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Look at This Blue and the Discontents of the Anthropocene

Introduction

Allison Hedge Coke is a liberal, ecologically concerned, and scientifically informed humanist. While deriving inspiration from California's socio-cultural and environmental context, her poem *Look at This Blue* actively addresses globally oriented inquiries and concepts that drive ecological thought. Hedge Coke's tireless campaign for the environment and Indigenous rights designs *Look at This Blue* as an emergent message. Her inference that "[w]here man goes, comes inevitable loss" (2022: 21) encapsulates the belief that humans harm ecosystems as they intervene in nature because of insufficient environmental concern or understanding that stems from a reference system (Western, capitalist, colonial) that privileges one type of human while neglecting other human and nonhuman life forms.

Hedge Coke is an Indigenous humanist whose cognitive eyes open from holistic cosmogony. Assuming from this environmentally just axiom, her language is characterized by humility while attempting to poetically articulate the discontents of, as Keller (2017) calls it, a "self-conscious Anthropocene." In this manner, while examining "the blue of extinction, the blue of the last butterflies, the blue of arson, howls of species gone, the last note of Ishi and his people," the judges of the National Book Award quote, "[t]he speaker's blue spirals of compassion and action, flora and fauna endangered, the blue of facts, lists, documents, missionization of First Peoples propel us through the poem, commit us to zig-zagging across stanzas of lives lost." Other critics praise the poem as radical and experimental (Heelein 2022). *Look at This Blue* blends poetic and documentary genres to highlight the system's all-pervading deceptiveness, which immerses humanity in an abundance of material in the age of the Internet but does not provide consolation. Chickasaw writer Linda Hogan (2022) states that Hedge Coke's poems "have so much to say that they can't talk fast enough, and this poet is not afraid to speak the dangerous truth."

Hedge Coke's poetic profundity, linguistic and visual subversiveness, and continuous concern for justice force us to confront the implications of colonialist ecological racism and capitalist exploitive and coercive power. Thus, *Look at This*

Blue joins Indigenous ecological activism, whose centuries-old knowledge offers holistic, sustainable, and justice-oriented solutions to the growing field of environmental humanities. Consequently, *Look at This Blue* becomes more than just a book; it represents a "scary" (Fisck 2024) action that engages readers in the extinction and survival processes in the world they navigate.

Where Hedge Coke writes from

The deep-rooted inequalities in environmental practices experienced by minority communities in North America, especially Native Americans, are marked by ongoing "ecological racism" (Gilio-Whitaker 2019) and "slow violence" (Nixon 2011). As Gilio-Whitaker discusses in her (ironically titled) study *As Long as Grass Grows*, supported by the narrative of progress, colonial practices facilitated the theft of Indigenous lands, genocide, and slavery, laying the foundation for the accumulation of wealth in America at the expense of ecological and cultural sustainability (2019: 32-3). The commodification of sacred land into private property facilitated the formation of economic surpluses, which, in turn, demanded a constant migration, displacement, and slow erasure of Indigenous communities (*ibid.*: 6). The disruption of traditional food systems has exacerbated chronic health issues in these communities (*ibid.*: 21). Besides, a large percentage of displaced Indigenous communities populate areas contaminated by uranium and toxic waste that have caused a series of health problems and shorter life spans (*ibid.*: 23-4), eventually resulting in historical trauma (Aloma 2016: ii). Still, in the 21st century, the U.S. legal system continues to marginalize Indigenous populations, frequently excluding them from decision-making processes about their lands and resources, as evident in the 2016 Dakota Access Pipeline controversy when the U.S. ignored the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Gilio-Whitaker 2019: 31-2), denying them the status of legal subject, water rights, and an opportunity to heal.

Technology that advances capitalist practices also shapes nature and our perception and communication with it, perpetuating the paradox of the Anthropocene (Solnick 2017: 7, 10). While humanity's increasing power results in greater environmental destruction, the accumulation of environmental knowledge still leaves humanity inactive or emotionally paralyzed (Keller 2017: 67, 150). In this context, poor communities incapable of adapting to abrupt changes suffer the most. In deteriorating and unsustainable areas, the direct violence of physical relocation is coupled with the "slow violence" of delayed destruction, which, Nixon elaborates, is incremental, accretive, and exponential (2011: 2-3). It is also mediated by bureaucratic and media violence, which perpetuates control over marginalized populations' visibility. This process results in "spatial amnesia," Nixon continues, which "imaginatively" shelters the privileged from reality (*ibid.*: 151). As a result,

disasters continue, exposing the limits of current systems and eroding trust in institutions. Indigenous ecological efforts join mainstream environmentalism in warning against this dangerous "multipolar order" (Stewart-Harawira 2005: 32), with the aim of ending suffering and achieving justice for past and present crimes.

Although "traditional indigenous knowledge forms have a profound contribution to make towards an alternative ontology for a just global order" (*ibid.*: 27), the academy tends to neglect tribal intellectualism mainly because it is transmitted through stories the dominant education understands as myths (Tuhiwai Smith 2007: 33). Building on this neglect and imploring that their data be "honorably harvested," Melissa K. Nelson explains that stories carry the power of connectivity, serving as an Indigenous means of "re-writing and re-*righting* history and combating the erasure of our people's presence on the land" (2023: 319). While calling out for joined academic and civic activities, Indigenous environmentalists also seek to cooperate with the settler societies (cf. Powys Whyte 2017: 210). For example, discussing how the COVID pandemic has highlighted social estrangement and vulnerability, Joy Harjo emphasizes the necessity of collective navigation (2022: 80). Instead of selfish and fragmented answers to global difficulties, interrelated crises necessitate collaborative solutions and a narrative that logically links them.

Indigenous contribution to ecological humanities, therefore, comes from their holistic epistemology that sees creation as a constant evolution of an ecosystem found in the sustainable and balanced cooperation of its diverse parts, thus incapacitating hierarchies (Deloria 2003: 77). As species communicate, learn from each other, and change into different life forms, the tribe includes all living and non-living entities that acquire the quality of intelligence and spirituality, i.e., personality. In her influential book *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Robin Wall Kimmerer discusses how the "Honorable Harvest" is founded on our accountability to both the physical and metaphysical realms and emphasizes that when we understand the beings we harvest as persons, possessing intelligence and spirit, family and home, taking life for sustenance gains a more profound significance (2013: 192). Creek ethnohistorian Donald Lee Fixico calls the overall connectedness of this animated world "Natural Democracy" (2003: 45-9). As Rosanne Kennedy derives, it requires Indigenous science—which she describes as "eco-memory" (2017: 276)—to take a multidirectional and multispecies approach and recognize the "ecological vulnerability neither exclusively in human-animal nor nonhuman animal terms but as interconnected" (*ibid.*: 269).

