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**SYMBOLISM AND
MYTHOLOGY OF THE ANCIENTS:
AN OUTLINE OF GEORG
FRIEDRICH CREUZER'S
ARGUMENT**

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This paper seeks to establish German Romanticism as the foundation for the process of formation of the humanities as a discipline. The research aims to enquire into the ideas that were crucial for the formation of mythology into discipline. The research explores the role of the romantic philosopher and philologist Friedrich Creuzer's arguments in relation to the history of science of mythology. The findings of the research illustrate the impact of the different positions in the debates surrounding mythology in the age of German Romanticism and German Idealism on the development of the humanities as a discipline. At the same time as he was studying the symbolism and mythology of the ancients he was acutely influenced by romantic ideas. We suggest that this fact is crucial for the interpretation of the history of mythology as a subject and as a discipline along with the complex interactions between historical, philological and philosophical arguments in Creuzer's work.

JEL Classification: Z.

Keywords: symbolism, mythology, romanticism, history of humanities, Georg Friedrich Creuzer.

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SYMBOLISM AND MYTHOLOGY OF THE ANCIENTS: AN OUTLINE OF GEORG FRIEDRICH CREUZER'S ARGUMENT

In the field of intellectual history researchers have paid a great deal of attention to the process of “discipline formation” in the humanities. The latter started in the Western Europe at the time of Napoleonic Wars. Standing at the centre of a contemporary disciplinary that is extremely diverse, some claim that there is a need for reassessment of the disciplinary division in principle³. These investigations represent an approach to the history of intellectual disciplines and the distribution of knowledge. The turn of the nineteenth century is considered a period when the basic foundations of “disciplinary division” were established.

Although previous studies have addressed the German Romantic's reflections on cultural successes and political failures, very few studies have paid significant attention to mythology as disciplinary project in its own right. Though nothing can be said of mythology in a university curriculum – for it was not meant to actually become a discipline – the analysis of its conceptual implications may be particularly relevant for this study of the field. Such areas of knowledge as Philosophy, Philology and Classical Studies (*Altertumswissenschaft*) were treated not only as educational disciplines but as holistic ways of representing the world. They were treated as a specific subjects with unique methodologies to capture a total image of the world. Innumerable writers have already described the particularities of Classical Studies and mythology as its main part, without, in general, recognising the debts they owed to the intellectual role of mythology which appeared to be an umbrella area for formation of the complex of such human disciplines such as comparative mythology, comparative religious studies, art criticism, philosophy of religion, psychoanalysis, among others.

The present study seeks to investigate interdisciplinary (that is, a place in-between Philosophy, Philology and Classical Studies) and establish a framework for a science of mythology at the turn of nineteenth-century German Romanticism. The research demonstrates that at the beginning of the nineteenth century mythology was possible not only as a subject of research but also as a discipline in its own right. The study observes its origins, and an understanding of scientific work, which enabled scholars to consider mythology as a discipline. That means that mythology became a possible academic study of the body of myths and symbols.

³ Cf.: History and the Disciplines. The Reclassification of Knowledge in Early Modern Europe / Donald R. Kelley (ed.). Rochester, NY: The University of Rochester Press, 1997; Marchand S. L. Down from Olympus. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003; Valenza R. Literature, Language, and the Rise of the Intellectual Disciplines in Britain, 1680-1820. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

The key character of the investigation will be a romantic philologist Georg Friedrich Creuzer (1771-1858), who was first to announce mythology as a discipline in a published introduction to an academic seminar⁴. In his principle work *Symbolism and Mythology of the Ancients, particularly the Greeks (Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen)*⁵ he worked out the theoretical ground of mythology as a subject and a discipline and analysed a vast body of mythological material.

