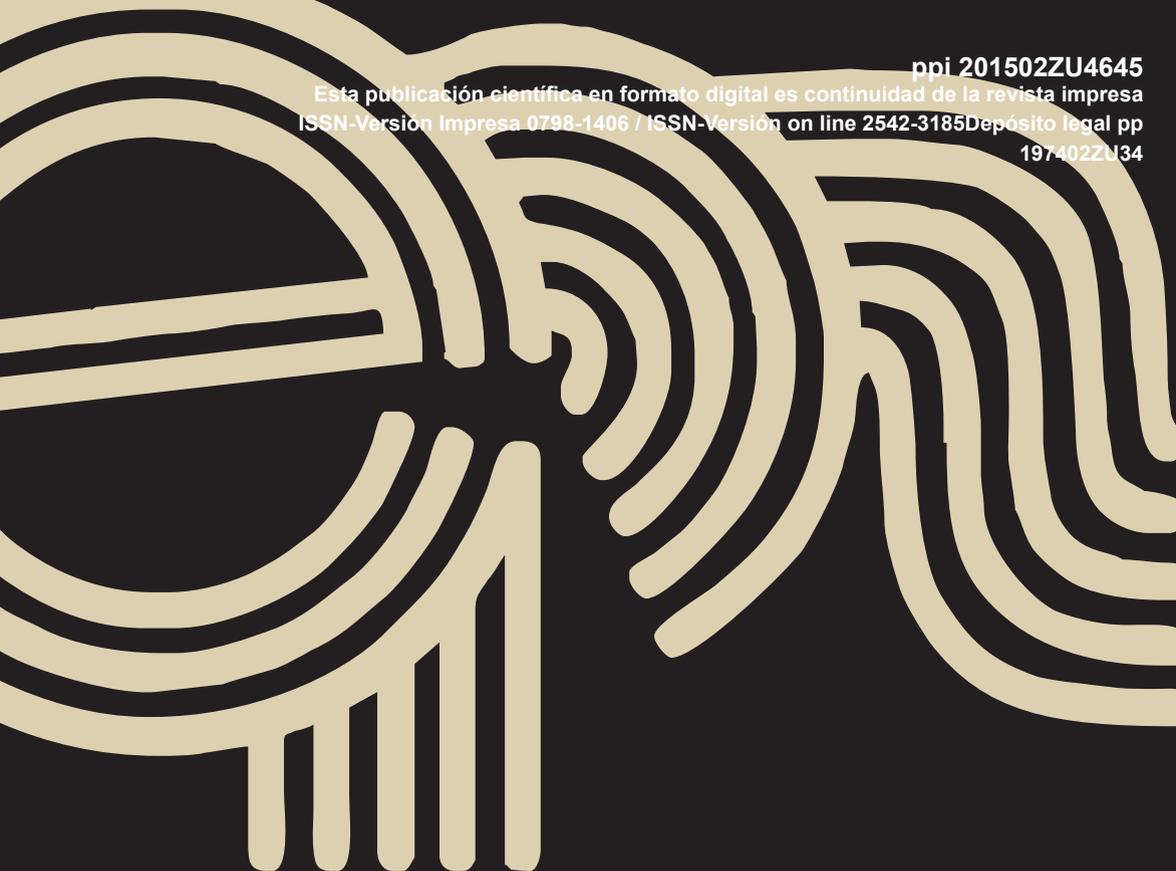


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# CUESTIONES POLÍTICAS

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# Influence of Religious Myth on National and Political Formation Across Cultures

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## Abstract

As a research objective, the article presents a classification of myths and scientific orientations of world mythology, as a condition of possibility to explain the national and political formation of cultures, for which the historical and cognitive method was used. Myths are part of the primitive religious imaginary. The political sphere, in which the principles and technologies of management of society are developed, is the one most in need of producing effective means of influence, so that its results have an intense load of mythogenesis. In the space of the political most of the characteristics of myth are the perception of accessibility and openness of empathy, regardless of a person's age, gender, nationality. Everything allows to conclude that, the history of the search for the underlying essence of the universe also goes back to the distant past of science. For example, some philosophers of ancient India and China, Egypt and Babylon, ancient Central Asia and Greece, among others, believed that some substance or certain element lay at the base of the universe.

