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THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF MYTH: ROMANTIC ACCOUNT OF SYMBOLISM AND MYTHOLOGY

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The present study seeks to investigate the arrangement of the science of mythology at the turn of the 19th century, and an understanding of the scientific work, which enabled to consider mythology a discipline. The research in a case of interpretation of the notions of myth and symbol explores prerequisites and framework for the study. The findings of the research illustrate the role of the disciplinary argument and publishing strategies in the debates surrounding mythology's conceptual bases. The research demonstrates that at the turn of the 19th century mythology was established both as a subject of research and as a discipline in its own right on the crossroads of disciplinary arguments, knowledge differentiation and knowledge distribution strategies.

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Although the reign of the mythological consciousness over the rational is long gone and was overcome by the first Greek philosophers and scientists, the mythological consciousness model does not completely lose its influence in society. The study of mythological methods in a scientific research (allegory, metaphor, control, manipulation) is still seen as extremely attractive³. They use archetypal stories⁴, symbols, and allegories, referring to the primary sense of the unity of the world, as experienced by every person in childhood. Myth as a unified representation of society on man and the world of ancient men has not survived. Although the method of constructing a world order in mythological consciousness as a model of perception, experience and characterization of events lies at the base of consciousness until now, and is especially clearly manifested in the production of mass representations.

During the rise of Romanticism in Germany it was possible to work out and comprehend different scientific programs based on ancient symbolic material, one of which was ancient mythology⁵. These programs appeared in different academic and university groups. The borders of these approaches lay not only in the educational and curricular specification but mostly in the logic of knowledge differentiation. The significance of the formation of mythology as a discipline may be found in the academic search for nationhood, through language and history as ancient mythologies. Romantic scientists analysed this process not from a teleological perspective but historically, in terms of its appearance at the first stages of its development, when many potential scripts were possible. Mythology appeared at the crossroads of these claims.

The article discusses the status of the scientific study of myth, the forms of its presentation (lectures, publications) in the theoretical justification of ancient mythology, undertaken by Georg Friedrich Creuzer (1771-1858) in Germany at the turn of the 19th century. The discussion around the romantic mythology project is analysed. The subject of special attention is a paradoxical synthesis of publication strategies and political, positive scientific and allegorical motives of the argument in the romantic symbolism and mythology project. An analysis of the grounds of academic debate and the starting points of scholarly

³ On contemporary ideas on myth see for example: *The rise of modern mythology, 1680-1860* / [compiled by] Feldman B., Richardson R.D. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1972. P. I-XXVIII.

⁴ One of the foundations for poetic use of archetypal: *Burke E. A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* [1757], ed. J. Boulton, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958. P. 60, 58, 63.

⁵ Cf.: *Marchand S. L. Down from Olympus. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003*; *Williamson G.S. The longing for myth in Germany: Religion and aesthetic culture from romanticism to Nietzsche. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.*

debate on the essence of antiquity studies (*Altertumswissenschaft*), philology, mythology and symbolism as its parts and sub-disciplines is provided.

The research demonstrates that at the beginning of the 19th century mythology was considered as a subject of research and 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 the academic study of the body of myths and symbols.

Mythology at the boundary: a guide to infinity and a positive scientific standard

Humans tend to create an alternate world through myth. Grand theorizers of the 19th century science had to disregard what did not square with or did not seem important to the great explanation theory. For those studying myth and mythology it is at the same time the starting point, the topic sentence and the conclusion, that myth, particularly classical myth, is too varied to be understood by one approach. Romantic theories reject the idea that myths are just inert, cultural relics. The Romantics made myth clear through the prism of the truth of myth as containing lost and emotional truths.

In the article *Portraying Myth More Convincingly: Critical Approaches to Myth in the Classical and Romantic Periods*⁶ Christopher Jamme examines the investigation of myth by Moritz⁷, Goethe⁸, Hegel⁹ and Schelling¹⁰ or the so-called *Goethezeit*¹¹. Jamme's article is quite a remarkable example of research on the subject¹². It is common to study myth as an

⁶ 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.

⁷ Cf.: Moritz K. Ph. Götterlehre, oder Mythologische Dichtungen der Alten. Berlin. 1791.

⁸ Cf.: Goethe J.W. Theory of Colours. London, 1840.

⁹ Cf.: Hegel G.W.F. Werke. Auf der Grundlage der Werke von 1832-1845 / Hg.: E. Moldenhauer, K.M. Michel. Bd. 7. Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1979; Gegel G. Filosofiya prava. M., 1990.

