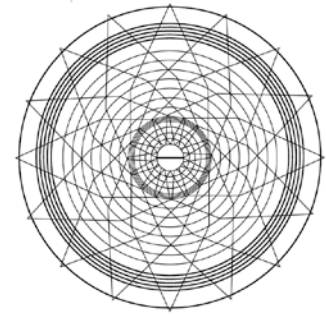


[Scientific Articles]

Kozyakova M.

Magic of screen culture



MAGIC OF SCREEN CULTURE

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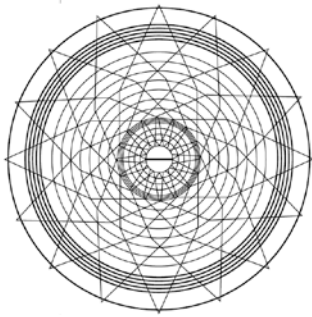
Abstract:

With the many centuries long history, from protective devices to the final element of complex electronic devices, the screen now appears as a symbol of the information age. The screen returns human civilization to the archaic magic, directly experienced sensations of the world. The following article describes the evolution of the screen, the formation of screen culture and its components, the virtuality and the imagery of contemporary media with the aim of exploring the actualization of archaic, the connection between the screen culture and the magic.

Keywords: screen, screen culture, magic, imagery, mythologism, cinema, television

The spread of new technologies radically changes the living environment of a person, his / her behavioral stereotypes, especially concerning the creation of a new virtual space. Virtualization becomes a sign of the time, a feature of global discourse. In the well-known work "The Medium is the Massage: the Inventory of Effects" M. McLuhan notes neo-archaic trends associated with the development of electronic technologies: "We have begun again to structure the primordial feeling, the tribal emotions from which a few centuries of literacy divorced us"[cit: McLuhan, 345]. Despite the ambiguity of the McLuhan concept of acoustic and visual communicative space, his prediction about the archaic trends made half a century ago, can be considered as justified.

Whether we now live in a "global village " is a debatable issue, although the deny of rationalism and determinism, Euro- and ethnocentrism, like any centrality in principle, pessimism about technological and social progress are typical features of the postmodern situation. At the same time, the artificial reality created by the latest technologies, modeling, and transformation of this reality, aesthetic experimentation constitute the most important modus of postmodern practice. The virtual world is increasingly invading a human habitable space, defining the realities of life: we all "live inside a Universal computer." Based on the synthesis of computer and video equipment, means of communication and channels of information transmission, screen



[Scientific Articles]

Kozyakova M.

Magic of screen culture

culture is formed. Its central element, the assemblage point that combines technical and semantic resources, materializes and broadcasts audiovisual content, is the screen.

The screen was once a simple reflective, enclosing surface, something like a shield, barrier, screen – cloth stretched on the frame – like, for example, the screen at the fireplace, the dam walling. With the development of technology, the functional purpose of the screen is expanded, however, maintaining its value of the plane, an object designed to protect human or technical devices from uncomfortable, harmful or dangerous effects of the environment – such as noise screens. Moreover, screen acquires new essential functions, relate to the energy conversion: this is a variety of thermal, electric, magnetic, and other types of screens. However, the screen gets its most important, qualitatively different content, its new ontological modus, along with the development of electronic technology. It becomes a device for displaying images, to demonstrate a visual series that reflects a specific space located outside the visible environment.

Inside the modern screen, a different virtual world is born, and the screen itself serves as a boundary connecting our (real) and other ("beyond the screen") world. The observer is separated from it by a screen barrier and, stopping in front of it, can penetrate "through the looking-glass," touch it only visually, although modern technology provides sound: it can be heard. The screen of the phone, the TV, the computer monitor serve for providing information, representing the most important means and at the same time a condition of its receiving. Large and small, huge movie screens and electronic scoreboards, which are installed in places of large gatherings of people; small displays of GPS and mobile phone; TV screens and computer monitors; displays of ATMs and payment terminals, street advertising – they surround us everywhere, mediating our everyday communication.

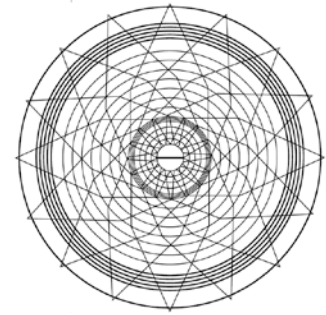
On-screen media make it possible to exchange information on a regular basis: events from different regions, gaining fame far beyond the local points, become a part of the flow of world news. The visualized information becomes available; the single information field is formed. Forming a new mentality of the consumer, intensification of information contacts leads to shifts in mass consciousness. Social relations are increasingly defined and mediated by information: the population needs regular access to its principal counterparty, communicator, mediator – to the screen. "To live in society," to be included in public life means the practice of regular connection to information flows, consumption (i.e., perception, assimilation, use) of information passing through the screens. This does not require much effort. Press the button to switch on the TV, phone, turn on the computer-information consumption – all these actions are passive to a certain extent, they do not involve significant costs of physical or spiritual energy. However, the status of the consumer is changing dramatically. An Autonomous entity becomes an object of the influence of electronic audiovisual technologies, placing it in the space of mass culture.

The raw stream of reality passing through mass media channels is somehow verbalized and visualized. It becomes a subject of coding, selection processing,

[Scientific Articles]

Kozyakova M.

Magic of screen culture

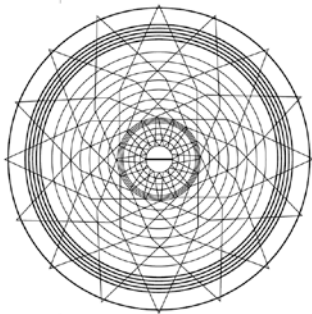


ranked according to specific political, ideological or commercial purposes. Pursuing them, the media create their product – mythologems and myths of mass culture are actively introduced into the consciousness of the recipient, forming the phenomenon of "false consciousness." Models and signs of the real world obscure a representative object, separate from it. They acquire their own lives, often poorly correlated with the reality that gave rise to it. The new Universum of communications fills the virtual space with phantoms called simulacra – meaning without meaning.

