

A Myth Analysis of Persian Heritage Brochures with Reference to Barthes' Semiology

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Abstract

The organized tour or the "all-inclusive" plays a paradoxical role in the dynamics uniting tourism and society. Indeed, in spite of the severe criticisms evoked against it, this form of tourism nevertheless continues to spread through an advertising discourse of an idyllic image of the journey, based on mythology. What can one read about this tourist mythology? Using a corpus of Persian Heritage advertising brochures published in the 2000 to 2010, this article aims to present an analysis of myths in tourism, in the wake of the Roland Barthes' semiological approach, anthropological approach of Perrot et al. (1992). In particular, it is a matter of unveiling how the tourist organization builds a second, both parasitic and mythical system, through its discourse and its images, which belong to the language of mass culture, in order to establish a close relationship between the tourist-consumer, the brand (Persian Heritage) and the tourist destination.

Keywords: Persian Heritage, tourism mythology, programmed mythology, re-enchantment, semiology

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of organized travel, including its "all inclusive" form, has a special place in the development of tourism. Often criticized for its reductionism in meeting the other and the tourist experience (territories isolated from the local populations, meeting reduced to that of the tourist community), the "all-inclusive" contributes to diffuse the image of mass tourism and illuminates, in a particular way, today's society. As a matter of fact, while the process of changing societies towards modernity suggests a rejection of tradition and beliefs outside of their social roots, a situation characterized by "disenchantment of the world", tourism participates in a sustained way in a re-enchantment of the world by a mythological imaginary, where tourist travel acquires a status and an important role in becoming a rite oriented towards the community preservation (Cho& Kerstetter, 2004:11). This aspect shows us that, despite an active rationality imposed by science and technology, we continue to observe in modern societies the permanence

of an active imaginary formed by the survival of ancient myths (Eliade, 1965), the emergence of modern myths (Barthes, 1957, Maffessoli, 2008) and the formation of a "programmed mythology" (Perrot et al., 1992). The latter presents itself as a process of sacralization of objects and social practices in which economic and political activities in the modern and postmodern life are closely involved. If tourism, a rationalized economic activity, does not hesitate using the mythological dimension, especially in its advertising discourse, what reading can be made of this mythology? Tourism can be considered as a place of expression for a "programmed mythology".

In the present study, the myths analysis in tourism will be conducted according to Roland Barthes (1957) and Perrot's et al semiological model. Anthropological approach (1992) through their concept of "programmed mythology". The corpus of analysis consists of the Persian Heritage advertising brochures published in 2000 to 2010. We will observe, on the one hand, how the tourist organization refers to both ancient and modern myths and, on the other hand, how this organization, in order to compensate for mythological reductionism, built a system showing a close relationship between the tourist-consumer, the Persian Heritage brand and the tourist destination, already relying on a particular organizational and functional integration in the world of the marketing of the tourist product (Taylor, 2001: 201).

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Persian Heritage is an International Iranian Tourism magazine which had been published from 2000 to 2010, two times in year to introduce absorbent places in Iran for holidays organized as the opposite of industrialized society, namely “the vacation society”. Also, it provides tours for the foreign tourists to the places which had been advertised in the magazine.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The interest of discourse and myths analysis in tourism is well observed (Hughes & Allen, 2005, Dann, 1996, Tresidder, 2011) since the late 1950s Barthes (1957) inaugurates the semiological discourse analysis and myths analysis of social life, some of which are related to tourism. By *Mythologies*, Barthes (1957) presents himself as a precursor of the analysis of postmodernity by valuing the mass culture long despised during the modern period (Laing, 2011: 15). From 1950 to 1970, the analysis of tourism discourse was gradually built on an analysis of tourism mythology by investing in particular the ideological dimension. Thus tourism was identified as a reductionist ideology of the reality of the Other (Barthes, 1957), and the tourist as attracted only by the reflection of things (Mellinger, 1994) and the consumption of “pseudo-events” (Berger, 2004) to fuel his experience. The ideological criticism of capitalist society is dominant, but few studies are linked to the relationship between tourism and myth. Among these studies, Hughes & Allen (2005) proposes an anthropological analysis to the myth for the discourse of The Club Med advertisements. Pearce (1991) further anchors the semiology of tourism: On the one, hand through sociology of tourist attractions perceived as a system of signs, and on the other hand, by tourism rehabilitation, recognized as the expression of a postmodern society. This recognition of the tourist by Pearce would be reinforced in the 1990s through Urry’s (1990) analysis of social tourism, a constructed view through the signs he finds during his visit in order to decipher the meaning and to the point of accomplishing a work close to a “semiotician” (Tresidder, 2011).