¹⁰ Cf.: Schelling F.W.J. Philosophical investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2006; Schelling F.W.J. Sämtliche Werke [SW] / Hg.: K.F.A. Schelling. Stuttgart – Augsburg: Cotta, 1856–61; Shelling F.V.Y. Sochineniya: v 2 tt. M., 1989.

¹¹ On the Goethezeit see: Chase R. The Quest for Myth. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1949; de Vries J. Forschungsgeschichte der Mythologie. Freiburg and Munich: Verlag Karl Alber, 1961; de Vries J. The Study of Religion: a historical approach / Trans. & intro. Kees W. Bolle. New York. 1967; Manuel F. The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959; Marchand S. L. Down from Olympus. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003; Meyer A. Von der Wahrheit zur Wahrscheinlichkeit: Die Wissenschaft vom Menschen in der schottischen und deutschen Aufklärung, Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2008; Strich F. Die Mythologie in der deutschen Literatur von Klopstock bis Wagner. 2 Bde. Halle, 1910; Tsoref-Ashkenazi H. Der romantische Mythos vom Ursprung der Deutschen: Friedrich Schlegels Suche nach der indogermanischen Verbindung. Göttingen, 2009.

¹² Along with other volumes in the topic, published by Jamme: Jamme Ch. Einführung in die Philosophie des Mythos. Bd. 2, Neuzeit und Gegenwart. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1991; Jamme Ch. Gott an hat ein Gewand: Grenzen und Perspektiven philosophischer Mythos-Theorien der Gegenwart. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1991.

ancient rudiment, in the respect of first steps of the development of mankind¹³. These studies usually take place within such disciplines as anthropology, art history, history of religion, comparative mythology, philology; sociologists and political scientists usually choose to study contemporary myths.

Myth in its philosophical-aesthetical interpretation in German idealism¹⁴, being contiguous with Enlightenment, Romanticism and Classicism was reduced by rational-historical criticism to a bygone, outdated form of knowledge. Not many scientists referred to the works of this period. Moreover, the roots and historical stages of the formation of myth, mythology, and the field of related subjects as specific notions are being lost. It is due to the state of affairs in which since the 18th-19th centuries reflection on myth has undergone multiple transformations, and it now has a tendency to be situated in a discourse on power. In addition humane studies do not presuppose to unravel the web of complicated texts of the time, which are by no means popular and simplified.

At the turn of the 19th century as it is stated in *Portraying Myth*¹⁵ we see the very opposite: reconstruction of the stages of the formation of the notions of myth and mythology at the crucial moment of the emergence of new material, interpretations and methods, and the revision of traditional theories. The title of the paper itself needs to be carefully examined: it is obvious from the title that the paper is devoted not to mythology in general, but to the profound portrait of myth, a task which at first sight seems unlikely. At all times in the academic sphere, myth seems to be a vague topic, indeterminate and doubtful in its potential clarity and truth. This is exactly what is kept in mind when talking about the rational critical interpretation of myth, according to which myth is an outdated form of knowledge and is ultimately considered passé¹⁶. However, according to Jamme there is the ambivalence in the relationship between Enlightenment and myth. On the one hand, Enlightenment shows a critical analysis of myth, but it is similar to it in its absolute fulfillment; on the other hand,

myth owes much more to the Enlightenment, than is made apparent by all too superficial historical categorizations¹⁷.

¹³ The rise of modern mythology, 1680-1860 / [compiled by] Feldman B., Richardson R.D. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1972. P. XII-XVI.

¹⁴ On the idea of new mythology see: *Frank M.* Der kommende Gott. Vorlesungen über die neue Mythologie. Suhrkamp. 1982.

¹⁵ Hereafter *Portraying Myth* stands for the title *Portraying Myth More Convincingly: Critical Approaches to Myth in the Classical and Romantic periods*.

¹⁶ 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. 29-30.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* P. 29.

This period's conceptualization of myth requires a special analysis as it was in the late 18th – early 19th century that the traditional notion of myth was reinterpreted, and the first attempts of historical evaluation of the classical religion appeared. Christopher Jamme also stresses the fact that “the rationalization of myth does not empty it of meaning; rather it uncovers its hidden depths”¹⁸. The starting points for the new interpretation were the discoveries of the new sources, new empirical material, the development of new intellectual means to incorporate new material into the system of knowledge.

