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EXEGESIS OF CYBERCULTURE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE TENDENCIES OF THE NEO-RELIGIOUS METAMODERN WORLD

M. S. Melnychuk*

Our scientific research deals with the problems of a man in the perspective of cyberculturalization of the modernized and neo-religious world. The main aspects affecting an individual immersed in cyberspace, such as self-identification, communicative relations, and the effect of presence, are considered in the article. Technical breakthrough in the modern world contributed that a person has acquired a new tool for self-discovery and reflection, namely, the Internet. Cyber culture is an integral part of the mass culture of the XX-XXI centuries, the phenomena realization and distribution of which is carried out in the Internet space. At the same time, it affects the real system of aesthetic and ethical values, universal or religious constants-dogmas of man in the hyper-transformations of the metamodern world, since the individual is involved in the processes of intense combination of living spaces, namely, real and virtual.

Taking into consideration, that in recent decades cyberspace has been a wide platform for active spread of various subcultures, i.e. constructive and destructive, secular and neo-religious movements (which arise against the background of today's dictatorship and play a significant role in modern society), it is really important for researchers to fill the emerging cognitive gaps of culturally verified and ethically understood conceptual information. Cyber culture as a phenomenon of social order must be the subject of modern cultural studies, religious studies and social philosophy, since the "place of residence" of the user audience of Internet subcultures is not actually the real world, but the virtual space that is at the same time is not isolated from the objectively existing reality. It is axiomatic that the need for quality information distributed in the network is greater than ever today. Therefore, one of the priority tasks facing modern researchers, who study the metamodernity phenomenon, and scientists who are focused on specific issues of culture interaction and society in particular is to highlight the problematic field of the most popular subcultures, the definition of ethical and aesthetic criteria of cyber culture and its phenomena.

Keywords: *cyber culture, virtual reality, cyberspace, metamodernity, Internet, identification, subpersonality, communication.*

*Ph.D., Candidate of Philosophical Sciences, Associate Professor
(National University of Water and Environmental Engineering, Rivne, Ukraine)
m.s.melnuchyk@nuwm.edu.ua
ORCID: 0000-0002-4299-968X

ЕКЗЕГЕЗА КІБЕРКУЛЬТУРИ В РАКУРСІ ВИМОГ ТЕНДЕНЦІЙ НЕОРЕЛІГІЄЗОВАНОГО СВІТУ МЕТАМОДЕРНУ

М. С. Мельничук

Стаття присвячена проблемам людини в ракурсі кіберкультуризації осучасненого та неорелігійзованого світу. Розглянуто основні аспекти, що впливають на індивіда, зануреного в кіберпростір, такі, як самоідентифікація, комунікативні відносини, ефект присутності. Завдяки технічному прориву в сучасному світі, людина придбала новий інструмент для самопізнання та рефлексії – мережу Інтернет. Кіберкультура – невід’ємна частина масової культури ХХ-ХХІ століть, реалізація та поширення явищ і феноменів якої здійснюється в Інтернет просторі. Досліджено вплив віртуального простору на реальну систему естетичних та етичних цінностей, загальнолюдських, чи релігійних констант-догматів людини у гіпертрансформації світу метамодерну. Доведено, що особистість виявляється залученою до процесів інтенсивного поєднання життєвих просторів – реального і віртуального.

Кіберпростір протягом останніх десятиліть є широким майданчиком для активного поширення різних субкультур – конструктивних та деструктивних, світських та неорелігійних рухів (які виникають на тлі диктату сьогодення та відіграють істотну роль у сучасному соціумі). Виникає необхідність заповнювати виникаючі когнітивні прогалини культурологічно вивіреної, етично осмисленої концептуальної інформації. Будучи явищем соціального порядку, феномен кіберкультуриповнен потрапляти в поле зору сучасної культурології, релігієзнавства та соціальної філософії оскільки «місцем проживання» користувальницької аудиторії інтернет-субкультур є не так реальний світ, як віртуальний простір, водночас, не ізольований від об’єктивно існуючої дійсності. Аксіоматично, що потреба в якісній інформації, яка розповсюджується в мережі, сьогодні велика як ніколи. Одним із пріоритетних завдань, що стоїть перед сучасними дослідниками цього явища метамодернувзагалом та науковцями, що фокусують свої наукові розвідки щодо конкретних питань взаємодії культури та соціуму зокрема, стає висвітлення проблемного поля найбільш популярних субкультур, визначенні етичних та естетичних критеріїв кіберкультури та її феноменів.