On this basis, Kyle Powys Whyte elaborates that, embedded in the acknowledgment of the "multiple relationships among living beings, non-living things, and the environment," the traditional body of knowledge "is viewed as the process of participating (a verb) fully and responsibly in such relationships […] it is the relationship with Creation" (2017: 4). The inclusivity of Indigenous thought and the concept of kinship with surrounding phenomena, Shawnee philosopher Thomas Norton-Smith describes as a "dance of person and place" (2010). Thus, when the

world is perceived as an energetic expanse in constant motion, its linguistic description is dominated by verbs that depict the perceived processes. Developing meanings through combinations of verbs, for example, the Hopi express that a cardinal is red through an utterance close to “cardinal is redding” (*ibid.*: loc. 487). Almost diagonally across the continent, the Anishinaabe word *puhpowee* means forcing “mushrooms to push up from the earth overnight” (Kimmerer 2013: 61). The Ojibwemowin verb *wiikwegamaa*, “to be a bay,” releases the expression from humanly enforced bondage, understanding that the living water “has decided to shelter itself between these shores, conversing with cedar roots and a flock of baby mergansers” (*ibid.*: 67). Ojibwemowin is listed in the Guinness Book as one of the most challenging languages to learn because “two-thirds of the words are verbs, and for each verb, there can be as many as six thousand forms” (Erdrich 2003: 59). Similarly, verbs comprise 70% of Potawatomi (Kimmerer 2013: 65).

From this position, Melissa K. Nelson proposes that “ecological knowing” is an active and continual process—therefore, an action—that “implies a plurality of ways or methods,” and humility because it does not express one “authorized” body of information, be it even Indigenous. “Knowledge as a noun,” she says, “can get turned into a thing, a product, a commodity. It can become mono-cognitive, mono-cultural, mono-lithic, *one* way” (2023: 317-8). Drawing from physicist Vandana Shiva, Nelson explains that “monocultures of the mind,” originating in the colonial hierarchical thought system, are irreconcilable with Indigenous perception. The Indigenous is the “grammar of animacy,” Nelson uses Kimmerer’s concept, which “opens poly-cognitive and poly-cultural ways of knowing” (*ibid.*: 318). Thus, ecological language is that of a relationship that acknowledges responsibility for a variety of lives, “oak trees and shale mountains, hummingbirds and saguaro cactus, or lizards and flowing rivers, and of course, with our own species, fellow mammalian two-leggeds of the five-fingered clan of many ages, colors, sizes, languages, places, and worldviews” (*ibid.*).

Finally, Creek poet and American Laureate (2019 – 2021) Joy Harjo considers the oversaturation of language in the digital era that has reduced the value of words and meaningful communication (2022: 76). She underscores that the Anthropocene cannot express justice because its language (scientific, economic, and political), founded on control, dominance, and separation, views the natural world as an object to be described, measured, and exploited. In line with Anthropocene history, the extension of European languages brought on the coercive myth of national progress (*ibid.*: 35), justified the oppression of Indigenous peoples, their languages and epistemologies, and aided in the global deterioration of ecosystems (*ibid.*: 11). On the contrary, Indigenous justice is inherently restorative and rooted in rebalancing relationships.

Look at This Blue as a reflection of the Anthropocene disorder

Look at the Blue is intensely centered on decolonizing justice by fostering respect for Indigenous methodologies and reestablishing rightful relationships of responsibility among humans and between human and non-human life. By weaving together historical and present, ecological, social, and individual adversities, the poem articulates a simple message that recognition of mercy and kindness will benefit both the colonized and the colonizers, who must relearn how to respect themselves and others. This message develops into an invitation for joint action, conveyed through a complex form that involves numerous, sometimes conflicting, languages and visual renderings, reflecting the chaos of the Anthropocene.

The poem's two epigraphs signal that it understands itself as a dynamic medium that seeks to intervene in readers' recognition. The mixture of tenses in the first epigraph evokes cognitive dissonance:

> *once, the world was gleaming, open,*
> *we entered unknowing, believing all we came to*
> *we must deserve, knowing we did not faced*
> *extinction.* (Hedge Coke 2022: xi)[1]

These first words—"once, the world was gleaming"— recall the beginning of storytelling and the disturbing destiny of Indigenous people. However, the pause, typical of this poem's discourse, transfers the poem's grievance for the lost language and alarms that we are all endangered, i.e., unless we learn to "honorably harvest" what is gifted to us. The second epigraph quotes Inuk musician Tanya Tagaq's song "Retribution," indicating that Indigenous environmental struggles are gaining momentum: "*The path we have taken has rotted/ Ignite, stand upright, conduct yourself like lightning*" (*ibid.*: xiii). This dialogue introduces *Look at This Blue* as a critique of the idolatry of wealth as the primary cause of environmental damage and spiritual emptiness and as an electrifying call to action.

On the following page, the poem is introduced as "*an assemblage*" (*ibid.*: xiv). We will see that it is an assemblage of man-induced catastrophes and expect it to be subversive of the linear thought that has carried domination and oppression. However, the choice of the concept of "assemblage" inevitably calls to mind Deleuze and Guattari's conceptual model of a "book as assemblage of the outside" and not an "image of the world" (2005; 23). As "an assemblage," a book establishes multiple connections with the world, becoming a rhizome (*ibid.*: 11). Built on multiplying modes of attention, the rhizome is heterogeneous and nonlinear. While disallowing hierarchies, the rhizome has neither beginnings nor endings but

[1] Italics are original unless otherwise noted.

only middles that form plateaus through which it progresses in many directions (*ibid.*: 23) and can be approached from various sides. Another principle of the rhizome is "asignifying rupture" (*ibid.*: 9), which means that it is "stratified, territorialized, organized" along the lines of segmentarity and deterritorialization (*ibid.*). Yet, every "line of flight is part of the rhizome" and "always tie[s] back" to other lines (*ibid.*). Thus, while trying to map the diverging consequences of the Anthropocene's inherent flaw, *Look at This Blue* develops as this multidirectional message, offering various perspectives on relationships that overcome scale and temporality, immersing within its subject both the language and the lyrical persona. As a result, the poem's fragmented discourse and seemingly dispersed images emerge through growing lists, historical projections, literary allusions, political commitment, and emphatical lyrical grievance, which strive to look into the middle of the problem as if trying to untie the Gordian knot of the Anthropocene.

