

Image as a Symbol: The Symbolic Connotations of Brooklyn Bridge in the Poems of Vladimir Mayakovsky’s “Brooklyn Bridge,” Hart Crane’s “To Brooklyn Bridge” and Marianne Moore’s “Granite and Steel”

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ABSTRACT:

This study expounds the symbolic significance of “Brooklyn Bridge” as a main image in the poetry of Mayakovsky, Crane and Moore. From a Marxist perspective, the Russian Futurist poet Mayakovsky believes that Brooklyn image foreshadows the ideas of class inequality in America. Moreover, it suggests the poet’s inherent belief in St. Augustine’s connotations of the city of Cain. In “To Brooklyn Bridge,” the American poet Crane proves that the image of “Brooklyn Bridge” turns to be a standpoint at which he indulges in self-meditations and a poetic experience related to religious mysticism. Through her poetic style which is described as that of “Wild decorum,” the American poet Moore believes that Brooklyn image is symbolic of the gloomy nature of a materialistic life in America. Consequently, she shares with Crane the same religious perspective stressing that the present image of Brooklyn Bridge stands for man’s original sin. Her viewpoint shows that the image of “Brooklyn Bridge” can raise philosophical views related to David Hume’s skeptical materialism. Thus, the researcher’s analysis proves that the symbolic connotations of “Brooklyn Bridge” as a main image in the three poems leads to a unified poetic experience.

Keywords: Symbolism – Image – Brooklyn Bridge – Social Inequality – Mysticism – Skeptical Materialism.

«الصورة كرمز: الدلالات الرمزية لصورة جسر بروكلين في قصائد «جسر بروكلين»
للشاعر فلاديمير مايكوفسكي و«إلى جسر بروكلين» للشاعر هارت كرين
و«حديد وصلب» للشاعرة مارين موور.

الملخص:

تتناول هذه الدراسة مفهوم الدلالة الرمزية للصورة الشعرية في ثلاث قصائد لثلاثة شعراء وهم فلاديمير مايكوفسكي (١٨٩٣-١٩٣٠) وهارت كرين (١٨٩٩-١٩٣٢) ومارين موور (١٨٨٧-١٩٧٢). ووضحت الباحثة أن هناك تقارب في الرؤية الشعرية لمفهوم الدلالة الرمزية لصورة «جسر بروكلين» عند الشعراء الثلاثة، وبالرغم من قيام الشاعر مايكوفسكي بتوظيف صورة جسر بروكلين للدلالة على مفهوم المدينة الأرضية عند القديس أوغسطين، إلا أن لهذه التجربة الشعرية خصوصية دينية عند كل من الشاعر الأمريكي كرين؛ حيث قام بتوظيف صورة جسر بروكلين للتعبير عن رحلة الشاعر التأملية وانغماسه في تجربة التصوّف الديني والروحي، والشاعرة الأمريكية موور التي قامت بتوظيف صورة جسر بروكلين للإشارة لمفهوم الخطيئة الأصلية.

وأوضحت الباحثة أن هناك تقارب في تجربة الدلالة الرمزية عند كل من مايكوفسكي وموور؛ فقد وظّف الشاعر الروسي المنتمي لتيار الشعر المستقبلي صورة «جسر بروكلين» للتعبير عن حالة انعدام العدالة الاجتماعية والطبقية في المجتمع الرأسمالي الأمريكي. وبالمثل فقد استخدمت الشاعرة الأمريكية صورة «جسر بروكلين» للتعبير عن زيف الحياة المادية في المجتمع الأمريكي المعاصر وهي بذلك ترفض الأفكار الفلسفية المتعلقة بالسببية المادية عند ديفيد هيوم. وزودت الباحثة الدراسة بعدة مراجع لتدعيم تحليلها لمفهوم الدلالة الرمزية للصورة الشعرية في هذه القصائد المختارة.