Ключові слова: кіберкультура, віртуальна реальність, кіберпростір, метамодерн, інтернет, ідентифікація, субособистість, комунікація.

Formulation of the problem.

Starting from the end of the sixties of the last century, the development of digital technologies caused the emergence of intellectual movements that formed the "socio-cultural metasoft" of the information society, i.e. cyberculture. As a rule, the term "cyberculture" is used in addition to the description of various virtual communities existing today, such as: social networks, online forums, cyberreligion, cybershamanism, virtual worlds, cybersex, electronic commerce, etc., including all manifestations of the digital world – from the science of cybernetics to the cyborgization of the human body and human society in general. Cyberculture, covering many intellectual and neocultural phenomena of modern society, such as the theory of cyborgs and cyberpunk, often manifests itself as a forecast of the possible future

and ways of humanity development, indicating a strong scientific interest in terms of research and conclusions.

The degree of the problem development.

Methodological and conceptual pluralism in the perspective of the problems of the world virtualization is observed in the philosophical, cultural, sociological or religious studies. When studying this problem, it is worth focusing on the works of D. Desiateryk (his works are dedicated to the search for the virtual and ssimulacra), A. Goshchynskyi (emphasis on the innovative development of virtual network organizations), A. Petrenko-Lysak (scientific explorations of the social determinants of cyber-virtual space), S. Bondarenko (problem of socialization of cyberspace users), M. Castells (reflections on the Internet,

its role and impact on society). Scientific investigations devoted to the problems of cyber culture are also presented in the works of social anthropologists A. Escobar and D. Hakken. The researchers emphasize that the study of "cultural constructions and reconstructions, on which new technologies stand, is actually what is shaped by new technologies". Also, in their works, it is stressed that "any technology is a cultural construction as technologies shape the world; develop in specific cultural conditions, later contributing to the creation of a new social and cultural situation", which essentially formed the aim of the paper.

The aim of the study is explication and the analysis of the cyberculture as a phenomenon of metamodernneoculture and consequently, the development of digital technologies of the information society. Also, we aim to present that the ideologies of various subcultures are intertwined in cyber culture, the peculiarity of which is the belief in the limitless possibilities of computer technology in terms of individual freedom implementation.

Discussion and results. The development of computer technologies creates new horizons for mankind and affects human society and shapes attitudes towards them at a special level. One of the new horizons is virtual relations, which generate completely new forms of communication. Virtual communication with the help of a computer and the global network (Internet) expands the capabilities of a person, namely, in the process of socialization it complicates the identity formation and construction of models of subjectivity. According to V. Korableva, "virtuality is an eternal cornerstone characteristic of a person, a temporary feature that distinguishes a person from the animal world" [6: 26]. As a result, we have the absorption of professional and socio-cultural activities by virtual reality ("VR"), the transformation of the way of thinking. Thus, the text is transferred as a cultural unit from reality to cyberspace.

The Internet, due to the technology development, gives a bit new sense to the concept of "virtual reality", and such concepts as "cyberspace", "cyberculture" and other less semantically extensive with the prefix "cyber" appear. All of them set formats, trends of the real world. The relevance of cyberspace is that it appears to seem as an embodied ideal, becoming a paradox of the material and the ideal world. At a rapid pace, covering the spheres of human existence, it becomes an alternative model of communities and society itself, since the subject exists and acts at once in two realities: virtual and real. Covering the maximum human functions, the computer is actualized as an object that ensures a comfortable human existence in the real world, and later acquires the objectives needed for everyday life. Specific capabilities of the computer determine the increase of impact on the personality and mental components of a person, and as a result, it significantly affects the socialization of the individual. According to V. Yemelin: "... postmodern culture is born at the junction of the decline of modernist ideals and the rapid development of digital information technologies" [3], which further leads to the simulation of reality. V.R. is used in various spheres of existence, and its penetration is only increasing. This leads to the problem of determining its role in the world. Phenomenon V.R. in the world of the metamodern acquired a lot of new things thanks to the Internet, for example, virtual worlds with interactive capabilities that allow the user to interact in V.R with other users [17]. The Internet forms a modern system, a fusion of the social and technical spheres, the basis of which is formed by technical devices and users. According to F. Hemit, computers, cables, servers and other equipment are material evidence of the existence of the Internet and, as a result, cyberspace (the information sphere created by technology). It is worth noting that the Internet has a high level of self-organization in its structure. The ideas of the researchers regarding the