Special attention should be paid to the essential relationship between myth and mythology. Because of the 18th century's revision of the notion of myth, its relationship to the notion of mythology gains another meaning. Mythology was used to be agreed to be treated as a collection of the stories about gods and the origin of the world of ancient people, and as a study of this collection (though this point of view persists until today). In the period something different occurs:

Out of traditional mythology emanates something mythical: a new mythic mode of existence that experiences the forces of life as divine power¹⁹.

For the first time mythology was actualized not only as a research subject, but as a reality in the works of Winkelmann²⁰, Herder²¹, Moritz²², Goethe²³, etc. During this period in indisputable works of enlighteners, romanticists and philosophers-idealists, the opportunities of myth's realization were discussed. Further projects of the time devoted to myth looked like what we today call an interdisciplinary approach: an association of the methods of art, poetry, philosophy, history, theology, philology and even natural science.

With the archaeological discoveries of 1833, 1848 and 1868 (Neanderthal skulls, fascinating paintings in caves) which led to the reopening of history, the emergence of the prehistoric time started. The starting point for a new interpretation provide the discovery of new sources and new empirical material for the study of myths of ancient Eastern and North American cultures. During the archaeological excavations at Herculaneum, Pompeii, Baalbek,

¹⁸ Ibid. P. 31.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ *Winkelmann J. J. Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerey und Bildauerkunst.* Walther, 1756; *Winkelmann J. J. Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums.* Dresden: In der Waltherischen Hof-Buchhandlung, 1764.

²¹ *Herder J.G. Idées.* Ed. bilingue. Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1941; *Herder J.G. Kalligone / hrsg. von Heinz Begenau.* Weimar: Hermann Böhlhaus Nachfolger, 1955; *Herders Conversations-Lexikon.* Bd. 4. Freiburg i. Br.: Herder'sche Verlagshandlung, 1856.

²² *Moritz K. Ph. Götterlehre, oder Mythologische Dichtungen der Alten.* Berlin. 1791.

²³ *Goethe J.W. Theory of Colours.* London, 1840.

Palmyra discoveries of new artifacts shed light upon ancient religions and myths, and caused a renewed interest in a specific material evidence. Romanticists anticipated these findings and turning points in the history of humankind in their ideas that Greco-Roman myths were not the only proofs of the early mythic thought and poetry. These ideas flourished in realizing and actualizing mythology, be it ancient or contemporary, in the mode of scientific work and even in the everyday life.

The ideas of romanticists reflect the spirit of a time, at which the traditional rational-historical and classical philological attitude to myth and mythology were revised, and when the reality and truth of myth and mythology were discovered in the new time and space²⁴.

The first half of the 19th century in particular was very much concerned with the phenomenon of myth. For some authors, the history of religion was practically identical to the study of myth, and comparative religion to comparative mythology. It seems as if the age of Romanticism discovered, after the age of rationalism, a deeper dimension to religion which was most apparent in myth and symbolism. One of the main questions of the time was how to find the deeper meaning hidden in these expressions, or in the absence of such a meaning to explain their occurrence.

The first volume to be mentioned in this connection²⁵ is *Symbolism and Mythology of the Ancient Peoples, Especially the Greeks*²⁶ (*Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*, first edition 1810-1812) by Georg Friedrich Creuzer. It is largely unknown among contemporary humanitarians, but at one time it made a considerable impact on the development of the study of mythology. The four-volume work may be called both a phenomenology and a history of religion²⁷. According to Friedrich Creuzer the entirety of world myths points to the same abstract truths, which are expressed in myth, symbol and concrete action as mere allegories. Creuzer considered symbol to be a way of dealing with

²⁴ Christopher Jamme's article is consistent with the spirit of the described epoch while latently appealing not only to an academician interested in the topic, but also to any reader's interest in perceiving myth in their own experience while reading in the meantime the commented extracts from Goethe's poems or the mystical history of the development of the Romantic movement.

²⁵ On Friedrich Creuzer's argument in *Symbolism* see also: *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; *Howald E.* Der Kampf um Creuzers Symbolik. Tübingen. 1926; *Marchand S. L.* Down from Olympus. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003; *Momigliano A.* Studies in Historiography. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966; *Münch M.-M.* La "Symbolique" de Friedrich Creuzer. Paris: Editions Ophrys, 1976; *Shalaeva A.* Symbolism and Mythology of the Ancients: an Outline of Georg Friedrich Creuzer's Argument / Working papers by Basic Research Programme. Series HUM "Humanities". 2014. №. 80; *Strack F.* Creuzers "romantische" Morgenlandfahrt // *Friedrich Creuzer 1771-1858. Philologie und Mythologie im Zeitalter der Romantik*. 2008. P. 59-72.