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On the 24th of May, 1893, Brooklyn Bridge has been inaugurated. Its construction has taken thirteen years to be finished and thus it has become a monument symbolizing America itself. John A. Roebling has designed the bridge to be a combination of solidity and symmetry. In *The Great Bridge* (1983), David McCullough has maintained that the bridge is steadfast and it can stand in front of forces of erosion. The architectural design of the bridge road is based on the use of expansion joints, thus the building construction can withstand the thermal expansion and contraction which results from the daily change in weather temperature. The bridge unites Brooklyn and New York and the measured building of the towers creates a visual perception of this bridge as a majestic skyscraper. The workers have used granite bricks, decorative light stones, and cornices to construct them. Moreover, the view of vertical and diagonal wire cables creates a graphic display of geometric structures. The structure of the bridge consists of opposing qualities such as weight/lightness binary, solidity and hollowness. Hence, it literary reflects the paradoxical nature of the human experience. Therefore, it is a source of inspiration for Joseph Stella who has painted "The Bridge".

The architectural design of the bridge with its minutiae pairing between flashlights and the arched structure of the passageway creates a poetic reflection of transcendence and the themes of authority and mysticism. Brooklyn bridge is the first bridge to be designed with a majestic passageway. Enormous stones are mixed with granite bricks turning the towers into arches of a Gothic cathedral. J. Stern and W. Carrie point out that the architectural construction of the bridge gives an image of the poet Eli Siegel's philosophy of Aesthetic Realism. They believe that "The choice of brown granite, and beige and light brown for the cables makes for a oneness of heaviness and lightness The Brooklyn Bridge, solid and graceful, majestic and democratic, strong and kind, stands for the real American spirit, and the hopes of people" (Stern, John and C. Wilson 6-9). The curved cables are known as the catenary curves which are developed naturally by gravity. The researcher believes that the great majestic and elegant appeal of the bridge is supposed to stand for the American soul and its optimistic future, but this belief turns out to be the exact opposite. Hence, the paper's main interest is to

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expound the symbolic significance of the image of Brooklyn Bridge in the three selected poems.

Vladimir Mayakovsky (1893-1930) is a Russian futurist poet who supports the Russian revolution in 1917 and the new Soviet State. As a futurist poet, his imagery depicts the physical characteristics of the city such as the streets, the bridges and the other buildings. In *The Symbolic System of Majakovskij*, Stahlberger stresses Mayakovsky's belief that "the poetry of futurism is the poetry of the contemporary city. The city has enriched our experiences and impressions with new city elements, unknown to the poets of the past ... Telephones, aeroplanes, express trains, elevators, moving machines, factory chimneys, stony heaps of buildings, and smoke are the elements of beauty in the new nature of the city" (45). However, Mayakovsky portrays negatively the city in his poem "Brooklyn Bridge". Both Majakovskij and Xlebnikov depict the city as a place of vice exactly like the Hebraic Christian concept. This negative depiction of the city contradicts Majakovskij's positive viewpoint which has been previously stated. "[T]he city of Majakovskij's poetry is like that Babylon which was so condemned by the old testament ... for its social injustice" (Stahlberger 53).

Majakovsky emphasizes his religious mythical depiction of the city which is like a hell due to the vice of Babylon or Sodom and the bloodshed of Cain. However, he remains hostile to nature and the countryside because he wants to communicate with the modern man who lives in the city. He even believes that "the creation is a faulty work for nature is an image of time, of suffering and death" (Stahleberger 58). Therefore, Majakovsky depicts nature or the creation in a derogatory sense. Majakovsky's symbol of the city echoes the Russian futurist notion of the fragmentation of reality. His religious mythical portrayal of the city agrees with the Christian notion of the "Earthly City" or the Babylon city of Cabin. Furthermore, he agrees with the Gnostic sects who regard the city as a prison. Therefore, Majakovsky "faces a complete alienation in cosmic space; he is alienated from both earth and heaven and condemned to an eternal homelessness" (Stahlberger 63).

Majakovsky's "Brooklyn Bridge" (1925) is written in ironic tone to attack the bridge as a symbol of the "U.S.A" or "New York" itself. U.S.A has been a foe of the U.S.R.. Furthermore, Majakovsky dislikes Brooklyn bridge due to the "Scattering of the "Indian Feathers". In other words, the American civilization is built on the ruins of the native Indians.

