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## SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY



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### Georgia as a Black Sea Connectivity Node of the Middle Corridor

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#### Abstract

**Introduction.** The article considers the Middle Corridor (Trans-Caspian International Transport Route) as a form of “connectivity policy”, in which material infrastructure (ports, corridors, cables) redefines the place of Georgia and its Black Sea region in the configuration of power and regional security. Georgia, which has port and transit infrastructure at the junction of the Black Sea and Caspian basins, acts as a hub for competing European, Chinese, Turkish and regional projects that affect the socio-economic dynamics and identity of the Black Sea region.

**Materials and Methods.** The methodological basis is made up of systemic and comparative political approaches, elements of geoeconomic analysis and concepts of social and political philosophy of space (subjectivity, power, center/periphery, “competing connectivities”). The empirical base includes strategic documents of Georgia in the field of transport, materials of the EU and international financial institutions on Trans-Caspian and Black Sea connectivity, as well as studies on the port of Anaklia and energy and digital corridors.

**Results.** The National Transport and Logistics Strategy 2023–2030 transfers the transit role of Georgia from a “natural” geographical advantage to a managed national project and consolidates the Georgian Black Sea region as a key hub of the Middle Corridor. The growth of container processing and the creation of a joint operator of the railway segment are interpreted as the institutionalization of a new configuration of the regional space; the EU and Chinese involvement infuses infrastructure with competing political meanings.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** Georgia’s strategic benefit is determined not only by the volume of investments but also by the nature of its subjectivity: the ability to ensure transparency of governance, balance the interests of external actors and take into account the consequences for local communities.

**Keywords:** Georgia, Black Sea region, Middle Corridor, Trans-Caspian route, connectivity, Anaklia port, Black Sea ports, South Caucasus, social and political philosophy, geoeconomics

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Оригинальное теоретическое исследование

### Грузия как причерноморский узел связности Среднего коридора

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#### Аннотация

**Введение.** Рассматривается Средний коридор (Транскаспийский международный транспортный маршрут) как форму «политики связности», в рамках которой материальная инфраструктура (порты, коридоры, кабели) переопределяет место Грузии и её Причерноморья в конфигурации власти и региональной безопасности. Грузия, располагающая портовой и транзитной инфраструктурой на стыке Черноморского и Каспийского бассейнов,

выступает узлом конкурирующих европейских, китайских, турецких и региональных проектов, влияющих на социально-экономическую динамику и идентичность Причерноморья.

**Материалы и методы.** Методологическую основу составляют системный и сравнительно-политический подходы, элементы геоэкономического анализа и концепции социальной и политической философии пространства (субъектность, власть, центр/периферия, «конкурирующие связности»). Эмпирическая база включает стратегические документы Грузии в сфере транспорта, материалы ЕС и международных финансовых институтов по Транскаспийской и черноморской связности, а также исследования по порту Анаклия и энергетико-цифровым коридорам.

**Результаты исследования.** Национальная стратегия транспорта и логистики 2023–2030 гг. переводит транзитную роль Грузии из «естественного» географического преимущества в управляемый национальный проект и закрепляет грузинское Причерноморье как ключевой узел Среднего коридора. Рост контейнерной обработки и создание совместного оператора железнодорожного сегмента интерпретируются как институционализация новой конфигурации регионального пространства; участие ЕС и Китая наполняет инфраструктуру конкурирующими политическими смыслами.

**Обсуждение и заключение.** Стратегическая выгода Грузии определяется не только объёмом инвестиций, но и характером её субъектности: способностью обеспечивать прозрачность управления, баланс интересов внешних акторов и учёт последствий для местных сообществ.

**Ключевые слова:** Грузия, Причерноморье, Средний коридор, Транскаспийский маршрут, связность, порт Анаклия, черноморские порты, Южный Кавказ, социальная и политическая философия, геоэкономика

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**Introduction.** The Middle Corridor (Trans-Caspian International Transport Route) is a multimodal line connecting China and Central Asia with the South Caucasus and further with Europe through Turkey and/or the Black Sea. In the optics of social and political philosophy, this is not just a “route on a map” but a spatial policy: infrastructure collects new centers and peripherals, nodes and borders, sets the modes of inclusion and exclusion [1]. Officially, the corridor is described as a way to increase the stability of Eurasian logistics during a period of turbulence [2], but it is more logical to read it as a re-marking of the political space of Eurasia.

For the Georgian Black Sea region, this means reassembling the country’s transit role and place in regional and global ties. Ports and crossing points of transport, energy and digital lines turn into “dense” zones where money, power and semantic frameworks (development, security, “Europeanism”) converge. Thus, geopolitics gets a material form and begins to work as a social and spatial order.

Hence the high political degree of the topic for Georgia: the corridor is associated with security and foreign policy positioning. The desire to consolidate the role of the “bridge” and logistics hub between Europe and Asia is reflected in the National Transport and Logistics Strategy 2023–2030 and digital transformation plans including the modernization of port and coastal infrastructure [3]. However, transit expectations rest on institutional quality and relations with the EU: candidate status was obtained in December 2023, and in 2024 an actual pause was recorded against the background of concern about democratic practices and the rule of law [4]. In a philosophical perspective, this makes the corridor infrastructure a test of subjectivity: whether Georgia will be able to set the rules of the game or its role will form external discourses of connectivity.

The scientific novelty of the article is that Georgia is considered as a case of the “policy of connectivity” in the Black Sea region. At the center of the analysis is how institutions, relationships with external actors and competing connectivity projects affect the transit subjectivity and trajectories of the region’s development, as well as which images of the Black Sea region are enshrined in development and security discourses (“corridor”, “node”, “frontier”, “bridge”).

