

**The Manipulation of History and Memory in  
Contemporary American Poetry:  
A Study of Ekphrasis in the Poetry of Jorie Graham**

توظيف التاريخ والذاكرة في الشعر الامريكي المعاصر:

دراسة التمثيل اللفظي في شعر يوري غراهام

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**ABSTRACT**

Ekphrasis enables poets to invade the most difficult and sensitive areas of thought without the pressure of direct expression. Ekphrastic poetry has a tendency to draw together contradictions; the work of art acting as intermediary between points of opposition, tension and contrast. The presence of the ekphrastic object in a poem is an acknowledgement of the unbridgeable hermeneutic gap between poetry, history and the real, indeed it often acts as the marker that exposes this gap. Also in a practical way, through both its critical and art-historical backgrounds, the practice of ekphrasis is located very firmly within arguments of a temporal nature; it is important to remember that paintings have a material history as well as a conceptual one, and that contemporary poetry is increasingly taking into account, and even seeking to replicate in some cases, the space of the museum itself as well as the paintings within it.

Therefore, the present paper aims at affording a new study of the poetry of the contemporary American poetess Jorie Graham through illuminating the rhetorical device of ekphrasis, which is meant to verbally represent what is already represented visually, and its relation to presentations of the most perplexing concepts in modern and contemporary literature in general and poetry in particular, namely, memory and personal history. The paper is an attempt to investigate how Jorie Graham uses images from painting, photography and films in her poems to manipulate time and represent personal history through memory which, in turn, leads to a consideration of how she uses ekphrasis to approach the ethics of representing public history, and how she uses the different temporal conventions of each genre to write about the past.

**Key Words:** Ekphrasis, History, Memory, Jorie Graham, Contemporary Poetry.

## I. Introducing Ekphrasis

When poets choose to write about a piece of visual art, what is chosen is often not the most famous, or iconic piece of art, but the art that has something to say about the poet's unexplored ideas. So that readers can often look to depictions of art in the work of particular poets, as they look to the repeated images from which they form their metaphors. The impulse to look and to describe is important to the surface of the poem, but is equally indicative of the currents that run beneath it, and so these images inevitably become a metaphor for a previously implicit theme. Thus, writing about art becomes a way of writing about poetry itself and the representational processes of the consciousness that produces it and in turn enables the poet to delve into extremely difficult and sensitive layers of thought without needing to rely on direct expression. The representation of visual art in literature is not a new phenomenon. Ekphrasis is found in poetry since Homer, and its progress has been documented from the perspectives of both literary criticism and art history. In the twentieth century, as modernist art increased its emphasis on abstract form and rejected representation, the formed image has become highly significant to poets as a

reflection of their image-creating process and as a mirror useful to study the self as image-maker.

For the sake of exploring the potentials of poetry about visual arts, readers must be aware that such poets work within a web of literary and art, historical, critical contexts as well as that they engage with the longstanding and growing creative debate on the topic of ekphrasis, so that it is focal to pay some attention to varied notions of what ekphrasis is. Ekphrasis has been around as long as literature itself. The components of the words (ek) and (phrasein) literally mean (out) and (to speak)<sup>1</sup>; that is to speak out. As a rhetorical device it simply meant to describe any object, natural or made, and to recreate the seen image in words. Classical ideas about the relation between word and image reveal the simple fascination this debate continues to hold for critics and artists as well, the viewpoint that the two sorts of media have similar aims and yet still are fundamentally different. Horace's famous phrase 'ut pictura poesis' (which is translated 'as for the image, so far the poem'), while implying the points of similarity between the two media, it is used in the text to underline that they are not identical. Indeed in much criticism, image and word are held apart in a succession of binary oppositions; silent and speaking, still and moving, spatial and temporal.