"unity principle", applied to the Internet, are as: "Internet unity is a form of union of free individuals in virtual reality, in cyberspace" [12: 168], where the values of each person are actually a path. Regarding the role of V. R. in the perspective of today's metamodernity, it is worth noting the opinion of the Ukrainian researcher D. Desiateryk, "basic poststructural postulates concerning the equality of exegesis and the original, the "death of the author" as an unchanging, obligatory and dogmatic character in the text are being implemented. Mass liquidation of cultural hierarchies is taking place right before the eyes of the audience, and aesthetic objects lose their integrity, become open to intervention and exegesis. Traditional spatial and temporal landmarks are also removed: any visual-sound image, any information is transferred instantly to any point on the Web" [5: 1]. The movement of users in the spaces of the Internet looks chaotic, disorderly. Everyone is focused on their own interests, surfing from link to link, creating a hypertext structure. But interests are the factor that unites users. The Internet is a new tool for finding information, regardless of its ethical and semantic content, and as a result we receive cognition, revealing the versatility and inner world of a person.

The modern world offers a person various options for existence, one of which is a virtual lifestyle on the other side of the monitor. Various virtual worlds in cyberspace succinctly fit into human society, creating new opportunities for self-identification. To a greater extent, this was achieved by the game industry, creating fantastic worlds, virtual worlds of computer games. Computer games, being a transformed form of the everyday game described by Johan Huizinga, have both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, expanding the possibilities, the computer game allows to simulate various actions, for example, flying with the help of wings, exciting battles with monsters, etc. Empowerment means something

that a person cannot do in the real world or does not have such an opportunity. Also, it increases the limitations of the player, drives him into the framework of the monitor (display, etc.), escaping from reality into a virtual world with its own limits. Thus, computer games due to their rapid penetration into various spheres of activity, change the inner world of a person and the way of life of society creating new senses for everyday life. But there's always been an issue on the V. R. reality, as fantastic worlds become a kind of "looking glass" that are not real, but give hope and faith in their reality during the game.

Cyberspace represents an unlimited space for the realization of opportunities, the limitation remains only within the technology development, which simplifies the process of interaction. The use of computer technologies allows to create three-dimensional graphic worlds with the possibility of transmitting sound data in real time. According to S. Orekhov, "Virtual worlds are three-dimensional models of the real or fictional world, designed using a special language and displayed on a computer screen" [3: 18]. Computer technology provides us with the visual image of cyberspace including interactive capabilities, and it creates the effect of immersion in the world of computer reality. The author V. Yemelin believes that "the virtual world, in which a person appears as a result of the fusion of computer graphics with the possibility of direct impact on events, is commonly called cyberspace" [6]. Researcher Chebotariova fully supports the opinion of A. Korupaiev that ... cyberspace "is a (virtual) reality that is a noosphere, the other world both "inside" the computer and "inside" computer networks" [10], and is space for information objects and events. Cyberspace is the sphere of fusion of human and technical world, where a social person, merging with technical capabilities, forms a new space that creates a system of information and person projection (avatar, character, etc.), considering that interactions flow

between generation of people and their projections. Thus, cyberspace becomes possible for V.R.

