OF TRIBAL MO(U)RNING: FIGURING INDIANS IN HART CRANE'S AMERICAN MYTH

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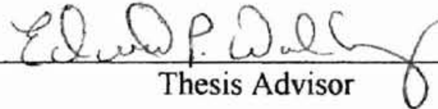

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Figuring Indians

> "[I]t might be that only Indians, among the peoples of this hemisphere at least, were still the possessors and users of the fundamental secret of human life."
>
> —John Collier (126)

In a letter[1] written from Mexico during the fall of 1931, Hart Crane despairs of the "dull times for poetry" that arise from "a world of chaotic values and frightful spiritual depression" (389). Such a dismal state of affairs, he writes, not only diminishes his "impulses in that direction" but also prevents "any satisfaction in the spinning out of mere personal moods and attitudes" (389). However, despite his poetic melancholia (and, most likely, clinical depression), Crane expresses a certain "attitude," if not a faith, in "living fully and absorbing a great deal" (389). To this end, he suggests that, in his day-to-day experiences in Mixcoac, he is "penetrating to a new kind of world in the psychology of the Indians," a world that offers "a strange suspension" of the chaos and depression (389). "The pure Indian type," writes Crane in a subsequent letter, "is the most beautiful animal imaginable (390). Whether influenced by his encounter with D. H. Lawrence's The Plumed Serpent[2] (390), inspired by his experience participating in a recent Tepoztlan festival honoring its namesake Tepozteco, "the ancient Aztec god of pulque" (381), or intrigued by his homosexual liaisons with one or more local natives (390), Crane contemplates "a project of a poetic drama on Cortes and Montezuma" that would pursue a new world of purity and beauty (390). Yet, while the scope of the project indicates an orientation towards the future and, therefore, an optimism of sorts, his de-

ultimately overwhelming as his creative energies dissipate beneath the "reputations trailing win his wake: heavy drinker, homosexual, unpredictable spendthrift, extrovert, introvert" (Unterecker 735). By the time circumstances forced him to entertain the idea of leaving Mexico in March of 1932, Crane confesses his lack of progress: "My Spanish is still as lame as my French when I left France. Of the 'Epic'—I haven't yet written a line. Only a few lyrics. But then what did I actually write in Europe—an environment not half so strange and distractingly new-old curious as this?" (405). Though he declares himself ready to "rap the typewriter a good deal," his never-to-be-realized "poetic drama" appears in subsequent letters as a mere brace of hope within an otherwise crippling despair; in April of 1932 Crane committed suicide.

Still, as a brace of hope during a time of despair, his projection of poetic work—lyric, dramatic, or epic—suggests that Crane, like other poets before him and after him, ascribes to his poetry the power to transform both himself and his world. More interesting, however, is the prominence of "[t]he pure Indian type" in his understanding of how his poetry effects such transformations; for the importance that Crane here attributes to the "[t] pure Indian type" parallels the importance that he attributes to "the primal world of the Indian" in his poetic work published in 1930 as The Bridge (307). In the section of The Bridge titled "Powhatan's Daughter," Crane attempts to "become identified with the Indian and his world before it is over" (307). Such an attempt suggests that "the Indian" becomes for him a figure that transforms. Only by "possessing the Indian and his world as a cultural factor" (307) can his poetry attain a state of "strange suspension" (389) whereby the continuously shifting—often conflicting—values of modern American culture are transformed, thus preventing "the world [from] all going to hell" (406).

As a result of the importance that Crane attributes to this figure, the figure of the Indian may be understood as central to an understanding of The Bridge. However, the centrality of the figure derives not so much from the semantic possibilities of the figure—indeed, all too often these meanings derive from execrable stereotypes of Native Americans—but more from the syntactical possibilities of the figure. Accordingly, I proceed in the following essay along two lines of critical inquiry. As a first step, I locate some of the possible meanings of the Indian figure within American cultural discourses. In doing so, I find Crane's figure of the Indian to be a figure constructed according to the structuring principles of the discourse in which it appears. Thus, as a second step, I analyze the structure of the Indian figure. As a result of this structural analysis, I find that Crane's figure of the Indian is constructed according to two contrary, if not contradictory, principles of discourse: the principle of metaphor and the principle of metonymy. The paradox suggested by Crane's construction of his Indian figure thus becomes the theme of my essay.

* * * * * * *

> "The indigenous populations must be always and essentially unreal, a figment of the national imagination. No more or less."
>
> —Jimmie Durham (429)

From the Thanksgiving story that describes native peoples as agents of God sent to save the pilgrims from starvation by sharing agricultural knowledge, from John Smith's claim that he was saved from execution by Pocahontas, from tales of Sacajawea leading Lewis and Clark safely to the farthest reaches of the continent, to television public service

announcements that suggest 'native' solutions to environmental problems, to New Age movements that promise cultural renewal through an adoption of native spiritual practices, the ascription of transformative power to native peoples is a discursive practice as old as America itself. To ascribe powers of transformation to native peoples, however, is to place native peoples within the discourse of a national people; that is to say, the native becomes "a figment of the national imagination." The figure of the Indian thus appears in the context of a discourse that recounts the movement of the pioneer figure from the open expanses of a continental frontier to the closed borders of the United States of America. "If the pioneer represented the forces of change that had transformed the West," writes cultural historian Brian W. Dippie, "the Indian naturally represented what had been lost" (199). Thus, not only is the figure of the Indian a transformative figure, it is also a figure of displacement; indeed, the Indian figure is transformative because it is displaced.

The meaning of this figure, however, varies according to the structuring principles of the discourse in which it appears; that is to say, the meaning depends upon whether the discourse structures itself according to the principle of metonymy or according to the principle of metaphor. If the discourse structures itself according to the principle of metonymy, then one figure displaces another figure. If the discourse structures itself according to the principle of metaphor, then one figure transforms into another figure. These distinct modes of structuring discourse are aptly described by Dippie.

> [o]ne school of thought, romantic, backward looking, and nostalgic, saw the Indian as a vanishing race and lamented his demise; the other, pragmatic, forward-looking, and unsentimental, saw the American Indian

> becoming the Indian American and hailed his transformation. Both were convinced the Indian was amalgamating and his culture deteriorating. (273)

Structuring itself according to the principle of metonymy, a "romantic" discourse thus emphasizes the displacement of native peoples by a national people. Conversely, a "pragmatic" discourse that structures itself according to the principle of metaphor emphasizes the transformation of the American Indian into the Indian American. In both discourses, the figure of the Indian is a figure beset by change, yet the implications of that change differ. While, the "pragmatic" discourse implies that change is an occasion to celebrate the transformation of the figure of the Indian within American culture, the "romantic" discourse implies that change is an occasion to lament the displacement of Indian culture by the figure of the pioneer.

