end.

Estes calls on two paintings to assist her develop the theme of divine and earthly love in the poem. The first is Fra Angelico's painting of the Saints Cosme and Damien. Before becoming third century martyrs, these men were doctors, who, according to legend, cared for the poor. Their spiritual form of love is described by the Latin expression, caritas, or charity. When Cosme and Damien refused to deny their Christian faith, they were stoned, hung on a cross, shot with arrows and beheaded. At this point in the poem, the central image of "Takeoff" becomes significantly complicated. Unlike the lover, who is flying away, the uplift requires

bloody sacrifice. Furthermore, the poet seems to imply that the appropriate response is personified by the trees:

In Fra Angelico's painting, even the flame
of cypress flare up
along the road where the gold-haloed
heads of the martyred Saints Cosme and Damien
roll like rocks with notes
bound over their eyes. (7)

The trees form here a central image of the painting: they move the viewer's eye from the rolling heads toward the sky, implying what is achieved by the sacrifice of Cosme and Damien. The love that is represented by their charity has been transformed into divine love via sacrifice. It is worth mentioning that the painting is set in a medieval, not a classical Roman scenery implying that the sacrifice of the martyrs is eternal and ongoing in the worlds of both; the poet and the painter.

Instantly, the poet uses the image of cypress trees to move the emotional sacrifice and uplift they evoke to a more contemporary moment:

It is a splash
of black in a sunny landscape,
van Gogh said of the cypress,
but it is one of the most interesting
black notes, and the most difficult

to hit off that I can
imagine. (7)

In these lines Estes is quoting from a letter written by van Gogh to his brother Theo. The painting to which the quote refers is entitled "Cypresses" and was painted in 1889. As the extract connotes, the trees are in the middle of a sunny landscape. They create a play between light and dark, but they also offer a visual direction of the eyes, as they did in Fra Angelico's painting.

Once more, in *Enchantee*, this theme of moving from one state of being to another is suggested by paintings involving birds. For example, "One Speaks of Divine Things on a Sky-Blue Field," presents a medieval saint and his birds in a complex style that also comprises medieval poetry:

as the birds fly in to hear
St. Francis speak in Giotto's fresco, their bodies turning
transparent before they touch the ground
so the blue sky beyond them
can be seen: sweet color

of oriental sapphire that spread
above Dante as he climbed up out of Hell. (28)

This very stunning moment, in which the evening sky opens up as Dante climbs out of the dark bowels of hell, is evoked here to imply the movement to a higher state of being which Estes's poetry often struggles to achieve. But the elevated state is also exemplified in the painting by the birds and by Saint Francis who cares for them. Therefore, once again, poetry and painting are working together in a kind of visible parlare intended to lift their audience from one state of being to another.

In a complex and comic way, Estes's interest in ekphrastic poetry is also called to mind in Tryst's "First Life of St. Francis." This poem refers to painting, opera and photography; it comments on art history and perspective, but its use of ekphrasis is especially complex, so that the work of art at the heart of the poem brings together and makes physical an intricate and interwoven series of themes and notions. This poem has the tone and structure of fairytale, but its intentional play with what seems like nonsense has a theme of using art to move between one world and another. Possibly that is the reason behind the poet's telling us that St. Francis looked "like a new Manet, one from another / work of art" (53). The focal image of the poem, the episode that takes place on the literal level, involves the story of St. Francis picking up worms and moving them off paths, so they would not be stepped on. In its first telling, one can make out the story via syntax, though the words themselves have something else to say:

Therefore, whenever he would find
anything writhing, whether goddess or
manana, along the waves, or in a hover of how

do you do, or on a flounce, he would pick it up
with the greatest revisions and put it in a sad
or deciduous place, so that nameless loot
would not rename there or anything else
rain could do. (53)

The theme of worms repeats itself and becomes more apparent as the poem goes on, but at first it seems difficult to associate these writhings with that creature, as it twists back and forth across the soil. While one has to be careful about over reading such an extract, words like "revision" and "rename" imply a theme of writing. This theme becomes more intense as the extract continues:

One day when he was asked
by a certain bother why he so diligently
picked up writhings even of Paganini
for writhings in which there was no mercy
for nay-saying at Lourdes, he replied,
Syllables are the litter out of which the most
glorious neighing of the Lord God
covers the earth: they burnish
the gold leaf lores of the white-throated
sparrow and lie along the highway, bob
on canals unmentioned but by goldfinches
alone, to whom belong every gondola. (53)

Despite the earlier association of the extract with worms, the writhing has become writing, which belongs to Paganini as music or lyrics, but also to the Lord God as neighing syllables. What is interesting here, however, is that language does for the readers the same thing the humility of St. Francis does for him; it moves him from a pedestrian to an elevated state, just as the worm is moved from danger to safety.

In the next section of the poem, the theme of transcendence becomes represented in art, in the halos within art, in picture frames and finally in the speaker's memory of fishing with worms:

But as artists developed
perspective, halos were tilted, hallowed,
made transparent until da Vinci
eliminated them altogether. Some claim,
however, that halos did not disappear
but became disguised
as hats or arches: in The Last Supper,
above Christ's head an arch
appears, while Vermeer in the background
of his paintings hangs square
picture frames as halos. Above me
is a framed photograph of a river
I used to fish, but was it a kind
of virtue to lift a rainbow

trout from the stream, interrupt
its spurt and hurry, and slit
its silver seam-pull out
the red and blue, sometimes
a bit of green- and leave it looking
as if it still intended
to swim? (54-55)

These lines show vividly how art moves us from one world, one state of being into another. People in art become a saint with the addition of a halo, an arch or even a picture frame. And the transformation can happen outside the physical art as well, as the poet herself, has a picture frame over her head, as if she were the sacred person in Vermeer's painting. This is a very complex and sophisticated delineation of ekphrasis. For the picture over the poet's head causes her to move from one world to another again, when she remembers the act of fishing on the river which is pictured in the photograph.