Hypothesis: strategic benefits are determined by investment, institutional predictability, foreign policy coherence and how elites comprehend the Black Sea region: as a resource for autonomous development or an object of external management. The purpose of the article is to show Georgia’s place in the architecture of the Middle Corridor as a Black Sea hub and to assess risks and opportunities for foreign policy and geoeconomic strategy. For this, the institutional and infrastructural foundations of participation, the interests of external actors, the importance of Anaklia and the Black Sea cable initiatives are analyzed, conclusions and recommendations are formulated taking into account the philosophical dimensions of regional policy.

**Materials and Methods.** The methodological framework collects systemic, comparative-political and philosophical views on the space and sets the research logic: how Georgia’s transit subjectivity is changing under the pressure of the “competing connections” of the Middle Corridor.

The Black Sea region of Georgia is considered as a junction of land and sea routes, as well as energy and digital lines of the Black Sea-Caspian macroregion. The middle corridor is interpreted as a network of “hardware and meanings”: the infrastructure simultaneously solves technical problems and consolidates the political framework.

The study is structured as a comparative case analysis: the strategies of actors that include the Georgian Black Sea region in their connectivity projects (EU and Global Gateway, China and “Belt and Road Initiative”, Turkey and Azerbaijan) are

compared [5]. The geoeconomic perspective helps operationalize infrastructure impact through three indicators: benefit sharing (tariffs/logistics), node control (ports/operators), and rule modes (procedures/standards) [6, 7, 8].

Discourse analysis through the categories of space, power, subjectivity and identity captures how images of the future region, “normal” development models and permissible limits of participation of external actors are constructed in strategies, reports and media; for this, key metaphors and roles (“corridor”, “node”, “bridge”, “frontier”) are distinguished and their use in different sources is compared.

The empirical base includes reports from the World Bank and OECD [1, 2], EU materials on Global Gateway and Trans-Caspian connectivity [3, 5, 9], documents and statistics of the Ministry of Economy of Georgia on port and transport infrastructure [3, 4], studies on Anaklia and competition of “connectivities” [10, 11]. Sources are used to reconstruct dynamics and to “read” what images of space, development and security they produce.

**Results.** The adoption of the National Transport and Logistics Strategy 2023–2030 and the Action Plan 2023–2024 is an attempt to “stake out” Georgia’s role in Eurasian logistics: transit ceases to be a bonus of geography and turns into a managed project. The documents list the key levers (ports, railways, east-west transport route, digital procedures and a “single window”), that is, a practical scheme is set for how the country’s connectivity and its Black Sea region should work.

The figures for 10 months of 2023 play along with this story: container processing exceeded 607 thousand TEU (+61,3%) [3]. But for research, it is not the growth itself that is more important, but its nature: is it a steady shift in routes or the effect of a low base and temporary flow of flows? In such a reading, statistics becomes a marker of the corridor dependence on the external situation, and not a “certificate of success”.

The World Bank and the OECD formulate the same double signal: there is potential, but the corridor slows down at the joints due to multimodality, borders and heterogeneous rules. Hence the working hypothesis: the Georgian sector wins only with regional synchronization, without coordination with Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkey, internal reforms run into external restrictions. The creation of the Middle Corridor Multimodal operator in 2023 can be understood as an attempt to make such synchronization permanent through the coordination of tariffs, schedules and procedures [11].

Outside, the corridor lives in several “versions of the future”. The EU promotes Trans-Caspian connectivity through Global Gateway, linking infrastructure with governance standards and sustainability; at the EU-Central Asia forum in January 2024, the readiness of financial institutions to support such projects was confirmed [3]. China, on the contrary, sees in the Georgian ports and the perspective of Anaklia an instrument for diversifying routes and presence in the Black Sea [7]. As a result, the same nodes get different political meanings and this fuels the competition of interpretations.

Therefore, Anaklia remains the “nerve” of the agenda: the history of tenders and the change in PPP formats shows the high foreign policy burden of the project. In research optics, this is a test of institutions: weather it is possible to raise capital without losing transparency, competition and compliance without which the trust of partners collapses or not [8].

Finally, connectivity is increasingly measured not by containers but by cables and energy. Global Gateway highlights an underwater digital cable in the Black Sea (focus on Georgia and Armenia) and an electric interconnector for exporting “green energy” to Europe. The creation in 2024 of a joint company of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Romania and Hungary to promote the Black Sea energy corridor confirms the transition to a multi-level infrastructure architecture [9]. Here the rate is higher: with institutional stability, this strengthens the subjectivity of Georgia, with a lack of predictability, it increases dependence and vulnerability.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** The results of the study show: for Georgia, the Middle Corridor is both a “maneuver window” and a set of rigid boundaries. Philosophically, these are different configurations of the “space – power – subjectivity” bundle, which manifest themselves through infrastructure.

The economic effect appears only when the entire route is configured: if neighboring links slow down, the Georgian section rests against other people’s “bottlenecks”. Therefore, as international organizations emphasize, not only ports and rails decide, but also “soft” conditions (general procedures, digital document flow, predictable tariffs and simpler boundaries). In research optics, this is a key conclusion: the corridor becomes a single space where joint regulation and trust arise, and Georgia’s competitiveness is measured by both infrastructure and inclusion in this general logic.

European interest in Trans-Caspian connectivity may strengthen the “European framework” through standards and investment, but everything rests on the dynamics of relations with the EU. Candidate status (December 2023) is adjacent to fixing the problems of democracy and the actual pause in 2024 [10], so trust and institutional compatibility become variables of infrastructure policy: Georgia’s role as a “European” node depends not only on funding but also on political perception by partners.