Virtual worlds are attractive because of their realism, but also because of the opportunity to interact in the virtual world, and "present a space for human life and activity, an alternative world to everyday reality" [1: 109], where the player can realize his motives and values. Interactivity provides an opportunity to interact with the world, change it, influence the course of events, develop; so it is shaped the collective image of events alongside a realistic graphic image that creates a virtual world, which becomes almost real. Worthy of attention is the opinion that "the effect of "presence" in virtual reality is caused by the perception of virtual stimuli by analogy with real ones" [1]. The player, experiencing the effect of presence, assumes the role of his character and "internalizes the goals and values of this game" [1]. On the one hand, the formation takes place taking into account the real image of the personality, on the other, the formation of the real personality takes into consideration the formed image of the personality. The process of mastering of different worlds is taking place. The starting point is the socialization with the help of myths underlying cyberspace, which, according to S. Bondarenko, "deals with the construction of the future virtual identity" [10, p. 5], and user's roles in cyberspace.

The subject of cyberspace is the user, who in one way or another interacts, is its researcher and the main actor. A person acquires the ability to be in the real and virtual world at the same time, interacting with space during the process of immersion in the Internet. According to N. Chebotarova, there is a process of mutual influence. The subject is replaced by a character, the real "I" of the user becomes virtual in cyberspace: "they merge with the character into one whole" [16], as a result of immersion in virtual reality, our consciousness "as if" leaves the body, moving into V. R. The author

M. Dery believes that "the split between our body and our consciousness becomes especially obvious after a long immersion in the virtual world" [4]. Immersion is a state of consciousness in which the subject ceases to feel his physical "I", without perceiving his body (let's remember the movie "Surrogates" with Bruce Willis starring in the main role). This state gives the feeling of infinity of space. "The subject turns to his simulacrum, and physically remaining in the world he mentally turns into a virtual world" [6]. We are the creators of ourselves in the new world, we create virtual bodies, give them names and play with them as we wish, leaving the virtual body without will, as a result we create: "Virtual personalities", describing ourselves in a certain way" [7]. A character's name is an identification number that distinguishes him from many others. The choice of name is completely up to you, which allows you to change the name given at birth, even in the virtual world.

The increase in the use of virtual communications is characteristic for the modern stage of culture and its development, thus, new forms of life and human values are being formed. Penetrating into various spheres of activity, communicative interactions become massive. Gradually, virtual communications are becoming necessary for life. Due to the Internet relevance as a space of information and its exchange, first of all, it becomes a space of virtual communications. Virtual communication differs significantly from other types of communication, especially it is obvious where the communication process accompanies activity. According to O. Astafieva, "variants of human existence in realities created with the help of computer systems have a wide range of diversity and complexity" [1: 222]. Author also focuses on the fact that the process of communication changes, transferring from activity to game forms in subjectively imagined reality. Communication is "transmission of one or another content from one

consciousness (collective or individual) to another with the help of signs recorded on material carriers" [15: 247]. Researcher S. Orekhov, considering the process of Internet communication, believes that "Internet communications are accompanied by individual's specific features" [12: 155] that involve the exchange of the semantic value of information. The improvement of technical means, thanks to which virtual communication takes place, creates new forms of interaction for people and forms new cultures in the perspective of today's metamodernity. The result was the digitization of the real world, manifested in various forms, such as the virtualization of social relations, the formation of new virtual communication spaces, etc. According to A. Zhichkina, virtual communications have features that allow spiritual self-disclosure of a person, and "on the Internet, as a result of the physical absence of mutual presentation of communication partners, a set of communication barriers lose their meaning..." [7]. Such non-interpresentation is expressed in the anonymity of the user, who for some reason hides his own identity (that is the real self), which leads to various consequences for communicators. Anonymity provides an opportunity to reveal a virtual personality, self-knowledge and self-realization in the Internet space. The next feature is the absence of part of the information received as a result of face-to-face communication, namely the non-verbal part, due to the absence of the interlocutor (absence in the sense that the person is not around). Let's consider some aspects revealed by non-representation, anonymity in the sphere of cyberspace. M. Chebotariova actualizes attention to self-presentation, as "a way of managing one's imagination, impression of oneself" [16]. A. Zhichkina, analyzing self-presentation, concludes that the possibilities of anonymity "allow a person to shape his or her identity as he or she chooses" [7]. Researcher S. Orekhov believes that "anonymity

entails looseness, non-normativeness, irresponsibility, it reduces psychological and social risks in communication" [12: 154]. A person gets the opportunity to manage himself, his will, and how he will use it, everything depends on various factors, but this problem does not fall within the scope of our scientific study.