In its visual subversiveness, the poem opens by inviting readers to imagine an extinct blue butterfly:

> Look at This Blue
>
> Xerces blue butterfly from the sand dunes of San Francisco
> first-known American butterfly to become extinct due to humans
> first known (Hedge Coke 2022: 1)

Urban development destroyed the lotus plant it fed on, and the butterfly died. The rest of the first page is empty, prompting us to reflect that the butterfly cannot be seen except as its photographed replica. The anthropocentric perspective emphasizes the iconic visualizations of its force and invisibilizes the vulnerable and the extinct. The juxtaposition of these incongruous phenomena, when something so silent as a butterfly produces noise, triggers consideration of what humanity might do with the space if fed by images of beauty and kindness instead of power and brutality.

Highlighting human agency in maintaining life on Earth, the invitation interweaves the book. It repeats five times, referring to the endangered "Palos Verdes blue […] *one of the best claims to being the world's rarest butterfly*" (*ibid.*: 11), "Mutant blue-eyed coyotes" (*ibid.*: 53), "Mission blue butterfly *from coastal chaparral*" (*ibid.*: 73), "Blue Whale *alongside Monterrey* […] first thought extinct by development" (*ibid.*: 94), and the "Hidden Lake bluecurls" (*ibid.*: 119), which are so small that "fifty flowers might fit on a penny" (*ibid.*: 119). Aesthetic appreciation here is ethical, and the authorial intention is obvious—"finding something beautiful," Emily Brady agrees, "contribute[s] to developing a caring attitude towards it" (2017: 208). Pointing to the phenomena invisibilized by the capital-driven frame of mind, these five summonses function as rhizomatic plateaus that provide a unifying power to the sections that interweave human and nonhuman disasters. Thus, although the poem is sometimes insistingly abecedarian—evoking the concept of lin-

earity—and pregnant with lists of the extinguished and endangered life, *Look at This Blue* relates that there are no visible beginnings and endings of the discontents. As one human action starts a rhizome of consequences, it becomes problematic to define the reason behind the vandalizations of parks or restaurant massacres, of which Hedge Coke gives numerous examples. Ignorance, greed, or an untreated illness are only "symptoms of something massive faster" (2022: 14), and incapable of caring: "Those who rage are," paradoxically, "*full of emptiness*," she argues, "hollow people, unfilled, vacant" (*ibid.*: 101). The mechanical force of the late industrial society feeds on this emptiness, objectifying humanity and overall life.

On the contrary, Indigenous understanding of relationality, kinship or "kinning" (Nelson 2023: 318), mutual accountability, and reciprocity cancels divisions and hierarchies, not only within the human landscape but also between humans and nonhumans. Connectivity and empathy are expressed in *Look at This Blue* through a seemingly irregular succession of images of destruction—brisk and elaborated, as well as personal and historical. Spectacular climate problems, like glacial melt—"Glacial melt, waves and waves./ 100 times faster than previously imagined" (Hedge Coke 2022: 86)—alternate with accretive violence, as seen in the poaching of redwood burls.

> Redwood burls cut like blisters shaved from trunks
> poach life source from root
> killing giants in knobby growth removals
> baseline / canopy-height bud tissue
> unsprouted genetic code for clone of parent-tree emergence— (*ibid.*: 2)

The burls produce highly textured wood for which reason they are poached even from national parks. The acknowledgment that the burls preserve a tree's life creates a profound shock, which leads the poet to draw a parallel between their devastation and a harrowing incident from her upbringing. Specifically, the tree is viewed as a living entity and its burls are perceived as the buds that supply it with life. However, the poachers are ruthless in disregarding the need for genetic replication, which is why the dash sign appears. The image instantly contrasts with a more visible threat to life—that of a person unable to breathe due to a gun barrel held at their mouth.

> Barrel at my mouth, ready-cocked held there
> by my baby brother's bared grip. (*ibid.*)

The space following the anecdote conjures the absent air. We learn that the barrel is held by an infant, a human incapable of sufficiently reasoning the action, which is why his grip is described as "bared." The murdering of a tree is, thus, compared to killing a person.

Seeing forests as persons with agency, *Look at This Blue* presents several consequences of their destruction. It recalls the 2017 arson ignited by Southern California Edison's equipment that burned around 280,000 acres of Los Padres National Forest. The fire destroyed thousands of homes, producing a massive wave of developmental displacement, including animal species unlikely to find shelter: "First the puma in Santa Paula palm branch, then coyotes, fox, rabbits appear,/ Birds overcome the sky" (*ibid.*: 8) producing a "plume," a mass of feathers or a long choking cloud of smoke resembling it. After this, the lyrical persona notices that "undulating fleas" cover the earth in thick "wrapping" that makes the path "barely passable" (*ibid.*). The destruction of one habitat inflicts transformations of another so that the denial of nature's agency generates a pronounced emotional reaction, from which springs intense recognition and identification when, as Margaret Ronda says, "the 'I' empties or expands into other beings" (2024: 54), with care and anxiety (*ibid.*: 51). The same recognition is evident in Hedge Coke's response to the "defunding" (2022: 115) of Joshua Park during the COVID-19 shutdown. Namely, with few rangers on-site, careless vacationers damaged trees, which may not recover in hundreds of years, spray-painted the sand rocks, and used sensitive areas as off-roads, thus destroying the macrobiotic dust of the trees' habitat. After experiencing the forest's grandeur as a "rangy succulent majesty" (*ibid.*: 115), Hedge Coke personifies its march across the U.S. Southwest—"said to straddle Mojave and Colorado Deserts" (*ibid.*). However, the fact that the pandemic shutdown brought a unique desert park to risk also provokes irony reinforced by the sorrow surrounding the prediction that climate change may destroy forests anyhow, underlying that those currently destroying them may simply be rushing towards the inevitable end: "by 2100 climate change rising temperatures/ may take it all, they're hurrying along" (*ibid.*).

