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HOMO DIGITALIS AS AN EXAMPLE OF AN EXISTENTIAL CRISIS OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN MODERN SOCIETY

*This article examines the fundamental mechanisms of modern human sociocultural transformation in the context of digitalization. Particular attention is paid to **the problem** of the digital human as a result of the aforementioned processes, defining its characteristic features, and the mechanisms of its formation.*

***The purpose** of the scientific work is to study the Homo Digitalis in the existential plane of the collision of his positive / negative characteristics. **Tasks:** to consider the mechanisms of transformation of the human personality in the conditions of intensive development of digital technologies; to reveal the key characteristics of the Homo Digitalis; to determine the essence of the existential crisis of the Homo Digitalis.*

*The methodological basis of the work is the following **methods**: the method of analysis and synthesis, the synergistic method, the method of structural and functional analysis.*

***Results.** The article emphasizes that the digital man is a vivid embodiment of modern social existence. The main mechanisms of transformation of the human personality, which led to the emergence of such a phenomenon as a Homo Digitalis, are virtual identification, which leads to the loss of one's individuality, alienation of the individual and the dispersion of the personal in the conditions of the formation of network authenticity. The digitalization of society transforms the ontological essence itself, generating the basis of an existential crisis – on the one hand, it makes human life easier, rapidly changing, opens up alternative options where previously a person could only dream, to a digital representation of the surrounding world, on the other – to the emergence of an «ontological void» (alienation of corporeality), changes in the value system, the problem of the relationship between the public and the personal.*

***Key words:** virtual reality, existentialism, synergetics, Homo Digitalis, digital society, digitalization of society.*

Introduction. The rapid development of digital technologies today encompasses virtually all spheres of social life, inevitably attracting the attention of researchers in various scientific fields. Particular attention is **problem** to the anthropological factor, that is, the impact on humans and the changes they experience as a result of the transformation of living conditions. Virtual reality, or virtual reality in our time, is no longer something new, but is perceived as a familiar part of everyday life, a world where people's immediate needs are met and where they spend considerable time. This "world" for people is more of an absolute reality, real life, and stands on par with other key traditional institutions of socialization–family and school–becoming, in essence, a new institution for the socialization of the modern generation. In other words, the emergence of a fundamentally new type of information society and the development of network communications are radically changing the nature of socialization, viewed as informational socialization [11, p. 145].

It is interesting that modern researchers draw attention to the fact that the era of the New Man, the advent of which was predicted by the philosophers of the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and also F. Nietzsche, has already come. One of the decisive characteristics of the personality of the new man is called a decrease in attention, the ability to concentrate and memory loss, because thanks to the availability of information in young people, the need to retain it disappears [13, p. 140].

In this perspective, Semenenko A. notes that if during the first industrial revolution the innovative technology that changed the world was steam energy, then during the second – the conveyor, and during the third – the computer. Today we live in the era of the fourth industrial revolution, and it is digital. The Internet of Things and Big Data, machine learning and AI, analytics and robotics are the forces that force us to rethink how we do business, work, interact with customers and the world around us" [14, p. 103–104].

Ogorodniychuk Y., speaking about the fourth industrial revolution or "industry 4.0", emphasizes that the individual is alienated, and not only from his work. A person "does not find" himself in professional activity, since the work he performs is often not in accordance with nature. Everything comes down to automation, mechanization, robotization of human life processes, most of what is created by man does not belong to him [10].

For his part, Dzyoban O. also draws attention to existential uncertainty and risks. The scientist notes that modern man has to live without stable landmarks, long-term factors of order, and generally recognized authorities. There is a growing awareness that new cultural realities are no longer unambiguously "good" or "hostile"; they are ambivalent, since they carry not only obvious benefits, but also sometimes hidden dangers and vice versa [6, p. 10].