This recollection establishes dramatic tension, as the poet does not protect her animals, the fish and its bait, as St. Francis would have done. Instead, she tears the fish's "silver seam" and asks herself if that were the virtuous thing to do. This variation between St. Francis and the poet mediating upon him is extended as the speaker considers the difference between how she treated her worm and how St. Francis treated them:

I had to push

a hook into the worm's thick

girdle, feel it writhe inside

my hand like a girlfriend's finger

spelling out words

on my palm in the darkened

room during school movies. Another loop

and puncture, loop and stick, almost

knitting, until only the last inch

like the tail of a y swayed

below the hook. Toward

little worms even, Saint Francis glowed

with a very great love, for he had read

this saying about the Savior: "I am

a worm, not a man." Therefore he picked them

up from the road and placed them

in a safe place, lest they be crushed

by the feet of the passerby. He knew their

favorite opera, Rigoletto, how they

pass their soft bodies

through the earth, carving,

as they go, their own

round halos. (55)

Here the dramatic tension between the speaker-poet and St. Francis is stressed, as she finally gets around to clearly revealing the mysterious story of St. Francis and the worms. As the speaker tells her story of putting the worm onto the hook, she does so with two or perhaps three forms of art as metaphor; knitting, the writing her girlfriend makes on her palm, and the movie. Art within art moves readers and audience as well between worlds, as the poet slays, even as St. Francis saves, the worms. Religion here, in the person of St. Francis, moves the worms between worlds, between dangerous and safe places, and art moves them too. Thus, the photograph and references to the works of da Vinci and Vermeer make this poem an ekphrastic one, a contemporary ekphrastic poem which does more than simply speaking for a silent artwork.

Furthermore, Estes's poem "Ars Poetica" speaks of the divine energy artworks. Here, she cites da Vinci's theory of art, which "sought / to reconcile the apparent contradiction / between a static, lifeless / artifact and the enlivenment / it provokes" (*Enchantee*:55). He accomplishes this notion by suggesting that "art must be / measured by its *vivacita*" (ibid.). This idea of vivifying an artwork is very much in evidence in her poem, "Here Lightning has Been," a poem that is highly ekphrastic at its core because its central image is a photograph. The poem's first stanza recalls the ancient Roman belief that anything touched by lightning has been infused with the energy of god. Then, the poet cites Plutarch to emphasize that human bodies can absorb divine power when touched by lightning. Consequently, the speaker associates this kind of divine energy with writing and dance:

In his diary,
Nijinsky wrote that he had
invented a fountain pen
called God: Handwriting
is a beautiful thing,
and therefore it must be
preserved. (Tryst:23)

Clearly here, writing is infused, but as the poem is referring to Nijinsky, it seems to suggest that dance can be similarly energized. Toward the end of the poem, the speaker attributes this energy, this meaning, this beauty of art. Moreover, she does this task in a particularly ekphrastic manner in that she is interpreting a photograph, so that the dance, the picture of the dancer and the poem describing him are all infused with a special type of energy:

In 1939, after shock
treatments, Nijinsky was visited
by photographers who asked to see
his famous leap. In one picture
Nijinsky appears-in dark
jacket, trousers, and shoes-highlighted
against a white wall, a foot
and a half above the floor, arms
outstretched and blurred like a hummingbird

hovering at a flower or a man before
a firing squad at close range,
each sip a jete
of light. (Tryst:24)

The shock treatment mentioned in the lines above is similar to Jupiter's lightning bolt in that it infuses the artist with energy. The shock treatment occurs on the literal level, but the divine leap, which transforms a mentally ill man into an artist, could be said to be working on the anagogical level. The *jete* of light reminds readers of the lightning of the first stanza, but it is also what the stained glass windows created in Abbot Suger's St. Denis.

However, the poem is indeed larger than Nijinsky, because the poet is telling us how art works for her. The objects about which the poet writes are infused with energy. The linguistic structure comprises that energy, so that the energy and the meaning are within the poem itself. Therefore, the energy and the meaning make art transcendent, just like Nijinsky's leap.

5.3 Michael Hamburger

Michael Hamburger (1924-2007) is a notable British poet, translator and critic of a German origin. He studied at Oxford University and was a friend to Dylan Thomas and Philip Larkin. In his early poetry, he delineated strict poetic forms, though, later on, he embraced free verse. Under the influence of T.S. Eliot, Michael Hamburger dealt with topics of exile, loss and the natural world. During his career, he was charmed by the notion and practice of ekphrastic poetry. A fact which made him compose various well-known poems focusing on the relation between poetry and arts.

Of his most apparent ekphrastic poems comes "A Painter Painted" which is a verbal representation of Lucian Freud's painting "Francis Bacon" which, in turn, affords a visual representation of Francis Bacon character and personal traits. Freud and Bacon were both portraitists. Similar to Plutarch's and William Hogarth's notions on the artistic representation of character upon pictorial space, classical and modern painters have voiced the conviction that the mark of a successful picture is the facial expression which reveals the psyche of the persona. Lucian Freud's painting is a hyper-realistic canvas of in which Bacon's facial traits are painted on a large frontal plain. His anxious expression and the bent posture of his head, against the interplay of light and darkness, expose his melancholic disposition.

In this painting the high forehead suggests that the painter is a cerebral man. The visible streaks of his light reddish hair randomly pulled to the back of his head, the single lock of hair falling on his forehead, the

highly accentuated deep, dark wrinkle between his eyebrows show his irritation and anger. In contrast with the firm, prominent, determined chin, his shut mouth with its chiseled lines on the lower lip, is full of tension. The emphasis on the slightly uplifted left part of his upper lip subtly insinuates his disquietude.

Although Bacon's painted expression is the result of all his facial traits in combination, it is by the representation of the painter's eyes that Lucian Freud adds pictorial expressiveness to his portrait. Bacon's half-lowered eyes show that he is concentrated in deep thought. His eyes may be lowered upon a mirror, as if he were scrutinizing himself for a self-portrait, or they could be lowered upon a canvas while conceptualizing his next composition, or still, they could be turned towards his psyche in introspection. Bacon's inner-oriented look indicates that he is looking at something beyond the viewer's immediate knowledge.