One of the contradictions of cyber culture is semantic polyphony, which often borders on cacophony and leads that an individual lose his value orientations and his own "I". If in a traditional society the function of meaning-making and values formation was performed by traditions handed down and consolidated by the family and the church, in an industrial society this function is performed by educational institutions and even the media (first printed, then radio and television), then in a post-industrial society the individual appears immersed in the information and communication space, where due to the variety of content sources (from global corporations and media personalities to ordinary users, from authoritative scientists to fraudsters and ignoramuses) it is not enough to simply make a demarcation, it is difficult to determine what corresponds to common sense and what does not, what is worth perceiving and what is necessary to neglect as unnecessary.

In the information society, a person is largely oriented on the ideas formed in the result of Internet communications, on the actions and words of other network users, who especially have a high status of popularity. If art, science, philosophy, religion, morality are higher forms of expression of meaning, in which the image of society is manifested and objectified in each historical epoch, then the phenomena of mass culture (mass media, advertising, tabloid literature, pop music, mainstream cinema, TV shows, etc.) can be attributed to a lower level of understanding, but possessing such manifestations of the humanity spiritual life, which have a wide range of influence (at the same time, we use the word "spiritual" in the sense of ideal or

immaterial). Digital social media make it possible to broadcast the created texts to almost any person with access to the Internet. This means that everyone can participate in the formation of the global information and communication space, using all possible means: text, images, audio and video materials, computer animation. Turning to hermeneutics and phenomenology makes it possible to clarify the mechanisms of formation of social consciousness, which, in turn, determines the nature of collective actions, the transformation of social norms, institutions and practices and affects the dynamics and nature of modern society.

The perspective of cyber culture has its own semantic logic, which leaves an imprint on the consciousness and behavior of Internet users. Our actions in virtual social networks, online games, messengers, vlogs and as users, gamers, viewers and listeners, and as developers, bloggers and administrators are determined by the context of cyber culture as the culture of the information society. As early as 1996, its essence was expressed by Mark Dery: "We wander the latest version of the Web, the World Wide Web (a hypertext system that allows users around the world to "mouse" from one multimedia site to another), jumping from digital video clips to snippets of audio and texts that have no end"[10: 9]. Over the years, little has changed precisely in this symbolic basis, although the Internet has improved both qualitatively (many new segments of the network space and types of digital resources have appeared) and quantitatively (the area of access to the global digital web has expanded and the speed has increased significantly and continues to increase data transmission). Despite the fact that cyberdelic dreams were not destined to come true (mankind did not change the form of existence from physical to digital), the Internet has significantly changed our lives.

Cyber culture, according to M. Castells, is focused on the value of freedom, which in online communities is

revealed through the importance of horizontal free communication and the importance of "self-directed organization of the network" [5: 73]. In general, optimistically assessing the prospects of the influence of the global digital network on society, the researcher calls the Internet the material and technological ground for such a form of sociality as network individualism, which includes the interaction of offline and online networks [5: 157-158]. The Internet expresses a trend embedded in urbanization: the transition from traditional communities based on territorial proximity of individuals and collectivism to network individualism formulated on the proximity of interests and activity goals.

If at the beginning of the current century 85% of Internet use was e-mailing, now social networks are the most popular. Based on this fact, the self-presentation of users through posts and blogs, likes and dislikes can be considered an important mechanism of meaning-making process within cyberculture. Viewing a social network has turned into a cybercultural ritual, an important ritual of which is the assessment of certain information presented (photo and video materials). Viewing a social network itself is an important part of the cult of social media, which, in turn, is determined by the logic of cyberculture and integrated into its structure. Cyber culture should be considered in the context of the information society features, which are characterized by the digitalization of social life that is constantly deepening. The actions of the account holder or blogger, as well as the actions of followers (subscribers), can be considered as symbolically mediated, that is, those that carry a certain meaning. P. Riker draws attention to such poles of the meanings of social action as the idea of the project, the idea of the motive, the idea of the agent, and the category of intervention or manifestation of initiative [8]. At the same time, the meaning can be both

superficial and simple (get as many likes as possible, demonstrate your achievements, show belonging to a high-status social layer or your success, etc.). the deeper meaning is relevant to those social media users who post content with a certain socially significant purpose.

