

УДК 32

## Alternative Culture: Tradition and Innovation

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Received 21.03.2014, received in revised form 16.04.2014, accepted 18.05.2014

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*Modern knowledge of culture is characterized by a turn to the studying of alternatives of cultural development, forming a plurality of contemporary cultural concepts. The philosophy of cultural alternativism uses the ideas of structural anthropology (M. Foucault). The alternative program requires a change of the development paradigm generated by the scientist culture, declaring the foundation of the cultural project, the future rehabilitation of spontaneity. Environmental ethics, romantic utopia and the technological myth act as a source of utopian and futuristic constructions, therefore in the alternative concepts we may single out three types of constructions: environmental, romantic utopia and technological futurological projects. The ecophilosophy proposes a new type of spirituality, the symbol of which is the "dancing Shiva", a symbol of the deployment of life recreating itself, the integrity of the universe. In the romantic utopias, the idea of the future culture is focused on creating a new type of the culture with an aesthetic-erotic orientation. Technological futurological projects appear in the theory of alternativism not as a continuation of the scientist culture, but as an alternative to the abnormal development of modern science and technology. We are talking about the possibility of a radical change of the civilization and culture as a result of a scientific and technological leap, qualitatively different from the modern scientific and technological development.*

*Keywords: culture, alternative concepts of culture, philosophy of culture.*

*Research area: 24.00.00 – culture studies.*

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### **Introduction to the Subject Matter of Research**

European philosophy traditionally distinguishes biological evolution from culture, which is reflected by the opposition of nature and culture (the concept of J. Herder is an exception). The culture is studied as a phenomenon, interrelated with the development of society or civilization that in the theoretical aspect was reflected in the rationalist (18–19), cyclic (end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – early 20<sup>th</sup> century), and

pluralist (20–21<sup>st</sup> centuries) paradigms of cultural research. The rationalist paradigm (J. Herder, A. Turgot, I. Kant, F. Schelling, G. Hegel) captures the process of linear growth of the culture (in the form of stages, phases, images) related to the complexity of progressive-onward social development. The cyclical approach is based on the concept of non-linearity and discontinuity of historical and cultural processes and interprets the development of socio-cultural formations in the form of a cycle similar to the

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development of a living organism. Despite the biological analogy, culture acts as an artificial cyclical structure opposite to nature. In the 20–21 centuries knowledge of the culture evolved from a unified universal monological reconstruction of the cultural universe to the paradigm of varieties. Culture is studied from different perspectives: philosophy of life (W. Dilthey, G. Simmel), phenomenology (E. Husserl), hermeneutics (M. Heidegger, H.-G. Gadamer, J. Habermas, P. Ricoeur), psychoanalysis and post-freudianism (S. Freud, K. Jung, A. Adler, E. Fromm), structuralism and post-structuralism (C. Levi-Strauss, M. Foucault, R. Barthes, J. Lacan), symbolism (E. Cassirer, S. Langer), anthropology (M. Scheler) and others.

The turn of modern knowledge of the culture to the study of alternatives of the cultural development forms the pluralism of modern cultural concepts. The specificity of modern culture understanding lies not in the examining its existence under the guise of change, but lies in the revealing the essence of the changes.

### **Criticism of the Modernist Culture within Alternativism**

Modern culture has been criticized from different standpoints. In traditional romantic and socialist concepts, its essence is revealed as something mercantile. Alternativism rests on another opposition: artificially organized and natural (spontaneous) existence. We can distinguish two points of criticism of the modernist culture in alternative concepts: understanding the technical way of being in the world as something universal and as a characteristic of ideological humanitarian knowledge as a source of the coercive organization of modern life. The first point includes the scientism of modern European culture as the object of main criticism, the history of which appears to be a result of a mistake of the mind, the wrong orientation chosen initially. The

core part of history of "madness of reason" (as defined by the theorists of the Frankfurt School) is the explication of totalitarian potentialities hidden in the logical rationality. The myth, which is the beginning and end of the bourgeois civilization, approved alienation of nature as a fact of reality, which is the essence of overwhelming rationality, oppressive scientificity, and bourgeois education, initially chosen the wrong direction, implemented in a failed civilization. The myth and science do not know any other way of understanding reality other than mastery and domination over it, which turns into the exploitation of man-by-man. From the point of view of G. Marcuse, science and technology serve as suppression of not only external nature, but also of the internal one (the person), "In the modern era technological reality intrudes into private space and nullifies it" (G., 1994)<sup>1</sup>. The Faustian reality principle, based on the suppression of vital instincts of the person, is identified by alternativists as a principle of rationality and scientificity and is regarded as a fundamental principle of the class-oppressive society as a whole.