The question of formation of mythology as a discipline at the turn of the nineteenth century following Creuzer's *Symbolism and Mythology* is considered in two interconnected problem fields, which correspond to two parts of the paper. First, the definition of those arguments (historical, philological and philosophical) have forced Creuzer's senior contemporaries to estimate his work at a high level that led to the so-called Creuzer Affair⁶. Second, analysis of the interpretation of Creuzer's epoch as philhellenistic and the general desire to build a "scientific concept" of mythology in the framework of the forms and principles of mythological investigations of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In our research, we choose the strategy of attentive analytic studying of a representative case that is a signal of the development of mythology as a discipline. This discipline could be regarded as a model of other disciplines in European countries and in Russia. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the process of creation of scientific disciplines was based on philosophy and anthropology of Enlightenment, on the search for regularities and fixed prototypes in the human development. During the 1790s and 1800s in Germany it was possible to work out and comprehend different scientific programs based on specific material, one of which was ancient mythology. These programs appeared in different academic and university groups. The borderlines of these approaches lay not in the educational and curricula specification but in the logic of knowledge differentiation. The significance of the formation of mythology as a discipline is found in the academic search for nationhood, through language and history as myth. Such writers analysed this process not from a teleological perspective, that is, from its goal, but historically, in terms of its appearance at the first stages of its development, when many potential scripts were possible and some aspects remained ephemeral. Mythology appeared at the crossing of these claims.

⁴ Creuzer F. Das akademische Studium des Altertums nebst eine Plane der humanistischen Vorlesungen und des philologischen Seminarium auf der Universität zu Heidelberg. Heidelberg. 1807.

⁵ Creuzer F. *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*. 4 Bde. Leipzig – Darmstadt. 1810-1812; Creuzer F. *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*. 6 Bde. Leipzig – Darmstadt. 1819-1822; Creuzer F. *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*. 4 Bde. Leipzig – Darmstadt. 1837-1842.

⁶ On the Creuzer Affair see: Marchand S. L. *Down from Olympus*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003. P. 45-47.

Historical, philological and philosophical arguments in the theory of symbol and myth

In the *Symbolism* Friedrich Creuzer outlines an ambitious account of the history of religious experience. He begins with symbol as the prehistoric embodiment of thought and religious experience, then he traces the amplification of symbols into myths and the latter into mythologies, religious beliefs and religions more generally. The elaboration of symbols into myths and myths into religions became increasingly rational as history advanced and gravity of civilisation swung from its eastern origin (India) to the West (Ancient Greece). Later Creuzer emphasises that this sort of investigation would be criticised by those “who are exclusively interested in deconstruction, and in making everything that trustworthy history and religious consciousness hold to be eternal and unchangeable into uncertain fluctuations, in order that we admire their keen understanding and heroic daring and that they now be able to build the throne of their egoism in the midst of a general nihilism”⁷.

Creuzer considers various kinds of mythologies, including the ancient Greek, as variations of monotheistic religion that have their roots in the ancient Orient. Creuzer makes his conclusions on the basis of the available sources, the writings of ancient Greek grammarians and lexicographers⁸. Speaking of the primary symbols, “which contain the truth clearly and immaculately”, he searches for evidence in these documents; to him they were sources and evidence of ancient modes of thinking. Generally his attention fall on the philosophic systems of Plotinus and a Proclus built from the Neoplatonic theory of emanation (that is, a decrease in the degree of perfection and emanation of being from a superfluous source to the stages followed by). Neoplatonic emanation theory appears as a model of the original system of humanity and a foundation for Creuzer’s search for the first monotheistic source of religious experience, mythology and religion.

Creuzer begins his work in the first edition of the *Symbolism* with a historical argument. To prove his assumptions on the origin of religions he appeals for evidence in ancient texts such as Homer, Hesiod, Herodotus⁹ (who paid great attention to Egypt, for example, as the most “outlandish and attractive”) Pausanias, Clement of Alexandria, Neoplatonists Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Damascus, Plutarch, Proclus, Simplicius, among others. In doing so, he emphasises the

⁷ Creuzer G. F. Aus dem Leben eines alten Professors. Leipzig; Darmstadt: Druck und Verlag von C.W. Leske, 1848. S. 55.

⁸ Primary sources for Creuzer are the following: Porphyrius de Styge apud Stobaeum, Eclog. phys. lib. I. cap. 4; Jamblich. De myster. Aegypt. sect. VII. cap. I; Simplicius Praefat in Aristotel. Categor. sect. X et XI; Proclus Theolog. Platon. lib. I. cap. IV; Damascius; Plotin. Enn. V. 8 6; Demetrius de elocut. § 100 seq.; Plutarch im Theseus Tom. I.

