

The Functions of the Myth in Modern and Contemporary Poetry

Modern ve Çağdaş Şiirde Mitin İşlevleri

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Öz

Şairlerin şiirlerinin arkasında çeşitli amaçlar vardır ve her biri farklı yöntem ve araçlar kullanarak alıcıyı etkilemeye çalışır. Yazarların her dönemde alıcılar arasında etki ve kabul görme yaratmak için benimsedikleri en önemli unsur, kültürel ve entelektüel mirasın kullanımı veya kültürel mirasın unsurlarından birine atıfta bulunmaktır. Bu kültürel miras, somut kültürel miras ve somut olmayan kültürel miras olmak üzere iki türe ayrılır. Ancak mit, her dönemin ve her halkın kültürel ve entelektüel mirasının en önemli unsuru olarak kabul edilir. Sonuç olarak, mit modern ve çağdaş Arap edebiyatında önemli bir araç olarak görülür. İlk olarak, mit herkesi ifade eden kolektif bir anlam taşır ve çoğunluk onun anlamını, etkisini ve kutsallığını paylaşır. İkincisi, metne belirsizlik getirir ve bu, edebi metinlerde modernliğin en önemli unsurlarından biri olduğunu biliyoruz. Bu nedenle mit, yaratıcı ve yazar tarafından kullanıldığında çeşitli amaçlara hizmet eder. Bu çalışmada, kültürel mirasların en baskın unsuru olan mit üzerine odaklanıyoruz. Mit, modern ve çağdaş şiirde şairin amacının alıcıya ulaşmasını ve kabul görmesini sağlamak için kullandığı araçlardan biridir. Her mit, şairin şiirsel metniyle ulaşmak istediği amaca uygun olarak vurgulamak istediği bir veya daha fazla işleve sahiptir. Araştırma, modern ve çağdaş edebiyatta mitin en önemli işlevlerinin neler olduğu ve şairlerin modern ve çağdaş dönemde şiirlerinde miti neden öne çıkardıkları sorusunu gündeme getirmektedir. Burada miti tanımladık ve türlerini açıkladık: dini, tarihi, sosyal ve diğerleri. Ayrıca, şairin yeteneğinin, miti orijinalinde alıntılanan şekliyle değil, onu yerleştirdiği bağlama göre mitin gidişatını ve çağrışımlarını değiştirerek ortaya çıktığını gösterdik. Ayrıca mitin çağrışımlarını ve çeşitli işlevlerini de tartıştık: bilişsel, entelektüel, psikolojik, sosyal, politik işlevler... vb. Son olarak, şiirsel metindeki mitin, metnin genel anlamını anlamak ve özelliklerini bilmek için gerçek anahtar olduğu sonucuna vardık. Ancak şair metnin örtük çağrışımlarını kasıtlı olarak gizlerse, mit bunları ortaya çıkarır. Mit, şairin niyetlerini ortaya çıkarır ve metnin estetiğini oluşturur.

Anahtar kelimeler: Mit, Mitin işlevleri, Modern ve Çağdaş Şiir, Arap edebiyatı.

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No artificial intelligence-based tools or applications were used in the preparation of this study. All content of the study was produced by the author(s) in accordance with scientific research methods and academic ethical principles. Abdelhalim Riougui