An analysis more centered on the behavior of the tourist can also reveal what myths are included in this socio-cultural activity. Thus, Cho & Kerstetter (2004) shows that the tourist has a look that is not without interest, bringing out the tourist model whose ideology is the search for authenticity and truth, and thus bringing us back to the heart of the myth of meeting in relation to the traveler.

The tourist imaginary remains a topical subject insofar as the interest based on clarifying, among other things by mythological and semiological analyses and the dimension

relative to the experiences and tourists’ motivations: To study the myths (Laing and Crouch, 2011) and analyze a literary corpus so that understand the myth of a destination such as Zanzibar, used in particular by communication tourism (Couégnas, 2008). Another aspect of semiological analysis is the dimension of destination (marketing and tourism communication): What are the representations associated with myths in tourism promotion for developing countries (Echtner, 2003)?

How do tourists construct their perception of destination from a mythical imaginary (Gao et al., 2012)? How do myths influence the producers of tourism services (Salazar, 2011)? The semiotics is applied to undertake marketing, since the 1980s (Echtner, 1999), and is of interest because tourism is considered as a “clean language” (Dann, 1996) and perceived “marketing language”; also, it is a sign system that creates, codifies and communicates certain mythical tourism experiences “(Echtner, 1999: 53). Semiological analysis in tourism (promotional discourse) reveals the complexity of the relationship between the tourist and the tourist destination (Brunner et al., 2005). Finally, the concern to differentiate itself from other destinations may lead to reconstruct perception of a difficult destination, e.g. Jamaica is perceived as dangerous shown by Pratt (2005: 28-29): “The risk here is that the name of private brands such as Persian Heritage is the primary motivation of visitors before Jamaica. This reality can lead to future problems of vulnerability and decline of the destination. “

How is the individual perceived in this report to the use of the myth in tourism discourse and practice? The observations on the myth-tourism relationship show us a tourist seeking liberation through an experiment proposed by tourism promotion, but without informing us about his behavior with regard to these practices. Does it have autonomy in the face of the enchantment of tourism consumption? The vision of a totally duped consumer would be inaccurate if we refer to certain reflections in the social sciences and management (marketing). Thus, postmodern consumption brings about important transformations: The postmodern consumer no longer responds in a predictable way, he changes and adapts constantly, releasing certain paradoxes, such as the pursuit of “a double quest of old and new “which marketing must take into account (Santos, 2004: 11). This new situation emphasizes the new roles of the postmodern individual: An “active consumer”, a “co-producer of his way of life” (Santos, 2004: 10), a “non-consumer” who resists and resumes its freedom (Sansaloni, 2006: 11-13), an actor in the “ephemeral co-construction of enchantment” of tourism developed from a process of “denial of economic reality” and a “voluntary suspension of disbelief”. This latter aspect

is particularly important because it highlights a process involving in the consumer and the tourist system, a sort of symbolic contract “where customers and tourism workers co-produce the enchantment that conceals the reality of merchant exchanges and the services relationship “(Cousin and Réau, 2009: 104). Certainly, “the consumer experience is not programmable” (Carù and Cova, 2006: 111), however, some scholars believe that if the consumer is aware that the advertising message exaggerates the expression of a certain reality, he would not grasp “the overall context of blindness that the advertising system puts in place. It is this As a matter of fact, the present study attempts to analyze every day myths conveyed by Persian Heritage according to semiology.