The different implications of these discourses offer an explanation for the often elegaic mood that permeates Crane's thinking of the Indian as a "glorious and dying animal" (307). On the one hand, the figure of the Indian is "glorious" because it is transformative; on the other hand, the figure of the Indian is "dying" because it is displaced by the figure of the pioneer. Herein lies the paradox; for Crane, the figure of the Indian is "glorious" because it transforms America by "dying." In short, his figure of the Indian appears bound by both metonymic and metaphoric structures of discourse. Within this double bind, the figure of the Indian itself becomes discursive; that is to say, the figure of the Indian moves to and fro: from displacement to transformation, from transformation to displacement...

Upon occasions of displacement, Crane laments the "dying" figure of the Indian. His lamentation appears most prominently in a short, two-stanza poem written sometime between 1926 and his death in 1932:

The Sad Indian

Sad heart, the gymnast of inertia, does not count
Hours, days—and scarcely sun and moon—
The warp is in the woof—and his keen vision
Spells what his tongue has had—and only that—
How more?—but the lash, lost vantage—and the prison
His fathers took for granted ages since—and so he looms

Farther than his sun-shadow—farther than wings
—Their shadows even—now can't carry him.
He does not know the new hum in the sky
And—backwards—is it thus the eagles fly? (Complete Poems 192)

This elliptical lyric emphasizes the metonymical structure of displacement. As airplanes—a "new hum in the sky"—appear in the place of "eagles," so has the American displaced the Indian. But the structural double bind of displacement and transformation is also apparent; for even though the American displaces the Indian, the Indian still "looms" large upon the discursive horizon—which is to say the figure of the sad Indian also exhibits some characteristics of the metaphorical structure of transformation. In this sense, the figure of

the Indian warrior displaced by the figure of the pioneer becomes the figure of the Indian weaver transformed by the figure of the tourist.

Upon the occasion of transformation, Crane celebrates the "glorious" figure or the Indian. The best evidence of such a celebration appears in the figure of Maquokeeta in "The Dance" sub-section of the "Powhatan's Daughter." Here, Crane celebrates the transformative power of the Indian figure: "Dance, Maquokeeta! snake that lives before, / That casts his pelt, and lives beyond! Sprout, horn! / Spark, tooth! Medicine-man, relent, restore— / Lie to us,—dance us back the tribal morn!" (64).[3] This brief four-line stanza emphasizes the metaphorical structure of transformation. Identified with a snake that transforms itself by molting, the figure of the Indian Maquokeeta may, when identified with a shaman, transform America by recovering an originary moment. Yet, as the metonymic structure of "The Sad Indian" also includes elements of metaphor so does "The Dance" (and the rest of The Bridge) include elements of metonymy. This double bind may be seen in the two passages that immediately follow the one just cited. In the first of these stanzas, the text evokes another perspective, an "I" identified not with Maquokeeta but with the voice that impels him to dance. From this perspective comes the claim that "I, too, was liege…Surpassed the circumstance, danced out the siege!" (64) Such a claim, allowing for two dancers rather than one, effectively prepares for the displacement of Maquokeeta in the second of these stanzas: "And buzzard-circleted, screamed from the stake; / I could not pick the arrows from my side" (64). Here, the displacement of Maquokeeta by an anonymous first-person perspective not only suggests a metonymical structure but also leads to an irony foreshadowed by the command to deceive ("Lie to us"): the displacement of the dancing "I" rather than the displacement of the dancing Indian figure.

In the end, Crane's celebration of the Indian as a figure of transformation is always undone by a lamentation for the Indian as a figure of displacement. Likewise, his lamentation for the Indian as a figure of displacement is always undone by a celebration of the Indian as a figure of transformation. Ultimately, his celebration and his lamentation—like the metaphoric and metonymic structures from which both arise—suggest a thorough-going involvement in the cultural discourses of his times.

Hart Crane and Myth of America, or America and the Myth of Hart Crane

The poetry of Hart Crane is very much a part of the American cultural discourses of the early 20th century. Consider, on the one hand, the discourse of anthropology: "With the United States government committed to a policy of Indian Assimilation, there would soon be no Indian cultures left to study. It followed that American anthropology's primary purpose would be the preservation of information about the vanishing cultures" (Dippie 233). In a sense, then, Crane's focus upon the figure of the Indian as a figure of displacement corresponds to the focus of anthropology upon "vanishing cultures." On the other hand, consider the discourse of literary criticism: according to critic Van Wyck Brooks, "what constitutes a literature is the spiritual force of the individuals who write it. If our literature is to grow, it can only be through the development of a sense of 'free will' on the part of our writers themselves. . . .for the creative spirit in its free state the external world is merely an impersonal point of departure" (213-14). In light of such thinking, Crane's focus upon the figure of the Indian as a transformative figure coincides with the focus of literary criticism upon "the spiritual force" of writers. Thus, the discourses of literary criticism and anthropology suggest a cultural context by which Crane's use of Indian figures may be more easily understood.

In his 1925 essay titled "General Aims and Theories,"[4] he indirectly situates his poetry within such cultural discourses:

> I am concerned with the future of America, but not because I think that America has any so-called par value as a state or as a group of people. . . It is only because I feel persuaded that here are destined to be discovered

> certain as yet undefined spiritual quantities, perhaps a new hierarchy of faith not to be developed so completely elsewhere. And in this process I like to feel myself as a potential factor; certainly I must speak in its terms and what discoveries I may make are situated in its experience. (219)

In these few lines, Crane not only articulates a theory grounded in the study of displaced cultures but he also echoes the themes of New World discovery, Manifest Destiny, and American exceptionalism often prevalent in discourses that seek a transformation of culture. Yet, the paradox suggested by a theory that rejects the "so-called par value" of America but accepts the potential value of a spirituality "not to be developed so completely elsewhere" recalls the paradox of a figure that is "glorious" but "dying." Moreover, both paradoxes demonstrates the discursive dilemma that permeates American cultural criticism in the 1920's. This discursive dilemma is aptly explained by Harold Stearns, a 1920's writer critical of such paradoxes. According to Stearns, American writers—particularly those writers engaged in cultural criticism—have a tendency to hold dearly "the abstractions and dogmas which are sacred to us. . .the more vociferously to show our sense of sin" (vii). If this tendency does indeed persist, perhaps the paradox of Crane's "General Aims and Theories" arises from a reaction formation in which a negatively valued aspect of America becomes—perhaps inadvertently—a positively valued aspect. Thus, if Crane writes paradoxically, an understanding of that paradox requires an examination of both the concepts that create the apparent contradiction and the concept(s) that resolve(s) that contradiction.

