



FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SPIRITUAL WORLDVIEW OF AN INDIVIDUAL IN CYBERSPACE

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Abstract

This article examines the flaws that negatively affect the spiritual maturity of individuals in cyberspace, taking into account the ideological attacks that spread ideas of aggression, destruction, depravity, and immorality within the spiritual realm of individuals in today's globalization era.

Keywords: Digital technology, cyberspace, “virtual culture,” entertainment environment, modern society, “mass culture.”

Introduction

In today's world of rapidly developing digital technologies, the dimensions and definitions of global reality are fundamentally changing and permeating all aspects of human life. The individual's spiritual culture manifests both in the real and virtual realms. The virtual world, now referred to as cyberspace, is being conceptualized as a “new environment” for modern human existence.

Recently, the term “virtual” has extended beyond the confines of computer science and IT. Previously unfamiliar combinations like “virtual corporation,” “virtual currency,” “virtual democracy,” “virtual education,” and “virtual culture” have now become common. Socially, cyberspace refers to a community of people who are interconnected through computer networks and entangled in graphical data from computers across different geographic locations.

The term “cyberspace” derives from “cyber” and spatial concepts. As French philosopher Henri Lefebvre stated, “Each society creates its own space” [1, p. 45]. In the late 20th century, a stereotypical ideological narrative emerged with cyberspace, encompassing three utopian dominants: hedonism, escapism, and the desire to transcend emotional reality. As a result, any interactive entertainment



environment created by computer technologies became associated with "cyber fantasy."

Cyberspace functions as a semiotic realm where operations with signs are carried out using modern technologies that facilitate and accelerate mental activity. It helps identify and explore new methods for achieving universal goals.

Today's global socio-economic transformations have led not only to modernity but also to the cultural dominance of space over time. Communication is almost instantaneous, and time-saving technologies divide time into nearly zero-length segments. In the 21st century, technology is becoming a universal tool for meeting human needs and a key component of youth culture. However, if technology attempts to replace culture itself, it may lead to the loss of worldviews in the medium term.

If we, as professionals in social, political, and economic spheres, remain indifferent to cyberspace and cyberterrorism—which are beginning to influence global geopolitics—what will become of the future? What will we tell the next generation? The emergence of global network societies during the information revolution is a serious concern for experts. These groups refer to themselves as “Cyber International NET,” “Children of the Internet,” or “Netizens,” and in some countries, they form political forces opposing official narratives via digital platforms.

The “spiritual food” offered in virtual spaces slowly erodes personal identity, weakens moral responsibility, and replaces rationality with raw emotion. Such individuals become gullible, mimicking celebrities and falling prey to advertising and manipulation.

One of the most prevalent threats in cyberspace is “mass culture.” Its core element, “pop psychology,” erodes youth's sense of responsibility toward society, family, and nation. Its foundation is the belief that everything—including health and life itself—can be bought for profit [2, p. 3]. The internet and digital television, acting as today's informal “educators,” are spreading this negative influence globally.

It is crucial to note that the individualism promoted by the West has no connection to genuine human individuality or identity. Instead, it aims to suppress national uniqueness. Critically analyzing the information society, Herbert Schiller argued that information dissemination benefits only when people become a passive “herd.” Mass culture easily influences its audience through aggressive tactics.



V.M. Mezhuev, discussing the “cosmopolitanism of modern mass society,” noted that while one may join this culture, preserving national identity becomes impossible [3, p. 267]. We agree and believe that mass communication technologies manipulate consumers and substitute real-life experiences with artificial ones.

“Mass culture” distracts individuals from real life and its challenges, replacing them with artificial, virtual ones—even in personal relationships. Alienation is growing, while genuine friendship, communication, and interpersonal bonding—especially among youth—are diminishing. Social interaction now occurs primarily on the Internet, where individuals express themselves through online platforms.

Our president has acknowledged the threats posed by such spiritual degradation, stating: "If we think that the threat of 'mass culture' only comes from the West, we are deeply mistaken. This danger can also emerge from within. Observing some locally produced newspapers, magazines, books, music videos, TV shows, and dances, it is clear that we face a serious challenge. Therefore, we must combat ignorance with enlightenment, educate youth to understand true art, and shape their aesthetic worldview on a sound foundation." [3, p. 267].

We agree with this perspective. Influential factors in cyberspace must be shaped based on ethical and religious values, and strict state control should be established. Youth should develop digital literacy about cyberspace, and the term itself should be added to dictionaries. Classes on Internet usage should be incorporated into educational curricula, and based on each discipline’s specific needs, relevant topics about cyberspace should be developed.

The threats in cyberspace are so universally harmful that they can severely impact not only individuals’ worldviews but also social stability, national peace, public opinion, and the cultural, political, and economic growth of nations. Distinguishing between useful and harmful information requires a developed consciousness and strong will, which most populations may not fully possess.

Conclusion: Mass culture is pushing out real-life experiences and replacing them with virtual interaction. The spiritual threats in cyberspace are vast. Among the primary ones are:

Firstly, threats to individual life, identity, dignity, spirituality, and national character.

Secondly, threats aimed at the moral decline, collapse, and cultural extinction of the nation.



Thirdly, politicized and commercialized spiritual threats that hinder national development.

To protect the spiritual worldview of individuals, nations must prioritize education, awareness, and value-based digital governance.

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