

Red Wheelbarrow

essays & poems by Luiz Mee

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The poem with the first line "so much depends"
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*so much depends
upon*

*a red wheel
barrow*

*glazed with rain
water*

*beside the white
chickens*

—WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS (1923)

RED WHEELBARROW

From a historical perspective, I assume William Carlos Williams's wheelbarrow event is formed by necessary and sufficient conditions, such that, say, the red wheelbarrow had been sitting there before the chickens arrived and the rain came, that day. As for how so much depends upon the red wheelbarrow, well, that is another matter. Kind of scary, really, like what if everything depended upon the red wheelbarrow? Because the red wheelbarrow sat there, *glazed* in rain water beside the white chickens, and it sat there while it was raining, and it sits there now the rain has ceased and the chickens have emerged from whatever shelter to continue doing what chickens do in both rain and shine, I can determine a *causal line* as to why Williams saw the red wheelbarrow beside the chickens in their various conditions and make inferences as to their relationship. It is the task of the historian and the physicist to describe and explain events in time and space, but for the poet, time-space must be placed in events. Historical method for a poet is an eloquent term for the self-created specific formulations of self-created objective facts.

There's an inside and an outside to this. The outside looks like a cheap theatrical prop. The inside is characterized by a "self" interpreting the "thing-in-itself." When I get close to the red wheelbarrow, I understand I am inventing the red wheelbarrow, and that the red wheelbarrow, also, invents me. This is why so much depends upon the red wheelbarrow. The red wheelbarrow is *the* red wheelbarrow. That's its purpose—to be the red wheelbarrow. The purity of its state of being, the pending in it. I recognize in the red wheelbarrow the sanctity of an everyday thing. As Lu Garcia says, "You can bury it, but it will never rust."

An exposition of "The Red Wheelbarrow"

The opening lines set an ontological tone—a barnyard microcosm. In lines three and four, there is a sharp focus on the wheelbarrow, the intensity of the color red, its condition after the rain. The line breaks make each element come into sharp focus. As we begin to see the wheelbarrow, it suddenly appears fresh, even majestic, *glazed with rain water*. In the final strokes of the picture, the white of the chickens contrasts dramatically with the redness of the wheelbarrow, and the painting is complete. Much depends on the stress the reader gives each syllable, enabling us to experience the tactile qualities of the scene.

Semiotics

Language, and the red wheelbarrow in particular, does not lose its semiotic character even when reduced to its sub-atomic classes.

Red Wheelbarrow in the 2-value system

The proofs of the two-valued system of logic are based on the law of contradiction (*tollens datur*) which states that something is either something or nothing but not both. (If *A* is *A*, then *A* is not *not A*.) Also, something to be stated in contradiction to this logical system must be translated into this system.

This *red wheelbarrow* is the one and only red wheelbarrow, a poetic archetype, and it is, also, an everyday red wheelbarrow.

Either the red wheelbarrow is a red wheelbarrow or it is not and the red wheelbarrow is both a red wheelbarrow and it is not at the same time means that this red wheelbarrow can be glazed with rain water in our imagination, and this red wheelbarrow can be next to the white chickens, and if the red wheelbarrow is glazed with rain water, then, the white chickens, as David Bromige pointed out the other day, more than likely depend upon the red wheelbarrow because it contains the feed they eat and is also used when the farmer mucks out their coup.

The red wheelbarrow energy vortex

I beg of you, seek nothing behind the phenomena.

They constitute their own lesson.

—GOETHE

From the Hammurabian code (c. 2100 BCE) to Rychard's *Café Poems* today, the information transmitted in structures of language materials transcends the syntactic-semantic relationships. The word is an energy vortex, whether it is the word as an event we enter or the word, in and of itself, as an event.

