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LA MATERIA MITICA E LE METODOLOGIE PER ANALIZZARLA:  
IL CASO DELL'ITALIANITÀ

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ABSTRACT

According to the interpretative hypothesis we propose in this paper, the theoretical notion of myth, as outlined by Roland Barthes, if appropriately updated, can account for some of the mechanisms that characterise today's communicative phenomena: in particular, the stereotypes and ideologies that run through contemporary texts and discourses. For this reason, in the following pages, we retrace the evolution of this theoretical notion in Roland Barthes' thought, trying to integrate it with more recent semiotic and anthropological approaches. In the final part of the essay, we will also focus on the characteristics of a phenomenon that in our opinion has all the properties of a myth: the image of Italy and Italian culture conveyed in international markets by Italian and non-Italian brands and products.