The Chinese factor reinforces the need for risk management, especially around Anaklia. The port is discussed as an asset and as a marker of foreign policy priorities and possible dependencies. For research, this is a convenient “stress test” of institutions: success requires combining capital with transparency, competition and compliance, otherwise the infrastructure solution begins to change the balance of power and subjectivity.

The shift towards digital and energy connectivity expands opportunities but increases the requirements for legal stability, a long horizon of planning and coordination of the interests of the EU, the South Caucasus and the Black Sea. Here the rate is higher, because we are referring to inclusion in the technological and energy chains that will shape the future of the Black Sea region.

In general, Georgia remains a key Black Sea link in the corridor with access to the EU and Turkey. The 2023–2030 strategy and the growth of container processing record the desire to consolidate this role, but practical benefits depend on three conditions: regional coordination (including Middle Corridor Multimodal) [11], transparent decisions on Anaklia and a stable trajectory of relations with the EU, which Global Gateway capabilities depend on [12]. Therefore, it is reasonable to read the Middle Corridor as a strategy of regional subjectivity: ports, corridors and cables here “collect” not only logistics but also new forms of power and identity in the Black Sea-Caspian region.

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### The Problem of Youth Self-Identification in Modern Dagestan Society

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#### Abstract

**Introduction.** The study of the problems of self-identity formation of Dagestan youth in a multi-ethnic confessional environment is relevant in modern conditions. The purpose of the article is a comprehensive analysis of the problem of youth self-identification in the Republic of Dagestan through the prism of interaction of key social institutions, identifying the role of the institution of the family, the educational environment, the language situation and digital reality as key factors affecting the process of self-identification of modern youth.

**Materials and Methods.** This study is based on the methodology of systematic analysis and synthesis of relevant scientific publications on this issue. Such general theoretical methods of scientific research as analogy, generalization and systematization were used.

**Results.** Research shows that ethnic identity in Dagestan continues to be the core element of self-perception, but its content and formal markers are significantly transformed. Empirical evidence suggests the complex nature of the interaction between family attitudes and the values of a multinational environment. Along with ethnic, linguistic, cultural components in the formation of identity, religious identification remains one of the basic elements of the formation and development of the personality of a Dagestani. The identification environment in Dagestan is a system where traditions and innovations coexist.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** The analysis suggests that the problem of youth self-identification in Dagestan is not reduced to a binary choice between tradition and modernization. What is meant here is the formation of a complex, multi-level and situationally determined hybrid identity that integrates various, sometimes contradictory, elements. A modern young Dagestani man or woman often combines several identities: local (clan, village), ethnic (Avar, Dargin, Lezgin, etc.), all-Dagestan (as a resident of a multi-ethnic republic), all-Russian civic and, increasingly, global (through digital environments and academic mobility). The contradiction between traditional and global values, being a creative conflict, acts as a catalyst for personal growth and the formation of multicultural competence.

**Keywords:** self-identification, youth, Dagestan, ethnic identity, educational environment, language situation, traditional values

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## Проблема самоидентификации молодежи в современном дагестанском обществе

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### Аннотация

**Введение.** Исследование проблем формирования самоидентичности дагестанской молодежи в условиях полиэтноконфессиональной среды является актуальным в современных условиях. Целью статьи является комплексный анализ проблемы самоидентификации молодежи в Республике Дагестан через призму взаимодействия ключевых социальных институтов, выявление роли института семьи, образовательной среды, языковой ситуации и цифровой реальности как ключевых факторов, влияющих на процесс самоидентификации современной молодежи.

**Материалы и методы.** Данное исследование основано на методологии системного анализа и синтеза релевантных научных публикаций по данной проблематике. Использованы такие общетеоретические методы научного исследования, как аналогия, обобщение и систематизация.

**Результаты исследования.** Как показывают исследования, этническая идентичность в Дагестане продолжает оставаться стержневым элементом самовосприятия, однако ее содержание и формальные маркеры значительно трансформируются. Эмпирические данные свидетельствуют о сложном характере взаимодействия между семейными установками и ценностями многонациональной среды. Наряду с этнической, языковой, культурной составляющих в формировании идентичности одним из базовых элементов становления и развития личности дагестанца остается и религиозная идентификация. Идентификационная среда в Дагестане является системой, где сосуществуют традиции и инновации.

**Обсуждение и заключение.** Проведенный анализ позволяет утверждать, что проблема самоидентификации молодежи в Дагестане не сводится к бинарному выбору между традицией и модернизацией. Речь идет о формировании сложной, многоуровневой и ситуативно обусловленной гибридной идентичности, интегрирующей различные, порой противоречивые, элементы. Современный молодой дагестанец или дагестанка зачастую совмещает в себе несколько идентичностей: локальную (род, село), этническую (аварец, даргинец, лезгин и пр.), общedaгестанскую (как житель полиэтничной республики), общероссийскую гражданскую и, все чаще, глобальную (через цифровые среды и академическую мобильность). Противоречие между традиционными и глобальными ценностями, будучи креативным конфликтом, выступает катализатором личностного роста и формирования мультикультурной компетентности.

**Ключевые слова:** самоидентификация, молодежь, Дагестан, этническая идентичность, образовательная среда, языковая ситуация, традиционные ценности

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**Introduction.** Modern Dagestan society is characterized by exceptional ethnocultural diversity, which creates a unique context for identification processes in society. The relevance of the study of the problems of youth self-identification in modern Dagestan society is due to the unique symbiosis of traditions of the multi-ethnic and confessional environment with modern global values. Trying to correlate themselves with a particular social group, modern Dagestan youth is forced to balance in the conditions of dynamic interaction of traditional Caucasian values, a complex system of interethnic relations and the growing influence of global trends. The purpose of the article is a comprehensive analysis of the problem of youth self-identification in modern Dagestan society through the prism of interaction of key social institutions. To achieve the goal, the following tasks are set: to analyze the content and dynamics of the ethnic identity of Dagestan youth; to identify the role of the family and the higher education system as complementary factors in the formation of identity; to determine the place and role of religious identification in the general system of social identification of young Dagestanis; to assess the impact of the language situation, in particular, the problem of preserving native languages and the dominance of the Russian language as a means of interethnic communication on the processes of self-identification; to describe the impact of modern digital technologies on the identification process of Dagestan youth.

