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**SPACE, TIME AND NUMBER
IN MYTHOPOETICS OF SOVIET DISCOURSE**

SUMMARY. The paper deals with the linguocultural and cognitive analysis of the language world-mapping in the Soviet discourse: the perception of space, time, and number.

KEY WORDS. Language world-mapping, metaphor, Soviet discourse, space, time, number.

This paper deals with the linguocultural and cognitive analysis of mythopoetic elements in the discourse of the Soviet period (1917-1991). Mythopoetic thinking is generally associated with traditional cultures and the pre-scientific cognition, not with the ideas of modern times. However, the elements of mythopoetic thinking peculiar to ancient society do not disappear irrevocably, but keep alive in the language world-mapping. Besides, when 20 years have passed after the end of the Soviet period, it is possible to study its discourse *ab extra*, in the historical context, as the language and culture of the ancient world are studied, with the same respect to the material under study.

The key features of mythopoetic thinking have been elicited in the process of studying ancient cultures and texts. In [1] I analysed such mythopoetic elements of the Soviet discourse as the faith in myth, imagery of thinking and the binary code providing the integrity of world-mapping. This paper is devoted to the perception of space, time and number, the essential concepts of world-mapping.

Naming is one of the integral elements of cosmogony, cf. *God said, "Let there be light." And there was light! God saw that the light was good, so God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day" and the darkness "night."* [Genesis, 1; 4-5]. Old rituals of naming assimilated the world with words, and the actions of a priest or a poet in such rituals aimed at the transition from non-being to being, from chaos to cosmos. So, "language, word, and name are creating the world again in themselves, clearing it of everything dangerous and destructive, transferring it from the kingdom of nature to the kingdom of culture, and making non-symbolic (and extra-symbolic) things symbolic <...> and, in idea, sacred" [2; 125]. The Soviet discourse, especially in its first decades, was characterized by wide-scale experiments with proper names: personal names, toponyms, etc.

New citizens of the new Soviet country were given new names as their parents desired to perpetuate their faith in the Communist ideas. Some personal names of the 1920s-1930s sound now as a historical paradox due to their discordance, e.g. *Persostrat* (< *Pervoy Sovyetsky stratostat* "first Soviet stratostat"); *Dazdraperma*

(*Da zdravstvuyet pervoye maya* "Long live the first of May"); *Traktorina* (< *traktor* "tractor"); *Noyabrina* (< *Noyabr* "November")*. If such names were given to babies, when they grow up, they changed them, cf. *Nonna* (*Noyabrina*) *Mordyukova*, an actress. Other coined names sounded better, but did not become very popular, e.g. *Vektor* (< *Veliky Kommunism torzhestvuyet* "Great Communism triumphs"); *Vilen, Vil'* (< *V.I. Lenin*); *Marlen* (< *Marx, Lenin*); *Melor* (< *Marx, Engels, Lenin, October Revolution*); *Erlen* (< *Era Lenina* "Lenin's era"); *Rem* (< *Revolution, Engels, Marx*). These names were kept in the discourse as the names of famous people, cf. *Vil' Lipatov*, a writer; *Melor Sturua*, a journalist; *Rem Vyakhirev*, a businessman; *Erlen Vakk*, a chemist. The third group of names is still rather wide-spread, but they are not associated with the Soviet period any longer, cf. *Ninel'* (< *Lenin*, read backwards), *Vlad(i)len* (< *Vladimir Lenin*).

New names were given not only to new people, but also to new cities and towns, cf. *Leninsk-Kuznetsky*, a town in the Kemerovo Region, founded in 1925. However, renaming of existing spatial objects was even more wide-spread. In the territory of former Russian Empire there were cities with names politically incorrect for the new authorities, in particular, those named after emperors or associated with them, cf. *Ekaterinburg*, *Ekaterinoslav* (now Dnepropetrovsk), *Novonikolayevsk* (now Novosibirsk), etc. But renaming was not limited with removal of those unacceptable names. Mass renaming of places with politically neutral names was especially active in 1920s-1940s. The examples of renaming of cities and towns in honor of V. Ulyanov-Lenin and I. Stalin are given in Table 1 [3].