²⁶ *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. Hereafter *Symbolism* stands for the title *Symbolism and Mythology of the Ancient Peoples, Especially the Greeks (Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen)*.

²⁷ Cf.: *Classical approaches to the study of religion: methods and theories of research / introduction and anthology* by J. Waardenburg. Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 1999. P. 9-10.

absolute, infinite truth in finite symbolic form, whilst myth depicted it in a finite and complex narrative form. Whereas truth is rational and abstract, myth is dramatic and concrete²⁸. For example, Zeus' golden rope which he could use to suspend sea and earth if he chose²⁹ symbolizes the cosmic energy that holds the world together. This is the same divine energy as described as a string (thread) of pearls from the Sanskrit epic *Bhagavad Gita*, "Song of the Blessed one" (probably first century AD). Each mythic image – the golden rope and the string of pearls – descends ultimately from a single primordial revelation to humankind of truth about the nature of reality.

Creuzer suspected that there was a mysterious revelation or wisdom in Greek mythology, the imagery of which missionary priests from the Orient used to convey a primeval wisdom or insight to the ignorant older people of Greece³⁰. Any enquiry into the origins of Greek culture comes across an exemplary group of aboriginals who, in a certain way, in a priestly worship set the standard for a mysterious, archaic foundations of the first race. These were the Pelasgians. The notions on that people profoundly influence 19th century mythography, and they are also meaningful for the way in which myth, mystery religion, and metaphysics developed the idea of the primordial unconscious. Elusiveness of this people enabled the development of connections and a reference to a time when religion, and the nature of gods or God in particular, were already existing, but had not yet evolved into dogma or any kind of clear theology.

Pelasgus, probably the first man, and the Pelasgians, became linked with the point in history when man and culture, symbol, language, religious feeling, and myth emerged. The autochthony proceeded not from a particular geographical location, but from the Nature itself. The place where matter and spirit were merged, their primordial spring or *Urquell* was for Creuzer the subterranean, the crude, the primitive, the obscure. From it emerged a symbol (*Symbol, Sinnbild*) which is a primarily expression of sudden illumination, a mid-point between the World and the Spirit³¹, between the mater and the soul. On the beholder the symbol acts like a lightening flash (*wie ein Blitzstrahl*) that sheds the light on a gloomy night. It is like the rainbow's play of colors, which means Idea as a sunlight as opposed to the darkest cloud. It combines unity and differentiation and acts as an instant flash; boundless and compact, it is literally a pregnant moment (*das prägnante Kürze*), for it recapitulated the instant moment of creation with whole its potency, it conveyed the meaning of creation, and

²⁸ Powell B.B. Classical Myth. New York, Toronto: Pearson Longman, 2011. P. 697-698.

²⁹ Homer. *Iliad* 8. 18-19.

³⁰ The archaic: the past in the present: a collection of papers / P. Bishop (ed.). Hove, East Sussex; New York: Routledge, 2012. P. 147-168.

³¹ Creuzer F. Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen. 1 Bd. Leipzig, Darmstadt. 1810. S. 63.

enjoyed the exuberance of the spring of all things³².

For Creuzer the symbol is both clouded by the medium and is clear in itself³³. 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 darkness, while shade and shadow are parts of light itself. Colour is the metamorphosis of light, and 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 appear not as isolated entities that have to meet, but as extreme terms, the extreme parties that have already met within 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 by one and the same structure³⁴. Antiquity was a time when every act was creative, the time of creative enthusiasm, and Creuzer's time of romantic activity was based on the same foundations.

There is an idea that man can transform from a crude animal state and gradually grow towards rationality³⁵. As the pure and the rational state is not directly available in an animal state, the rationality should be somehow implemented into it. A man should learn how to deal with his animal nature, and for this reason it is necessary to locate the rational in men through art and play, which use the natural constitution and in a way lure men away from the animal state. *Bildung*, or education, begins with the same steps that the nature of men has already travelled. Man should go back, and unlearn what people have learned by a natural way. This route opens man up to this influence, and he is therefore able to learn not by nature, but in a human manner.

