

**PERAET 2021****International Scientific Conference «PERISHABLE AND ETERNAL: Mythologies and Social Technologies of Digital Civilization-2021»****MYTHOLOGIZATION OF TIME AND SPACE OF POWER IN THE SPANISH LANGUAGE**

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**Abstract**

The article presents the results of the original analysis of the mythological component of the semiotics of time and space of power in the Spanish “thinking world”. A significant attention is given to the analysis of lexemes-referents “Poder” from Latin and the identification of mythologized elements as a probable source of the mythological elements of the space-time of power in the Spanish speech. It is concluded that power in the semantic fields of the Spanish language is an individual opportunity-power fixed in a certain instrumental set, which is realized in space-time, and, therefore, declares the presence of power itself. Moreover, the power in Spanish is extremely far from the Latin standards of the semantic triangle, which claimed to be a cosmic transcendence of the game of Chaos and Space: “auctoritas” – “potestas” – “imperium”. The mythologized elements of Spanish power most clearly manifest themselves not in the verb “Poder”, but in the noun “Potestad” connecting the symbolism “strength” + “monarch” and giving the result – “authority”, influence, which in turn produces numerous mythologemes that objectify in space eidos of the time of power. But the noun (concept, notion, lexeme) “Potestad” is practically not a subject of serious academic discourse and is rapidly disappearing from everyday speech, which deprives the myths about the power of their articulation and clear binding to certain linguistic symbols.

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## 1. Introduction

Traditionally, the topic “Myth and Power” is disclosed through the analysis of one or another collection of textually arranged myths, identification of mythological elements in one or another ideological construct, selection of cultural achievements articulating myths about power or myths artificially created by the power itself (which is most often understood as political forces or state institutions). But all this useful work and the very possibility of such work is based on the ability of the on-looker or actors of myth making to perceive, understand, enjoy or resist the eidos of power. The latter is recorded in the ontological sense not in the products of high artistic creativity, but primarily in the basic constants or dynamic variables of the language of the bearer of one or another eidos of power. It is the so-called natural language. It seems quite obvious that the symbols of the hero’s sexual power, as a proof of his total power over the world in the language of the Sumerians, within the framework of the Sumerian linguistic picture of life, look quite appropriate, but do not at all touch the “thinking world” (Lotman, 2019), for example, when a Russian-speaking observer reads in Russian. In this linguo-ontology, the key parameter, in our opinion, is the problem of Time-Space of power (or, using the Bakhtian term, “chronotope of power”). The myth manifests its influence in the language in many ways and marking the special status of time and space, and in particular the Time-Space of power, seems to be the most mythologized part of the linguo-ontology of the philosophy of power. To prove this point of view, let us take one of the most worldwide spread languages, which has a rich tradition and is very strongly associated through Latin with the classical European heritage. It is the Spanish language. It rarely becomes a subject of study within the philosophy of power and is rarely analyzed in a wide academic discussion related to the theory of myth. However, the Spanish language is a unique example of the transformation of the classical linguistic heritage of high antiquity. Perhaps, only the New Greek and Italian languages can boast of the same purity. This means that the Spanish language can serve as a certain litmus test in the development of the European mythological representations influence on power. In this article, we propose a possible research trajectory for such a study.

## 2. Problem Statement

The problem of power in the Spanish language is not only an academic issue, it also has a distinct political character associated with the opinion of the Spanish-speaking community about the need to get out of the “voces perdias and voces de poder” (lost voices and voices of power) in academic practice, when the Spanish language is suppressed and marginalized by English language (Salinas, 2017). Probably, as part of the prevention of such an imbalance, a large-scale pan-European research project “Autoridad y Poder” in the era of the Golden Age was carried out with the involvement of a wide variety of experts from different thematic areas from theater to economics (Insua, 2018). But we did not manage to find an important question in this extensive program: how is the time and space of power actually perceived in the Spanish semantics of power? Another question is on how the myth finds its way out in the Spanish power. These questions drop out even from specialized texts devoted exclusively to Spanish power as a manipulation technique, which seems to be based on games with time and mythologemes that occupy the subject of ideology (Rojas, 2020). It is not a secret that power as a strictly rational