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Abstract

Poets have various purposes behind their poems, and each of them seeks to influence the receiver, using different methods and means. The most important aspect that writers tend to adopt in every age to create influence and acceptability among the receivers is the use of cultural and intellectual heritage, or reference to one of the elements of cultural heritage. This cultural heritage is divided into two types the tangible cultural heritage and the intangible cultural heritage. Yet, myth is considered to be the most important element of the cultural and intellectual heritage of each era and for every people. Consequently, myth is regarded as an important medium in modern and contemporary Arab literature. Firstly, it has a collective signification that expresses everyone, and a majority share in its understanding, influence and consecration. Secondly, it brings ambiguity into the text, which we know to be one of the most important aspects of modernity in literary texts. Therefore, myth serves several purposes when employed by the creator and writer. In this research, we focus on the most dominant element of cultural heritages, namely the myth, which, in modern and contemporary poetry, constitutes one of the means the poet employs to ensure that his purpose reaches the receiver and creates his acceptance. Each myth has one or more functions that the poet seeks to emphasize, in accordance with the objective he intends to reach through his poetic text. The research raises the question of what are the most important functions of myth in modern and contemporary literature, and why poets use it prominently in their poems in the modern and contemporary era. We have defined herein the myth and have explained its types: religious, historical, social and others. We have also demonstrated that the ability of the poet emerges through changing the course and the connotations of the myth according to the context in which he has set it, and not by referring to it as originally cited. We have also discussed the connotations and various functions of the myth: cognitive, intellectual, psychological, social, political functions... and so on. Finally, we have concluded that the myth in the poetic text is the genuine key to understanding the overall meaning of the text and knowing its characteristics. Yet, if the poet deliberately hides the implicit connotations of the text, the myth shall reveal them. It reveals the intentions of the poet and creates one of the aesthetics of his text.

Keywords: Functions, Myth, Modern, Contemporary, Poetry.

Introduction

Cultural heritage is divided into two types: tangible and intangible cultural heritages. The tangible heritage includes all aspects of urbanization, construction, traditional clothing, popular dishes, means and tools, jewellery and so on. While, the intangible heritage is represented in all aspects of oral expression and folk literature, such as myths, tales, stories, fables, songs, popular riddles, proverbs, sayings, folk dances, and so on. Every foresaid element has some functions in society and others in the literary and artistic creations when used by writers, either explicitly by entirely mentioning it, or implicitly by partial mentioning or alluding by referring to a symbol that embodies it. We know that mentioning all the functions of all the elements of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in a scholarly article is impossible. Therefore, we shall deal with one of the most important elements of intangible cultural heritage, which is myth, given its value, symbolism and connotations in every society. We will devote other articles to the other elements, and we will publish a book that brings together the functions of all the elements of cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible.

Myth is considered the most valuable element of cultural heritage, and it has different meanings in some cases. However, they all converge on the notion that myth is the epochal story of a people that becomes its symbol, one that generations boast about and pass on. Myth reveals wondrous things that are beyond the mind, or that the mind can almost believe. It is linked to imagination and wonder.

Myth is linked to human beings, their heritage and their history. "Myth is that heritage matter which was formulated in the earliest human eras and through which Man, in those particular circumstances, expressed his thoughts and feelings about existence. Within it, reality mixes with imagination and sensory, mental and subconscious data were blended together". (Fatiḥah Ḥusayn, 2013: 2) Myth is sometimes linked to reality and other times to the imaginary. You may find one reason to believe it as well as another to deny and classify it as fantastic or marvellous.

The attention paid to myths by poets is considered "one of the most significant literary features of contemporary poetry and seems to have been the result of the prevailing awareness of the importance of myths on the one hand, and the influence of many poets by the Western approach to poetry that spreads widely in the Arab region, on the other". (Mahā Daḥḥām, 2021: 3). The reasons for recourse to myth remain mainly linked to the purposes of the poet.

The most essential functions of myth may be explaining, interpreting and informing about natural, social, cultural and environmental phenomena, particularly in primitive societies... further to proving and answering questions related to the nature of one of the rituals practiced by a society or one of the customs prevailing therein. (Al-Sayyid Najm, 2023: 13).

Studying the various myths, we find that primitive societies, at the stage of myth formation, possessed a kind of innate faith and unity of creed. With the development of ancient civilizational societies, myth became a metaphorical expression of various religious, social, political, moral and philosophical ideas, then entered art and literature with the development of these societies. (Al-Sayyid Najm, 2023: 5). Myths have multiple connotations, including religious, historical, political, and social and so forth, related to peoples, their attitudes, customs, values, religion and history, and whatsoever linked to each era at different levels.