As environmentally conscious narratives intertwine ecological facts with cultural histories and values, we are reminded of the genocide performed over the California tribes and, in particular, of the Yahi, of whom Ishi was thought to be the last surviving member. Hedge Coke narrates that Ishi was found in 1911 and mostly kept for studying in a museum directed by the Berkley anthropologist Alfred Kroeber. Unable to cope with European diseases (similar to the butterfly whose habitat was destroyed), Ishi died five years later, while his brain was returned to his relatives only in 1999. Explaining that Ishi was not the original name of this objectified person—it meant "human" in the Yana language, which also became extinct—Hedge Coke emphasizes that the whole culture was erased with the disappearance of its language: "*The Yana/ language was distinctive in having different/ word forms used by male and female speakers,/ an unusual trait that does not exist in the other/ languages of this region*" (*ibid.*: 6). The story about Ishi opens the way for the poet to warn that the dominant thought system rejects alteration. The poem lists nearly 150 animals and 265 endangered or extinct plants (*ibid.*: 33-52), provides an abecedarian register of 320 missionized Californian

tribal groups (*ibid.*: 64-66), and records 32 massacres of California tribes (*ibid.*: 67). Simultaneously, these lists mimic the language that facilitates the mechanical linearity of the deterministic system to affect readers' awareness of their discontent with the Anthropocene.

Coming from an inclusive culture, Hedge Coke must remember other unprivileged communities to show that, as the communities that bear the least responsibility for the environmental crisis, they endure its consequences most frequently. However, in the accelerating capitalism, they are invisible, like the butterfly. Discussing the environmentalism of the poor, Nixon alarms that the concept of progress discounts the unprivileged on three levels: "as political agents," "long-term casualties of slow violence," and "cultures possessing environmental practices and concerns of their own" (2011: ix). This recognition drives not only *Look at This Blue* but environmental humanities in general, which examine how these communities are abstracted from national narratives and stigmatized as irrational, inconvenient, unworthy, surplus, disposable, expendable, invisibilized (Stewart-Harawira 2005: 24), unimagined (Nixon 2011: 150), monstrified (Giuliani 2021), uninhabitants (Nixon 2011: 153), etc. In *Look at This Blue*, however, they are approached with solidarity from an equally abject position of an Indigenous woman excluded from the realms of the privileged (Kristeva 1982) and endangered on multiple levels (LaDuke 2015: xvii). Because these communities are least likely to achieve redress, it becomes the poet's priority to show, as her fellow feminists say, how "alienation and disempowerment make it […] difficult for communities to fight against a system that is poisoning them" (Cuomo 2001: 37) and how it is only "when our values and decisions do not center solely on our own interests that our thinking is ethical" (*ibid.*: 64).

Hedge Coke presents numerous burning issues among California non-white residents, in particular Latinos, African Americans, Chinese, and Japanese. On the same page (2022: 96), we learn about the 1852 "*harsh fugitive slave law that condemned/ dozens of African American migrants to deportation and lifelong slavery,"* "THE CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT OF 1882," the 1929 forced removal of "400,000 Mexican American people/ from their state,/ their country of birth." The poem emphasizes that these communities are "[d]eprived, defrauded," as their property is stolen to buy "trains, cars, buses,/ planes" (*ibid.*). They are also unjustly forced out of their neighborhoods, "with no due cause," by—the poem is now disturbed and employs a series of progressive forms—"Enacting threats, committing/ violent acts, raiding targeted persons,/ misnaming them illegal aliens,/ despite legal residence, citizenship" (*ibid.*). The caesura after "citizenship" takes Hedge Coke to revisit the World War II internment of over 100,000 Japanese Americans that followed the Pearl Harbor attack. She focuses on the Tanforan relocation facility constructed of former horse stalls, where, among the interned, "haystack beds, stinky stalls, rank from manure" (*ibid.*), she finds Miné Okubo (1912 – 2001), a California citizen born in Riverside. To reflect on art's witnessing and empowering function,

Hedge Coke reminds that Okubo's book *Citizen 13660* (1946), which documents her experience at the camp, received the American Book Award in 1984, almost forty years after she was "banned from living on the west/ coast" (*ibid.*) by the 1942 Executive Order 9066. At this point, the poem pleads, connoting the deprivation by repeating the most straightforward choice of the past participle "taken": "for all taken, taken, taken, taken, occupied, or destroyed/ discourage future violations of civil liberties/ Make credible, make sincere, concern" (*ibid.*: 99).

Recalling COVID-19—"deaths, hospitalizations,/ cases soaring in encampments, detentions, between borders, nations, between worlds" (*ibid.*: 80)—Hedge Coke also remembers the riots organized mainly by the whites to highlight how racial dichotomies and poverty combine to render the "others" invisible. "The LA Times" quotes that "[t]he crowds protesting California's stay-at-home orders […] have a litany of grievances: Open the beaches. Free the churches. End the tyranny of a governor" (Branson-Potts et al. 2020). While the privileged protestors "hop barricades to surf," "cite the Constitution," "wave American flags," "sport Trump 2020 gear," "rail against vaccines," the "others" dared not voice concerns despite the analysis showing that African Americans and Latinos under fifty years of age were impacted by the virus in significantly greater numbers, primarily due to their employment in "essential" service jobs that required them to leave their homes (Rust 2020).

When the political, economic, or pandemic crises culminate, their most visible aspects are immigrants and refugees. Through the example of immigration department performance, Hedge Coke presents bureaucratic violence and the tendency to equalize and, thus, abstract, all "colored" communities and individuals:

> Where are your mother's
> naturalization papers? Her green card. Can you fax them
> to INS, to IRS? They put your mother in a van to deport
> to Mexico. She's Canadian, you note. Black hair, black eyes,
> short, dark complexioned, Mexican enough, he says… (2022: 17)

Hedge Coke records that "*[t]wenty-four immigrants have died in* ICE *custody, by August 2019*" (*ibid.*: 74) and documents their mistreatment and the way media presented it. The images of the grieving and unattended refugees, separated families, inadequately equipped detention centers, overworn or inattentive border, and medical agents, exhibit what Ronda calls "relationality without unity" (2024: 58)—the world that lacks cohesion and needs an urgent collective navigation (Harjo 2022: 80), to address the crises.

