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**TÍTULO:** El papel del mito y la religión en la cultura de Ethnos.

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**RESUMEN:** El artículo está dedicado al análisis del papel del mito y la religión en la cultura de los grupos étnicos, destacándose la importancia del medio ambiente, el paisaje y la ecología a la formación de asociaciones étnicas en un territorio particular. Se llevó a cabo una reconstrucción racional del contenido de los elementos religiosos y mitológicos de la conciencia étnica con acercamiento al mito como la primera manifestación espiritual que permitió la definición de la base primaria de la conciencia étnica. Se señala la importancia de estos grupos étnicos para encontrar una convivencia armoniosa con su entorno, concluyéndose que la autoidentidad étnica Talysh se formó en estrecha relación con su entorno geográfico circundante limitado por el sistema de las montañas Talysh, que caracterizan aislamientos que han contribuido a la preservación de la cultura Talysh singular y original durante un largo período histórico.

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** conciencia étnica, mito, cultura, Talysh.

**TITLE:** Role of myth and religion in the culture of Ethnos.

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**ABSTRACT:** The article is devoted to the analysis of the role of myth and religion in the culture of ethnic groups, highlighting the importance of the environment, landscape and ecology to the formation of ethnic associations in a particular territory. A rational reconstruction of the content of the religious and mythological elements of the ethnic conscience with approach to the myth was carried out as the first spiritual manifestation that allowed the definition of the primary basis of the ethnic conscience. The importance of these ethnic groups to find a harmonious coexistence with their environment is pointed out, concluding that ethnic Talysh self-identity was formed in close relation with its surrounding geographical environment limited by the Talysh mountains system, which characterize isolations that have contributed to the preservation of the singular and original Talysh culture during a long historical period.

**KEY WORDS:** ethnic consciousness, myth, culture, Talysh.

**INTRODUCTION.**

Being a complex socio-cultural system any ethnic group has both features distinguishing them from other ethnic formations and characteristics found in most of these communities. The main traits that characterize innate specific properties of the ethnos and distinguish it from others, as a rule, include

customs, traditions, language, decency accepted in the given ethnic environment, etc., that together with the territory occupied and economic set-up define the most important feature of ethnicity. Moreover, each ethnos is notable for its outlook - the worldview that includes ethnic systemic ideas about the universe structure, ethnic mythological and religious world, perception of the environment, standards of morality, moral and ethical ideas developed during historical development of the ethnic group in question.

Originally, ethnicity is formed by a common territory, language and economic activity. These are primary obligatory conditions that support the formation of large ethnic groups. Nature of the surrounding medium, landscape of the territory, geophysical and ecological conditions, an appropriate level of productive forces and production relations development, rational use of natural resources and possibility of population growth are important as well. Displacement of population and ethnic residence area density are affected by migration, inter-ethnic relations and other processes resulting in the fact that the same ethnos is located on the territory of several states.

## **DEVELOPMENT.**

### **Methods.**

Research into ethnic religious-mythological worldview shaping within a certain territory, the analysis of consciousness structure-forming elements, a description of a specific experimental material involves the reconstruction of the religious-mythological elements content of consciousness. Having radically rethought Freudian unconscious nature ideas, K.G. Jung regarded myths as main archetypal images.

According to Jung, an archetype is an unconscious content that changes when it is recognized and perceived; it uses the colours of individual consciousness in which it becomes obvious (Jung, 2011). Thus, unconsciousness contains subjective and individual units pushed out beyond consciousness as

well as all collective and impersonal mental content rooted in deep antiquity. Moreover, being a collective unconscious medium, these structural images may be inherited biologically.

The concept 'archetype' has been known from the ancient cultural heritage; both Philon of Alexandria and Dionysius Areopagite made reference to it in relation to the image of God in man; later it was often used in psychology, the latter means a special way of connecting images, passing from generation to generation by this term.

Archetypes assign a general personal structure and sequence of images that appear in mind on creative activity arising; thus, it is quite obvious that the spiritual sphere itself, in particular the sphere of consciousness, bears archetypal imprints. Archetypes arrange understanding of the world, oneself and other people; with precise clarity, they appear in mythical narratives, fairy tales, heroic epos, etc. The archetypal type of thinking has been described in detail in studies of famous domestic and foreign researchers.