Some believe that myth has no major positive function, since its sole purpose is to arouse wonder. (K. K. Ravin, 2018: 11). In other words, myth is linked to the miraculous and imagination, and is only made for pleasure, excitement and suspense, as Claude Lévi-Strauss sees when he says: "No matter how much you transform myths

into their various aspects, they seem to remain limited to free play", (Claude Lévi-Strauss, 2011: 226). Namely free stories told hither and thither for play, pleasure and suspense. Myths are stories of sheer pleasure that people tell on long winter evenings, like the story of Pygmalon and Galatea. They have no reasonable connection with any event in nature. (Edith Hamilton, 1990: 19) and (Zāhir Shawk, 2006: 6). Whereas Pierre Grimal believes that myth, either believed or disbelieved, has no purpose in itself. We believe in it because of the faith we have in it, because we find it beautiful or realistic, or just because we like to believe in it. (Pierre Grimal, 1982: 7) and (Zāhir Shawk, 2006: 2). However, Grimal argues that myth, whether real or imaginary, believed or disbelieved, is useless and has no purpose and no objective. As for Roland Paris, he identifies it as a negative and very dangerous function when he said: "The sole purpose of myth is to freeze the movement of the world". (K. K. Ravin, 2018: 135). That is the mind and thought will be frozen by what has happened in this myth. It is closely linked to myth, becomes the orbit of reflection and thought, and cannot go beyond since it is the ultimate in the eyes of some. Given these assertions, we believe that myth is linked to the excitement, suspense and enjoyment of reality, but we also believe that its content conveys connotations and functions that are artistic, religious, historical, social... It is fundamentally linked to a society, or a people, in which it has bases, aims and purposes, and it is by no means possible to link myths to excitement and narrative suspense alone.

The Renaissance paid particular attention to the scientific study of myths. (Al-Sayyid Najm, 2023: 6). Once Westerners became familiar with the civilizations of Egypt, the Levant, Mesopotamia, Eastern Europe and the American peoples, and learned their myths, they had the ability to conduct comparative studies between different peoples. The Renaissance paid particular attention to the scientific study of myths. In philosophical studies, the functions of myth have become multiple, so there may be comparable elements in different myths. (Al-Sayyid Najm, 2023: 7). Myths have played a main role in revealing scientific, historical and social facts about ancient peoples. They have even given myths a scientific value when they have made it possible to compare the beliefs and aspirations of peoples and revealed an important aspect of these peoples. Myths have many different functions, first and foremost for themselves, for each people or for a poet or writer who uses them... and so forth.

1- Factors in the multiple functions and connotations of myth:

The subject of a myth is a single story, yet its functions may be multiple when each poet employs it in a text. These functions can be differ from one poetic text to another, and they can also be multiple within a single poetic text due to multiple readings and interpretations, different readers, varied horizons of expectation and cultures. "Myth aims to create a narrative dynamism and semantic richness due to the multiplicity of its connotations in an era or according to each understanding, critic or poet and the way it is used. The meaning of the myth changes each time it is told, which gives a certain dynamism and validity to the myths according to each era, but rather according to each text in which it has been included and according to the specific aims of each poet" (John Stephens, 2020: 4).

The functions and connotations of myth are numerous, depending on several factors, the most important of which are:

- Myth has multiple connotations and functions, depending on the reader. As we know, each reader has a point of view, a horizon of expectation, and a cultural and social level... which are determined by cultural and intellectual accumulations... etc. Thus, each reader draws a specific connotation to the myth. As a result, myth may has multiple functions in the same text. Some readers give it a religious dimension, others

a historical one, still others a social one. Even if the myth is linked to the purposes and meaning of the text, the reader is free to choose, interpret and project.

- The connotations and functions of myth are multiple in every era: a myth has certain connotations which are renewed by taking other connotations according to each era, on the one hand because of the difference in cultural and social levels between eras, and on the other because of the distance between the text and the receiver. The receiver of the myth at the time is not the same as the one who receives it ten and hundreds of years later, and so on.