**Keywords:** national formation; mythology; politics and culture; political imaginaries; historical method.

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## Influencia del mito religioso en la formación nacional y política en todas las culturas

### Resumen

A modo de objetivo de investigación, el artículo presenta una clasificación de los mitos y las orientaciones científicas de la mitología mundial, como condición de posibilidad para explicar la formación nacional y política de las culturas, para lo cual se hizo uso del método histórico y cognitivo. Los mitos forman parte del imaginario religioso primitivo. La esfera política, en la que se desarrollan los principios y tecnologías de gestión de la sociedad, es la más necesitada de producir medios eficaces de influencia, de modo que sus resultados tienen una intensa carga de mitogénesis. En el espacio de lo político la mayoría de las características del mito son la percepción de la accesibilidad y la apertura de la empatía, independientemente de la edad de una persona, el género, la nacionalidad. Todo permite concluir que, la historia de la búsqueda de la esencia subyacente del universo también se remonta al pasado lejano de la ciencia. Por ejemplo, algunos filósofos de la antigua India y China, Egipto y Babilonia, la antigua Asia Central y Grecia, entre otras, creían que alguna sustancia o cierto elemento yacía en la base del universo.

**Palabras clave:** formación nacional; mitología; política y cultura; imaginarios políticos; método histórico.

### Introduction

Myths and legends, which symbolize the ancient religious beliefs and traditions of the world peoples play an important role in the study of ancient religious ideas, their essence, and philosophical interpretations. After all, myths, which are a set of ancient people's primitive ideas about the world of existence, include beliefs about the creation of the universe, the creation of man, plants and animals, the appearance of heavenly bodies, the causes and essence of natural phenomena, legendary heroes, gods and goddesses.

Religious sources may be verbal, pictorial, or otherwise in religious beliefs based on myths, narratives. Mainly, ancient myths and legends are found orally. This caused diversity. For instance, a narrative belonging to one religious faith may come across differently in a particular region than in another. It indicates differences in the interpretation of religious narratives and myths spread orally. There are several versions of the "Flood" narrative, which is widespread among the peoples of the world, depending on the region. However, the similarity of content means that the basis of these narrations was once the same.

Myths are part of primitive religious imagination. The scientists of antiquity were the people, who made the first attempts to understand the essence of mythological images and their scientific interpretation.

As a result of ethnic and religious diversity in the regions of the world, which have become a permanent contact area of different nations and peoples, as well as religious views and beliefs, such a situation has arisen that, despite the disappearance of many primitive religions, it has been preserved in the traditions of the peoples living in a certain region. To study of the history of religions in different countries is extremely significant for a complete understanding of the culture and history of the peoples of the world today, as well as their religious and national origin based on their diversity and unity at the same time (Karimova *et al.*, 2022).

Studying religion means studying humanity. The reason is that religion is closely connected with the spiritual world of a person and is always with him in his social life. The science of religious studies provides the ability to draw correct scientific conclusions about religion, its various forms, doctrines, directions, and sects, to form a correct worldview capable of reasonable analysis of religious and secular relations, to think objectively about religion, that is, to have conscious personal opinions about concrete events and phenomena based on the knowledge they have acquired.

When communicating with different peoples of the world, it is very important to know their outlook, customs and values. In order to know them, it is necessary to study the ancient and current religious beliefs of these peoples. If we look at the history of mankind, we can notice that the important activities related to his daily life, including birth, foraging, hunting, ensuring his safety, burial, etc., have been associated with various religious thoughts and beliefs.

According to the information about the life of a primitive man, the religious ideas that originated in his life were manifested in primitive religious forms such as totemism, animism, fetishism, shamanism, and sorcery.