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's well known essay, "Laocoon: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry" (1766), addresses the division between word and image as static and unbridgeable as does Murray Krieger in his essay "Ekphrasis and the Still Movement in Poetry; or Laocoon Revisited". Here he argues that ekphrasis uses a "plastic object as a symbol of the frozen, stilled world of plastic relationships which must be superimposed upon literature's turning world to 'still' it"<sup>2</sup> and that the fundamental opposition at work is that between the spatial and the temporal medium. However much poetry tries to embrace the physical qualities of art and to place emphasis on the physical form of words. Despite conceding that poetry has special time-space powers, he sums up his discussion with the notion that:

Time, in this unique empirical particularity, must always be celebrated in its flow even if we arrest it to make its movement a forever-now movement. Or else poetry is hardened into static, Platonic discourse that has lost touch with, indeed that disdains to touch, our existential motions.<sup>3</sup>

In his book, *Ekphrasis*, Krieger does not mainly revise his ideas on the separation of word and image into temporal and spatial media, thus, in his definition of the term, he describes ekphrasis as both “a miracle and a mirage”:

A miracle because a sequence of actions filled with before and afters such as language alone can trace seems frozen into an instant's vision, but a mirage because only the illusion of such an impossible picture can be suggested by the poem's words.<sup>4</sup>

Any image-like properties that the written text can attain are a fleeting illusion, a sleight of hand trick that allows the verbal to hint at the visual.

Therefore, poets concerned with representation like Pound, Graham, Charles Wright and still many others have looked at the Chinese poets as a source of inspiration and have been fascinated with the idea of a written language made of images. The pictorial origins of many written languages might suggest that word and image are not so entirely different from each other as is often thought as both can represent and both can function as vehicles for meaning. In his book *Picture Theory*, Mitchell argues that any division into opposite and separate qualities is a totally false and imposed one: “all media are mixed media, and all representations are heterogeneous; there are no “purely” visual or verbal arts,....”<sup>5</sup> He does not only argue the case for celebrating the implications of this statement in the artistic world, but also in the academic world that studies it:

The clear separation of “faculties” (corporeal and collegial) on the basis of sensory and semiotic divisions is becoming obsolete and is now being replaced with a notion of humanistic or liberal education as centrally concerned with the whole field of representations and representational activity.<sup>6</sup>

His inclusiveness is evidence of where the ekphrastic urge takes many poets, which is towards a mixing of genres as well as media, and their works are proofs that ekphrasis acts as a catalyst for fusion.

## II. Ekphrasis, History and Memory in Graham's Poetry

Jorie Graham, a Fellow of the American Academy since 1999, is Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory at Harvard University. She has published numerous collections of poetry, including *Hybrids of Plants and of Ghosts* (1980), *The End of Beauty* (1987), *The Dream of the Unified Field: Selected Poems 1974 - 1994* (1995), which won the 1996 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, *Never* (2002), and, most recently, *Overlord* (2005). She has also edited two anthologies, *Earth Took of Earth: 100 Great Poems of the English Language* (1996) and *The Best American Poetry* (1990). Graham served as a Chancellor of The Academy of American Poets from 1997 to 2003.<sup>7</sup> She was raised in Italy, studied at the Sorbonne, and returned to graduate from New York University and the University of Iowa. Her concern for the visual in poetry may be traced to her growing up with a mother who was a painter and to her work in television; a musical presentation of images tending toward abstraction and mystery may be ascribed to her early reading in French symbolists. She has been praised for her philosophical examination of questions of creativity.<sup>8</sup>

Jorie Graham produced her own visual works and has used both paint and film to express ideas contained in her poems. She wishes to build some kind of coherence out of the broken pieces of modern history through abstract representation. In her works, ekphrasis appears as a reflective act of self-consciousness in which they hold every aspect of their poetic under scrutiny. Their engagements with works of art sometimes provoke change but are equally a clear cut sign of the external changes they undergo. She argues that the takeover of literary language by modern consumer values described by Bob Perelman as he states that "words/ that died on/ the way to/ the mall, mad/ that the world/ hadn't thought/ to provide/ anything more interesting/ than ranked merchandise"<sup>9</sup>, is a problem that influences human ability to think and write

about certain things; most important among them, human history. The perceived lack of personal responsibility in modern culture, has changed her idea of who she is writing for and has given her a sense that the American reader is “a reader who doesn’t trust language any more as a medium for truth—because of advertising, because of government, because of the atrocities language has carried in its marrow.”<sup>10</sup>