METHODOLOGY

The present study has applied Roland Barthes (1957) and Perrot’s et al semiological model to analyze myths in tourism. Anthropological approach (1992) through their concept of “programmed mythology”. The corpus of analysis consists of the Persian Heritage advertising brochures published in the 2000 to 2010. Twenty leaflets were analyzed and coded according to the model of the study. In order to analyze the present study, a hermeneutic approach was applied, thus, the theoretical framework to the methodology should be elaborated here.

In mythologies (1957), Barthes argues that myth, which bears significance, belongs to the semiology postulated by De Saussure (1962: 33-34) in these terms: “we can therefore conceive of a science that studies the life of signs within social life, we shall call it semiology “. Language, as a system of signs, therefore belongs to semiology.

It is interesting to note that Jenkins (2003: 11), in a very enlightening article entitled “semiology of language”, posits “a principle of hierarchy” according to which “the signs of society can be fully interpreted by those of language, not reverse. Language will therefore be the interpreter of society “.

According to Barthes (1957: 227), the myth is “a second semiotic system”, in the sense that it relies first on the semiotic system of language: “The final term of a first semiological chain will become the first term or partial term of the enlarged system. Thus, the signifier of myth (or form) results from the association of the linguistic

signifier (acoustic image) and the signified (concept), that is, the sign (or word). However, as a form, the signifier of the myth “becomes meaningless and calls for a meaning that fulfills it” (Barthes, 1957: 229). The meaning of myth itself as the sign is the word. By myth, meaning becomes form, “it empties, it becomes poorer, history evaporates”, but remains “an instantaneous reserve of history” (Barthes, 1957: 229). Thus, form hides itself in the sense, nourishes it in nature and “it is this interesting game of hide and seek between meaning and form that defines myth” (Barthes, 1957: 229). In seeking the concept, the true meaning, one reaches the motive and the intention.

In language as in mythology, the basic unit carries meaning, a necessary condition of any semiological system, but with a major distinction between the two systems:

if De Saussure’s theory is based on the “arbitrariness of the sign” (Barthes, 1957: 232-233). In the case of Barthes, “the mythical meaning is never completely arbitrary, it is always partly motivated” (Barthes, 1957: 232-233).

If the system of a mythological analysis is described in Mythologies (1957), it is in Elements of Semiotics (1964b: 133) that Barthes enunciates a basic principle borrowed from linguistics, relevance, and recommendations to define the corpus (1993: 276), define relevance as “a rule of scientific description (or as a condition to which a constructed semiotic object must satisfy), according to which it is not to be taken into consideration, Among the numerous possible determinations of an object, than those which are necessary and sufficient to exhaust its definition “. On the one hand, relevance is linked to the uniqueness of the point of view, to the selection made by the semiologist: To take an interest in the meaning of objects and to consider the other determinants (psychological, sociological, and physical) without involving them in this step. On the other hand, the corpus must be “a finite collection of materials” and meet two particular requirements:

Be as broad as possible so that “its elements saturate a complete system of resemblances and differences” (Barthes, 1964b: 133);

Ideally, constitute a homogeneous corpus, that is to say, the same material substance (images, texts) and the same type of document. However, Barthes points out that reality will require the use of heterogeneous corpus.

If we subscribe to the methodological principle of Barthes (1964b), which recommends that the corpus chosen must be homogeneous on the plane of substance, on the plane of temporality, on the other hand, the synchronic element

Table 1: Myth system

The language system	Signifier + Signified	
	Sign (word)	
The mythological system	Signifier or form	Signification (myth)

which imposes “a section of history” satisfied only through the annual brochure. However, we consider it insufficient, especially since Barthes directs us towards a “varied” corpus. To be varied, the corpus must cover a few years, given the annual publication.

Persian Heritage published a program brochure twice a year (winter and summer) until 2010, and since then has published one yearly. However, in this study, we have retained the brochure published for Canada, made available to us by the Persian Heritage representation in Montreal. We will therefore look at the 2000 to 2010 in terms of temporality, focusing on the years 2001-2002, 2002-2003, 2003-2004, and the years 2005-2006, 2008-2009, 2009-2010. We have therefore observed several years over a decade, without going into a diachronic study.

