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**MYTHOLOGICAL CREATION OF MEANING AS BASIS FOR
COMMUNICATION IN MODERN SOCIETY**

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Abstract

The analysis of the mythological creation of meaning as an objectified form of societal life regulation is carried out in the context of the socio-communicative paradigm of the study of myth. The paper is devoted to the analysis of the most significant methods of mythological creation of meaning and to the identification of the algorithms perceived in the dynamics of the mythological creation of meaning. The socio-communicative aspects of the study of myth allow one to analyze the logical mechanisms of mythological thinking and to carry out a consistent analysis of the mythological creation of meaning as an invariant structure underlying human communication. Structuralist and post-structuralist approaches form the methodological basis for investigation of the communicative aspects of modern myth. Methods of information theory and structural linguistics are also used since social communication is revealed in the context of the existence of language. The analysis of the mythological creation of meaning as an objectified form of societal life regulation, allows one to come to a number of conclusions. The ability of the myth to codify and sacralize the traditions, norms and rules of life in society is associated with the reproduction and consolidation of the most stable social relations and connections. Social space may be understood as an area in which the mechanism of active myth-generation functions constantly. Modern social myths are formed as a result of conscious reflexive goal-setting and represent a means of manipulating the mass consciousness and a peculiar component of political and ideological practice.

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1. Introduction

Modern understanding of social space is connected with the idea that communication is a foreground research object in various fields of social and liberal knowledge. In the modern world, global information society is built as a specific type of civilization, where interpersonal relationships exist by means of information, which determines a person's sociocultural life and his physical existence. Dynamic and destabilising nature underlies all spheres and processes of the cultural and communicational environment of modern society. Mosaicity, rhizome multiplicity, semantic fragmentation form conceptual basis of the modern culture's semantic space, which causes a person to suffer from the identity crisis and lack of existential knowledge. Spiritual, moral meanings of a particular person mirror the global problems of culture and civilization, bringing relevance to the search for the fundamental basis of human existence and society.

Modern philosophy is focused on the search for nonclassical and post-nonclassical methods and approaches in solving fundamental problems like the basis of human existence, of society, culture. One of the methods consists in viewing mythological thinking as the most crucial element in overall development and self-awareness of mankind. Myth connects all the elements of sociocultural experience, creating conditions for interpersonal and intergenerational transmission, as myth is a unique way for a human being to sense the world and create meanings.

2. Problem Statement

Communicative change in studying social reality also influences the modern interpretational paradigm of myth. Myth is a universal phenomenon of human existence and culture. Study of the communicative aspects of the modern information society is based on the socio-communicative paradigm of myth research. Claude Lévi-Strauss (Lévi-Strauss, 1963), Roland Barthes (Barthes, 1968), (Barthes, 1972), Julia Kristeva (Kristeva, 1980), Tzvetan Todorov (Todorov, 2001), Umberto Eco (Eco, 2000) J. Campbell (Campbell, 1972) and other researchers address the formally contextual, functional features of myth, the specifics of myth mutations under the influence of internal or external factors. Researchers like A.G. Barova (Barova, 2015), (Azarenko, 2013), M. Palmeirim (Palmeirim, 2016), S. Fondevila, S. Aristei, W. Sommer, P. Casado, M. Martín-Loeches (Fondevila et al., 2016), V.B. Okorokov (Okorokov, 2016), N. Nikonovich (Nikonovich, 2016). V. Ulicsni, I. Svanberg, Z. Molnar (Ulicsni et al., 2016), (Grace, 2000), O.N. Tomyuk (Tomyuk, 2014) carry out an analysis of everyday life, modern everyday mass consciousness and ideology in the context of revealing the functioning methods of mythologems in the modern information society. Viewing of mythological creation of meaning as the basis for communication in modern society is based on the myth definition proposed by Eugenia Ivanova, who considers myth as a universal symbolic system that allows a person to navigate in the surrounding world (Ivanova, 2012), (Ivanova, 2013).