Consequently, one of the aims set by Graham in constructing her poems is the attempt to recover the reader’s faith in words, a faith that they can use to approach and share experience. There is a sense in her poems that re-appropriating the narratives of history is some of the serious work words in her poems must do if they are to recapture the interest of the cynical and disillusioned reader. This is partly due to the fact that Graham sees herself, as her readers, suspicious of any narrative, especially one that claims to represent history, as well as the writer who wants to win it back. The duality of this struggle is comparable to those acted out in her dual self-portrait poems of *The End of Beauty*. The poet’s own trust in the nature of words and the representational weight they can carry is also under question, especially “that great double-edged power in language, the power to define that has been used so devastatingly by colonisers and dictators alike.”<sup>11</sup> Her discomfort with the unquestioning use of “the language of the culture that is terrifying the whole globe”<sup>12</sup> is one of the catalysts for the constant desire to change and rework the language of her poems, an integral part of her creativity depends on trying to discover in each new book “a more moral terrain—a terrain in which one is more accountable.”<sup>13</sup>

Various other American poets are also motivated by the same impulse to think about how one can interpret the past and how it affects human’s view of the present after experiencing the same difficulties representing history. Mark Doty, for example, sees it as a deeply-rooted cultural problem, something American in particular: “in America we tear down the old or polish it into unrecognizability; we make it ‘historic’ and visitable, a replica of itself, metals replaced, colors restored. Make it new or cart it away.”<sup>14</sup> Graham might see this

as having something to do with a particularly American conception of time. In an interview with Thomas Gardner, she describes a childhood game she played in Rome, sitting in her room imagining back through the layers of history and the scenes played out on that piece of ground. She says:

I sat above the 'current humans' in the room below and loved to imagine the eighteenth century house beneath 'this' house and its people, the Renaissance house and its people, the Medieval house and its people – all the while trying to summon the whole city around the house.<sup>15</sup>

Her imagination leads her back to pre-Roman settlement and even beyond. When she tries the same game as an adult in Iowa City the experience is never the same; after the Civil War town and the first settlements, after the native communities, she reaches a void. In Wyoming, the game stops even more abruptly:

Strip away this nice enclosed room you've placed on this bedrock prairie and what do you have? Some homesteader, some roaming herds and their hunters – then silence, then some age when all you are sitting on, or looking out at, was ocean. (*The End of Beauty*, 74)

More than the effect of Graham's trilingualism on her syntax and vocabulary, the most significant legacy of her childhood in Rome then Paris is a divided conception of history and a feeling of its weight on the great cities of Europe. Such notions give her ground for comparison with the freedom from the weight of history she perceives America as having; a gap that could, like others in her works, prove fertile. This lack of sense of history has led, ironically enough, to its commoditisation and the energy with which Americans go about making it new. She laments that "you would think the simple fact of having lasted/ Threatened our cities like mysterious fires" (*The End of Beauty*, 93).

One of the reasons that Graham refers back to Eliot so much is because she sees herself in a situation with increasing parallels with the era of high modernism (1920-1960) and she identifies with many of its aims and

dissatisfactions; especially the problem of a collective trauma that needs expression and a language that is seen to be losing the power to express it because of a kind of socio-political erosion. T.J. Clark underlines modernism's dream "of turning the sign back to a bedrock of World/ Nature/ Sensation/ Subjectivity which the to and fro of capitalism had all but destroyed...an emptying and sanitizing of the imagination."<sup>16</sup> This desire to clear language of its political associations chimes with what Graham tries to achieve in her poem "Disenchantment" from the collection *Overlord*. She has referred to the WWII and the (holocaust) in nearly all her collections, but *Overlord* focuses on these subjects most consistently. It is a collection whose dual themes are the failures of history and the poet's fears for the future in a nation that has lost its sense of compassion, thus becoming a metaphorical wasteland. The poems focus mainly on the allied offensive in Europe, and the collection is even named after Eisenhower's 'Operation Overlord.' Graham uses historical as well as personal accounts to reconstruct some of the landings, interspersing these with more general poems relating the lives of soldiers or more contemporary concerns. One of her increasingly frequent forays into an experimentalism that is similar to language poetry<sup>17</sup>, "Disenchantment" deals with the problems of perspective judgment and how to represent personal or cultural history. She wants a language that can do justice to the atrocities of modern history and raise questions about the lessons that can be got from it without lapsing into a narrative that privileges a certain view of itself or writes a certain kind of history to the neglect of other possibilities. At the same time, a view of history that embraces fiction and myth, blurring lines between reality and the imaginary, can entail certain dangers; the extremist of them is a denial that the atrocities ever happened at all.