There are two opposite approaches regarding the ratio of mythology and religion. The first one considers religion and mythology as completely different types of worldviews; the other brings them together as close as possible. M. Eliade pointed out sacredness as a specific myth feature; due to it we are able to go outside the limits of the real world and plunge into a world transformed, so called sacred time, 'when new phenomena are discovered, full of power and significance' (Eliade, 1995).

In mythology and religion I. Bachofen saw the key to correct understanding of mankind ancient history. In his opinion, myth is the beginning of any development, and any in-depth study of antiquity inevitably leads to myth (Bachofen, 1996).

Roger Caillois, famous French philosopher and sociologist, took as a premise that myth is determined historically and socially and performs public functions. In his judgment, from within myth is driven by the inner power of any development which is in and of itself a driving force to the progress. R. Caillois wrote 'A sufficient prerequisite for a myth is its overdetermination, that is, it is a node of

psychological processes, the coincidence of which can be neither accidental nor episodic, personal nor artificial' (Kaiya, 2003). According to the author, all these historical and social factors form the most important layers of the myth shell.

A. A. Potebnya spoke about timelessness of mythological thinking. In his opinion, the latter is not limited to any particular epoch, but it characterizes people and peoples of different historical eras (Potebnya, 1976).

In E. A. Torchinov's works, devoted to the development of a psychological approach to study religious experience, various aspects of relationships between religion and mythology have been analyzed. E. A. Torchinov considered that it was pointless to compare religion and mythology in general, that both religion and mythology were 'intercrossing and interacting areas but in no way they were identical or reducible to each other' (Torchinov, 2005). E. A. Torchinov thought that the essential characteristic of all myths is the same, since myths are products of a special type of thinking, some researchers calling them mythopoetic and others regarding them to be mythological (Potebnya, 1976).

Without going into details of mythology and religion comparison outside the context of the problem of religious and mythological characteristics of ethnic consciousness, some attention will be paid to specify the A.F. Losev's concept of myth and E.A. Torchinov's 'mind boggling experience'. Touching upon the characteristics of myth as a personal form, A.F. Losev put forward his understanding of myth in the work 'Dialectics of Myth'. According to A.F. Losev myth is: 1) neither a fable nor fiction, but a logically and, first of all, dialectically essential category of consciousness and existence in general; 2) not perfect objective reality but vital and perceptible material one; 3) a non-primitive-scientific structure, a living subject that is empirical intercommunication, containing its own, non-scientific, purely mythical truth, authenticity, principle regularity and framework; 4) not a metaphysical construction, but realistically, materially and sensually created reality, which at the

same time is detached from the ordinary course of phenomena and contains a different degree of hierarchy, a different degree of detachment; 5) neither a scheme nor an allegory, but a symbol; and being already a symbol, it contains schematic, allegorical and life-symbolic layers; 6) not a poetic work; but its detachment is the formation of isolated and abstract-distinguished things into an intuitive-instinctive sphere which primitive-biologically interrelates with a human subject and where they are combined into one indissoluble, organically coalesced unity '(Losev, 1991).

Everything is revealed and sensually tangible for mythical consciousness. A.F. Losev is sure that myth penetrates through the whole human life (Losev, 1991). Analyzing relationships between mythology and religion, A.F. Losev points to a one-sided connection between them; it is not necessary for myth to include religion, since mythology is broader than the latter, while religion cannot exist without myth. A.F. Losev's ideas were reflected in EA. Torchinov's key point 'myth and religion show similarity and connection at the deepest insight level as two forms of 'mind boggling experience' (Torchinov, 2005).

Based on the above, it makes no sense to compare religion and mythology in general: 'There are myths and myths. Some of them are closely related to the very essence of religiosity and could appear only in a religious context, others are rather superficially connected with religion, and the rest are generally beyond the boundaries of religious phenomena' (Torchinov, 2005).