To get at the concept that creates the apparent contradiction in Crane's thought, a return to his "General Aims and Theories" is all that is necessary. When Crane declares

that "certainly [he] must speak in its terms and what discoveries [he] may make are situated in its experience," the third-person-neutral-possessive pronominal refers to a "process" of discovery and development that occurs within a present simultaneously structured by the past and the future. He writes: "[t]he deliberate program, then, of a 'break' with the past or tradition seems to me to be a sentimental fallacy. . . .The poet has a right to draw on whatever practical resources he finds in books or otherwise about him" (218). Like T. S. Eliot, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank and other writers of an era mindful of the interstice between culture and history, Crane would not hesitate to make pragmatic use of the past metonymically displaced by the present. Recalling his 1923 poem "For the Marriage of Faustus and Helen," Crane forms a conclusion regarding his poetics vis-a-vis his "right to draw" on the past: "I found that I was really building a bridge between so-called classic experience and many divergent realities or our seething, confused cosmos of today" (217). Across this "bridge" he would extend the boundaries of the present to include a displaced past in which many "traditions" from "[t]he great mythologies" are found "in millions of chance combinations of related and unrelated detail, psychological reference, figures of speech, precepts, etc." (218). Though forgotten or fallen into disuse, he perceptively notes that such displaced elements "are all a part of our common experience and the terms, at least partially, of that very experience when it defines or extends itself" (218). Unlike Eliot, however, Crane concludes that the past—as found in traditional concepts—only partially structures the present. As a result of this incompleteness, the construction of his "bridge" would require him to "tax his sensibility and his touchstone of experience for the proper selections of these themes and details" (218). In this manner, the poet would use, presently and presciently, "the gifts of the past

as instruments" to transform the present and, therefore, ensure a brighter future (222). While conceding that he runs the "risk of speaking in idioms and circumlocutions sometimes shocking to the scholar and historians of logic," he nonetheless would use any "themes and details" that would thus express the authentic "voice of the present, if it is to be known" (222-23).

There are a number of problematic features to Crane's essay on his "General Aims and Theories." First, his negative evaluation of experiences in the "seething, confused cosmos of today" leads him to a positive evaluation of the past, the "so-called classic experience." Second, his negative evaluation of "the great mythologies" of the past leads him to a positive evaluation of the lesser mythologies found in the concepts of the "New World," "Manifest Destiny," and "American Exceptionalism." Consequently, for Crane the distinction between the past and the present is effectively effaced. Indeed, historical time collapses altogether, resulting in what Walter Benjamin calls the universality of an "homogenous, empty time" in which nothing happens except an awaiting upon a not yet present power of transformation (Illuminations 262). Crane's effacement of temporality leads him to treat the "chance combinations of related and unrelated detail, psychological reference, figures of speech, precepts" as if these appear unburdened by historical context. The only relevant context for him is the present-constructing context of his "bridge." According to Brom Weber, Crane "decided the past was fine, and then he concluded that the present which had come forth from this past was also fine" (323). In short, Crane proceeds as if his "bridge" is a structure that directs the flow of traffic from the universality of present experience to the displaced particularity of past experiences. These past experience, once re-presented, would render the future certain. For Crane, the structure of

his "bridge" is the structure of discourse; that is to say, his " bridge," like his figure of the Indian, is a structure that effects a movement to and fro.

* * * * * * *

In a 1923 letter to Gorham Munson dated the 6th of February, Crane confesses offhandedly his desire to write "a new longish poem under the title of The Bridge" (118). In a letter to Allen Tate bearing the same date, he admits that his idea was as yet "too vague and nebulous to talk about" (118, 120). However, in a letter dated later that same month, Crane describes his idea as "just beginning to take the least outline" (124). Written to Waldo Frank, his letter articulates the shape of an idee grande—nothing less than "a mystical synthesis of 'America'" (124). This "mystical synthesis" suggests a metaphoric structure that would transform American past into a American future:

> [h]istory and fact, location, etc,. all have to be transfigured into abstract form that would almost function independently of its subject matter. The initial impulses of "our people" will have to be gathered up toward the climax of the bridge, symbol of our constructive future, our unique identity, in which is included also our scientific hopes and achievements of the future. (124)

Still, despite how "thrilling its symbolical possibilities" appeared to him during subsequent months, Crane composed no more than "some climacterics" that would later contribute to the end-piece of The Bridge (128, 137). By December of 1925, the "mystical synthesis" announced to Frank became, in a letter to potential financial patron Otto Kahn, "a new cultural synthesis of values in terms of our America" (223). This "cultural synthesis"

suggests a metonymic structure that would displace the terms of the past with terms of the present. Whether or not the differences between a "mystical synthesis" and a "cultural synthesis" bore substantial distinction in Crane's conception of his long poem, the financial support he received from Kahn afforded him the time to develop his central symbol. In a January 18, 1926, letter to Frank, Crane describes this development:

> [t]he bridge in becoming a ship, a world, a woman, a tremendous harp (as it does finally) seems to really have a career. I have attempted to induce the same feelings of elation, etc.,—like being carried forward and upward simultaneously—both in imagery, rhythm and repetition, that one experiences in walking across my beloved Brooklyn Bridge. (232)

Bolstered by the potential that a more concretely developed trope of a bridge suggested, in the following months of 1926 Crane completed the end-piece of his poem, "the mystic consummation toward which all the other sections" would lead (240). With an ending in hand, what previously had been "too vague and nebulous" to be discussed beyond "the least outline" became more specific—at least in greater outline. In a letter to Kahn dated the 18th of March, 1926, Crane offers "a very rough abbreviation" of The Bridge:

> I Columbus—Conquest of space, chaos
>
> II Pokahontas—The natural body of America-fertility, etc.
>
> III Whitman—The Spiritual body of America
>
> > (A dialogue between Whitman and a dying soldier in a Washington hospital; the infraction of physical death, disunity, on the concept of immortality)

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IV John Brown

(Negro Porter on Calgary Express making up berths and singing to himself (a jazz form for this) of his sweetheart and the death of John Brown, alternately)

V Subway—The encroachment of machinery on humanity; a kind of purgatory in relation to the open sky of last section

VI The Bridge—A sweeping dithyramb in which the Bridge becomes the symbol of consciousness spanning time and space (241)

This outline, although remaining somewhat "nebulous" as regards the finer details, nonetheless suggests what a synthesis—mystical or cultural, metaphoric or metonymic—might entail if Crane's inchoate conception of his long poem was to reach the poetic fruition for which he hoped. Still, neither the outline nor the intent correspond to the final version of The Bridge, published in 1930.[5] By this time, the matter of synthesis becomes a matter of articulating "the Myth of America" (305).