For this reason, versions of history have tended to close around themselves, being exclusive of possibility and seeing history and art or history and myth as incompatible. This is a problem raised by Graham in *Erosion* with a poem entitled "History". Here she juxtaposes some modern reactions to WWII; the words of a holocaust denier and a photograph of a brutally murdered man

which, in an artistic flavour, can from this distance be perceived as beautiful. History brings with it judgement, subjectivity and emotional reaction. It is:

...the opposite  
of the eye  
for whom, for instance, six million bodies in portions  
of hundreds and  
the flowerpots broken by a sudden wind stand as  
equivalent.... (*Erosion*, 64)

She is here clearly referring to the defamiliarising effect of the visual image; that its forms and patterns can have an immediate effect on readers that could be seen as inappropriate to the context. What the poet is mainly concentrating upon is that the images of history come back to haunt us and even its most insignificant events echo out into the future. These difficult images cannot be avoided, nor can they be traced in a narrative sense like the fairy tales “where simple/ crumbs over the forest/ floor endure/ to help us home” (*Erosion*, 65). Graham questions how people can tell themselves fairytales while the small facts of history repeat themselves with such random brutality, reminding them that there are ethical implications for how they re-write history and re-present its images.

In spite of such concern with the problems of defamiliarisation, it is in the techniques and ideas of visual artists that she finds forms that can take her closer to her goal. When writing about the holocaust, she has often linked the event to an image; either in painting or a symbolic image from her own past, thus, in a way, linking personal, subjective history with public, objective one. In “Two Paintings by Gustav Klimt” (1983) the beech forest she is describing takes a different light when she gives it its German name; “this yellow beech forest,/ this buchen-wald” (“Two Paintings by Gustav Klimt”, 62). Even though the painting was completed in (1890) when it is given its title, “Buchenwald”, the

silent anonymity of these rows of thin white trees and the hollow 'gaseous light' seems to foreshadow the coming holocaust. Graham cannot unburden the painting of these more modern associations; it is changed forever. In "Annunciation with a Bullet in it" (1993) a family's six month imprisonment, waiting for the inevitable and seeing it happen to those around them<sup>18</sup>, is compared with an incident in Graham's childhood; a dog that survived a few days after being shot with the bullet still in its head. This poem shows a development of her interest in using original voices, of letting other people's speech and writing into her poems and sometimes changing details or words, an interesting method of interpretation which has added some controversy to how critics have seen her writing about history.

"Disenchantment" deals in its core with history in a far more general sense, its effects seen through the life and work of the German expressionist Gerhard Richter whose painful images of German history have often resulted in controversy. Even the most superficial layer of meaning in the poem needs to be dug for a little, Graham's sources are not obvious and they are presented without context, in a state of textual confusion. Similar to many of her studies of representation, more important than the images in themselves is how they were formed and derived from their photographic sources. Richter projected the photographs onto a canvas, traced every detail and reproduced them with photographic accuracy, intentionally smudging and distorting them afterwards until the details are no longer visible, lost in the haze. He states that he was "like a gravedigger while I painted these corpses. It was just work. If I felt one of them looked too theatrical, I painted over it."<sup>19</sup> They are distorted almost to the point of being non representational, without knowledge of the originals one could not grasp what they are.

Disruption and distortion are techniques used by Jorie Graham a great deal in her poems from her pivotal third collection, *The End of Beauty*, onwards. The gaps and unfinished sentences in these poems are instances of speechlessness when faced with the past and they often seem to represent the ultimate inaccessibility of a unified perspective of history through language of

trauma and frustration of these cut, unfinished lines. This frustration of the lack of a point from which to see things, and also the distrust in contemporary 'polluted' language's ability to express it, leads her to use words like a collage, culminating in the poem "Disenchantment" which is composed almost entirely of other writer's words. She has the urge to lay words down on paper, to say something, even if she cannot find the language she wants to express it with. She instead finds the fragments of history that can be shored against the ruins of the present; scattered and out of context points of view that can be collected as a movement towards the whole view that takes each perspective into account, and in which each voice has a different perspective but each is seen as equally meaningful. Many of the poems of *Overlord* are grouped together from original testimonies of soldiers who fought on D-Day<sup>20</sup>, changed and worked into the body of the poems, which is one of the points of criticism to this collection. William Logan, for example, finds her comparisons of the public and personal sides of history, her unwillingness to draw a line between the staggering tragedy of genocide and the domestic tragedies experienced in everyday life as reductive and belittling; "Graham's lack of any sense of proportion reduces the argument of *Overlord* to something like "On the one hand, my kitty has AIDS; on the other, a whole lot of guys died on Omaha Beach."<sup>21</sup> This is a radical example of a technique of juxtaposition that also had a positive revisionary effect of integrating history that may be otherwise lost and forgotten. In previous collections, especially *Materialism*, the same treatment has been given to philosophers, poets and diarists, for Plato to Whitman, as well as to the narratives of ordinary people. Here, she freely quotes, paraphrases, cuts and changes her sources, including a caution in the notes; "all passages referred to as "adaptations" are edited, rewritten in spots, or assembled out of fragments collected from the larger work named. This also applies, in small measure, to the epigraphs."<sup>22</sup>