**Materials and Methods.** This study is based on the methodology of systematic analysis and synthesis of relevant scientific publications on this issue. Based on their analysis, the dynamic interaction of ethnic, religious and cultural identities is considered. Such general theoretical methods of scientific research were used as analogy, generalization and systematization, which make it possible to move from describing specific manifestations of identity to understanding it as a complex, structured socio-psychological and cultural phenomenon.

**Results.** Research shows that ethnic identity in Dagestan continues to be the core element of self-perception, but its content and formal markers are significantly transformed. On the one hand, the family retains its role as a key institution for the primary transmission of ethnocultural models, where «national identity develops at an early age in the process of upbringing in the family and is based on a certain tradition or its elements, cultivated as “representation of tradition” [1, p. 275]. On the other hand, immersion in a multinational educational environment within the republic, and especially in universities outside Dagestan, contributes to the formation of a more flexible, multicultural consciousness, “erosion” of rigid ethnic borders.

Empirical evidence suggests the complex nature of the interaction between family attitudes and the values of a multinational environment. The study involving Dagestan students of Moscow universities demonstrates that family values representing ethnic experience and the values of a multinational environment actively interact, and their interaction becomes one of the key factors in the ethnic identification of a person throughout life. At the same time, the gender specificity of this process is noted: “in most cases, women are more conservative and more likely to remain committed to ethnic behavior derived from the family or their ethnic environment” [1, p. 275].

However, by senior years, there is a leveling of statistically significant differences in the assessment of traditional values between young men and women, which confirms the hypothesis of the transformative effect of prolonged stay in a foreign culture environment. According to D.G. Saibulaeva, in the structure of the personal identity of modern students, identity statuses are dominant, characterized by a low level of their development, orientation towards social and family ties to the detriment of the orientation towards self-determination, independent choice and self-realization [2, p. 136].

Along with ethnic, linguistic, cultural components in the formation of identity, one of the basic elements of the formation and development of the personality of a Dagestani is religious identification. “The foundations of identity are laid in the family, and then in the process of further socialization, self-identification with a particular religion is already more independent. The very process of forming a religious identity within the framework of social identification of a person is bilateral. Since religion affects the general socialization of a person, and elements of social identification are manifested in the formation of religious identity, correlated with a specific religion, culture and lifestyle. Under the influence of religion, the foundations of the value preferences of the individual are laid, the most significant nuances, views, principles on which their daily existence is based” [3, p. 322].

The linguistic situation in Dagestan, characterized by a complex interweaving of ethnic and linguistic markers, is of particular importance in the context of self-identification. According to available data, more than 25 Dagestan languages are in serious danger of extinction according to UNESCO classification. The historically established ethno-language system, where the differences between some dialects are so great that their speakers sometimes do not understand each other, led to the need for a mediator language [4]. If in the past this function was performed on the plain by the Kumyk language, in the mountainous Dagestan by the Avar language, now the Russian language has unconditionally become the language of interethnic communication. This creates a complex identification node: the native language continues to act as a powerful symbol of ethnicity and a “means of ethnic self-identification”, while the Russian language is an instrument of social mobility, access to education and integration into the all-Russian space. As a result, translanguaging, that is, the ability to switch freely between language codes, is a characteristic feature of modern Dagestan youth.

The identification environment is a system where tradition and innovation coexist. In the age of high technologies, the virtualization of society leads to a change in the hierarchical relations between local and global processes [5]. In the information society, what the traditional society was based on is destroyed – the integrity of ethnocultural being, the loss of the usual ways of transmitting information from the older generation to the younger one. The connection of generations is minimized, since peer communities or virtual space now become a connecting factor [6, p. 41]. Passion for social networks, life for show have become an integral part of the life of Dagestan youth. The identity of a person is transformed along with the changes taking place in the modern world, the criteria for identification are expanding, some of which are irretrievably lost, but at the same time, in order to maintain our selfhood, a certain stability is needed that fixes us in the new sociocultural reality [7, p. 141]. Trying to adapt to a rapidly transforming world, young people want to find basic identifications for themselves.

The identity space can simultaneously include ethnic, regional and civic levels, coexisting and actualizing depending on the context. Multilevel identification implies belonging to a complex culture, for example, to Russian or Dagestan. The great poet of Dagestan Rasul Gamzatov, determining the meaning of this phenomenon, said that in Dagestan he is Avar, in Moscow – Dagestan, and abroad – Russian. The multilevel structure of identification is a prerequisite for the stable existence of any multi-ethno-confessional society [8, p. 72].

**Discussion and Conclusion.** The analysis suggests that the problem of self-identification of youth in Dagestan is not reduced to a binary choice between tradition and modernization [8, 9]. What is meant here is the formation of a complex, multi-level and situationally determined hybrid identity that integrates various, sometimes contradictory, elements. A modern young Dagestan man or woman often combines several identities: local (clan, village), ethnic (Avar, Dargin, Lezgin, etc.), all-Dagestan (as a resident of a multi-ethnic republic), all-Russian civic and, more often, global (through digital environments and academic mobility). The contradiction between traditional and global values, being a creative conflict, acts as a catalyst for personal growth and the formation of multicultural competence. The threat of the disappearance of languages is an anthropological problem that requires finding a balance between the functional necessity of the Russian language and the preservation of the unique linguistic heritage of Dagestan.