3. Research Questions

Myth appeals to emotionally valuable sign complexes that, in the communicative structure, convey worldview images in empirically illustrative form. The main questions of this paper are:

- evaluating the value of myth in everyday life;
- examining the most significant methods of mythological creation of meaning;
- identifying the algorithms for dynamics of mythological creation of meaning.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the paper is to analyze the mythological creation of meaning as an objectified form of regulation of society life, the basis and the method of communication in modern society.

5. Research Methods

The methodology of the research of communicative aspects of the modern information society is based on structuralist and post-structuralist approaches. Methods of information theory and structural linguistics are involved, as communication is revealed in the context of language existence. By addressing the social and communicative paradigm of myth research it becomes possible, first of all, to effectively introduce the logical mechanisms of mythological thinking, as well as to carry out a consistent analysis of the mythological creation of meaning as an immutable structure underlying human communication.

6. Findings

6.1. Communicative aspects of the modern mythological creation of meaning.

Myth is a universal symbolic system that determines a set of certain meanings that model human activity. According to the definition of E.V. Ivanova, myth is a universal symbolic system that allows a person to navigate in the surrounding world (Ivanova, 2012). As a universal symbolic system, myth consists of special components called mythologems or archetypes. The latter contain dyads or triads that are expressed through symbols. Thus, the structure of the universal symbolic system is represented as follows: universal symbolic system → mythemes → monads, dyads, triads → symbolic images of the irrational.

As a universal symbolic system, myth does not exist in a static condition. Myth is not possible without a dialectical algorithm, its figures forming the logical operational skeleton of a myth. By thinking dialectically, a person exists in mythological reality, and dialectics become a method of subject's mythological relationship to the model of the objective world built by them V.B. Okorokov (Okorokov, 2016). However, as its contents change, myth also develops externally, especially in the information age. Today readers and spectators face the problem of understanding and interpreting reality in all its diversity. Ontological and gnosiological features of reality are descriptively presented in contrasts: presence and/or absence; true/imaginary, good/evil, death/immortality – these are manifested especially clearly through the representation of the mythical. Here the authors will look at just one of the ways the mythological creation of meaning is manifested in textual form of religious mythology (Ivanova, 2012). Understanding the role of the mythological creation of meaning in the communicative space of the information society is important because of the role played by myth in everyday life.

1. The myth text allows for simplification of reality and countless conflicts that exist within, as in

religious myth for their diminution to the simplest formula of the struggle between Good and Evil.

2. The world in myth is comprehensive and fully cognized, so with the help of sacral symbols, one acquires a sense of harmony with it.

3. Myth alleviates people's fear of reality, directs them towards future improvement instead of today's reality. At the same time, the improvement comes through either ritualistic return to the fundamental principles (Nikonovich, 2016), ritualistic preparations for the future (new neocults), or escape from reality into the virtual world of dreams, games and fantasies.

Mythological creation of meaning is a distinctive feature of mythological creativity. In its operational basis, four patterns of mental actions are concluded: 1) selection of an object with a certain semantic meaning, necessary for interpretation; 2) definition of the main features of the object; 3) selection of a suitable method or schematization element; 4) obtainment of a new feature as a result of its change. One can distinguish a few of the most significant methods of mythological creation of meaning.

First, the inversion (replacement of some feature with the opposite).

Secondly, the "crushing-unification". In this case, the object (the mythical image) is divided into components that play independent roles that are then merged back into a single whole. Referring to Roman mythology, a typical example of this method is "two-faced Janus," who had two faces turned in opposite directions (one to the past, the other to the future).

Thirdly, the "acceleration-deceleration of action." Features of mythological time in relation to the social time can be characterized by analogy with time in dreams. It is no accident that many psychologists equated myth and dream as the action is carried out in a short time, that to the heroes seem like years, "relativity of mythical time."