⁹ Herodotus Book 2: Euterpe [52] // The History of Herodotus, parallel English/Greek, tr. G. C. Macaulay. 1890.

real historical evidence of the authors mentioned above on the way of thinking and action that characterised the first ancient people. Creuzer calls the latter the “happy peoples of antiquity”. For them the ideal and the real were one, and they could directly and perceive the ideal and the real simultaneously together. He believes that the following generation could only perceive the ideal in the form of “imposing brevity”, in poetic, mythical and religious creations¹⁰.

The *Symbolism* was based on an idea of justification of symbol and myth in the historical process¹¹. It reveals Creuzer’s interest in the idea of progressive development in stages, a paradigm, which was established in the eighteenth century. J. H. Block puts it as follows: “Creuzer’s vague speculative theory was thoroughly inspired by romantic Neoplatonism, which distinguished the *Symbolik* from the Enlightened variety. His system focused in the development of myth, but it also offered the reader a view of the origin of religion and culture. [...] It is evident that Creuzer interpreted this organic transformation from an essential unity to diversity as a deterioration in the strength of the religious experience”¹². This paradigm of the stages of history constitutes the belief that the human mind and consciousness act as a mediating force between the universal laws of nature and the gradual development of human civilisation.

To illustrate this we can take an epigraph to the first volume of the first edition of the *Symbolism*. Friedrich Creuzer borrows this passage from the *Mythical History of the Asian World*¹³ (1810) written by his colleague and friend Joseph Görres¹⁴. This epigraph suggests that religion has a history and this history of religion is not discrete, but is a continuum, a chain of transformations of the essential unity. This means that the symbolic and mythological period of antiquity takes a special place among the stages of the development of history. The latter are owned by the inner logic of the whole movement, and the former serves as an equal research material for romantic science.

Since myths either are told or written, they are expressed in language. One of the most important methods of reconstruction of the origin of myth is a philological analysis, and in particular, analysis of etymologies. Creuzer aims to demonstrate the Eastern, namely the Indian, origins of religious experience and thus mythology. The etymologies, which he derives, are so broad and varied that at times they not only lose connection between the first and the last link, but

¹⁰ Creuzer F. *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*. 1 Bd. Leipzig – Darmstadt. 1810. S. 7-10.

¹¹ Ibid. S. 88-89.

¹² Blok J. H. *Quests for a scientific mythology: F. Creuzer and K.O. Müller on history and myth // History and Theory*. 1994. Vol. 33. Issue 4. P. 31.

¹³ Görres J. *Mythengeschichte der asiatischen Welt*. 2 Bde. Heidelberg. 1810. S. 1.

¹⁴ Joseph Görres (1776-1848), a German Catholic thinker, writer, journalist, pamphleteer.

the connection may not be obvious even between the links standing next to each other¹⁵.

“Language is the most confident document of the nations. Therefore, we will interview it namely”¹⁶. First comes the naming for the first nameless, which signifies the transition from Gods in general to the Gods with names. The name here is already a prayer in a brief and concise formula (for instance, the Orphic hymns). According to Creuzer the first priests taught the rude peoples of antiquity in a number of ways: they hinted (*hindeutete*), pointed (*hinwies*), showed (*vorzeigte*), pursued (*nachging*), and linked together (*zusammenhielt*)¹⁷. Teachings of the ancient priests have been performed in a brief and concise form of images and symbols. Therefore, the first language is the language of the ancient worship, which is a closed and independent system that interprets itself via the relation with its own elements. This is the first lesson of the priestly worship, it is mysterious and requires a competent interpretation. On the other hand, since it has such a nature that there is no need to hide its main foundation from the rough crowd, because in the absence of a competent priest it is almost impossible to find the meaning of this teaching.

Along with historical and philological arguments, Creuzer includes philosophical categories in his methodology. The latter are usually not cited or explicitly referred to, but incorporated into the body of his research. The range of the borrowings is quite broad: Creuzer appeals to the notions of intelligible and phenomenal from the allegory of the cave in the seventh book of Plato’s *Republic*¹⁸, to the Neoplatonic phraseology, to the idea of intellectual intuition and idealistic terminology from the Friedrich Schelling’s *System of Transcendental Idealism*¹⁹ (primarily to the pair of the finite and the infinite), to Goethe’s *Colour Theory*²⁰.