Such quotations and adaptations in her works show a technique similar to ready-made expressions and collages, and a similar urge to Richter's, to repeat images even by mechanical reproduction, to distort them and try to remove their meaning or emphasise a different aspect of it. But Graham does not use them

in an entirely uncontrolled way for there is always a guiding consciousness behind even the most automatic of gestures. She counterbalances the differing voices, the holocaust victims with the holocaust deniers. A good example of this is the selection of phrases from Lyotard's *The Differend* that shows the logical difficulty of proving the gas chamber deaths ever happened, strangely personified in the voice of an angel, used to create an irony that is not placed easily with the voice of the child in "Annunciation with a Bullet in it". Despite letting both voices in, the testaments from the past in her work are never synthesized; the difficulty of weighing them up is left to the reader. In the second section of "Disenchantment" she paraphrases Richter's words as: "I want this to be seen – listen to me – always – as a narrative –/even if it is a narrative of nothingness – nothing is something."<sup>23</sup> Both poet and artist attempt to create a sort of negative space in their work, full but at the same time empty, filled with something made deliberately incomprehensible and stripped of much of its capacity for meaning. It is a technique that calls on the reader to interpret; faced with these morbid canvases and this fragmentary poem it is not possible to be passive: even after the readers worked out what they are, the meaning and the motivation remain occluded.

Once more, and like many other modern and contemporary poets, it is the technique that is more interesting than the subject here, her choice of quotations, from which she constructs the poem, seems to be at the same time banal and highly symbolic. "Disenchantment" is slightly different from her other poems that use quotations heavily in that the focal component in its linguistic collage is a recent review article; like Ashbery's "Self-portrait in a convex mirror", it integrates critical work on the paintings within its frame of reference. Most of the poem is taken from a *New York Times Magazine* article by Michael Kimmelman entitled "Gerhard Richter: An Artist Beyond Isms" (2002), the second source is Goethe's *Faust*. The whole poem is structured into seven sections representing the seven days of creation. The artist is not compared to a creator hovering over the fertile gap; instead the references are somewhat blank, an organizational imposition, and feel as though they fail to make a point. The horrific and haunting images taken from the end of Goethe's play,

Margaret's imprisonment and Faust's regret, mixed strangely with Kimmelman's efficient, journalistic style. Readers expect a poem about Gerhard Richter from the dedication under the title, but, instead of the conventional meditation on his paintings, readers discover recycled biography and technical details of his painting process, his spotless studio and ordered rows of clean tools. The writing, like Richter's methods, can look like rather clinical and mechanical, the biographical detail very cold and non touching. Graham underlines the unimportance of the bare facts she is reproducing by not even mentioning the dates as in "the year x saw him joined, the year y saw him married" (*Overlord*, 48).

What interests her much more is the root impulse of these paintings, the desire to disrupt what Richter calls "the terrifying power that an idea has."<sup>24</sup> His interest was not focused around a left or right wing viewpoints, but was instead focused on the effect of the beliefs that made them crazy. Richter blurs the photos because the details are not important, what comes across from his reproductions of these widely sensational photographs is their sadness and dullness, the way these shadows of lives have lingered on in the German collective memory. Although he works from photos to produce highly realist paintings, he also works simultaneously on abstracts and the structure of these also inspires Graham's poem. She sees them, again, as disruption and deferral. When meaning starts to form, she says that he builds up repeated layers of thick, brightly coloured paint and scrapes them off again with squeegees to reveal those behind:

Just there were the center was beginning to form –  
no, there should not be a center – listen how it echoes –  
you can blot it nicely with some abstraction –  
something applied to the blank,.... (*Overlord*, 48)

