

**ISCKMC 2020**  
**International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****MYTHOLOGIZATON AND REMYTHOLOGIZATION OF  
MARGINAL SENSE OVERTONES (AS EXEMPLIFIED IN PRISON  
LITERATURE)**

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**Abstract**

The immanent interrelation and mutual influence of the individual-author's, marginal and general linguocultural components of the conceptual-valerian system, explicating combinatorial variability in texts that are significant in terms of the formation, transformation and preservation of "sociocultural memory" in a changing vertical context, determines the formation and development of new myths in the general linguocultural space. The author's intention, as well as the constants of subjectivity and modality, plays a key role in the implementation of the predicted effect of modifying the conceptual-valerian system of the linguocultural community. In the context of the inclusion of the constants of meaning-making into these processes, the hermeneutic-noematic method should become the dominant method of analysis. The inclusion of peripheral components that represent marginal mechanisms and methods of conceptualization and actualization in the space of prison literature leads to the formation of special understanding and transformation types of the general linguocultural value space in a specific epistemic context, which can be defined as a relatively stable naive natural myth and pseudo-myth. The new myth and stereotype becomes an attempt at alternative socialization of members of minority subgroups. The naive myth, generated in the process of group conceptualization, helps to reduce the degree of negative interpretation, to the shift of the dominant into the sphere of prelogical comprehension of the specific socio-cultural context of imprisonment. The pseudo-myth is used in prison literature as one of the intentional ways of creating "semantic wells" and encouraging the reader to use active reading, phenomenological reflection on the described events.

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*Keywords:* Mythologization, stereotyping, marginal meaning, prison literature, conceptual-valerian system



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## **1. Introduction**

The myth as such is a specific priori-functioning form of world outlook based on psycho-emotional, figurative, sensual aspects of ideas about reality. It is the myth as the primary way of structuring, categorizing, and conceptualizing the phenomena of objective and reflective reality that ensures the unity and integrity of the pictures of the world (“individuality”) of both a particular person and a sociocultural group. Within the framework of ensuring adequate perception (interpretation according to the "scheme of action" laid down by the author himself) extremely reflexive texts, for example, prison literature, which are designed to modify the community's attitude to the marginal aspects of life in conditions of dissonance between legitimized and normative-moral regulation, during periods of dysfunctionality of basic ideologically determined categories and institutions, the dissymmetry of the positive and negative socio-cultural context is leveled. In a situation of expansion of peripheral value-orientational components into a transformable nuclear area, which is no longer always shared by each of the members of the linguocultural community, the destruction of the old, traditional mythology takes place, and on the basis of the remythologization of nihilistic areas, an argot marginal core of the interpretation of subgroup inoideologemes is formed. Extrapolation of the marginal areas of the conceptual field is rooted in the usual space of perception and is being replicated already in everyday usage.

## **2. Problem Statement**

It should be noted that the process of expansion of marginal mythology into the general linguocultural neomyth within the framework of socially significant communication cannot be reduced only to the consistent glorification of systemic penitentiary and criminal values, which is often carried out at the level of banal use of argotisms in the media, glorification, romanticization and legitimization of criminals. This process should be perceived much wider within the framework of a deep understanding of the cause-and-effect relationships of personal and socio-cultural interaction, intentionally actualized by the authors of literary works that do not idealize but reveal the conceptual aspects of the value-orientational spaces of various social groups.

## **3. Research Questions**

The dominant tasks of the research are: 1) determination of the mechanisms of mythologizing marginal meanings, 2) determination of natural and artificial mechanisms of myth-making, 3) identification of the relationship between myth and pseudo-myth and methods of fixing reflection. In the modern community, the expansive nature of individual and subgroup (often quite aggressively implanted) mythologemes does not raise doubts, since it is he who creates a new one of the most effective models of the influence of a personality on a wide space of sociocultural system, which can be described in terms of “conceptual prisons” (from the English. prison – prison) – the implementation of prison mythologemes into the conceptual sphere of an average member of the linguocultural community.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The primary goal of the study is to identify and analyze the mechanisms for including marginal elements in the general linguocultural conceptual-valerian space based on one of the least studied in the framework of the processes of conceptualization of the phenomena of rigid stereotyping – prison mythology.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The methodological basis of the study is made up of the provisions proved in linguistics about the interdependence of the verbal representation of the conceptual space of an individual linguistic person (the author of a work of art) and the linguocultural divided basis of the value-orientated space, as well as the dominant position of sociocultural memory in the process of translation and modification of both basic and peripheral components of the conceptual-valeric system. These criteria for the explication of various types of semantic components (individual, peripheral-marginal and general linguocultural) are most effectively analyzed within the framework of the hermeneutic-noematic method, which makes it possible to identify not only components, but also paradigmatic meta-connections in the hierarchy of the generated meaning of the statement.