Neoplatonic rhetoric can be traced in Creuzer’s argument in the general principle of emanation and the descent of the true perfection, which is internally controversial and inexpressible to the expression, which loses the primary and ultimate truth. The entire responsibility for the expression of the infinite in the finite is transposed upon the soul. However, the ontological status of the soul according to Creuzer is not clarified: the soul acts as something “third” that links two opposing worlds, the intelligible and the material²¹. This bond loses its own autonomy. Let us recall the chapter on ontological valence of the picture²² from the *Truth and Method* of Hans-Georg Gadamer: an image is ontologically *valent*, it is not closed in itself, it has an empty bond that

¹⁵ Creuzer F. *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*. 1 Bd. Leipzig – Darmstadt. 1810. S.41-42.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* S. 10-11.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* S. 9-10.

¹⁸ Platon. *Gosudarstvo // Sochineniya*: v 4. tt. T. 3. M., 1994.

¹⁹ Shelling F.V.Y. *Sistema transtsendentalnogo idealizma // Sochineniya*: v 2 tt. T. 1. M., 1989.

²⁰ Goethe J.W. *Theory of Colours*. London, 1840.

²¹ Creuzer F. *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*. 1 Bd. Leipzig – Darmstadt. 1810. S.66-69.

²² Gadamer H.-G. *Istina i metod*. M., 1988. S. 181-190.

always refers to something different to some kind of being, which image it obtains. What does Creuzer here is a direct extension of what the Neoplatonists did, he discovers the first theory of the symbol from them.

Speaking of the time of the dominance of the symbolic, a time of the ignorance of division of the corporal and the spiritual, its habit to distinguish the living everywhere, Creuzer reveals his acquaintance with Schelling's identity philosophy. The latter claims the idea of the relation of the ideal and the real and an antagonism of the finite and the infinite in nature. Schelling calls that initial necessity, according to which ancient man anthropomorphically perceives the world, an "absolute bond" (*das absolute Band*)²³. This is the ontological foundation of the natural for a person of anthropomorphist beliefs. Like Schelling, Creuzer, while describing the formation of symbol, speaks about the image, the expression of the poet, art critic or a connoisseur of art, who is the only one to resolve the unsolvable in its evident contradiction.

The symbol for Creuzer is both clouded by the medium and clear in itself²⁴. In this statement we can see the influence of Goethe's colour theory, which suggests the interaction of light and shadow. Colour arises from the energy of the darkness, while shade and shadow are parts of light itself; colour is the metamorphosis of light, the colour is a medium between light and darkness. Thus we obtain the extreme from the middle, and since, according to Creuzer, the soul is given as an active bond (*das tätige Band*) of ideal and real, we obtain the infinite and the finite through the soul. For Creuzer, as for Schelling, the ideal and the real are thought not as isolated entities that have to meet, but as extreme terms, the extreme parties that have always already met in the soul. The latter involves both parties, but we may obtain them only indirectly in the soul. Intellectual intuition (*die intellektuelle Anschauung*), the art and the symbol should be described in one and the same structure²⁵. Antiquity was the time when every act was creative, the time of creative enthusiasm; Creuzer's time of romantic activity was based on the same foundations.

There is an idea that a man can get out of a rude animal state and gradually grow up to rationality. As the pure and the rational state is not directly available in an animal state, the rationality should be somehow implemented into it. This is the central idea of the Friedrich Schiller's *Letters upon the Aesthetic Education of Man*²⁶ (1795). It is the basis of his idea of educating people by means of art for a new citizenship. A man should learn how to deal with his animal nature, and for this reason it is necessary to find access to the rational in men through art and

²³ Schelling F.W.J. Philosophical investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2006. S. 13.

²⁴ Creuzer F. Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen. 1 Bd. Leipzig – Darmstadt. 1810. S. 69-72.

²⁵ Schelling F.V.Y. Filosofskie pisma o dogmatizme i krititsizme // Sochineniya: v 2 tt. T. 1. M., 1989. S. 68, 70, 74-76.

²⁶ Shiller F. Pisma ob esteticheskom vospitanii cheloveka // Sochineniya: v 6 tt. T.6. M., 1957. S. 264-266, 325-327.

play which use the natural constitution and in a way lure the man from the animal state. *Bildung*, or education, begins with the same steps that the nature of men has already made. Man should go back, and lose what people have learned in a natural way. This route opens man to this influence and they become able to learn not by nature, but in the human manner. Schiller says that the art and the play are associated with this replay moment, which enables to learn the same, but in a different way²⁷. Schiller had been avidly read by all romantics, including Creuzer.

