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# MYTH AND SOCIAL REALITY: SOCIAL AND COMMUNICATIVE THE PARADIGM OF INTERPRETATION

*Abstract*: *This paper purposes to present the complex of ideas related to the social and communicative interpretation of the interaction of social reality by analyzing ideas of scholars and focus on myth as a universal phenomenon of human existence and culture.*
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## Introduction

In the research practices of traditional and modern humanities, the myth has proven itself as a concept that has the property of eluding definitions, remaining, in the words of D. Campbell, a mysterious "hero with a thousand faces". Since the ancient era, fundamental ideas and the most important problems from all areas of human existence have been met and intertwined in discussions about the myth. In our opinion, a huge array of research material about the myth as a universal phenomenon of human existence and culture can be presented in in the form of three interpretive paradigms (ontological-existential, cultural-semiotic, social-communicative). In each paradigm, various formal and substantive aspects of the myth are identified, their corresponding functional characteristics, as well as the specifics of changes in the myth under the influence of both internal and external factors.

## Discussion

If the features of the socio-communicative interpretative model of the myth is considered in more detail it states various paradigms. The socio-communicative paradigm of myth interpretation originates in the development of socio-philosophical thought of the XIX-early XX century (K. Marx, G. Spencer, E. Durkheim, etc.). During this period,

society is interpreted as a sum of connections or a mutually condition system of relations arising from the joint life of people, reproduced and transformed by their activities. The main theses that predetermined the specifics of the mythological interpretation in the social perspective were the thesis about the dominance of social existence over cultural and individual, about the recognition of the principle of sociality as the highest principle in the development of human existence, about the need to express social reality in a system of special categories. In this perspective, E. Durkheim assessed social existence and myth as its manifestation. Social existence, in its interpretation, is more complex and stable than the existence of an individual, it is the existence of an objective collective life, the main element of which is stable transpersonal connections and relationships. It is in the plane of social life that we should look for the universal foundations of religiosity, morality, and spirituality. Myth, according to E. Durkheim, is historically the first form of understanding and experiencing social reality interpreting it in consciousness. Myth as a form contains the results of the process of primary classification and logical categorization of the world. The content of the myth is collective representations that reflect the mental life of the primitive collective, generalize the experience of the genus, reproduce the most general and stable social relations, the everyday

life and social experience of the community. The specificity of the mythological content lies in the mixing of images, the identities of the living and the inanimate, people and animals, object and subject, are "a continuous stream of representations that plunge into each other" [1. P. 9]. The functional analysis of the myth allows us to see new facets of its participation in the formation of connections and relations between social structures and between people. Thus, B. Malinovsky is a staunch supporter of a new methodology in the study of primitive tribal societies – "field ethnography"; he believes that the researcher-anthropologist "should leave your comfortable chaise longue on the veranda of the mission house" [2. p. 143] and conduct observations and analysis of the life of a primitive collective not from the outside, but from the inside. The myth, according to B. Malinovsky, can be understood only in a certain social context, it is not limited to only astronomical or meteorological phenomena that have become objects of socialization and ritual worship. The essence of the myth is determined based on the functional needs of primitive society: it " expresses, strengthens and codifies faith; it justifies and implements moral principles; it confirms the effectiveness of the rite and it contains practical rules that guide a person" [2. p. 99]. Myth is closely connected with magic, which is a means of introducing to the mythological world, the world of sacred reality, which preserves a complex of spiritual, religious, cultural and ethno-social values and traditions of the collective. Determine the factors that caused the occurrence of L. Levi-Bruhl sought to reveal the "mechanisms of mental activity of the so-called primitive people" in the archaic era. Primitive thinking appears in his concept as a special process of logical perception of the world, controlled by its own by law (participation), therefore, indifferent to contradictions and creating an internally consistent, subject-an object-unified world. Primitive collective representations are poorly differentiated, emotional, volitional and cognitive elements are not yet separated in them, the logical is closely intertwined with the world of feelings and emotions, the cognitive side of primitive consciousness is almost completely suppressed by the emotional-affective, the ability to interpret is absent. For L. levy-Bruhl myths is a relatively late product of primitive society, which appears when direct participation has disappeared, becoming obsolete and need a new special mechanism that would make up for the lack of direct participation, embedded in ways of perceiving the world and provide a sense of ownership with social group, with the last of his kind, with the totem, and social groups – with the surrounding social and natural environment [3. P. 353-357].