Study limitations are due to its descriptive nature and reliance on secondary data. For a deeper and more representative analysis, new large-scale empirical studies are needed directly in the Republic of Dagestan using qualitative and quantitative methods. Prospects for further research are seen in the study of the specifics of identification processes in the digital environment, as well as in the development of pedagogical models that contribute to the harmonious integration of Dagestan youth into the all-Russian community while maintaining the ethnocultural diversity of the region.

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## SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY



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Original Theoretical Research

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### Relativism of the Value World and the Security of Modern Person

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#### Abstract

**Introduction.** Modern society has created a system for the peaceful resolution of most conflicts, introduced powerful and technologically advanced means of defense against enemy attacks, learned to prolong human life, and create comfortable conditions for human existence. However, people are still concerned about social instability, aggression from other countries, the spread of viruses, invasion of privacy, dangers posed by social networks, telephone fraud, etc. The issue of ontological and psychological security remains relevant and significant for modern humans. The aim of the study is to conduct a comparative historical analysis of aspects of safe existence and the associated system of values that determines human stability and security.

**Materials and Methods.** Analyzing statistical data showing contemporary threats and aspects of danger that are significant for people, the author draws on scientific works on philosophical anthropology, history, and axiology by Russian and foreign thinkers. The study employs dialectical and comparative-historical methods, as well as axiological and systemic approaches.

**Results.** Traditional society, with its fairly transparent hierarchical system of values, has formed an open, calm attitude towards death and an understanding of the world that accepts the end, despite the lack of resources, mass epidemics, and high female and infant mortality rates. As for modern society, it has created external conditions for a safer existence, granted equal rights under the law to different segments of the population, and formed a culture of longer and more comfortable life. However, in the absence of a clear hierarchy of values, people may perceive illusory problems as dangerous and worry not about a specific situation, but because of the peculiarities of their internal state. Axiological relativism leads to a conformist existence in which anxiety is so ingrained in people that they can be manipulated. In this regard, the need for stable life in a world of constant change requires a clear and transparent system of values and social institutions on which it can rely. Actualizing the dialogue about values is the work of maintaining human security.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** Research into the clash of values, especially in harsh political regimes, shows that people with a clear relativism of significant aspects of life find it difficult to adapt to reality, are unable to make choices, and experience feelings of guilt. Having a hierarchy of priorities and acting in accordance with them (for example, a humanistic system of relationships) can guide them toward a more meaningful life and, consequently, an inner sense of a more secure existence.

**Keywords:** value, axiology, safety, danger, hierarchy, relativism of values

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*Оригинальное теоретическое исследование*

### Релятивизм ценностного мира и безопасность современного человека

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#### Аннотация

**Введение.** Современное общество создало систему мирного урегулирования большинства конфликтов, внедрило мощные и технологичные средства защиты от нападения противника, научилось продлевать жизнь челове-

ку и создавать комфортные условия его существования. Однако до сих пор предметом обеспокоенности людей является социальная нестабильность, агрессия со стороны других стран, распространение вирусов, нарушение приватности пространства, создание опасностей через соцсети, телефонное мошенничество и т. д. Проблема онтологической и психологической безопасности продолжает оставаться актуальной и значимой для современного человека. Цель исследования – сравнительно-исторический анализ аспектов безопасного существования и связанной с ним системы ценностей, определяющей устойчивость и защищенность человека.

**Материалы и методы.** Анализируя статистические данные, показывающие современные угрозы и аспекты опасностей, значимые для людей, автор опирается на научные работы по философской антропологии, истории и аксиологии отечественных и зарубежных мыслителей. В исследовании применяется диалектический и сравнительно-исторический методы, аксиологический и системный подходы.

**Результаты исследования.** Традиционное общество с его достаточно прозрачной иерархической системой ценностей сформировало открытое, спокойное отношение к умиранию, миропонимание, принятие конца, несмотря на недостаток средств жизнедеятельности, массовые эпидемии, высокую женскую и детскую смертность. Что касается современного общества, то оно создало внешние условия для более безопасного существования, наделило равными правами по отношению к закону разные слои населения, сформировало культуру более долгой и комфортной жизни. Однако в отсутствие понятной иерархии ценностей человек может воспринимать в качестве опасных в том числе и иллюзорные проблемы, тревожиться не по поводу конкретной ситуации, а в силу особенностей своего внутреннего состояния. Аксиологический релятивизм приводит к конформному существованию, в котором тревога укоренилась в человеке так, что им можно манипулировать. В этой связи необходимость устойчивой жизнедеятельности в мире постоянных изменений требует понятной и прозрачной системы ценностей и общественных институтов, на которые он мог бы опираться. Актуализация диалога о ценностях – это и есть работа по поддержанию безопасности человека.

**Обсуждение и заключение.** Исследование столкновения ценностей, особенно в условиях жестких политических режимов, показывает, что человеку с явным релятивизмом значимых аспектов жизни оказывается сложно адаптироваться к реальности, он не в состоянии выбирать и испытывает чувство вины. Наличие иерархии приоритетов и деятельность в соответствии с ними (например, гуманистической системой отношений) может его сориентировать на более осмысленную жизнь и, следовательно, внутренне мироощущение более безопасного существования.

**Ключевые слова:** ценность, аксиология, безопасность, опасность, иерархия, релятивизм ценностей

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**Introduction.** Today, ensuring security is a rather important task related to the functioning of states, society, and individuals. International and domestic law are focused on creating conditions for the protection of physical integrity, health, and the environment, as well as the preservation of peaceful life as a condition for stability and personal development. Security is also considered a basic human need (A. Maslow), without which normal life is impossible.