The complex of imagination and beliefs of primitive man, their difficulties, problems and achievements in real life are reflected in oral creation. This thing remained in the minds of people and caused the creation of various legends (Alimova, 2020).

In religious beliefs based on myths and legends, religious sources may be verbal, pictorial, or in a different way. Basically, ancient myths and legends are found orally. This caused variety. For example, a narrative within one religious faith may come across differently in one area than in another. It indicates that there are differences in the interpretation of orally spread religious narratives and myths. For example, there are several versions of the "Flood" narrative, which is one of the common narratives for the peoples

of the world, depending on the regions where they are spread. It shows that once the basis of these narratives was one (Alimova, 2019a).

## **1. Literature Review**

Myth (Greek *mithos* - myth, narrative, legend) is a set of primitive ideas of ancient people about the universe, the creation of the universe, the creation of man, plants and animals, the appearance of heavenly bodies, the causes and essence of natural phenomena, legendary heroes, gods and included religious views about the gods.

Mythology – 1) a coherent system of mythological imaginations created by a certain people, a set of myths. For example, Greek mythology, Indian mythology, Uzbek mythology; 2) a science that studies myths, mythology. The first attempts to understand the essence of mythological images and their scientific interpretation were made by scientists of antiquity.

Myths are part of primitive religious imagination. In the book “Encyclopedia of Pagan Gods. Old Slavic Myths” written by Bychkov (2001), the following information was provided: “Thousands of years ago, various tribes, who made a living by hunting, fishing and gathering wild plants, lived in the Eurasian region. Human life was closely connected with nature, its forces, success in hunting. A successful hunt means the well-being of the tribe (there is food to eat), on the contrary, its unluckiness, catching the prey less than the target, and the hunters falling ill cause the crisis and famine of the tribe. In such cases, people helped each other, lived for the benefit of the community, based on mutual solidarity.

In some cases, people find their prey - animals. Hunting a wild bull or a bear was one of the most difficult tasks, and by eating their meat, people believed in acquiring the strength and dexterity of that animal. In this regard, the bull, the wolf and the bear were in special “respect”. Over time, the bear in particular received more attention and was finally transformed into a deity of wealth and prosperity.

In the ancient Slavs, the bear was embodied as the deity of Veles - the bear-God. In the Volga region, Bear graves, amulets made of claws, and metal bear paws were found. According to the imagination of the population, bear paws protected the herd from wild animals. Therefore, they hung it in stables and fortresses. Man worshiped the forces of nature - sun, moon, wind, water, stones. He divided the forces of nature into the forces of good and evil.

## 2. Methods

In the process of research, general scientific methods of cognition were used, including the principle of objectivity, consistency. The disclosure of the topic was also carried out from the standpoint of such methods as: historical, comparative, logical research methods.

The source base of the study includes published articles on the issue, as well as examples of the myths of different nations. On the basis of myths, the formation of national, political and cultural identity could be traced.

## 3. Results

Mythology was a way of understanding the universe for ancient peoples. Myths were used to explain why the sun rose and set, why people got sick or died, why summer alternated with winter. The section “Religion and Mythology” of Anatoly Gorelov’s book called “History of World Religions” (2006) states that myths are the main part of widespread religions. It links Robertson Smith’s process from mythology to religion as follows: ritual---myth---belief.

There are following types of myths:

1. myths about the beginning (myths about the creation of the universe and the emergence of life on earth);
2. heavenly myths (myths about the appearance of heavenly bodies and natural phenomena);
3. anthropogenic myths (myths about legendary wrestlers with unusual characteristics, for example, Heracles, Gilgamesh, etc.);
4. cult myths (related to certain religious beliefs, for example, myths about the worship of fertility, water, plants, fire);
5. ethnogenetic myths (myths related to the origin of clans and tribes; for example, the emergence of 92 Uzbek clans, the myth about Alankuva in Mongols);
6. calendar myths (myths related to the calculation of the year, month, day, for example, myths related to the calculation of “ayamajuz”, “chilla”, ninety);
7. eschatological myths (the myth of the end of the world, for example, the end of time).