In the rhetoric of the image (1964a: 40), Barthes, recognizing that linguists do not lend a “linguistic nature” to the image, questions the essence of the image: Can it produce “true sign systems”? For Jenkins (2003), the answer is clearly no. In his article, *La communication*, he argues that the significance of the image, like all artistic systems, is not based on identifiable and meaningful isolable units. Therefore, the image does not belong to the semiotic mode but to the semantic mode. Barthes (1964a: 106) himself is not far from this perspective when he writes: “The image is immediately communicative if not significant.”

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the Persian Heritage brochure, the language message is attached to the image, whether on the cover page or in the inside pages. On the cover page, the name of the firm Persian Heritage (with its symbol, the trident) is associated with a slogan. Here are a few examples: *Life and nothing else* (2001), *Being-Happy* (2002-2003-2004) and there are so many worlds to discover (2008-2009). At first, we analyzed the Persian Heritage logo, and then we would return to the slogans.

The sign “Persian Heritage” has only one referent denoted: The multinational firm. How does the mythological system transform this sign that becomes form and put it on a new, mythical meaning? Through a set of connotations, Persian Heritage is no longer a multinational firm that is part of the tourism industry; it belongs to a circle of people, a social group with common activities and leisure activities. However, do not enter who wants in a club; the latter connotes a form of privilege conveyed by bourgeois ideology.

- “Life and nothing else”: Nominal sentences, minimalist in their particular construction. This minimalism

gives them a strong expressiveness and connotes the same minimalism of a simplified life, purified of the constraints of the industrialized and urbanized society, which takes us away from the essential. The absence of a verb gives the message an impersonal and timeless character, close to a general truth. Persian Heritage allows you to get back to basics: Life.

- “Be-re”: Verb/polysemic auxiliary to the infinitive, which marks existence or the state outside of time. Linked by a hyphen with the prefix “re”, it gives a deliberately asyntactic construction, which plays both on the homophony “to be happy” and on the prefix “re” employed in the absolute. The latter connotes all possible forms of rebirth, renewal, renewal, and return to real life. Double play: Myths of happiness and rebirth.
- “There are so many worlds to discover”: A slogan that presents itself as a postulate. Unlike the previous one, he does not describe a state focused on “the tourist being” but poses the existence of the immensity of the world. It is an invitation to travel.

The image of Persian Heritage can be rendered through slogans such as “the one and only”, “the sympathy of the GO team” (Great Organizers), “the softness of the GP (Great Prices) 2007-2008), “Persian Heritage, the world is more beautiful and bigger” (Fall-Winter 2001-2002). Thus, everything is set up initially to seduce the consumer by the magic of the message in which, in a subtle balance, economic rationality (soft price) and magic vacancier (beauty of the world found again): “Holidays for the family”, “Village for families. for singles. for couples” (1994-1998).

The adjective “Great” allows us to disseminate a human image of the organization to better erase an industry. The use of the initials G.O and G.P helps to give a tone of sympathetic familiarity.

- Iran, an Eden of Abundance and Luxury
The altruistic relationship between the organization and the vacationer gives rise to slogans such as “all-inclusive happiness to share together” (2009). Persian Heritage insists on its ability to go to the Other, to put at the disposal of the tourist what it possesses, which translates in messages such as “Generosity of the meals”, “Comfort of the villages”, “Happiness to live in the heart of refinement” (2009). The tour also provides time, because, in this organization, “the world is more beautiful and the weather lasts longer” (Fall-Winter 2001-2002). Even the price is “sweet and nice”, so within reach of everyone.

Aerial photos framing the village at the foot of the mountain show the island form and its remoteness from

the urbanized places. The tour's cruise ship anchored off the island itself becomes a floating island (2007-2008). It is the reverse of urban society, whose significance is the search for a situation of isolation or insularity.

Photos showing facilities for meetings and seminars (2004-2005), or showing the staff of a company in a seminary, sitting around tables planted in the middle of the water: "After having laminated 60 pages where one does not Talk about vacation, if you thought a little about work "(2007-2008). Image of a humanized enterprise, the meaning of which is the encounter of the useful and the pleasant. At Persian Heritage, the company is invited to renew itself: "Persian Heritage Affaires is a philosophy, a state of mind, in a unique setting, to re-energize its company, regenerate its teams" (2001- 2002).