However, despite the many and varied efforts of international communities, states, and civil society organizations, this issue remains relevant. In Russia, according to a 2024 report by the Human Rights Commissioner of the Russian Federation, Russians are particularly concerned about external factors such as the threat of mass epidemics or attacks by other countries. Among internal problems, concerns about the security of bank accounts, email, social networks, the growth of domestic violence, and telephone fraud are significant. Corruption among government officials and shortcomings in law enforcement make these problems particularly significant [1]. Despite all the efforts of countries themselves and the international community to ensure human safety and security, this problem remains, and new threats to human existence are emerging.

In psychological and ontological terms, the issue of security is revealed as a complex, multi-level phenomenon linked to human experience, social interaction, and value systems. Hence the relevance of research and the importance of dialogue when considering issues related to security as a state of human protection and a system of values in the context of their degradation and relativism in the modern era.

**Materials and Methods.** The work of domestic and foreign authors in the fields of philosophy, anthropology, and axiology is analyzed. The study uses the dialectical method as one of its fundamental approaches, examining issues through the prism of contradictions, development, and the interconnection of all phenomena. From the perspective of a systematic approach, security is examined as a property of complex, multi-level systems. The axiological approach makes it possible to examine the problem of security through the prism of values. The work also uses comparative-historical and other general theoretical research methods.

**Results.** Let us consider such features of human subjectivity as the perception of values that are significant to a person and the feeling of security at different periods of time. It seems to us that axiological transformations have taken place from traditional society to modern society, associated not only with the possibility of choosing significant aspects of life, but also with the relativity of their existence. In this regard, the theme of the danger of space is increasingly felt not on a physical, external level, but on an internal one. This is evidenced, in particular, by the active development of psychological sciences, in particular, practical psychology, which allows a person to feel relatively calm, possessing a certain internal set of meanings and values.

In traditional society, we find a system of ideas based on the notion that identity in the form of sameness is the foundation of the world order (Parmenides, Plato, Aristotle). A. Kozhev, a researcher of G. Hegel's work, pointed out that in it "identity = being," and only through their labor or struggle can people bring about changes in this system [2, pp. 31–35]. Another researcher, M. Foucault, noted that the world in such a society is organized according to the principle of correspondence between words and things, which meant the existence of a hierarchy of values with an ideal model that was copied in social experience [3]. From birth, a person had a certain set of norms and rules, which differed according to gender and social status. Their regular reproduction ensured the person's safety.

Thus, in ancient society, the ideal of man was built in accordance with the ideas of a rational, politically active, physically proportionate man endowed with virtues. It was he who had to ensure the safety of the polis from military threats, even though he himself was constantly facing imminent death. However, the value system, in which a person perceived himself as part of the great Cosmos as a single cyclical space in which there is a return, an opportunity to enjoy the benefits of social experience, allowed him to feel secure in this.

Ensuring inner stability, overcoming fear, and countering threats was seen, for example, as the path of a stoic who was ready to end his life at any moment. Thus, Seneca noted that a sense of security is associated with peace of mind, serenity, and the disappearance of all fears; in essence, it is a test of happiness. It can be assumed that the same state is associated with stones, animals, and people who are not self-aware. However, they lack the intelligence to recognize the advantage of this state [4, pp. 167–192].

For most non-citizens, such as slaves and women of the polis, the situation may have been different. They were granted a status similar to that of property, and their safety depended on the prudence of their master, who knew how to hide and protect his "property." The latter, in turn, created conditions for his existence as a warrior, politician, and landowner. A peculiar situation arose in which a citizen of an ancient polis with a stable worldview and regularly facing physical death felt safer than a woman who had no social privileges, could not defend herself, and felt a constant threat to her physical integrity.

In the Middle Ages, the constant proximity of death was a necessary part of human life, especially among the military class. The fear of physical destruction was compensated for both by Christian beliefs about the afterlife (in paradise, hell, purgatory) and by the fact that the Church itself encouraged war as a godly cause [5]. Acting in accordance with the code of chivalry, a warrior died for a great cause. Circumstances such as the high mortality rate of various people during this period (especially infants, women from complications during childbirth, and those infected with deadly diseases during epidemics), as well as the experience of living out one's life together and openly, created conditions for greater acceptance rather than denial, which, according to F. Aries, allowed us to say that death was "tamed" [6]. Physical death did not end a person's life, especially when they perceived their behavior as being in accordance with the requirements of society, expecting reward in another life.

An interesting aspect of human security is the proclamation in the constitutions of European states of the inviolability of the individual and their property from encroachment, as well as other rights and freedoms in the modern era. To ensure these rights, a penitentiary system, police forces, and an extensive network of psychiatric institutions are being actively developed. On the one hand, liberal-democratic values are emerging, allowing us to talk about individual development, but on the other hand, the will is placed within the limits of reason (R. Descartes), which creates conditions for the formation of a disciplinary society (M. Foucault).

It provides external security for different categories of citizens, as evidenced by the effective fight against epidemics, the development of a medical system that successfully copes with childbirth and infant care, and the possibility of social adaptation for people who were previously not involved in public life. Thus, women began to participate in public life, in particular, studying, working, and visiting public places that were previously inaccessible to them (e. g., cafes, bars). Thus, from the middle of the 19th century, middle-class women appeared on the streets, hurrying to the library, to lectures, to department stores, where they could feel comfortable. In those days, however, they were still forced to walk quickly down the street, unlike male flâneurs, so as not to be mistaken for prostitutes [7]. In addition, an important indication of the weakening of power over the human body is the end of public torture of criminals in the late 17th–19th centuries, as described by M. Foucault. Offenders were now restricted in their freedom, but were no longer subjected to physical pain [8, p. 17].