* * * * * * *

"[T]he myth of America becomes in the final analysis, a universal myth. In the last line of the prologue or proem ("To Brooklyn Bridge") that introduces The Bridge, Crane suggests that his poetic work will "lend a myth to God" (Complete Poems 46). Whether the work succeeds or fails is a matter of perennial debate among critics. Within this debate, Malcolm Cowley— critic and sometime friend of Crane—suggests that "the two opposing schools might be called the integrationists and the dispersionists" (191). The point of his

distinction focuses upon the formal status of The Bridge. If a critic considers the work to be a unity, then he or she is an "integrationist." If a critic considers the work to be a disunity, then he or she is a "dispersionist." However, Cowley's division into rather neat "schools" threatens to conceal as much as it reveals, a point he himself recognizes when he poses the rhetorical question—"Might it be that both sides are partly right in their opposite contentions?"—to which an affirmative answer follows (191-92). What his division reveals is that the question of success or failure appears under the rubric of form. What his division conceals is that success or failure—regardless of which "school" adjudicates—depends not upon the formal status of the work but upon the poetic function of the work.

For example, Cowley names R.W.B. Lewis as "an outstanding member" of the integrationist "school" (191). In his book, The Poetry of Hart Crane: A Critical Study, Lewis argues that "the formal problem is not inherent in Crane's poem, but in our critical vocabulary. We still lack the terms to indicate what, on the formal side, The Bridge is quite successfully doing" (376). Rather than a "conventional form" of poetry, the work is a "repetitive form" in which "[t]he various parts, though in many ways disparate, cohere. . .because the same kind of experience is being continuously passed through, and the poetic diction is constantly echoing and repeating and parodying itself" (380). Instead of a diachronic progression from a beginning through a middle to an ending, the "repetitive form" of The Bridge suggests a synchronic, "gradual permeation of an entire culture by the power of poetic vision" (382). For Lewis, then, the "repetitive form" of The Bridge achieves a non-conventional unity but the success of that unity depends upon the function of "poetic vision."

To contrast the "integrationist" view represented by Lewis, Cowley presents Brom Weber "as an extreme dispersionist" and, ostensibly, adequate representative of that "school" (191). Weber, in his book, Hart Crane: A Biographical and Critical Study, concludes that "[n]othing useful can be accomplished…by persisting in the consideration of The Bridge as a unified poem" (328). Conceding the formal disunity of the work as a whole, he describes it as "a collection of individual lyrics" (328). Critics should "cease mourning the failure of The Bridge as a whole, and begin acclaiming Crane for the poetic achievements which are lavishly strewn throughout its length" (328). Accordingly, Weber claims that much of the work is "completely or fragmentarily great poetry" (329). With such "great poetry" in evidence, concludes Weber, Crane only "failed in part of his task," the part that, preoccupied with formal status, would require the integration of the parts into the whole (329). Still, to conclude that Crane fails in part is to imply that he succeeds in part; and success depends not upon the formal status of the work as a whole but upon the poetic function of the work as a collection. For Weber, the "individual lyrics" within The Bridge, dispersed as they may be, still "perform an all-significant function in increasing our apprehension and understanding of the aesthetic and emotional qualities of experience" (33).

In the end, Weber, like Lewis, finds The Bridge to succeed or fail not as a result of its formal status but as a direct result of its poetic function. Whereas Lewis locates this function in "poetic vision," Weber situates it in the "individual lyrics" that "perform an all-significant function." In both of these functions, the focus tends toward poetic experience. However, this tendency to focus upon poetic experience rather than the formal status of the work *per se* is a phenomenon that extends beyond the exegeses of Lewis and Weber.

Indeed, this tendency pervades the criticism of Crane's work in general and, specifically, the criticism of The Bridge.

Even a critic like Sherman Paul, whose book Hart's Bridge most nearly achieves an argument for the success of Crane's work based upon a formal (phenomenological) status of the work, employs concepts—such as "a personal or central subjective consciousness"—that often appear interchangeable with the concept of poetic experience (298). Paul expresses his incredulity at how critics "find it so difficult to make formal sense of The Bridge" given the virtual dominance of formalist principles since the advent of Eliot-inspired New Criticism (284). For Paul, no question regarding the formal status of The Bridge arises; the work possesses "the structural elements of other large modern works. . .lyric design or thematic form, and symbolic narrative" as well as "episodic construction" (298). However, the success of The Bridge comes by means of the conscious "effort of the poet to do what he actually does in the spaces of the poem" (301). What Crane "actually does" in the work is, not unsurprisingly, "enter his experience and rescue it with art" (301). Thus, despite the concern with form, Paul ultimately relies upon the function of the poem—the articulation of poetic experience—to evaluate the overall achievement of The Bridge.

Since the critical works of Lewis, Weber, and Paul may be considered representative of the criticism of The Bridge in general, then this tendency to focus upon the function of poetic experience suggests a common concern among critics: the relation between cause and effect or—more to the point—the relation between an effect (The Bridge) and its cause. Within this shared concern, the focus upon the function of poetic experience may be understood as the result of an attempt to answer questions deriving

from what might be described as the most problematic component of the Aristotelian paradigm of causation. Two components of that four-point paradigm, the material cause and the efficient cause, quite understandably pose little difficulty for these critics: the material cause is language; the efficient cause is the poet—Crane himself. While the formal causality certainly attracts the interest of critics, questions regarding the essence of The Bridge (What is The Bridge? A long-poem or a collection of shorter poems? An epic or a group of lyrics?) are displaced by questions regarding its functional cause or purpose (What is the aim of The Bridge?). From questions of function or purpose, the question of success or failure inevitably follows. Not so inevitable, however, is the critical response to the question of functional cause; for the tendency to emphasize poetic experience as the functional cause indicates a tendency to conflate the purpose of the poetic work with the intention of the poet; poetic experience becomes synonymous with the experience of the poet. For many critics of The Bridge, to ascertain the question of success or failure is to transform the question into a question of intention.

However, to say that many critics of The Bridge determine the success or failure of the work by determining the success or failure of Crane to realize his intentions is neither to say that all critics do so nor to say that success in the one area necessarily indicates a concomitant success in the other area. A case in point is Edward Brunner's excellent book, Splendid Failure: Hart Crane and the Making of *The Bridge*. Having considered the eight sections of The Bridge in the order of composition, Brunner concludes that "[t]he genuine excitement of the poems is…the poet continually surpassing himself, generating his poem out of his increasing awareness, realizing that what he had thought to be conclusive has lingering in it further implications which need carrying forward, which call

out to be identified and explored" (2). In this process of "increasing awareness," Crane both succeeds and fails in realizing his intentions. According to Brunner, the sections written by the close of 1926 do not constitute "the poem Crane set out to write; it is not even the poem he wanted to write" (182). Yet Crane's failure to realize his intentions is, for Brunner, a positive turn of events; the supposedly incomplete work of 1926 achieves success in its failure. By failing to realize the intentions of the poet, it is "a poem that makes understandable why it is the way it is, a failure that points to success. As a splendid failure, it is an undeniable triumph: suffused with the particular feelings of a special moment" (182). Thus, while Brunner concedes that material later included to complete the version of the work published in 1930 as The Bridge results in a "respectable" poem "well received by the majority of reviewers," he concludes that additions are problematic:

> The 1930 *Bridge* is blurred and vague in a way the 1926 *Bridge* was not. By arranging the poems as he did, Crane drastically alters their original meaning, then scurries to reorient his work through his later additions. The ideas are all in place but broadened out, conventionalized. The flashes of genius, the intuitive insights, and most of all the constant turning away from false to true aspirations, thinking his poems through in their very movement—all these are lost. (232)

For Brunner, the success of The Bridge comes in an inverse relation to the success of Crane to realize his intentions. In a sense, then, Brunner transforms the question of success by displacing the question of intention. Nevertheless, to ascertain a inverse relation between the one area and the other merely adds the negative relation to counterbalance the positive relation.