In this way they submerge the story that is clamouring to be told, the narrative that will develop given half a chance, of Richter's painful past experiences, the history he has lived. Richter says one should look for random forms in his abstracts. As Kimmelman notes that his abstract art is "inherently about the

search – and about not finding anything.”<sup>25</sup> The original meaning of the word trauma, as Cathy Caruth asserts, is of a physical wound, which is what many of Richter’s abstract canvases resemble, deep red wounds scraped back to the raw flesh.<sup>26</sup> In Graham’s works, the wound and the moment of chance are seen both as the same thing, for example in “Pollock and Canvas” it is the metaphor of the gap between Pollock’s brush and his canvas, where he drips the paint freely instead of exercising control, that opens up ideas of fertility and plurality, re sowing the American Wasteland with new ways of meaning. In mythology and many literary works like Dante’s *Divine Comedy* the wound often has the power of speech, forever repeating the hurt it has sustained. This notion of the gap or wound also characterises “Disenchantment”. Graham is scraping back the layers of language and meaning in this poem, which is partially ready-made, and partially abstract, hoping to relinquish control, leaving a space for chance even in this most constructed and conscious of media, and therefore, she hopes, a space for feeling.

The coldly journalistic biographical and historical detail in the poem enacts another point about the desensitising power of a lot of factual information given too rapidly. In an interview Graham gives the example of the split news screen, giving us images of war with sport updates, stock reports and the weather, conflicting visual and textual information at the same time:

The ‘multitasking’ asked of us by the CNN screen is precisely geared to dissociating our sensibilities. It forces us to ‘not feel’ in the very act of ‘collecting information.’ But what value does information unstained by emotive content have, except a fundamental genius for manipulating dissociated human souls. Why, you can frighten them to the point of inhumanity. You can get them to close their eyes and let you commit murder in their name.<sup>27</sup>

By defamiliarising the information in a poem and making readers read it critically, presenting them with impediments to a superficial and unthinking reading and never presenting an image of completion in what she says, she wishes to wake readers of their passivity, to make all possible readings critical ones. She is eager to make readers reappropriate the past as something they

can also read critically, “the past, the past is also yours to keep if you wish/ with its own last effort to outwit you,/ with its silently projected map of the world” (*Overlord*, 48). Representation and repetition of the images of the past are very and purely human urges, but humans have to choose carefully the way in which they appropriate these images. The past’s last effort to outwit people is the idea that their understanding of these images can ever be more than a process of changing points of view projected through the blurred filter of memory read out of its linguistic and cultural context.

The seventh and last section of the poem is in Graham’s own words and strikes a much lighter tone than the rest of the poem. She sees people as “...a list of examples that keeps growing faster. / Embracing brutality and importance. Some joy. Some preliminary sketches” (*Overlord*, 49). Humans are made of continually changing and often contradictory perspectives, views and looks, they do not have to forget the examples of their past but they have to find a way of moving on from them. This negative capability is perhaps finally what draws Graham to a painter like Richter and why people looking at his paintings found them difficult, his work is always reassessing itself and changing, he does not try to be consistent or paint a version of himself, a continuous narrative. Like Graham, he swings between representation and abstraction, as if the only thing saving his work from the hand and influence of history closing around it is to think of nothing and just keep painting.

### **III. Conclusions**

It can be claimed that for Graham the danger of history lies in its conception as a fixed narrative, a story to be told and retold in the same structure each time every now and then, and that the only escape from this is in plurality of representation and continual revisions that embrace different, variant viewpoints, both frontal and peripheral. Acts of remembering ought to be repeated and understood as always personal, never objective; they must be an attempt to fracture that artificial unity, breaking open the metaphysics of a single homogenous version of the past. They must involve the consciousness that each memory is another representation, another version, each time it is remembered. Memory and history for Graham, then, are things humans

themselves construct, laying down counter-memories against the reductive narratives that would claim to comprise a completed view of experience.

