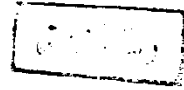




Ain Shams University
Faculty of Al Alsun



Mythical Structure in the Earlier Works of Ezra Pound

*A thesis
submitted to*
the Department of English language and literature
Faculty of Al Alsun
Ain Shams University

In Fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
M . A. in English literature



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M . B

By

Mohamad Bahnasy Ali Al Nagar

51004

under the supervision of

Prof. Eva Selim Saigh
Professor of English lit (poetry),
Dept. of English ,
Women's College for arts, Science and Education
Ain Shams University ,
(main - supervisor)

Prof. Ramses Awad
Prof. of English lit (novel),
Dep. of English ,
Faculty of Al Alsun
Ain Shams University,
(co-supervisor)

1994



Dedication

To my late grandmother and my parents .



Abbreviations :

Full Title	Abbreviations	Edition cited
Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound.	C E P	1976
The Cantos of Ezra Pound.	C	1991
Personae : The Collected Shorter Poems of Ezra Pound.	P	1952
A B C of Reading .	ABC	1961
The Letters of Ezra Pound. , 1904- 1947.	LETT	1951
Literary Essays of Ezra Pound.	LE	1960
Guide to Kulchur	G K	1952
Pavanes and Divagations	P D	1958

It doesn't , in our contemporary world , so much matter where you begin the examination of a subject , as long as you keep on until you get round again to your starting - point . As it were, you start on a sphere , or a cube , you must keep on until you have seen it from all sides , or if you think of your subject as a stool or a table , you must keep on until it has three legs and will stand up , or four legs and won't tip over too easily .

Ezra Pound , A B C of Reading

Acknowledgements

The candidate wishes to extend his gratitude to Professor Eva Selim Saigh for her continual encouragement , supervision and liberal guidance . Thanks are also due to Professor Ramses Awad for his enlightened support of the candidate ever since he was an undergraduate . I should also mention the constant helpful encouragement of Professor Mohamad Shibl Al komy whose knowledge and academic expertise greatly helped the candidate . The candidate also gratefully acknowledges Prof . Thoraya Herakly for her critical interest in the thesis . Thanks are also due to Dr . Salwa Bahgat for her help and professional advice . Special thanks are due to Dr . Danial . J . Vitkus of the Department of English and Comparative Literature at the AUC under whose influence some of the ideas of the last chapter were developed . The candidate also wishes to extend his gratitude to the staff members of the British Council and the AUC for the library facilities they provided .

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Introduction

The thesis aims to be a critical study of the mythical structure in the Earlier Works of Ezra Pound . The study originated in an atmosphere of hot critical debates about the validity of new critical methods .

Questions about the problem of new critical methods have never ceased to exert a strong influence on young research - workers from the early 1980 ' s onwards . These debates started in Egypt with the publication of two literary journals : Fusul , a quarterly journal of literary criticism, issued by the General Egyptian Book organization and Alif , a yearly journal of comparative poetics , issued by the Department of English and Compative Literature at the AUC . From the publication of its first number in October , 1980, Fusul dealt a very heavy blow to established critical and scholarly conventions . The " homespun " hypotheses of impressionistic and positivistic criticism were radically called into question , and the eyes of young academic and non - academic researchers were violently opened to many new vistas of critical and literary debates . Egyptian academic and literary life became well acquainted with the latest advances in literary criticism .

There were many labels . Russian Formalism, Structuralism and Post - Structuralism , ModernPsycho - analytic criticism , Genetic Structuralism were among the many vistas that were opened to the eyes of a generation which practically knew nothing beyond Anglo - American criticism and the Positivism of Hippolyte Taine . It was impossible , therefore , to

write this thesis in isolation of the critical fervour which originated in the early eighties both outside and inside the conventional academic circles .

The selection of a certain methodological approach is usually related to the procedures and aims of that particular approach . It is also related to the problem of critical perspective which is usually informed and defined by that methodology . The methodology of this thesis grew out of a very difficult and dynamic dialogue with these methodological interrelationships. Methodologically , The thesis will be broadly located within the general framework of Formalist and Structuralist criticism . The main procedures and critical strategies will be based on the Formalist , Structuralist and Post - Structuralist Framework .

There will be moments , however , when the main critical trajectory swerves to assimilate procedures from Anglo - American New criticism , Marxism , Positivism or Psychoanalysis . Such borrowings will never be meant to turn the thesis into an inter- disciplinary study . They will be simply meant to broaden , rather than subvert , the main critical perspective adopted in the thesis .