Fourthly, the "dynamization-stillness". Time freezing, a hero falling asleep, marvellous daydream. That what moves becomes motionless, motionless acquires an ability to move, as an oven in the Russian folk tale "By the Pike's Command" does. At the moment, one does not differentiate between the concepts of fairy tale and myth according to all intrinsic features inherent to them, however, in a fairy tale all described elements acquire even more grotesque fantasy forms. A fairy tale is a personal imagination, personal pleasure, an expression of desires and imaginary fulfilment of those, compensation for the transience of real life, escape from actual disappointment and conflict. Therefore, a fairy tale is individual and personal, and the scope for imagination in it is infinite. Myth is more social, and, forming a strict model of the world, it is more serious, and the flight of fantasy shares responsibility for the state of society. Nevertheless, the elements of fantasy that the authors describe are inherent in both phenomena.

Fifthly, "enlargement-reduction of the object", relativity in the mythical space. For example, gnomes, first described by Paracelsus, are able to move through ground as easily as through water, their main duty is to guard underground treasures, while giants are endowed with gigantic growth and colossal power, not too smart and not too bloodthirsty, however, some of them are used to eating men. (Ulicsni et al., 2016). Most clearly the "enlargement-reduction" is represented in Norse mythology: from elves and gnomes to people (middle world), Aesir and Vanir, and Giants (first heroes). The enlargement/reduction in size is accompanied by increased or decreased wisdom, strength, moral qualities; socially significant features that became important in the creation of key moral meanings in person's life.

Sixthly, "continuity-quantization". This is also one of the techniques that allow understanding a hero's journey in space. J. Campbell in his study "The Hero with a Thousand Faces" calls this element the breaking of the one into the manifold (Campbell, 1972).

Seventhly, "universalization-specialization." The essence is to create a universal meaning-image so that its action applies to a large class of phenomena. Or vice versa, so that the range of its action is limited to a highly specialized one. Without going into an analysis, one can mention the typical heroes of Slavic mythology as Baba Yaga and Koschei the Immortal. In modern myth-making, this method is used most often in advertising of all-purpose cure, miraculously protecting from "everything in the world", but only chosen heroes know these properties and offer help to an ignorant everyman.

Eighthly, the change of properties. In this case, both the object itself and the natural laws by which it exists are changed. Examples may be miracle objects from fairy tales as "seven-league boots", magic tablecloth, flying carpet, etc.

Ninthly, "detachment-attribution". Any functionality, part or property of a fantasy object can be separated from it, and, vice versa, can be attributed to a completely different object. A typical example in Russian fairy tales is Zmey Gorynych, who is described as follows: fire blazing from his mouth, a column of smoke goes from his ears, he roars in so a loud voice that the oak wood trembles; with his tail he beats on a damp earth, the rivers overflow the banks; under the foul breath of the serpent the grass dries, the leaf from the tree falls.

Thus, the dynamics of the mythological creation of meaning is reduced to the following algorithms:

1. Selection of an object with a certain semantic meaning and that is necessary for interpretation.
2. Determination of its main features and properties.
3. Selection of a schematization method.
4. Obtainment of a new quality as a result of a change.

Of course, for classical archaic myth-making, it is rather difficult to reduce all the components to this scheme, but for modern myth-making, at the level of everyday mentality, it is quite acceptable.

Since it is impossible to trace the dynamics of the mythological creation of meaning for all cultural heroes due to the limited scope of the research, the authors will stick to just one example. It appears of particular relevance to analyze the dynamics of the mythological creation of meaning of the female mythical hero image, acting in the myth about the witch, whose roots go back to the Middle Ages (Palmeirim, 2016). However, having appeared, perhaps, a long time ago, a mythical hero exists even today: witches are characters of the modern media (Barthes, 1972).