#### **6. Findings**

For a detailed examination of the mechanisms of expansion, it is necessary to distinguish between both myth itself and mythology, while subdividing the former into artificial (pseudo-myths) and natural. The natural myth presupposes naivety and separation (a priori social significance) of the formation of meaning on the basis of a certain conventional worldview model. This type of myth is always equipped with imperative components, which, involuntarily taking root in the consciousness of each member of the linguocultural community, organizes the ethos of the perception of reality (Smaznova, 2007). Such myth-making is characteristic only of group consciousness, individual-author's overtones in the mechanisms of the final verbalization of such mythologemes are leveled and subordinated to the collective unconscious. Thus, the core and the near periphery of the cultural and ethical dominant of an entire era are created. From this point of view, myths of this type can be considered an integral part of the episteme, and therefore the conceptual-valeric areas formed by these myths seem to be relatively stable. The imperative characteristics of these myths presuppose their a priori separation by all members of the linguocultural community, which means a similar interpretation based on noematic (unconscious reflection) during perception. These mechanisms of mythologization have been well studied (in particular, based on the myths of various subcultures), and therefore organically enter the general cultural space of the naive picture of the world.

On the basis of natural myth, most of the abstract concepts of the marginalized penitentiary system are conceptualized, for example, FREE WILL, DURESS, PRISON, FREEDOM, SHARING, CAMP.

*Finding himself in a quod, everyone will understand, and it is not even about understanding as much as it is about feeling with his skin, how restrained the soul feels in the body, just like a free person*

*feels in a 3 by 4 iso* (Peltier, Arden, 1999). In this case, the generally accepted verbalizer *quod* emphasizes the imprisonment of a person in a confined space and conceptualizes this concept as a symbol of the nuclear concept PRISON, reducing the abstract concept of any penitentiary institution or punishment system as such to a specific object – a bunker, a solitary confinement cell. In addition, in this example, sensual characteristics are explicated (the feeling of stiffness of actions by the skin), while the spiritual abstractions of FREE WILL are implemented into the bodily space, which is a characteristic technique of prison literature.

*And, as convict Khamraev used to say, going on a wet business – with God! ..* (Dovlatov, 2014). In the above statement, the diffusion of value-orientational spaces of the usual use of the vocative *with God!* is carried out in the function of a hedge (justification for an act condemned by society – *a wet case* is a murder). In addition, the assertive components are leveled out by the marker as he said, which creates an “evidence base” for referring to the conceptual-valerian components of a certain socio-cultural subgroup (criminal community). Based on the creation of the illusion of argumentation, accentuation of norms “norm”, “conformity” not only forms the actual “scheme of action” according to the reader’s interpretation of the described socio-cultural context, but also mythologizes the topic of blood in the context of somatic symbolism. Moreover, it equalizes the explicatory possibilities of etymological, accompanying or the same irrelevant signs, implicitly preserved in the deep structure (possibly etymol from tabo; “wet” – danger; also “wet” – a murderer who committed a murder with blood shedding) (<http://rus-yaz.niv.ru/doc/russian-argo/index.htm>).

The ultimate extrapolation of the image of imprisonment and internal lack of freedom occurs when the abstract concept of LIFE is identified with being in prison, which is observed in what Solzhenitsyn (1968) once said: *And no one has yet had the end of their term in this camp* (par. 7). A lifelong term is LIFE itself, a specific image of physical lack of freedom and physical suffering refers the reader to the quintessence of subgroup denial and alienation “people live here too”. Thus, real life outside the camp (free life) is identified with prison life, which was very symbolic during the Gulag. It is on this basis that the CAMP, as an exaggerated reflection of the totalitarian state, is included as a nuclear component in the structure of the sociocultural memory of the Russian-language linguocultural space.

Natural (naive) myths, being verbalized in the space of prison literature on the basis of compensatory objectification and rejection of objective reality, are able to neutralize the negativism of secondary perception. Even descriptions of the horrors of camp life in the artistic representation do not form a stable negative attitude towards the “inmates” in the reader. Prison mythology that arises outside of conscious reflection, even without sophisticated speech techniques, forms a specific suggestion (manipulation), which allows the recipient to form a holistic view of the marginal areas of imaginative axiology (Golosovker, 2010).