The researchers have also studied various myths and legends about the creation of the world among the peoples of the world. They include

“Creation stories around the World” (2000), “Classic Chinese myths” (Walls and Walls, 1984: 55), “The Masks God: Oriental Mythology” (Campbell, 1962), “The Babylonian Genesis” (Heidel, 1952) and other books.

Most creation myths are similar. It is well-known that the sacred sources of world religions also provide information about the creation of the universe. In particular, in the “Genesis” part of the Bible, it is explained that the creation of the world took place in 6 days. It is said in it that God first created light (day 1), sky and water (day 2), land and plants (day 3), heavenly bodies (day 4), animals (day 5), man (day 6). In some sources, there is a difference in the sequence.

Other peoples have different ideas about the creation of the universe. According to the Oceania peoples, Heaven is finally separated from his wife, Earth. However, love between them remained. The heavy sigh of the earth, its breath reaches the sky over the valleys and forests. People call it fog. The sky, in its turn, shed tears for its beloved. People call these tears dew.

In the ancient Hebrew language, “Adam” is a word man, “earth” is derived from “Adam”, referring to creation from the soil. In the Babylonians, the god Bel cut off his head, and the rest of the gods created people from his blood and clay. Khnum, the father of Egyptian gods, created people on the potter’s wheel.

Prometheus also created people from dust. Among the inhabitants of the Pacific Islands, it was believed that man came into the world from a mixture of soil and the blood of various animals. They believed that a person’s character depended on which animal blood flowed in his veins. For example, whoever had rat blood was a thief, snake blood was a coward, rooster blood was brave (Alimova, 2022).

After several periods, especially the bear, a physically strong animal, received more attention and was finally transformed into a god of wealth and prosperity. As time passed, religious views also changed. The content of religious legends and the practice of religious beliefs have also altered.

In the Philippine Islands, there is a legend that God created the sea, land and plants, and then man. People were distinguished by the color of their skin, good or bad humanity, depending on what kind of soil they were made of. The Maydu Indians of California believe that the first man was created by a being, who descended from the sky on a rope made of bird feathers. According to the legend, the body of that Being was shining like the sun, and his face was hidden from view. This narrative helps ufologists to enrich their imagination about extraterrestrials (Alimova, 2019b).

There was a classic Chinese narrative about the creation of the world in the book “Creation stories around the world”. This narration is called “Pan Gu and Nu Wa” and it was expressed as follows: Long ago, when the Sky and

the Earth were one, the whole Universe was surrounded by an egg-shaped cloud. The whole universe revolved inside this egg. The root of the rotation was Pan Gu. He developed and slept in the egg for 18 thousand years. After all, one day he woke up and cracked open the egg to realize existence. Light, pure things went to Heaven and the Sky, and impure things fell down to Earth.

Then Pan Gu worried that the Throne and the Earth would be reunited and decided to separate them, holding the sky above his head and the Earth under his feet. Pan Gu held them for another 18 thousand years without changing, and during these years he also grew. When the sky was 30,000 miles away from the earth, he realized that it was all stable, and soon he died. Earth gained special importance after his death. His hands and feet became mountains, his blood became rivers, and his sweat became rain and dew.

His voice turned to thunder and his breath to wind. His hair became grass and his veins became roads. His teeth and bones turned into minerals and rocks. From his flesh came dust. Above, his left eye became the Sun and his right eye became the moon. In this way, Pan Gu created the world as it is today (Creation stories around the World, 2000).

The creation of the Universe in the myth spread in Mesopotamia is described as follows: "There was no name for either the sky or the Earth in the past. Aspu, the goddess of fresh water, Tiamat, the goddess of the oceans, and Mummu, the goddess of radiance emanating from them, were still united together.