Moreover, Michael Hamburger's poem comments on a portrait painted by another portraitist. In the opening stanza, the poet says ironically that whether Bacon's painted head is to be considered as a portrait, a still life or a landscape painting, the portrait might still come to life in the painting: "The never visible, may stir again in stillness" (5). Bacon's facial expression which is indicative of his state of mind is arrested upon the canvas regardless of the artistic genre to which the painting belongs. With these first two lines of this poem, the poet also defines ekphrasis in poetry; the inner reality conveyed by the character's expression on a portrait or the natural scenery and the action represented

on a landscape are captured in a moment of time by the poetic text. As Wendy Steiner asserts that:

> *More generally, the temporal limits of painting could be overcome by isolating a moment in the action that revealed all that led up to it and all that would follow. This is the so called pregnant moment, and is obviously associated with historical and iconographic art, since it usually cannot function with full effect unless we already know the story captured in the moment of the painting.*
>
> *Dependent as it is on literary sources, the pregnant moment in painting has in turn generated a literary topos in which poetry is to imitate the visual arts by stopping time, or more precisely by referring to an action through a still moment that implies it. The technical term for this is ekphrasis, the concentration of action in a single moment of energy, and it is a direct borrowing from the visual arts (1982:40-41).*

Steiner's notion of the pregnant moment, as a reference to an action captured in a still moment, is applicable both to Freud's representation of Bacon's head and to Hamburger's transcription of it in the poem; for the connotation of the word "action" surpasses in denotation, as mere movement, and may allude to the interior activity of the spirit. Thus, in the first stanza, Hamburger introduces the symbol of the wind to represent

Bacon's breath. Breath cannot be represented upon a canvas through the pictorial technique but it can be implied by the character's stillness. The poet and the painter are essentialists who insist on indirect links between art and reality through their proper media. The painter, Hamburger indicates, tries to represent Bacon's "breath that came hard/Or easy" (3-4) that is "never visible" directly upon the canvas but can be only suggested indirectly.

In the painting, Bacon's breath is suggested both to the poet and to the viewer by the painter's introspective style. Lucian Freud's hyper-realistic technique renders Bacon's expression of melancholic meditation upon his canvas by reproducing his facial traits in a dimension of grandeur close to nature, and by foregrounding and approaching Bacon's painted head towards a frontal plane that is very close to the viewer's scope of vision. By suggesting that "The never visible, may stir again in stillness" (5), the poet recognizes the natural, life-like quality of the portrait. Through the symbol of the wind, he indirectly acknowledges the painting's enargeia which is suggested in the painting by Lucian Freud's hyper-realistic pictorial technique that emphasizes Bacon's stillness.

Furthermore, Bacon's portrait painted by Lucian Freud seems more real to the poet than his actual meeting with both painters forty years ago: "This head's more true than the head I saw. /Closed, these lips tell me more that the lips that spoke. /Lowered, these eyes are better at looking" (9-11). Paradoxically, against the empirical evidence that memory is the principal support of sensory perception, Hamburger finds Bacon's painted portrait to be closer to the truth than his recollection of their face to face

meeting. The poet prefers Bacon's image as it has been filtered through the painter's sensibility to the man he met in the past. Our quotidian perceptions are fleeting and exterior appearances change with time. By painting Bacon's portrait, Lucian Freud captures on the canvas the painter's reality at a certain single moment of his existence. He thus captures the flow of time by painting a still moment that implies it, and by doing so, adds verisimilitude to the painting which Hamburger transcribes to the poem by referring to a temporal sequence. He emphasizes the temporal flow of his meeting with both painters by presenting it as a sequence of moments or actions; "we met, / We talked, we drank, and we went our ways" (7-8).

Through a series of paradoxical propositions, Hamburger contrasts his past acquaintance with the painter he met forty years earlier, and his present perception of Francis Bacon painted by Lucian Freud. Hamburger's central paradox through which he acknowledges the enargeia of Freud's portrait once again, is that looking at a mute portrait is more true and more communicative than meeting and talking to the person himself as he did in the past.

In addition, the verse line; "Lowered, these eyes are better at looking" (11) is an oxymoron since lowered eyes cannot behold a scene in its entirety. Yet still, if the painter's eyes are lowered because this facilitates concentrated thinking, then, on a symbolic level, they are better at looking and seeing the truth. Freud's penetrating gaze enables him to paint Bacon as he really is. The act of looking also refers to the poet who is looking at Bacon's picture. In both cases, the semantic opposition

contained in the proposition disappears when the meaning is tested against the expressionistic reality of the portrait. Thus, the poet here condenses the literal and symbolic significances into one poetic line.

Additionally, in the third stanza of this poem, Hamburger refers to the creative process that transforms and "distills" Bacon's real head into a painted head; "A Likeness caught? No. Pictor invenit" (12). Lucian Freud does not reproduce the replica of Bacon's external likeness. The portrait is alive because the artist invents. Art transcends mere mimesis. "Pictor invenit" is a comment on Freud's and Bacon's creativity. As painters, they transform their immediate sensory surface perceptions and translate the hidden invisible aspects of reality on the canvas. Art synthesizes objective perceptions and subjective experience with the artist's idiosyncratic style.

One of the theories that explains how the artist merges his subjectivity with the objective external reality was voiced in 1906 by Wilhelm Worringer who, in contrast to Lessing, maintained that art does not imitate nature. To reproduce his resemblance on the canvas with verisimilitude, the artist empathizes with his character:

> *This projection of the sense of life upon the artistic medium is said to come about by what Worringer… (and Theodor Lipps who founded the psychological theory) called Einfuhlung, or empathy…. Kenneth B. Clark…defined empathy as "the capacity of an individual to feel the needs, the aspirations, the frustrations, the joy, the sorrows, the anxieties, the hurt, indeed, the hunger of others as if they were his own."...In Clark's definition,*

empathy is described as the ability to perceive what is felt by others and to do so by reference to one's own feelings (Arnheim, 1986:53).