The second point of criticism of the modernist culture in alternativism lies in its negative assessment as a global socio-cultural revolution, the transition from natural to artificial organized forms of life that occurred, contrary to popular belief, not in the material and spiritual production: in universities, where the program was formed by the scientific organization of consciousness. Industrial technologism pulled man away from nature, socio-cultural technologism separates man and the natural environment, which is manifested in such mechanistic features of modern European culture, as recycling, the manufacturing principle of organization, its usage as a fundamental principle of human engineering, a setting for a perspective, the influence of mass cultural production on changes in the world. This results in a repressive culture: on one side stands a mass

system of cultural production, which emanates prescriptions to another, devoid of self-reliance, "mosaic" civilian life, combinable and mounted according to various technological projects. Science provides dominance in two ways: as a productive force, it establishes the dominance of society over nature and as a tool for objective knowledge; it appeals to the world of objects of the man, i.e. to its own creation, to itself. In all cases, it guarantees the consolidation of a certain type of dominance over the man, and the forces that dominate the late capitalist world do not need an external imposition of their will: it is enough to appeal to the common sense of people beforehand closed between the "scientified" world and all its copies, or to the subconscious. This implies limitless possibilities of manipulating people. Despite the radical anti-scientism, the criticism of modernist culture by the alternativists contains a number of positive aspects: consideration of rationality and science as an integrated cultural and historical phenomenon that develops a certain type of civilization; characteristic of the development of science as a global socio-cultural process; shifting the focus on the individual, the need for its liberation from the yoke of a repressive culture.

### **Origins of Alternativism Philosophy**

The philosophy of alternative culture uses the ideas of structural anthropology (M. Foucault), considering the emergence of capitalism as a replacement of those abilities that produce resistance to the rising rationalist functionalism. The alternative program requires changes of the development paradigm generated by the scientist culture. At the heart of the cultural project of the future goes a certain anthropological principle: rehabilitation of spontaneity. Extension of this principle to the center of alternative studies is conditioned by the state of crisis of modern

culture. Alternativism theorists consider the modern culture by analogy with the interpretation of modernity according to J. Baudrillard as an era of total simulation. A wide range of social phenomena shows its simulation character in the modern era. Power acts as a simulation of power and resistance to it cannot but be simulative as well. Information does not make sense, but plays it, substituting communication by the simulation of communication. Simulation is located on the other side of true and false, on the other side of the equivalent, beyond the rational distinctions, which operate in any social phenomenon. Reality as a whole is replaced by the simulation and becomes hyper reality. Simulation as a form of fixation of non-fixable contradictions opens the horizon of an event on one side of which lies the deadly and fierce determination of the supposedly objective and immanent sense of the event, and on the other lies blindness, which is the result of an illusion of the meaning. The discourse of power stands for all cultural phenomena found, all-penetrating ability of which allows it to cross, coordinate, interrupt any structure that gave G. Deleuze a reason to talk about tree-likeness of the power. Language, which symbolizes all forms of power, functions as a treelike structure.

Modern debates on governmental issues focus their attention on the fact that within the boundaries of the global economic space arises global political space in which the state loses its competence, legitimacy and power that are typical of the leading agent in world relations, and gives its way to a more comprehensive "post-internationalist universe that is characterized by diversity in politics"<sup>2</sup>. The post-international universe is characterized by the formation of problems of global power and global responsibility. The researchers (K. Brown, J. Baudrillard, J. Lacan, F. Guattari) discuss the changing nature of power in the moment: the power is transformed into a network, it becomes rhizomatic, rather than

hierarchical, created and maintained not by such attributes as violence, military power, economic production, but by people working and consuming in the global economy. Due to the changing nature of power, a modern empire is different from the hierarchical empire of the Victorian era.