Majakovsky's negative depiction of Brooklyn bridge and America can be traced through his negative lexical choices, imagery, analogies and satiric tone. Consequently, Mayakovsky introduces the image of Brooklyn Bridge as a symbol to attack and break from the brutality and social injustice of American capitalism. This gloomy perspective of the bridge/ New York City as a villain place is reflected in these lines:

As a crazed believer
enters
a church,
retreats
into a monastery cell,
austere and plain;
so I,
in graying evening
haze,
humbly set foot
on Brooklyn Bridge.
As a conqueror presses
into a city
all shattered,
on cannon with muzzles
craning high as a giraffe—
so, drunk with glory,
eager to live,
I clamber,
in pride,
upon Brooklyn Bridge.
As a foolish painter
plunges his eye,
sharp and loving,
into a museum madonna,
so I
from the near skies
bestrewn with stars,
gaze
at New York
through the Brooklyn Bridge.
New York,
heavy and stifling
till night,
has forgotten
its hardships
and height;
and only
the household ghosts
ascend

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in the lucid glow of its windows. (Mayakovsky lines 12-52).

Majakovsky uses negative nouns and adjectives to attack Brooklyn Bridge as a symbol of America. The lexical choice of the modifiers "austere," "haze," "graying," "foolish," and "shattered" as well as the nouns "cannon" and "muzzles" creates a negative and a gloomy image of both Brooklyn Bridge and America (Mayakovsky lines 17-26). Then Majakovsky shifts his attack to the city of New York using the following modifiers: "heavy," "stifling," "crawling" and "rattling" as well as the nouns: "hardships" and "ghosts" (lines 44-50). They indicate that the over-crowded city of New York is like a hell or a prison. The repetition of the modifier "austere" and the noun "steel" and the choice of "blots," "pins" and "rib" diminish the beauty of the bridge and reveal Majakovsky's despise for it as a symbol of America (lines 17-83). Furthermore, the lexical choices of "chaos," "smash," "bits," "hugry howl," "jobless men" and "prolonged" create a dismal image of New York as a city where the annual percentage of its immigrants population shows that many of them suffer from unemployment and even poverty (Mayakovsky lines 87-150). This negative depiction of America and Brooklyn Bridge emphasizes Majakovsky's notion of the "Earthly City" or the Babylon city of Cabin. The poet's attack against the image of "Brooklyn Bridge" or the American civilization that is built on the ruins of the pre-Columbian era is perceived in the following lines:

I am proud
 of just this
 mile of steel;
upon it,
 my visions come to life, erect—
here's a fight
 for construction
 instead of style,
an austere disposition
 of bolts
 and steel.
If
 the end of the world
 befall—
and chaos
 smash out planet
 to bits,

and what remains
 will be
 this
 bridge, rearing above the dust of destruction;
 then,
 as huge ancient lizards
 are rebuilt
 from bones
 finer than needles,
 to tower in museum,
 so,
 from this bridge,
 a geologist of the centuries
 will succeed
 in recreating
 our contemporary world.
 He will say:
 —Yonder paw
 of steel
 once joined
 the seas and the prairies;
 from this spot,
 Europe
 rushed to the West,
 scattering
 to the wind
 Indian feathers. (Mayakovsky lines 73-117).

Majakovsky uses a series of negative and satirical analogies to make fun of Brooklyn Bridge. For instance, in the second stanza, the speaker enters Brooklyn Bridge “as a crazed believer” (Majakovsky line 12). In the fourth stanza, the speaker perceives “New York through the Brooklyn Bridge” as if he were “a foolish painter” (Mayakovsky lines 41-42). In the third stanza, Majakovsky climbs the bridge as if he were “a conqueror” of “a city” which is already “shattered” (lines 23-25). Ironically, Mayakovsky who admits that “Brooklyn Bridge” is “quite a thing!” perceives it as if he were “an Eskimo”. (lines 150-165). This series of analogies ridicules the beauty and the gracefulness of the bridge, as a symbol of America.

Brooklyn bridge and the city of New York are portrayed negatively through a series of visual images such as the “graying evening” which is “haze,” “the masts/ passing under the bridge” which “looked no larger than pins,” and the “austere disposition/ of blots/ and steel” (Mayakovsky lines 19-83). All of them diminish the beauty of the bridge and reveal the