On the whole, the question of success or failure—answered so often in response to a question of form that struggles to subsume all questions and, thereby, collapses distinctions between formal, functional and efficient causes—proves problematic. As Paul notes, the question of success or failure suggests "that the criticism as much as the writing of The Bridge belongs to the history of modernism" (285). This possibility suggests a double bind not unlike that one found in Crane's figure of the Indian. If so, the question indicates a discursive structure that permits an alternation between metonymy and metaphor. While a metaphorical structure initially suggests transformation, unity, and success, a metonymical structure initially suggests displacement, dispersion, and failure.

* * * * * * *

> "[D]iscourse is not a slender surface of contact, or confrontation, between a reality and a language (*langue*), the intrication of a lexicon and an experience...[instead] one sees the loosening of the embrace, apparently so tight, of words and things, and the emergence of a group of rules proper to discursive practice...'Words and things' is the entirely serious title of a problem, it is the ironic title of a work that modifies its own form, displaces its own data, and reveals, at the end of the day, a quite different task. A task that consists of not—of no longer—treating discourses as groups of signs...but as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak."
>
> —Michel Foucault (48-49)

When Crane writes, in his "General Aims and Theories," that the poetic "terms of expression employed are often selected less for their logical (literal) significance than for their associational meanings," he recognizes a linguistic phenomena similar to the one Foucault describes as the problematic relation between words and things (221). What Crane perceives, conceptually if not analytically, in language is anarchic relation between the signifier and the signified. According to Brom Weber, "Crane was already conscious of the importance of new words combined with old words in non-logical patterns which evoked a broad range of connotative meanings. . .new language in a super-logical arrangement" (229). The very possibility of "non-logical patterns," that is to say, the possibility of an expression or discourse "that modifies its own form, displaces its own data," suggests the need to understand what Foucault calls a "group of rules." Yet, where Foucault focuses upon discursive practices to understand such rules, Crane turns to "the organic principle of a 'logic of metaphor,' which antedates our so-called pure logic" (221). Thus, while Crane's concept of organicism and Foucault's concept of praxis seem to bear little in common, both writers adopt similar strategies to contend with the anarchic relations that obtain between signifiers and signifieds; both strategies suggest the priority of practice to theory. For Foucault, discursive practices "systematically form the objects of which they speak." For Crane, upon the "metaphorical inter-relationships" endemic to poetic practices, "the entire construction of the poem is raised" (221). To this end, Crane adds, "I can only say that I attach no intrinsic value to what means I use beyond their practical service in giving form to the living stuff of the imagination" (222).

* * * * * * *

> "[I]n Crane's verse the metaphoric relationship 'A is B' takes by ellipsis the form of a complex word or phrase 'AB,' and this complex word or phrase becomes in turn part of the metaphoric relationship 'C is AB,' and so on, with mounting complexity."
>
> —John T. Irwin (209)

Irwin's understanding of Crane's "logic of metaphor" illustrates quite nicely the double bind of metonomy and metaphor. While the simple metaphor expressed in the relation "A is B" may very well become a compound "AB" that in turn becomes part of a complex metaphor expressed in the relation "C is AB," the compound "AB" is itself a metonym.

* * * * * * *

> "What is the essential literary convention of the newspaper? If we were to look at a sample front page of, say, *The New York Times*, we might find there stories about Soviet dissidents, famine in Mali, a gruesome murder, a coup in Iraq, the discovery of a rare fossil in Zimbabwe, and a speech by Mitterand. Why are these events so juxtaposed? What connects them to each other? Not sheer caprice. Yet obviously most of them happen independently, without the actors being aware of each other or of what the others are up to. The arbitrariness of their inclusion and juxtaposition (a later edition will substitute a baseball triumph for Mitterand) shows that the linkage between them is imagined...The date at the top of the newspaper, the single most important emblem on it, provides the essential

> connection—the steady onward clocking of homogenous, empty time [sic]."
>
> —Benedict Anderson (37)

The present-orientation of Crane's poetics suggests an awareness of the newspaper conventions described by Anderson. Indeed, Crane's work in the advertising business lends plausibility to a claim that his work is informed by such conventions.[6] Evidence to support such a claim appears in the "Van Winkle" subsection of the "Powhatan's Daughter." The final stanza of that lyric recapitulates the opening lines of the subsection—"Macadam, gun-grey as the tunny's belt, / Leaps from Far Rockaway to Golden Gate. . ."—then concludes with the following lines: "Keep hold of that nickel for car-change, Rip,— / Have you got your '*Times*'—? / And hurry along Van Winkle—it's getting late!" (61). Crane's invocation of the "*Times*" followed by an elliptical dash is semantically folded and re-folded. Within the poetic discourse of this particular subsection, the invocation has a three-fold function: (1) an anaphoric repetition that refers back to the second stanza, which reads in part "Times earlier, when you hurried off to school, / —It is the same hour though a later day—"; (2) a reference to the *New York Times* newspaper; (3) and a reference to Crane's own poetic drive to capture the "spiritual quantities" of his times (58).

Within the poetic discourse of this section and the other sections of The Bridge, the invocation calls into play the literary conventions of the newspaper. As such it recalls a line in the poetic prologue or proem ("To Brooklyn Bridge") of The Bridge: "Some page of figures to be filed away" (45). Whereas a traditional reading of this line holds the "page of figures" to be an accounting ledger, the semantic and syntactical ambiguity of the line

allows for a reading that understands the "page of figures" to be a newspaper page. Moreover, since this "page of figures" appears on the front-page of the proem (which is the front-page of the poem), it suggests a status not unlike the status Anderson describes. As a front-page, then, the proem juxtaposes poetic stories—liberty, the future, God, and more—beneath the newspaper-like masthead that is the title The Bridge. And, like newspapers that continue front-page stories on later pages, so The Bridge continues its stories in eight separate but thematically interconnected sections. For example, in the proem, "A bedlamite speeds to thy parapets, / Tilting there momentarily, shrill shirt ballooning, / A jest falls from the speechless caravan" (45). The story of the bedlamite's plunge from the bridge continues in the final section of The Bridge, "Atlantis." Turning the page, then, the story concludes: "O Thou steeled Cognizance whose leap commits / The agile precincts of the lark's return….the orphic strings, / Sidereal phalanxes, leap and converge" (116, 117). As it turns out, the silent bridge—"the speechless caravan" from which the bedlamite falls—is a strategically "steeled Cognizance whose leap commits / The agile precincts of the larks return" and thus heralds with "orphic strings" the heroism of the bedlamite's "Sidereal phalanxes" that "leap and converge." The "jest," however, is a cruel one; for the bedlamite is not a lark: no return will be made.