- Myth takes on specific connotations and functions among different peoples. The myth of Zeus has different connotations among Greek and modern Arab peoples. There are always general connotations that share the views of all peoples, and there are particular connotations according to each people or society. They are governed by several elements, the most important of which are religion, culture, customs, traditions, history...etc.

- The functions and connotations of myth are manifold, depending on the poet, even if they were from the same period. Myth depends on each poet's doctrine, tendency, sect and religion. These issues vary and differ from poet to poet, accordingly the connotations of myth differ from poet to poet based on perspective, context and objectives of each poet.

- The functions and connotations of myth vary according to the text it contains and the purposes it serves. There is a political poetic text, a religious text, an erotic text, a pride or a satire text. Myth thus derives its connotations from the connotations of the text it contains and is primarily linked to the aims of the text for which it was intended.

2- The functions of myth

Myth in modern and contemporary Arabic poetry serves multiple crucial functions. Literarily, myth introduces ambiguity and symbolic richness, distinguishing modern poetry from classical forms and enhancing linguistic creativity. Religiously, myth reflects and reinforces spiritual beliefs, connecting poetic expression with sacred narratives and rituals. Socially, myths embody the customs, values, and collective identity of societies, serving as a dynamic tool to understand social realities across eras. Politically, myths function as subtle means for poets to critique or reflect political conditions while evading censorship, and they can be exploited to legitimize ideologies.

Psychologically, myths tap into the collective unconscious, expressing universal human emotions, social bonds, and even therapeutic practices. Creatively and aesthetically, myth enriches poetry with symbolic depth and innovation, becoming a defining feature of contemporary poetic expression.

Cognitively, myths act as pre-philosophical frameworks that help interpret natural and social phenomena, preserving cultural heritage and historical memory.

Finally, myths empower communities by maintaining traditions and legitimizing existing social and religious structures, ensuring the continuity of collective identity across generations.

Among the most important functions of myth in modern and contemporary poetry are:

A-Literary function

The literature of the modern era in general has paid attention to myth. However, modern poetry has made the myth its main pillar, since "myth gives the text a certain strangeness and ambiguity, making it one of the most

attractive things for readers of modern poetry, who like the poetic text to be full of obvious ambiguity and clear implicitness. (Ja'far al-Dandal, 2021: 5).

If we know and agree that ambiguity is a characteristic of modern and contemporary poetry, then myth and symbol are among the most important factors in creating ambiguity in poetry. Consequently, the use of myth in modern and contemporary poetry has become almost necessary. We can see here that myth has a literary function, as it is linked to the literature of the modern and contemporary poetic text, being one of the elements of ambiguity used by mentioning only a symbol or part of it, leaving the reader to evoke the rest of the text or the story linked thereto. If the reader ignore the myth, he feels mysterious and strange, and perhaps if he does know the content of the myth, he will feel mysterious about the strangeness of the relationship between myth and poetic text.

Poets have used myth for the ambiguity they consider necessary to create the literary nature of the modern and contemporary poetic text. There could also be another reason, namely that most modern and contemporary poets wanted to get rid of the rules of the classical Arabic poem and wanted to distinguish themselves from ancient poetry. As we know, ancient poets had not used myths. Therefore, myth is considered a distinguishing mark from ancient poems.

Myth values the literary aspect particularly the linguistic side. "It values linguistic aspects such as the multiplicity of vocabulary, meanings, rhetorical arts such as metaphors, methods of rhetoric and oratory... etc." (John Stephens, 2020: 4). In addition to the fact that myth is one of the conditions, rules and aesthetics of modern and contemporary poetic text, it preserves the linguistic levels of societies, vocabulary, structures and rhetoric that prevailed in those societies and times.

B- Religious function

Religion and culture are the primary bond of every poet, which is why he tries to either foreground or convert his religion. "Many Western poets have exploited myths and cultural heritage, and have employed them in their poetic texts, in order to call for the revival of certain religious concepts." (Mahā Daḥḥām, 2021: 5). Religion, then, is the primary objective and most prominent motivation for using myth and other elements to enhance or convert religion.