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speaker's mockery of it. Furthermore, the similes and the deanimation in "this/ bridge, rearing above the dust of destruction/ then, as huge ancient lizards" and "I seize on it/ as a tick fastens to an ear" create a satirical and a dismal depiction of the bridge (Mayakovsky lines 92-167). The metaphors in "Yonder paw of steel" and "Yank Brooklyn" reveal a clear attack against the bridge as symbolic of New York (Mayakovsky lines 108-127). He even despises the bridge and deanimates it as if it were an animal. The simile in "a city all shattered on cannon with muzzles craning his as a giraffe," and the visual image in "New York heavy and stifling till might" reveal his attack on New York as if it were like *The Waste Land* (Mayakovsky lines 27-47). Furthermore, the metaphors of "the household ghosts," the "trains" which "are crawling and rattling," the "scattering" of "the wind Indian feathers" and the "planting" of "a steal foot in Manhattan" portray a dismal, gloomy image of New York (Mayakovsky lines 50-125). They stress that the Americans have built their civilization on the ruins of the Red Indians. The visual images of the "men" who "had ranted on radio," and "ascended in planes" and the metaphor of the "hungry howl" reveal emptiness of the capitalist American civilization which is portrayed in the image of Brooklyn Bridge (Mayakovsky lines 137-148). Finally, the simile in the "canvas" which "is unobstructed as it stretches on cables of string to the feet of the stars" reveals the speaker's attempt to ridicule the bridge/ American capitalism (Mayakovsky lines 155-158). The visual image of the "chaos" that destroys "our planet to bits" emphasizes his attack against the absence of a socialist economic system in New York (Mayakovsky lines 87-89). All these images depict his negative portrayal of New York and Brooklyn Bridge as its symbol. They also stress Majakovsky's concept of the "earthly city of cabin" which is characterized by social injustice and bloodshed. The poet's attack against the totalitarian regime and the bourgeois society is inferred in the image of "Brooklyn Bridge" and repeated in the concluding lines:

From this spot,
 jobless men
leapt
 headlong
 into the Hudson.
Now
 my canvas

is unobstructed
as it stretches on cables of string
to the feet of the stars.

I see:
here
stood Mayakovsky,
stood,
composing verse, syllable by syllable.

I stare
as an Eskimo gapes at a train,
I seize on it
as a tick fastens to an ear.

Brooklyn Bridge—
yes . . .

That's quite thing! (Mayakovsky lines 149-171).

The sarcastic tone of the poem demolishes the beauty of the bridge as a symbol of America. The poem starts with a tone which reveals an implicit irony. This is emphasized by the exclamation mark in ‘a shout of joy!,’ the declarative sentence: “I too will spare no words about good things” and even the phrase “[b]lush at my praise” (Mayakovsky lines 2-6). Then, the conjunction “however” marks a dramatical shift to a sarcastic tone criticizing Brooklyn Bridge as a symbol of American capitalism. This technique is known as the “tone of voices”. The grammatical deviation and the cohesion of foregrounding in “graying evening/ haze” and “cannon with muzzles graining” create a gloomy image of Brooklyn Bridge which symbolizes New York or *The Waste Land* (Mayakovsky lines 20-26). Similarly, the grammatical deviation in “New York, heavy and stifling” foregrounds Mayakovsky’s sarcastic tone (lines 43-44). This tone is intensified in the declarative statement: “I am proud/ of just this/ mile of steel,” and the noun phrases: “Paw of steel” and “Yank Brooklyn” (Mayakovsky lines 1-127). The speaker foregrounds his satire of Brooklyn Bridge using a dash and three dots in the concluding stanza. The tone of despise and attack is evident as he states: “Brooklyn Bridge - / Yes .../ that’s quite a thing!” (Mayakovsky lines 169-171). The exclamation mark reveals that the speaker does not see any grace or beauty in the structure of the bridge which symbolizes the American capitalist society.

Hart Crane (1899-1932) is an American poet well-known for his long or even epic poem “The Bridge” (1930). It is written as an attack on T.S. Eliot’s pessimistic epic *The Waste Land*. Crane uses Brooklyn Bridge as a symbol to create a “mystical synthesis” of the American

history (*The Letters of Hart Crane* 124). Therefore, he revives the spirit of Emerson and Whitman. He also recalls the memory of Columbus, Pocahontas, the Wright brothers and Winkle who have founded and stabilized the American civilization. Giving a mystical experience in his verse, Brooklyn picture "should bridge the seeming barrier ("impasse") between man and God which men confront as they travel their narrow ways ("Canyons") from birth to death" (Lyon 3).