Table 1

Cities and towns renamed in honor of V. Ulyanov-Lenin and I. Stalin

| Name | Period | Name before Renaming | Present Name |
|-------------|------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Leningrad | 1924-1992 | Petrograd | Sankt-Peterburg (Russia) |
| Leninabad | 1936-1991 | Khudschand | Khudschand (Tadschikistan) |
| Leninakan | 1924-1991 | Gumri | Gumri (Armenia) |
| Leninogorsk | since 1955 | Novaya Pismyanka | Leninogorsk (Russia, Tatarstan) |
| Leninogorsk | 1941-2002 | Ridder | Ridder (Kazakhstan) |
| Leninsk | since 1919 | Prishib | Leninsk (Russia, Volgograd Region) |
| Leninsk | 1918-1929 | Taldom | Taldom (Russia, Moscow Region) |
| Leninsk | 1922-1991 | Asaka | Asaka (Uzbekistan) |

* The 1st of May was the Day of Workers' Solidarity.

** In November the Anniversary of Revolution was celebrated.

The end of table 1

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------|-------------|---|
| Leninsk | 1966-1992 | Baikonur | Baikonur (Kazakhstan) |
| Leninsk | 1924-1927 | Chardschu | Turkmenabad (Turkmenistan) |
| Leninsk-Kuznetsky | since 1925 | Kolchugino | Leninsk-Kuznetsky (Russia, Kemerovo Region) |
| Ulyanovsk | since 1936 | Simbirsk | Ulyanovsk (Russia) |
| Stalingrad | 1925-1961 | Tsaritsyn | Volgograd (Russia) |
| Stalinabad | 1929-1961 | Dushanbe | Dushanbe (Tadschikistan) |
| Staliniri | 1934-1961 | Tskhinval | Tskhinval (South Osetia) |
| Stalino | 1924-1961 | Yusovka | Donetsk (Ukraine) |
| Stalinogorsk | 1934-1961 | Bobriki | Novomoskovsk (Russia, Tula Region) |
| Stalinisi | 1931-1934 | Khashuri | Khashuri (Georgia) |
| Orashul-Stalin | 1950-1960 | Brasov | Brasov (Romania) |
| Stalinograd | 1953-1960 | Katowice | Katowice (Poland) |
| Stalinvaros | 1951-1961 | Dunaujvaros | Dunaujvaros (Hungary) |

As the examples above demonstrate, the name of V. Lenin was given to cities and towns located in various geographical parts of the USSR, generally, after his death in 1924. The name of I. Stalin was given while he was alive; the maximum of renaming is between 1924 and 1934. The second surge of renaming in honor of I. Stalin was in 1950s, and it concerned towns beyond the USSR, but in its closest environment, i.e. in the Socialist countries of the Eastern Europe. All locations named after I. Stalin were given back their old names, mainly in 1960-1961, after the Stalin's cult of personality was condemned. Some locations named after V. Ulyanov-Lenin keep their names up to now. Renamed cities and towns also glorified "new saints" of lower ranks, e.g. S.M. Kirov (*Kirov*, Russia); A.A. Zhdanov (*Zhdanov*, Ukraine, now Mariupol); Ya.M. Sverdlov (*Sverdlovsk*, Russia, now Ekaterinburg); K.Ye. Voroshilov (*Voroshilovgrad*, Ukraine, now Lugansk), etc.

Large-scale renaming occurred with smaller spatial objects: villages, streets and squares; The names of Communist leaders were given to educational and cultural organizations, underground railway stations, etc., cf. *У нас, коммунистов, хорошая память / На все, что творится на свете; / Напрасно убийца надеяться станет / За давностью быть не в ответе... / И сами еще мы здоровья стойкого, / И в школу идут по утрам наши дети / По улице Кирова, улице Войкова, / По улице Сакко — Ванцетти.* (*Sacco-Vancetti Street* by K. Simonov)