Romantic pursuit of the essential unity and coherence of the subject of knowledge and the knowledge itself in the Creuzer's work is manifested as a junction indistinguishable between the historical, philological and philosophical.

Early nineteenth-century debates on the interpretation of symbolism and mythology

It is necessary to recognise that the current approaches to the study of myth and mythology are significantly fragmented. Various approaches (in one of many possible classifications²⁸) in the study of myth exist: the literary approach (Joseph Frazer, Jesse Weston, Northrop Frye, Bronislaw Malinowski, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, Claude Lévi-Strauss), the psychological approach (Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung), the symbolic-linguistic approach (Ernst Cassirer, Suzanne Langer), the folklorist approach (Stith Thompson, Richard Dorson), the history of religion approach (Mircea Eliade), comparative mythology (Joseph Campbell) theological (Rudolph Bultmann), among others. We would like to consider mythology not only as a subject of study but also as a discipline referring to philology, philosophy, history and theology.

Existing investigations into the history of the study of myth fully reflect this above mentioned specialization and fragmentation. The work by Richard Chase *The Quest for Myth*²⁹ considers the literary background of mythology. In *The Study of Religion*³⁰ and in *Forschungsgeschichte der Mythologie*³¹ by Jan de Vries as in *L'Étude comparée des Religions*³² by Pinar de la Boullaye myth is considered as the subject of the history of religion. Frank Manuel in his work *The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods*³³ investigates myth in the broader context of

²⁷ Ibid. S. 345.

²⁸ The rise of modern mythology, 1680-1860 / [compiled by] Feldman B., Richardson R.D. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1972. P. XX.

²⁹ Chase R. *The Quest for Myth*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1949.

³⁰ de Vries J. *The Study of Religion: a historical approach* / Trans. & intro. Kees W. Bolle. New York. 1967.

³¹ de Vries J. *Forschungsgeschichte der Mythologie*. Freiburg and Munich: Verlag Karl Alber, 1961.

³² Pinar de la Boullaye S.J. *L'Étude comparée des Religions*. 2 Vols. Paris: G. Beauchesne, 1922.

³³ Manuel F. *The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959.

nineteenth-century ideas about religion. In his *Studies in Historiography*³⁴ Arnaldo Momigliano attempts to define two approaches to myth: of an erudite and of a philosopher. In his extensive volume³⁵ Fritz Strich gives a broad study of literary interest in myth in Germany.

In the academic community Friedrich Creuzer is known as a translator of the Neoplatonists' Proclus and Olympiodorus (Frankfurt, 1820-1822), Plotinus (Oxford, 1835). A renowned event of his time was the three-volume edition of the *Enneades*³⁶ (1835) prepared by Creuzer together with Georg Heinrich Moser. Creuzer was a well-known and discussed intellectual of his epoch: Friedrich Schelling³⁷ and Georg Hegel³⁸ were in correspondence with him and referred complementarily to his research in their works. His fame as of the author of the *Symbolism*, which has become a sensational and debated work of its time (until recently, it was hardly discussed in Russian). There are no special works devoted to Creuzer, nor any translations of his works into Russian. A preprint *Discussions on Mythology in the Romanticist Altertumswissenschaft*³⁹ by Petr V. Rezvkh serves as the exception. This work provides a broad and thorough analysis of the origins, course and main points of debates on the science of antiquity at the turn of the eighteenth century in Germany, including a comment on the debate over Creuzer's *Symbolism*. The reception of the *Symbolism* has largely excluded German, French, or English-speaking scholars. The only translation has been a French translation with comments and additions by Joseph-Daniel Guigniaut⁴⁰.

The studies of Friedrich Creuzer work have generally flashed among enthusiasts or meticulous researchers, and then faded again. The topic is not a one among academics and researchers. There is not even an extensive biography of the philosopher, with an exception of short notes⁴¹ and sections of introductory articles. One of the first major works devoted to Creuzer is *Der Kampf um Creuzers Symbolik* by Ernst Howald⁴² along with commentary and analysis of the author's works provides extracts from Creuzer and his opponents, gives an overview of the broad debates that emerged around his new research methodology. Another work devoted to Creuzer and published under the auspices of the University of Strasbourg, was *Symbolism of Friedrich*

³⁴ Momigliano A. *Studies in Historiography*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966.