There were not even mountains rising to the surface of the water, pastures, reeds-swamps. Gods began to be born from Song, Aspu and Tiamat. This continued until the birth of the god of rivers, Ea. Tiamat gathered an army of dragons and creatures and made the god Kingu its leader. Marduk, son of Ea, controlled the gods in order to win this battle. When the other gods agreed, Marduk was given a royal robe and a scepter. Marduk fought with Kingu's army of creatures.

In battle, Marduk overcame Tiamat and threw half of her body into the sky and created the heavens, while roaming the heavens he created the stars and the moon. From the second part of Tiamat's body, Marduk created the earth above the pure water of Aspu. From his eyes, he created tigers. As he roamed the earth, he created seeds and herbs, pastures and fields, rain and seeds, cows and sheep, forests and orchards. Then Marduk brought Kingu, Tiamat's commander, to the gods and executed him. Nintu created a human being from his blood, earth and elements of other gods (Creation stories around the World, 2000).

The history of the search for the underlying essence of the universe also goes back to the distant past of science. To illustrate, some philosophers in

ancient India and China, in Egypt and Babylon, in ancient Central Asia and Greece believed that there is some substance or certain element at the base of the universe. Some of them considered this element to be fire, others to be water or air, and some to be earth. According to some philosophical teachings, it is said that fire, air, water and earth were the basis of the Universe, and all things were formed from the combination of these four elements (Turaeva, 2017).

Religious conceptions of the world interpret complex issues related to its future, creation, or past, mainly as a product of divine power. In religion, the world is divided into “this world” – “transitory world” and “the other world” – “eternal world”. It is based on the idea that in return for someone’s hardships in this world, a person will enjoy the pleasures of another world.

Science has its own way of thinking about the universe. It tries to prove complex issues related to the Universe based on logical arguments from practical experiences. Events that deviate from existing scientific logic are not explained. For this reason, some miraculous phenomena are not included in the object of scientific research (Abdullaeva, 2019).

The visions of the world are one of the visions of the peoples of the world for all times. These visions are sometimes religious and sometimes scientific. Some people, based on their knowledge and experience, interpreted the visions of the universe differently from religious views. In human history, there were also periods when religious views prevailed, scientific hypotheses and scientific results were negatively treated (Ernazarov, 2014; 2018).

Such periods took place in medieval Europe, and the church dominated every aspect of life. In those times, like other issues, the creation of the universe was approached from a religious point of view. It is known from historical sources that the Church declared those who opposed its beliefs as “heretics” and burned them at the stake (Alidzhanova, 2019).

According to Islamic sources, Allah the Almighty created the Earth and sky from Sunday to Friday, that is, in six days. If the Jews say that they rested on the seventh day, that is, on Saturday, Christians claim that they finished Saturday from Monday and rested on Sunday. According to the creed of Islam, such claims are wrong. After all, Allah the Almighty never gets tired and He does not need rest, sleep, or pleasure. He was able to create everything he created in six days in an instant, but he wanted to create in six days to be an example to his servants, to encourage patience, and with other wisdom unknown to humans.

According to the teachings of Islam, the creation of the Universe was by God and all things in existence praise God. The wisdom of God’s creation of the Universe is known only to God, but scholars say that the wisdom of this is to introduce oneself to the things that God has created. The fact that God created the world in six days, the throne, the chair, and the arrangement

of all affairs is in the will of God are among the things that muslims must believe (Isakdjanov, 2019). In this regard, it is said in “Aqida al-Nasafi”: “The world with all its objects is a joint phenomenon.

That is, it was created at some time. So, the universe consists of complex and uncomplicated independent bodies and bodies that are not independent, but are dependent on other bodies... The creator of the universe is Allah.” God created mankind only to worship God and provided all the blessings on earth for mankind. God created Adam in Paradise, then he came down to Earth and saw a lot. God sent prophets to people and called them to guidance. The movement of bodies in the universe, the movement of the Sun, the Moon and the planet Earth, night and day, water and air - the movement and process of all this is by the will of God. Allah has made all these signs and signs to reveal Himself.