Evolving during the centuries from a primitive and straightforward protective device to the final element of the most complex electronic devices, the screen appears as a metaphysical embodiment of the modern type of culture, as a symbol and synonym of the information era. The information age started not with computerization and the Internet, and "mass" culture – that claimed by M. Castells not without reason; the mass culture in the postwar period of the XX century was based mainly on the on-screen system: for film, TV, video [6, p. 316]. M. McLuhan noted the same relationship: "Printing technology created the public. Electronic technology has created a lot of" [9, p. 346]. Electronic equipment provided with a screen becomes the material bearer of a new type of culture, its various forms: artistic, scientific, every day. It is the screen that turns out to be the central representative of audiovisual content, not only in entertainment, communication but also in the business sphere, ensuring the provision of professional information – testimony, information, data, references, notices, notifications, etc. The screen in the workplace has long become a sign of the times: "We can debate whether our society is a society of representation or simulation, but surely it is a society of the screen"[10, p. 55].

Modern screen inherits many properties of its historical prototypes – technical devices, spaced from our time for 200-300 years. They allowed organizing the entertainment, which was popular in XVIII and XIX centuries – representations with the "magic lantern," a diascope, a primitive projector. Moreover, one goes deeper into history and can find analogs of the first screen devices – in the Windows of the prospects of Alberti. During the Renaissance, by L. B. Alberti was the first theorist of the Central perspective. He claimed that the picture is like a window through which we look at the part of the visible world: "First, where I have to draw a picture, I draw a quadrilateral with right angles of the size I want, and take it for an open window, where I consider what will be written on it" [1, p. 29].

The linear perspective of the Renaissance for many years determined the specifics of the new European painting, as well as it fixed the format, which later began to offer visual information. A rectangle with a longer side along the horizontal axis corresponded to the "landscape" format, in which landscapes should be depicted, as well as scenes relating to the historical, everyday, battle genre; the opposite format – with a longer side along the vertical axis, was called "portrait", which corresponded to the content of this type of paintings. Both of these formats inherit the modern screen – as before, it is a "window into the world," a rectangle with a flat surface, designed for frontal perception. To replace the screen with a static image – the so-called "classic" (L. Manovich) – comes the "dynamic," so the screen projects motion.



The evolution of the screen is determined by technological development, and the very possibility of transition from a stationary, static, to a moving picture was directly related to the success in the development of electronic technology. Thus the screen culture is formed, and thus it comes deeper and deeper into all the spheres of society.

The phenomenon of screen culture does not have its established academic definition yet. Moreover, even in dissertations on the subject, the authors do not give a clear statement, approaching this phenomenon through various indirect mediation: "Informatization of culture is not only as a result of the use of information technology in the field of culture but as a precondition for further development of the information society... an essential element of the information culture is a screen culture – production, storage and broadcasting of cultural valuables in audiovisual form with the screen technical means." [7] This passage immediately provokes the question: do technical screen means produce, store and broadcast only "cultural values"? How can we deal with that vast array of chaotic, not always decent information, advertising, engaged and incompetent primitives that can be met on the Internet, present on television channels?

Another definition, which has become somewhat typical, cannot be considered satisfactory either: "Screen culture is a system whose constituent elements are cinema, television, video and computer cultures." [7] It is obvious that the definition of a phenomenon cannot be based on the listing of the constituent elements of the phenomenon, especially since the individual "cultures" mentioned above represent only a particular sphere, an integral part of the information (screen) continuum, and their different scale, co-subordination or ordination can be debatable.

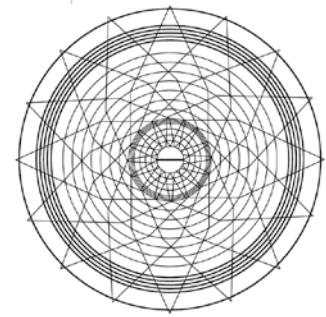
Much more meaningful is the approach proposed almost thirty years ago in the article "Culture of the coming Millennium" (authors A.V. Prokhorov, K. E. Razlogov, V. D. Ruzin), designated as "preliminary definition of the screen culture": "By it we mean the type of culture, the main material carrier of the texts of which is not writing, but "screen". This culture is based ... on a system of on-screen (planar) images, ... on so-called "screen speech," that is, on a temporary stream of screen images that freely accommodate the behavior and oral speech of the characters, animation modeling, written texts and more. At the same time, the main feature of the screen culture... is dynamic, changing every second, conversational character of the relationship between the screen text and the partner." [15]

Of course, the text mentioned in this quote should be understood as the intertext of Y. Kristeva and R. Barthes, or as T. Nelson's hypertext, which is actively used by many postmodern theorists; the difference in their interpretations are not fundamental here. However, the following is fundamental in this context: screen civilization becomes "image-oriented, focused on the visual image" (U. Eco). Noting this feature, Umberto Eco, appealing to M. McLuhan, indicates that he already had this idea in 1960-s, when in "The Gutenberg Galaxy" he wrote about a different type of perception – "hyperception." Global perception through television images and other electronic means replaces the linear mode of thinking that prevailed after the invention of printing. [18]

[Scientific Articles]

Kozyakova M.