³⁵ Strich F. *Die Mythologie in der deutschen Literatur von Klopstock bis Wagner*. 2 Bde. Halle, 1910.

³⁶ *Enneades*. Ed. Creuzer F., Moser G.H. 3 vols. Oxford., 1835.

³⁷ Schelling F.V.Y. *Vvedenie v filosofiyu mifologii // Sochineniya: v 2 tt. T. 2. M., 1989. S. 233-238.*

³⁸ Hegel G. *Filosofiya prava*. M., 1990. S. 242.

³⁹ Rezvkh P.V. *Diskussii o mifologii v romanticheskoy Altertumswissenschaft*. Preprint. Seriya WP 6. Gumanitarnye issledovaniya. M., 2012.

⁴⁰ Guigniaut J.D. *Religions de l'antiquité, considérées principalement dans leurs formes symboliques et mythologiques*. Paris. 1825.

⁴¹ Dammann O. *Creuzer (Creutzer), Georg Friedrich / Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* URL: <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/sfz48942.html> (accessed 24.04.2014).

⁴² Howald E. *Der Kampf um Creuzers Symbolik*. Tübingen. 1926.

*Creuzer*⁴³ by Marc-Mathieu Münch. It demonstrates the ideological context of the Creuzer's ideas formation, both when he was a beginner and a serious scholar, and it also provides a detailed analysis of the *Symbolism*.

We could not ignore an anthology though: *The Rise of Modern Mythology, 1680-1860*⁴⁴ compiled by Burton Feldman and Robert D. Richardson. In this volume the compilers, who are distinguished experts in mythology and literature of romanticism, have collected not only fragmented published works on the science of mythology, but also material previously unpublished. For each author of 1680-1860 mentioned in this anthology there are two or three excerpts from their writings and an analytic review. One such section is devoted to Friedrich Creuzer and his *Symbolism*.⁴⁵ The authors of the volume emphasise the fundamental link between the rise of modern mythology to the romantic ideas on myth but the form of the anthology doesn't give them opportunity to show the actual origins of ideas and shifts in the arguments.

It was documented that it is in the grounds and the formation of a romantic interpretation of myth and mythology, where we see the origins of many of today's concepts of mythology, be they structuralist, anthropological, or psychological. One major drawback of this approach is that normally it just states the idea of the romantic origins of the modern theories of myth, but do not provide a detailed analysis of similarities and shifts in the ideas of romantic authors and their interpreters or even readers. Sometimes it is only possible to see the connection in ideas of romantic and modern authors by citations or even unclear references without definite names and works titles that requires a much deeper investigation. That is why a thorough and painstaking research into romantic ideas is needed to provide the hard evidence for their continued existence in the following academic studies of myth.

Here we should mention several articles published in the past two decades in the wake of an interest in the history of ideas referring to the romantic origins of the modern concepts of mythology. The paper *Quests for a Scientific Mythology: F. Creuzer and K.O. Müller on History and Myth*⁴⁶ considers the problem of the study of Greek mythology at the crossroads of the interests of such disciplines as theology, history, psychology. In particular, it discusses the assumption that it was the Greek mythology that shed the light on the origins of civilisation and culture. These issues

⁴³ Münch M.-M. La "Symbolique" de Friedrich Creuzer. Paris: Editions Ophrys, 1976.

⁴⁴ The rise of modern mythology, 1680-1860 / [compiled by] Feldman B., Richardson R.D. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1972.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 387-396.

⁴⁶ Blok J.H. Quests for a scientific mythology: F. Creuzer and K.O. Müller on history and myth // History and Theory. 1994. Vol. 33. Issue 4. P. 26-52.

are discussed on the example of reflection on the science of mythology by Karl Müller⁴⁷ and Friedrich Creuzer interpretations of the Amazons myth case.