The literary conventions of the newspaper are central to Crane's poetics. First, the juxtapositive method of newspaper composition imposes a type of syntactical interdependence upon the "chance combinations of related and unrelated detail" that appear in a wide range of stories about events that occur independently in space and time. Moreover, this syntactical interdependence effects a semantic relation among the various stories presented on the page; that is to say that, arranged upon the page, the stories

presented concur with the over-all meaning of a newspaper: the news or, more precisely, the news of today. Here, among the news of the present may be found the presence of the new, what Crane calls those "undefined spiritual quantities" that may lead to "a new hierarchy of faith." Second, the function of the newspaper mast-head, complete with a date, corresponds with the function of Crane's "bridge." Whereas the newspaper mast-head effaces the difference between now and then, today and yesterday, the "bridge' elides the distinction between the present and the past. Both concepts privilege a present, that "homogenous, empty time" in which nothing occurs independently and, therefore, everything concurs. Thus, by imitating in The Bridge the juxtapositive composition of newspapers, Crane not only finds a "usable past" faithful to his general theories but also fulfills Ezra Pound's directive to "make it new."

* * * * * * *

"And Rip was slowly made aware

that he, Van Winkle, was not here

nor there. He woke and swore he'd seen Broadway

a Catskill daisy chain in May—

—Hart Crane, The Bridge

"At ten o'clock on the morning of September 28, 1887, Albert K. Smiley stood in the parlor of the Lake Mohonk Mountain House and called an unusual meeting to order. Smiley, the Quaker proprietor or this fashionable

> Catskill resort, faced a group of men and women who had come to New York from as far away as South Dakota to discuss the future of the American Indians…From their opening prayer to the closing hymn, sung together two days later, Smiley and his guests talked about people who were not there and wrestled with a 'problem' that had no direct impact on any of them….the conferees did not notice the absence of Indians from their meeting. They were far too enthusiastic about the Native Americans' rosy future to dwell on the bizarre present…The Mohonk meetings, [were] first held in 1883 and continued with the support of the Smiley family into the twentieth century."
>
> —Frederick E. Hoxie (205-206)

Of the five subsections which comprise the "Powhatan's Daughter" section of The Bridge, only the "Van Winkle" subsection is bereft of figures of the Indian. The absence of this figure suggests two relevant possibilities: (1) the transformative figure of the Indian is displaced by the transformative figure of Rip Van Winkle; (2) figure of Van Winkle, a figure displaced from its time, is transformed (in subsequent sections) into the figure of the Indian.

Tribal Morning: Pocahontas and the Dawning of America

In the first section of The Bridge, "Ave Maria," Crane imagines the thoughts of Columbus as he returns to an "old" world from a "new" one: "Slowly the sun's red caravel drops light / Once more behind us. . .It is morning there— / O where our Indian emperies lie revealed, / Yet lost, all, let this keel one instant yield!" (48). By linking the concept of "morning" with the "Indian emperies [that] lie revealed," he thus sets in motion a trope that situates the beginning of America in the revelation of the Indian. As Lewis notes, "[t]he American Indian, it is clear, provides the major symbol" of the five subsections of the following section "Powhatan's Daughter" and "Pocahontas, the daughter of Chief Powhatan, is of course the primary figure" (288).

In "Harbor Dawn," the first subsection, "Pocahontas appears here as a mistress," writes L. S. Dembo, but in subsequent subsections ("The River," "The Dance," "Indiana") "she also stands generally for that mythic spirit of the past that is hidden beneath the modern world and awaits discovery by the poet" (65). With the occasional exception of critics like M. D. Uroff, who describes Crane's Pocahontas "as a medusa-like figure who elicits screams and wails," the critical understanding of this figure of the Indian parallels that presented by Dembo and Lewis (93). This virtual unanimity most probably results from one or more of the following three possibilities. the figure of Pocahontas lends itself to such understanding; the figure is not primary (a possibility suggested by a title that uses the name of the father in possessive form to refer to the daughter) but secondary and, therefore, perceived as either trivial or non-controversial; Crane's own comments set the standard of criticism.

In a 1927 letter to Otto Kahn, Crane once again notes that he is "impelled to mention a few of my deliberate intentions in this part of the poem, and to give some description of my general method of construction" (305). He writes as follows:

> Powhatan's daughter, or Pocahontas, is the mythological nature-symbol chosen to represent the physical body of the continent, or the soil. She here takes on much the same role as the traditional Hertha of ancient Teutonic mythology. The five sub-sections of Part II are mainly concerned with a gradual exploration of this "body" whose first possessor was the Indian. It seemed altogether ineffective from the poetic standpoint to approach this material from the purely chronological angle—beginning with, say, the landing of "The Mayflower," continuing with a resume of the Revolution through the conquest of the west, etc. One can get that viewpoint in any history primer. What I am after is an assimilation of this experience, a more organic panorama, showing the continuous and living evidence of the past in the inmost vital substance of the present.
>
> Consequently I jump from the monologue of Columbus in "Ave Maria"—right across the four intervening centuries—into the harbor of 20th-century Manhattan. And from that time and place I begin to work backwards through the pioneer period, always in terms of the present—finally to the very core of the nature-world of the Indian. What I am really handling, you see, is the Myth of America. (305)

Certainly Crane's avowed purpose in selecting Pocahontas as a figure to represent the body of the continent in his "Myth of America" is in keeping with his poetic practice of

metaphoric transformation; that is to say, by selecting the Pocahontas figure Crane places his poem within a particular cultural discourse that Frances Mossiker dubs the American "genesis myth" (321). According to Mossiker, "Pocahontas was the made-to-order American heroine, the very one to figure in a heroical, historical myth, the perfect mythic persona in the euhemeristic sense" (321-22). While obvious nationalistic efforts began in the nineteenth century, the figure of Pocahontas saturates cultural discourses in the early twentieth century.[7] In the divine madness of the 1920's, writes Lewis,

> popular culture (films, songs, anecdotes) invested the American Indian with many of the qualities postulated by Crane. It should be added, too, that Pocahontas. . .was almost as central to popular culture as to Crane's poem. Pocahontas was indeed a sort of cliché of popular culture; and it was one of Crane's achievements in The Bridge to detect the potent basis of that cliché—the sense, let us say, of extraordinary fleshly female beauty, at once alien and intimate—and to draw from it fresh and ennobled meaning. (314)

Crane incorporates these popular meanings in his work when, in "The River" subsection, he writes of the intimacy experienced by "the states" that "know a body under the wide rain. .They lurk across her, knowing yonder breast / Snow-silvered, sumac-stained or smoky blue" but adds a marginal gloss that acknowledges the alienation also experienced by those states "who have / touched her, / knowing her / without name" (66-67). The "fleshly female beauty" of which Lewis writes, doubly bound in alienation and intimacy, recalls the double bind suggested by Crane's use of the figure of the Indian as a figure of transformation and displacement. And like that more general figure, his figure of Pocahontas also appears bound by metonymic and metaphoric structures.