## **Results.**

An interesting characteristic of myth semantic content has been given by a modern Russian philosopher A.M. Lobok, who considers it historically the first form of spiritual self-realization of man. He defines myth both as a set of ancient narratives and the foundation of every culture. The author justifies this idea by the fact that modern human thinking remains largely mythological, for man is a being that constantly creates myths and adjusts the rest of humanity to the framework of this myth. According to the authors, an appeal to the truth is an appeal to the collective experience,

perceived by man as a cultural fact. Further, A.M. Lobok emphasizes that myth is a secret language of meanings, the very essence of which is to make the given culture special, impenetrable for representatives of other cultures: 'Myth is a selection sign of the person born in a given tribe'. Thus, A.M. Lobok summarizes that cultural diversity of the world is based on myth as a fundamental point of reference, as a sign of cultural self-identification of a person in the quality of a special cultural type: Myth is the meaningful reality of a person, and therefore it is immeasurably stronger than reality as such.

After all, it is in myth where a person tries to root his own right to exist in the face of the world in which this very right is not provided for, and therefore, myth is the ultimate reality which man appeals to (Lobok, 1997). Sacral meanings reflected in mythological ideas are embodied in religious texts. Worldview of mythological consciousness or a mythological element is shown in them in two forms - in descriptive (cosmography) or as a mythological plot (cosmogony).

Storage and transfer of knowledge in the mythological consciousness sphere are carried out by sacred knowledge guardians.

Analyzing myth through the prism of relationships between conscious and unconscious components of consciousness, K. Levi-Strauss speaks about its symbolic function. That's why it is important to make clear distinction between consciousness and unconsciousness: 'Subconsciousness as a storing place of memories and images accumulated by each individual during his life, in this case, becomes one of the memory aspects. Due to the same properties, subconscious memories are permanent and limited in time, and they are subconscious because they cannot be triggered by one's will'. On the contrary, the unconscious always remains empty and devoid of figurative content or more precisely it has the same attitude to images as the stomach to food in it.

The unconscious is a one purposed tool, it keeps in with structural laws, by which its reality, undifferentiated elements coming from outside, intentions, emotions, ideas, memories are covered. The subconscious can be said to be an individual dictionary in which each of us records the vocabulary of his individual history. Organizing this vocabulary according to its own laws, the unconscious attaches importance to it and converts it into a language that we and other people can understand to the extent that it is structured according to the laws of the unconscious' (Lévi-Strauss, 2008). At the same time, the myth origin does not matter, if it is a product of individual consciousness or it has been borrowed from one or another ethnic tradition, as there is constant interpenetration and exchange within the mythological complex framework itself. It is referred only to distinction between images, but myth structure remains unchanged, and this fact allows myth to perform its symbolic function.

On the other hand, according to K. Levi-Strauss, mythological thinking has dual nature: 1) it coincides with its object, giving it a homologous image, but at the same time never dissolves in it. Although mythological thought does not care about completeness, as there is always something in it that could be complemented, but in essence the logic of mythological thought is as inexorable as the logic of science. The French thinker outlines the difference between them not in logical operations, but in the very nature of the phenomena subjected to logical analysis.

According to K. Levi-Strauss, to understand specific nature of mythological thinking myth should be recognized both as a linguistic and extra-linguistic phenomenon: 'Myth always refers to past events: 'before the creation of the world' or 'at the beginning of time', in any case, 'long ago', but myth significance is that all these events, which took place at a certain time point, exist out of time. Myth explains in equal measure past, present and future (Lévi-Strauss, 2008). Unlike poetry myth is perceived differently, it cannot be distorted, even if it is poorly translated into another language, when poetry value can be lost. In K. Levi-Strauss's view, myth value cannot be destroyed even by the worst

translation: 'No matter how badly we know the language and culture of the people who created the myth, it will still be perceived by any reader in the world as myth. The fact is that the essence of myth is not a style, not a form of narration, not syntax, but a story told in it.