Symbolism and mythology in lectures and sketches

One of the interesting sources for the study of the formation of mythology as a discipline in the late 18th - early 19th centuries is the prominent work of Friedrich Creuzer *Symbolism and mythology of ancient peoples, especially the Greeks*. We will consider three German editions of *Symbolism* published by the author in the period from 1810 to 1842. We

³² The archaic: the past in the present: a collection of papers / P. Bishop (ed.). Hove, East Sussex; New York: Routledge, 2012.

³³ Creuzer F. Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen. 1 Bd. Leipzig, Darmstadt. 1810. S. 69-72.

³⁴ Schelling F.W.J. Sämtliche Werke [SW] / Hg.: K.F.A. Schelling. Bd. XI. Stuttgart – Augsburg: Cotta, 1856–61. S. 253-269. For Russian translation see: *Shelling F.V.Y. Filosofskie pisma o dogmatizme i krititsizme* // Sochineniya: v 2 tt. T. 1. M., 1989. S. 68, 70, 74-76.

³⁵ *Shiller F. Pisma ob esteticheskom vospitanii cheloveka* // Sochineniya: v 6 tt. T.6. M., 1957. S. 264-266, 325-327.

will do that in order to understand on a representative case of a debated romanticist work on mythology the knowledge differentiation strategy, and to account on which of these publications may be most appropriate for the study of the formation of the ideological foundations of mythology as a discipline.

Georg Friedrich Creuzer as the author of scientific papers rejected his first name; in any edition of *Symbolism*, or in articles in the authorship he does not mention it. The academic community knew him as Friedrich Creuzer. *Symbolism*, which was published in the first edition from 1810 to 1812, received considerable attention in the wake of the formation of the Romantic movement in the humanities at the time. The influence of the Romantic tradition in the mainstream of German idealism served to embody the philosophical interpretations of mythology (Herder, Moritz, Schelling).

All three editions of *Symbolism* were published in German in Leipzig and Darmstadt, by the publisher Carl Leske, and have not yet been translated into other languages except for French³⁶. The first publication of the four volume *Symbolism* was carried out in 1810-1812³⁷. The second was supplemented in 1819-1822³⁸ by Franz Monet's fifth volume and included the sixth volume with illustrations, the third was published in 1837-1842³⁹ within the framework of a compendium of works by Creuzer published in German. All three editions appeared during his lifetime.

The first edition of *Symbolism* already had its own background by the author. There was activity concerning the rethinking of the nature of philology as a discipline in Germany at the turn of the 18th - 19th centuries. The debate on this issue included not only the philologists, but also theologians, historians, politicians and philosophers⁴⁰. In works prior to *Symbolism*, Creuzer rethinks the essence of Philology as a scholarship, he does not seek to isolate philology from other disciplines, as did some of his contemporaries, but instead emphasizes its relationship with others. Philology in the works of Creuzer, is essentially linked to mythology, which grew from a sub-discipline study of antiquity to one of the main studies in his writings. Along with mythology, he describes the symbolism of ancient peoples, which, in his opinion, requires a thorough study. On that example, he seeks to analyze the ratio of Greek and ancient oriental (especially ancient Indian) cultures.

Creuzer was looking for a methodology of studying ancient material on the one hand,

³⁶ A French translation with a considerable amount of interpretation : *Guigniaut J.D.* Religions de l'antiquité, considérées principalement dans leurs formes symboliques et mythologiques. Paris. 1825.

³⁷ *Creuzer F.* Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen. 4 Bde. Leipzig, Darmstadt. 1810-1812.

³⁸ *Creuzer F.* Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen. 6 Bde. Leipzig, Darmstadt. 1819-1822.

³⁹ *Creuzer F.* Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen. 4 Bde. Leipzig, Darmstadt. 1837-1842.

⁴⁰ The so-called Creuzer Affair.

and on the other hand he tried to expand this methodology to the broadest range of material. This led to the fact that the author began to lecture, which focused on the symbolism of the ancient peoples. On the basis of these lectures, Creuzer writes in the preface to the first edition, he has created an extensive *Symbolism*. The first volume was published in 1810, the second in 1811, the third and fourth in 1812. The first is of the greatest interest for us because it contains the theoretical basis of *Symbolism*, and provides theoretical arguments and justification for the methodology, which in his previous works on similar themes had not yet been covered. In the second issue of the journal *Studien* (1806) Creuzer published an article *The Idea and the Sample of Ancient Symbolism (Idee und Probe alter Symbolik)*⁴¹, which put forward a program of symbolism, but the methodology was not expounded, because it contained only one example of analysis of a case in symbolism. In *Symbolism* Creuzer also offers a detailed theory, which should serve as a basis for a new synthetic discipline.