Christopher Jamme considers Moritz, Goethe, Hegel and Schelling's ideas on myth at the so-called *Goethezeit*, the time of Goethe⁴⁸. We can see here a rare example of a study on the stated topic: the scholar demonstrates philosophical and aesthetic interpretation of myth in German idealism, romanticism and classicism. In front of us is a reconstruction of formative stages of notions of myth and mythology at a turning point of emergence of a new material, a reconsideration of traditional theories and new interpretations and research methods. Friedrich Strack considers Friedrich Schlegel's romantic ideas, a "quest for the highest" in the East, and Johann Herder's idea of the quest for "the cradle of mankind" in the East as preconditions for Creuzer's ideas on the eastern origin of the first peoples, languages and myths. He refers to a poet, who, representing both a priest and sage, was able to unite the first people⁴⁹.

The article *The historian and antiquarian*⁵⁰ by the renowned Italian scholar Arnaldo Momigliano published in London in the journal Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, while anticipating researchers of the late twentieth century and their quest for science, emphasises the division of theoretical and practical aspects of disciplinary work. These aspects are the specificity of research methods of antiquarians and of historians. In another article on Friedrich Creuzer and Greek historiography, Momigliano suggests Creuzer is a kind of "pioneer" in the study of Greek historiography⁵¹. He also demonstrates a well-known⁵² presentation of Creuzer as a typical romantic author, who cannot avoid a tragic story with a young romantic poet Karoline von Günderode, who commits suicide out a feeling of futility. He only mentions Creuzer's attention to the Neoplatonists as scholars whilst working on the *Symbolism*. However little attention is given to the specificity of Creuzer's theory and method or presumptions that allow him to build his argument.

The attempt of this research was to demonstrate through the example of Friedrich Creuzer's *Symbolism* how it was that the science of myth, arranged in the beginning of the nineteenth century,

⁴⁷ Karl Otfried Müller (1797-1840) was a German scholar, partisan of ancient Sparta, who is considered to enter the modern study of Greek mythology. His main work in the field of the studies of mythology: *Müller K.O. Prolegomena zu einer wissenschaftlichen Mythologie: mit einer antikritischen Zugabe*. Göttingen, 1825.

⁴⁸ *Jamme Ch.* Portraying myth more convincingly: critical approaches to myth in the classical and romantic periods // *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*. 2004. Vol. 12 (1). P. 29-45.

⁴⁹ *Strack F.* Creuzers "romantische" Morgenlandfahrt // *Friedrich Creuzer 1771-1858. Philologie und Mythologie im Zeitalter der Romantik*. 2008. P. 59-72.

⁵⁰ *Momigliano A.* Ancient History and the Antiquarian. *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*. 1950. Vol. 13, No. 3/4, P. 285-315.

⁵¹ *Momigliano A.* Friedrich Creuzer and Greek Historiography. *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*. 1946. Vol. 9. P. 152-163.

⁵² Cf.: *Grafton A.* Arnaldo Momigliano: A Pupil's Notes. *The American Scholar*. 1991. Vol. 60, No. 2 (Spring). P. 235-241.

came about, examining what it was based on. From an understanding of its scientific character it was possible to speak about mythology as a discipline that is the academic study of a body of myths and symbols.

The article examined the formation of mythology's ideological bases in a ternary argument. To achieve this goal we have briefly considered the basic lines of the intellectual space of the turn of the nineteenth century: the concepts of symbol and myth, symbolism and mythology, historical, philological and philosophical arguments, romantic ideas in the studying method that constructed symbolism and mythology of ancient people. The key moment in the formation of mythology as a discipline is the intellectual space of the romantic epoch, which channels researchers' aspiration to integrate disciplines and methods, subjects and ideas into a uniform general plan of development of the nature and knowledge. The broad concern for reflection of the performative (symbolic and mythological) which would combine the methods of philology, philosophy and history in the development of social and human disciplines, makes this work relevant to the history of formation of the corresponding human disciplines complex: comparative mythology, comparative religious studies, art criticism, philosophy of religion, psychoanalysis, and others.

Creuzer started with the important precondition: that the work of the Alexandria scientists had a special scientific character. He considered Neoplatonist's intentions as "scientific" that allowed him to formulate a "scientific" mythology. On the other hand, Creuzer worked with contemporary sources, using the ideas of Kant, Schelling, Görres, and Goethe to develop terminology and concepts. This research thus prepared a foundation for further analysis into myths and symbols and their associated disciplines.

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