L. Levi-Bruhl's attention to the operations of mental activity that generate mythological it is an important step in determining the qualitative specificity of mythological thinking, but the myth in its concept remains an obsolete "sacred history of lower-type societies" [3. p.356].

The twentieth century not only sets new parameters for the reflection of social space, but also the mantises communication as a priority object of research in various fields of social and humanitarian knowledge (psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, Cybernetics, philosophy, cultural studies, pedagogy, linguistics, etc.). In many social-political concepts modern society is presented as a system of communication, social action as communicative action, human – like communicative personality, speech event as a communicative act, and knowledge as a communicative rationality. Such a communicative turn in the study of social reality makes its own changes in the formation of the interpretative paradigm of the myth. Considering the interaction of myth and ideology in social life, many researchers come to the conclusion that myths are an integral part of the ideology of the political system of society, aimed at manipulating the mass mythological consciousness. Thus, myth is interpreted as an objectified form of regulating the life of society, as a means of mass communication, and ideology is understood as the final stage of the development of myth, "a means of influencing the present" [4. P. 56–57], whose functions include the socialization of the normative patterns and rituals established by the myth and the ordering of the total explosion of irrational and rebellious enthusiasm of the masses provoked by the myth. The most important role in the formation of the socio-communicative interpretative paradigm of the myth structuralism played a role (K. Levi-Strauss, R. Barth, Y. Kristeva, Ts. Todorov, U. Eco, etc.), whose representatives they sought to identify invariant mental structures hidden from consciousness, but determining the entire complex of human reactions to the external world. The object of the structuralisms' research was sign systems with certain similar features (common expressive means and symbol systems, the uniformity of the transmitted information, a stable set of norms and rules, orientation to certain communicative situations, etc.). In search of universal models of the generation of cultural texts, they used structural-semiotic methods for the analysis of the communicative and the symbolic nature of the myth, the mechanisms of ideological myths, the functioning of myths in everyday social life, in art and mass culture, in mass communication media, etc.

For example, K. Levi-Strauss believes that consciousness exists only at the intersection of many unconscious structures of the human spirit, each of which corresponds to a certain level of social reality. Therefore, analyzing the structural organization of primitive tribes, K. Levi-Strauss strives to identify universal models of human behavior and thinking. K. Levi-Strauss connects the emergence of social life with the development of exchange and

communication, which are subject to certain rules and are impossible without sign systems that represent social facts simultaneously as things and as relationships. Such sign systems (totemic representations, kinship, marriage, table manners, etc.) are semiotic modeling systems and are subject to the same synchronous study structural methods, as well as natural languages. The structural approach allowed K. Levi-Strauss to describe the effective operation of the logical mechanisms of primitive thinking and to carry out a consistent analysis of the myth as the most characteristic phenomenon of primitive culture, leading to invariant structures lying in the human subconscious. According to K. Levi-Strauss, the universal foundations of being realize themselves through myths and in mythological forms. K. Levi-Strauss considers myth a phenomenon of language and applies to it the methods of information theory and structural linguistics. The myth in the interpretation of K. Levi-Strauss there is a " verbal creation that occupies in the sphere of this is a place comparable to the place of a crystal in the world of physical matter" [5. p. 164]. For primitive thinking, a myth that operates with binary oppositions ("raw–boiled", "right-left", etc.) is primarily a logical tool for resolving contradictions in the field of unconscious logical operations. This understanding of the myth leads to an emphasis on paradigmatic at the expense of narrative syntagmatic, on mythological systems to a greater extent than on individual plots. K. Levi-Strauss presents the principle of the myth as follows: in the process of encountering a new socio-cultural experience, a person's readiness to build oppositions is actualized, and it is possible to overcome the field of emerging tension through progressive mediation or mythological mediation. In the system of binary oppositions, the myth becomes a "condensed expression of necessary relations", a "bundle of relations" that reflect a complete invariant structure-a prototype [6. p. 140]. Working with oppositions, identifying emerging contradictions and the conditions for their "removal", K. Levi-Strauss sees in them only the logical structure, leaving the myth in the sphere of subjective mentality, in the sphere of cognitive. And although this is typical for non-classical attitudes, the version of the "work" of the myth with a contradiction proposed by K. Levi-Strauss is more consistent with the mythological paradigm of post-non-classical. Following K. Levi-Strauss, a number of domestic researchers (M. B. and S. V. Turovsky, A. S. Akhiezer, N. S. Autonomova and others) also address the problem the correlation of myth and contradiction as a statement of equivalence between the subjective and objective elements of a single socio-cultural system, between the personality and the sociality of the individual, between creative redundancy and social determinism. A. S. Akhiezer notes that the most important function of myth is the elimination of contradiction, integration. In this