Myth is a language, which works at the highest level, where the meaning can separate from the language basis on which it has established' (Lévi-Strauss, 2008). Though a myth language has enormous possibilities of symbolization (and the world of symbols in their meanings is highly mythological), a mythological narration itself is usually quite specific and inclined to convey its generalizations through images of the objective world. Most probably, it initially did not contain allegories and speculative ideas at all, they appeared in more complex religious systems, forming the basis of theological teaching and corresponding areas of religious art. However, massive, spontaneous oral traditions, to some extent, preserve specificity of their imaginative structure, even in cases where our rationally oriented vision sees conventionality and abstraction from reality in them. It stands to reason person's mythological understanding of dominated spiritual and practical experience generally precedes rational-logical knowledge. But it does not mean that myth only remains the heritage of the distant past or it is very much the preserve of unwritten traditions that survived to our time. In addition to archaic mythology (in relation to which the word 'myth' is used in the most narrow and special meaning), it is customary to distinguish mythological components in the currently existing religions of revelation: Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam (this is broad understanding of the religion essence, but representatives of these denominations will naturally disagree). Besides, there are mythological components in different cultures, customs, traditions, etc.

Re-evaluation of mythological thinking nature in ancient societies, religions and cultures allows us to analyze and clarify, on the one hand, the history of human thinking development, and on the other hand, to understand one of the most important spheres of human consciousness that is the sphere of religious ideology. As for Iranian mythological traditions and Talysh mythology, in particular, it

undoubtedly has similar features to Indo-European mythology. These are, first of all, oral etiological and astral legends, genealogical and ethnogonic legends, magic texts, oral cosmographic descriptions with the introduction of ancient Iranian pre-philosophy (Chanyshv, 1990), as well as folklore, cosmo and anthropogonic themes.

Despite the heterogeneous nature of mythological components and a weak connection between them, all these groups in their integrity form a single structural community, a system of mythological concepts which are illustrative of both Iranian and Indo-European mythological traditions. According to E.A. Torchinov, those religions are most closely connected with mythology, 'where the basic psychological experience was formulated, described or interpreted in mythological categories and in mythopoetic thinking way' (Torchinov, 2005). These are, first of all, the oldest religions, in particular, Zoroastrianism. Zoroastrian religious worldview developed from a variety of different beliefs of the ancient Iranian pantheon: from belief in various gods, in forces of nature and space, in souls of deceased ancestors, etc.

The religious life of the Talysh was a multitude of beliefs and rituals - the cult of natural elements - fire, air, water and earth, the cult of stones, groves and trees. Talysh religious consciousness perceived the world around as an arena of natural forces and elements that directly influenced human life. It is no coincidence that, until recent time, for example, the Talysh did not cut down trees around their homes at all, considering natural connection with natural forces to be an important characteristic of human existence (Riss, 1855). Each element had great strength of action. The most powerful of them were worshiped and offered sacrifices. The main central deities of the ancient Iranian pantheon were Ahura-Mazda, Mitra, Apam-Napat, Ardivisura Anahita, etc.

These ancient ideas, religious beliefs contributed to the formation of a naive worldview. Undoubtedly, the basis of such outlook consisted of mythological ideas playing an important role in person's daily practical life; they contributed to rapid adaptation of man to the surrounding social world. Although

myth as an initial universal attempt to understand the world contributes to the emergence of other types of knowledge, nevertheless, further development of knowledge does not lead to displacement of mythology from cognitive practice. Mythological perception of environmental phenomena as a fundamental feature of consciousness characterizes all stages of formation and development of ethnic consciousness. The given feature of ethnic consciousness is especially important because in any other case it is deprived of its main function, adaptive one, and cannot serve as a basis for adapting to the social world, society, for making vital decisions by the ethnic group (Bicheev, 2005). It is obvious that mythological worldview of the ethnos was formed as a response to its practical needs, as an important cognitive function, contributing to adaptation to the environment. These needs are reflected by the psychological approach based on the fact that transpersonal experience is precisely the root of religious faith and religious life of the ethnic group. In this connection, traditional rituals existing in ancient mythological tradition are of interest. E.A. Torchinov determined a ritual as 'a set of certain acts that have a sacred meaning and are aimed either at the reproduction of one or another deep experience, or at its symbolic representation' (Torchinov, 2005). So, being devoid of connection with deep-seated experiences carrying a powerful psychological energy boost, a ritual is no longer a ritual but a ceremony. A ritual was a form of powerful deep-seated experience for mythological consciousness.