In this way, "The Bridge" portrays the spiritual quest of the modern American man in a fragmented and a secular life. However, some critics of the new Criticism movement believe that the poem fails to create a myth of the American history due to its incoherent symbolism. Like Eliot, Crane prefers what is known as the "logic of metaphor" (Crane, *The Complete Poems* 221). The absence of unity is a characteristic of the modern long poems. Crane states that: "the form of my poem rises out of a past that so overwhelms the present with its worth and vision that I'm at a loss to explain my delusion that there exist any real links between that past and a future destiny worthy of it" (*The Letters of Hart Crane* 261). The poem is divided into eight major sections: "Ave Maria," "Powhatan's Daughter," "Cutty Sark," "Cape Halteras," "Three Songs," "Quaker Hill," "The Tunnel" and "Atlantis," as well as the opening section "Proem" or "To Brooklyn Bridge". First, Crane has written "Atlantis" which is the concluding part of "The Bridge". It harmonizes all the minor themes discussed in the diverse parts of the poem. "The Bridge" is "of what Crane considered the three chief values of human life: union with the divine, human love, and poetic creation, though – as always in his work – poetry and human love are viewed as aspects of union with the divine and hence as subordinate to it" (Lyon 2). "Atlantis" and "The Bridge" give an image of the bridge as a symbol of the wholeness or completion. However, this image is fragmented in the other sections. Crane believes that Pocahontas as a figure symbolizes America as a cradle of abundance.

In this way, the bridge is a symbol of the spiritual quest of the modern man in a fragmented American life. Crane links the past with the present creating a myth of American history. Brooklyn Bridge gives an image of the poet's meditative thoughts to escape from his negative viewpoint of the city abyss. The section of "Ave Maria" portrays the early American history, while "The Tunnel" depicts the late American one. The "Three Songs" is a trilogy attacking the impotence of modern love. The

loss of faith and despair in “The Tunnel” have changed to faith and fear in “Ave Maria”. Finally, “The Bridge”:

moves erratically through history from Columbus to the present and then back into the past of the Indian and up again to the near past of clipper ships, and forward into world war I and the subway. And even within these sections, the movement is back and forth, Walt Whitman and Edgar Allan Poe appearing in the modern world as the poet merges into the old world (Dickie 75).

The researcher’s main scope of interest is on the first introductory part of Crane’s long poem or “To Brooklyn Bridge”. The lexical items and the imagery of “To Brooklyn Bridge” reveal that the bridge is a symbol of wholeness or completion, a spiritual quest and the myth of American history in a fragmented and secular modern American life. They also foreshadow the poet’s upset with the unpleasant present and his attempt to avoid a “bedlamite’s end” (Brunner 126).

In the first two stanzas, Crane addresses the bridge as a symbol of man’s spiritual quest in the fragmented modern life. The choice of the noun “liberty” and its contrast with the noun phrase “over the chained bay waters” have symbolic connotations (Crane line 4). “The Seagulls” which fly over the bridge dramatize freedom (Crane line 2). Therefore, the image of the bridge which is in complete harmony with the “seagull’s” stands for spiritual freedom. While the noun phrases: “over the chained bay waters” and “some page of figures” stand for the employees or even the modern men who are imprisoned whether in their offices or within the daily routine of modern life (Crane lines 4-7). The sentence “till elevators drop us” indicates that modern man can only gain some freedom when he finishes his work (Crane line 8). Therefore, the image of the bridge with the “seagulls” that “pivot him” is a refuge for modern man as it symbolizes his search for freedom and wholeness (Crane line 2). Hence, “the bridge” is a standpoint at which the poet contemplates the gloomy nature of the materialistic mechanized life of the modern American society, thus indulging in alternative thoughts about spiritual mysticism (Crane line 2). Crane’s lines implicitly depict his sensation of a religious experience:

How many dawn, chill from his rippling rest
The seagull’s wings shall dip and pivot him,
Shedding white rings of tumult, building high
Over the chained bay waters Liberty—

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Then, with inviolate curve, forsake our eyes 5
As apparitional as sails that cross
Some page of figures to be filed away;
—Till elevators drop us from our day . . .

I think of cinemas, panoramic sleights
With multitudes bent toward some flashing scene 10
Never disclosed, but hastened to gain,
Foretold to other eyes on the same screen;

And Thee, across the harbor, silver-paced
As though the sun took step of thee, yet left
Some motion ever unspent in thy stride,— 15
Implicitly thy freedom staying thee! (Crane lines 1-16).

