MYTH-MAKING BY ADVERTISING MEANS: SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL AND HISTORICAL-PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOURSES

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The article examines the phenomenon of myth-making by means of advertising in the philosophical discourse of the twentieth century, because advertising is a component of many social processes, it affects the formation of thoughts and experiences of contemporaries, popularizing and disseminating mythologemes. Advertising appears as a phenomenon that is a transhistorical way of spiritual and practical development of human world, social reality. The study analyzes the works of philosophers: Walter Benjamin ("Baudelaire", ""One-Way Street""), Johan Huizinga ("Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element of Culture", "Autumn of the Middle Ages"), Marshall McLuhan ("The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of Industrial Man", "Understanding Media: the Extensions of Man"), Roland Barthes ("Mythologies", "Image Rhetoric", "Advertising Message"), Umberto Eco ("Lack of Structure"). It is shown that W. Benjamin studied advertising in the plane of urban narrative (mythization of advertising media in the symbolic production and exchange of society). In the philosophical legacy of J. Huizinga, advertising was considered in terms of meeting the non-utilitarian needs of consumers. The specifics of the advertising message are analyzed on the basis of the works of M. McLuhan, who pointed to the departure from the rational perception of information through the actualization of the audiovisual method of obtaining it, which resulted from the establishment of television in the media space. According to the works of R. Barthes, advertising is considered in two forms: as a message and an image. It is shown that the advertising message, which is a denotative-connotative motive of social activity (i.e. perceiving the literal meaning as "buy!" aims to motivate and is characterized by ambiguity of content). Visual advertising code as an object of philosophical reflections of U. Eco, in contrast to the verbal image is characterized by ambiguity of interpretation and therefore is a space for myth-making. Distinguishing three levels in visual communication (iconic, iconographic and trope level), it should be noted that each of them, even if it is an elementary image of the advertised product, has a place to interpret what is seen through the established cultural and historical codes.

Key words: *Symbolic Production and Exchange, Philosophy of Advertising, Modern Myth, Mythization, Remythization, Myth-Making, Media Space, Simulacrum in Advertising*.

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МІФОТВОРЕННЯ ЗАСОБАМИ РЕКЛАМИ: СОЦІАЛЬНО-ФІЛОСОФСЬКИЙ ТА ІСТОРИКО-ФІЛОСОФСЬКИЙ ДИСКУРСИ

М. В. Слюсар

У статті досліджено явище міфотворення засобами реклами у філософському дискурсі XX століття, адже реклама є складовою багатьох соціальних процесів, вона впливає на формування думки та переживань сучасників, популяризуючи і поширюючи міфологеми. Реклама постає як феномен, який є трансісторичним способом духовно-практичного освоєння людиною світу, соціальної реальності. У дослідженні проаналізовано праці філософів: Вальтера Беньяміна ("Бодлер", "Вулиця з одностороннім рухом"), Йогана Хейзинги ("Homo Ludens. Досвід визначення ігрового елемента культури", "Осінь Середньовіччя", Ролана Барта ("Міфології", "Риторика образу", "Рекламне повідомлення"), Умберто Еко ("Відсутність структури"). Показано, що В. Бельямін досліджував рекламу у площині урбаністичного наративу (міфізація рекламними засобами при символічному виробництві та обміні суспільства). У філософській спадщині Й. Гейзинги реклама розглядалася з точки зору задоволення неутилітарних потреб споживачів. Специфіку рекламного повідомлення проаналізовано на основі праць М. Маклюена, який вказав на відхід від раціонального сприйняття інформації через актуалізацію аудіовізуального способу її отримання, що спричинилося в результаті утвердження місця телебачення в медіапросторі. За працями Р. Барта розглянуто рекламу в двох формах: як повідомлення та зображення. Показано, що рекламне повідомлення, яке є денотативно-конотативною спонукою соціальної активності (тобто сприймаючи буквальний зміст як «купуйте!», націлює споживача одразу сприймати і друге – означуване значення з акцентом на знаково-образну систему рекламної комунікації), виступає інструментом міфізації (воно має на меті спонукання і характеризується двозначністю змісту). Візуальний рекламний код як об'єкт філософських розмислів У. Еко, на відміну від словесного образу характеризується неоднозначністю трактування і тому є простором для міфотворчості. Виокремлюючи у візуальній комунікації три рівні (іконічний, іконографічний та рівень тропів), треба вказати, що на кожному з них, навіть якщо це елементарне зображення рекламованого товару, є місце для інтерпретації побаченого через усталені культурно-історичні коди.