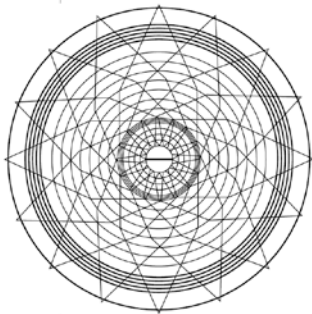
Magic of screen culture



Screen culture is formed by means of communication and channels of information transmission, computer, and video equipment – technical means for recording, processing, storage and playback of video and audio information, including cinema and television. Their incorporation, synthesis, forming with the development of electronic technology, took various forms over the past century. The history of screen culture begins with the appearance of cinema: the brothers O. and L. Lumiere, the first session of cinema in Paris on December 28, 1895. The first silent documentary short films – "Release the workers from the factory gates," "Card Game," "Feeding baby," the comic episode "The Sprinkler Sprinkled"; among them was the famous film "Arrival of a Train," which caused a panic reaction. As Andrei Tarkovsky wrote calling this movie brilliant, the last one was recorded simply because the camera, film, and projector were invented. And yet it was not just a technique or a new way of reproducing the world. A new aesthetic principle was born: for the first time in the history of art, for the first time in the history of culture, a person found a way to capture time directly.[17, p. 121-122]

Time, its fixation, stopping, saving, its special accentuation, interpretation, preparation, the ability to create author's rhythm, event series, or just carefully consider any fragment, episode, arbitrarily taken out and again released in an unstoppable time stream. Find what is important, what has not been seen by others and, finally, share it with the viewer – is the quintessence of cinema. Its beginning was revolutionary. Ingeniously simple – time caught by the screen: young, newly born cinema genotype, probably can be compared with the modern translation of a football match, with the repetition of the goal scored. It is the repetition, just repetition, and not the scoring moment itself. It is repetition and only, but the viewer has the opportunity to "stop" time, that is, to manage, to master it. Of course, "control" is notional, and the time fragment will relate to the virtual time, but it can be perceived by the viewer as well as its real prototype. The latter belongs to "our," coming to us, passing and transient, disappearing reality, but its repetition gives us the opportunity to feel its observers turned off from the action itself. Metaphysically, it is not only observation, but also "mastery" of time, although the direct perception of screen products is not logical, but mostly emotional.

Getting emotions and affect from the screen creation is real, but it is only an appearance, fiction. Something illusory, captivating the audience, is having a real effect, brings the mysterious ability to influence people is the screen "magic." The viewer gets the opportunity to be present in other worlds, he or she "doubles," acquires a different "life," different from his or her own. Moreover, these "lives" can be as many as one likes. Our contemporary is accustomed to virtual life and takes it casually. A direct sense of presence in a different space and time is almost lost, a sense of presence in a different reality, which occurs when watching a good movie, when a viewer is immersed in his illusion – it is not about special ways to create a 3D effect. However, the viewer of the first movies felt the effect of the presence directly, especially the reaction of the audience to the film "The arrival of the train" is indicative,



[Scientific Articles]

Kozyakova M.

Magic of screen culture

even being at a particular stage mythologized, as the researchers of the history of cinema insist.

The original principle of the cinematography, cinematograph numeroscope was the ability with maximum precision to record reality – “everything like in real life.” Later in the audiovisual culture appears an opposition to O. and L. Lumiere. A call is thrown by “Jules Verne of the screen” – professional magician, poet Jean Méliès declares a different motto “no such thing in real life.” The reality of life, as presented in the film, gets the interpretation and evaluation, is transformed following the author's plan. Cinema, of course, is a synthetic art that uses the creative potential of other, older arts: literature and music, painting and architecture, choreography and theater. At first, attention was paid mainly to literature: scenes of literary works and their characters were staged; at the same time began to use special techniques of shooting, there appeared close-ups and editing.

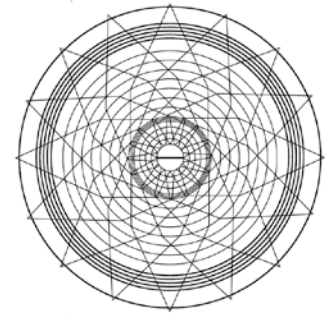
Cinema of the first three decades – “the great dumb”: the absence of sound was considered as a specific feature of screen art of this time. During the heyday of silent movies in the 1920s, many great artists began to work: Eisenstein, V. Pudovkin, A. Dovzhenko, C. Chaplin. The lack of sound was compensated by plastic expressiveness of the acting, which is known as the main feature of the actor's work of this period. The “dumbness” of the film ends in the late 20's-early 30s: when the sound film production starts. A new era opens the American movie “The Jazz Singer” (1928): the average artistic level of this work did not prevent it from making a real revolution in cinematography. Sound movies (“talkies”) receive an enthusiastic reception, sound cinema became a mania, but at the same time, it caused a split in opinions, the opposition among the recognized masters of cinema. So, Chaplin sharply opposed: “I hate talking movies, they appeared to spoil the most ancient art of the world – the art of pantomime; they destroy the great beauty of silence»; “talking” movies that aim to connect the dramatic convention with the realism of the movie, are ugly.” [16] The leading masters – S. Eisenstein, V. Pudovkin, and others also condemned the implementation of sound in movies.

These views after many decades seem strange because sound cinema has created new opportunities for creativity and, of course, enriched cinema. However, for their time they were significant because the imperfection of the sound differed from the virtues of the “great mute” and masters essentially were not against the new features of cinema, but against innovations that disavowed and replaced the real art, against the new fashion of mass culture. Sound, screen speech denies the presumption of cosmopolitanism of screen environment, returns the right to national languages, and with them in the cinema inevitably penetrates national specificity, reflecting the archetypal traits of a nation, especially its worldview, value orientations, its mythology, and ideology. So, American cinema typically uses the screenwriting formula of “happy end” (Griffith's “lucky escape at the last moment”) that reflect, albeit in a highly mediated form, basic progressive, vital installation American archetype, while European cinema is not always drawn to this model.

[Scientific Articles]

Kozyakova M.

