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"MEDIA IS MESSAGE" IN SPACE OF MODERN COMMUNICATION.

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Abstract

Modern communications produce new contexts and new languages. The formula of McLuhan appeared to have new features in virtual reality and cyber space. The article shows some aspects of axiology and ethics in cyber communications, virtual reality, history of media.

Key words: *information, communication, media, virtual reality, cyber ethics, informational society, history of communications.*

Nothing is made of stone or iron,
everything would be changed
Bible

The general purpose of any kind of communication is mutual understanding and creating language of understanding. These languages were invented by mankind from petroglyphs to Internet. Culture was created as an answer on the need of communication – as anthropological researches has shown. The existential philosopher K.Jaspers remarks: what is not given in communication is simply not exist.

According to M.McLuhan, the history of means of communication, so called media, from hieroglyphs to video through Gutenberg Galaxy – appeared that modification of method of transporting the information changes radically all sides of life from art and philosophy to political programmes. (McLuhan, 2005) The environment of man is transformed into *noosphere* – as the remarkable scientist - cosmist V.I.Vernadski dreamed, the sphere of human Mind. Computer systems stimulate new "global brain"- self-organized production of information, which should be coordinate with human presence, his feelings and relations. We are living in informational society, as McLuhan predicted, and this phenomenon supposed new kind of perceptions and actions.

Media technologies attack the conscious of individual and produce the picture of world in accordance with global informational space. The challenge of media reality can be compared with challenges of nature, that mankind should give answer (give or not give), as the great searcher of history A.Toynby told. Such answers in history of mankind were several. First overturn was invention of *written language*. Everybody knows the legend about ancient ruler who just firstly was acquainted with written text. He comes up with a predictable and brilliant idea: the invention makes shorter and weaker memory, now you should not strain your brain, spend you forces. What for? It was the beginning of future technical suppressing of natural human capacities. Sometimes it was called prosthetic appliance of memory.

*"Cunning (slyness) of world`s techne"*- it is wise expression of the leader of Saint-Petersburg *media philosophy V.V.Savchuk*. (Savchuk, 2013). He transforms the popular idea of Hegel`s philosophy of history "cunning of world`s historic Mind". Hegel shows the dialectics of history, he means, that people`s efforts, struggle, hard work, sufferings, researches….has the result which is opposite to previous planning. The idea of great philosopher should be applied to development of phenomenon

techniques. The term *techne* originate from Greek and means firstly general capacity to artificial creation without differing whether it is technique or art. Sculpture was simply the most skillful potter or ceramist. More late it was transformed into the specific concept – *techniques*, that had task to relieve hard work, to be the addition to eyes, hands and, certainly, memory.

Message is constantly has semiotic nature and can be understand only in cultural context. Drawing on stones had different polysemantic sense: it was signal of hunting, danger, praying or rituals of love. Hieroglyphs – ancestors of such kind of pictures – also has numerous living senses. Everybody, trying to study China or Japan languages, feel an enormous difficulty in catching real sense, hidden in intonation, pauses, melody expression etc. The specific beauty of language created vision, images, behavior – all components of culture.

The choise of European culture was *phonetic alphabet.* Greece – the source of European mentality – created their communication on alphabet. According to McLuhan's conception this fact determined all system of life: roads, buildings, political organization and even philosophic systems. Another remarkable transformation of the reading process took place at early medieval: *codex manuscripts* arised. Codex means a written (not printed) work bound as a book. Formerly ancient people used scrolls or volumen made with papirus or very expensive parchment. Imagine how uncomfortable it was for scholars to find lines or chapters in opus of Hippocrates or Aristotle. Probably Socrates was right when he prefer only oral discussions.

Codex was born inside the remnants of Latin science. Gradually codex has get features of books as we accustomed: pages, alphabetical index, signs. Paper came from China (as many other inventions) and made carrier of information cheaper. Culture of manuscripts, during several ages was rather dramatic, arised the image of *scriptorium* with hard work of monks-copyists. *U.Eco*, famous Italian postmodern writer depicts the image of scholastic researchers and medieval monastery in his philosophic detective "Name of rose". Skillful copyists were highly appreciated in various cultures - beautifully decorated books in big monasteries were the objects of commerce and gave income.