Lucian Freud empathizes with Francis Bacon in order to paint his portrait. He discovers Bacon's true character by blending his subjective perception of Bacon with his objective facial traits. Paradoxically, the artist relies on his subjectivity, through empathic projection, to endow the work of art with objectivity. Therefore, Francis Bacon's painting by Freud becomes Hamburger's "objective" reference for his poem. Hence, the painting and the poem are both referential and self-referential. The poet considers painting as a process which is unfolding in time; yet, he expresses this in an oxymoron; "Slowly, slowly, under his lowered eyelids/He worked, against time, to find the face grown truer" (13-14).

Freud had to cross the time dimension "Slowly, slowly" in order to defy time that consists of innumerable fleeting moments, a multitude of different, ever-changing perceptions. Much like Bacon, Freud too, had to delve deeply into Bacon's personality, to paint his "face grown truer" to resist the ravages of time. Nevertheless, as the deep lines on the canvas show, Bacon's character is, paradoxically and partially, revealed to the viewer with the passage of time. As James Bunn states in his "Circle and Sequence in the Conjectural Lyric"; "the coordination of process and stasis, movement and permanence, time and space, tends to result in this relativistic stance of potential energy, of being always poised for movement or action in a stance of stationary flux" (Steiner, 1982:41). In

addition, the painter also, Hamburger suggests, works firstly with time; he studies his character in order to interiorize it, empathize it, then paints. The moment he begins to put his cognized vision upon canvas, the painter works against time; he represents his discoveries at a given moment in time but which will be forever fixed on the canvas.

Interestingly, it is on Freud's painting that Bacon's image exists in an eternal present, in a double sense, because the painting not only freezes Bacon's expression forever, but, as well, condenses Bacon's character which is transmitted on the canvas through the representation of his facial expression. Unexpectedly, it is paint, the painter's tool, an inanimate material, which animates the painting with Plutarchian enargeia; "Coax it to life in paint's dead millimetres, /Compare them into nature, in a light/ That is not London's, any hour's or year's" (15-17). The painting's light is created by Freud particularly. It does not exist outside the painting which the painter invents. Ironically, Bacon's portrait is brought to life through Hamburger's oxymoron which qualifies Freud's painting that is made of "paint's dead millimetres."

In the painting of portraits, the capacity of the artist to interiorize his character, is closely linked with his memory so that he can transmit the character's psychological disposition on the painting in the Plutarchian sense of true pictorial vividness. The artist registers the initial perceptual image in mnemonic codes, then transforms it through his medium in order to set up new relationships while maintaining the constancy of the represented object.

In his painting, Freud uses the technique of chiaroscuro to emphasize Bacon's melancholy. From the viewer's standpoint, the right part of the face is bright while the left part remains in darkness. In the final stanza of the poem, the poet comments on Freud's pictorial procedures by stated and implied metaphors about the agricultural usage of the land and the elementary forces that move upon the land:

Furrow it, too, with darkness; let the winds

That left their roads, painter's and painted's littered,

Brought branches down, scattering feathers, fruit,

Though for a moment only, stopped the bland flow of breath.

(18-21)

Here Hamburger symbolizes Freud as a plowman who cuts furrows in the land that is Bacon's face, along the lines of Bacon's eyelids, nose, cheeks and mouth. Bacon's face is the littered soil that is, partially, dug in darkness by a plow or the painter's brush. The winds that have blown across Bacon's facial landscape have given rise to the lines and reliefs scattered among the traits of his face, the "roads" or landmarks left by his past experience. They refer to the torments of the painter's life that shaped the deep lines of his face, and broke the calm flow of his experience. Additionally, the line "brought branches down, scattering feathers, fruit"

allude to Bacon's disillusioned worldview reflected by the distorted figures of his paintings.

The concrete images which are suggested by the poem's metaphors render the poetic text to be visual, approaching the poem's reality to that of the painting, and adding verisimilitude to the ekphrastic experience of readers. The verb "to furrow" is associated with digging the soil to prepare it for planting; lines, wrinkles on a face are "furrows" because life forms the face as it does the land. Hamburger suggests that for the painter, "coaxing paint into life" (15), signifies linking the artwork and the work of nature through Energeia. The wind and the farmer shape the land, the painter shapes canvas and the poet shapes the poem by metaphors that tie them all together.

Therefore, Michael Hamburger implies that all abstractions, all concepts in poetic language, are ultimately metaphorical. In order to describe the psychic disposition of the person portrayed, the poet has to refer to concrete images. The poet does not describe Bacon's picture literally; but, through linking different realms via metaphors, turns the poem into an entity that both refers to and creates its own reality. The poem becomes an artifact that has an identical status as that of the painting. In "A Painter Painted", the poet's aim transcends verisimilitude. His language is not descriptive, but rather creative, as Freud's light is not London's or that of a specific hour or place, but rather his own interior light.

Likewise, the winds of the final stanza may symbolize the painter's inspiration that "for a moment only, stopped the bland flow of breath"

(21) to fix Bacon's image on the canvas. The winds are being symbolic of artistic creation, in general, and of Freud's and Hamburger's ekphrastic works, in particular, which freezes inner into art. Freud's portrait, by seizing Bacon's expression on the canvas, frees both Bacon and the painting from the grasps of time.

Nevertheless, in order to transcribe the painter's ekphrasis into his poem, Hamburger has to refer to the temporal dimension. As Wendy Steiner asserts:

> *The temporal claim of ekphrastic poetry is figurative…since the poem still occurs in time, though it refers to the timeless…the assumptions behind the still-moment topos are paradoxical. Ekphrastic poetry signifies motion through a static moment" (Ibid.).*

The poet's concluding line in this poem is highly ironical "and here it hangs, the still life of a head" (22). The still-life in Bacon's portrait is the outcome of a dynamic process of interiorization, which is sustained by symbol and concept formation, and with the support of memory. According to Jean Piaget, who defined thinking as an interiorized action which the child acquires by the coordination and control of his motor actions, by imitation, symbols, and language, the interiorization of action permits the reconstruction of purely perceptive and motor action on the higher level of conceptual representation.