This unexpected incursion of the dimension of work into the field of holidays, perceived as a place and a time freed from everyday constraints seems a paradox. This paradox does not seem to create an ideological conflict at the level of the principles of Persian Heritage which already wrote in the early 2000s: "Who says that one cannot combine business and relaxation? At Persian Heritage, this goes without saying "(summer-autumn 2001).

It may be said that an organization like Persian Heritage can dispose the myth that constructs as it wishes. Thus, through alchemy that it has the secret, Persian Heritage goes so far as to transform work and business into relaxation.

Even after identifying signs at the level of the image, there is still "a message without code" (Barthes, 1964a). In order to access or read this message, the reader does not need to resort to cultural knowledge as to the level of the second message (coded iconic). The latter is therefore the image itself where one can perceive and name the objects. Also, the knowledge used for this message is purely perceptual and non-cultural knowledge

More than 50 years after Barthes, the image invades our everyday life and Persian Heritage delivers an unequivocal message. The linguistic message conveyed by the advertising text reveals the myth in particular and the ideology in general. It has a function of anchoring and controlling the image.

In our semiotic analysis, Persian Heritage's advertising text as a metalanguage fulfills this function of control and selection.

Also, following the analysis of Persian Heritage's advertising discourse, we identify three mythical words such as the village, the organizer and the holidays. These words are borrowed from the Club's advertising discourse.

The Myth of the Village

The village is the central element of Persian Heritage's organizational system and its vision of holidays. It is present in the brochures of the 1990s and 2000s. The village has a history; it symbolizes as one of the first human forms of complex and hierarchical organization. By the concept of village, human organizes the social and economic life on the basis of a division of the tasks between the members of the community. It is a new life that is organized, sharp with that linked to the tribal organization. The village is then the vanguard of a modern society, but the village sign of the linguistic system is monopolized by myth and used as signifier, meaning and form. The meaning refers to a history, to the past. However, this meaning is transformed by the magic of the myth into an empty form. It is filled with a new story, a new meaning. This is what happens in Persian Heritage's discourse. The meaning or the history does not disappear, it serves the form, it is submitted to it, it is the place where it "feeds in nature" (Barthes, 1957).

In 1965, in a brochure entitled "The Holiday Book," Persian Heritage described the new society to be constructed through a vision of the village: "Such a society is so little utopian that it exists. It selected the old and natural cell of the village. It is deeply insular. "The village is presented as a new concept (second term of the mythical or signified system), where a new story is established. The mythical village will reflect three characteristics: Universality, Insularity and counter-urbanity, Fugacity

Universality

The village is found almost everywhere on the planet, it is everywhere identical and, although it adapts to different needs (family, couple, single), it provides the same services. In 2009, there were 80 villages in 30 countries around the world. This universality is linked to discovery and openness to the world, as the slogan says: "There are so many people to discover."

Insularity and counter-urbanity

The village is not the natural grouping of people to adapt to an often hostile environment (isolation, economic precariousness), but the place of relaxation and opulence: "Everything is there, available. no queue waiting periods and long journeys "(2007-2008). What persists in the historic village is only isolation and serenity. The villages of the Club are distinguished by their insularity, a displayed and developed aspect. They are "Villages deliciously nestled in the most beautiful places in the world" (2008); In Mexico, "Playa Blanca is a village nestled in a peaceful cove"; or "Sonora Bay is set in a spectacular site" (spring, 1995-1996). Persian Heritageshows the village as an island-like entity (insularity), but also as a remote place of the city and the reverse of urban society. Thus, the village of Cancun

Yucatan (Mexico) is described as “a fabulous site, far from the hubbub of the city” (2008).

The fugacity

The Club presents this social structure for holidays as natural. Now, is the village, a socio-economic place, really what it is today? The village lives in a globalized economy (job losses, demographic decline) and the devastating effects of an unbalanced natural environment (deforestation, mountain landslide).