In the climate of injustice, the homeless, the picaro, become the most apparent "discomforting reminder" of the "studied amnesia" of the elite (Nixon 2011: 55). Now, the poem develops an observative ethnographic tone and through plain diction looks at the raw essence of urban diversities—a street as a microcosm of systemic displacement:

> Here, streets lined with fresh
> refugees, straggler homeless, cardboard
> box men, prostitutes, pimps, beautiful
> neighborhood people who teach me
> you can get a great meal for $2 on
> this block. How to eat with chopsticks,
> which store gives free bread if you
> don't have $. Lots of Skins pass through. (Hedge Coke 2022: 62)

In its ethic of witnessing, the poem shows the ongoing crisis in the imagery of neglect, precarious sheltering, and objectification of humans in the margins into categories ("cardboard/ box man"). Yet, this evocative cinematic moment shifts the perspective from the street level to make the hardships relatable and flip the power dynamics noticing the resourcefulness and connection amid adversity. The city block, although apparently decayed, becomes a site of education, generosity, and beauty, a lesson in survival, community, and defiance of capitalism. Its concerned inhabitants demonstrate harmony and cohesion—the large system lacks, as we have seen—leading to a higher level of empathy when the poet identifies with the destitute:

> the riverbottom people begged
> for when we were them
>
> scruffed, scuffed, sleeping under overpass, in dryers
> to keep warm, kids, we were
> under shattered skies (*ibid.*: 108)

Permeated with profound emotional scars, the speaker recounts a time when her people lived in extreme poverty and social marginalization as "riverbottom people." The colloquial language of "scruffed, scuffed, sleeping under overpass, in dryers to keep warm" emphasizes the hardship and the indignities of homelessness. The picture of children living under "shattered skies" conveys the profoundness of their lives' adversity, brokenness, and disarray. Yet, despite the fractured lines and lack of punctuation that reflect the instability and disorientation, the shift from "we" to "them" generates tension between remembering and transcending the past and develops a tone of resilience.

Among other endangered, so-called "equalities" communities (Bell 2021: 148), are the sick, the elders, and children. We see a senior "[w]alking on an unattended broken leg" (Hedge Coke 2022: 13). The following verses depict an everyday living experience in instrumentalized urban landscapes that prioritize vehicles over humans, growing into an elegy for the preventable tragedy:

> Reaching back for slipped skateboard
> he was hit so hard he flew while breaking.
> […]
> on Martin Luther King Road
>
> near Bordwell Park, Eastside, where the speed limit suddenly increases
> while approaching two close crosswalks leading to homes from Stratton
> Community Center, Bordwell, Emerson Elementary—Eastside; Black,
> brown kids; elders—
> Anyone can see someone once worked this out. (*ibid.*: 5)

The violence of unexpected destruction of the delicate life is highlighted by the stark contrast between the ordinary action, a boy "reaching back for slipped skateboard," and the disastrous outcome when he was hit because the car could not instantly stop. The mention of Martin Luther King Road, often located in African- or Latino-American neighborhoods, contributes to the social critique of urban infrastructure. Although the terms "Stratton Community Centre," "Bordwell," and "Emerson Elementary" illustrate a community-focused environment, they also emphasize the dangers inherent in areas not designed with pedestrian safety in mind, especially where "the speed limit suddenly increases/ while approaching two close crosswalks." The concluding remark—"Anyone can see someone once worked this out"—conveys a sense of resigned acknowledgment regarding the planning insensible to the safety of the community.

Look at This Blue dramatizes the gendered dichotomy through abuse, both domestic and social, directly brutal and extended, such as being denied sympathy, medical treatment, or legal protection, especially if the woman's witnessing authority is racially discounted. The speaker's body projects the repeated violence and the lasting impact of assaults and interventions through reflections that take us out of the domestic and into the social sphere.

> Somewhere on my left face, you can still see
> where it was sewn back on.
> On the right, the line across eyelid
> where it was sewn back on.
> On the abdomen the line
> where it was sewn back, sewn back, sewn back.
> Somewhere on my right hand
> where it was sewn.
> All the heres and theres
> where sewn.
> All the labia biopsies, removals, explorations, assaults, sewn. (*ibid.*: 9)

The act of sewing symbolically suggests a process of repair. However, the repetition of "sewn back" implies a cycle of damage and restoration, highlighting an on-

going experience. Every colored woman suffers "ethnostress," LaDuke elaborates (2015: xvii). As a woman of color, she adds, "your politics will be race based, your analysis marginalized, and your experience seen as limited" (*ibid.*). Among the many instances when the lack of concern is experienced as a prolonged insult, Hedge Coke demonstrates how even the legal system is permeated by gender and racial biases, minimalizes justice, and fails to speak in terms of fairness and safety.

> After he cut this hand, severed tendon,
> Punched this face, mocked,
> Bruised, cut—punched again—
> His Ventura County public defender, a woman,
> asked me to drop charges so he
> wouldn't miss class.
> Not happening.
> Not happening.
> Not happening.
> Guilty; she won Suspended Imp anyway.
> This is how roadside trash pick-up equates even. (2022: 27)

The speaker expresses a profound frustration with a justice system that trivializes severe violence ("severed tendon," "bruised, cut—punched again") and dismisses the pain of this woman in the bargain "so he/ wouldn't miss class." The system's outcome ("Suspended Imp anyway") transforms justice into a hollow process, almost a mockery, especially when the guilty verdict—roadside trash pickup—stands absurdly disproportionate to the harm caused, further diminishing the woman's worth. The speaker's defiant rejection of the system, underlined in the repeated "Not happening," recalls the history of abstracting the injustice suffered by humans who are marginalized due to gender and race.

Justice requires the excluded, the subaltern, to speak because diverse life experiences bring new forms of communication and knowledge (cf. Bell 2021: 4; Powys Whyte 2017: 210). Apart from being a poetic appeal for an inclusive and just society, *Look at This Blue* offers academic, civic, and individual solutions toward this aim. In the context of Indigenous suffering, the poem recommends "[s]olutions set out in Vizenor's tribunals" (2022: 68), referring to Gerald Vizenor's lecture that initiates the establishment of formal tribunals across the U.S. to prosecute perpetrators of crimes against humanity, and Native Americans in particular, by international conventions and declarations (Vizenor 2007). Hedge Coke explains that these are "assembled in the academy, investigated, fully researched trials, for the premeditated serial genocide committed through government role/s" (2022: 68). Besides, an inclusive approach to environmental justice necessitates partnerships outside the academy. Environmentalist scholars (Powys Whyte 2013: 7; Brown 2022: 17-20) discuss "stewardship" as the essential civic agency that works to repair the damaged relations between society and the environ-

ment by empowering us to recognize our shared humanity and respond to the violations it suffers. Reinforcing this message, Hedge Coke presents the responsible participation in the biosphere, family, and language of the Amah Mutsun tribe, engaged in "[r]estoring indigenous knowledge and practices/ to Popeloutchom ancestral homelands" (2022: 54). Yet, the climate of justice sometimes only needs good intentions. *Look at This Blue* presents a woman who "forced the city to put in a crosswalk/ for grade school kids crossing, running late, between cars—who might fall down be hit—" (*ibid.*: 112) and finishes the account after another visual break, suggesting: "Something anyone might do—" (*ibid.*). The last statement is characterized by commonality and inclusivity. The pause emphasizes that advocating for children's safety is not only civic responsibility but simply an act of kindness, a natural response to the situation. In this way, *Look at This Blue* advances communication among academic, civic, and individual domains and provides the language of recognition and care.