In the world of religious mythology, the mythological creation of meaning is most vividly represented by modern religious fantasy (Fondevila et al., 2016). Fantasy is one of the means of literary forecasting, as fantasy series are aimed primarily at young people, teenagers, and affect their future choices. In psychotherapy, there is a method of "fairy tale therapy", when a psychologist reveals patient's favourite childhood fairy tale heroes and pinpoint similarities with his own life scenarios. Today, the impact of the visual fantasy world is similar to these fairy tales. It should be noted that the modern world

of fantasy is the world of "magic"; it is built according to the laws of mythological creation of meaning, and the narrative sequence of religious myth is created in the space of a universal symbolic system.

6.2. Myth as an instrument of semantic modelling of the surrounding world

Modern culture is a culture of consumption. The modern myth is integrated into the process of symbolic consumption and depends on the technology of broadcasting in the media (Kress, Van Leeuwen, 2001). Mythological thinking is not a relic of the past. Mythological thinking is invariant, a matrix that shapes moral guidelines and moral values in modern society. For the modern social communicative space, the appeal to the Barthes's interpretation of myth is relevant, due to its interpretation of the world of everyday life as a cooperative one. The area of everyday life is formed through the ability of language to unite the semantic zones of everyday reality. People share meanings within the boundaries of society, realize them as general, and as a result, everyday reality is formed as an intersubjective reality.

Mechanisms of meaning creation in myth is one of the important topics to which Roland Gérard Barthes, a French philosopher and literary critic, a representative of structuralism and post-structuralism thinking and a semiotician, devoted his works (Barthes, 1972; Barthes, 1968). According to Barthes, a signifier in myth is both a meaning and a form. The signified is a concept, and the resulting element is meaning. While the concept is a particular way to introduce a new eventuality into the world, the signifier in the myth has a dual purpose. The signifier is both a meaning and a form that allows it to be characterized as being both filled and empty. The sign in the myth becomes a signifier, i.e. an empty form.

As Barthes observes, myth holds power over meaning (Barthes, 1972). Myth fulfils a double function. Myth both denotes something and inspires, i.e., drives to action, sets the intention for human action and thinking.

Myth affects social communication. The mechanism of the impact of the myth on social communication is related to the ability of mythological symbols to provoke emotionally coloured associations in people and thereby push the participants of social processes to certain actions. Symbols are universal ways of expressing people's ideas about the world. Mythological intention can be realized only through a symbol, in which the unity of the mythical signifier and the signified is realized. Myth is variable, which means that a single signified concept in the myth can have many signifiers.

R. Barthes defines the myth as a reality that is distorted, which prompts the exclusion of such concepts as "true" and "false" (Barthes, 1972). Myth-creation is the process of transforming signs into empty forms by replacing rational meanings with emotionally saturated suggestive meanings. According to Barthes, the myth is a distortion, a deformation. The myth does not contain lies or sincere confessions. Myth is a semiological system that verges on turning into a system of facts.

According to the concepts pioneered by Barthes, myth is a form. The creation of the myth is carried out based on a sequence of pre-existing signs. This allows, for example, Elias Canetti, on the one hand, to use biographical, cultural and historical, comparative historical and mythological methods of research, and on the other hand, to refer to the stories from different cultures and mythologies, to review them, in the creation of his own mythopoetic system (Barova, 2015). Canetti's system of social mythologems is an author's vision of social space. The creation of a modern myth is possible because

myth allows any form, i.e. the signified, to become a myth. Connotative shades of meanings play in the denotation, which allows a new meaning to be born in the modern myth.

Modern myths are generated as a discourse. Discourse is realized in the environment surrounding individuals at the moment of communication and is realized as a dynamic integrity (Kristeva, 1980). The discursive nature of the modern myth determines the infinite multiplicity of values when they are irreducible to some single, "genuine" value. The modern mythological space is discrete. Myth, as such, disappears, but the mythical remains, representing values and meanings that are, because of their non-reflexivity, implanted in the tissue of consciousness as a "natural" image of reality in a mutual communicative space. Myth is a communicative system, for which reflection is disastrous and destructive. However, the mythologized nature of social space does not mean that it is absolutely irrational and spontaneous. "Logos" can be explicated in this case as certain "forms of vision" and "forms of comprehension", given by the norms of cultures, both verbal and visual. These cultural norms are grouped into systems of visual-spatial codes, each of which carries its own rules for governing the semiotization of spatial objects (Mitchell, 2005).