The sphere of law regarding the issue of the Homo Digitalis has also acquired a special significance. M. Airapetov notes that in the context of international humanitarian law, a person's digital avatar is considered as a tool for ensuring the rights and freedoms of the individual in conditions when traditional protection mechanisms are becoming less effective. During extreme situations, when the physical security of civilians is exposed to significant threats, a digital avatar can act as a regulatory carrier of human rights and freedoms – from the right to privacy to freedom of expression [1, p. 132].

Speaking about the legal foundations of the development of digitalization of society, Denisenko K. draws attention to the fact that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe since 2003 has issued more than 50 recommendations and declarations that apply the lens of human rights to various problem areas related to the use of digital technologies, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has issued a number of guidelines related to freedom of expression on the Internet, such as "Freedom of the Media on the Internet: Guidance by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe"; the United Nations Human Rights Council since 2012 has adopted a number of resolutions that confirm the protection of human rights on the Internet. The European Convention on Human Rights also regulates digital and information rights by enshrining such fundamental rights as the right to respect for private and family life (Article 8), freedom of expression (Article 10). It is worth noting that the European Convention provides for restrictions on these rights in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, to prevent the disclosure of confidential information or to maintain the authority and impartiality of the courts [7, p. 92].

Shapoval V. claims that the triumph of man in the modern information and digital era is that we have reached the level of a society of mass information consumption. But the tragedy is that people were not ready for such a rapid turn in the development of our civilization. There is a real risk of losing our humanity, turning not into spiritual beings, as the outstanding philosophers and religious thinkers of the past dreamed of, but into something like machines, homo technologicus, for whom not only higher spiritual needs disappear, but also the value of life itself. The usual state for such beings who have lost themselves is destruction, violence and war with themselves and the whole world [15, p. 56].

Thus, **the purpose** of the article is to study the Homo Digitalis in the existential plane of the collision of his positive / negative characteristics.

Tasks:

– to consider the mechanisms of transformation of the human personality in the conditions of intensive development of digital technologies;

– to reveal the key characteristics of the Homo Digitalis;

– to determine the essence of the existential crisis of the Homo Digitalis.

Research methods. The study of this problem requires the use of the following scientific methods: the method of analysis and synthesis (allowed us to reveal the main aspects of the emergence of a Homo Digitalis), the synergistic method (a Homo Digitalis is considered as a complex system that self-organizes in constant interaction with the virtual environment), the method of structural and functional analysis (allowed us to identify the key characteristics of a Homo Digitalis and determine the essence of his existential crisis).

Results and discussion. It is known that the term "digital native" was first used in 2001 by American writer Mark Prensky to refer to people born after the digital revolution, who live surrounded by computers, video games, video cameras, mobile phones (smartphones), networks, etc. and who are used to receiving information through digital channels. Observing schoolchildren and students of the 2000s, the researcher came to the conclusion that people born at the end of the last century are different from all others. M. Prensky proposed to call such people "digital natives" – speakers of their native digital language of computers, video games and the Internet. People born before this period, the scientist called "digital immigrants". According to Prensky's theory, no matter how hard they try, "immigrants" still have something like an "accent" – a kind of "echoes of the past", attempts to combine the latest possibilities with the old ones (for example, when a person confirms receipt of an email by phone or, instead of editing a text on a computer, prints it out and edits it by hand) [6, p. 11].

Indeed, since a person has involved digital devices in these processes, he has changed the usual mechanisms of perception and assimilation of information. And we are not talking about the technical difference between using a pen and a touch screen, a paper book and a tablet, but about significant changes in the formation and functioning of mental and psychophysiological processes inherent in a person – perception, attention, imagination, memorization, thinking. A touch or electronic screen, a computer mouse, a keyboard require skills that are different from those that a person uses in contact with a book, notebook, pen, etc., accordingly, they educate other skills, alternative to those that a person acquired earlier in the development process, and at the same time change the operations and connections in analyzers and signaling systems. Technologies change the structures of thinking and behavior of a Homo Digitalis compared to their predecessors, and the main principle feature of Homo Digitalis is the existence of a Homo Digitalis in an inseparable ontological system "person – gadget" [2, p. 18].