The art of manuscripts flourished in Europe about one thousand years and produced specific elements in culture and conscious. Written language as new kind of message formed analytical, rational, linear stile of thinking. In historical psychology it was named "*victory of left hemisphere*"- the part of our brain, that responsible on science, logic, rational actions. The process of writing just as the process of reading was forced to be long and tedious, stimulate analytical attitude to world, to nature and people. Such rational mentality generated the image of scientist, working over concrete field of knowledge, analyzing and penetrating into deep senses. A.Hertzen told about such kind of researches: the science had come to temple of nature so closely, that every scientist now can see only his brick. This opinion was mentioned in 19-th century, but at the end of Medieval a pen and paint of copyist organized mentality of New Ages.

We can't imagine in modern school a person with pen, making copies. But according psychological researchers ancient art of calligraphy is *prevention of computer addiction*. Training of small muscles of the hands develops brain, helps to think, and even lowers blood pressure. You train not only your hands but your soul: for example, you can write beautifully the song or the pray or the letter to friend. In Russia was organized the Union of Calligraphers (Chairman is Chubidko P.P.). In London there is a Royal Institute of Calligraphy.

The process of writing, especially calligraphy, could be compared with delivering *melody* in singing. The author of written book realized himself as individual in personal communication with reader. A.Losev, famous Russian and Soviet philosopher, interpret music as *symbolic activity* and drawn it nearer prayer. (Losev, 2004) The process of creating books in scriptorium should be compared with

singing in choir of temple. Severe obedience in working and praying could be substitute on long patient writing and painting with light of candle.

So called *"melotypia"* (music printing) was invented just after book printing of Gutenberg and arised such complete forms as opera, symphonic works. Written notes already existed since Guido d'Arecci, who firstly calculated music scale in 11century. German religious Reform in 16 century has get support in melotypia. People not only began to read Bible in German, but also to sing psalms in native language, because not only priests, but all believers should participate in church service. German folk songs were used for public worships, that's why content of sacred texts became understandable. We can suppose - such "folk" praying was variant of mass communication identical modern TV, just as mechanism of psychological influence on souls of people was found exactly like in political manipulation in modern mass media.

MEDIA AS VIRTUAL REALITY

The concept "virtuality" had different senses in history of culture. It mostly express an active source, predisposition to new conditions and actions. The content and volume of this category was regulated in history of science through logic of language and semantics of cultural forms. In classic Latin "virtus" means courage and pious charity, but in Medilatin it received meanings of probability, secretly present. In scholastic Medieval literature the term *"virtus"* means something possible, potential which dates to another level of reality and fruitfully applied in theological compositions. (Tretyakova, 2013)

Then "virtual" became to identify with simulation of reality, opposite to material. "*Virtual reality*" was widely used in humanitarian sciences for searching dreams, hallucinations and various forms of abnormal conscious, when the borders of reality are blurred, (Nosov, 2000) fields of artistic and religious feelings.

The essence or "inner form" of this concept reflexed new features in mentality. At the end of XX century the term "virtuality" appeared to be closely connected with *media processes* in its symbolic senses. The notion "virtual reality" has get widely spread in technical, psychological, sociological literature, concerning media processes. But hardly we point the area of specifically "virtual": it does not exist in nature, we can not see it neither in mental or spiritual universe, nor in social processes. But we are sure that it really exists everywhere and eternally. G.Berkeley, with his subjective philosophy, told that *to exist means to be perceptible*. This formula would help to understand "virtuality" as objective reality, a person, plunged into virtual world, feel it as reality, just as man with mythological mentality live inside myth and feel it as reality.

Modern media and cyber communications suppose new interpretation of virtual processes, that construct another picture of world with *not linear determinism*, with 3d measuring *space* and polidirected *time* - traditional categories received uncertain forms and demand original approach.(Epstein, 756). Communicating system changes the most important coordinate of our life: the space and the time. The flow of information can deprive countries with its historic and geographic features (if we add here globalist tendencies). The time with its Past, Present and Future would be mixed being programmed in one message. So we need *human* assimilation of new technologies and searching it in socio-cultural context.

AXIOLOGY OF VIRTUAL PERSON

One of uncertain concepts, appeared in cyber communications, so called *"virtual person"* produced specific *axiological* and *ethic* problems. Real person in classical anthropology obtain its features as

synthesis of spirituals and physical qualities, as ensemble of social roles. According to "informational determinism" (McLuhan) man transforms itself into audio and video consumer, his conscious penetrates out of borders of ordinary reality, being plunged in informational environment.

