

EZRA POUND'S MODERNIST "EPIDICY"

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DOI: 10.32342/2523-4463-2018-2-16-6

Key words: Pound, epidicy, epic, genre, jeremiad, periplum, nostos.

Following the pattern of terminological coinage of "biodicy" by M. H. Abrams, the article puts forward the concept of Ezra Pound's "epidicy" in his Cantos to legitimize the epic and its *raison d'être* in modern writing and to organically integrate it into the continuity of European and American literature. The paper seeks to prove that Pound transformed and enriched a traditional epic view of the world into the form of a subjective, fragmentary construction marking the *Weltanschauung* of the personae in search of the epic as the unity of human being and history, individual and society in the post-epic era. The Cantos are contextualized in the works by J. Salinger and L. Feuchtwanger to demonstrate similarities in their poetics in terms of versified history, genre transformation, and structure. Like Pound, J. L. Borges's reversed chronological order asserts and celebrates the eternal emanation of the creative principle where the past, present and future function synergistically, highlighting the temporal continuum of culture against the backdrop of geographical discretion.

In terms of genres, Pound's cultural history is codified in the form of the roundel, a favorite structure of later Swinburne, with its condensation of semantic energy foregrounded in the refrains. American ingredient is marked in the Cantos through the complementary juxtaposition of narrative constructions built upon the templates of such essentially American genre as the jeremiad.

A paramount artistic vehicle to (re)structure the modern epic has been taken *verbatim* from the *Ur-Cantos*: "the truth [i]s inside this discourse." The shortest modernist manifesto «Make it new» is explicated as a call to transform and modernize narrative codes and conventions of the ancient epic such as duplication of episodes, nostos, and periplus. The ancient nostos topos constitutes a defining versification attribute both of Pound's lyric poems and of American epic. He renovates the νόστος theme in structural and imagery of the medieval lyric forms with their inherent architectonics of refrains and textual *déjà vu* of sorts. In Pound's modernist 'epidicy', the configuration of textual *déjà vu* is extended from micro- to macrolevel of the artistic work where the refrains of the fixed traditional strophic forms in the European lyric poems are expanded to the scale of the aesthetic system of quotations, reminiscences, allusions, etc. The quotation function is related to the shift of focus from the mimetic poetics and language as a means of representation onto the nonmimetic expression with language portrayed as the very object of representation. The total aesthetic system of layering and juxtaposition of poetic and non-literary components, their rondel-like repetitions, creates a collage which, due to the aestheticization of the epic formula of 'duplication of episodes,' again returns to the epic generic source and symbolizes the important constitutive components of the Pound's 'epidicy.'

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Одержано 5.10.2018.