The scientific directions of world mythology can be classified as follows:

- “Anthropological school” built on the basis of the achievements of English comparative ethnography (E. Taylor, E. Lang, G. Spencer, J. Fraser).
- The “ritualist school” of Cambridge mythologists (D. Harrison, F. M. Cornford, A. B. Cook, G. Murry) who studied myths and rituals in their interrelationship.
- “Social school” of French ethnologists, who studied the spiritual foundations of primitive culture (E. Durkheim, L. Levi-Bruhl).
- “Symbolist school” (E. Kassier, W. Wundt, K. G. Jung-Germany), which highlighted the uniqueness of mythological thinking as an intellectual phenomenon.
- “Structural school”, which analyzed myths from different points of view in the works of representatives (K. Lévi-Strauss-France).
- Uzbek mythology was researched by G’ Akramov, B. Sarimsakov, T. Haydarov, T. Rahmonov (myth and epic), M. Joraev, Sh. Turdimov (series of images and genetic basis of Uzbek mythology), Sh. Shomusarov (comparative analysis of Uzbek and Arab mythology).

Mirca Eliade (1996) gives the following information on the issue of sacrifice to the gods: “Agreeing to sacrifice according to one’s own will is called Mariah. He could live a full life among people, build a family, have children. A few days before the sacrifice, he was deified. Others bowed to him and danced around him. Then they asked for salvation from the Earth and prayed: “O Goddess (Mother-Earth), we offer you this sacrifice. Give us abundant harvest, good seasons, good health!”.

Then they turned to the victim and said: “We did not take you by force, we bought you. Now we offer you as a sacrifice, and there is no sin against us”. Finally, Meriah was drugged with opium, made unconscious and strangled. Then they cut his body into pieces and spread them around the villages. Those parts were buried in the fields. The rest of the body was cremated and its powder was scattered on the ground.”

In the study of primitive religions, epics are of great importance. Epos (Greek epos — word, story) – 1) a type of fiction (along with lyrics and drama); 2) a work reflecting the heroic past of the nation. Initially, the epic meant the works in which the struggle of the heroes against the evil forces and people with corrupt intentions in the world was described (Turdiyeva, 2020). The interpretation and description of the events in the ancient epics was based on the people’s worldview and beliefs of that time.

As the oldest examples of the epic, “Gilgamesh”, then “Ramayana” and “Mahabharata” of Indians, “Iliad” and “Odyssey” of Homer, “Alpomish”, “Goroghli” of Uzbeks, “Manas” of Kyrgyz, “Qoblandi botir” of Kazakhs, “Koroghli” of Azerbaijanis, “Song about the Nibelungs” of the German, “Song about Cid” of the Spanish also belong to folk heroic epics. The legends of “To’maris” and “Shirok”, “Zarina and Striangiya”, and “Zariadr and Odatida” about the people’s heroes, who fought heroically against the Iranian invaders who invaded Turan, are also examples of folk heroic epics (Mukhamedov and Turambetov, 2021).

## **Conclusions**

The epic appeared in the early stages of the development of society, not because of the change of class relations, but when the national spirit of a particular ethnic group awakened and began to imagine itself as an ethnic unit living by inviolable moral and spiritual rules, and not just a group of people.

In the study of primitive religions and mythology, ancient religious beliefs and epics of African and American peoples, “Religions and mythology of the peoples of the Ancient East, Ancient Greek and Roman religions: pantheon of gods, mythology, peculiarities of religious beliefs of Slavic peoples, Germano-Scandinavian religions and mythology, religions and legends of the peoples of ancient India, aspects of the religious system of ancient China and Japan, ancient religions and mythology of the peoples of Central Asia and other such topics can be studied.

In these topics, information is given about the first religious ideas, ancient legends and narratives, their general description, classifications, the history of their creation, their essence, and their specific aspects. The systematic

description of primitive religions and mythology greatly contributes to the humanization of the consciousness of the growing generation, helps to have a new attitude to the monuments and achievements of world culture, increases the independence of young people's worldview, increases their spiritual level and interests.

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