Consequently, the creative artist, similar to the child, re-constructs immediate perceptual information with the higher level of pictorial and poetic representation, which refers to his initial perception in an original manner "Pictor invenit" (12). In "A Painter Painted", then, Hamburger re-represents Freud's invention in a creative method. The poem becomes self-referential because it refers to the production of the picture which inspired the poem. The poem's self-referentiality which is expressed by means of metaphors, symbols, and oxymorons, endows the poem with a life of its own, bringing it closer to the status of the framed portrait. Therefore, the creative process behind "Pictor invenit" is identical to that of "Poeta invenit", and may be summed up as being the process of creative conceptualization.

5.4 Joy Harjo

Joy Harjo (1951-) has worked as a painter, a dancer, a musician, a screenwriter, and a teacher, yet it is as a poet that she has reached her widest audience and has made the deepest impression beyond her immediate Native American culture. Of the many Native American poets who have come to prominence in the past two decades, few have produced such imaginative and provocative work as Harjo. Her strong sense of ancient Native American values coupled with untraditional visions of the larger society enables her poetry to transcend a particular culture or a single period of time.

Harjo uses poetry to travel to internal landscapes and to return to the visible world. The poet not only employs visual images to report on these journeys, she also uses the connected sounds she has heard in her

mind since childhood. This delineation of sound as a starting point for her poetry is a vital part of her artistic thinking, as focal to her as her early experience with painting. Her approach to poetry composition is similar to a painter's technique as she uses images which overlap till they form a one whole.

For Harjo, painting was not only a way to express herself, it also opened up educational opportunities. After her stepfather threw her out of the house when she was sixteen, she enrolled in the fine arts program at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The education was inferior and she remembers that the teachers humiliated their students. Harjo, like many of her classmates from other tribes, turned to drugs, alcohol, and self-hurt to express her anger and fear. Nevertheless, despite its weaknesses, the school did assist Harjo to expand herself creatively. It is also during this time that she married a fellow student, Phil Wilmon, and became pregnant with her first child, a son named Phil Dayn. She wrote about his birth in "Warrior Road", which is an essay published in *Reinventing the Enemy's Language*.

One of the most ekphrastic works composed by Harjo is a collection of thirty poems she writes in *Secrets from the Center of the World* which appears opposite to thirty 4 by 4 inch color photos taken by astronomer Stephen Strom on and around the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico. Harjo says that Strom, who was teaching at Navajo Community College in Tsaile, approached her with a stack of photographs in search of someone to write the accompanying text. He wondered if she were interested. When she began looking at the photos, she says that she

immediately became intrigued. Their project developed collaboratively from there and resulted in their book published in 1989 (Schroder,2006:53).

The poems in this collection are short, between three and ten lines and are untitled. At first glance, they seem to be captions on the left side of each double page for the photos on the right. However, paying them closer examination, they resist such direct references, in a sense that they refuse to even try to reach the imitative aim of ekphrasis as understood in contemporary critical circles. This does not mean that the book lacks an anchor in specific places. On the contrary, the locations in Navajo Country are all listed at the end, along with the short biographies of Harjo on the left and Strom on the right, reflecting the book's pattern of poems on the left and photos on the right side of the pages. In this collection she states that "anything that matters is here. Anything that will continue to matter in the next several thousand years will continue to be here. Approaching in the distance is the child you were some years ago. See her laughing as she chases a white butterfly" (Harjo,1989:32).

Like many of Harjo's works, this book is shaped in no small part by her experience as a visual artist. She comments that "I always said that when I grow up I am going to be a painter; I am going to be an artist. Then I made the decision to work with words and the power of words, to work with language, yet I approach the art as a visual artist" (Kallet,1993:57). Equally important, her art is formed by her Indigenous Muskogee worldview and by the Navajo philosophy that developed through the landscape where Strom took the photographs. Harjo develops

ekphrasis, in her work, through layout and design, and especially through her poems' verbal dialogue with Strom's photographs. So, she invites her readers from a wide variety of backgrounds into a worldview which is different from the Western one that structures reality for many readers. From this shifted perspective, she opens imaginative spaces for the conventionally western-based reader to rethink their approach in interpreting texts.

Moreover, in reading the poetry of a Native, multimedia artist as Harjo, an emphasis on the separation and gaps, focused on by theorists of ekphrasis, would seem to run counter to her cultural work of healing the mental and emotional fragmentations caused by centuries of historical trauma (Denham,2008:391). Harjo's long-term project comprises the commitment to revitalize indigenous ways of knowing as relevant not only for those in Indian country but also for a broader audience. Her work is about putting back together the various ways by which Western epistemologies have separated art from nature and the verbal from the visual (Rader,2014:300). Furthermore, Harjo implicitly suggests for the reader and viewer a dynamic practice of ekphrasis which includes non-Natives as well. Her method, however, is more related to the classical Greek uses of ekphrasis than to recent literary critical understandings.

Therefore, the following element is central: within the indigenous framework of Harjo's ekphrastic poetry, the relationship between representation and phenomenon, and between the visual and verbal modes, are not separate. Harjo expresses this view in her Preface to this collection of poetry where she notes that Strom's photographs:

> *Emphasize the 'not-separate' that is within and that moves harmoniously upon the landscape. They "gracefully and respectfully exist inside the land. Breathe with it. The world is not static but inside a field that vibrates" (Harjo,1989).*

This multisensory method to vision shares assumptions with the classical rhetorical sources that understand ekphrasis as:

> *Not even restricted to objects. It is a form of vivid evocation that may have as its subject matter anything – an action, a person, a place, and a battle, even a crocodile. What distinguishes ekphrasis is its quality of vividness, enargeia, its impact on the mind's eye of the listener (Webb,1999:13).*

The influence centers simultaneously through the ears and mind's eye of a listener, not only through the observed words or images on a printed electronic page. In its classical Greek contexts, language was considered as oral. In his discussion of the shift in human consciousness that happens when cultures move from orality to literacy as a basis for understanding their worlds, the linguist Walter Ong recognizes that the sense of sound comprises the listener and the speaker in a larger, spherical field of sensory awareness which connects the personal, interpersonal, and cosmic (Ong,2002:7). While sound includes the listener in a kinesthetic, multisensory experience of spoken words, the sense of sight has the effect of making it seem that the one seeing is separate from what is read on the page, or viewed on a painting. A culture based in orality flourishes within

a spherical, living consciousness that relates to each of the senses as part of a continuum rather than as separate modes.