Ключові слова: *символічний виробництво та обмін, філософія реклами, новітній міф, міфізація, реміфізація, міфотворчість, медіапростір, симулякр у рекламі.*

Introduction of the issue. In today's globalized world there are significant changes in media reality, which are characterized by changes in the nature and forms of advertising myth-making as a component of social activity. Advertising as a form of social communication cannot exist without myth-making. It reflects the basic social transformations, on the one hand, and on the other – it is a factor in many social processes.

The assertion of the information society is accompanied by the emergence of the latest media and relevant gadgets, which, on the one hand, are able to transmit messages without local binding of the recipient, and on the other – form an individual as a carrier of "tablet consciousness", which focuses primarily not on reliable, properly verified knowledge, but on mythologemes. The latter are understood as elements of purposeful mythization in the symbolic production and exchange of modern society. Mythologemes as a concrete-figurative, symbolic way of constructing reality touch on various aspects of human life. One of the means of production and dissemination of mythologemes is advertising and its myth-making. It becomes one of the factors in the formation of specific standards of attitude to social reality and social behavior of the individual.

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Among a number of its functional purposes, myth-making is becoming increasingly important. The increase in information flows reveals the inefficiency of focusing exclusively on the information component in the advertising message. The need to use other components that would affect the emotional and sensory sphere, contributed to the separation of a particular advertising message from the flow of all others, essentially creating the latest myth and selling not so much goods as their simulacra.

The study of this problem goes beyond the socio-economic plane or communicative, because such transformations significantly change the nature of the relationship "man - world", "individual - society" and requires interdisciplinary thinking based on philosophical discourse (especially social philosophy, philosophy of culture, philosophical anthropology) and the sciences of social communication (advertising, journalism). In this context, scientific research requires the study in the history of philosophical thought of the twentieth century, the genesis of the idea of myth-making through advertising.

The aim is to analyze the phenomena of myth-making and mythization in the symbolic production and exchange of modern society based on the consideration of philosophical discourses of advertising in the twentieth century. The study was based on comparative-historical and systemic methods, the principle of pluralism and interdisciplinary approach in addressing the philosophical achievements of famous modern philosophers. Sources for the study of myth-making by means of advertising as a process, and modern advertising myth in particular and the social phenomenon in general, in the latest philosophical explorations are the works of Walter Benjamin (*Baudelaire, One-Way Street*), Johann Huizinga (*Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element of Culture, Autumn of the Middle Ages*), Roland Barthes (*Mythologies, Rhetoric of the image, Advertising message*), Umberto Eco *(Lack of structure*).

Current state of the issue. The study of the heritage of these thinkers was carried out by Olexandr Polysayev, who clarified theoretical approaches to the mythological tradition and modern "status" of myth based on the understanding of the latter as a metahistorical form of spiritual and practical development of the world [17]. A number of studies on the problems of understanding the social role of myth in the philosophy of the twentieth century, so Anatoly Pritchin and Boris Teremenko attempted a systematic analysis of myth and advertising as cultural phenomena [18]; Svetlana Kutsepal analyzed the structural-semiotic interpretation of the political myth by Roland Barthes; Olexandra Legeza revealed her views on the essence of the myth in general [16]; Vadym Slyusar and Vitaliy Koval studied the problem of advertising myth-making in the context of its functioning in the urban space in the subject field of social philosophy [12]. However, comprehensive studies of this issue in the domestic social philosophy has not been carried out.