A full account of the red wheelbarrow

Starting with some marks on the side of the red wheelbarrow, slight irregularities in the surface of the wheelbarrow—I connect the dots and discover another wheelbarrow beside two chickens. Now, being careful to stay inside the lines, I color the wheelbarrow a thick coat of barn red, and the chickens I make white with quick strokes of my brush, leaving the paper show through. Getting the rain water effect on the wheelbarrow requires a coating of glazing compound. Important, still, to stay within the lines, keep to the measure.

The dot

The dot—in OE, a noun, *dott*, head of a boil; in 1570, a small lump, clot; in 1674, a minute speck, spot, mark; 1748, a roundish mark made with a pen. It was not the act by which a dot is made until 1858. A little child, or creature, in 1859. As a verb, to mark with dots 1740; 1816, to scatter with specks; 1818, to cover with minute spots. Poets knew it (knew(i)t—little i, knewt—no(tat, tit for tat)ed—knit (know it, dotted it down) all along.

Nothing sentimental about this wheelbarrow

I came home drunk, and the next morning I punished myself by digging a trench across a gravel road for a culvert. Again, I used a red wheelbarrow.

Who listens to the music a red wheelbarrow makes? So, I stop and listen at this dumb thing in the barnyard. I stand next to it and chop the heads off the white chickens, and I hang their carcasses by their claws on a fence made of hog wire to let the blood drain. Other chickens peck at blood-soaked clods of earth, while the eyes of the dead chickens glaze over. No need for shellac.

Graphemes

There are tracks in the snow, left by the red wheelbarrow and the chickens.

Morphemes

What was once a red wheelbarrow, just outside my window, beneath the honeysuckle sun, has become a slogan, "Bird lives!"

Tech support for wheelbarrows

I was 19 when I read the poem by William Carlos Williams about a red wheelbarrow glazed with rain water beside the white chickens. I wanted one. A wheelbarrow. Not green. A bright red wheelbarrow. So, I finally bought one. Went to Home Depot tonight to pick up a wheelbarrow. It's red. It's in the back seat of my car, and like a good Chesterfield, I am unable to move it further in or take it back out. What should I do?

Unless they are welded on, the handles/poles and the rear stands/feet of the wheelbarrow should be attached with some form of bolt. Pull out your ratchet or wrench or large pliers and get to work. If they're welded on then you should look into removing the front axle assembly. That's probably just held in place with a few screws or another bolt or two. That should defiantly be able to come off (as you'll end up replacing the tire at some point). Otherwise, follow the engineering maxim of "There are very few problems that cannot be solved by a large hammer." Best of luck.

So much depends
upon
a bright red bar
held by
a square bolt.

Red Wheelbarrow in code

Each letter means the letter before it.

Tp nvdi efgoet
vspo
b sfe xiffmcbsspx
hmbafe xjui sbjo
xbufs
cftjef uif xijuf
dijdlfst.

Oscar night

Red Wheelbarrow was resplendent in an a black, single-breasted, one-button, shawl-collar tuxedo with black vest by Armani.

Accepting the award for ihis raw, explosive performance in *Spring and All*, he said, "Thank you, I don't know what to say. I feel such gratitude. Thank you."

Later, he confided to me that it is not easy to have much of a private life being such a celebrity. No way to move. The papparazzi are watching his every move. He has to stay in place.

Amazon.com red wheelbarrow

Amazon Toys & Games: Red Wheelbarrow

Carter Back to Basics Toys—safe and sturdy, this red wheelbarrow steers easily with smooth wooden handles, and rolls along on a steel tire with rubber treads.

Transformation

back to the thing-in-itself

it is the same red wheelbarrow in that it changes

the same changes

as one

is one

such
that it
is you

Red wheelbarrow in code

(Instruction: each letter means the letter before it.)

tp nvdi efgoet

vspo

b sfe xiffm

cbsspx

hmbafe xjui sbjo

xbufs

cftjef uif xijuf

dijdlfst

Red Wheelbarrow in Hell

Following the axiomatics of Lukasiewicz, where letters = sentences,

Hell is a sentence

when *l* is a sentence

and *e* is a sentence

followed by a sentence

and *H* is a sentence

followed by two sentences

Hell

is a language. Language is a *sentence* in the E-phenomenal sense

that an object is related to existence.