Consequently, for all the differences between indigenous ways of seeing on one hand, and the contexts for employing the trope of ekphrasis in ancient Greece on the other, both worldviews are formed in a multisensory world where knowledge is based on orality. Visual art and even printed words on a page, can then be regarded as locations for the stories to be told and heard. That is why a number of critics have commented on the way Harjo's ekphrastic poetry cannot be easily labeled. Rather, they have noted that her skill of playing with multiple forms lets her to explore a Native perspective of American history and the Western worldviews that govern it. For instance, Azfar Hussain discusses the various ways in which Harjo's ekphrastic poetry can be characterized by both its postmodern playfulness and by its consistent anchoring in history. Because her poetry remains attentive to the institutional sites where colonizing knowledge is reproduced, argues Hussain, it resists being understood in terms of multicultural liberalism (Hussain,2000:28).

Additionally, Mary Leen carries Hussain's discussion of Harjo's use, in ekphrastic poetry, of different forms in a various direction. She comments that as an artist poet, Harjo's creative risks have permitted her to recreate memories through storytelling in a way that is "vital and generative" (Leen,1995:2). More to the point in discussion, Leen notes that in terms of the larger Indigenous Muskogee epistemology to which the poet is committed, "the past and the future are the same struggle" (ibid.:2). Among many other critics, Hussain and Leen suggest some of

the ways through which Harjo is able to convey a sense of timeless spaciousness to readers from various backgrounds. Her effectiveness has much to do with her willingness to work at the edge of multiple genres, such as music and poetry, music and dramatic performance, film and memoir, and visual arts, poetry and criticism.

The title of her 1989 collection with Strom is applicable to this viewpoint. The ekphrastic poems resist conveying a single truth; rather they move back and forth in time, to and fro in space, and shift perspective from that of a human narrator to crows, to horses, to a Navajo woman, to the 'earth spirit.' At the same time, they return again and again to the sense of a center. The reader is asked to consider what the meaning of this "secret" could be and where it is revealed in the words and images inside the ekphrastic poems of this collection. The reader of these poems more appreciates the ways in which the words and images seem to be riffing off each other than words which directly describe images. The viewer might wonder where the secret figure is hiding in the photographs, especially the one that accompanies the poem "Anything that Matters." On the other hand, readers might see that the secrets which are hidden in this and other photographs include multiple layers of seeing and knowing.

Harjo's method of connecting her poems with Strom's visual art can be read as a process of ekphrastic revelation of other types of "secrets." The reader may have known them intuitively but may have forgotten them or become used to discounting them in a contemporary world where the written word and linear thinking about past and future are predominant. Rather, Harjo's narrator allows space for the reader to do this work in

choosing the unfamiliar way of seeing and to bring it vividly to life with his/her imaginative vision.

Nevertheless, in the familiar popular imagination, American-Indians are most often recognized through the often-clichéd visual images. Therefore, it would seem at first look that Harjo's *Secrets from the Center of the World* is characterized more in terms of what readers do not see rather than what they see about the Native American presence in the American Southwest. Yet, by the end of the book, readers realize that the difference is more in terms of what they are able to see, rather than what they turn away from. The story Harjo and Strom motivate readers to hear is a story which makes them to turn toward slowly, rather than away from, that is the memory of violence against Native people that has characterized American history since the 1500s. This is the memory that many of the popular images of Indians avoid looking at directly. More often, they celebrate the American victory over Indians, or they lament the tragic demise of a noble race.

Harjo's "Anything that matters" is set in the center of her collection of ekphrastic poems. On the page opposite to the poem, there is a photo of a multicolored landscape. Patches of olive green mark the foreground, contrasting the white color behind it. In the middle ground, red curves and expanses of white dominate, while a narrow strip of blue horizon frames the background at the top of the photo. Harjo's assertion that "anything that matters" now or in the next five thousand years suggests that readers as well as viewers must be careful not to look away too quickly, careful not to assume the names of the objects they see; colors as trees, dried up

river bed washes, desert sand and a horizon. They see the possibility that there may be something here beyond these physical representations of objects. If there is a gap between readers' abilities to represent accurately on one hand and the land as phenomenon on the other, then the gap can be reframed as separating their habitual, Western-trained methods of knowing the world from a more Indigenous perspective.

The quality of vividness in the classical meaning of ekphrasis in this poem is in the mind of the reader, who also recognizes his/her own geographical place of reading this poem. At the same time that Harjo employs a single word "here" to encourage active seeing from the part of her readers though she does not tell them what to see. Instead, she directs their attention to what is "here" for them. What is "here" connects the imagined landscape to what is visible to the human eye in Strom's picture.

Harjo is addressing the personal memories of her readers, who were they, or might have been as children "approaching in the distance." She wants to make such memories inwardly visible. Time and space, past, present, and future are part of the same internal experience. Harjo has chosen the word experience rather than representation intentionally because she has suggested in her preface that the photographs "are not separate from the land, or larger than it. Rather they gracefully and respectfully exist inside it, breathe with it" (*Secrets*: Preface). In other words, this quality of embodied, multisensory, expanded seeing is supported by Strom's photograph. For example, its respectful support is suggested in the sense of distance appearing as a thin band of blue-grey horizon at the top of the photo. There may be an abundance of white sand

in the distance, but the presence of the white butterfly in the poem allows for the graceful human scale of experience. The human scale exists were they sit reading the poem and looking at the photograph, not in a point in the picture claiming to represent the human.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS, FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter Six

Conclusions, Findings, Suggestions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

Poetry and painting are two subjects of the humanities; both would necessitate a historical study because their task is to bring the past to the attention of those who want to study it in the present. Rather than dealing with temporal phenomena and causing time to stop, they penetrate into a region where time has stopped of its own record, and try to reactivate it. In the analysis of the chosen poems for this study, the relation between the ekphrastic poems and paintings is explained through an analogical relation. The differences between the paintings and the poems are most obviously made apparent by the idiosyncratic use of the artistic techniques specific to each medium, which at the same time create a metacommentary on the nature of each media.