Magic of screen culture

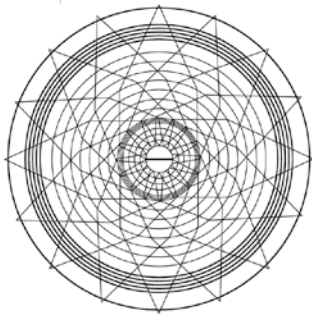


The next stage in the development of screen culture is the emergence of television, which became widespread in the United States in the second half of the 1940s – the first half of the 1950s (in Western Europe in the 1950s). The TV is a brother of the cinema, but it is distinguished by the essential communicative features – broadcast ability and domestication. The TV can transmit events in real time, monitor and observe the changes that happen – a feature that cinema does not have, as it always broadcasts only the past, the reality captured once and for all. TV, as a “vision at a distance,” embodies the marginal speed of dissemination of information, coherence, the ability to create an “effect of presence” for the recipient. Thus, there is a third type of screen – real-time screen. His technical predecessor was the radar that tracked the position of the object in space: “In the case of radar, we see for the first time the widespread use of... a fundamentally new type of screen, a screen that is gradually beginning to occupy a dominant position in modern visual culture – a video monitor, a computer screen, tool display.” [10, p. 59]

The second feature of TV is related to its focus on home consumption. The home screen is free from conventions unlike the big screen of the cinema assuming a rigidly fixed position of the viewer, demanding from him or her concentration and submission to the screen plot: these conditions are not only dictated by generally accepted norms of behavior but also objectively are necessary for receiving pleasure from the movie. (First of all, it is supposed to be a pleasure, aesthetic pleasure, because it is a work of art, although perhaps the movie may be not an artistic, but more a commercial product). Besides, the place of demonstration of the movie, the cinema belongs to the public space.

With the TV everything is different: it is probably the most “home” of all screen technical devices: unlike a laptop or smartphone it does not “accompany” its owner in his or her movements; unlike a stationary home computer, it is less addressed to the business sphere of life. Having confidently settled down in the house, in its Central part, it gathers around family members; it is the family center which replaced in this function the family hearth. The TV can be just turned on as a background; a viewer can ignore it, or pay attention only from time to time when it is convenient; We can watch the TV while curling on the sofa or, conversely, on the run, passing, doing other things. It is vitalized, it turns into a kind of living creature – attracting attention and creating comfort, it is always at the service.

The TV has surpassed cinema on prevalence and availability: cinema art is still the same “art,” despite all the conditionality of nomination in this status of separate works, despite all commercialization of this sphere, while television is not only and not so much art, but more the information channel. Television communication is intended, as a rule, for a vast, global audience, with all the ensuing features. It must meet the mass of the “average” viewer with his or her classified views primarily, with his or her tautology and “omnivorous” (V. Benjamin), that characterize the mass reception. Producing mass culture in non-stop mode, modern television – terrestrial, cable, satellite, Internet television – makes a significant contribution to the formation of the global media environment.



Technical progress has a decisive influence on the further evolution of screen, it was associated with the improvement of the technology of cinema, television, with the advent and proliferation of video on various technical media (cassette, laser disc, etc.) The development of technology during the second half of the 20th century gives rise to large-scale innovation – the computer revolution. The computer, with the screen as an invariable attribute of electronic media technology, acquires new functions – it can be a device for writing or reading, for collecting information, a game module or a translator of movies and music. The screen of the computer is exacting; it demands active actions from the "vis-a-vis." There is a dialogue between man and machine, the effect of communication "interface" – interactive communication, which also operates via the screen. Working with a computer, the user must perform certain actions, monitor the result – these actions are different from the "work" with the TV (of course, except for the "labor" of switching buttons on the TV remote).

The computer creates conditions for the largest, fundamental transformation of the end of the century – the birth of the Internet, which has become the mainstream of technological, social and humanitarian development. It is difficult to list all the new opportunities, practices, technological solutions and improvements that have occurred in the World Wide Web over the last quarter of a century – its history is "fantastic both regarding the pace of changes and in their content" (E. Dukov). However, the Internet is not just a communication technique and the rules of its use, but also people who somehow know the technique and try to learn to speak its language. [4, p. 94] Our contemporary interacts with the computer screen not only for entertainment, leisure time, but also uses it as a working tool necessary to obtain information in their professional activities, as well as for educational purposes.

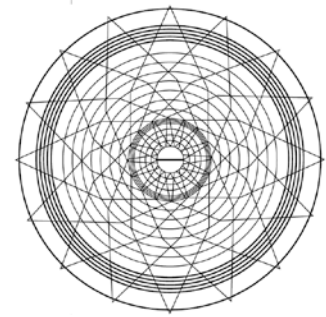
The development of screen culture and computerization has a dual and contradictory impact on society. One positive aspect is cultural diversity, which is reflected, inter alia, in the Universal Declaration of UNESCO: "Cyberspace is not only an environment for the existence and dissemination of information but also a means of communication and exchange of views. The diversity of information on different cultures and values on the Internet allows a person while remaining a bearer of his culture, to represent it to other people, and in turn, to get acquainted with other cultures and to experience their influence." [8] In the modern era, thanks to the global computer communication systems, access to information is expanding, the world becomes united and interconnected, but its cultural diversity is also preserved. Especially valuable is the acquisition of new opportunities for communication, new degrees of freedom, that are associated with personal access to the global information environment.

The global media environment and the screen, as its principal mediator, play a crucial role in the democratization of culture: screen culture cannot be limited to state, national, confessional, other frameworks and barriers. It is available to all who have the appropriate technical device and access to the network, with minimal skills of the computer usage. The Internet space becomes a space of free communication, creates equal opportunities in the introduction to cultural values, in access to the

[Scientific Articles]

Kozyakova M.

