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MAN IN THE SPACE OF DIGITAL CULTURE

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Abstract

This paper presents a study of the key social, cultural and media area for the 21st century - the Internet. The focused environment and the emerging cultural form in it - digital culture - convey their values, ethical and aesthetic attitudes to the user, and satisfy many human needs. In this regard, it is appropriate to talk about the mass educational significance of digital culture in relation to entire generations. Based on the strong emphasis on a commercial motive (advertising, monetization, etc.) and the lack of ethical and aesthetic control over the content promoted on the Internet, it is concluded that the priority in the value system of the digital culture of commercial interest is made against the background of spiritual and social aspects. The topic of "Internet memes" is touched upon as elements participating in the formation of clip and template thinking of the audience. Using the example of video bloggers as producers and distributors of a semantic product on the Internet, the educational mechanism of the mass consumer of different age levels is described. In this network activity, the promotion of conflict thinking, and behavior is noted, and the negative aspects of the cultural impact of the network environment indicate trade in meanings (with an indifferent attitude of the subjects of activity to the ideological content), Internet dependence of the audience and the degradation of its cognitive, volitional and moral qualities.

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1. Introduction

During the history of mankind, world culture has created many information spheres, from which the individual draws semantic content to form a picture of the world. This includes mythmaking, religion, art, social and political organizations, education, the media, etc. In the 21st century, a new information-semantic and virtual area has been formed - the Internet (Rykov & Nagornyy, 2017). The spread of this information network has become so large-scale and significant that its alternative name is the World/Global Network. Today, the Internet is in almost every digital device of every person in every developed country. The Internet is actively used by representatives of almost all segments of the population, and many of them regularly spend a significant part of the day in the digital space (Andriyenko et al., 2020).

The Internet in human everyday life is no longer only a way of exchanging data, storing information, and working environment. Now it is a place where people spend their leisure time: they relax, have fun, get to know each other, educate themselves and, in general, satisfy many needs. The Internet has become not just a part of a person's life, but a space in which a separate, parallel life unfolds. And with such involvement in digital life, it is self-evident that virtuality has become an area for a person in which they satisfy their social and spiritual needs (Belyakova et al., 2017). Thus, the Internet is overgrown with its own mythology, its semantic and value layers, forms its ethical and aesthetic content. In other words, the Internet is a full-fledged sphere of culture (Kasavina, 2018), in the context of which a person is being transformed or even a new generation and a new species are being nurtured.

2. Problem Statement

By now, the development and diffusion of digital technologies, the Internet culture has a huge impact on its audience of millions of people. Virtuality is so closely intertwined in human everyday life that today it can be considered its original form. Digital culture, as a product of this environment, has a significant impact on the transformation of human thinking and spiritual life, and, as a result, on the change of society and, in the future, possibly of the entire civilization. This phenomenon contains many problematic components, from changes in the moral character of a person in the 21st century to fundamental transformations of his perception and behavior. Forecasts regarding the indicated changes are often not formed in a positive way, concretizing in the designation of such consequences as the development of lack of initiative and lack of will of a person, an indifferent attitude towards real people and society, deterioration of cognitive abilities.

The study of the described problems was carried out with an appeal to the diverse scientific and philosophical literature, which outlines certain aspects of the existence of the Internet space, social networks, different genres of media content and the peculiarities of human interaction with them, and describes the specific problems arising from this. However, when working with the bibliographic base, there is an unsystematic nature of the totality of materials and a lack of general philosophical research in which a holistic concept of the virtual environment and digital culture would be developed.

3. Research Questions

The research objective is to answer the following questions:

1. What is digital culture? Does it exist according to its own special principles, or is it the old value-semantic formation enclosed in a new technological framework?
2. Is the specific semiotic-axiological content important for this environment, or does the significance remain only with the very production and dissemination of meanings?
3. Due to the technophysical features of the interaction between a person and the digital environment, which sensory foundations of the formation of the world perception remain involved, and which ones lose their relevance? How does this affect a person's sense of themselves as a part of the world?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to describe digital culture as an integral formation, a systematized set of social, cultural, economic, and political phenomena, as well as to give it a critical assessment in terms of its impact on a person and make a forecast of its further development.