"In this empire the military power of the United States is very important in conjunction with the civil authorities, provided corporate capital elites, many of whom are American, but it is not a specifically American empire in the conventional sense of the term, it is not America as a state. You can hold a key analogy with the Roman Empire, a network whose power was based on the Roman legions"<sup>3</sup>. Power, understood in this sense, does not have a location and cannot be controlled, it is ubiquitous, and creates an empire consisting of non-hierarchical networks. The upcoming transformation of culture is impossible without creating a new metaphysics, a new picture of the world and a new view of human nature, as the internal freedom of the individual implies the possibility of the evolution of culture in different directions. Alternativists believe materialism to be the kernel of the obsolete worldview; they identify it as the commitment to material progress, possession of things and domination over nature. It is necessary to develop an alternative metaphysical worldview, which can give an opportunity to comprehend the full impact of scientific and technological progress in the future. A crisis of values occurs when any particular type of culture gives way to another, gives rise to various utopian concepts, and therefore the utopianism and futurology are important components of the system of alternativism. The sources of utopian and futuristic constructions lie in environmental ethics, romantic utopia and technological myth, so the alternative concepts are the three types of constructions: environmental, romantic utopia and technological futurological projects.

### **Alternative Concepts of Culture**

In E. Fromm's way of thinking the conflict between the individual and nature has an ability to be renewed with each new generation, and therefore cannot be eliminated in the future. "Environmental tortures of the earth" (T. Roszak) manifest themselves in a person's life through a radical transformation of the sense of being identical to nature. Thus the myth of human's falling out of nature's integrity is born. From the standpoint of H. Skolimowski, on the contrary, the environmental crisis will not last forever: it is due to the principles of relationship with the world underlying Western civilization; the principles were formed in the culture of modern times. The automated alienated environmental consciousness, which has replaced the religious one, generates the eschatology of consumption whereas the latter replaces the sacred values. The alternativists believe that there is a way out, which they are looking for in a new dialogue with nature, which becomes the basis of various evolving theories of alternative development, focused mainly on two areas: the practical-transformative and enlightening. Under the first component in the concept of ecological materialism, they study the ecological transformation of earth in a new world order based on the principles of ecoenergy: a decentralized economy of small communities, operating on renewable, non-polluting forms of energy. An alternative project offered in ecosocialism is based on the formation of a new environmental culture: on the principles of limiting the consumption of resources and centralization of all spheres of public life. The program of ecosocialism (A. Gorts, O. Ulrich, I. Illich) provides for the refusal of economic rationalism, the development of civic consciousness, a change in the distribution of wealth. Another escape from the ecological crisis is the development of educational projects. It implies a way of changes

outside the system of socio-cultural relations, which leads to the creation of anthropological theories of personal changes of man. The root of the ecological crisis lies in a crisis of the inner man himself. The environmental ethics can facilitate the transition from the old to the new values. H. Skolimowski offers a conception of the spiritual world orientation, which can make an alternative development of human culture. In his scheme, the religious consciousness is the thesis, the technological one is the antithesis, the environmental one is synthesis, since the latter overcomes the one-sidedness of the religious consciousness, marking the return of spirituality without subordination of religion, and removes one-sidedness of the technological consciousness, since the value of environmental consciousness is focused on the universe and life. In ecophilosophy, a new type of spirituality emerges, the symbol of which is the "dancing Shiva", a symbol of the deployment life recreating itself, the integrity of the universe.

Modern romantic conceptions of culture are heterogeneous; they have different traditions, in Europe starting from the Enlightenment (Rousseau), in America – from the transcendentalists (Thoreau). Now ideas of the romantics are perceived through the prism of theories put forward by N. Brown, P. Goodman, H. Marcuse, and other philosophers who criticized modern civilization and culture, and made an attempt to formulate an alternative that reduces the justification of the need to move to a new type of culture: for example, Apokatastasia (a new utopia) by T. Roszak, the sensual culture of H. Marcuse. If the development of mankind chose the direction of formation of sensual culture, the production would not depend on the principle of rational use, and socially necessary labor would be aimed at creating an aesthetic rather than a repressive environment, at the creation of recreation areas, and not mass entertainment and

relaxation, which would put forward the aesthetic principle as a form of reality. In the romantic perception of utopias, the idea of a future culture is focused on creating a new type of culture with an aesthetic-erotic orientation.

Technological futurological projects appear in the theory of alternativism not as a continuation of the scientist culture, and as an alternative to the abnormal development of modern science and technology. We are talking about the possibility of a radical change in the civilization and culture as a result of a scientific and technological leap, qualitatively different from the modern scientific and technological development. The rational model of progress leads to a deadlock. True optimism does not lie in an effort to protect it by all means, but to find a replacement that would deprive it of a future.