The outline of unresolved issues brought up in the article. The processes of remythization, i.e. the assertion of myth as one of the manifestations of modern socio-cultural life, but not as an appeal to it as a certain historical type of consciousness, but through its acquisition of new connotations, was a reaction to the radical rationalization of social life in modern and postmodern times. However, today in philosophical knowledge and the humanities there is no unambiguity in the interpretation of the content of the concepts of myth-making, mythization, mythologizing, and the interpretation of

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the specifics of these phenomena in modern society.

Results and discussion. Modern mythology, according to O. Polysayev, is a phenomenon that, while maintaining its existential multidimensionality, focus on politics and art, science, religion and public administration, is a transhistorical way of spiritual and practical development of the world [17: 295]. Until the nineteenth century, myth was studied mainly in the folklore plane, where the emphasis was on the collection and classification of mythological themes, as well as on comparative characteristics, on establishing formal structural relationships of its components, its functional purpose as a component of social life.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, mythology, in the apt words of A. Prytchyn and B. Teremenko, passed from the category of "evidence of the past", as it was treated in previous times, to "accomplice" of what is happening [18: 149]. Now we can talk about the mythization of public consciousness, political culture, which is largely established through the total influence of the media.

In philosophical and artistic discourses, the German thinker Walter Benjamin attempted to comprehend the worldview of advertising as a social phenomenon. Although his philosophical ideas are not systemic in nature, they have had a significant impact on the social philosophy of neo-Marxism, as well as on media philosophy, philosophy of language, philosophy of history. He studied advertising in the context of the urban narrative of wandering the "flannel" through the labyrinths of the city. His hero, looking at shop windows, abandoned courtyards, advertising posters and new buildings, always goes against the purposeful, utilitarian movement of the crowd [14: 20]. In the work "One-way street" W. Benjamin draws attention to the placement and, accordingly, the peculiarity of the perception of the text under the influence of advertising. The letter, which has its autonomous existence in the printed book, has passed the path of placement from the vertical method of placement in ancient times to the horizontal (book printing), – he is convinced. And street advertising returns back to the vertical (along with the film establish the dictatorship of the vertical), giving it the power of brutal heteronomy of economic chaos [4: 28].

The peculiarity of advertising as a tool of "experiencing the city" is its ability to bring things closer, because it as a "mercantile look at the heart of things" destroys the free space of contemplation and brings us things at a dangerous distance. Due to the clear advertising visualization, a stable idea is formed that any thing that can be mastered by the consumer-resident of the city, is at a distance of one stop by public transport [12: 152]. On the one hand, according to W. Benjamin, the subject environment of man takes the face of goods, and on the other – it is advertising designed to hide the marketable nature of things. The process of counteracting this described by him can be understood as mythization – remythization in advertising. After all, W. Benjamin emphasizes that the deceptive whiteness of the commodity world is opposed by its distorted representation in the allegory: "The product tries to look himself in the face" [6, p. 148]. Moreover, a special stage in the development of photography, the German philosopher considered the emergence of "creative" photography, which seeks not to convey the image, but by changing the lighting, to establish the principle that "the world is beautiful" [5: 383]. It is advertising and the associations created by advertising mythologemes that are the expressions of "creative" photography, which allowed true reality to slip into the realm of the

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functional, to establish itself in surreal images in this sphere.