Graphemes

There are tracks in the snow, left by the red wheelbarrow and the white chickens.

Morphemes

What was once a red wheelbarrow, just outside my window, beneath the honeysuckle sun, has become a slogan, "Bird lives!"

Phonemes

I heard Crazy Jane sing

*Hate ate the red wheelbarrow,
But love dug it up again.*

In poet's hell

I stay after school and fill all the
blackboards:

So much depends upon a red wheelbarrow glazed with rain water beside the white chickens.

So much depends upon a red wheelbarrow glazed with rain water beside the white chickens.

So much depends upon a red wheelbarrow glazed with rain water beside the white chickens.

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So much depends upon a red wheelbarrow glazed with rain water beside the white

chickens.

Why would anyone say such a thing?

Wheelbarrows within wheelbarrows

Starting with some marks on the side of the red wheelbarrow, slight irregularities in the surface—I connect the dots and discover another wheelbarrow beside some chickens. I color the wheelbarrow with a thick

coat of barn red paint, and the chickens I make white with quick strokes of my brush, letting the paper show through. Getting the rain water effect on the wheelbarrow requires using a coat of shellac. Important, to say with the lines, keep to the measure.

No soil or mulch or mud

—Philip Whalen

Who listens to the music a red wheelbarrow makes? I stop a moment in wonder. Then, I hook a couple of the chickens with a long wire and chop their heads off on the stump where I cut kindling. I hang them on the fence by their legs to drain. Other chickens peck

**at the blood-soaked earth, while
the eyes in the decapitated heads of
the dead chickens glaze over.
There's no need for shellac.**

*Tech support for wheelbarrow
owners*

**I was nineteen when I read the
poem by William Carlos**

**Williams about a red
wheelbarrow glazed with rain
water beside the white
chickens. I wanted one. A
wheelbarrow. Not green. A
bright red wheelbarrow. So, I
finally bought one. Went to
Home Depot tonight to pick up
a wheelbarrow. It's red. It's in**

the back seat of my car, and like a good Chesterfield, I am unable to move it further in or take it back out. What should I do?

Unless they are welded on, the handles/poles and the rear stands/feet of the

wheelbarrow should be attached with some form of bolt. Pull out your ratchet or wrench or large pliers and get to work. If they're welded on, then you should look into removing the front axle assembly. That's probably

just held in place with a few screws or another bolt or two. That should defiantly be able to come off (as you'll end up replacing the tire at some point). Otherwise, follow the engineering maxim of "There are very

*few problems that cannot be
solved by a large hammer.''*

*So much depends upon a
bright red bar held by a
square bolt.*

Good luck.

Yahoo.com red wheelbarrow

Amazon Toys & Games:

Red Wheelbarrow

Carter 'Back to Basics'

Toys—safe and sturdy,

this red wheelbarrow

steers easily with smooth

**wooden handles and
rolls along on a steel tire
with rubber treads.**

Ames True Temper

Recall of

Wheelbarrows

... CPSC, Ames True

Temper Announce

Recall of

Wheelbarrows.

WASHINGTON ...

purchase.

Wheelbarrows with

metal wheel

assemblies are not

part of this recall.

Amish Products

OLD STYLE

WOODEN

WHEELBARROW.

Remember the

wooden

wheelbarrow

Ganddad used on

the farm?

**Remember the
White Leghorn
chickens?**

Excerpt from the

autobiography

**Along with
everything else, I
was asked to
teach poetry to**

**high school
students in
Rutherford, but I
wasn't sure I
could manage**

this, as I had no

experience

teaching poetry.

Returning on the

train from a

**pediatric clinic in
the city, I met an
elementary
school teacher, a
woman, who had**

a lovely smile.