The works of post-industrialists contain an attempt to soften the primitive techno-determinism of previous theories, which fatally predetermined the further development of culture. The future culture is portrayed as something multivariate. The post-industrialism theorists explain the crisis of modern society and culture by the gap between the principles of highly-industrialized economy (efficiency, lowest cost of goods sold, profit maximization, rationality) and the orientation of the contemporary culture on hedonism, irrational behavior, anti-intellectualism. The culture of the future is based on different principles. Its formation is due to the transition from an industrial to a service society, the crucial codified scientific knowledge for the implementation of technological innovation, the transformation of a new intellectual technology "is crucial point in theoretical analysis and decision-making" (D. Bell). The fact, that the technological issues were moved to the focus of research of postindustrial culture, is associated with the gap between the rapid growth and its minimal progress in the socio-cultural organization and

the person controlling his own products. In order to bridge this gap we need to work out a new type of technology: combinatorial, divided into three classes – the new information technology, serving for the processing and transmission of alphanumeric information; a new biotechnology; and new materials. By the mid of the 21<sup>st</sup> century biotechnologies are going to come to the forefront. Based on their development, bioethics is going to be developed as a new culture; its main task is biological justification of moral values that are adequate to the conditions of the new mobile society. The adoption of such a culture will ensure harmony and humanism in the continuous technological progress. The representatives of post-industrialism consider the renaissance of the technocratic culture to be a positive sign, not to mention the artistic application of new technologies. Now humanity is approaching the understanding of the technology as an art. The development of technology requires to place it in a broader perspective, namely in the framework of the social (or cultural) mutation. J.-P. Quentin emphasizes that it would be more accurate to speak not about replacing the technoculture by a social culture but about a progressive transition to a new stage of civilization, which becomes the leading social culture. It is a global innovation, with all its components.

In the information society, knowledge and information will act as key agents of the social and cultural change, ensuring the transformation of modern culture into a new type, which will be a key element in the production of information, which in its importance exceeds tangible products, energy and services. The self-expansion of information will replace the self-expansion of capital. The informational dimension of culture is comparable to such epoch-making processes as industrialization and book printing, which had their impact on working knowledge, psychology, and styles of thinking. Culture as a system of

symbolic means is a natural object of storing and transmitting information.

The principal difference of the information technology from previous ones is that its objects are not material, but mental. In culture, the challenge is to reach a new level of human participation in creative activities through the creation of new forms of cultural life. In the course of the information revolution, an objective technological possibility of open access to any array of human knowledge for all people for the first time was carried out. Conditions of the information revolution go as follows: guaranteed access to information for all citizens, awareness of the primacy of the personal aspect, a new stage in the treatment of human knowledge. The emergence of the common global information market, stimulated by the development of telecommunications, is now already leading to the emergence of a new culture that is changing the very meaning and social status of information. Now it is difficult to assess the culture in terms of the information shock, but you can understand how great its role is<sup>4</sup>. The information covers all aspects of social life, creating an information infrastructure.

Theorists of the information society emphasize the ambiguity and poly-alternativeness of the future culture. Different ideas about the future culture are determined not only by regional and national traditions, but also research oriented searches in reliance on traditionalism, rational attempt to incorporate new technical inventions in the cultural system, the experience of designing a new social reality with a particular style of life and a level of cultural consumption. The researchers point out that the modern technology can lead to a complete degeneration of man and the environment, so it is necessary to protect the value of human culture.

Humanitarian culture has become outdated. With the emergence of mass media the structure

of culture is undergoing profound changes. The integrated system of knowledge is replaced by a set of short-term facilities, distributed through the media. The concept of a mosaic culture rather than a humanitarian one is being formed. The main distinctive feature of the new cultural situation is its incessant variability. The information culture theorists speak of a new cultural paradigm. Accumulation of technical capabilities inevitably leads to a qualitative leap. New, unusual in its capabilities means of mass communication appear. The future culture is a culture based on the technological development of high reliability. Similar to computers, developing and improving, regenerating and forming new generations, the culture based on communication devices of one generation is supposed to be qualitatively different from a culture based on a communication technology of the next generation. Only when technical machines of communication have taken their final place in the system of mass communication, and have received their aesthetic content, we can say that the end of the first generation of communication tools is close.