Thus, an important feature of a Homo Digitalis is seen – the philosophy of a Homo Digitalis builds its essence on the interaction between people and digital technologies. At the heart of this concept is the impact of the digital age on the individual, his perception of the world around him, interaction with others and self-determination. The identity of a Homo Digitalis is formed in the online space through social networks, digital platforms and interaction with various technologies. In essence, a Homo Digitalis faces the issue of privacy and security, as personal information becomes vulnerable to digital threats. Social interaction turns into online communication and virtual communities, which affects the formation of social relationships and mutual understanding [3, p. 26].

The above allows us to argue that in our time it is already necessary to distinguish between "non-virtual" and "virtual" human personalities. The new virtual personality that is being formed is revealed through self-awareness and self-correlation within the virtual reality itself. For this virtual personality, the images of the virtual world are not disembodied or allegorical, they are quite real, because they exist with it in the same space [11, p. 147]. In the digital space, a person has special anthropic characteristics, non-trivial identification and self-identification. And this is not surprising, since in the virtual space a person has the opportunity to change appearance, age, gender, etc. As D. Wang notes, in the new space there is a fact of increased individualization and at the same

time there is a clear manifestation of the manipulative nature of the new culture. In parallel, there is a break with communities of a religious, professional, age-related nature, etc., that is, with communities already familiar to a person. This is a rather complex process, as it allows us to note two essential lines. Firstly, the personal position is becoming weaker, because a person does not have those around him who can support him in the real world, there are no those who are the bearers of those values that strengthened his faith in himself and in his "I". Algorithms of actions, a certain behavior are imposed on a person, and therefore new intellectual efforts are required from a person and humanity in terms of defending his "I". Secondly, such a situation realizes the manipulative potential of digital culture. Natural social ties are lost, they are replaced by artificial ones. Artificiality lies not only in the ways of organizing communication processes, but also in their essence, where cultural certainty is replaced by technological programming. Making friends on the Internet without any physical and spiritual effort, putting up "likes" in support of those like you, rather than providing real support – this simplifies not only human relationships, it simplifies the person himself. Communication is formed for oneself and does not contribute to the creation of an environment favorable for the preservation and development of humanity. Such a person turns into a monosyllabic social atomic organism [4, p. 18].

A vivid example of the implementation of this idea was the fact that in 2007 the Gartner company developed a set of technologies for the Homo Digitalis and demonstrated a number of trends in the development of digital technologies at the International Scientific Symposium "IT Expo (Emerging Trends) Symposium" in Barcelona. In the same year, American entrepreneurs Josh Spear and Aaron Dignan introduced the concept of Born Digital ("digital from birth"), which later transformed into Digital Generation ("digital generation") [6, p. 11].

In order to understand the essence of the changes taking place in the anthropological environment, it is necessary to pay attention to the mechanisms of transformation of the human personality, which Semenenko A. cites:

1. Creating virtual avatars. In the digital environment, a person can have several identities at once, embodied in the form of avatars – characters in video games, profiles in social networks, virtual models in metaverses. This is how the so-called identity multiplication is formed, when a person receives many images, each of which performs a certain social function. In this case, identity becomes flexible, relational, adapted to a specific digital context.

2. Self-presentation in social networks. Social networks (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok or LinkedIn) offer tools for controlled self-presentation. Likes, comments, algorithmic visibility and digital popularity become not only forms of social capital, but also factors that influence self-esteem, a sense of identity and belonging.

3. Algorithmic practices of personalization. Algorithms of social platforms, search engines and marketing services personalize the user experience, creating so-called "filter bubbles" that affect what a person sees, reads, and is interested in. These algorithms not only respond to the user's behavior, but also shape his information field, reinforcing certain elements of identity – political views, consumer preferences, aesthetic tastes, etc. A person becomes an object of algorithmic influence, which partially deprives him of autonomous control over his own identity.

4. Digital corporeality and virtual presence. With the development of augmented and virtual reality (VR/AR) technologies, a new type of corporeality is emerging – a digital body that functions virtually, but affects the emotional, psychophysiological and social state of a person.