This study of ekphrasis in modern and contemporary English poetry demonstrated that the media of poetry and painting comprise both spatial and temporal features. The spatial and temporal characteristics of both arts are expressed by the ekphrastic dimension of the chosen poems. When a poet describes a painting, or alludes to its contents, or transforms its influence into a poem, he enters the linguistic dimension, first by the sequential order of the gaze and then by the linearity of poetic writing. The transcription of the mimetic principle of the paintings into a poetic text contains a narrative sequence which includes a temporal dimension. The symbolic significance given to painted units by the poet and the

perceiver is the outcome of a verbal conceptualization that is clarified in the linguistic and temporal realm.

In all the ekphrastic poems chosen for this study, the symbolic dimension is thoroughly interconnected with the ekphrastic one and exemplifies the poets' distinctive creative language. In ekphrastic poetry, the poetic message is conveyed by the referential context represented by the painting but also transcends the reference by the symbolic dimension which expands the significance of the text via metaphors and prosodic techniques. Throughout the symbolic dimensions of the chosen poems, symbolism is attributed to the paintings as well. This symbolism refers to the creation of the painting, and thus, to that of the poem.

Via the symbolic dimension and the technique of analogous correspondence, the selected ekphrastic poems in this study indirectly admit the reality of the paintings. These ekphrastic poems are not directly based on empirical reality but is a work of art which speaks about another artwork, its genesis and the sensibility of the artist. via many poetic techniques, ekphrastic poems indirectly admit the enargeia of the canvases to which they refer. In the selected ekphrastic poems the poem mirrors the canvas through descriptive, figurative, or prosodic techniques like the alliterative pattern or the rhyme scheme. The images included in the symbolic dimension of these poems illustrate Horace's maxim of the "ut pictura poesis". Via imagery, these ekphrastic poems combine visual and verbal components in their attempt to re-present a meaning whose truth can be only shown by referring to the visual work of art.

The power of ekphrasis is in the fact that the ekphrastic poems make the reader practice the illusory power of words which, in their combinations, are able to denote creatively to a combination of painted signs whose flexibility relies partially on the flexibility of the vision of both the painter and the perceiver, without which the painting would be only a flat colored surface. The power of ekphrasis lies as well in the notion that each poem is a particular response to the corresponding painting. Had the painting been represented by another poet, the response would have been different. Therefore, some ekphrastic poems tend to write about and enhance the paintings, whereas other ekphrastic poems are meant to confront and challenge the power of the canvases they allude to.

William Carlos Williams presents an innovative method in the use of ekphrasis in his "The Pot of Flowers." In this ekphrastic poem, the temporal dimension which depends on the spatial re-presentation is comprised in the iconic image of the petals. Through the arrangement of the words on the page, the syntax which places a greater emphasis on prepositions which state the spatial relations of the ekphrastic objects, the iconicity of the poem visually mimics the movement of the eye as it retraces the plant from the petals, laterally towards the leaves above the pot's rim, and, then, to the pot at the very bottom. In this poem, the ekphrastic power is closely interrelated to the creative dimension to refer to the interaction of the colors of the tuberoses and their movement with the light effects. The poem's iconic form on the page signifies a similarity between the movement of the eye as the poem is read and the nature of the flowers in Demuth's painting. Demuth's non-finito method is parallel to

Williams' iconic demonstration in the poem which focuses on the tension between the self-referentiality of words and their referential ability to the pictorial reality re-presented by Demuth's canvas.

Through her ekphrastic poetics, Hilda Doolittle reforms the Lady over and against conventional art cultures as a powerful site for modern feminist-artistic enrichment. By doing this, she damages the unicity of a predominant artistic convention that distinguishes disinterested, objective, and universalized discussions of aesthetic awareness and dismisses female spectators' sensation of cultural property. Her writings instead assert the importance of effective responses to art that decline such authoritative considerations of aesthetic experience. Her epic of cultural crisis has been fastened with sceneries of ekphrastic meditation, intentions in which her poetic speaker enhances his/her desire through techniques of observing and poetically signifying aesthetic objects that resist emphasizing the masculine normative optics of Western culture. Her belief assures that art at once surpasses the everyday but can establish and improve it, drawing on the poetics of ekphrasis to rearrange the significance of cultural organizations.

The ekphrastic poetry of W. H. Auden mirrors the twentieth-century poetic orientations with his light-hearted tone and straight-forward style. As is realized in his treatment of ekphrasis in his poetry, the verbal has not considered the visible as an opponent but as a partner. It involves the visible and holds a definite agreement style by which the picture ought to submit on semantic, grapho-logical, and syntactical basis. Therefore, his ekphrastic poems, labor to examine the modern standard of ekphrastic

relationships with its assertion on the deparagonal alteration which is relating artworks to poetry.

In the ekphrastic poetry of Elizabeth Bishop the space of ekphrastic still life affirms the domestic world, defending a human scale of order and comfort against larger forces which threaten the individual. Her ekphrastic poems involve the depiction and representation of several modes of being; natural and artificial, animate and inanimate, representational and real on the same level. Moreover, in Bishop's ekphrastic poetry the generic affinities with still life and ekphrastic poetry are too strong. The keeping of ekphrastic poetry, like the keeping of still life, does not denote mastery over material things, let alone over landscapes. Both remove the ekphrastic objects in her poems from experience and reconfigure them in an artificial space. Yet they mark out an environment, shallower than landscape, but more intimate and more human, in which the material world is arranged and encoded for the individual beholder.