What is the relationship between the village and the local population? The village of Persian Heritage seems to deny the local population and the rest of the country where it is located. Countries and populations are reduced to the aspects of exoticism and adventure. For example, there will be a former pirates’ retreat, an island like the Bahamas preserved as in the days of Christopher Columbus, an island like Cuba, where one will go “in the footsteps of Hemingway” (1998). The visitor is made to feel the possibility of contact with the culture of the country visited, but the vision of the Club has shown from the beginning of its creation that “. of course, most of the Club remains in the privileged area of the villages” (Med, 1965). Even if one proposes the discovery of the other, it would be a simulacrum of encounter.

If the myth of the holidays is the essential element of the mythological system, the myth of the organizer ensures a human dimension and a rational organization.

The Myth of Great Organizer

The organizer is a significant element of the Persian Heritage holiday ideology. The organizing sign refers in particular to a real and historical dimension of the modern world. He is the character with whom we feel certain ambivalence: Attraction with regard to the art and the experience which it deploys in order to solve often complex situations on the economic and social plane; also, repulsion displays a cold attitude and makes suitable decisions for the company, by sacrificing its members. Pritchard (2001) considered the relationship between management and society as fundamental while showing that society is controlled by organizations that need the best management.

In the mythical process, this reality is replaced by another: The organizer becomes a “gentle organizer” (G.O) serving a “gentile member” (G.M), the vacationer. This famous G.O, “it is the soul of the village. G.Os are not employees in the traditional sense. However, they are true professionals “(2007-2008) who also control our time.” This new signified reflects the proximity of the organization to its members.

The human dimension of the organizer is put forward, masking an attempt to anthropomorphize the organization. This organization is successful to keep contact with its members: It has nice organizers and nice prices. The mythical mission of the organization was presented by Persian Heritage from the beginning, in 1965.

This organization is granted a power which goes beyond its economic and organizational aspect, a quasi-divine power. With Be-re (pronounced “Being happy”), the signified refers to the ability of an economic organization to restore a state of fullness: “Persian Heritage is reborn every day and day after day rediscovers that one has a body, five senses and a soul “(autumn-winter 2000-2001). This organization makes it possible to reach “all the happiness of the world” (2009), because it is “rector of happiness since 1950” (spring-summer 2009). The ideologically profound significance is that of the power of Persian Heritage (economic, financial and cultural), able to satisfy all types of desires, in short to become the reflection of society but inverted (in the Marxian sense of the term): This is how one recognizes the myth.

Today, the Persian Heritage organization takes the form of an institution capable of transforming the social field to the point of creating new values. Why not a new company of holidays? For Persian Heritage, there is no doubt. However, what holiday is it?

The Myth of Holidays

The word holiday reactivates an imaginary made of change and rupture. He refers to the suspension of school and work time for the benefit of family and leisure time. The holiday sign refers to freedom of action, the desire to do at last what one wants, and even to do nothing. In the mythical process meaning “transforms”, it takes another form in the process. The part of hazards and freedom in the holidays is thus extirpated. With the Club everything becomes easy, normal and obvious. It is enough to talk to him to see the holidays otherwise, i.e. a dream of holiday or “real holidays” (2007-2008). The Club is then the place where one discovers “the paradise of family holidays” (2008) and the one where “we constantly reinvent the alchemy of happiness” (2009). This new (mythical) meaning refers to the idea that holidays, as imagined, require organizational effectiveness that only Persian Heritage can offer. Hence, do the Club holidays bring the freedom-loving individual back to the daily routine he tried to escape? Could this be the “false liberation” proposed by the tourist system and denounced by Mellinger (1994)?

Like the Blue Guide, “the landscape only in the form of picturesque” (Barthes, 1957: 121), where “everything is

fragmented, evaluated, labeled” (Berger, 2004: 9), Persian Heritage, through its advertisements, also pursues a reductionist process of culture to exoticism. He became the incarnation of a new society.