However, serious problems of a disciplinary society include the formation of a relative system of values and human dependence, the shift of security issues to the level of internal feelings, when a person begins to fear not real objects of the

surrounding world, but sometimes imaginary ones (we can recall that Sigmund Freud spoke about the influence of culture on the emergence of neuroticism). In the absence of a hierarchy of axiological aspects of culture (which is also associated with the “death of God”), a person’s choice is neither final nor important to them for any length of time. Everything is relative and can change at any time, which causes anxiety. For example, the value of freedom, once significant for the opposition, becomes an important part of the constitutional elements of the state and is presented by the authorities as significant for them, which indicates a loss of its original meaning (liberation from feudal dependence).

In modern culture, value relativism is expressed, for example, not by the power of authority (such as the Christian God), but by the fact that public life is invaded by a multitude of private examples (as demonstrated today by social networks) that can be followed [5, p. 76]. In the absence of a hierarchical model and with widespread control, society is a system of similarities, simulacra, in which conformist behavior is safe for a time [3].

The problem of relativism arises when values compete with each other. For example, in a harsh political system that is extremely unsafe for humans, survival will be linked to the choice of behavioral strategies that sometimes do not align with moral priorities and lead to feelings of guilt. Thus, the work of ordinary Germans in concentration camps during World War II was explained by them, among other things, by their extreme naivety, unless they truly believed in the ideas of racial purity. Some of them said that they were simply accustomed to following orders from their superiors, while for others, such work represented an opportunity for career advancement [9]. Issues of personal well-being, on the one hand, and the destruction of a large part of the population, on the other, could compete with each other in a situation of moral choice.

Thus, we have established that the value orientation of traditional society toward meaningful elements of security (divine assistance, the possibility of returning to the world, the well-being of the afterlife, social prestige, etc.) created a sense of stability, while the relativism of values in modern society when creating a disciplinary system caused increased anxiety, especially in conditions of competition, and gave rise to numerous manipulations and conformist behavior [10]. Consequently, despite all the care taken in creating external elements of security, people today continue to need a stable system of values and a more meaningful life.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** Modern people find themselves in a space of diverse values, relying on their own choices when it comes to safety and adapting to others in the opposite situation. We may also face the problem of moral choice. Not knowing what to rely on, we find ourselves in a space that is unknown, unstable, unreliable, and anxiety-provoking, and we look to others for guidance.

If a person has learned to survive by constantly adapting to the behavior of others, will they be able to live their life to the fullest? Will they feel secure despite their conformist behavior, which only brings temporary results? We believe that our contemporaries need not to focus on others, but rather to consciously understand the hierarchy of values based on thinking and reflection, within which they can make their own choices. And if this hierarchy was not formed in childhood, then it should be understood by an adult. Such conscious existence creates an inner sense of harmony with oneself. Acting within the framework of certain stable semantic guidelines, modern people, like the Stoics of old, can form their own zone of security in which they can live their lives.

In conclusion, we note that the value system in society provides security by creating a predictable, meaningful world and uniting people into stable communities. The problem is that over time, this system can become outdated, conflict with other systems, or be destroyed, leaving people alone with chaos. In the modern era of globalization, relativism has become mainstream thinking. This is the result of the collapse of traditional societies and the departure from rigid religious and patriarchal dogmas; the spread of multiculturalism; information overload and the formation of an endless multitude of opinions in which it is easy to lose one’s footing. Security requires predictability and stability, but relativism erodes these rules. The relativism of values creates a vacuum of uncertainty, and individuals lose their sense of security, which makes the study of ontological and psychological security central to the philosophical understanding of modernity.

Given the importance of philosophical schools for ancient culture and monasteries for medieval culture, it is worth noting that modern people also need civil society structures that help them make informed value choices and prevent manipulation of their consciousness.

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## PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY OF CULTURE



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Original Theoretical Research



### Resistance to Information Uncertainty as a Factor of Students' Professional Development in Higher Education

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#### Abstract

**Introduction.** The dynamic state of the external environment determines the significance of the individual's ability to overcome information uncertainty. In the field of education, adaptive properties and analytical skills play a key role in building a system of students' professional development, in connection with which the purpose of the study is to study the mechanisms of forming resistance to situations of uncertainty among students of higher education as a basis for personal identification and career growth of future specialists.

**Materials and Methods.** The study is based on meta-analysis, systematization and structuring of relevant empirical research, the comparison and synthesis of which allows us to identify the correlation between the level of tolerance to uncertainty and the possibilities of professional realization of the personality.

**Results.** Within the framework of the study, key psychological, competence and organizational educational factors affecting the formation of students' resistance to information uncertainty were identified, as well as mechanisms for overcoming unforeseen situations within the framework of the educational activities of higher education were studied. A significant step in building these skills is the definition of effective pedagogical methods of interaction between teachers and students, as well as the implementation of innovative didactic principles and tools.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** The data obtained make it possible to understand the psychological aspects of the student's personality formation in conditions of uncertainty, make it possible to analyze the organizational features of building a pedagogical environment and relevant didactic means in order to modernize the higher education system.

**Keywords:** resistance to information uncertainty, didactic principles, pedagogy, higher education system, adaptability, critical thinking

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Оригинальное теоретическое исследование

### Устойчивость к информационной неопределенности как фактор профессионального развития студентов в высшем образовании

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#### Аннотация

**Введение.** Динамическое состояние внешней среды определяет значимость способности личности к преодолению информационной неопределенности. В сфере образования адаптивные свойства и аналитические навыки играют ключевую роль в выстраивании системы профессионального развития обучающихся, в связи с чем целью исследова-

ния является изучение механизмов формирования устойчивости к ситуациям неопределенности у студентов высшего образования в качестве фундамента для личностной идентификации и карьерного роста будущих специалистов.