Consider the process of mass renaming of streets in Tyumen. In the 19th century, Tyumen streets were named on the "God or benefactor" principle. The streets named after the churches (*Arkhangelskaya, Vsekhsvyatskaya, Znamenskaya, Il'inskaya, Nikolskaya, Spasskaya, Uspenskaya*) in 1922, just after the end of the Civil War, were renamed in honor of "new saints" or new dates in history, respectively *Uritskogo, Sverdlova, Volodarskogo, 25 Oktyabrya, Lunacharskogo, Lenina, Khokhryakova*. The streets of Tyumen named in honor of famous merchants (*Voinovskaya, Podaruyevskaya, Zhernakovskaya, Trusovskaya, Serebryakovskaya, Yadryshnikovskaya*) were renamed respectively *Kirova, Semakova, Trudovaya, Perekopskaya, Sovetskaya, Olovyannikova* [4; 7].

Thus, the landmarks were replaced both on the map of the country and on the map of the town. The phenomenon of mass renaming made in a certain historical moment is the result of a myth, but it may also be a source of other myths and misunderstandings. Consider the examples. During World War 2 Leningrad was in a long blockade resulted in numerous victims. Is it correct to speak about the *Sankt-Peterburg blockade*, as this is the city's present name? No, it is not. It was the *Leningrad blockade*, but nowadays people need historical commentaries on the term. The same misunderstanding is with *Volgograd* and the *Stalingrad Battle* which occurred in its streets. The historical event fixed the city's name for the historical moment. The name of the street — *25 Oktyabrya* "October, 25" in Tyumen — is also confusing. It is often called *25 let Okyabrya* "25th anniversary of October (Revolution)" on the analogy with another street *50 let Okyabrya* "50th anniversary of October (Revolution)" located nearby. These confusions indicate that now people are unaware of the etymology of the name. The street was named after the date of October revolution (October, 25, 1917, Old Style). The fact that the anniversary of the event is celebrated not on October, 25, but on November, 7 (New Style) contributes to misunderstanding.

Mythopoetic ideas of space are in between the sentient experience and scientific cognition. The Euclidean space, for instance, is characterized by three basic attributes: extent, infinity, and homogeneity. However, perception is unaware of infinity; it is limited with abilities of sense organs. The spatial homogeneity is the property of its structure, but not of its perception; visible and touchable space is heterogeneous and some of its parts are different from others by their qualities. Some places (a temple, a palace, one's home, etc.) are especially significant for people. There people find their sacred center where they feel the highest safety. While going away from such center, people are met with hostile periphery [5]. Mythopoetic time is also divided into sacred and profane. During a ritual, people find themselves not in the chronological time but in the archetypal age, when the events happened for the first time [6], see also [7] и [8]. If we remember that ritual actions take place in special (sacred) locations, we can assert that space and time are not represented separately, but are blended in a single formation — chronotope [9], see also [10].

The chronotope of the Soviet age has a distinct central point in space (the Moscow Kremlin) and in time (1917). Marxism-Leninism, like a religious doctrine, declared the creation of the new world on the ruins of the old one. This was stated in "International", the national anthem of Soviet Russia (1918-1922), and later of the USSR (1922-1944), cf.: *Весь мир насилья мы разрушим / До основанья,*

а затем / Мы наш, мы новый мир построим — / Кто был ничем, тот станет всем! (International)

The Moscow Kremlin was considered the sacred center of the country and the origin of the world, cf.: Начинается земля, / как известно, от Кремля. / За морем, за сушею — / коммунистов слушают. / Те, кто работают, / слушают с охотой. / А буржуям этот голос / подымает дыбом волос. (V. Mayakovky). С добрым утром, милый город, / Сердце родины моей! (V. Lebedyev-Kumach) Ну как метро? Молчи, в себе таи, / Не спрашивай, как набухают почки, / И вы, часов кремлевские бои,— / Язык пространства, сжато до точки... (O. Mandelshtam)

The cultural heterogeneity of space was provided with formation of the sacred center with special symbolism. Near one of the Kremlin walls, there is the Lenin's Mausoleum; from its platform the Communist leaders welcomed their people during demonstrations and parades. This global center was multiplied in Lenin's monuments all over the country. In most cities and towns the central street is still Lenin street. The center of a town or a city was usually the area around the regional / town / district committee of the Communist Party, with its own Lenin's monument. It was the place where demonstrations and parades were held. Thus, with those rituals, the integrity of world-mapping was provided and a certain social order was maintained.