Elements of modernity or technology heighten modern man's frustration. The darkness of the cinema, the "panoramic sleights" that are repeated on "the same screen" and the "flashing scene" that "never disclosed" increase modern man's alienation and boredom (Crane lines 9-12). At this moment, modern man remembers the bridge which acts as a muse or a spiritual refuge for man in his search for completion. This is emphasized by the use of the bright colours: "the sun" and "silver-paced" (Crane lines 13-14). These joyful colours are contrasted with the darkness of the cinema. Furthermore, the bridge with its "stride" and "freedom" is contrasted with the limitations of the cinema as a modern place (Crane lines 15-16). The bright colours of the bridge help modern man to realize the importance of his "motion" or actions (Crane line 15). Man's actions can have the same freedom of the "Seagull's wings" (Crane line 2). The bridge as a symbol of wholeness helps man to realize the importance of his abilities. Man can see the bridge as "parapets" or "speechless caravan" (Crane lines 18-20). In other words, man can see the bridge either as a mere piece of steel or as an idol symbolizing completion. Man can either "shrill shirt ballooning" or just "fall" as a "jest" (Crane lines 19-20). Symbolically man can have operative roles or work as a machine.

The noun "wall" either refers to the over crowdedness in "Wall" street or to the huge number of skyscrapers. These two forces lead to modern man's imprisonment. Even the sun becomes like a "rip-tooth" or an "acetylene" due to this over-crowdedness (Crane line 22). The "derricks" stand for the bridge as a symbol of spiritual refuge for man (Crane line 23). The bridge which faces the storms of the "North

Atlantic” sea acts as a remedy generating “breathe” in the city (Crane line 24). Thus, the bridge symbolizes man’s spiritual quest in search for freedom and completion. Furthermore, the bridge symbolizes religious tolerance creating harmony and uniting people. As a symbol of religious mysticism, it helps the “Jews” to gain “reprieve” and “pardon” (Crane lines 25-28). The bridge acts as a “guerdon” for the “Jews” helping them to “accolade” with the Christians. It symbolizes unity for the whole humanity represented by “the prophet’s pledge,” the “prayer of pariah” and “the lover’s cry” (Crane lines 31-32). The completion of the bridge makes it combine the characteristic of each human sect. In this way, the bridge is a spiritual refuge generating harmony. In spite of the overcrowdedness in the city, the “lights” of the cars become like an “unfractioned idiom” reaching the sky without any “immaculate sigh” (Crane line 34). The “beading ... path” of the bridge generates eternal harmony between men (Crane line 35). Hence, the verse foreshadows a union between man and God or the Christian belief in a hypostatic union:

And obscure as that heaven of the Jews, 25
Thy guerdon . . . Accolade thou dost bestow
Of anonymity time cannot raise:
Vibrant reprieve and pardon thou dost show.

O harp and altar, of the fury fused,
(How could mere toil align thy choiring strings!) 30
Terrific threshold of the prophet’s pledge,
Prayer of pariah, and the lover’s city,—

.....

Under thy shadow by the piers I waited;
Only in darkness is thy shadow clear.
The city’s fiery parcels all undone,
Already snow submerges an iron year . . . 40

O Sleepless as the river under thee,
Vaulting the sea, the prairies’ dreaming sod,
Unto us lowliest sometime sweep, descend
And of the curvship lend a myth to God. (Crane lines 25-44).

The image of the bridge with its “shadow” that is “clear” stands in contrast to the “darkness” of the night (Crane lines 37-38). Symbolically, modern man suffers from a lack of faith due to his secular life. The bridge gives man spiritual guidance and softens his feelings which become like

the "iron" (Crane line 40). The man-made "curveship" of the bridge stands for man's creative power (Crane line 44). The harmony of the bridge helps man to wake up from his "sleepless" life and to violate "the prairies" (Crane lines 41-42). In this way the bridge as a symbol of wholeness can help men to "lend a myth to God" (Crane line 44). In other words, it will help modern men to strengthen their faith and gain spiritual reconciliation with God.