The problems of advertising as a socio-cultural phenomenon in the philosophy of the twentieth century were touched upon by Johan Huizinga. In the concept of the game nature of culture, analyzing such its characteristics as "modernity", he finds that it not only has not lost its game components, but to some extent they have been transformed into organized games with a system of rules. And given the strengthening of communication links, the so-called commercialization of the competition comes to the fore. Trade competition, which was underdeveloped until the twentieth century, is intensified precisely through advertising as propaganda, according to J. Huizinga. The tool for this is the desire to set a record, then the game element replaces the utilitarian. This commercial game is already carried out according to established internal rules, gaining the meaning of the game, and differs from reality. For example, today we can even state the fact of financial support by commercial enterprises of sports teams, and keeping on the balance of their own teams, which are already a tool of advertising [8: 199-200]. That is, this commercial game becomes mediated: the effect of advertising is enhanced by replication, aimed at meeting the non-utilitarian needs of the mass audience. Advertising also influences contemporary art, orienting it to the market, actualizing the need to involve technical means [8: 202]. In the work "Autumn of the Middle Ages" J. Huizinga draws attention to the tradition of political advertising, which existed in the era of chivalry. It can be traced in the proclamation of the Crusades (the Dutch philosopher cites the example of Philip the Good), in which the main thing is not so much the campaign itself, as preparation for it, the formation of public opinion. This is a kind of compilation of chivalrous whim

and political advertising [9: 84]. And also a kind of socio-political advertising was a challenge to a duel. Huizinga notes that such challenges were traditional, often used as an element of chivalric culture, but, paradoxically, almost never occurred. Citing examples of numerous challenges to knightly duels, he draws attention to detailed descriptions in the chronicles of the training process, but little information about the fights themselves, as they were often canceled. The challenge is, on the one hand, a kind of tribute to chivalrous traditions, and on the other – a reaction to public expectations.

The problem of advertising and myth-making by means of advertising occupied a special place in the work of the Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan. Declaring that "media is a message", he already in his early works drew attention to the specifics of the advertising message. Already in the work "The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of Industrial Man" M. McLuhan shows that advertising is part of the socio-cultural life (especially folklore) of modern society. Interesting, in our opinion, is the described principle of its distribution – through the formation of a perceiving person's constant feeling of incompleteness, lack of specific objects (both tangible and intangible) with, accordingly, exaggerating the role of others. The latter are a tool of advertising, which, in his opinion, can lead to deviations (for example, to sexual because of the emphasis in advertising on images of erotic content, depicting women's legs in tights, standing on a pedestal, ignoring the whole body) [10: 98-101]. The spread of advertising through channels that allow the simultaneous application of audiovisual impressions, leads to the fact that the recipient loses the ability to think rationally and critically perceive information.

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And in the work *Understanding the media* he generally concludes that in advertising messages, which are now icons, i.e. the only compressed images of a complex type, there is a departure from the consumer image of the product to the image creation process, where the consumer becomes a creator [11: 303]. Brief advertising images come to the fore, they are to some extent due to this form opposed to the printed texts of articles in magazines and newspapers. But the effectiveness of advertising is primarily due to the high level of belief, which is based on the all-consuming repetition, which acts as a rapid attack on the subconscious sphere of the spiritual life of the recipient.

Advertising messages are intended as subliminal pills for the subconscious in order to exercise a hypnotic spell, especially on sociologists [11: 308]. It is obvious that, without separately analyzing the mythization of advertising space, M. McLuhan pointed to the departure from the rational perception of information through the actualization of the audiovisual method of obtaining it, which resulted from the assertion of the place of television in the media space. The "group advertising icon", according to McLuhan, replaces writing culture, one's own unique point of view, a critical way of thinking, and instead offers a standardized way of life that is unique to everyone and no one else. These, in fact, are the features of mythization in modern society.

Advertising as a tool of myth-making was one of the first in philosophical explorations considered by Roland Barthes. He considered this problem in the context of the author's concept of myth and mythologizing. Unlike his predecessors (Claude Levi-Strauss, Bronislaw Malinowski, James George Fraser, Carl Gustav Jung, etc.), who saw the myth primarily as a rudiment of archaic cultures that does not have a significant impact on modern social life,