Many researchers agree that myth was based on the religious belief of primitive societies, as it represented a religious creed or an extension of religious thought and derived from its rituals. (Zāhir Shawk, 2006: 2). Myth emphasizes religious and spiritual aspects, as well as the customs and traditions of peoples and nations. (John Stephens, 2020: 4). There is almost unanimous agreement that myth has a predominantly religious function, since it was the first link with the gods and sacred places, given that it tells of the supernatural, miracles, and such matters that do not happen in reality and are linked to the imagination and to the gods powers, according to the beliefs of certain peoples.

André Gide believes that representing these ordeals endured by heroes and showing them to spectators through plays is something they once considered art and religion. (Andre Gide, 2014: 14). Robert Smith said in his book (The Religion of the Semites): "In all early religions, myth replaced belief". (K. K. Ravin, 2018: 39). It became a religious belief and a method of thought, in the course of which they resolved the problem of death by the existence of resurrection and that of human weakness by the existence of polytheism transformed into humans. ('Abd al-Ḥamīd Jaydah, 1980: 105) and (Zāhir Shawk, 2006: 2). Malinowski believes that myth was like the Constitution of belief that interprets the present and assures the future. (Sayyid al-Qimnī, 1999: 24). Consequently, every people has myths that they sanctify as a mark of respect for their religion and gods, and do not deny their

existence. The Greek people believe in the myth of Zeus and do not consider it an imaginary, but rather as real, while other people see it as imaginary, and so on for each people. Indeed, each people has its own gods, saints, supernatural things and wonders, but they see them as real, sacred and linked to their religion and history.

C- Social function

Myth is linked to societies, as each society has its own myths, therefore "it is obvious that myth has a global social function, as is clearly shown by the religious symbols it contains, and its impact on society should not be diminished". (John Stephens, 2020: 4). Since every myth is linked to a group and a people, it explains and relates to aspects of that society. The function of social myth comes after the religious function, as almost every society is associated with a religion. Priority is therefore given to the religious and social functions.

Myth shows certain facts and the details of its impact on the lives of the characters and societies associated with them in each era. This means the impact of the truth of certain people and events on their societies. Myth is used as a message adapted to the social context of each era, thanks to the dynamism of its content. (John Stephens, 2020: 4). It is therefore a powerful key to understanding what happened in those societies on an individual and societal level. It is established by the characteristics of primitive society, that it explains the customs, mores and pretexts of these societies, as well as their aesthetic and religious concepts and the institutions on which they are based. (Al-Sayyid Najm, 2013: 9). The social function of myth is extremely important, and studying it according to a sociological approach reveals a great deal about the life of societies and peoples, their ways of thinking and believing, and what society with its different levels resembled at that time.

D- Political function

In every age, we find poets expressing their reality and hopes and considered the politics as one of their aims, then poets and writers tend to turn to symbolism to stay out of trouble and pursuits. Since the Abbasid era, when Ibn al-Muqaffa translated the book *Kalila and Dimna* into Arabic, the course of his stories has been all politics in the language of animals in symbolic language. Right up to the present day, myths have been used with the same symbolism. "It seems that the political circumstances that prevailed in certain Arab societies prompted certain poets to use myth and employ it in poetry. "It is a means by which the poet can express his thoughts without using explicit meaning words." . (Mahā Dahhām, 2021: 6). The point is to avoid prosecution and harassment, if any, and to escape legal and judicial accountability for charges of insult, slander and defamation against a given entity or person. It can also be said that using myth is not about staying away from prosecutions, but rather about citation and evidential value to link what has happened to what will be happen in order to create an atmosphere of comparison, quotation and representation between political levels, eras, and different worlds such as the animal and the human worlds.

The opposite may be true, since politics takes advantage of existing myths to serve its orientations and ideologies: "Politics uses myths to serve its ideology, that is, to create perceptions as false consciousnesses that lead individuals to act upon their goals, whether they are aware of it or not, by exploiting the magic shadows of words" (Zāhir Shawk, 2006: 2).