phenomenon, totally intellectual in the style of the new European triumph of the enlightened mind and scientific style of thinking, is absent as a phenomenon. Fucoldianism has already widely demonstrated the work of mythologemes, myths, and mythical states as a norm, basis and horizon of thinking of an individual falling into the space of power realities (one can find the same ideas in Jung, Fromm and Lebbon, but from the point of view of mass psychoses). We will venture to put forward a research hypothesis that the myth in any ideal constructions of power is ontology of power and, in a certain sense, the power's epistemological limit. First of all, it concerns the specific alignment of the space-time of power. To confirm this hypothesis, let us turn, in the style of the analytical school, to the linguistic arguments taken from the Spanish language and, partially, from Latin.

### 3. Research Questions

- 1) What are the Spanish referents of the Russian lexeme “Власть” (“Vlast/Power” and the English “Power”)?
- 2) What is the historical and etymological path of the Spanish referent of power?
- 3) Is there a strong connection between the Latin mythological meanings of power and modern Spanish power?
- 4) What is the structure of the semantics of the Spanish power?
- 5) What is the specificity of the mythological elements of the space-time of the Spanish power?
- 6) Are the mythological elements of Spanish power a constant or a dynamic structure capable of change in the present and in the future?

### 4. Purpose of the Study

Reveal mythological elements and constructions in the linguo-ontology of the Spanish eidos of power.

### 5. Research Methods

The disclosure of the problem is possible if a number of methods is used. Firstly, it is the method of rich description according to K. Geertz, naturally, within the framework of its adaptation to the research topic, as, for example, this method was adapted for the needs of international relations (identity analysis (Seo, 2021) or, for example, medicine (analysis of friction points (Loblay et al., 2021)). Secondly, it is the method of historical and etymological research to identify the dynamics of changes in mythological structures from Latin to modern Spanish. And thirdly, we apply Yu. Lotman's methodological concept of the existence of thinking worlds, which we understand as the key point of any linguistic and ontological research in the field of mythology.

In Spanish, *power* is not a noun, but a verb – “Poder”. It is indicated in the dictionary as:

*... 1) strength, might, vigor; 2) power (incl. state) ... 3) military power; 4) (more often pl) powers; power of attorney (document); 5) ability; ~ adquisitivo purchasing power; 6) strength, influence, weight ... II 1. vt 1) to have ability, to be able to do smth.; 2) Arg., Par., Ur. be able to handle*

(*smb.*), *be stronger (than smb.)*; 3) *Guat., Gond., M. to irritate, to infuriate...* (Bol'shoy ispanko-russkiy slovar', 1999, p. 603)

Moreover, in the second case, "Poder" is interpreted by philologists as a lexeme identical to English "can/may" (Resende & Araujo-Adriano, 2019, pp. 935-936).

However, the vocabulary form is not entirely accurate, at least for the purposes of our work (perhaps, it was the result of using some outdated form of publication, but, unfortunately, it was not possible to find a newer version).

In fact, the Spaniards master power as: "*lafacultad, habilidad, autorizaci3nparallear a cabounadeterminadaacci3n*" (ability, skill, permission to carry out this activity - translated by O. Shevchenko) (Porto & Merino, 2008). At the same time, according to the authoritative "la Real Academia Espa1ola (RAE)", such familiar definitions of power as "government", "ownership of something", etc. belong to the second block of interpretations of the concept of "Poder" (Diccionario de la lengua espa1ola 2014). This requires turning consistently both to the historical and etymological analysis and to a rich description, bearing in mind that power is always an intellectual and emotional abstractness that requires its formalization in the sphere of the thinking world.

## 6. Findings

The verb "Poder" goes back to "posere" from Vulgar Latin (the correct Latin is "posse"), where it denotes the possibility of anything, and this makes it related to the English version of power, partly with Spanish and a little bit with German.