5. Archiving and digital traceability. Every action of a user on the network – message, photo, like, viewing history – is stored and forms a digital archive of the personality, which can be accessed, analyzed and represented in the future. Thus, identity becomes a temporal process, which is not limited to the "present self", but includes its digital past. This creates a new form of memory, where the individual appears as a product of an accumulated and structured digital history [14, p. 104–105].

Also, the synergistic aspect is important in the context of the interaction of a Homo Digitalis and a digital society, which is reflected at the level of self-organization and self-regulation of society. In this case, Voronkova V. argues that a digital society is a system that always has emergent properties

(special, unique), absent in individual elements and determined by a certain combination of a set of elements that interact with each other. From the same elements, a wide variety of systems can be formed, more or less stable (depending on the connections between them, the state of the external environment) in the context of searching for extraordinary creative solutions in the new digital era [5, p. 31].

Dzyoban O. identifies the following characteristics of a Homo Digitalis:

• a Homo Digitalis is formed as an information and knowledge carrier and an interpreter of a huge amount of information. Information is endowed with a certain subjective content in accordance with the purpose, turning into knowledge – the basis of development. Information is a resource for the realization of a person's intellectual abilities;

• in the cognitive sphere, there is a widespread increase in the value of the speed of perception and processing of information, often to the detriment of the depth of perception;

• a decrease in the need for training of working memory, which can be transferred to devices;

• mobile communication devices acquire the features of a "mental organ" taken outside: finding themselves without a gadget or mobile phone, a person feels helpless, deprived of memory and communicative function in general;

• a loss of interest in fundamental knowledge of the basics, being satisfied with superficial knowledge of problems, ignoring verification by experience and critical thinking; the formation of a special type of visual-figurative "clip" thinking, where the brightness and accessibility of the content is valued above its depth;

• the ability to obtain an almost unlimited amount of information in a relatively short period of time;

• virtualization of interpersonal contacts, which, on the one hand, facilitates communication, and on the other hand, creates the illusion of accessibility and ease of relationships;

• transformation of gadgets into an element of the subconscious, an individual external carrier of the collective unconscious;

• transfer of various types and methods of communication to the online sphere;

• increase in the number of pathologies due to envy due to a clearly expressed property stratification;

• identification of a Homo Digitalis occurs through a person's involvement in a particular sphere of information, virtual and social spaces;

• self-presentation of an individual on the Internet is carried out through a nickname, avatar, page on a social network, due to the freedom of their construction and attractiveness for users [6, p. 17-18].

In turn, Wang D., speaking about the characteristics of a Homo Digitalis, highlights the following important issues:

– the emergence of a new form of citizenship. This refers to the concept of network citizenship. And this is quite understandable, because on the one hand, the information society does not create a new society or space separate from the nation-state, but, on the other hand, in cyberspace it is difficult to distinguish the nationality and political affiliation of network users. In the network, modern national and political systems are no longer the most important reference systems for network users, and the identity of network citizens urgently needs to be defined;

– language, which has recently been in a state of transformation (syntactic and semantic shifts). Modern culture is moving from the dominance of language to the dominance of images, where people increasingly rely on images to understand and interpret the world. People are used to calling the modern era the "visual era", where the ubiquitous visual image covers all fields and traditional rules. Only that which can fully capture people's attention has power or influence. Widespread visual images profoundly change the form of many cultural events [4, p. 18–19].

Thus, a large-scale transformation of a person, his existence, spheres of his interaction and influence takes place. Digital man becomes increasingly dependent on virtual reality and digital space, which affects his self-acceptance, worldview, worldview. The development of virtual space builds a digital civilization, where human activity, interaction, self-expression and perceived reality are transformed. On the one hand, technologies contribute to the expansion of prospects for modern man, and on the other hand, they limit his freedom. Moreover, this happens gradually, algorithmically, systematically and imperceptibly for the individual himself [10]. In other

words, the simulation of social reality, which occurs as a result of the digitalization of society, leads to the fact that the real world recedes into the background, its place is taken by a "fake" safe and therefore attractive space: there is alienation from the natural world, which saves the human nervous system. The real world with its ideals and values is devalued, at the same time the influence of the virtual world becomes limitless: the individual turns into a one-dimensional homo virtualis, inextricably linked with the computer, a person with pseudo-passions and the same feelings and moral attitudes [12, p. 209].