Particularly noteworthy is the title page. The title treatise is put there as follows: “The symbolism and mythology of ancient peoples, especially the Greeks in lectures and sketches” - a characteristic gesture that indicates that this is a work in progress. The title says it all: the work in lectures and sketches. It means that the text is certainly heterogeneous, it has a completed position, conceptually designed and formulated which stands for lectures (*Vorträge*), and oral reports which are only available in the form of sketches (*Entwürfe*). At the beginning of the 19th century it was a fairly common form of printed texts, which were used not only independently, but also to accompany the spoken word (for lectures). This form includes a poster and an advertising text.

The first and third editions included engraved tables and copies of artifacts depicting mythological and religious subjects of ancient peoples. In the second edition, these materials were presented in a separate volume. The illustrations were not just for the purpose of beauty, but were themselves essential research material. The author seeks to simultaneously work with verbal and visual material evidence, interpreting them through each other.

The second edition has provoked the most active discussions about this work. The front page states: “The second completely revised edition”. The first volume was published in 1819, the second in 1820, the third and fourth in 1821, the fifth and sixth volumes in 1822. In spite of the mentioned mark and the fact that the book was completed by Franz Monet (fifth volume) and a separate volume with illustrations, second edition of *Symbolism* has almost completely retained the same general concept outlined in the first edition, and contained corrections and additions only in respect to a number of factual details. Contrary to

⁴¹ Creuzer F. Idee und Probe alter Symbolik // Studien. Hrsg. v. F.Creuzer u. C.Daub. Bd. 2. Heidelberg. 1806.

expectations of Creuzer, the second editions of *Symbolism* elicited a devastating critique. In the debates⁴² which essential elements and content faded into the background to be replaced by cultural and political motives. The protagonist of this critique was Johann Heinrich Voss (1751 - 1826).

There were three editions of *Symbolism* which we could describe as follows. The first edition is presented in the form of short theses, partly as a draft version, as a number of separate overviews, as a program and a basis for future lectures. The second edition claimed the encyclopedic scope in an epic way, published with two additional volumes, compiled by Franz Monet. In one of these additional volumes they separately published the illustrations. This volume showed significantly greater material than in the first edition. The third edition was carried out within Creuzer's collected works and summed up the whole of his research work.

In relation to the difficulties and contradictions of various circumstances surrounding the publication of *Symbolism*, the issue of preference for the most suitable edition for investigation should be guided by the research interest, as well as by the specific situation in which the output of these three editions occurred. Preferences for the use of a certain edition should be formed within the influence of a range of issues and goals that interest the researcher. For the study, theoretical and methodological foundations of symbolism and mythology of the ancient peoples (which is the subject we are interested in) the first edition is more preferable because in the first edition the author describes the methodological foundations of his system and reveals the preparation process for the systematization of vast material. In the following editions (second and third) Creuzer goes deep into the expanding material (he also published illustrations as a separate volume). He differentiates sections of the book according to the respectively reappearing symbolic and mythological material from different sources. For the third edition, he started not with the theoretical explication of the methodological issues, but with a presentation of the natural history of the Greek people. Therefore the third edition, rich in revised both long existing and more recent research material, will be interesting to those involved in special narrow issues of symbolism and the mythology of ancient peoples.

⁴² On the debates of 1820s, the so-called Creuzer Affair see: *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; *Howald E.* Der Kampf um Creuzers Symbolik. Tübingen. 1926; *Marchand S.L.* Down from Olympus. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003. P. 44-48; *Williamson G.S.* The longing for myth in Germany: Religion and aesthetic culture from romanticism to Nietzsche. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. P. 121-150.

The formation of the scientific study of myth in the 17th and early 19th centuries

The scientific approach to the study of myth is believed to be formed through an example of Max Muller's comparative mythology⁴³. However, in his preface to the 1972 anthology *The Rise of Modern Mythology 1680-1860*⁴⁴ Mircea Eliade assures that a surprise awaits the reader, which is to detect that many interpretations of myth, considered to be modern post-Müllerian, have their roots in some other statements, still popular in the 17th - early 19th centuries. For example, from time to time in the history of the study of the myth, they reformulate an idea about the irrational nature of myth and mythological thinking, and the old and venerable notion that myths contain noble and higher ideas or hide a scientifically credible description of cosmic structures and laws⁴⁵. It turns out that some of the approaches and methodological assumptions regarding the study of myth - for example, naturalistic, psychological or historical, allegorical or symbolic – were established and became well known in the 17th-19th centuries. Occasionally, they regain their authority, and sometimes even become popular.