### **Notes**

1. "Ekphrasis," <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>.
2. Murray Krieger, *Ekphrasis: The Illusion of the Natural Sign* (Baltimore: John Hopkins U.P, 1992), p.266.
3. Ibid. p.287.
4. Ibid. p.xvii.
5. W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), p.5.
6. Ibid. p.6.
7. "Jorie Graham," <http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA149898420&v=2.1&u=oslis&it=r&p=GPS&sw=w>, p.1.
8. "Jorie Graham," <http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA16849525&v=2.1&u=oslis&it=r&p=GPS&sw=w>, p.1.
9. Bob Perelman, *The Future of Memory* (New York: Roof Books, 1998), p.78.
10. Thomas Gardner, "An Interview with Jorie Graham," *Denver Quarterly* 26, no.4, 1992, p.98.
11. Ibid. p.82.
12. Gardner, "Jorie Graham: The Art of Poetry LXXXV," *The Paris Review*, no. 165, 2003, p.96.
13. Gardner, "An Interview with Jorie Graham," p.83.
14. Mark Doty, *Seeing Venice: Bellotto's Grand Canal* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2002), p.125.
15. Gardner, "Jorie Graham: The Art of Poetry LXXXV," p.73.
16. T.J. Clark, *Farewell to an Idea: Episodes from a History of Modernism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), pp.7, 9-10.
17. Language poetry is a postmodern avant-garde movement in American poetry in the 1960s and 1970s which paid greater attention than before to the importance and power of language in poetry writing.
18. This episode but reminds me of what had happened in the village of Naslawia in Erbil in the reign of the past regime as told to me by a friend in koya city.
19. Michael Kimmelman, "Gerhard Richter: An Artist Beyond Isms," New York Times Magazine, January 27, 2002, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9501EED8153BF934A15752C0A9649C8B63&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all>.
20. It is the first day of the Invasion of Normandy during WWII which started on Tuesday, 6 June 1944.
21. William Logan, "The Great American Desert," *The New Criterion* 23, 2005, p.81.
22. Jorie Graham, *Materialism* (New Jersey: The Eco Press, 1993), p.145.
23. Jorie Graham, *Overlord* (Manchester: Carcanet, 2005), p.43.
24. Kimmelman, "Gerhard Richter: An Artist Beyond Isms." P.4.

25. Ibid.  
 26. Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins U.P, 1996), p.97.  
 27. Gardner, "Jorie Graham: The Art of Poetry LXXXV," p.96.

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## المستخلص

يمكن التمثيل اللفظي الشاعر من الولوج في اكثر مواطن الفكر وعورة وحساسية دون الضغط الذي يسببه التعبير المباشر. ينزع شعر التمثيل اللفظي لجلب المتناقضات جنباً الى جنب، حيث يعمل هذا العمل الفني كوسيط بين نقاط التعارض، التوتر، والتناقض. يمثل وجود عنصر التمثيل اللفظي في القصيدة اعترافاً صريحاً على وجود فجوة تفسيرية لا يمكن تجاوزها بين الشعر، التأريخ والواقع، والتي غالباً ماتمثل الدليل الذي يكشف عن هذه الفجوة. في السياق العلمي، ومن خلال كلا الخلفيتين، النقدية والفني-تأريخية، فان ممارسة التمثيل اللفظي تكمن ضمن نقاشات الطبيعة المؤقتة: كما انه من الجدير بالذكر ان اللوحات الفنية تأريخياً مادياً ومفاهيمياً ايضاً، وان الشعر المعاصر يأخذ بالحسبان بشكل متزايد-وحتى انه يهدف في بعض الحالات-الى نسخ فضاء المتحف ذاته وحتى اللوحات التي بداخله.

لذا فان البحث يهدف الى تقديم دراسة جديدة لشعر الشاعرة الامريكية المعاصرة (يوري غراهام) من خلال تسليط الضوء على الاداة البلاغية المعروفة بالتمثيل اللفظي للتمثيل الصوري وعلاقته بأكثر المفاهيم المحيرة في الادب الحديث والمعاصر عموماً والشعر خصوصاً، الا وهما، الذاكرة والتأريخ الشخصي. هذه الورقة البحثية هي محاولة للكشف عن ماهية استعمال الشاعرة لصور مستقاة من فن الرسم، التصوير والافلام في قصائدها للتعامل مع الوقت ولتمثيل التأريخ الشخصي من خلال الذاكرة، والتي تقود بدورها الى النظر في كيفية استخدامها للتمثيل اللفظي للتوصل الى اخلاقيات تمثيل التأريخ العام، وكيف انها تستخدم تقاليد وقتية عديدة من كل نوع فني للكتابة عن الماضي.