Barthes defines the myth as a kind of marker *Qualitative characteristics of modern bourgeois society*, and mythologizing – an attributive feature of any society [15: 110]. Myth, according to R. Barthes, is a kind of semiological system in which the myth itself arises as a deformation of the relationship "concept - meaning", i.e. distorts the original meaning of a concept, which acquires new interpretations, losing its significance as a cultural and historical value. Then, notes O. Legeza, for "R. Barthes myth is what allows people who perceive the myth to move away from its socio-cultural significance, and perceive it as a natural state of affairs, as what should really be, and as a certain idea that they themselves must embody" [16: 57]. Based on this and the idea that the mythical word is a message, he argues that the myth in modern society can be photography, cinema, reporting, sports, entertainment, and advertising. They, as the material carrier of the mythical message, are only material for myth-making or mythization, in the process of which they acquire the function of signification in the semiological system.

Significant for the study of the problem of myth-making advertising means is the consideration of advertising by R. Barthes in two planes: as a message and as an image. Declaring that any advertisement is a message (containing the sender, recipient and transmission channel), he analyzes it from an immanent position in relation to the object of study, i.e., limited to the message as such, emphasizing its semantic structure. Each advertising message in its original, denotative form contains a plan of expression and a plan of content, which together convey the literal content of the message. At the same time, each advertisement is essentially reduced to the proclamation of the priority of a particular product. This actualizes the secondary

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(connotative in relation to the primary) message, which with the use of rhetorical figures proclaims the highest qualities of the advertised product. The advertising message itself is denotative-connotative, i.e. perceiving the literal meaning ("buy!"), The consumer immediately perceives the second – the denoted meaning with an emphasis on the sign-like system of advertising communication. Thus, there is a mythization, which consists in the motivation and ambiguity of the content. In the work *Myth Today* R. Barthes notes: "Myth has an imperative, buttonholing character: stemming from an historical concept, directly springing from contingency (a Latin class, a threatened Empire), it is I whom it has come to seek. It is turned towards me, I am subjected to its intentional force, it summons me to receive its expansive ambiguity" [1: 124]. The above-mentioned linguistic dualism, in the words of the French philosopher, "returns the dream to the human community" [13: 413]. This expresses the myth-making nature of the advertising message, which through connotative ambiguity by linguistic means connects the consumer with the wider "world", which contains experiences of ancient images, deep and unobvious experiences, age-old wisdom that explains the relationship between man and nature, her understanding of things, that is, any advertising, naming a product, tells about something else, it gets a qualitatively different meaning, and the process of using it turns into a spiritual experience [13: 415]. The analysis of advertising in the figurative plane by R. Barthes is based on the statement that the advertising image itself, unlike many other images, is carried out so that the consumer could not help reading them, they are characterized by expressiveness.

The advertising image carries an iconic message, which either requires some knowledge of various aspects of socio-cultural life, or basic knowledge of the depicted objects. This allowed the philosopher to classify them as "symbolic" (connotative) and "literal" (denotative). The second, of course, aims to prevent the mythization of advertising space. But the paradox is that the most effective tool for transmitting an advertising message through a denotative image – photography – actually creates the illusion of the natural presence of things in it [2: 44]. Modern development of technology allows man-made meanings to accept the "mask of meanings" given by nature itself, affirming in the media space the myth of the "naturalness" of the photographic image.

For example, R. Barthes on the example of advertising detergents shows how there is a purposeful mythization of the latter in order to hide some of their properties (but not their denial), creating associations with certain traditional images. Thus, he shows in the essay *Soap-Powders and Detergents*, in the advertising of washing powder *Omo* emphasizes its features such as depth and foam. The first through the introduction of a new form of measurement for linen gives it special characteristics, and the second – turns it into a sign of a certain spirituality, because "the spirit is believed to be able to extract everything from nothing to expand the endless surface of consequences for a small number: they remove wrinkles, pain, burns, etc.)" [3: 36]. (This is done in order to hide the abrasive function of this detergent, which appears as a deep and at the same time airy, able to correct the molecular structure of the fabric without invading it). According to R. Barthes, the consumer cannot read advertising images adequately and completely, because they are characterized by imagination.