As far as periphery is concerned, the capitalist countries were considered the most hostile ones, cf. капиталистическое окружение "capitalist trapping", cf. also: И мы учились читать газеты / С двенадцати лет, с девяти, с восьми / И знали: пять шестых планеты / Капитализм, а шестая — мы. (B. Slutsky) Мир неделим на черных, смуглых, желтых, / А лишь на красных — нас, и белых — их. / На белых — тех, что, если пригладеться, / Их вид на всех материках знаком, / На белых — тех, как мы их помним с детства, / В том самом смысле. Больше ни в каком. / На белых — тех, что в Африке ль, в Европе / Мы, красные, в пороховом дыму / В последний раз прорвем на Перекопе / И сбросим в море с берега в Крыму! (K. Simonov)

Socialist countries were considered less hostile but not entirely kindred.

The inner territory of the country was also considered heterogeneous. Vast backwoods were to be conquered, cf. освоение Севера / целины "harnessing of the North / wild land"; укрощение рек "taming of rivers"; cf. also: Мы рождены, чтоб сказку сделать былью, / Преодолеть пространство и простор! / Нам разум дал стальные руки-крылья, / А вместо сердца — пламенный мотор.

The clichés of the Soviet propaganda are rich in space metaphors: строительство социализма / коммунизма "construction of socialism / communism"; горизонты коммунизма "horizons of communism"; столбовая дорога социализма "highway of socialism"; солнечные дали коммунизма "sunny distances of communism"; следовать Ленинским курсом "to follow Lenin's course"; светлый путь коммунизма "light path of communism"; гигантские шаги пятилетки "giant steps of a five years' plan", перестройка "perestroika", literally "reconstruction"; прораб перестройки "building engineer of perestroika", etc.

See also slogans: *Верной дорогой идете товарищи!* "You are going the right way, comrades!" *Все дороги ведут к социализму* "All roads lead to socialism".

The Communist Party leaders were called *выдающиеся* "outstanding" > *выдаваться*, lit. "protrude"; the towns were divided into *открытый* "open (with free entrance)" and *закрытый* "closed (entrance was allowed with special permission only)"; cf. also *выдвигать* (на партийную работу) «promote (to the Communist party positions)», *выездной* "of those who were allowed to go abroad"; *невыездной* "of those who were not allowed to go abroad"; *генеральная линия партии* "general line of the Party"; *новые рубежи коммунистического созидания* "new lines of Communist creation".

The Soviet system called itself *передовой* < *перед* "forefront, cf. also *передовик производства* "leader of production". The semantics of the forefront was represented in naming new objects. The words *прогресс* "progress", *авангард* "advance-guard", *вперед* "ahead" were widely used in naming collective farms, department stores, hotels, cinemas, newspapers, cf. *Vperyod* and *Avangard* — collective farms in the Kurgan Region [12; 74], *Progress* — a department store in Tyumen. Moreover, *Avangard* was used as a personal name for boys born in 1920-1930. [12; 21].

The words *запад* "west" and *восток* "east" acquired new connotations in the Soviet discourse. *Запад* "west" was associated with the capitalist Aliens, "countries of West Europe and America (in contrast with the countries of the socialist commonwealth)" [12; 147]. The word *восток* "east" was not so often used for marking the socialist countries (the Kin). However, it could be often met among Soviet proper names, cf. *Vostok*, the first Soviet spaceship, piloted by Yu. Gagarin. There are hotels named *Vostok* in Moscow, Tyumen, Krasnoyarsk, Voronezh, Dnepropetrovsk and many other cities of the former USSR, but there are no hotels named *Zapad*. There are hotels named *Zapadnaya* "western" in Rostov-on-Don and Tyumen, but the name means that they are located in the western part of the city; besides, they appeared after 1991.