An analysis of the works from the 18th-19th centuries, in particular Friedrich Creuzer's *Symbolism* attested interest in myth, will ultimately produce some new observations for the history of European science and thought. As can be seen from the history of science of the 20th century, the interpretation of the myth goes hand in hand with a specific understanding of religion and, in this regard, with a special concept of man, as well as a specific anthropology. After the collapse of Max Müller's solar theory of the origin of myth and religion, his interpretation of myth as a "disease of language" and the "nomina-numina" theory became a secondary product and a verbal explication and justification of the ritual for most authors of the 19th-20th centuries. In her 1912 *Themis*, Jane Ellen Harrison points out that "mythos" to the ancient Greeks is "just spoken, something uttered"; its antithesis, or rather correlate is

something produced, prescribed, ergon of the case ... The primary meaning of the myth in religion is the same as in the earlier literature; this is a spoken correlate for the

⁴³ Müller K.O. Prolegomena zu einer wissenschaftlichen Mythologie: mit einer antikritischen Zugabe. Göttingen, 1825.

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

⁴⁵ Cf.: The rise of modern mythology, 1680-1860 / [compiled by] Feldman B., Richardson R.D. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1972. P. XII-XVI.

ritual actions⁴⁶.

In 1889, exploring the origins and development of Semitic religions, William Robertson Smith in his *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites* took the myth as having secondary importance, akin to its position in the Müller's theory, arguing that myth originated as a ritual and an explanation of its purpose, when the original meaning has been lost or forgotten. Almost everywhere, he claimed:

myth originated from the ritual and not ritual from myth; ritual was unchanged, and the myth has changed, the ritual was required, and the belief in the myth - at the discretion of the believer⁴⁷.

Due to the achievements of the romantic theory of myth at the turn of the 19th century, and its ongoing interpretation since then, it has recently become possible to speak broadly about the existence of the "truth" of myth. The notion of the "truth" of myth is manifested in its meaning, function and strength, delineating the fictional content character of cosmogonic and historical myths.

In the 18th-19th centuries mythology became associated not only with the Greek, Roman or Egyptian myths, but also with myths in general. Previously unexamined collections of myths were discovered in India, China, Persia, Scandinavia, Germany, Africa, America and Australia. From the study of the collection of myths, writers and scientists turned to analysis of mythological consciousness and the search for myths' governing principles. As myth was increasingly perceived as a way of thought and imagination, and less as a body of knowledge about old stories, romantic writers and scholars in Germany, England, France, America, Russia and other countries were inspired to study and interpret it. By the middle of the 19th century the so-called romantic ideas about the myth markedly dominated religious studies, history and philology.

Perhaps it is the wide range and interdisciplinary nature of research which eventually

⁴⁶ Harrison J.E. *Themis: A study of the social origins of Greek religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. P. 328.

⁴⁷ Smith W.R. *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites: First Series. The Fundamental Institutions*. Appleton, 1889. P. 29. 338.

led to the fragmentation and collapse⁴⁸ of the study of myth in the late 1800s

around 1830, mythology lost its institutional place. Until 1825, Creuzer and others like him were classical philologists and archaeologists at the same time. Around 1830, the philologically oriented science of antiquity germinated other disciplines such as ancient philology, ancient history, archeology, art history and especially the history of religion⁴⁹.

Myth was significant for a number of narrow and rapidly developing disciplinary fields. Although as a separate subject in itself, myth was discredited by research which was popular at the time, such as an influential Victorian textbook called *The Age of Fable*⁵⁰ by Bulfinch, and the numerous well-known works of Max Muller and his many followers.

Mythology has ceased to exist as the backbone discipline that it was at the time of Creuzer and Müller, becoming a branch of emergent research fields. From the mid 1850s, in each of these disciplines, the study of myth continued with even greater diligence, and although the development of the study of myth was not always consistent, the overall progress of the work and approval of its subject needs no introduction, nor justification.

It is extremely important to appeal to the framework and structures of knowledge and perceptions of society itself, which were established during the period of Romanticism at the turn of the 19th century through studying the stages of discipline formation and the disciplinary.