Russian philologists, considering the issue of the etymology of the verb, give us a key to disclosing the problem, unambiguously stating that "*poder*" has similarities to the Latin referent; actually, it does originate from Vulgar Latin, but it was not borrowed directly and went a long way of popular use and spontaneous formation in the midst of socio-economic and political cataclysms on the Iberian Peninsula (Ivanova, 2014).

In 1348, "for the first time in medieval Spanish linguoculture, the concept of "power" (poder) is in the spotlight, and its origin and distribution in society are substantiated" (Ivanova, 2014, p. 9). The basis for theoretical study is the thesis that: "From a linguistic point of view, poder belongs to the class of abstract category names and is an element of the "invisible spiritual intelligible world"" (Ivanova, 2014, p. 110). Already with the introduction of this term into legal and literary circulation in the XIV century, the polysemy of the term was obvious, attempts were made to explain it with the help of Latin, and a detailed picture of specific examples of its action was offered (Ivanova, 2014). In the XVIIth century, the concept acquires a narrow legal meaning: "the right that one person transfers to another, so that they do something instead of him" (Ivanova, 2014, p. 132). But for the XIV century (and earlier) "the idea of "strength and possibility" lies at the heart of all the senses of the lexeme poder (Ivanova, 2014, p. 136).

The very first mentioning of the verb dates back to the XIIth century: "Phonetic transformations in folk Latin on the Iberian Peninsula led to the emergence of the infinitive form of the modal verb poder, which was transferred to modern Spanish. For the first time in the infinitive form poder was recorded in "Song of my Side" (c. 1140), in the same monument the substantivized form poder appears for the first

time” (Ivanova, 2014, p. 138). The Latin origins go back to the hoary Indo-European antiquity. Unlike the ancestor of Russian power – *vlast* (which very quickly acquired the character of possession, ownership of land and became materially explicit, unconditionally given, the one that is), Latin had somewhat different roots in the formation of “its own” power, different from *ulad*, the ancestor of the Old Russian *vlast*: “The infinitive of the Latin verb *posse* is formed with the addition of the adjective *pot-is* (powerful) with the verb *esse* (to be)” (Ivanova, 2014, p. 138).

However, Latin did not treat power as simply as it seems at first glance: the term *imperium* ... denotes one of the types of power (*potestas*), namely the supreme administrative power, including such an element as commanding the troops, together with judicial power (Tsypin, 2015, para. 5). The *imperium* had a strict spatial and temporal localization: the name of the state - *imperium Romanum* - was used during the time of the classical republic, long before Caesar and Augustus, as a kind of synonym for the expression *orbis terrarum*, in Greek *oecumene* - the universe (Tsypin, 2015). *Imperium* in the meaning of power dropped out of the Romano-Germanic languages, although there are certain intellectual traditions to return its existence, at least in the field of socio-political research (Varandzh, 2017).

The key term for power is *potestas*. That is, the initiative of the authorities as a force capable of imposing their will (Fédier, 2008). But this is just an opportunity *per se* that needs to be legalized, that is, a situation is needed when people will be able to accept this power. For such cases, the term *auctoritas* was used. In other words, the *potestas* belongs to the people, but the *auctoritas* belongs to the Senate. The term, which acts as a mirror image of *potestas*, is the above discussed word with an amazing fate - *imperium*. The root of the word is *impero*: *prepare everything, take action, arrange for something to be done; enforce it* (Tsypin, 2015, para 7). At the same time, within the framework of the implementation of the meanings of the *imperium*, you can take any steps, even outside the framework of law and customs, if the survival of the state and society requires it.

It is evident that in the first case, the *potestas-auctoritas* connection has a pronounced sacred coloring (moreover, some researchers directly assert the transcendental origins of at least *auctoritas* going back to Greek metaphysics and cosmological theses of a clearly mythological nature (Sa, 2019). It is the guarantor of order, and the order tending to infinity. After all, the Roman Senate was often called the guarantor of eternity. The meanings of this connection are metaphysical, they are transcendental for a person outside of them with no Rome. The second face of power - *imperium* is a concrete, practical objectification of the material aspects of power in the form of government, supremacy, domination and so on (see the above review). It exists as a consequence and thanks to the first link it can never and under no circumstances replace it. It can ignore, distort, but it cannot replace and become self-sufficient.