Magic of screen culture



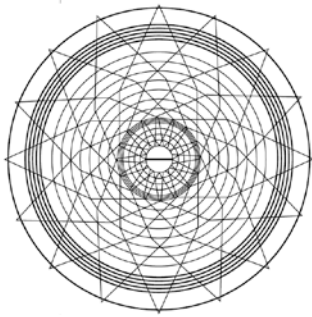
treasures of museums and libraries, collections and repositories. This is an opportunity to get acquainted with a considerable number of artistic creations – movies and performances, musical works. Finally, it is just a psychotherapeutic function, stabilization of emotional, affective background of its users, which is vital in a situation of risks and threats of all kinds.

The culture associated with the screen also has negative characteristics. Initially set by the technique, effect of presence involves the presumption of validity of a virtual picture offered. Gradually, it lost its authentic characteristics, acquiring the possibility of a more profound and more comprehensive distortion of reality. However, the drift itself, removing the observer from the original narrative, occurred so imperceptibly, that the deviation, substitution of certain aspects did not cancel its original status. Even global reconstruction, falsifying factual material, could not shake the recipient's subjective perception of its reliability: thus, the effect of the reality of audiovisual images turned into a mechanism of global falsification.

In a fundamentally new ontological reality, the artistic culture experiences inevitable losses: the practice of technical reproduction (Benjamin) blurs the line between the copy and the original and the work of art loses its aura of the only and unique. Replication, which eliminates the artistic value of the artifact, is spreading especially widely, along with the increasing usage of digital computer technology. The omnipotence of the multimedia sphere calls into question the artistic status of the creation and the Creator. New features of screen technology enrich the palette of artistic practices, but whether they serve to create masterpieces – ask art critics: “Those works that were born in the multimedia environment – can we call it art?”

A screen that forms public opinion can and does result that people are being manipulated. Of course, first and foremost there was a goal to command and control the “silent majority”: manipulations were addressed to the “bottom” of the society, to a mass audience. It focused on certain social and cultural stereotypes, patterns presented as the most prestigious, elite models. The totality of the screen divided society into two unequal groups: powerful elite and “all others” – the passive majority. Twenty years ago, the criterion proposed by U. Eco was relevant: “in the nearest future our society will split – or has already split – into two classes: those who watch only television, so that receive ready-made images and ready judgments about the world, without the right to critically select the information received, and those who look at the computer screen, that is, those who are able to select and process information.”[18]

Now Internet technologies have simplified so much that even those who “look at the computer screen” are not all able to “select and process information”, because the computer revolution, according to experts, can lead and to some extent already leads to a decrease in the intellectual, cultural level of people, to a certain extent – to reduction of literacy. Thus, with the development of all sorts of devices that facilitate our lives, humanity in its mass does not have to acquire many skills previously required: with the spread of the calculator, for example, the need for oral account skills sunk into the past and now workers dealing with calculations, including bank



[Scientific Articles]

Kozyakova M.

Magic of screen culture

employees, accountants, sellers, cashiers do not always consider it necessary to know the multiplication table.

Orientation on the visual image, McLuhan hyperception weakens logical potential, abolishes the cognitive features and rationalism of the Western type of thinking. It is significant that at the suggestion of American sociologists this type of people in the literature received an unpleasant definition “vidiots,” the meaning of which is clear without detailed comments. Another aspect is the selection of a new ideology of “techno-fundamentalism”, the emergence of new forms of violence — “virtual violence.” It can be groups that incline young people, teenagers to suicide, to dangerous adventures like the popular quest activities, some pornographic sites. There are numerous examples of the use of the web by terrorist organizations, a criminal who creates fraudulent commercial schemes – the Internet can be unsafe.

The screen makes visible a different reality, distant from the direct perception, whose substance is ephemeral since it is enclosed in the plane of the screen. The moment of its existence is brief, although the brevity is expressed here not in temporal characteristics, in a subject: the time of its existence correlates with the time of spectator attention – the screen reality is ontologized through representation, presenting it to observers. It becomes visible to a specific audience, and it is the only way to reveal its status, that is closely related to the consciousness and perception of the subject. Screen visualizes pieces, that is not apparent in the presence of “here and now,” and therefore for this locus “screen” is not an objective reality, although it is perceived externally as a “new way of reproducing the world” (A. Tarkovsky). The characteristic related to the effect of cinema can be extended on the entire screen sphere: “from the impression of reality to the reality of impression.” It is the perception, and the experience constitutes the last, the ultimate reality, or rather the lack of it, manifested with the procession of simulacra, preserving the outward appearance of the objective representation of artifacts.

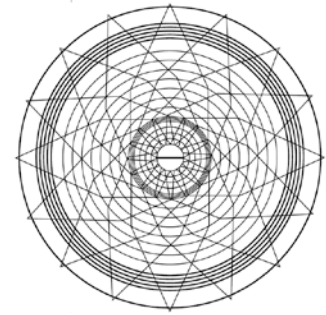
The world screen is an illusory, artificially constructed world, that is based on the fiction of its Creator, and that is what makes it magical, even though it shows the nearby staircase and the events there. The world of the screen in this respect is magical – from the Latin *magia* or the Greek *mageia*, which translates as witchcraft, magic, because the Creator of screen reality, as in cinema, uses a set of special creative techniques to build (transfer, transform) it. Thus he can demonstrate his own, “author's,” to a certain extent “man-made” illusory world created by him or her for the audience. Interesting and indicative in this respect are the names that are connected with the history of the modern screen. His distant ancestor – the projection apparatus (lantern) – was called the “magic lantern,” and the cinema, like cinematography, was called once “illusion.”

The magic of the screen can be interpreted in another, figurative aspect as the power of the screen, which has an extraordinary effect on people. It includes an element of the suggestive impact that contains something “unseen, the ineffable,” as once defined “suggestion” theorist of symbolism S. Morris. More than for the creative work of the symbolists, suggestion becomes a key feature of the screen art: the latter

[Scientific Articles]

Kozyakova M.