The choice of the Structuralist framework of analysis , as well as the deviations from it in certain areas of the thesis , are , in fact , dictated by the nature of the earlier works of Ezra Pound . These works are elusive , highly experimental and reflect a predominance of the technical over other concerns in Pound's earlier poetry . The scope of the thesis will comprise what can be termed as the earlier text of Ezra Pound . Such a text

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slender candles
extinguished
with tapers quenched
will include the earlier verses and prose works from the publication of A Lume Spento in 1908 up to the publication of the three Ur - Cantos of 1915 - 1914 . These works are collected in two books . The first book is called Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound , edited by Michael John King . The book contains the ninety - nine poems which Pound published in his early books but rejected later when he made a final selection in his Personae or Collected Poems . Although these poems were rejected by Pound and described as stale cream - puffs , they proved to be of great value for the exploration of his critical views . The second book is entitled Personae , Collected Shorter Poems of Ezra Pound , edited by Pound himself . The three Ur - Cantos which Pound subsequently revised in his published Cantos are to be found in Ronald Bush's The Genesis Of Ezra Pound's Cantos .

Pound's prose works are many . Among these prose work , A B C of Reading and literary Essays of Ezra Pound , edited by T . S . Eliot , are considered to be his most important works . Other prose works include The letters of Ezra Pound . edited by D . D .Paige , Guide to Kulchur and Pavanes and Divagations . Other prose materials were simply culled by the student from secondary sources .

The thesis falls into four chapters , as follows :

Chapter One : -

Chapter one is entitled " The Structure Of Myth " . It will be concerned

with the theoretical problems raised in the current studies of myth . It will handle two problems, i . e .the problem of definition and that of structure . The chapter will also be concerned with the questions of reference and signification . The chapter falls , therefore , into two sections . The first section will be related to the question of reference . Most of the referential approaches to myth will be discussed and criticized in the light of Structuralist and Post - Structuralist hypotheses . The second section will be related to the question of signification . This section will be devoted to the Structuralist approach to the study of myth . It will discuss the mechanism and function of myth as a linguistic sign in a second - order semiotic system . The Formalist features of the mythical discourse and its symbolic nature will be outlined .

Chapter Two : -

Chapter Two is entitled " Mythical Intertextuality " . It will be concerned with the intertextualistic nature of the Poundian text . It will offer some critical alternatives to traditional categories such as scriptor , text and intertextuality .With the help of these new critical tools , the earlier verses and prose works of Ezra Pound will be studied as complementary parts of a unified text . The Poundian concept of intertextuality and his creative application of it in his earlier works will be discussed . The play of intertextuality in Pound 's earlier text , namely the primitive intertext , the mystical intertext and the mythical intertext .

Chapter Three : -

Chapter Three will be entitled " Myth and the Structure of the Image " . It will be concerned with Pound's Imagist Poetics , Pound 's Image and its relation to myth and the Imagist techniques in the myth poems . The chapter will discuss Pounds's employment of a number of technical and stylistic devices for creating the Image . The chapter will also discuss the stylistic presence of the Image as a form of fragmentation and condensation or as a form of ellepsis .

The chapter will also discuss the employment of other technical devices such as super - position and juxtaposition , montage , rhythmic definition , dislocated syntax and unusual forms of typography .

Chapter Four: -

Chapter Four will be entitled " The Structure of the Mythical Masks " . The Chapter will be concerned with two questions . The first question is : What are the reasons which account for the persistent use of the mask technique in Pound's poetry ? The second question is : How is the mask structually present in his poetry ? The mask technique will be seen as a poetic answer to the technical , existential and ideological dilemmas which govern the grdual but highly energetic development of Pound's syncretic poetic project . The second section of the chapter will stress the structural elements of the Poundian mask . The section will trace the origin of the mask technique back to classical drama .

The Poundian mask will also be regarded as a synthesis of two types

of dramatic monologue : The Browningsque and the Yeatsian . That is why Pound's relation to the technique of dramatic monologue in Browning and the practice of the masks in Yeats's poetry will be examined . The synthetic nature of the Poundian mask will also be examined and a relation between Pound's practice of the mask and I. A . Richards ' definition of metaphor will be proposed . The rest of the chapter will be concerned with the formal elements of the mask poem in Pound . These elements comprise tone , voice , point of view , narrative authority , referential and ambivalent uses of pronouns and the multiple layers of irony .

The conclusion of the thesis will emphasize some findings related to the thesis and state some recommendations for future studies about the same topic .

Chapter One

The Structure of Myth

Chapter one

The Structure of Myth

The Problems of Definition .

The first problem raised by myth is a problem of definition . The problem of definition raises many interrelated questions , namely the questions of reference , structure, signification and interpretation .

The question of reference is primarily a historical question . It leads up to humanity's vision of itself in its various phases of evolution . The referential approaches, each in its own way , tend to clarify the relation between the position of the mythic narrative and some external origin of meaning . They have diachronically established details of the development of myth in the light of social customs , economic forces or psychological factors .

The question of structure is closely related to the question of signification and interpretation . The Structural approach to myth sets aside the question of referentiality which the referential approaches have developed . It tends to concentrate on the nature of the "mythic" in order to reveal the ontological status of myth as discourse .

The Structural approach to myth investigates the dynamic interrelations of the formally constitutive units of the mythic discourse . Thus , while the referential approaches reduce myth to some form of reality, Structuralism