The language of *Look at This Blue*

While it remains explicitly committed, Native American literature is sensitive to the level of its proximity to the "master's" language and functions as the "language of survivance" (survival and resistance, Vizenor 1999). Indigenous appropriation of the dominant language produces literature that Louis Owens describes as "frontier writing" (1998: 26). Owens uses the cartographic (colonialist) metaphor to explain that while the territory is secured and mapped, the frontier "is always unstable, multidirectional, hybridized, characterized by heteroglossia, and indeterminate" (*ibid.*). In other words, while Native American writers use English—which to them is "the linear tongue of colonial discoveries, racial cruelties, invented names, the simulation of tribal cultures, manifest manners, and the unheard literature of dominance" (Vizenor 1999: 105)—they subvert or reinvent it (Bird and Harjo 1997). They produce works in familiar forms to trick the reader into an alternative literary experience. Thus, the covers of *Look at This Blue* present the text as a poem, but on page xiv, the text insists it is an assemblage. Nevertheless, we proceed to the main content, failing to notice that the enumeration style in the front matter conventionally suits discursive writing, which, by the end, provides further reading, an index, and works cited. As an activist poem, *Look at This Blue* must reject the comfort of one genre, while its affecting and loosely structured verses oscillate from lyrical to documentary. The most obvious sign of the poem's discontent with the form is the profuse listing that places the names of the extinguished and endangered lives in abecedarian order, as well as registering the massacres and cultural genocide committed against California's Indigenous peoples. This documentary maneuver mimics the seeming order of the dominant language to provoke the reader's discontent with its linearity, such as when page

67 introduces aporia: "How many massacres?" The poem's final call—"Do the work:" (*ibid.*: 123)—is followed by a colon and a list of sources to be consulted in reclaiming our agency in the world we navigate. This invitation turns the poem into action, an active participation in the Creation.

Hedge Coke's diction often changes to mimic the disoriented and fragmented experience of the present. In the first place, she alludes to and quotes discerningly—journals, books, statistics, politicians, activists, educators, artists—not to add another layer of realism to her count as much as to increase the implication of her words by suggesting the unstable relationship between reality and its representation. Thus, interrogating the authorities and juxtaposing disparate elements evoke an atmosphere of disjunction. However, this discursive tone proposes that not every human should be equally judged for the discontents of the Anthropocene, as the following statistics illustrate:

> Still, estimates of fatalities exist:
> 300,000 to 250,000 Spanish-rule killed
> 250,00 to 150,000 under Mexico
> Under US, after 1848
>
> in two years of gold fever, 100,000 killed.
> of 150,000 people, 20,000 more killed in the next 25 years,
> when *the state spent $1.7 million to murder 16,000*. (*ibid.*: 63)

Therefore, to uncover the social stratification of the Anthropocene, *Look at This Blue* is pronouncedly subversive of the official discourse. It often imitates legal documents in presenting facts in a clinical, factual, detached manner to evoke the inhumanity of bureaucracy:

> His country of origin
> Vietnam
> admitted as lawful, permanent resident
> 1984
> final order of removal
> 2004
> 2005
> released on supervision
> 2017
> found guilty of disorderly conduct
> upon imprisonment, denied medical issue
> was taking prescription for schizophrenia
> for major depressive disorder
> 2018
> transferred, unresponsive, no reflexes, gag or pupils. (*ibid.*: 82)

There is no room for the fallacy of euphemism in *Look at This Blue.* It intrepidly calls out the politicians: “Donald Trump is literally destroying America” (*ibid.*: 115). It calls a deputy sheriff a bigot. It suggests that the casualties were not addressed promptly because politicians routinely deal with environmental issues during electoral cycles: “*California has joined with 21 other states* […] *in a legal challenge to the Trump administration’s repeal of Obama-era clean power rules*” (*ibid.*: 85; cf. also Nixon 2011: 8). It calls out businesses: “*California’s largest utility could face murder charges*” (Hedge Coke 2022: 20). The hypocrisy of the missionaries is underlined by repeating their “father” function, ending in another aporia: “How many villages could be missionized, enslaved for one mission?/ Led by Father Junípero Serra/ Father Estévan Tapís” (*ibid.*: 64).

In line with Norton-Smith, Kimmerer, and Harjo, *Look at This Blue* understands that a thought system informs the language we use. To this aim, the poem reflects that technologies not only physically modify nature but also communicative systems that construct human consciousness and its response to the environment (cf. Solnick 2017: x). Returning to the visual metaphor from the beginning, we notice how the font changes from regular to italicized and capitalized while using differing sources, shifting voices and perspectives to bring another visual dimension to the text. As the butterfly contrasts the images of violence that flood our screens, the font changes disrupt the reading experience, making it comparable to watching the news. The poem almost compulsively documents hundreds of pieces of news and repeats keywords to build up the verisimilitude of the hysteria perpetuated by the media. Its register of massacres, fires, shootings, etc., demonstrates the information overload that confuses the brain. While humans are bombarded by the news, especially sensationalists, language strays, as Harjo warns (2022: 76), and needs to be focused. To focus attention, for example, page 7 consists of only one line: “*It’s all going to burn*,” *says man accused of setting Holy Fire,”* referring to the 2018 fire set in Holy Jim Canyon that destroyed more than 22,000 forested acres. Margaret Ronda’s concept of “acceleration” (2018) serves to point out that when subjected to a series of abrupt changes, humanity is left without time for retrospective analysis and, thus, with unresolved traumas. Then, contrary to the media spaces that use visual stimuli to either prompt the reading or divert attention, *Look at This Blue* uses blank spaces to prolong the time for readers’ cognition:

> blue   eyed   chance mutation (2022: 53).

Here, the textual silence becomes an ethical space that invites the reader’s active engagement in constructing meaning. The fragmentation of the quoted line urges readers to consider the profound consequences of genetic chance and the interplay between aesthetics and ethics. Similarly, the unfinished phrase “Land of the—” (*ibid.*: 68) forces confrontation with the contested meaning of freedom in historical and contemporary contexts.