Ancient ideas of a sacred top are represented in such Soviet clichés as *высокое доверие* "high trust", *высоты коммунизма* "heights of Communism", cf. also: *Все выше, и выше, и выше* / *Стремим мы полет наших птиц* (Air Force March by P. German)

Together with pathetic *высоты* "heights", the Soviet discourse coined such word as *вышка* "extreme (death) penalty" < *высший* "highest" [12; 84], cf.: *Всего лишь час дают на артобстрел.* / *Всего лишь час пехоте передышки. Всего лишь час до самых главных дел.* / *Кому — до ордена, ну, а кому — до "вышки"*. (Penal Battalions by V. Vysotsky)

The opposition of the old and new worlds could not miss the ideas of time. The sacred time starting the new age is October (November) of 1917, cf.: *День седьмого ноября — / Красный день календаря.* / *Погляди в свое окно: / Все на улице красно.* (November by S. Marshak). As the new calendar started from the birth of Christ, the Soviet history started anew from 1917 and the whole history started to be divided into *дореволюционный* "pre-revolutionary" and *послереволюционный* "post-revolutionary".

The poem *Kiev* by V. Mayakovsky illustrates the ideas of old and new ages. It starts rather in the cozy and home-like style, the author compares the arrival

of the lyrical hero to Kiev with the visit to his grandmother: *Лапы елок, лапки, лапушки... / Все в снегу, а теплые какие! / Будто в гости к старой, старой бабушке / я вчера приехал в Киев.* Nevertheless, the final of the poem sounds very aggressive, the lyrical hero calls to the death of his old grandmother, because she stops his way: *Здравствуй и прощай, седая бабушка! / Уходи с пути! скорее! ну-ка! / Умирай, старуха, спекулянтка, набожка. / Мы идем — ватага юных внуков!*

Седая бабушка “grey-haired granny” represents old Russia (the Russian Empire and the Kiev Rus). The poem declares that the life of old Russia with the power of owners (*спекулянтка* “profiteer”) and Russian Orthodox Church (*набожка* “worshipper”) is over and that it should clear the way for new people (*ватага юных внуков* “drove of young grandchildren”).

This poem contains another idea specific for 1920s — renunciation of family. This idea, though it did not live long and later the family was declared the cell of the Socialist society (*ячейка социалистического общества*), occurred in the Communist propaganda: parents and other ordinary mortals had to keep their distance from the atemporal ancestors, cf. *дедушка Ленин* “grandfather Lenin”; *Родина-мать* “Motherland”; *Сталин, отец народов* “Stalin, the father of peoples”; *братская семья советских народов* “brotherhood of Soviet peoples”.

The calendar of pre-revolutionary Russia acquired new marks: if earlier people planned some events *к Рождеству* “by Christmas” or *после Пасхи* “after Easter”, later they started to plan as *к майским праздникам* “by May holidays” (the 1st of May, the Day of Workers’ Solidarity) or *к ноябрю* “by November” (the 7th of November, the Anniversary of Revolution. The sacred character of certain dates was emphasized with great events timed for them — the launch of a spaceship, putting a plant into operation, some agricultural works, etc.

If space was to be conquered (*покорить*) or overcome (*преодолеть*), time was to be accelerated (*ускорить*); plans were to be fulfilled ahead of time (*до-срочно*), cf. *Время, вперед!* “Time, ahead!”; *Пятилетку — в четыре года!* “Five years’ plan — in four years!”; *Пятидневку — в четыре дня* “Five days plan — in four days!”, cf. also *ускорение < ускорить* “accelerate”, one of the M. Gorbachov’s postulates, along with *perestroika* and *glasnost*.

The Soviet metaphors of space and time combined in metaphors of motion. The word *встречный* “oncoming, head (of wind or train)” began to be used of a plan — counter-plan [12; 80]. The propaganda declared the idea to catch up and surpass the antagonists, cf. *Вашу быстроногую, знаменитую Америку / Мы догоним и перегоним.* (*Americans Surprise* by V. Mayakovsky). The author’s metaphor (V. Mayakovsky) becomes the slogan (N. Khrushchev): *Догнать и перегнать Америку!* “Catch up and surpass America!”

The results of researching the chronotope of the Communist propaganda are summarized in Table 2.

* This phrase from *Banya* by V. Mayakovsky was used by V. Katayev as the title of his novel (1932) devoted to the construction of an ironworks.