The messages and images of Persian Heritage reveal a powerful mythology inviting the holidaymaker to satisfy a wide range of human desires, and only during a stay in a holiday village.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the myth in tourism inspired by the Barthesian methodology (1957) allowed to “unveiling”, according to Calvet (2007: 77), the hidden face of an economic and social activity. Let us recall the two determinations underlying Barthes’ approach: To “make an ideological criticism based on the language of mass culture and to account for the mythification that transforms the petty-bourgeois culture into a universal nature”. The analysis has highlighted the “programmed mythology” of Persian Heritage driven by discourse and image. Three myths have been identified forming a system that reflects an ideal society offered to the tourist. It is the myth of the village placed at the heart of mythological formations while symbolizing this idealized society found again. This myth is associated with two other myths of the organizer and the holidays. The myth of the organizer carries the dynamics of a modern society (rationality of the economic organization) while making it perceive as different, accessible and human (as “nice organizer”) and liberator for the tourist. This liberation is also carried by the myth of true holidays, a vector of true happiness, of real life. In modern and postmodern society, the individual adheres to represent the reverse part of a “programmed mythology” through these beliefs and myths. Thus, rationality and irrationality can coexist naturally in modern and postmodern societies where the myth is well anchored while emerging from “new Mythologies” (Garcin, 2007).

Should we continue to pursue the myth, exclude it from scientific concerns or simply accept it? A certain reflection of epistemological and ideological type is necessary. The work of the intellectual, here the mythologist, resides in a true hunt for the myth according to a particular mode, a “paradoxical” mode (Henderson, 2001: 18) as accomplished by Barthes. However, epistemological vigilance seems to be accompanied by ideological vigilance. However, the intellectual’s commitment to an ideological struggle for meaning remains hampered by two major difficulties: His vulnerability to the increasingly dominant ideological and mythical system and the inevitable production of an ideological discourse to fight against other ideology.

Even if the great mythological studies may arouse suspicion and skepticism (Dubuisson, 2008: 326), we continue to observe that myth remains a topical subject and scientific interest.

Thus, following Barthes (1971: 1185), which already showed the need to go beyond ideological denunciation and to move towards a new semiology, extended to western society, Joly (2004: 6) believes that mythological analysis can be extended to the world (globalization). Moreover, Maffessoli (2008: 11) shows that we have gone from a mythological criticism of society to a stronger social anchoring of ancient myths and the prominent figures of everyday life that have become themselves mythical. According to specialists in social psychology and social representations, Barthes’ contribution remains fundamental: Not only “it provides a theoretical bridge between myth in its contemporary version and collective representation” (Jodelet, 2010: 75).), But “it remains great relevance for the study of social representations, directing attention to the” naturalizing “dimension of representative constructions and the conditions that may lead to their decline or disappearance” (Kalampalikis, 2010: 38).

Is it a kind of social acceptance of the presence and existence of the dimension of non-rationality in postmodern societies? There is indeed a social anchoring of the myth, and its analysis, even if it raises epistemological problems, cannot be excluded from the field of scientific knowledge (Sternberg 1997: 12). Tourism as an object and field of scientific research is also at the heart of these issues. While considering the myth as part of its economic activity, tourism continues to build its scientific legitimacy (Stafford, 1998, Kadri, 2008). Semiotic analysis is one element of this legitimacy, and despite the recognition of its scientific relevance, its development has remained less important than other approaches to tourism (Tresidder, 2011). Semiological study could take its place more in marketing: By going beyond the analysis of the tourist discourse centered on the tourist, analyzing the destination as an “integrated project” (Kadri et al., 2011) and taking an interest in system constructed by the tourist organization and its promotional discourse. This would go beyond the mere mythological analysis of the discourse that could ultimately reduce the reality of tourism, a reality that nevertheless contributes to a re-enchantment of the world.

In the context of postmodernity, the presence of myths participates well in this re-enchantment of the world, as Maffessoli seems to think (2008: 14): “the classical mythology, like postmodern mythology, illuminates the path, individual or collective that is all human existence. The myth is oxymoron: This is its sombre light that serves

as a lantern. We are far from the period when ideological criticism was elevated to the rank of doxa.

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