The correctness of everyday judgment lies in the fact that a significant part of our daily interactions really has the character of a form of worship in this negative sense of the word. In a number of works devoted to the analysis of 'pure forms' (G. Simmel's term) of interactions, G. Simmel came to the conclusion that most of person's daily life consists of customary actions, having few or no connections with troubles and concerns.

**Discussion.**

Analyzing the custom of secular communication, G. Simmel indicated that it is entirely ritualistic, since its rules require participants not to touch real life problems: family complications, financial difficulties, diseases, etc. Such communication is the product of a conscious agreement to ignore real values of life that go beyond the very form of communication.

Many moralists stigmatized social communication for its emptiness and hypocrisy, but according to G. Simmel, this is not 'meaningful vacuum and hypocrisy', but emptiness and hypocrisy of a game (Zimmel, 1996). Any game is void in the sense that moves in this game (respectively, utterances in a social conversation) are motivated by the game rules, but not by participants' real life problems; so, illness of a chess player's wife does not determine what defensive play he will choose in the game. Likewise, the blame for hypocrisy of secular intercourse does not stand up to criticism, because when individuals enter the game, they consciously assume the role dictated by the game rules, refusing (completely or partially) their own individuality.

Analyzing 'naive' worldview, various religious systems and ideas, it can be argued that they largely depend on cultural and historical surroundings that contribute to individual consciousness formation. But there are other examples, such as adoption of religion thanks to a person possessing certain strong personality charisma and performing missionary efforts, similar to the prophet Zarathushtra in Ancient Iran, who acquired the Iranian peoples to a new religion - Zoroastrianism. However, it should be understood that Zarathushtra did not start with a 'tabula rasa'; his religious doctrine, firstly, became a kind of revision of the ancient Iranian pantheon with many gods, and, secondly, became widespread thanks to the religious activity of magicians, who later became consistent advocates and conductors of Zoroastrianism.

Ancient historians considered magicians to be priests and forecasters of Median and Persian kings. I.M. Dyakonov pointed out that the word 'magician' in the Bekhustinskaya inscription of Darius I did not possess any birth status, or profession, it had an ethnic designation (Dyakonov, 1956). Medieval Arab authors, in particular, Al-Istahri, determined the Mukan region (now Mughan) in Azerbaijan, which locates north of Deylem (Northern Iran), as the birthplace of magicians. Meanwhile, it is worth noting that magicians resisted the new religion, initially perceived it as an alien religion, but later, seeing its success, they became enthusiastic disseminators of Zoroastrianism (Dyakonov, 1956). Thus, we have every reason to state that if the basis of the ancient Iranian pantheon was made up of powerful deities that could only be propitiated by numerous sacrifices to streamline economic life; Zoroastrianism is basically an ethical religion, viewing the world through the lens of good and evil.

Possibility of individual cultural development contributes to group worldview formation by the awareness of person's ethnicity to create various individual and group systems of social stratification. To become 'guarded' in collective consciousness of the ethnos ideological postulates or moral ideas have to be accepted by the ethnic group as value reference points. It is a long and ambiguous process, expressing person's attitudes towards these values. Only in the process of historical development, ethnic community spirit, understanding the importance to be involved in the fate of one's native ethnos gains a wider and conscious character, contributing to the formation of ethnic consciousness. Some ethnic collective and/ or individual peculiarities can be unchangeable; on the one hand they cannot be explained in a logical way but on the other hand they are considered as normative in the given ethnic worldview and can be expressed in the most diverse forms.