5. Research Methods

The author of this study carried out a structural and genre analysis of digital culture in its dominant form. Using this method, the format and genre varieties of video blog (Chateauvert, 2021; Tekut'yeva, 2016), trade in meanings, advertising (Shchekoturov, 2020; Shchepilova & Kruglova, 2019), biased censorship (Chang & Lin, 2020) and memes (Polishchuk et al., 2020).

Using the forecasting method, the stated elements and processes of digital culture were critically assessed and the negative results of the interaction of this cultural formation with humans and society were described: virtualization of life (Lebedeva & Subbotin, 2020; Soldatova & Pogorelov, 2018), asociality and conflict, "living" someone else's life to the detriment of their own (Omarova (Umarova), 2016), information satiety (Lupanova, 2017), Internet addiction (Romashkina & Khuzyakhmetov, 2020), devaluation of creative forms of culture (Pavlov, 2019), degradation of sensory-experiential cognition (Testov, 2018) and clip thinking (Ermak, 2018).

6. Findings

Entering the World Wide Web, for example, for work or study, the user goes from site to site and discovers many advertising messages (Shchepilova & Kruglova, 2019). Advertising is displayed in the form of "banners", embedded in the background of a web page, in a video, etc. Advertising as an element of commerce and the commercial sphere itself are perceived by the individual as an integral part of the environment in which they are located, including in a cultural sense. Culture, perhaps, turns out to be unthinkable for a person without constant commercial offers and transactions. Especially if the individual is a representative of a generation that has been accustomed to digital "toys" and virtual life from an early age (Lebedeva & Subbotin, 2020).

In considering the Internet as a cultural area, not only is the endless advertising and sale of goods/services notable, but also the trade in meanings. Surely, many have seen how a child who has not yet had time to go to school happily consumes content, for example, of some channel on the video hosting YouTube, how they laugh, watching the “antics” and “jumps” of their favorite video blogger (Chateauvert, 2021). Since the video blogger not only entertains their viewer with funny “antics”, but also speaks to the audience verbally and communicates on the air with “colleagues in the shop”, it can be assumed that a small viewer learns a certain vocabulary through this (and the language is one from the pillars of consciousness (Il'yenkov, 2021)), models of behavior and attitude towards others. The content producer receives money for this (through, for example, monetization of views or advertising embedded in the content, which is relevant for any social networks (Shchekoturov, 2020)), and the young consumer becomes an object of digital distance education and, in the mass sense, an object of cultural cultivation.

But this process affects not only children and adolescents. Adults also watch, read, and listen all the time, absorbing huge amounts of information. Among them, “light” genres are also popular, such as “sketch show”, “prank”, “lifestyle”, “beauty blog” and so forth. (Tekut'yeva, 2016). But, in addition, the demand of the adult audience is directed to such thematic categories as society, politics, culture, popular science videos, etc. There are many channels and sites of different political and social agendas: left, right, liberal, traditionalist, religious, etc. The authors of many such resources talk about global things, offer the viewer their own worldview and moral and aesthetic guidelines. Sometimes such content contains links to various literature, philosophical and other cultural traditions. By consuming this semantic product, an individual not only allows transforming their worldview, but also feels like a part of a “get-together”, a certain group of people united by interests who do not hold real meetings (in most cases) but exist as a virtual community.

In many cases, virtual communication and unification to some extent compensate for the lack of real social interaction, over time weakening the individual's initiative to meet this need. The consequence of this may be various mental disorders of a person and, in general, an increase in the level of asociality of people in society. It is appropriate to assume that for the producers and distributors of such materials, this is often just a trade in meanings without a sincere desire to influence the real world, based on some ideological prerequisites.