Cyberspace creates opportunities for the formation of virtual communities, the emergence of new types of text formats, erases the borders between states that separate people, and creates a specific form of culture – cyberculture. Cyberculture is a type of modern culture, the basis of which is the use of V.R. technology, as well as computer games. M. Dery believes that "computer culture, or in other words, cyberculture..." [10] is a consequence of the use of computer, virtual and informatization tools. The attitude of a person to technology is a natural development process, and caused changes in the structure and quality of spiritual socialization, which is quite significant in the perspective of neoculturalization and neoreligionization of today's metamodernity; regardless of the subject of socialization, such transformations are expressed in the illusory and compensatory self-sufficiency of the person's existence in computer communication of modern materiality [18].

The development of virtual forms of communication in society leads to the formation of information culture and sets the framework for its development. On the one hand, it inherits the principles and features of the life rhythm, and on the other hand, it is filled with significant meaningful innovations, the basis of which is the computers and the information and communication environment. According to L. Manovych: "Virtual communication assigns showing not only actual, but also potential features of existence, both actual and possible being" [14]. A person manifests himself as an active subject of the real world and cyberspace at the same time, bringing changes to both the first and the second.

During the stay in the virtual space, the user is identified with his virtual character. Over time, the virtual character acquires its own features of behavior, different from other virtual characters, moreover, the user creates subpersonalities. The author N. Chebotariova suggests "to consider virtual self-presentation as the actualization of one or more sub-personalities" [10]. Let's clarify the definition of subpersonality: "it is a complex psychodynamic structure that strives for independent existence" [14: 22]. Sub-personalities are the revelation of man in V.R., resulting that it is possible to conduct endless research on a person, finding something new, or having studied a certain number of parts, come to a conclusion about the limitations of a person or, on the contrary, the lack of borders. "Sub-personalities perform the function of individual's self-expression tools" [14: 23]. A person gets another opportunity for self-reflection, but the reflection and actions inextricably exist in harmony.

In cyberspace, the process of forming a virtual personality accompanies the process of user socialization, and as a result, the generation of a certain number of pseudonyms (nicknames) is observed, which, according to N. Chebotariova, "identifies one or another sub-personality" [16]. The consequence of which is "the unfolding of the structure of one's own personality and the study of the needs that gave rise to them" [16]. The multiplicity of sub-personalities can be observed due to the lack of self-realization in a person's real life, but, on the other hand, it is possible that this is a surplus of modern society and it is a side effect. Without having a certain disadvantage in real life, in cyberspace it is possible to create a certain type of personality, namely, sub-personalities. By transferring the real "I" into cyberspace, the user reveals the personality, and at the same time, the personality is divided into sub-personalities. The process of the users socialization takes place, while users

master the technologies of interpersonal communication, social navigation and rules of behavior in computer networks, as well as social norms, values and role requirements" [2: 5].

Conclusion. The refore, transmission of subcultural values into the environment, both purely secular, independent of religious and dogmatic constants, and filled with neo-religious modern contributes to that cyberspace is transformed into a socially recognized form of leisure. Informal subcultures and rules are replaced by generally accepted social norms. Cyberspace is perceived as a place of self-realization and self-actualization, the formation of subpersonalities leads to the fragmentation of a person, his real "I".

These processes contribute that a person, using the possibilities of V.R., creates an innumerable number of his or her "I". Without trying to find integrity, the person feels as he/she belongs to everything. Each virtual character will react to certain events taking place in cyberspace, but the cyberspace is a reflection of the real world, therefore, a person will participate through an intermediary in the events of the real world by using cyberspace, the virtual world. Violation of the person's integrity by the person himself is a transition to a state of participation in everything and everywhere, here and now, always online in the paradoxical, unpredictable world given to us by the neorealities of metamodernity.

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