Cultural development in the future will enable the genesis of man as a new species (through the computer). As voluntary civic information networks are formed by new means of communication and human with the help of robots becomes free from direct participation in productive work, the conditions for the genesis of a new type of human, the knowledgeable person, take their shape. Anatomically speaking, this type will not possess any special properties. The new man is a man of high intelligence. The people of the new type are going to build a civilization, radically different from the one built by the person reasonable. Society and culture of the new type are going to be intelligent. Information forms the basis of intellectual performance, completely different from the material values in the following

respects: inexhaustibility, non-transferability, the cumulative effect.

### **Conclusion**

Alternativists offer a new interpretation of the traditional values of modern European culture of rationalism, individualism, humanism. The basic principle of the emerging rationalism is pluralism. The modernist rational thinking has lost its vitality. A. Etzioni stresses that the ideal of modern society the quality of life is an alternative vision and legitimizing principle, which does not expand, but displaces rationality<sup>5</sup>. The necessity of the emergence of an alternative reason, which acquires the potential to ensure the stability of the system "biosphere – man". The resulting collective intelligence gives the person a certain chance to save himself in the biosphere. The search for alternative values of individualism leads to the assertion of a special kind, purified from pragmatism, utilitarianism, egoism and intricately fused with the humanistic and democratic values. Alternativists believe that it is necessary to develop humanism of the post-technological era that would transform the gleaned from past principles and norms and contributed to the emergence of new values, restoring the balance of man. In the new system of values the "life mind" (H. Ortega-y-Gasset) by its very presence must displace all the others. "The theme of our time is to give the mind vitality in biological localization of reasoning, in its submission to the spontaneous" <sup>6</sup> (p.29). New humanism is not nothing else but a real human revolution, the meaning of which is the moral education of man, in the awakening of his humanistic conscience, in an attempt to give a heart to the heartless world. A new view of the world implies the approval of ecological humanism. Alternativism theorists are aware of indivisible integrity of the world: for my existence, I need the existence of the whole. In this regard, natural appearance of globalism is a

step approximating to the cosmic consciousness. Theorists of post-industrial and information culture are trying to portray the development of knowledge and information as a process, which is not an extension of interpretation of the scientist-oriented culture, but rather an opposite one.

Based on this framework we see an attempt to consider the future technologies as an art and a desire to evaluate the informational dimension of culture as the third revolution in the history of modern European culture (after industrialization and book printing).

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<sup>1</sup> Marcuse G. (1994). Dimensional man, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Politics. History's Revenge and Future Shock. Val. H. (2004).

<sup>3</sup> Brown C. (2004). Do Great Powers Have Great Responsibilities? Great Power and Moral Agency. Global Society Vol.18, №1.Jan, 14-15.

<sup>4</sup> Toffler A. (1997). Futuroshok, 464.

<sup>5</sup> Etzioni A. (August, 2011). Behavioral Economics: Towards a New Paradigm. American Behavioral Scientist. 55:8, 1099-1119.

<sup>6</sup> Ortega-y-Gasset H. (1991). The theme of our time. What is philosophy?

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5. Remapping Global Politics. History's Revenge and Future Shock. (2004).
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## Альтернативная культура:

### традиции и инновации

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*Современное знание о культуре характеризуется поворотом к исследованию альтернативных вариантов развития культуры, формируя плюрализм современных культурологических концепций. Философия культуры альтернативизма использует идеи структуралистской антропологии (М. Фуко). Альтернативная программа требует смены самой парадигмы развития, порожденной сциентистской культурой, провозглашая основой культурного проекта будущего реабилитацию спонтанности. Источником утопических и футурологических построений выступают экологическая этика, романтические утопии и технологический миф, поэтому в альтернативных концепциях можно выделить три типа построений: экологические, романтические утопии и технологические футурологические проекты. В экофилософии формируется новый тип духовности, символом которой выступает "танцующий Шива", символ развертывания жизни, воссоздания самого себя, целостности универсума. В романтических утопиях представление о будущей культуре*



*ориентировано на создание нового типа культуры с эстетически-эротической ориентацией. Технологические футурологические проекты появляются в теории альтернативизма не как продолжение развития сциентистской культуры, а как альтернатива неправильному развитию современной науки и техники. Речь идет о возможности коренного изменения цивилизации и культуры в результате научно-технического скачка, качественно отличного от современного научно-технического развития.*

*Ключевые слова: культура, альтернативные концепции культуры, философия культуры.*

*Научная специальность: 24.00.00 – культурология.*

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