Magic of screen culture



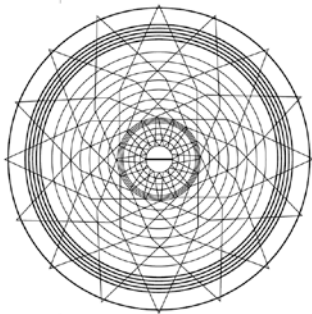
with much more reason can be called “the product of suggestive magic” than “the pure art,” to paraphrase C. Baudelaire. The very suggestion can be attributed to the modern aesthetic categories, although the aesthetics in this context is secondary: it is true that the impact of the dynamic screen is magical and inexplicable – moving pictures attract attention, capture viewers, who can monitor what is happening on the screen only because there’s just something going on.

Magic action can have not only a screen but also a spectacle, especially correlated with art. Figurative sense of magical action is most often interpreted as a feature of the sphere of art; it is “high magic”: so, this mysterious effect is devoted to written by S. Eisenstein in Moscow in October 1944 note, called "Magic of art." He writes: “Magic is not an empty phrase. As the art (real art) artificially returns the viewer to the stage of sensuous thinking – of its norms and types, and it is the stage of magical relationship with nature. When you have achieved, par exemple, a synesthetic fusion of sound and image, you have put the viewer's perception into a sensual thinking environment where synesthetic perception is the only possible – there is no differentiation of perception yet... feeling and consciousness in that case – submissive and manageable almost in the form of trance. Moreover, the passive-magical state of receiving art at the same time – actively-magical in the ownership and management of the viewer by a magician-Creator.”[21]

One can become the victim of the magic; it can turn into an addiction. For example, T. L. Shchepkina-Kupernik writes about it in her memoirs “Theater in my life”: “I forever fell under the power of this special feeling — "magic theater.” This statement is given in various dictionaries as an example of the figurative meaning of the word “magic,” although the screen dependence is not necessarily associated with art. Separated from the artistic sphere, the magic of the screen can reasonably be interpreted as a pale profaned likeness of the sublime, romantic sense of admiration for art. Nevertheless, it is much stronger in its impact, broader concerning audience coverage, for example, in television advertising, in the media information sphere. Rather, it can be defined as the effect of fascination, arising from the perception of audiovisual products.

Magic, as an ancient human phenomenon, goes through all ages, through ontologization by all nations, repeated, revived, reconstructed at each new phase of history. This is not only the oldest form of perception of the world, reflected in the form of remnants of archaic rituals, myths, ideas, and rituals, as interpreted by J. Frazer in his classic work “Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion.” In Ancient Greece under the magic was understood as the sum of the mysterious rituals associated with astrology, folk medicine, fortune-telling. The notion of magic was widely used in philosophical schools, such as the non-Pythagorean, Neoplatonic school, and it was not identified with enchantment: magic was esoteric knowledge and practice. Some magical practices were borrowed by Christianity, such as worship of relics, Holy places, and religious attributes.

In the Middle centuries in Europe, the magical consciousness of the masses was pronounced – many scholars mediaevalists describe the corresponding moods and



rituals. However, it is also the consciousness of the intellectuals: Francis of Assisi, Teresa of Avila, Meister Eckhart, German and Spanish mysticism has continued this tradition in the Middle Ages; M. Ficino, J. Bruno, J. Pico Della Mirandola, T. Campanella, Paracelsus, and many others – in the Renaissance. Since the Enlightenment, magic as an irrational theme, as an idea and its implementation has been pushed back from the historic advance, and not just pushed aside, but “pushed” into the furthest and darkest corner of the generally recognized practices. The dark middle ages were replaced by the time of the Mind, in social and philosophical teachings the idea of the progress of human society developed, ignorance and superstition were stigmatized.

Belief in scientific and technological progress gradually acquired the features of religious charisma, technology and science became the idol of the new time, it was identified with the idea of the public good. However, despite all the achievements of scientific and technological development, the three-hundred-year stage of the culture of Modern times, called modern, ends with a crisis. Deep, all-encompassing crisis, which long before its full deployment was diagnosed by many thinkers belonging to different philosophical currents- “philosophy of life,” analytical psychology, phenomenology, etc. This was the “The Decline of the West” of O. Spengler, delivered a stern warning at the beginning of XX century.

One of the most critical components of the crisis process can be attributed to the phenomenon of human nature, without which the meaning of many social, cultural, philosophical phenomena will not be understood: it is the treatment of a person as a biological being, regardless of the level of his or her sociality, the degree of development of reflection, the modus of subjectivity. In the mind of any person, in addition to conscious, rational outset, there is the irrational, the unconscious. Being the most important side of life, it always exists, representing the reality of being. The modern man, however, went further and further from nature and his nature, walking the path leading to nowhere – the path of war with nature, which lasted “from Heraclitus to Hiroshima” (M. Serres): a new, man-made artificial environment increasingly replaced the actual reality, alienated man from the basis of his instincts.

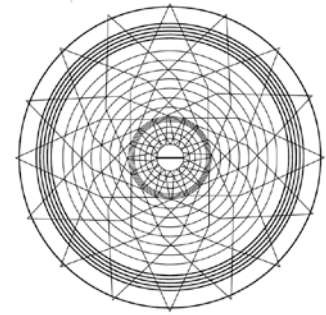
Speaking about the metaphysical foundations of human existence, K. G. Jung emphasized one of the most important conditions – the need to maintain a mental balance. The desire to achieve it is carried out instinctively, that is, irrationally. This irrational intention is realized in practice of such areas of human activity as religious, mythological: “...people from ancient times have cared that any decision with unpredictable consequences had a safety net suitable for these myths, religious in nature. Always and everywhere there were the rituals of “entry and exit,” which to the ignorant psychology of the enlightenment – was magic and superstition.” [20, p. 125]

Under the law, which Jung called enantiodromia, everything turns into its opposite. Suppressing its unconscious, consciousness struggles with an inalienable part of the human psyche. The more the unconscious – the irrational – is displaced and suppressed, the stronger it becomes. If throughout the history of generations, something is systematically displaced or suppressed, it becomes more and more

[Scientific Articles]

Kozyakova M.