Table 2

Chronotope of the Communist Propaganda

| Kin | Alien |
|---------------------|--------------|
| We | They |
| New world | Old world |
| East | West |
| Future | Past |
| Growth, development | Decay, death |
| Progress | Reaction |
| Creator | Destructor |
| Youth | Senility |

As far as the perception of numbers is concerned, the mythopoetic thinking considers numbers not as positions in a sequence, but as sacred essences of their own classification relevance. V. Toporov assumes that “in archaic traditions, a number could be used in the situations with sacred, “cosmic” sense. Thus, a number became the image of the world (*imago mundi*) and therefore — an instrument for its periodic reconstruction in the cyclic system of development, for overcoming destructive chaotic trends” [13; 227].

The Soviet discourse is characterized with conviction of One, i.e. everything individual (e.g. *крестьяне-единоличники* “individual peasants” < *один* “one”) and glorification of everything collective, cf. *Я — последняя буква алфавита* “Я is the last letter in the alphabet” (*Я* — also “I, the pronoun, 1st person, singular”). V. Mayakovsky contrasts One (an individual) and the Communist party (a solid set): *Единица — вздор, единица — ноль, / один — даже если очень важный — / не подымет простое пятивершковое бревно, / тем более дом пятиэтажный.* (*Vladimir Il'ich Lenin* by V. Mayakovsky).

The negative symbolism of One is neutralized in the ritual formula which ascends to medieval traditions: *Один за всех, все за одного* “One for all, all for one”. The words *единство* “unity” and *единодушный* “with one mind, at one” became clichés, cf. *монолитное единство партии* “monolithic unity of the Party”, *единодушное одобрение всего советского народа* “approval of all the Soviet people at one mind”.

The word *первый* “first” acquired new positive connotations, cf. *первое лицо (предприятия)* “director (of the enterprise)”, lit. “the first person”, *первостроитель* “first builder”, *первооткрыватель* “first settler of the wild land”.

Among the first 10 numbers, Five is also characterized with positive connotations. Five is the highest mark in the Soviet school; it is also the honorary pentagon (State Emblem of Quality). *Пятилетка* < *пять* “five” + *лет* “years” is five years’ plan in the economics with central planning. During the 1st *pyatiletka* of 1928-1932, its third year was given its own name — *третий решающий* “the third crucial”. During the 9th *pyatiletka* of 1971-1975, the names were given to each of the years — *первый начинающий* “the first opening”, *второй продолжающий* “the second continuing”, *третий решающий* “the third crucial”, *четвертый определяющий* “the forth determinative” and *пятый завершающий* “the fifth closing”.

Three symbolizes power, cf. *тройка* “the commission of three people, sentencing instead of the court in 1918-1934”, lit. “triad”; *треугольник* “the bosses of an enterprise: the director, the Party boss and the Trade Union boss”, lit. “triangle” [12; 429-430].

The numbers of Party congresses and Komsomol conferences, the anniversaries of the October Revolution and the Communist leaders' jubilees became certain symbolic milestones. The name of streets fixed not only the names but the dates and anniversaries, i.e. numbers, cf. *1905 goda St.* (in honour of the Revolution of 1905) in Moscow; *50 let Oktyabrya St.* (the 50th Anniversary of October Revolution of 1917) and *50 let VLKSM St.* (the 50th Anniversary of the Communist Union of Youth) in Tyumen; *22 Part's'yezda St.* (the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party) in Omsk, Lipetsk and Donetsk.

As a result of this research of such essential concepts of world-mapping as space, time, and number, it may be concluded that the Communist propaganda appealed to the most ancient archetypes of the human mind and did it rather effectively until the major part of the society kept their faith in the Communist ideas. The innovations in giving names were used to establish new faith and to dissociate from old traditions. The chronotope of the Communist propaganda represented a multi-layer semantic code based on the system of spatial oppositions, clearly divided into sacred Kin and demonized Alien. Time was perceived in a special way, in deep interaction with space. The date of the October Revolution (1917) was declared the moment of creating the new world. Some numbers from 1 to 10 were given new semantics.

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