The style of "To Brooklyn Bridge" combines not only modernist but also early modern pronouns. The latter appear in the use of "thou" with its forms, the standard iambic pentameter, and the rhythmic style (Crane line 28). Among the modernist features are the incoherent symbolism, fragmented ideas and the influence of cubism in the poem. This cubistic influence appears in the cumulative effect of the bridge on man's behaviour and feelings. The use of the second pronoun "thou" with its forms and the third person pronoun "him" and "his" help to animate and personify the bridge. The speaker treats the bridge with respect as if it were a tutor guiding people. The mystical tone of the poem echoes the depiction of the bridge as a symbol of wholeness. It also echoes the spiritual quest undergone by men to attain completion or to reach the status of Christ's hypostatic union.

Marianne Moore (1887-1972) is an American poet, essayist, translator, editor, playwright and short story writer. Her poetry is characterized by experimentation, minutiae description, syllabic meter, and harmonious rhyme. The language of poetry portrays her concept of the "Wild decorum". In other words, Moore writes the same traditional poetry forms but with a fresh new perspective and a modernist peculiar language and style. In "Marianne Moore's Wild Decorum," Bonnie Costello points out that in Moore's poetry "[t]he old-world values of tradition and culture grow static and superficial in excess; the new, frontier values of freedom and originality are precarious and tend to become crude and rapacious" (43). Her diction is aphoristic and her verse is argumentative. The themes of her poems reveal her fascination with animals, birds and nature. Moore's most famous poem is "Poetry" in which she states that poets are "literalists of/ the imagination" (lines 41-42). Their verse should depict "Imaginary gardens" due to the "real toads in them" (Moore line 44). Her poem "What Are Years?" reveals her

tendency to write intellectual poems. Moore's sense of humour and her genuine wit appear in her poems: "To Be Liked by You Would Be a Calamity" and "The Arctic Ox". Her verse is admired by many poets such as: Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams and T.S. Eliot. Moore's poetry is marked by "the mosaic of citations and shifting focuses" (Parisi 8). As a feminist or an anti-Poetess Laureate, she decides to change the patriarchal history. A famous example of this tendency is her poem "The Jerboa". Moore's verse is also marked by "the drama of examining a photograph ... [Moreover,] The rhythm of autocracy, reticence, and asseveration in the poems confirms the sense that Moore is studying a static representation" (Parisi 118). She often likes to insert quotations in her poems although they create an atmosphere of evasiveness.

Moore's "Granite and Steel" (1966) portrays Brooklyn bridge as a modernist symbol of modern America and the American materialistic way of life. The bridge and the modern American man are in many ways similar. The personifications in "her feet as one on shattered chains" and "caged circe of steel and stone" indicate the imprisonment of the bridge or the modern American man due to his superficial life which resembles an exile (Moore lines 4-6). The lexical choices of "Crass," "mind's deformity," "uncompunctious greed," and "acquiescent" as well as the repetition of "priority" depict a panoramic image of the modern American life in which the bridge or modern man suffers from multiple imperfections (Moore line 9-13). As a symbol of a materialistic mania and the life of the modern American man, the bridge suffers from a state of death-in-life due to the absence of "probity" which "had not joined" men together in the united states of America (Moore lines 13-18). Therefore, the first stanza, is written in a contemplative tone. It reveals the contrast between the original state of the bridge and its present day situation. The use of the soft colour in "silvered by the sea" emphasizes the fact that the bridge has been designed by the German engineer Roebling with an "enfranchising cable" (Moore line 1). In the past, the bridge has been a symbol of "liberty" and harmony. However, as a symbol of the modern American materialistic life its "wire" has been "grayed by the mist" (Moore line 2). From a religious perspective, the image of "Brooklyn Bridge" symbolically stands for a contrast between the two states of man's original purity due to his creation in the image of God and his later transformation into a sinful man after committing the original sin. This gloomy atmosphere symbolizes the death-in life state of the modern American man and the spiritual voidness of his life. Moore's

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verse reflects an attack against the vices of the modern American man and a disargument with David Hume's sceptical materialism:

Enfranchising cable, silvered by the sea,
of women wire, grayed by the mist,
and Liberty dominate the Bay—
her feet as one on shattered chains,
once whole links wrought by Tyranny.

Caged Circe of steel and stone,
her parent German ingenuity.
"O catenary curve" from tower to pier,
implacable enemy of the mind's deformity,
of man's uncompuentious greed. (Moore lines 1-10).