Magic of screen culture



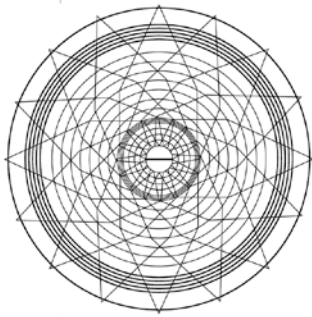
important in human society; and the more complete and powerful the displacement becomes, the more primitive and archaic the level of the unconscious becomes involved.

Technogenic postindustrial civilization radically changes the consciousness of modern man. Many researchers note the turn in the direction of the collective unconscious, talking about the magical Renaissance, the advent of the era of “new irrationality,” mysticism, a return to pre-rational forms of perception of the world. These phenomena are most directly and immediately connected with electronic technologies and mass media communications. “The incredible complexity of technological, economic and social systems in the process of their continuous partial improvement, superstructure and completion gradually lead to the fact that these systems become incomprehensible to their creators and are not controlled by them. New magical worldview starts to reign”; “the further goes the progress, the more it creates the magic worldview.” [5, p. 157]

It is interesting that once M. Weber, noting the most important features of the modern era, wrote about it as a time of “unspelling” of the world, when humanity, freed from magic and superstition, finally found the opportunity to objectively understand the phenomena of reality, rational explanation of its phenomena. It seems that at the present stage the period of “unspelling” has come to its end, there comes a new “ice age,” archaic, in which the opposite process of magical “enchantment” of the world regains its rights. “The paradoxical revival of some primitive magic, occult, magnetopathic technique of production of visual signs, which do not make any sense and do not require reflection, but effectively cause certain mental reactions, is striking today. A fantastic twist to the images, to the visual culture of today, is becoming a real possibility thanks to mass media, which produce visual signs which, contrary to the realist theory of knowledge, have an incomprehensible effect on people,” the researchers note. [11, p. 502] In addition to the statement of a return to pre-rational forms of perception of the world, it seems noteworthy in this statement not only and not so much a reference to the realistic theory of cognition, which seems to have lost its validity, but also visual signs that provoke emotional, magical reaction.

Indeed, the essential cause-and-effect relations are fixed here. The Renaissance of archaic takes place at the peak of the technological revolution, with the widespread of the most modern electronic media. Screen technologies are usually visually oriented. The question of vision is extremely important; it is one of the centers in the history of Western civilization: it is enough to mention that all human activities are strictly related to vision, almost all the information – up to 90% – we get from this source. The increase in visual communication, its dominance clearly entails the activation of the collective mythological consciousness, testify to the greater imperative. By visualizing the person returns to the archaic, the magical, the directly experienced perception of the world.

Communication that appeals to the imaginative perception of the world is a particular feature of mass culture. Revived archaic irrational intentionality is most closely associated with the presence of the display environment. Unique expressive



[Scientific Articles]

Kozyakova M.

Magic of screen culture

means of the screen significantly enhance the emotional effect, as screen communication uses acoustic and visual channels, synthesizes sound and image — this kind of complex impact on the sensitive side of the viewer's perception as effectively as possible. The picture, the image does not require reflection — it can affect the subconscious, bypassing all intellectual and logical barriers. For cinema it is possible to speak about the emotional-aesthetic response, on participatio — participation, associative, imagery of thought, closely related to the affectivity of consciousness. Suggestively and hallucinogens cinema, its magical, “intoxicating” effect became almost commonplace, researchers noted these characteristics throughout most of its history, including references to the opinion of R. Clare, Siegfried Kracauer, Jean Baudrillard, Russian researchers V. Mikhalkovich, P. Ogurchikov, etc.

The magic and mysticism of the screen are also considered in the dissertation research. In one of the latest works on the topic “Screen culture as a new mythology” the author states: “the Magic of the screen gives rise to a new mythology, with the help of which the models of human behavior in culture are approved, the placement of individual life in a new system of social and cultural coordinates”. [14] The Myth and mythology become relevant, the myth, as well as magic, not only represents the syncretism of primitive culture. In this context, the ontological foundation of myth, allocated by R. Bart: “...myth is the word. Of course, not any word... However, from the very beginning, it is necessary to state firmly that myth is a communicative system, some message. And because a myth can be anything that is covered by the discourse.” [3, p. 252]

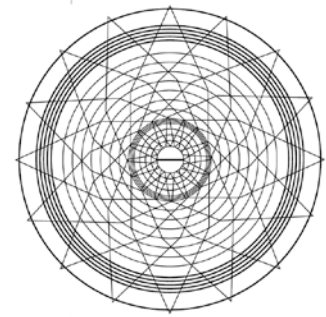
A myth is an expression of universally human, which is transmitted from generation to generation, and therefore “mythology is a collective, not an individual psyche”, — says analytical psychology. [19, p. 221] Magic and myth return to us again and again. It returns as an allegory, fairy tale, as philosophy and art, literature or ideology. Demythologized periods alternate with periods of remythologization — beats of an invisible pulse of the culture. Pushed out, disappeared from the cultural horizon, myths go into the shadow, continuing to exist in implicit form. Then the pendulum starts moving in the other direction, and they are again on the solar side. At this time, the magic imperative was revived: all the magic becomes actualized, included in cultural context, extends to the center of the energy field of culture. The myths themselves are reflected, transformed; they get a new and unexpected sound.