When she smiled,

tiny lines formed

around her lips,

which made me

**think she must
smile a lot.**

**Striking up a
conversation, I
told of my**

**dilemma, and she
gave me a couple
of tips. First tip,
don't let them
think they are**

**smarter than
you. Second tip,
if they do, you
must argue all
night to show**

them they're not.

**'I never let the
little bastards get
the better of me,'**

were her exact

words.

**Her name was
Margaret Brown,
and she lived on
a small farm with**

her parents just

outside of

Hackensack. We

took a liking to

one another, and

**she extended an
invitation to visit
if I was ever in
the
neighborhood.**

**About a week
later, after
attending to a
sick baby near
the town of Lodi,**

**I was driving
down a country
lane and spotted
her working in
her yard.**

**She wore bib
overalls, and as it
had been raining
earlier, her
clothes were**

caked with mud.

I sensed

something

primitive about

her, something

**actual and real,—
what Cézanne
might have called
an energizing
force. I stopped,**

**and waved. She
was standing
near a red
wheelbarrow
beside some**

**white chickens,
and she waved
back. It made my
heart Spring.**

*Reflections of a
red wheelbarrow*

**So little is needed
so much is**

remanded

so little reaches

the front

so much is

pending.

**Everything seems
squeezed
into a single
point, no place**

for me.

Maybe it's the

rain

water. Maybe

**it's the American
way.**

**I think, maybe
it's a joke,**

but

somehow

I don't get it.

Oscar night

(Hollywood)

Red

Wheelbarrow

was

resplendent in

a black, single-

breasted, one-

**button, shawl-
collar tuxedo
with black vest
by Emporio**

Armani.

**Accepting the
award for his
raw, explosive**

performance in
Spring and All,
he said,
'Thank you, I

**don't know
what to say. I
feel such
gratitude.**

Thank you.”

**Later, he
confided to me
that it is not**

**easy to have
much of a
private life
being such a**

celebrity. No

way to move.

The paparazzi

are watching

**his every move,
so he stays on
his farm in
upstate New**

Jersey.

*Red, white &
blue*

wheelbarrow

[The following is
an excerpt of
"Red"]

Wheelbarrow's

**testimony before
the House Un-
American
Activities
Committee on**

**October 20, 1947,
as reported in the
official
Government
Printing Office**

**record ('Hearings
Regarding
Communist
Infiltration of the
American**

Literary

Consciousness").

The Committee's

chairman was J.

Parnell Thomas,

and Robert

Stripling was

Chief

Investigator.]

Mr. [Robert]

**Stripling: I
gather, then,
from your
analysis of this**

poem your

personal

criticism of it is

that it

**overplayed the
conditions that
existed on the
farm at the**

**time the poem
was made; is
that correct?
Mr. ['Red']**

Wheelbarrow:

Well, the poem

portrayed the

animals in the

**barnyard in a
better
economic and
social position**

**than they
occupied.**

Mr. Stripling:

And it would

**also leave the
impression in
the average
mind that they**

**were better
able to resist
the aggression
of the German**

**Army than
they were in
fact able to
resist?**

Mr.

Wheelbarrow:

Well, that was

not in the

**poem. So far as
the Russian
war was
concerned,**

nothing was

shown about it.

The Chairman:

Mr. Nixon.

Mr. [Richard]

Nixon: No

questions.

The Chairman:

**All right. The
first witness
tomorrow
morning will**

by Ayn Rand.

*Picture from
Williams*

—*for Jane*

she did a

painting, which

in

keeping with

the spirit was

to be

a red

wheelbarrow

rain-

drenched

with

chickens

no fuss,

straight up

finally, tore the

sky

into four

pieces, each

had a line

of verse

and framed the

botched

wheelbarrow

**and too bright
interpretation
of
chickens with**

sewn on

feathers

by

thumbtacking

**it to a
stretcherbar**

so much

**depends upon
that first cup of
coffee**