regard, he studies inversion as a specific mechanism of mythological thinking that allows to resolve contradictions arising in the subject-object space. In contrast to mediation, there is no need for inversion logic to overcome difficulties in eliminating contradictions: it is characterized by "instantaneous wrapping of the phenomenon with one or the other pole". Assessing the role of inversion in the context of myth, the author claims that as a result of inversion, mythological consciousness deprives the subject of the opportunity to reflect on a specific situation [7. Vol 3.pp. 116-117,193]. N. S. Avtonomova draws attention to the contradiction as an essential characteristic of the myth itself. Although the myth in its interpretation is reduced to a form of consciousness, it seems important that N. S. Avtonomova tries to reveal the ambivalence of the myth, to trace the socio-cultural conditions for the actualization of its normative and creative components, rational and intuitive principles. But, noting the internal contradiction between the "moments of norm and creativity" in the myth, the author believes that it exists only "at the stage of primitive mythological consciousness", later being fixed in science, morality and aesthetics [8. pp. 40, 45-48]. The greatest contribution to the study of the communicative nature of the myth in the social space was made by R. Barth. Developing the structural and semiotic concept of myth, R. Barth introduces myth into the institutional space of joint social existence as a formal component, as an element of communication, as one of the ways of signification, a kind of cultural mediator. The essence of the myth, according to R. Barth, is not determined by what it tells about, or by its material carrier. "A myth cannot be a thing, a concept or an idea... myth is a form" [9. P. 72]. The myth acts as a tool for semantic modeling of the surrounding world and at the same time as a way of self-identification of the subject. It is created based on some sequence of characters that exists before. The fundamental indifference of the myth to the content side allows any form (signified) become a myth: the denotation sign is endowed with a certain connotative shade of meaning, as a result of such an "eternal game of hide-and-seek between meaning and form" a new meaning is born – a myth [9. P. 83]. In this context, R. Barth's attention is transferred from semantic fullness of the myth to the mechanisms of sense. Barthes finds meaning in the myth both meaning and form that defines the signified as the concept, and the resulting element as value as "a continuously rotating turnstile, alternating sense of meaning and its form, language object and metalanguage, clean signification and clean imagery" [9. P. 88]. The concept is always "something concrete", "it is both historical and intentional, it is the motivating reason that brings the myth to life... it is always connected with this or that situation. Through the concept, a new eventfulness is introduced into the world" [9. P. 83]. The signifier in

the myth is ambiguous: at the same time it is both a meaning and a form, filled and at the same time empty. What in the original system is a sign saturated with meanings, in the myth becomes a signifier, i.e. an empty form. As R. Barth notes, " ... in the mythical concept there is only a vague knowledge formed from indeterminately loosen associations ...a formless, misty-shaky clot, united and connected only by virtue of its function." And further: "... the concept is given to us globally, as a kind of nebula, in which knowledge is more or less loosely condensed" [10. pp. 244, 257]. The myth, according to R. Barth's definition, holds meaning in its power: "For the form, meaning is like an improvised stock of history, it is rich and subdued, it can be either brought closer or removed... the form constantly needs it as a shelter." The myth serves a dual function, it means something and inspire, make you act, the goal of the myth is to convey clear and logical concept and intention: "the Myth is the word in which the intention... is much more important than the literal meaning... and at the same while the intention here like solidifies, cleaned, built for eternity, is absent due to the literal meaning..." [10. pp. 243, 249]. The mechanism of influence of the myth is based on the ability of symbols to provoke emotionally colored associations that push to certain actions. R. Barth emphasizes that the intention of the myth lies in its signified, in the mythical concept. But this intention can be realized only thanks to the symbol, i.e. the unity of the mythical signified and the signifier. One signified in a myth can have a huge number of signifiers, which is why the myth is variable (and this is a property of both archaic and modern myth).