Every poet seeks to link the nuances of myth to his current political realities, in every age. Just as Ibn al-Muqaffa did in the past with the animal fables of *Kalila and Dimna*, here is the modern and contemporary poets using myths for political projections. "It is not surprising that we examine the struggle of several gods in ancient times from a political angle, as each god tried to extend his influence, for example in the history of the Greeks, Romans and other nations." (Zāhir Shawk, 2006: 2). The relationship between myths and politics is one of

exchange and support, with each side employing the other. However, we stress that the myths had no political connection, but politics is that which uses myths in its service, either to escape reality or accountability, as there are those who use them politically in the service of political ideas and ideologies.

For instance, "the economic collapse that hit Germany led to its inability to deal with the situation in a natural way after the First World War. Thus was born the political myth that goes in a very different direction from the prevailing trends. It does not start by demanding the prohibition of certain deeds, it aims to change people, so that it can regulate and control their actions." . (Zāhir Shawk, 2006: 2). As we can see, the use of myths has both individual and collective political dimensions: the myths are used by the poet to describe a reality and guarantee an evasion of accountability, while they are used at the collective level for sensitizing or political persuasion in favour of a specific political idea or ideology. The poet may also use myth for argumentation and citation of comparison argumentation between one era and another, between one people and another, or between different worlds, as we said, between the animal world and the human world on the political level.

E- Psychological function

Myth occupies a special place among psychologists as it is linked to the subconscious. Sigmund Freud said: "It has a close link with the subconscious. It is an instinctive expression of repressed desires that arise when the right conditions are present." Freud believes that myth is linked to man's child psyche". (Al-Sayyid Najm, 2021: 10). His disciple Carl Jung disagreed with Freud's emphasis on the symbolism of myth and its link to the subconscious, he rather think that it is linked to the mature subconscious of human psychological life and the collective unconscious. According to Jung, myth is made up of authentic images that symbolize wisdom and maturity, and derive from constant psychological motivations that recur throughout a person's life, prompting them to think about the Supreme Being and human nature's quest for immortality. (Al-Sayyid Najm, 2021: 11). Freud's view differs from Jung's in that Freud sees myth as linked to the individual, infantile unconscious, while his disciple Jung sees myth as linked to the mature collective unconscious. Jung's proposal is stronger and more convincing.

There is no doubt that myth is a creative literary art, and that all creative art is closely linked to the human psyche. Therefore, no one denies that myth has psychological functions linked to the human psyche, to express societies on a religious, historical, social levels and beyond. Myth has psychological functions, of which the most important are (Zāhir Shawk, 2006: 2):

1- Describing the symbolism of human feelings. "Linguistic symbolism locates sensory influences just as mythical symbolism locates feelings. In his religious rituals, man follows the influences of deep-seated individual desires and violent social incitements, and performs these actions without knowing their motivations. (...) These actions are completely unconscious". (Zāhir Shawk, 2006: 2). The first thing that myth expresses are human feelings: victory, joy, sadness, disappointment, deception..., and this is evident in all myths.

2- Projecting personal emotion onto general emotion. (Claude Lévi-Strauss, 2011: 227). Interest in myth has resurfaced as a psychological outlet for human anxiety, confusion and brokenness. This interest has been linked to psychological demands that see myth as a kind of psychological projection aimed - through the representation of rituals - at reconstructing human contradictions, experience and the multiple pressures facing his consciousness. Thus, the use of myth in poetry is an attempt to elevate the poem from its self-diagnosis to its greater, more general humanity. (Rajā' 'Īd, 1998: 297). If myth sometimes possesses an intrinsic psychological dimension, it will then be linked to the more general and comprehensive dimension by projecting individual and repressed emotions onto the collective as a whole.

3- Describing past psyches: These are repositories of primal, primitive motivations that reveal and excite man's collective unconscious. ('Abd al-Riḍā 'Alī, 1984: 14). Myth depicts the psychology of the current and previous societies.