When the documentary discourse cannot reach pathos, the language moves to colloquial—"My gut aches. All this, all this indelible hurt" (*ibid.*: 84)—that suggests an intense bodily reaction and emphasizes the profound and lasting impact of the hurt through repetition, creating a sense of despair as the speaker grapples with pain. The minimalist, stark, paratactic, fragmented style also captures the gravity of distress, such as in the verses:

> She left her children with her mother
> He didn't have ID
> They were in a car Suspicious
> Severe dehydration
> She needed insulin
> He had pneumonia
> He had pneumonia
> He had pneumonia
> He needed heart medicine
> He had a seizure (*ibid.*: 76)

Repetition here does not serve as a mnemonic or incantatory device but, as Keller notes (2010: 80), to intensify distress and extremity. Comparably, pages 74-76 list the coercive tools in a driving, forceful rhythm with strong accents and a relentless beat. The steady tempo appears to aim at the crescendo as the physical and psychological violence alternate: "Use of the largest federal law enforcement entity U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)/ Use of force/ Use of ignorance/ Use of weapons/ Use of fascism […]".

The dramatic driving force behind the poem, the urgency to account for the dispersion of violence and how it affects our response to it, is emphasized by the variations in rhythm and lineation, rhythmic and visual breaks, and changing meters, as visible in the images of the copied pages 44-49 of concrete poetry:

Remembering the lives before them, we
broke into double-throated song scales
singing
nothing matches life,
recite their *names now:*
Ramshaw Meadows abronia
San Mateo thorn-mint
San Diego thorn-mint
Cushenbury oxytheca
San Clemente Island bird's-foot trefoil
Santa Cruz Island bird's-foot trefoil
Santa Cruz Island lotus
Blasdale's bent grass / delisted
Munz's onion
Yosemite onion
Sonoma alopecurus
San Diego ambrosia
large-flowered fiddleneck
McDonald's rockcress
Baker's manzanita

The Cedars manzanita
Santa Rosa Island manzanita
Little Sur manzanita / delisted
Franciscan manzanita
Del Mar manzanita
Hearsts' manzanita
San Bruno Mountain manzanita
Presidio manzanita
Morro manzanita
Ione manzanita
Pacific manzanita
pallid manzanita
marsh sandwort
Humboldt milk-vetch
Cushenbury milk-vetch
Braunton's milk-vetch
Clara Hunt's milk-vetch
Lane Mountain milk-vetch
Long Valley milk-vetch
Coachella Valley milk-vetch
Fish Slough milk-vetch
Sodaville milk-vetch
Peirson's milk-vetch
Mono milk-vetch
Ventura Marsh milk-vetch
coastal dunes milk-vetch
Trask's milk-vetch
triple-ribbed milk-vetch
San Jacinto Valley crownscale
Bakersfield smallscale
Encinitas baccharis
bensoniella
Nevin's barberry
island barberry
Sonoma sunshine
Point Reyes blennosperma
dwarf goldenstar
Hoffman's rockcress

thread-leaved brodiaea
Kaweah brodiaea
Chinese Camp brodiaea
Indian Valley brodiaea
leafy reed grass
Dunn's mariposa lily
Siskiyou mariposa lily
Tiburon mariposa lily
Mariposa pussypaws
Stebbins' morning-glory
San Benito evening primrose
white sedge
Tompkins' sedge
tree-anemone
Tiburon paintbrush
succulent owl's-clover
ash-gray paintbrush
Mt. Gleason paintbrush
San Clemente Island paintbrush
soft-leaved paintbrush
Pitkin Marsh paintbrush
California jewel-flower
slender-pod jewel-flower / delisted
Coyote ceanothus
Hearsts' ceanothus
maritime ceanothus
Mason's ceanothus
Vail Lake ceanothus
Pine Hill ceanothus
Catalina Island mountain-mahogany
Santa Lucia purple amole
Camatta Canyon amole
salt marsh bird's-beak
soft bird's-beak
palmate-bracted bird's-beak
Howell's spineflower
Orcutt's spineflower
San Fernando Valley spineflower

Ben Lomond spineflower
Monterey spineflower
Scotts Valley spineflower
robust spineflower
Sonoma spineflower
Ashland thistle
fountain thistle
Chorro Creek bog thistle
Suisun thistle
surf thistle
La Graciosa thistle
Presidio clarkia
Vine Hill clarkia
Merced clarkia
Pismo clarkia
Springville clarkia
Mt. Diablo bird's-beak
seaside bird's-beak
Pennell's bird's-beak
Wiggins' croton
bristlecone cryptantha
July gold
Red Rock tarplant
Livermore tarplant
Otay tarplant
Gaviota tarplant
Santa Susana tarplant
Mojave tarplant
Baker's larkspur
Cuyamaca larkspur
golden larkspur
San Clemente Island larkspur
Mount Laguna aster
Vandenberg monkeyflower
beach spectaclepod
slender-horned spineflower
Cuyamaca Lake downingia
Santa Clara Valley dudleya

short-leaved dudleya
Agoura Hills dudleya
Santa Monica dudleya
Santa Cruz Island dudleya
Conejo dudleya
Laguna Beach dudleya
Santa Barbara Island dudleya
Verity's dudleya
Ash Meadows daisy
Kern mallow
Big Bear Valley sandwort
Santa Ana River woollystar
Hoover's woolly-star / FDR (gray, no note)
Tracy's eriastrum
Parish's daisy
Indian Knob mountainbalm
Lompoc yerba santa
Trinity buckwheat
Ione buckwheat
Irish Hill buckwheat
Butterworth's buckwheat
conejo buckwheat
Santa Barbara Island buckwheat
San Nicolas Island buckwheat
Kellogg's buckwheat
southern mountain buckwheat
Cushenbury buckwheat
Thorne's buckwheat
Twisselmann's buckwheat
Congdon's woolly sunflower
San Mateo woolly sunflower
San Diego button-celery
Loch Lomond button-celery
Delta button-celery
Contra Costa wallflower
Menzie's wallflower
Santa Cruz wallflower
Hoover's spurge

Mexican flannelbush
Roderick's fritillary
Borrego bedstraw
El Dorado bedstraw
sand gilia
Boggs Lake hedge-hyssop
Orcutt's hazardia
Algodones Dunes sunflower
Butano Ridge cypress
Marin western flax
rock lady
water howellia
Webber's ivesia
Contra Costa goldfields
coast yellow leptosiphon
Congdon's lewisia
western lily
Parish's meadowfoam
Point Reyes meadowfoam

Pine Hill flannelbush
Gentner's fritillary
striped adobe-lily
box bedstraw
San Clemente Island bedstraw
Hoffmann's slender-flowered gilia
Ash Meadows gumplant
island rush-rose
Santa Cruz cypress
Gowen cypress
Lake County western flax
Santa Cruz tarplant
Tahquitz ivesia
Burke's goldfields
beach layia
San Francisco lessingia
Mason's lilaeopsis
Pitkin Marsh lily
Baker's meadowfoam

These unstable lines, short and long, linear and zigzagging, sometimes forced, sometimes pouring down as the rain of tears, reflect the flux, the disturbing nature of experience, and the disjointed nature of contemporary life and memory. Yet, to-

gether with lists and quotes, these lines create an evocative design that reflect multivocality and layers of consciousness.