Authentic mythological, fairy-tale stories can have an unexpected continuation in modern conditions. Science and technology of the XX century were able to implement many of the visionary imaginations of our ancestors, because, in principle, there are no national or state borders to implement them. One of these cases is metamorphosis fairy narrative when the idea set out in the Russian fairy tale, “materialized” through the latest electronic technology. This is the “Tale of a silver saucer and a ripe Apple” from the collection An. Afanasiev, the leitmotif of which is a dream of vision, distant vision in real time: “Roll-roll, Apple, on a silver platter, show me the city and fields, forests and seas, and mountains height and heaven beauty!” [13, p. 87]

[Scientific Articles]

Kozyakova M.

Magic of screen culture



It is obvious that mythologems do not arise from scratch, but are fed on the juices of life realities; at the same time, their roots are located in the depths of the irrational mental sphere, and they themselves serve to a certain extent as a bridge connecting reality and the collective unconscious. Perhaps we can agree with the bold statement that “the technical achievements of our time are created not only by the engineering thought but also by the collective unconscious. It spawned many fantasies and myths, now implemented engineering with the thought.”[12, p. 367]

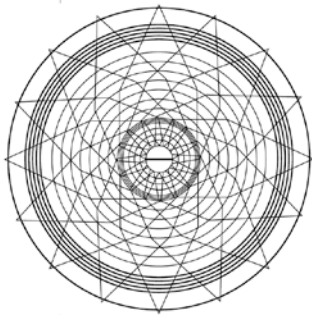
The dream of the far vision was the sustainable archetype for centuries; it appears as a common plot in different nations. The spell of the heroine of the “Tale of a silver saucer and a ripe Apple” gives an aesthetic formula of the Russian peoples’ ideas about the beautiful world: “Ripe apple rolls on a silver platter, and on a silver platter all the cities one by one are visible, ships on the seas and armies in the fields, and mountains height and heaven beauty; the sun is heading for the sun, the stars collect in the dance – so beautiful, a miracle, that one couldn't tell in a tale or write with a pen.” At the end of the fairy tale, the magical character of the wonder is no longer correlated with television, but with computer representation, with the possibility of interactive communication, the choice of visual material, suggesting the presence of a kind of “menu” user content: “What do you, the Tsar, want to see: your strong city, or your brave warriors, or ships in the sea, or wonderful stars in the sky?”

The myth of the main artifact – a magic silver platter and ripe apple that can show the whole world - is so profound and poetic that the story is found not only folklore but in a literary version too. Here is a poetic arrangement of this story included in the poetic collection of K. Balmont "Glow of dawn."

"Ripe Apple, you roll, roll,
Roll clock-wise, roll up and down.
Burn and show how the dawn burns,
Show cities, forest, fields, seas.
You roll, show the height of the mountains,
You roll, show the beauty of Heaven." [2]

Being placed at the end of the collection, "Fairy Tale" frames it artistically, completes it, and this compositional technique allows the reader to finish the poet's monologue appeal to folk, fairy-tale tradition. In a folk interpretation of magic doubles: magic action with a silver platter and ripe apple reflects the magical beauty of the surrounding world. Translating these connotations in the context of screen magic of our time, you can continue the theme of “Apple” specificity: the American Corporation Apple, a pioneer in the production of computers, phones, software, uses the catchy logo of the Apple. The randomly chosen name of the Apple was later successfully interpreted as the theme of the extraordinary creativity of this famous company, which occupies the first place in the world regarding market capitalization, a company famous for innovative technologies and aesthetic design.

The spectacular logo of the bitten apple should be perceived as a unique ability, a special gift for innovative strategies, because the apple in the biblical and medieval Christian tradition symbolized knowledge, hardly or never approachable by a human.



[Scientific Articles]

Kozyakova M.

Magic of screen culture

In the same way, a modern screen is able to show a person the whole universe, large and small, unattainable in its direct observation. So the ripe apple from the Russian fairy tale, showing all the beauty of the “God's world,” predicted and anticipated the reality, the symbol of which is the modern Apple – the brand of the most prestigious electronic media.

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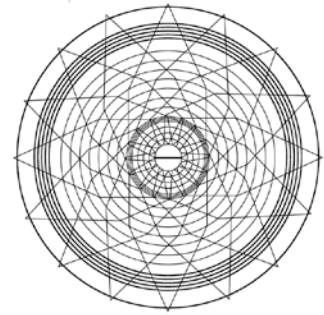
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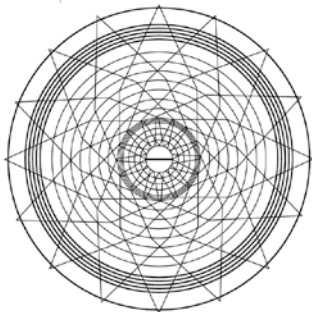
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МАГИЯ ЭКРАННОЙ КУЛЬТУРЫ

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Аннотация:

Продлав на протяжении столетия путь от простого защитного приспособления до завершающего элемента сложнейших электронных устройств, экран предстает как символ информационной эпохи. Экранная цивилизация возвращает человека к архаике магического, непосредственно переживаемого ощущения мира. Эволюция экрана, экранная культура и ее слагаемые, виртуальность и образность современных медийных средств рассмотрены в статье с целью раскрытия актуализации архаики, связи экранной культуры с магическим. Автор последовательно разбирает историю эволюции экранов, касаясь кинематографа, телевидения, компьютерной и интернет-революции, показывая, какую функцию выполняли экраны на протяжении всей истории человечества.

Ключевые слова: экран, экранная культура, магия, образность, мифологизм, кинематограф, телевидение

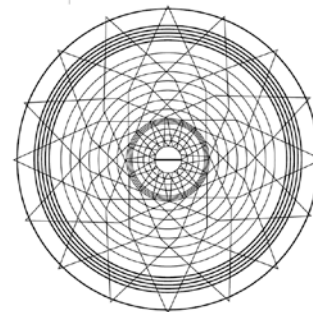
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Kozyakova M.

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