It is necessary to mention a more complex form of myth-generation, which is characteristic not only of a certain sub-community but explicates a conscious reflection on the epistemological situation and the usual mythological space. This type of reflexive creation of the implemented areas in the general linguocultural conceptual-valerian system, which should be accepted a priori, presupposes way out of the collective unconscious into the area of creationism. Most authors working in the genre of prison literature create an individually associated mythology on the basis of “mythoid technologies”, using tools that can

be called anti-mythical. At the same time, the leading role begins to be played by the individual author's axioms, own peripheral components of the conceptual-valerian system, the world perception is no longer built on the basis of epistemic modality, but first enters the concentrated (author's) mythoid space, which then scatters over the nuclear area of personified myth-making (Smaznova, 2007). With a decrease in epistemic modality, personal images mythologized in their own world create the possibility of an individual author's symbolic language in the artistic space of the text. Such myth-making creates a pseudo-myth as the opposite of a natural (naive) myth, i.e. is the result of painstaking searches, erudition, reflection in the belt of thought-communication.

Thus, for example, the chronography of the conclusion, the methods and stages of overcoming the "inner lack of freedom" is carried out in a pseudo-myth-making form. None of the clocks were knocking – prisoners are not supposed to have a clock, the bosses know the time for them (Solzhenitsyn, 1968). In this example, the pseudo-myth about the formation of a certain system of time coordinates not by one's own feelings and not by conventional means (by the clock) actualizes the norm of the "relativity" of time. The correlate of the binding of the camp time to the authorities transforms the "alien" side for the prisoners in the medical unit into a kind of Gods, Lights in the "impenetrable darkness of existence". The category of time explicated in a literary text, first of all, is intended to give the addressee an idea of the continuous chronos, which characterizes the individual author's picture of the world, which can be expressed in failures, natural for the author, of the "progressive movement of artistic time (retrospection, prospectus; folding and stretching of time intervals) and in discreteness of time" (Akhidzhakova, Khartikova, 2015, p. 80).

The versatility of the perception of time in the conclusion is also explicated in the following phrase: "... the bosses are afraid that the prisoners would lose their time, they would not scatter over the heaters – and the prisoners have a big day, enough for all the time" (Solzhenitsyn, 1968, par. 4). In addition, this passage introduces its own controversial frame of reference into the general linguocultural conceptual-valerian space, acting in the mind of a person for whom one day is similar to another, and hours, days, months and years pass in a single rhythm, differing only in conceptualized concepts of gastronomic preferences.

*... Balanda did not change from day to day, it depended – which vegetable would be prepared for the winter. In the summer year, they prepared one salted carrot – and this is how the gruel went on a clean carrot from September to June. And now – black cabbage. The most satisfying time for the camp is June: every vegetable ends up and is replaced with cereals. The worst time is July: they whip nettles into the cauldron. (Solzhenitsyn, 1968, par. 11)*

However, it would be erroneous to say that the artificial myth is completely divorced from reality, because the forms of the author's awareness and interpretation of objective reality are also refracted in the transformable nuclear areas of sociocultural memory. After all, the author, as a member of a specific linguocultural community, always refers to the episteme characteristic of this community or group (Akhidzhakova et al., 2017), and therefore there is no complete breakdown of the fundamental principles of the reliability of religious, ideological, linguistic feeling. The pseudo-myth created in fiction as a way

of implementing the individual author's components into the socio-cultural space does not violate the inappropriateness of the interpretation of reality.

On the basis of this principle of non-pretense, the implementation potential of the prison myth expands, – the social and ritual aspects (values, norms, cultural artifacts) that make up the marginal space of the natural myth organically enter the conceptual-valerian space of linguistic culture. In addition, at the stage of diffusion of accepted and associated mythologemes in the author's reading, a purposeful transformation of values and the concept of the conformity of actions and interpretation of the axiological aspects of the existence of a marginal subculture is carried out. At the same time, the natural myth, which is designed to facilitate the unification of members of a certain social group, which forms the barrier of “friends and foes”, also consolidates wider masses (for example, the legitimization and justification of prisoners during the GULAG on the basis of their introduction into the sphere of “friends”, “one of people”).