The centrality of the Pocahontas figure for the "Powhatan's Daughter" section derives from this double binding of structures. As metaphor, this particular figure of the Indian transforms the history of an old world by offering the possibility of a perpetual beginning. "Transcending history, Pocahontas has passed into American folk-lore," writes Mossiker (336).

> The dates of her birth and death may be hazy, the entire panorama of her life obscure, seen through a glass darkly, but her name is forever familiar to our ear.... The *tableau vivant* at the altar-stone—the death defying embrace, white man and red woman aswoon with love and terror—seems fixed, frozen in time, indelibly imprinted on the mind's eye, reminding us that at least once in our history, there existed the possibility of inter-racial accommodation. For that one fleeting moment—with the blood-thirsty blades arrested in midair—came a flicker of hope that on this continent, at least, there would be no cause to mourn man's inhumanity to man. (336-37).

In one sense, then—the metaphorical sense—Pocahontas transforms a particularly problematic moment in the history of America. As Uroff notes, "[a]lthough her origins were not divine and although she never inspired a cult of worshippers, some Americans, certain Virginians, trace their biological descent from her. . .in Crane's poems she represents as an Indian princess the complex associations of guilt and desire normally attributed to divine ancestors" (82-83). And while this attribution may seem an unsurprising ploy from a white poet concerned with transformation, what may be surprising is a similar attribution by a group of Native Americans concerned with the same issue.

According to Christian F. Feest, the figurative use of Pocahontas by American story-tellers "confirmed later American intentions to include native peoples in their Melting Pot ideology and policies—to solve the Indian problem by fusing the latter's identity with their own" (51). Subsequently, notes Feest, the Pamunkey—an Algonquian tribe living in Virginia—"began to use the Pocahontas story to validate their Indian identity" as a "reminder of the debt owed by Virginians to the Indians, of the old alliance between these peoples, and the fact that Powhatan's children were still alive" (55). For the Pamunkey, the figure of Pocahontas appears bound by a metonymical structure that declares their continuing, always contiguous, presence in America and American culture. Thus, while perhaps displaced, they appear as a reminder of who makes transformation possible.

Crane seems to recognize the metonymical structures of his Pocahontas figure in the much-maligned subsection "Indiana." Here a pioneer woman, left widowed and impoverished by a prospecting failure in a western gold-rush, travels "[t]he long trail back" to the East (78). She meets

> Bent westward, passing on a stumbling jade
>
> A homeless squaw—
>
> Perhaps a halfbreed. On her slender back
>
> She cradled a babe's body, riding without rein.
>
> Her eyes, strange for an Indian's, were not black
>
> But Sharp with pain
>
> And like twin stars. The seemed to shun the gaze

Of all our silent men—the long team line—

Until she saw me—when their violet haze

Lit with love shine… (78)

Crane describes this subsection in a letter as "a lyrical summary of the period of conquest" which suggests the pioneer woman's "succession to the nature-symbolism of Pocahontas" (307). While many critics[8] agree with Lewis' observation that this subsection "is after all not much more than an array of notations and hints about some mode of transference, of succession and continuity—not very coherent, if looked at too closely," his conclusion that the subsection is, finally, "perhaps sufficient" also warrants respect (319). For it is in this subsection that Crane recognizes his Pocahontas figure to be a displaced figure as well as a placed figure, a figure of displacement as well as a figure of transformation. Still, as a "tableau vivant," the saving grace of the Pocahontas figure lies in its becoming what Crane calls the "incognizable Word / Of Eden" in the "Ave Maria" subsection (51) and elsewhere "the Word made Flesh."[9]

Tribal Mourning: Maquokeeta's Dance in Twilight

The first two stanzas of "The Dance" subsection of the "Powhatan's Daughter" section introduce the second of Crane's Indian figures.

> The swift red flesh, a winter king--
>
> Who squired the glacier woman down the sky?
>
> She ran the neighing canyons all the spring;
>
> She spouted arms; she rose with maize--to die.
>
> And in the autumn drouth, whose burnished hands
>
> With mineral wariness found out the stone
>
> Where prayers, forgotten, streamed the mesa sands?
>
> He holds the twilight's dim, perpetual throne. (70)

The "winter king" sitting upon "the twilight's dim, perpetual throne" is the yang-ish figure that Crane counter-poses to the yin-ish figure of Pocahontas or, here, the "the glacier woman." Unlike the latter, the masculine figure of the Indian--Maquokeeta--is not a history-based figure. Like the Pocahontas figure, however, Maquokeeta appears as a figure deriving from a particular cultural discourse; moreover, as already indicated in the above passages of this essay, this figure also appears as a figure of both displacement and transformation.

To counterbalance his use of figures from the past, Crane finds in Maquokeeta a figure from the present. In a letter to Yvor Winters, Crane writes:

> I am anxious to know if there is an Indian Philology or symbolism concerned in the name "Maquokeeta." I chose the name at random, merely from the hearsay of a NY taxi driver who was obviously of Indian extraction (and a splendid fire-drinker by the way) who said that his Indian name was "Maquokeeta." I think he came from Missouri, or there-abouts. You know much more about Indian fable, symbolism etc. than I do. Will you let me know if the name is "sufficient" to the role it plays in the poem? (Parkinson 31)[10]

In a follow-up letter, Crane apologizes to Winters: "I've felt quite guilty for having put you (and others) to such lengthy pains anent the investigation of Maquokeeta. I feel perfectly reassured, however, for obviously the name isn't some notorious joke. Even if it has no existence as a name it's quite practical enough to apply to a redskin" (60). In yet another letter to Winters, Crane concludes "that the Indian Chieftain's name is all the better for not being particularly definite—especially as Pocahontas had a thousand Indian lovers for the one white marriage license to the English Planter.[11] I shall continue to depend on taxi drivers for all matters of folklore" (74). Despite this correspondence, Thomas Vogler claims that "the name means, literally, 'Big River' but neglects to indicate his source (75). Whether the name possesses this meaning or not, the significance of the name lies in its derivation from Crane's present.