Communication in Internet gives feeling of grandiose opportunities and compels to try on different social roles. Conscious finds duality nature, being constantly transformed from ordinary to virtual and back. Computer techniques give possibilities to create cyber *double*, with features of original. It is so called video and audio portrait for communication. Virtual double would stay with your relatives after death as memory for next generations. Curious fact: new business service appeared for virtual conservation ancestries, parents for grandchildren. You can create a kind of *family's pantheon* where descendants can communicate or ask consultation with there grandfathers. The service for providing your *personal eternity?*

The concept "virtual person" seems to be approached with transcendental Mind, Spirit or Soul – it appeared to be reproduced and control in semiotic systems of computer reality. Life of Mind can be imagined as virtual expression of meanings, encoded and translated by symbolic systems. Another component of virtual person is *"virtual soul"* (in Greece "psychea", in Latin 'anima") is individual and unique, may be eternal. According to well known hero of M.Bulgakov, soul is located in body and can be placed or removed from body. Informational theories suppose that programs of individual vitality and personal inner life would *substitute* real soul – the most impotent element of human being. Certainly very disputable idea - stimulate the investigation for survival and reproduction of codes of vitality and conscious, which is often name as "artificial intellect".

Life in virtual communication is obeyed to laws of *computer ethics*, the principles of behavior in virtual should not differ from rules in real. So called cyber ethics should contain the same categories as traditional ethics: *responsibility, justice, freedom, debt, compassion*. Motivation of virtual person just as motivation in real world must support on *will*, this thesis was declared in classical philosophy of I.Kant in XV111 century. Actions of man are determined with general moral law, every person must follow it, discharging his debt, excluding his inner sympathy and inclinations. His principle that every human being is to be regarded as an end in himself and never can be a mean for anything - becomes a form of the doctrine of the Rights of Man and the basic of Western liberalism.

Is it possible to apply the classical philosophic ethics to actions and relations in cyber space? Virtual world is independent from physical influences just as from social processes. It is the world of "pure" human ambitions and intellectual games. We ourselves enter Internet according our will and the only motivation we have is interest, probably, it is duty. Virtual life seems to be utopian country of universe love and charity. (Taratuta, 2007)

Appreciating of moral life in virtual reality has a kind of specific. Our conduct in Internet is part of an ocean of another conducts and actions – this factor should be mentioned when you appreciate the behavior ethically. If you are part of this ocean, the user of Net comprehends his participation to everything in the world and the ability to influence on everything. The user creates the world looks like ancient demiurge. Have the God responsibility? In virtual reality you feel yourself as God, all being depends on you, nobody can repeat your life, because only you create it.

Virtual person has many *faces, avatars, names* – so you can't identify his individuality, the problem of responsibility increase its completeness, abnormal virtual appearance does not decrease responsibility, because every symbol and every word in Net has author. Your mask, abnormal virtual appearance preserve responsibility for your action. Moral imperative in Internet would sound: maximum of your capabilities should serve maximum wishes of another people. Nobody in the world can do what I can instead me. (Epstein, 759)

Curious feature of cyber communication is constant artificial *constructing* images of communicants. Your anonymous interlocutor seems to be whatever you wish, you may use his image as realization magic dreams or, on another hand, as an object for pouring forth aggressive affects. You also may put on any mask, change your age, sex, profession, nationality – construct your own virtual person. The participators of Net communication have nick-names. Virtual playing with names and masks can be compared with Medieval *carnival*, with its mixing of sacred and profane, up and down, clean and dirty. But if carnival is preparation to Lent, what do we think about *virtual carnival*, what do it prepare for us in future?

CODES OF COMPUTER ETHICS

Computer ethics firstly contain traditional human values. So rules and advices point on understandable sides of relations between people. The first code of computer ethics was designed, supposed, at 1979 in USA, when the necessity of regulation of informational processes appeared strongly, although the time of Internet was in future. Several principles were worked out as basic for codes.

1. The principle of *privacy* asserts the right of any person on freedom in private life, the right on defense from invasion into his life by state, authorities or another people. Simultaneously, it express the right on freedom of word, applying the liberal values to virtual field.

2. The principle of *accuracy* maintains accurate treating with systems, to have qualification in using computers and cultivating the information.

3. The principle of *property* means inviolability of private property, including intellectual property, the problem, grown up later when information become enormous and uncontrollable.

4. The principle of *accessibility* is necessary in informational society, because information transformed into the main treasure and the main force, so it must be acceptable for any person, at any time or place.(Mason, 1986).