The scheme of spatial thinking is different in that it relates not the species with the genus, but the parts with the whole and with each other, which gives the basis for interpreting the spatial object as a text – as an overlay of a code-specified scheme on space. Spread of visual-spatial codes in the culture is the introduction into the consciousness of logical and "infra logical" schematism (in terms introduced by Jean Piaget), subjection to which appears to be a necessary condition for intersubjective vision and understanding of significant forms in a semiotized space. "To speak the language" means to take the form of life, in this case, reflecting the logic of the desire of the myth, which not only denotes but also dictates, sets the methods of manifestation and speaking, and thereby the ontological foundations of a person's life in society. The invasion of human consciousness is carried out at the level of semantics, at the level of language (Mitchell, 2005). A very important observation for understanding the essence of the mythological creation of meaning is that the myth tends to look like a "phenomenon of nature", and not "a product of artificial reality", that is, a culture. Therefore, the myth parasitizes on ideologically neutral signs of natural language. Cogito is replaced by an anonymous scattered language, a system that is predetermined for any individual and, in a way, constitutes an anonymous social history. Language is impersonal and intersubjective, not private.

In the post-structural text theory, great relevance is ascribed to Ferdinand de Saussure's thesis, according to which the intersubjective language sphere is the product of countless influences (Bouquet, Engler, 2006), (Harris, 2001). Myth is a tool of semantic design and modelling of communicative space and, at the same time, a way of self-identification of the subject. The social myth is clothed in norms and models, becoming the ideal person is represented as the goal of each person. The charm of the missing dimension of the ideal bewitches a person, adopts an ideal body, an ideal face, an ideal gait, perfect pronunciation, an ideal life. It is this "ideal" that is represented as the missing dimension. Contemplating the ideal model as an icon, a person perceives an object with their eyes, i.e., sees its self-sufficient life that is not dependent on a peculiar viewpoint. Language determines the logic of thinking and the discourse of desire, within which the person's body becomes "stolen," because they are placed in a

position of attitude toward their own body, and not manifestation in it. The body, and even sex are only symbols of something absolutely non-physical.

For Jean Baudrillard, the meaning of the meaning "I will be your mirror" is revealed not as "I will be your reflection", but "I will be a bit for you ", covered with emptiness, for temptation is not possible in the realm of everyday reality; it always refers to the system of the sign and ritual (Grace, 2000, pp. 36-47). The masculine "is determined," it knows the "concrete" and "absolute" criterion of "truth"; the feminine is insolvable. Simulation eludes the approved world of difference because it has only one centre, a single perspective and false depth. The reason for the decentration of the subject, as defined e.g., by Lacan, is its inclusion in the symbolic world (Abdul-Jabbar, 2015). The subject is defined in the context of the externality to all knowledge, that is, through building from its relation to the other, which leads to the appearance of conditions; in mass culture, naturally for the functioning of mythological consciousness on the boundary between the world of everyday life and other areas of social reality.

7. Conclusion

The distinguishing features of the mythological creation of meaning in its social and communicative interpretation are as follows:

- myth is included in social processes due to its ability to codify and to sacralize the traditions, norms and rules of life within society;
- myth consolidates the most stable social relations and connections that become invariant entities in the communicative space;
- myth is a tool of semantic modelling of the surrounding social world;
- mental action patterns are contained in the operational basis of the mythological creation of meaning;
- language is the basis of the communicative nature of social reality, its structures and processes, and it allows one to turn to myth as a tool for semantic modelling of the surrounding world;
- modern social myths are formed as a result of conscious reflexive goal-setting, allowing myth to exist as a way of mass consciousness manipulation;

myth is a method of subject's self-identification and the basis of communication in modern society.

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