By examining the history of myth interpretation, we can actually trace the development of thought – including myth and symbol – in the light of the prevailing ideas of the certain age, epoch, time. These previously described approaches change, although myth does not. These different theories used to be, and had to be selective in the evidence they establish to examine. Their failing, if it appears to be, lies in the effort to proceed their conclusions to all myth, when in fact the thesis are actually applied in case-studies only to selected myth(s), or mythology(s). As myth is evident and illustrative of the human ability to

⁴⁸ Michelsen P. Der Sog der Mythe // Heidelberg im säkularen Umbruch / Hg. F. Strack. Stuttgart, 1987. P. 444-465 (hier 444).

⁴⁹ "... die Mythologie ist um 1830 auch institutionell ortlos geworden. Bis 1825 waren Creuzer und andere Altphilologen und Archäologen in einer Person; um 1830 gliederten sich dann aus der philologisch orientierten Altertumswissenschaft die Disziplinen der Altphilologie, Althistorie, Archäologie, Kunstgeschichte und besonders die Religionsgeschichte (Maury, R. Évide, Welcker, Usener) aus". *Jamme Ch.* Gott an hat ein Gewand: Grenzen und Perspektiven philosophischer Mythos-Theorien der Gegenwart. Frakfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1991. S. 83.

⁵⁰ *Bulfinch T.* The Age of Fable; or, Beauties of mythology. Boston, 1855.

create histories, ideas, representations and realities, along with that myth interpretation is a study of an expression of this same capacity. Classical myth being at the center of romantic mythology studies is such a complex that must be travelled and approached from a variety of methods at the same time. To examine it, we must make use of insights undertaken by different schools of interpretation because no one method of analysis will uncover the endless mysteries of myth as such in the perspective of its origin and rise.

The paper examined the formation of the science's of myth ideological bases. In the published results⁵¹ of the previous work on the subject we have already considered the basic lines of the intellectual space of the turn of the 19th century in the perspective of Creuzer's *Symbolism*. We briefly accounted 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 undertaken by Creuzer. What is significant here is that he explained myth as an allegory of the transcendent philosophic forces which in a more precise way may be imparted through reason in a philosophical experience of the infinite. Therefore, he considered myth through Neoplatonists' emanation theory, the works of the last antiquity's commentators and scholiasts such as Damascius, Iamblichus, Hermeias, and Syrianus, Plotinus, Proclus, and Porphyry⁵². Creuzer echoes an important and increasingly essential feature of Neoplatonism, namely Plotinus' "identification of metaphysical realities with states of consciousness"⁵³. Creuzer manages to reconcile emanating from the highest spheres philosophic ideas with insights rising from the depths, largely by referring to Neoplatonic commentaries on the mysteries. In the present article we have positioned the above mentioned results of the research on Creuzer's *Symbolism* into the broader context of the epoch's understanding of scientific work and the studies of myth.

We briefly considered the basic parameters of the romantic ideas at the turn of the 19th century, the concepts of myth and mythology as well as a case of knowledge differentiation strategy in a Creuzer's publication strategy and briefly the method of study that constitute the symbolism and mythology of ancient people in 17th-19th centuries. A key moment in the scientific study of myth is the intellectual space of the romantic epoch, which channels

⁵¹ Shalaeva A. *Symbolism and Mythology of the Ancients: an Outline of Georg Friedrich Creuzer's Argument / Working papers by Basic Research Programme. Series HUM "Humanities"*. 2014. №. 80; Shalaeva A.V. *Istoki stanovleniya gumanitarnykh distsiplin: konflikt v osnovanii kraha mifologii kak distsipliny // Konfliktologiya*. 2014. № 4. S. 26-38; Shalaeva A.V. *Mifologiya v romanticheskoy nauke: Simvolika Fridriha Kreytsera // Trudy BGTU*. 2014. № 5. S. 87-90.

⁵² Creuzer F. *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*. 1 Bd. Leipzig, Darmstadt. 1810. S. 52.

⁵³ Wallis R.T. *Neoplatonism*. London: Duckworth, 1972. P. 5.

researchers' aspirations to integrate disciplines and methods, and subjects and ideas into a uniform general plan for developing nature and knowledge. The broad concern for reflecting on the performative (symbolic and mythological), combines the methods of the differentiated development of the human disciplines, as well as comparative mythology, comparative religious studies, art criticism, philosophy of religion, and psychoanalysis.

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