Conclusions. The above-mentioned characteristics of the Homo Digitalis and the mechanisms of its transformation make it possible to assert that the Homo Digitalis is a vivid embodiment of modern social existence. The main mechanisms of transformation of the human personality, which led to the emergence of such a phenomenon as the Homo Digitalis, are virtual identification, which leads to the loss of one's individuality, alienation of the personality and dispersion in the personal in the conditions of the formation of network authenticity. To this should also be added the transformation at the cognitive level, cognition of the environment and awareness of one's essence, role.

This statement is quite justified, since the digitalization of society transforms the very ontological essence, generating the basis of an existential crisis – on the one hand, it corresponds to modern socio-cultural transformations, making human life easier, rapidly changing, opening up alternative options where previously only a person could dream of digital representations of the surrounding world, the emergence of an "ontological void" (alienation of corporeality), the system of values changes, which entails a change in attitude to the problem of life / death, the problem of the ratio of the public and the personal (the former comes to the fore, for example, in social networks life events are covered, which is supported by likes, etc.).

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ЦИФРОВА ЛЮДИНА ЯК ПРИКЛАД ЕКЗИСТЕНЦІЙНОЇ КРИЗИ ІНДИВІДУАЛЬНОГО В СУЧАСНОМУ СУСПІЛЬСТВІ

*Стаття присвячена дослідженню головних механізмів соціокультурної трансформації сучасної людини в умовах цифровізації суспільства. Особлива увага приділяється **проблемі** цифрової людини як результату зазначених процесів, визначенню її характерних рис та механізму формування.*

***Метою** наукової роботи є дослідження цифрової людини в екзистенційній площині зіткнення позитивних / негативних її характеристик. Розкриттю мети сприяло вирішення наступних **завдань**: розглянути механізми трансформації людської особистості в умовах інтенсивного розвитку цифрових технологій; розкрити ключові характеристики цифрової людини; визначити сутність екзистенційної кризи цифрової людини.*

*Методологічною основою роботи являються наступні **методи**: метод аналізу та синтезу (дозволив розкрити основні аспекти виникнення цифрової людини), синергетичний метод (цифрова людина розглядається як складна система, що самоорганізується у постійній взаємодії з віртуальним середовищем), метод структурного та функціонального аналізу (дозволив виявити ключові характеристики цифрової людини та визначити сутність її екзистенційної кризи).*

***Результати дослідження**. У статті наголошується, що цифрова людина виступає яскравим втіленням сучасної соціальної екзистенції. Основними механізмами трансформації людської особистості, яка призвела до появи такого явища як цифрова людина, виступає віртуальна ідентифікація, яка призводить до втрати своєї індивідуальності, відчуження особистості та розсіяння особистісного в умовах формування мережевої автентичності. До зазначеного слід також додати трансформацію на когнітивному рівні, пізнанні оточуючого середовища та усвідомлення своєї сутності, ролі. Цифровізація суспільства трансформує саму онтологічну сутність, породжуючи основу екзистенційної кризи – з одного боку вона відповідає сучасним соціокультурним трансформаціям, роблячи життя людини більш легким, швидко мінливим, відкриває альтернативні варіанти там, де раніше людина лише могла мріяти, цифровим уявленням навколишнього світу, з іншого – до появи «онтологічної пустоти» (відчуження тілесності), зміни системи цінностей, що тягне за собою зміну відношення до проблеми життя / смерті, проблеми співвідношення громадського і особистого (перше виходить на перший план, наприклад, у соціальних мережах висвітлюються події життя що підкріплюється лайками тощо).*

***Key words:** віртуальна реальність, екзистенційність, синергетика, цифрова людина, цифровізація суспільства.*