4- Determining the psychological bonds between individuals: it creates a state of social sympathy and teaches us the meaning of global, unifying bonds. In his book *The Golden Branch*, Cassirer passed on a myth according to which if the inhabitants of one of Dabak's villages go hunting in the forest, the rest of the family members must not touch the oil or water with their hands, as this makes the hunters' fingers sticky, helping the prey to slip from their hands. (Zāhir Shawk, 2006: 2). This myth confirms that there is a relationship between individuals: when family members touch oil or water, a fisherman far from home gets sticky hands.

5- Therapeutic method: This is what Strauss sees after telling us about the use of an incantation that is recited by a priest to whom the midwife has gone to ask about a difficult delivery by a woman from the Kuta tribes in the Republic of Panama. This is done in a room in which a number of burnt cocoa beans are incensed. He performs certain supplications and prepares small sacred statues called "Nushu". (Claude Lévi-Strauss, 2011: 214-216). In our popular Arab culture, we find many myths linked to healing and treatment. For example, a person suffering from ophthalmia is told to take a coin, circle the affected eye seven times and then toss it. The person who picks up the coin will be sick and the one who threw it will be cured. He may also pour salt on the head of a patient who is envious or afflicted with an evil eye and throw it into the path of passers-by... etc. All these customs and traditions are linked to certain myths at a time when they became widespread and their therapeutic power became known because of their connection with that myth.

F- Creative and aesthetic function

Poets do not hesitate to add whatsoever may distinguish their poetry in order to give it a creative and aesthetic touch. They use a purple patch, figurative meanings and so on. They have seen that myths are an important aspect of the creative and aesthetic process. "Myth was used as a purple patch". (Mahā Dahhām, 2021: 4). Poets have found that myth is almost necessary to produce the creative and aesthetic aspect of the modern and contemporary poetic text. In fact, the receiver can hardly read a poem without myth, so myth has become a creative and aesthetic key between creator and receiver.

For modern poets, myth represents an experimental trend in the construction of contemporary poetry, as it is enriched with aesthetic and semantic values. ('Aqīlah Marājī, 2024: 12). Many modern poets have seen that the use of myth has a creative and aesthetic distinction that did not exist in poetry before them, so they have inclined towards the use of myth until it has become an important, if not a necessary, element. "Poetry is not a repetition of heritage as it is, but rather its creation through a new vision and a new experience." (Fatīḥah Ḥusayn, 2013: 2).

In fact, myth constitutes a creative and aesthetic difference between the modern and contemporary Arabic poem: it even constitutes the distinguishing mark in the formation of the modern poem, if not its first keynote.

G- Cognitive function

Myth is linked to the observation of people's ideas, history and customs, in order to know them closely. This is why the primary function of myth is cognitive: "it includes contemplation, interpretation, reasoning and attempting to simplify phenomena in order to reach the truth of the present and ensure the future. Myth long preceded philosophy, playing the role of initial teacher and educator in a language comprehensible to the primitive mind". (Ernst Cassirer, 1975: 74) For early man, myths were a means of contemplating and understanding nature. Man was not yet capable of analysing phenomena and rationalizing their causes and results, so he described them

in symbols that reflected his lifestyle and embodied all the desire, wonder and longing he knew about survival, death and immortality. (Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, 1992: 19) and (Zāhir Shawk, 2006: 2). -Thus, myth enables us to know and learn more about people's lives, and to deal with them in a correct and reliable way. Myth embodies the preservation of culture, as the main idea of myths revolves around a character, a place or a historical fact. As a result, it tends to shed light on all aspects of the culture of the place and time, and is considered a historical testimony, making it a legendary story that endures through the ages. Myth conveys the tragedies and mistakes of the past, (John Stephens, 2020: 4) by describing the origin, basis and backgrounds of events (places, characters, events and so on), helping us to understand the past, avoid its mistakes and better comprehend its consequences.