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The idea of semiotic analysis of the advertising message was continued by Umberto Eco. Thus, in the work "Lack of structure" he examines advertising communication in order to identify it iconographic, rhetorical, stylistic codes. Violation of communicative norms leads to a change in rhetorical expectations, and, consequently, to an emphasis on the advertising message itself through a change in the belief system. This occurs under the condition of the predominance of the emotional function of the advertising message (it, like other functions – referential, phatic, metalinguistic, aesthetic, imperative – is identical to the function of any message in general) [7, p. 168]. The aesthetic value of the rhetorical image and its emotional perception come to the fore in the advertising message. Emphasis is placed not on the arguments for choosing to buy a particular product or service, but on mythologized images, which may not correspond to the essence of the advertised product. Visual advertising code, according to U. Eco, in contrast to the verbal is characterized by ambiguity of interpretation, i.e. it is a space for myth-making.

Distinguishing three levels of visual communication (iconic, iconographic and trope level), he points out that in each of them, even if it is an elementary image of the advertised product, there is room for interpretation of what is seen, for the application of established socio-cultural codes. And at the level of tropes and enthymemes there is a combination of visual communication with verbal, which is a space for the introduction of advertising mythologies, because the image of any iconograms causes the connotation of tropes, which, in turn, provide specific links. The ambiguity of the image implies the need to fix it for the appropriate interpretation of verbal means through established methods of argumentation. Also U. Eco, analyzing the advertising message of soap *Camay*, shows that the fundamental connotations form chains of statements, which are tools of myth-making. In particular, it demonstrates a chain: high-ranking people should be imitated – if those in the higher spheres do so, then why should you act differently – it would be nice to understand why they succeed – respected people show us how to behave [7: 172]. Or another mythology produced through ideological attitudes: success in life is a common success in the affairs of women and men, and works of art have their own commercial value, possession of them is a sign of success, and a successful person is worthy of envy and imitation.

Conclusions and prospects for further research. Advertising and mythization of advertising media is one of the means of production and dissemination of mythologemes, it becomes one of the factors in the formation of specific standards of thinking and behavior of the individual in modern society. Focusing solely on the information message in the advertisement loses its effectiveness, so we decided to investigate this problem based on the works of Walter Benjamin, Johann Huizinga, Marshall McLuhan, Roland Barthes, Umberto Eco.

It was found that W. Benjamin studied advertising in the context of urban narrative, the author drew attention to the placement and peculiarities of the text perception under the influence of advertising. (Benjamin emphasizes that the deceptive whitewashing of the commodity world is opposed by its distorted view).

We understood this process as mythization- remythization by advertising means. It is pointed out that J. Huizinga emphasized that the effect of advertising aimed at meeting the non-utilitarian needs of the mass audience is amplified by replication. Advertising also affects art, focusing it on the market, highlighting the need to use technical

means. We note that M. McLuhan showed that advertising is part of the socio-cultural life of modern society. (According to him, the spread of advertising through channels that use the audiovisual impression of the masses, leads to the fact that the consumer loses the ability to think rationally. In the work "Understanding the media", he concludes that advertising messages move away from the consumer image of the product image creation).

Thus, the features of mythization are: the replacement of a "group icon of advertising" a unique point of view on an event or cultural heritage, the displacement of critical thinking in assessing the events of modern life and products of symbolic society, propaganda of a standardized way of life and predictable behavior (myth as a kind of marker of "qualitative characteristics of modern bourgeois society", when the myth is photography, cinema, reporting, entertainment, and advertising). According to R. Barthes, mythization in advertising stimulates the development of imagination, fantasy in contemporaries. While U. Eco analyzes the phenomenon of advertising through the discovery of iconographic, rhetorical, stylistic codes (visual advertising code is characterized by ambiguity of interpretation), and fundamental connotations form chains of statements, which, in fact, are tools of modern myth-making. In our opinion, the prospect for further research is the study of the phenomenon of myth-making in the philosophical heritage of poststructuralists and postmodernists.

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