Moore's contemplative tone is intensified by the exclamation marks in the following lines: "O path amid the stars/ ... wing!" and "O radiance that doth inherit me!/ ... harmony!" (lines 18-21). Actually, the speaker ridicules the modern American materialistic life which is void of "harmony" and "radiance". Therefore, the bridge as a symbol of modern American sinful man has actually lost its original beauty. Furthermore, the poet laments the present death – like state of the bridge and its lifeless image in "O Steel! O stone!" (Moore line 25). The speaker presents two contrasting visions of the bridge. The "romantic" vision of the "eye"/ the dreamy view point shows that it is a "climactic ornament, a double rainbow" (Moore lines 23-26). It also emphasizes that it is a "monument" of the "German tenacity" (Moore 28-29). However, "the eye of the mind" reveals the present-day transformation of the bridge into a mere "actuality" and an "untried experiment" (Moore lines 22-24). In other words, in the past, the structure of the bridge has combined beauty and grace. However, as a symbol of the modern American man and the materialist ethics it has lost its grace, thus leading a death – in life state of imprisonment. Depicting the atmosphere of spiritual emptiness in America, "Brooklyn Bridge" now looks like any other stone or metal bridge. Its structure has been reduced to mere "Granite and Steel". The style of the poem reveals Moore's use of the syllabic meter. For example, this appears in the following lines:

his crass love of crass priority
just recently
obstructing acquiescent feet
about to step ashore when darkness fell
without a cause, (lines 11-15).

This use of the syllabic meter heightens the spontaneity and the free floating of ideas. The shift to the Elizabethan style appears in “doth,” to increase the ironic tone (Moore line 20). Actually, she does not give the bridge a sense of grandeur. She means that in the present day life, it has lost its grace and beauty. Moore’s style is based on a contrast between the “enfranchising cable” and the “shattered chains” (lines 1-4) and between the view of the “eye of the mind” and that of “the [dreamy] eye” (lines 24-25). This contrast stresses the transformation which happens to the bridge as a symbol of modern sinful American men and their materialist ethics. The tone shifts dramatically from sadness to lauding and pity. This technique is known as the “tone of voices”. The ironic tone appears in the “enfranchising cable,” then it turns to be sadistic in ‘shattered chains’. It becomes mainly critical in the “uncompunctious greed” and “the mind’s deformity” (Moore lines 9-10). Furthermore, it shifts to mock praise in “radiance” and “harmony” (Moore lines 20-21). Finally, it turns to a pitiful tone lamenting the present day state of the bridge. Examples are: “O Steel! O Stone!” (Moore line 25). However, a final shift to mock praise appears in “inverted by French perspicacity” (Moore line 27). Then, the poem ends with the word “an actuality” lamenting the death – in life state of the bridge. (Moore line 30).

This paper shows how the image of “Brooklyn Bridge” symbolically leads to diverse poetic views in the three selected poems of Mayakovsky, Crane and Moore. Being built in 1893, Brooklyn Bridge has inspired poets, artists and writers to tackle the symbolic significance of its image in their works. The researcher proves that both the Russian Futurist poet Mayakovsky and the American poet Moore have analogous viewpoints with regard to their gloomy depiction of the bridge. Rather than viewing it as a symbol of the grandeur of the American civilization, they believe that Brooklyn Bridge stands for man’s superficial materialistic life, earthly vices and the social inequality in the American capitalist society. Mayakovsky’s dismal depiction of Brooklyn image shows indirect religious connotations of St. Augustine’s concept of the earthly city. However, the American poet Crane has a somewhat different perspective. Hence, he believes that the bridge as a magnificent work of art and as a

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crucial symbol of America, it stands for man's spiritual mystic quest. Moreover, the bridge image infers to a Christian theological belief in what is known as the hypostatic union that is represented by the character of Jesus Christ. Similarly, Moore's implicit reference to the idea of the original sin has religious connotations. Though the three poets apparently have different poetic depictions of the bridge image, they agree that it is symbolic of the city abyss and the mechanized life of the American society. The researcher supports her ideas and analysis of Brooklyn image in the three poems with a number of key references such as those of Carrie, Stahlberger and Dickie. Consequently, the study gives different symbolic connotations of the poetic image of "Brooklyn Bridge".

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