On their basis, the ethnos constructs new and new worldviews that have the greatest adaptive properties in a given period of ethnos existence (Lurie, 2004); therefore, adapting to the environment, each ethnic group creates inherent space images. Adaptation under such conditions is the very core

of an ethnogenesis geographic aspect resulting in the emergence of ethnic systemic integrity. In accordance with L.N. Gumilyov's concept, both certain individuals and ethnic groups have a homeland that is a combination of landscapes, where they first designed into a new system (Gumilyev, 1990). L.N. Gumilyov recognized indisputability of geographical landscape influence on ethnic communities as groups of *Homo sapiens* species.

Based on the extensive ethnographic material L. Levy-Bruhl concludes that for ancient primitive consciousness space did not seem to be something uniform and homogeneous, indifferent to what it was filled with, devoid of quality and in all its parts identical with itself. A social group feels a mystical connection with the part of the territory that it occupies or moves through. Each area has its characteristic appearance or shape, rocks, stones, springs, trees, etc. 'There are involvement relationships between the land and the social group in question, they are identical to a sort of mystical property, which cannot be altered, taken away or conquered' (Levy-Bruhl, 1994). It stands to mention that in ancient times interacting with the surrounding natural world and social environment, man did not oppose him to nature, and certainly did not separate him from the clan group. He was an inseparable part of the family line due to self-identification with it he could specify himself as a member of the society. The main task of the ethnic group here is to organize protection against all kinds of external threats. P. Teyar de Chardin writes 'It can be said, that with the emergence of human thinking (both individual and collective) evolution, going beyond physicochemical organization of bodies, leaps into a new ability — the ability to bring order into the universe by perceiving the world. (De Chardin, 2002). It allows an ethnos to have such an 'image of the surrounding, in which all elements of the universe are structured and correlated with the person himself, so that every human action is a component of the overall structure' (Lurie, 2004). In this sense, the myth content for a person is quite true, because it fully corresponds to the structure of his emotional experience. In ancient Iranian traditions seven stars of the Great Bear were perceived as seven body parts a boy with

big horns. It has been weaved into the structure of the ancient Iranian world outlook, into the structure of even pre-maritime life values, thus it is basic knowledge in its essence.

If myth has to be analyzed as the first spiritual manifestation, then primary foundations of ethnic consciousness can be seen in it. Myth reflects the opposition of 'us' and 'them', of cosmos and chaos. 'Us' originally meant a tribal group, personified in the image of the myth hero who defended the world, broadly speaking, the cosmic order (Traeton). 'Them' was represented by the side of the evil forces, muddying the water (Azhi-Dahak).

Mythology reflects the struggle of the cosmic order with chaos organized by evil, demonic forces. Creation of the World myths tell us about the victory of the cosmic order over chaos, resulting in regulation of cosmos. An important characteristic of any ethnic cultural and historical tradition is to search for harmonious coexistence with its natural environment. For centuries this feature of ethnic culture has remained the main determining incentive of ethnos behavior. In ethnic consciousness, the number of natural markers is very significant and covers practically all of life situations in biological, social and mental aspects.

The details spoken above allow conclude that ethnic consciousness of the Talysh ancestors was formed in close connection with the surrounding Talysh mountains on the one hand, and the Caspian Sea, on the other hand, the geographic environment retaining individual elements of that remote era, to which the Caspian-Cadus component of ethnogenesis belongs.

The system of the Talysh Mountains constituting a single geographical economic complex in relation to man, is determined as isolates (Gumilyev, 1990), contributing to the preservation of unique original Talysh culture throughout a long historical period. Breaking up into smaller parts, united ethnic clusters or compounds have been known to leave behind a conglomerate of various clan and tribal groups, connected by family ties or cultural relations. The formed ethnic communities or structures began to recognize themselves as one of the vital parts of society, defining their role and significance,

whereas members of an ethnic group identified themselves as independent people (at least in relation to their origin), whatever specific role they had to play in a socially heterogeneous society.

According to a number of researchers (for example, B.A. Bicheev), if a clan is accepted as an ethno-cultural community, then a tribe can be considered as an ethnopolitical one, where the leading role belongs to the ruling family, which gives the name to the whole association (Bicheev, 2005).