New element in existence of man in modern world is *infosphere*. If traditional axiology sees the object of investigation only in relations between human beings, than in modern situation we assert the value of the technology itself and the value of the information. The actions of the user would be appreciated from the point of its influence on virtual environment. Kantian imperative now should be formulated as: your behavior in computer space must be example for imitation in all cyber society. Virtual reality distorts the perceptions between subject and object that is usually took place in life. The subject (user) does not correlate his actions with emotions or interests of his partners, does not feel moral regulators. His abstract partner may be treated by programming or “gaming”, not by living relations.

Informational society aspires to find acceptable forms of communication in virtual space. Cyber activity circulates all over the world, it is absolutely necessary to all countries, states, all ages and professions. Several patterns of codes of behavior in computer communication were suggested in 90-th years by American associations of managers and users of information technologies. “International federation on information technologies” (IFIP) recommended to receive *codes of computer ethics* to national organizations of another countries, correlating it with local cultural and ethnic traditions. Associations in different countries proposed another vision of computer ethics, according with national specific, but several points of moral imperatives were taken as general basic: (Dedyulina, 2007)

1) Not use a computer to harm other people.

2) Not cause interference, and does not interfere with the work of other users of computer networks.

3) Do not use files that are not intended for free use

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4) Do not use a computer to steal

5) Don't use your computer to spread false information

6) Do not use stolen software.

7) Not to assign the intellectual property of others.

8) Do not use the computer equipment or network resources without authorization or proper compensation

9) Think about the possible social consequences of the programs that you write, or systems that you are developing

10) Use a computer with self-limitations that show your thoughtfulness and respect for other people.

Informational societies in all countries are anxious with problem of moral and judiciary rights and duties of computer users. There is no practice of pleading a case, judges sometimes are not competent in computer terms, although it becomes more and more necessary to defend the information and personal rights of users. Administration of American President has special officer, responsible on researching computer crimes. Saint-Petersburg's technical universities prepare specialists, capable to solve cyber tests and conflicts in virtual world.

MEDIA CREATE SIMULACRA

Media technologies construct new realities with new forms of existence, radically transforming human conscious and perception of world. J.Boudrillard, French postmodern philosopher, sees the substitution by *simulacra* of real signs in modern culture.(Boudrillard, 2000) Informational society search not the real ways of cognition but constructing texts and hypertexts where real and virtual realities do not intersect. Cultural information is constructed according to principle of multimedia where associative links and contacts dominate, virtual reality organize another cognitive processes, not linear associative logic. In practice of TV and Internet this processes are named *clipping conscious.* Traditional culture demands attention to content, while reading book or looking film, you follow the author's ideas, agree or dispute with him, you receive the wholeness of text and participate in creating the senses. Entertaining programs, videoclips, advertisement suppose passive perception and consumption of readymade production.

The process of consumption in media reality was depicted and criticized by J.Boudrillard. His idea of *symbolic consumption* encoded the senses of moving goods, of motives for buying in modern world. We acquire things not because we need it but because we need *the status* of this acquisition. In media world it means substitution of real image to simulacra.

Transformation of image passes several stages.

1/ Image reflects reality.

2/Image masks or conceals but then distort reality.

3/ Image masks the absence of reality.

4/ Image has no reality and becomes its own simulacra. (Boudrillard. p.154) The last situation penetrates all space of modern life: politics, economy, art, ideolody, mode etc. Massmedia construct reality and compel listeners and spectators to believe. Political discussions are provided for presentations and public performance for creating an attractive image, give to spectators the illusion of truth.

M. Castells asserts, that people now consider media life more real, than their real environment. He supports well known definition of culture as the "*system of symbolic forms*"(Cassirer E.). M.Castells told, that culture is created by communications, which are based on producing and consumption of signs. Modern culture is named communicational and symbolic system that construct real virtuality, imitation of reality in media forms.(Castells, 132)

The mosaic of world constructed by media, include political, scientific, religious, artistic languages – looks like *ancient myth* with its syncretism. Mythology had the great force in organization and development of ancient people. Media reality is our new mythology, it makes unit with different kind of cognition, cultural and religious values, languages of art. In spite of its illusiveness media reality should become the force of changing and improvement our world.

The expression "media is message" may be translated in usual language as "*means is the purpose*". It is the continuation of very old dialectical problem. Firstly, in classical variant, "*the purpose justifies the means*" it was clear and understandable, that books serves education, the singing, dancing, cinema, theatre – are means for entertainment, all together organize human life and serve for the benefit of mankind. But the time comes, and confirms Hegel's dialectical formula "means can teach the purpose" or "means can change the purpose". Mass media transform the position, it becomes the purpose itself. May be the "canning of world's Mind", as it was mentioned above, search new method to organize human life?

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