In his ekphrastic poem "Lines for A Painter," Cronin develops the concept of temporality via a little narrative whose description explains the development of his thoughts concerning his changing relation with his painter friend, P. Swift. This ekphrastic painting signifies a meta-reality which is filtered through the sensitivity of the painter, and is then changed by his predictions upon which the symbolic vision of the poet is created. Via the parallel actions in the ekphrastic poem and through the dialogue between the two friends that is included in the narrative which is exposed in time, Cronin confirms Lessing's notion that the ekphrastic poem, like all these analyzed in this study, exemplifies bodily shapes indirectly by

means of actions. Through the depiction of the difference between the past thoughts of the poet and his present perception of his painter friend's artistic activity included in the anecdote, Cronin surpasses Lessing's argument. In his ekphrastic poetry, Cronin establishes how a poetic text, by means of the creative elements of an anecdote or by the beliefs and reflections of a poet, can indirectly talk about bodies or figures not only by means of actions but also via ideas.

Michael Hamburger in his ekphrastic poem "A Painter Painted," attempts to re-present an idea which summarizes various experiences concerning Bacon's life into a fixed timeless moment. He associates Bacon's facial expressions to a still life fixed into a painting. Therefore, he connects ekphrasis in poetry to the idea of temporality and re-defines it as an action and/or an inner/outer reality caught by the poetic text in a still moment in time. Lucian Freud describes the facial expressions of the painter along with his psychological nature at a specific moment in his life. Therefore, he adds Plutarchian enargeia to the picture and restrains time within the frame of the canvas. The frame both encompasses the portrait and opens it up to the audience. Since the perceiver is capable of understanding Bacon's expression at a single gaze, so Lucian Freud succeeds in reducing time into a still moment. On the symbolic level, by capturing Bacon's expressions upon the painting, Lucian Freud provides both the painting and the painter, with timelessness. In this ekphrastic poem, the depiction of a still moment in time as it is seized in Bacon's picture, is recorded in the poem by means of metaphors which are belonging to diverse fields. One can thus conclude that the poetic re-

presentations of temporality are symbolic and depicted through figurative language.

Angie Estes, throughout her ekphrastic poetry, delineates visual artworks as images in her poems. Nonetheless, she never employs her poetic discourse in the way an art critic would. She does not basically elucidate the movement or the meaning of works of art. Instead she tries to work with pieces of art and their artists to produce an emotional response analogous to that which the artwork initially inspired. In her ekphrastic poetry, Estes delineates visual artworks along with other images in order to move her audience from one emotional state to another. For Estes, words themselves are charged items on the literal level, but they can still be converted to the anagogical by a dialectical agreement between poetry and visual art that take her readers over the doors of their minds, wherein with a slight stroke of light, they can all learn to leap.

Throughout her ekphrastic collection *Secrets from the Center of the World*, Joy Harjo offers different styles to her Western-trained readers on how to read texts other than the conventional styles they tend to follow. Her indigenous attitude redefines the approaches of literary criticism which suggest an ontological gap between the visual and verbal phenomena. In the practice of reading in a new way, readers of Harjo's ekphrastic poetry increase the emotional and epistemological consciousness that Harjo's ekphrastic poetry involves and provides. In her ekphrastic poems, what becomes crystal clear for the reader is the factual opportunity of living and dreaming well in a process which is harmonizing to all life. Harjo creates concepts and images and made them

obvious for her readers by means of her skill to see them via perceptions that at first look like irrelevant and to shift them to the middle of their awareness. By means of her ekphrastic poetry, she affords her readers with a new awareness; their visible and invisible worlds can coexist without an opposition and along a continuum.

6.2 Findings

1. The attention of many poets is drawn to ekphrasis and ekphrastic poetry due to its pivotal significance and power of representation.
2. There is a strong interdisciplinary correlation between poetry and the visual arts.
3. William Carlos Williams made use of primary and secondary cratylism to deal with the power of ekphrasis in his poetry.
4. In her poetry, Hilda Doolittle benefited from the power of ekphrasis to initiate a positive cultural change after the London Blitz.
5. W.H. Auden referred to two paintings in order to deliver the theme of the continuation of life and the relativity of suffering to his readers.
6. Throughout her ekphrastic poetics, Elizabeth Bishop was able to shift the attention of readers to the everyday and ordinary by teaching them the significance of rhopography and megalography.
7. In "Lines for A Painter," Anthony Cronin delineated the poetics of ekphrasis to represent his developing personality and philosophy of the relation between poetry and painting.

8. Angie Estes was successful in deploying the ekphrastic poetics for the sake of moving her readers from one emotional status into another.

9. Via his engagement with the poetics of ekphrasis, Michael Hamburger succeeded in asserting the reciprocal relation of subjectivity and objectivity between poetry and painting.

10. The indigenous, Joy Harjo, employed ekphrasis to present her native American readers a new way of understanding the world to free them from the Westernized method of comprehending the world.

6.3 Suggestions for Further Studies

1. Conducting a similar study on the power of ekphrasis in other literary periods of English literature.
2. Making a similar study on the power of ekphrasis in comparative literature (Arabic-English).
3. Analyzing the power of ekphrasis in poems other than the ones analyzed in this study.
4. Figuring out the reasons and inclinations behind the delineation of ekphrasis by poets other than those selected in this study.
5. Studying the treatment of ekphrasis in the poetry of poets from nations which differ from the ones dealt with in this study.

6.4 Recommendations

In the light of the conclusions and findings of the dissertation, the researcher recommends the following:

1. The inclusion of ekphrasis and ekphrastic studies in the undergraduate and graduate courses to afford students with sufficient background information about this significant term.
2. Paying more attention to interdisciplinary studies between literature and other fields of knowledge.
3. Arranging recurrent museum visits by teachers of English literature along with their students to have a closer look at painting and its influence on poetry.

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