V.P. Alekseev supposes that common self-consciousness of any ethnic group is inseparably linked with the existence of a common self-name. This is especially true of ancient ethnonyms with a complex origin. Therefore, 'by clearly marking the people in question, ethnic self-consciousness does little to define common origin of a group of peoples, i.e. to reconstruct 'ethnogenetic beams' (Alekseev, 1986).

In the group of peoples with similar origin, culture, and language, some awareness of common origin and genetic kinship is preserved, and it is stronger if the peoples are geographically closer to each other. For example, the Talysh and their neighbours the Gilyanians as well as other Iranian-speaking peoples have common genetic roots, dating back to the ancient tribes of magicians, the Caspians, the Cadusians, the Gelov, etc., who lived on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea. Later as a result of migration beginning in the medieval period from the XI century, when the Turkic tribes invaded Azerbaijan (Agaev, 1984), the Talysh rubbed shoulders with the Turks in the north who gradually displaced them to the south, adopting a lot of customs and traditions of the local population, including Gia Shia (Mamedov et al, 2018; Ibragimov et al, 2016).

Development of any culture is accompanied by the creation of certain 'protection mechanisms' constructed hierarchically. An adaptation identification function plays an important part here, due to which an external world appears in the mind of a person in the most comfortable, adapted and adjusted forms. At the same time activation of 'protection mechanisms' allows structuring the world around

with the help of cultural symbolic elements. A symbol is the key to understanding each culture. Artifacts can become characters.

It is necessary to mention O. Spengler's interesting observations that each culture had soul, which is something intangible, but fixed by means of painting, music, architecture, poetry, and scientific thinking. Culture exists until this task is accomplished [20]. Moreover, each culture, according to O. Spengler, demonstrates a deeply symbolic and almost mystical connection with space in which and through which it seeks self-realization. This connection is reflected in Talysh ethnos culture under the conditions of a 'geoethnic reserve'.

## **CONCLUSIONS.**

Following the results of the work done, a number of important conclusions and generalizations were made. First, the place of myth and religion as an obligatory early stage of ethnic culture formation has been determined. In reliance on studies of famous thinkers who have analyzed the mythological consciousness essence, some regularities in ethnic consciousness development have been shown.

The formed cultural unity of ethnic members is inextricably linked with the communion of their psyche, manifested, in particular, in the connotation of their character, specificity of their value orientations, tastes, etc. Obviously, the main semantic guidelines of ethnos' culture are transmitted in the process of intra-ethnic interaction. And each member of any ethnic group absorbs and perceives semantic settings of his own ethnic culture, thus semantic content plays an important role in the formation of an individual worldview. Second, the stages of ethnogenesis and worldview of Talysh ethnic consciousness were determined.

The Talysh ethnos worldview is an integral part of the Caucasian and Iranian cultural spheres, where traditional ideas developed and prevailed under specific conditions of ethnos existence. We called them a 'geoethnic reserve'. Introduction of foreign cultural traditions did not allow their constituent elements to eliminate the existing values of the 'geoethnic reserve', but rather contributed in creation

a syncretic environment promoting evolution of Talysh ethnic consciousness in the direction of understanding the world in the system of moral and ethical ideas that greatly enriched the Talysh ethnos worldview. Such a syncretic environment had a significant impact on Talysh ethnos social worldview, predetermined dominant nature of religious values in its spiritual and socio-political life. Social being of the Talysh ethnic community is the real basis for Talysh ethnic consciousness formation, i.e. the process of Talysh interrelation in economic, social and spiritual activities, where not only individual natural features of each member of an ethnic community are formed and identified, but also features which characterize an ethnos as a whole and arise in the process of cooperative socio-economic activities of individuals.

The modern stage of ethnic consciousness development, including the Talysh ethnic consciousness, is characterized by a strong desire of many ethnic groups to search for their historical roots, the desire to actualize ethnic and confessional factors, which results in the so-called movement for national 'regeneration', the first signals of which could be seen in the late XX century.

However, in our opinion, it is practically impossible to revive Talysh culture in all its color and diversity due to the loss of certain social roots, as well as the objectively manipulating processes of globalization and modernization under conditions of continuing assimilation and collapse in cultural continuity of the ethnic development.

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