The “dance of person and place”

The disturbing message of *Look at This Blue* is interwoven by contemplative lyricism informed by Indigenous wisdom and counterbalanced by the emersion of the poetic “I” in the beauty of life seen in the “dance of person and place” (Norton-Smith 2010). The following verses build an image of the balanced world by centering on the River as a nurturing force that gathers varied life forms and will continue to do so unless humans destroy the riparian zones. Capitalization of the word stresses that the River possesses the qualities of a person. It is not an image or an object of contemplation but an active agent that keeps life together, invoking and encapsulating Creation. The following verses musically and rhythmically echo an undisturbed flow of life, expressing the poem’s profound reverence for the natural world.

> We need balance. Need keep from
> what may kill us all what may
> End us. Distinguish an atom, a
> gathered molecule, something we must
> in each and every touch in this life in
> every single moment of solitude and in
> silence in the coming and going of River and her
> embodiment of so many other beings she
> nurtures to replenish us with the life givers the
> fish she bears and birds who seek her
> for snails and protection as we seek River for
> healing to rekindle us in our own winterings.
> Now is the time to return to what we do with
> our partnerships in life, the cranes impressing
> us for generation upon generation giving us
> dances and life and reason and approach to
> enjoy the reason we were gifted these particular atoms. (Hedge Coke, 2022: 25)

The verses are structured with differing levels of indention that shift perspectives and emphasize fragmentation to contrast the observed balance in the scene that enlivens the traditional wisdom about the importance of relationality and continuity. The visual markers in the form of gaps prompt the reader to pause and recognize the significance of what is said before and after, in particular, the consequences of the actions that are now given the form of fragmentation. The fragmentation in this poem reflects the fear and the image of the fragmented Cre-

ation, which, to an Indigenous mind, means the Apocalypse. At this moment, Hedge Coke takes over several cultural roles to elicit the reader's response. The Indigenous woman, who identifies with Creation, cannot stop grieving, seeing this image of herself shattered, with no hope of recovery unless a higher voice orders reconsideration and recognition. An Indigenous poet joins the action by giving these tears words that are read worldwide. Then, the Indigenous teacher of culture names the poet's creation as an invitation to lose our gaze at this rare color in nature, whose scarcity adds to its allure.

The repetition of the phrases "we need balance" and "what may" create a rhythmic cadence, enabling the message to dive from the straightforward conditionality (assumed in the choice of "need" and "may") into the uninterrupted lyricism of the flow of the river of life, i.e., Creation. The continuity is built by the image of the cranes dancing with respect to the River's rhythms. The repetition of the soothing rhythmic patterns and the soft and gentle quality of the sounds "n" and "s" conjure the sounds of the untamed river. The lineation appears to no longer reflect the fragmentation but reads as enjambment to contribute to the seamless blend of visual and auditory imagery, inviting an immersion into peace of the "silence in the coming and going of River."

The pulse then fluctuates to disturbance to warn us about the reciprocity that may be extinguished when Creation stops. Hedge Coke's phrases "in each and every touch," "in every single moment," and "generation upon generation" emphasize continuity but also prolonged anxiety. Thus, the short diction in "end us" strengthens the message that humanity is facing destruction, while the consonant clusters in "what may kill us all" and "gathered molecule"—the quintessence of human—create a dense texture and a sense of immediate weight. The stressed syllables in "We need balance" and "Now is the time" draw attention to the urgency of the message.

Conclusion

Drawing from environmental humanities and Indigenous philosophies, we approached *Look at This Blue* as a contemplative lyrical grievance and a call to action that reflects the diverging consequences of the Anthropocene. The poem visualizes the vulnerable and the extinct abstracted from the dominant discourse to disclose the corruption of the narrative of progress. Developing as a metonymy of the Anthropocene, the poem employs fragmented discourse and dispersed imagery to mirror the disrupted experience perpetuated by technology that hampers understanding of the human role in preserving the ecosystem. The poem's blurring of genres, loose verses, empty spaces, and changing script express the prolonged stress the violent system causes. To subvert the narrative of progress and mechanical linearity of the deterministic system, *Look at This Blue* interweaves past,

present, ecological, social, and individual adversities in a rhizomatic format. By doing this, the poem works within the Indigenous body of knowledge, participating fully and responsibly in the world and encompassing experiences of different life forms. Through the mixture of languages, *Look at This Blue* invites every reader to actively withstand the impacts of environmental destruction and join in creating alternative stories through academic, civic, and individual engagement. Finally, *Look at This Blue* is a commanding lecture by an Indigenous humanist on how to overcome the present disorder through recognition and mercy.

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SAŽETAK

LOOK AT THIS BLUE I NEZADOVOLJSTVO ANTROPOCENA

Look at This Blue (2022) autorice Allison Adelle Hedge Coke poema je u formi knjige. Bila je finalistica za National Book Award 2022. te dobitnica nagrada Emory Elliot i Thomas Wolfe 2023. godine. Poema predstavlja poetsko istraživanje bioraznolikosti Kalifornije, njezine povijesti genocida i urgentne potrebe za ekološkom i društvenom pravdom. *Look at This Blue* odlikuje se inkluzivnim aktivizmom: pjesnikinja iz perspektive autohtone učiteljice kulture poziva Kaliforniju na odgovornost prema ljudskom i neljudskom životu – životu koji je u njoj izvorno nastao i onome koji u Kaliforniju dolazi s nadom. Moja rasprava bavi se tematskim i stilskim obilježjima poeme *Look at This Blue* te načinom na koji njezina forma odražava sadržaj kako bi izrazila autohtonu percepciju ekoloških problema i nadu u ljudski potencijal da se prepoznavanjem i milosrđem prevlada kapitalistički sustav. Moje čitanje oblikovano je spoznajama iz područja ekološke humanistike i autohtone kritike antropocena.

Ključne riječi: antropocen, narativ progresa, ekološki rasizam, ekološka humanistika, indigene studije