The role that Maquokeeta plays in The Bridge is, according to Dembo and most other critics, the role of a Nietzschean "Dionysus burning at the stake" (77). While Dembo admits that "Crane is known to have read only The Birth of Tragedy" (8), he cogently

argues that "Crane accepted the proposition that resurrection always follows suffering and death. That is really the essence of what he took from Nietzsche" (16).

The basis of Dembo's argument is what Nietzsche termed "the continous development of art [that] is bound up with the *Apollinian* and *Dionysian* duality" (Birth of Tragedy 33). Whereas the former represents the world of artistic contemplation—which is to say the world of reason—the latter represents the world of artistic experience that is the world of ecstasy.

If one understands Maquokeeta to be the Dionysian figure indicated by Dembo and other critics, Maquokeeta is a figure to be displaced in the hope of transformation. This displacement appears to be exactly what transpires in "The Dance" of Maquokeeta. Recall the following lines:

> The long moan of a dance is in the sky.
>
> Dance, Maquokeeta: Pocahontas grieves...
>
> And every tendon scurries toward the twangs
>
> of lightning deltaed down your saber hair
>
> Now snaps the flint in every tooth; red fangs
>
> And splay tongues thinly busy the blue air...
>
> Dance, Maquokeeta! snake that lives before,
>
> That casts his pelt, and lives beyond! Sprout, Horn!

> Spark, tooth! Medicine-man, relent, restore—
>
> Lie to us,—dance us back the tribal morn! (73)

In a letter to Kahn, Crane rejoices at the result of Maquokeeta's dance:

> Here one is on the pure mythical and smoky soil at last…I also become identified with the Indian and his world before it is over, which is the only method possible of ever really possessing the Indian and his world as a cultural factor. I think I really succeed in getting under the skin of this glorious and dying animal, in terms of expression, in symbols, which he himself would comprehend. (307)

However, recalling the paradox associated with his comments regarding the "glorious and dying animal" represented by the figure of the Indian, Maquokeeta becomes—rather than the displaced figure of Dionysian revelry—a transformative figure of Apollinian dream suggested by Crane's "terms of expression." His poetry here attempts to create what Nietzsche describes as "a profound illusion that saw the first light of the world in the person of Socrates:

> the unshakeable faith that thought...is capable not only of knowing being but even correcting it. . . .Socrates appears to us as the first who could not only live, guided by his instinct of science but also—and this is far more—die that way. Hence the image of the dying Socrates as the human being. . .liberated from the fear of death. (96)

Crane's figure of the dying Indian plays the same role in American cultural discourse as the figure of the dying Socrates plays in the Greek discourse described by Nietzsche. To

mourn the twilight displacement of Maquokeeta is, as suggested already, to celebrate the morning of the American tribe.

Notes

[1] Unless otherwise documented, all references to letters derive from The Letters of Hart Crane 1916-1932. Ed. Brom Weber. New York: Hermitage House, 1952.

[2] See Helge Normann Nilsen's book Hart Crane's Divided Vision: An Analysis of The Bridge. Oslo, Norway: Universiteitsforlaget, 1980. Nilsen argues the relevance of Lawrence's text to The Bridge by referring to the correspondences with Mexican Indian lore. While cogently argued, I consider such correspondences to be largely fortuitous for two reasons. First, while Crane is known to have read The Plumed Serpent, what he gained from that reading is less certain. Moreover, as Crane's biographers have demonstrated, Crane tended to discuss his various fascinations in letters to friends and family. The fact that Lawrence's book receives no sustained reference in Crane's letters suggests that he did not ascribe it with much significance as regards his poetry. Second, Crane's fascination with Mexican Indians comes after the publication of The Bridge. Consequently, any insights for his long poem that may be derived from this fascination necessarily appear as an instance of hindsight.

[3] All quotations from The Bridge derive from Crane's The Complete Poems and Selected Letters and Prose of Hart Crane. Ed. Brom Weber. New York: Doubleday, 1966.

[4] All quotations from "General Aims and Theories" derive from Crane's The Complete Poems and Selected Letters and Prose of Hart Crane. Ed. Brom Weber. New York: Doubleday, 1966.

[5] The Bridge of 1930 consists of eight sections and a proem; some of the sections are divided into subsections. Thus,

To Brooklyn Bridge

Ave Maria

Powhatan's Daughter:

The Harbor Dawn; Van Winkle; The River; The Dance; Indiana

Cutty Sark

Cape Hatteras

Three Songs:

Southern Cross; National Winter Garden; Virginia

Quaker Hill

The Tunnel

Atlantis

[6] In a letter, Crane writes of "The River" that "[t]he introductory speedy, vaudeville stuff (what comes before the line beginning "The last bear . . .") is a kind of take-off on all the journalism, advertising, and loud-speaker stuff of the day." See page 592 of Letters of Hart Crane and His Family. Ed. S. W. Lewis. New York: Columbia Press, 1974.

[7] Frances Mossiker's Pocahontas: The Life and Legend. New York: De Capo, 1976. 321-37.

[8] For example, Richard P. Sugg, in his Hart Crane's The Bridge: A Description of its Life. University, Alabama: Alabama UP, 1976, interprets the "eye" mode off

transference to be inadequate when he writes that "the Indian's experience of the unity of nature, imparted from the squaw to the mother of Larry, does not survive. The sailor's eyes in "Cutty Sark" have undergone a sea-change, and he keeps 'weak-eyed watches'" (64).

[9] See his 1921 letter to Waldo Frank in The Letters of Hart Crane: 1916 to 1932. Ed. Brom Weber. New York: Hermitage House, 1952.

[10] All quotations of the Crane/Winters correspondence derive from Thomas Parkinson's Hart Crane and Ivor Winters: Their Literary Correspondence. Berkeley: California UP, 1978.

[11] A reference to John Rolfe. See Wilcomb E. Washburn's The Indian in America. New York: Harper & Row, 1975. Wilcomb writes that "[a]n important but little used political relationship between Indians and whites was intermarriage. Such a course was urged upon the Virginia colonists by the Indians but discountenanced by the zealous ministers of the colony. The few exceptions authorized were quite explicitly political matches: the Pocahontas-John Rolfe match was approved by the government of Virginia not because it was an ideal love match, but because it offered practical advantages of both a defensive and offensive nature to the colony The most perceptive observers of the Virginia scene, including William Byrd, Robert Beverly the historian, and Thomas Jefferson, felt such an amalgamation to be advantageous to both races and to the peace of the country and regretted that it had nor been officially encouraged" (93). See also Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr. in his The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present. New York: Vintage, 1978. He writes that "in spite of the policy makers' stress on the civilizational transformation of the Indian and incorporation of the Red man into

American society, very few of them ever advocated marital amalgamation as an important means to those ends" (155).

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