R. Barth refers the myth to a deformed, distorted reality, taking it out of the brackets of such concepts as true–false. The meaning of myth-making is the transformation of signs into empty forms, the content of which is emasculated by deforming the original, rational meanings and is implicitly replaced by other, emotionally saturated suggestive meanings. "The myth does not hide anything and does not advertise anything, it only deforms; the myth is neither a lie nor a sincere confession, it is a distortion" [9. p. 95]. Distorting the assumed natural in relation to there are signs to it, the myth simultaneously strives for its own "naturalization". "A myth is a semi logical system that claims to turn into a system of facts" [9. p.101]. The myth is characterized by the desire to look not like a "product of culture "(i.e., a product of" artificial reality"), but a" phenomenon of nature", so it parasitizes on ideologically neutral signs of natural language. Modern myths are generated by a single type of thinking, they manifest common structural principles, but they do not add up to a single system. The myth is formed not as a narrative, but as a discourse, it is discrete, "it is nothing more than a phraseology, a set of phrases, stereotypes, the myth as such disappears, but there remains an even more

insidious mythical" [10. P. 15]. A myth is a form in which meanings and meanings are represented, accepted by consciousness "on faith", not subject to reflection and therefore easily amenable to both production and assimilation. The probability of implanting an image of reality into the fabric of consciousness as a "natural" image for the bearer of mythological consciousness arises in a mutual communicative space. As a communicative system, the myth in the Barth interpretation is possible only in the absence of subject-object structuring, and reflection is fatal for the myth, which inevitably leads to its analytical destruction. A characteristic feature of the modern socio-communicative interpretation of the myth is the actualization of interest in the world of everyday life as a joint existence. The area of everyday life, or everyday life, has the status of" supreme reality "[11. p.383] and is located on the border with other finite areas of meaning (theoretical thinking, art, religion, dream, fantasy, game). The semantic zones of the reality of everyday life are connected and integrated into a single semantic field thanks to the language and its ability to go beyond the "here-and-now". Thus, everyday reality becomes inter subjective, its meanings are shared by other people within the boundaries of society, are realized as common.

**Result**

Everyday reality reduces any non-everyday meanings to the needs of life and creates themes the most optimal environment for their penetration into consciousness in a mythologized form. It is in the sphere of mass everyday consciousness, according to researchers, that the functions of systematization of knowledge or achieving ideological integrity are transferred to it in response to internal tension within the most diverse social structures, which provokes a "mass eruption of myths" [12. P.7]. The socio-cultural problems of the myth in connection with the analysis of the sphere of everyday life are addressed G. S. Knabe, K. Bogdanov, V. I. Samokhvalova, N. S. Avtonomova, G. G. Kirilenko, etc. According to G. S. Knabe, the myth regulates everyday existence in a variety of epochs, but it becomes especially popular in the twentieth century, due to the emergence of such a phenomenon as mass culture. Pushing "high" culture to the periphery, mass culture includes marginal phenomena and events in the world of everyday life, distorting traditional value orientations and habitual ways of communication between people. So, the modern "grassroots" culture changes my status: it is no longer perceived as cultural opposition, as a form of plebeian protest of the masses against the "high" culture, and acts as an official culture, as its transformed form [13. P. 21]. G. S. Knabe, underscoring the desire everyday reality to reduce any meanings to the vital needs of social practice, which leads to the appearance in popular culture conditions

for the functioning of mythological consciousness on the border between the world of everyday life and in other areas of social reality.

Find items mythologizing and determining the specifics of myth-making in connection with the analysis of the sphere of everyday life and the modern mass ordinary consciousness and ideology, identification of mechanisms of translation the myth, the analysis of the functions of myths in contemporary social situation, especially Russian is P. S. Gurevich, T. I. Kovaleva, T. M. Oneway, G. V. Osipov, M. D. Cherkashin, A. G., Vaganov, E. A. Isakov, M. P. Volkov, etc.

**Conclusion**

Thus, we note a number of specific characteristics of the myth in the deployment of the socio-communicative paradigm of its interpretation:

- the inclusion of a myth in social processes is determined by its ability to codify and socializing traditions, norms and rules of life in society, to reproduce and consolidate the most stable social relations and ties;

- within the framework of the structural approach, the myth appears in the most formalized form not only as an element of communication, as a tool for semantic modeling of the surrounding social world, but also as a universal category that has the most important methodological status in the representation of all spheres and systems of relations of social reality;

- the zone of increased activity of myth in the social space is the area of everyday life, in which the mechanism of living myth generation constantly functions;

- modern social myths are formed as a result of conscious reflexive goal-setting and are a means of manipulating mass consciousness and a specific component of political and ideological practice;

- the analysis of the myth from the standpoint of a social and communicative approach allows us to study the nature of its penetration into all spheres of society's life activity, as well as to rethink in this regard the communicative nature of the social reality itself, its structures and processes.

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