Authors often express their thoughts and aspirations as conscious and explicated components of intimated conceptual-valerian systems in an extremely psychologized form of an internal monologue: ... *those prayers, as statements, either do not reach, or “refuse a complaint”* (Solzhenitsyn, 1968). The regulatory function of hope is leveled out in personal reflections; however, it is maintained in the space of external (real) interaction among prisoners, which creates some manipulative overtones and the illusion of maintaining "good spirits. “After all, Ivan Denisovich, your soul is asking God to pray. Why don't you give her free rein, huh?” (Solzhenitsyn, 1968, par. 6).

In the creation of a pseudo-concept and its introduction into the general linguocultural conceptual-valerian system, the artificial myth is based on the manipulative component of the archetypal representation, i.e. gives out remythologization based on personality overtones as a systemic process of stereotyping. The created “false mobilizing system” (McLuhan, 2003) attunes the recipient to the perception of the individual components of the generalized meaning as fully justified and acceptable, if not for the whole society, then at least for a separate part of it. Such a system of conceptualization arises in connection with an objective lack or reduction of the potential to influence the socio-cultural context, which is due to the restrictions in places of detention. A decrease in the degree of access to the vectors of discourse control (Bredikhin & Bredikhin, 2017) within the framework of reducing the perceptual capabilities of the individual also entails the formation of apperceptive forms of action with reflexive and objective reality, i.e. the creation of some kind of alternative reality, the value-orientational paradigms of which one has to obey in conditions of limiting real action.

The duality of interaction is created during the incoative process of initiation, the introduction of a new member into the prison community, and the active role of the person himself is leveled, as his previous social status is erased, and reification occurs. Each of the ritual actions is performed on the prisoner – washing, shaving – everything symbolizes the death of the past and the rebirth of the new through humiliation and suffering.

*Everyone got a piece of stinky soap and was stuffed into a common showerroom under stabbing jets of cold water. Then they **all, naked, were driven** along the corridor to the linen room where **the slave-puncher** threw each of us a robe with a roll of toilet paper...* (Peltier & Arden, 1999).

The process of a person's transition from a free life to imprisonment is extremely ritualized and mythologized on the basis of a connection with the archetypal concepts of GOD and EVENING, which contribute to the consolidation of the components of unity and community in the group, and subsequently in the general linguocultural consciousness. *And I told him once at a late hour over a mug of chifir* (Demin, 1994). In addition, the status of the use of certain foods and drinks is emphasized, which initiate the process of transition from one group of prisoners to another: “There are especially many chifirists among thieves. This drink is like a kind of drug for them. <...> If you add a good strong cigarette to this, you get a nice bouquet!” (Demin, 1994, p. 4).

The accentuation of individual components of the conceptual-valerian system within the framework of telescopic lexemes, which are designed to explicate the duality of the attitude of “us” and “foes” to this or that phenomenon of prison life, is indicative. So, in the American prison literature there is such a conceptualized concept as nutraloaf, which is a certain type of punishment associated with dietary restrictions. This “dish” of the prison menu, which is so hated by the prisoners because of its indigestible appearance, “offensive to the sense of smell” smell and corresponding taste, fully complies with generally accepted norms of nutritional value, which allows it to be used quite legitimately. Instead of some good munchies they brought me to the isolator some nutraloaf; obviously, the master believed I had not enough of my asthma trouble in the raw basement, all infected with feces and fungi and with no bunk, so he decided to follow a more sophisticated, yet quite legal, path (Foucault, 1995).

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, natural myth-making conceptualizes the overtones of leveling negativism in the interpretation of limited information and contributes to a departure from rational understanding and a real assessment of the existing socio-cultural context. While artificial mythology brings to the fore precisely the intentional assessment of reflexive and objective reality. Based on the archetypal binary oppositions “I am society”, “ours – someone else's”, “freedom – non-freedom” and the principles of both rational and irrational argumentation, a transformed conceptual-valerian system is created that legitimizes attitudes to reality outside the dichotomy of “freedom – responsibility” ... In the mythology, explicated in the texts of prison literature, there is a predominance of a specific component of the interpretation of universal criteria for freedom, spirituality, with the elimination of the existential “responsibility”. The mythologization of the chronotope is based mainly on the concepts of CYCLICITY, CLOSEness, and also on the basis of the verbalization of temporal categories by means of description and reference to local symbols endowed with mythical meaning. Key cultural concepts MOTHER, LOVE, GOD are involved in the process of axiomatic argumentation of both “imprisonment” and “liberation”.

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