Myth helps to evoke more than one historical period in the poem, through the use of legendary historical symbols from more than one era and culture. This integration and evocation gives us a deep knowledge of this people across many eras and diverse demonstrations. (Ja'far al-Dandal, 2013: 5) "When the reader encounters a text featuring Sisypheus, Ishtar, Tammuz or similar myths, he will search for the basis and the history of that myth, and thus be better able to understand modern poetic texts". (Fatīḥa Ḥusayn, 2021: 6). Myth, as described by the English researcher S.J. K. Jum, is an attempt to explain the sciences of the pre-scientific era, as it tells us the cause of human creation and natural phenomena, and it explains the secrets behind the characteristics of animals. (Hādī Nu'mān al-Haytī, 1986: 191-192). Myth is the heritage of previous civilizations and part of their history... it conveys their experiences, their vision of life, their know-how, their beliefs and their dreams. ('Aqīlah Marājī, 2024: 12). Thus, myth helps the scholar increase his knowledge of people's lives, and makes him more perceptive about events on many levels. It is considered to be a historical documentary for each people, giving us a deeper knowledge and understanding of them.

H- Empowering function

We have already seen that myth has a cognitive function that is introducing us to peoples and their different linguistic, religious, social and historical backgrounds. In addition, myth has an empowering function, namely ensuring the preservation of popular and societal heritages, so that they do not disappear and remain in the continuity of generations, transmitting them from generation to generation, thus linking the past to the present.

Among scholars, there are those who believe that the function of the myth is the preserving of legacies, which means that it is responsible for preserving a large and important part of the history of peoples' heritage. There are those who do not see myth as an explanation, justification or attempt to simplify phenomena. It rather sustains the preservation of precedents that justify the current situation. Thus, myth supports and consolidates what already exists. Malinowski said: "Myth does not explain the origin, but rather preserves the precedents that cause to the present situation. Myth is a real evidence of primitive faith and moral wisdom. (K. K. Ravin, 2018: 32). Elsewhere, he said: "The myths of primitive peoples seek to lay the foundations for the beliefs and practices that constitute social organization, (Muḥammad 'Ajīnah, 2005: 42). and they have practical objectives which aim at reinforcing the authority of a clan within itself or establishing a social system within itself and so on. (Sayyid al-Qimnī, 1999: 24) .This is why Maret said: Myth is not explanatory but rather empowering, and it does not satisfy curiosity but confirms belief. (K. K. Ravin, 2018: 32) and (Zāhir Shawk, 2006: 2). Faith here is part of the religious life of any people, which means that myth aims to confirm religious beliefs, not to satisfy curiosity or entertainment.

It promotes attention in and curiosity about the history, customs and traditions of peoples, which in turn encourages research into oral narrative traditions in particular cultural, religious and anthropological backgrounds. (John Stephens, 2020: 4)

Conclusion

Myth is an apparent feature of modern and contemporary Arabic poetry, so much so that some have almost regarded it as a necessary requirement of modern poems. Its aesthetics and connotations are multi-layered, and its functions range from religious to political, social, psychological, cognitive and beyond. Myth contributes to understanding the past and history of nations. It preserves the origins of peoples, their customs, traditions, ways of thinking and religions. The connotations and functions of the same myth may vary according to each era, each poet, each text and each poet's objectives.

Myth occupies a prominent and indispensable position within modern and contemporary Arabic poetry, to the extent that it is often considered a fundamental element of the modern poetic discourse. Its aesthetic richness and layered connotations offer multifaceted functions encompassing religious, political, social, psychological, and cognitive

Among others. Myth serves as a crucial medium for understanding the historical and cultural heritage of nations, preserving their origins, customs, traditions, worldviews, and religious beliefs. However, the meanings and functions attributed to a particular myth are not fixed; rather, they fluctuate depending on the historical context, the poet's individual vision, the specific text, and the poet's intended objectives.

Despite its wide-ranging impact, the conclusion could be strengthened by explicitly acknowledging the dynamic and sometimes contested nature of myth in poetry, including its potential to both challenge and reinforce prevailing ideologies. Additionally, further emphasis on the dialogic relationship between myth and modernity in Arabic poetry would provide a more comprehensive understanding of its evolving role and significance.

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