It is also worth highlighting one of the favorite entertainment elements of the networked public - conflict. Internet bloggers often get into fights with each other, arrange whole events around this and produce video and text materials in large quantities. And if manufacturers of this kind can always be suspected of staged situations, then the audience shows noticeable emotional involvement, perceiving the observed conflicts on a personal level. This expresses the desire of a person to “replace” their life (because of dissatisfaction with it) with someone else's. In this sense, digital culture appears to be an analogue, for example, of the culture of glamor and gloss (Omarova (Umarova), 2016). In addition, through these media representations, conflict behavior is promoted as a norm of social interaction and a form of leisure, which only enhances the asocial character of educating the masses in digital culture.

Weaning from one's own life with the ensuing need to constantly consume network content causes a person to experience a state of information satiety (Lupanova, 2017) and, as a possible consequence, to fading interest in really important information, which for an individual becomes only part of the general

flow. At the same time, the quality of life, due to a passive attitude towards it, does not get better, the consumption of information does not stop, which leads to Internet addiction (Romashkina & Khuzyakhmetov, 2020). This effect also occurs in the field of art, philosophy, science, which, losing the role of creative cultural forms, become only a short-term entertainment and “information dose” for the mass consumer, thus losing their significance (Pavlov, 2019).

But since influential segments of the population (businessmen and politicians) do not try to regulate, censor (not for the sake of private political and economic benefits (Chang & Lin, 2020), but based on some general ethical and aesthetic ideals) and do any contribution to the positive transformation of the network environment and digital culture, it can be assumed that the current situation suits them. In the end, passivity, promiscuity, indifference, and digital dependence of the mass public only play into the hands of individuals and organizations in pursuing their commercial interests or political propaganda. Perhaps it is just such a person - an amorphous consumer of an information-digital product who lives in their own “virtual reality” (Soldatova & Pogorelov, 2018) and does not want to contact the external environment - and is beneficial to the “powers that be”.

Due to the fact that the culture, the spiritual being of a person “turns into digital”, and his consciousness is largely immersed in this environment, breaking away from reality for a long time, what can be called a “crisis of tactility”, or in a broader sense, “a crisis of sensuality”, when the world for a person is a composite hodgepodge of information products absorbed through a digital device, and not the result of sensual, direct interaction with the surrounding reality. The craving of a person and the degree of their empirical, experimental knowledge are weakened, in connection with which it is possible to admit the possibility of degradation of their ability to comprehend the world.

It is appropriate to assume that there is a connection between the lost sensory and experiential knowledge in digital culture and the idea of overcoming human corporeality within the framework of the cybernetic transformation of human nature in such philosophies as transhumanism (Dieguez, 2020), posthumanism (Galparsoro, 2020), etc. In connection with all this, it is possible to deduce the likelihood that in the future a person awaits a deep transformation of the psyche, which will be extremely negative (Testov, 2018).

“Memes” (Polishchuk et al., 2020) are also widespread in the Internet culture - small messages, usually of a humorous nature. Their intended function is the content and dissemination of a ready-made, quick reaction to all kinds of situations. This phenomenon can be a sign of the simplification of the “living” thinking of the individual, when the observed cultural environment provides a person with ready-made, stereotyped responses “for all occasions”. This category also includes popular short (up to one minute) videos of any content, cut from any source: film, news report, documentary, or household recording, etc. Perhaps these social patterns and cultural preferences are associated with the phenomenon of “clip thinking” (Ermak, 2018).

7. Conclusion

Based on the above, we can conclude that digital culture, being a superstructure of the virtual network environment and realizing the economic interests of its sponsors and technical creators, exists and develops primarily to meet specific private or corporate needs. Complementing this with the ethical

and aesthetic ambiguity of the allowed (and accepted as the norm) content of various resources disclosed in the article, one can conclude that in the value system of Internet culture, commercial interests have a higher priority than moral and ethical principles and social factors.

Information addiction and human satiety in digital culture lead to indifference to the quality of information and, as a result, to ethical, aesthetic and intellectual illegibility. Coupled with the development of clip-template thinking and with a decrease in the level of tactile and, in general, sensory, and experienced perception of the surrounding world, this leads to the degradation of the intellectual abilities of the individual and society as such.

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