Moreover, we consider it important to note that splitting semantic fields in Latin is done not just for philological “fun”, it has an important socio-philosophical aspect, which helps, among other things, to consider the problem of myth in political philosophy. For example, based on the split concepts of *potentia* and *potestas*, an idea is formed about a certain dark, abstract multitude and about active nation, acquiring sovereign features (Tretyak, 2020). Moreover, the multitude is clearly close to the abstract model of chaos (the primary force of existence), which is opposed by the model of the demiurgical cosmos. For the first one, time is dissolved in the mass of the social body, and for the second it is a construct that shapes the existence of a social order. Or the split of *potentia* and *potestas* form a point of joy (within the framework

of feminist political anthropology) (Moss et al., 2018), which has all the signs of the excitement of mystery, as here-joy, concentrating all the lines of the power of possibility and the power of realization grouped in one body, one sense of life and power over the world. However, all these research intuitions coming from a dead language - Latin should be correlated with a natural, living language. And the closest thing to Latin is Spanish. Therefore, it is extremely important to analyze the work of the Latin semantic fields in their historical development.

But we are back to modern Spanish. In it, in addition to *poder* (the most common form is several orders of magnitude superior to all others - 8346 usages in the XXth century according to the Spanish Language Corps) there is the closest rival with a Latin root - *potestad* - 97 mentions (Ivanova, 2014) "... from *potestas* the noun *potestad* (power, law, authority) appeared, from *potentia* - *potencia* (strength, power, might), from *potentatus* - *potentado* (prince, monarch, ruler)" (Ivanova, 2014, p. 140).

The Spanish language allows speaking about more or less power, for example: "the size of power can be increased. For example, an emperor can gain the greatest power if he loves his people and the people love him in return" (Ivanova, 2014, p. 147), moreover, power is always a consensus between various branches of the supreme power, at least in the Spanish medieval mentality: "The highest power needs recognition from the military leaders in order to restrain those who do not want to obey the emperor" (Ivanova, 2014, p. 148).

## 7. Conclusion

The general conclusion: the Spanish power is something instrumental, it can be killed or increased, divided in principle and unable to concentrate entirely and completely at one point (with the exception of God, and even then with some reservations). A lot depends on the skill of using power, the presence of power per se still does not give anything. We would venture to assert that the Spanish "*Poder*"/"*Potestad*" is the most temporal and substantive of all the languages of the Romano-Germanic group (probably this fact allows us to intuitively identify the violent space of power and fluidity, the plasticity of the time of power, linking them with governance tools even within the framework of literary works (Areco, 2020). This is an individual opportunity-might fixed in a certain instrumental set, which is realized in space-time, and, therefore, declares the presence of power itself. This is manifested as much as possible in the noun "*Potestad*" connecting the symbolism power + monarch and giving the result - authority, influence. It is "*Potestad*" that maximally objectifies the myth of the time of power, creating a completely material, tangible texture of the fabric of the time of power at the metaphysical point of unity of the Power of the Monarch. But the paradox is that the noun "*Potestad*" is rapidly disappearing from everyday, colloquial speech and is not the subject of serious academic discourse. As a result, the subject of power, mythologized in space, still exists in the Spanish thinking world as intuition, but it no longer has its own articulation and often because of this it loses its significance in ideological propaganda or in literary images of classical literature.

The Spanish language, which is native to the inhabitants of a colossal number of states, does not have the opportunity to work with power at the level of a "pure" idea or to perceive power from the standpoint of an abstract possibility. It requires a clear set of tools to deliver bright and meaningful strength. And this, in turn, greatly contributes to the objectification of myths about power, myths created

by management structures, nationalist myths, of which examples can be found not only in Hispanic, but also in related Portuguese-speaking countries (Brusadin, 2018).

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