**Материалы и методы.** Исследование строится на базе мета-анализа, систематизации и структуризации релевантных эмпирических изыскания, сравнение и синтез которых позволяют выявить корреляцию между уровнем толерантности к неопределенности и возможностями профессиональной реализации личности.

**Результаты исследования.** В рамках исследования определены ключевые психологические, компетентностные и организационные образовательные факторы, воздействующие на формирование устойчивости студентов к информационной неопределенности, а также изучены механизмы преодоления непредвиденных ситуаций в рамках учебной деятельности высшего образования. Значительным этапом в выстраивании обозначенных навыков является определение эффективных педагогических методик взаимодействия преподавателей и студентов, а также реализация инновационных дидактических принципов и инструментов.

**Обсуждение и заключение.** Полученные данные позволяют понять психологические аспекты формирования личности студента в условиях неопределенности, дают возможность проанализировать организационные особенности выстраивания педагогической среды и актуальных дидактических средств с целью модернизации системы высшего образования.

**Ключевые слова:** Устойчивость к информационной неопределенности, дидактические принципы, педагогика, система высшего образования, адаптивность, критическое мышление

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**Introduction.** In modern realities, uncertainty is becoming a ubiquitous attribute of human life requiring the development of adaptation skills to new technological and information conditions.

Uncertainty implies situations corresponding to the theory of unforeseen circumstances [1, p. 266], for example, lack of data or blurred information, social changes, economic crises, political transformations, etc., which cannot be foreseen in the framework of work, education or private life. When faced with such events, the individual tries to manage them, or at least reduce their adverse consequences, proactively using the situation for their own purposes, in the implementation of which flexibility and adaptive abilities play a key role for personal growth, professional development and career advancement.

According to I. Rozina, N. Malanyuk, N. Tsumareva and others, flexible professional skills such as: creativity, innovativeness, self-organization, communicative skills and the ability to work in uncertain conditions, are becoming more and more important due to the constant evolution of labor market requirements [2].

Mastering these competencies is fundamental to ensure the assimilation of young professionals into various fields of professional activity [2]. In the education system, in particular in higher education, resilience to information uncertainty means stability of cognitive processes, flexible formation of personal and professional identity, and the ability to rationally make decisions and act in situations of ambivalence, variability and inconsistency. In scientific discourse, the concept under consideration has many interpretations and is widely known by the term “tolerance to uncertainty”. According to I.N. Leonov, “tolerance to uncertainty can be considered as a personal character trait, a situational-specific attitude” [3, p. 44], an acquired skill and a “metacognitive process” [3, p. 44].

Modern studies show that the phenomenon of uncertainty can be predicted and overcome by building certain models and organizational structures. According to M. Smithson, there are some principles and methods that need to be followed in this process in order to manage uncertainty: you should start with studying the circumstances (uncertainty should be identified, assessed and analyzed), then a decrease or smoothing the negative impact is carried out, then the adoption of an inevitable situation leads to the need to control or use it for your own purposes [4, p. 20].

Based on the existing recommendations, we can say that they are quite generalized and are not always comparable with the problems arising in the field of education. In this regard, the purpose of the study is to study the mechanisms of building resistance to information uncertainty among higher education students as the basis for the professional development of future specialists.

**Materials and Methods.** A systematic review and meta-analysis of relevant studies (S. Varlık, I. Rozina, N. Malaniuk, A. Kalyniuk, L. Potapiuk, N. Tsumarieva, M.N. Yurtaeva and others) allow us to assess the effectiveness of existing models and principles for overcoming information uncertainty within a paradigm approach, which asserts the indisputability of external factors and objectively considers reality and evaluates key facts [5].

Comparison and synthesis of relevant approaches allow us to identify the correlation between existing concepts of building tolerance to uncertainty, as well as determine how such skills affect various aspects of life, training and

professional growth of students. Assessing the resilience of individuals in relation to the circumstances of information uncertainty implies determining the level of stress and anxiety in unforeseen situations, which necessitates the study of a number of psychological factors that trigger homeostasis of internal regulatory systems of the individual.

In the field of pedagogy, the study of the formation of resistance to uncertainty is associated with the organization of didactic tools that contribute to the training of students of higher education in adaptive skills and competencies.

**Results.** Promoting tolerance to situations of information uncertainty in higher education is an extremely important stage in the development of the personal and professional potential of students. Such skills allow you to better adapt to new conditions and risks, contribute to the rationalization of the decision-making process, and also limit the factors of the unfavorable emotional impact of external phenomena on the individual's psyche and cognitive abilities.

Empirical studies show that the indicator of tolerance to uncertainty present in the individual directly correlates with "flexibility of cognitive control and responsiveness" [6, p. 74], which confirms the fact that "people tolerant to uncertainty are more successful in conditions of subjective uncertainty and in a situation of cognitive conflict requiring the adoption of a new mode of action" [6, pp. 74–75].

As part of the study of reflexivity and psychological features of personal perception of unforeseen circumstances, the empirically confirmed generalization, according to the methods of assessing tolerance to uncertainty of D. McLane and S. Badner, is the correlation of the cognitive style of the individual with their adaptive potential: individuals with pronounced impulsiveness, extreme analyticity and rigidity show cognitive biases towards an erroneous assessment of external factors as uncontrollable, dangerous and critical, which defines their behavior model as avoiding or intolerant to uncertainty [6, pp. 76–77].

In other words, people who cannot accept uncertainty will experience extreme anxiety and fear in such conditions, will not be able to effectively manage the situation in unforeseen circumstances and make informed decisions [7, p. 940]. In this regard, the coverage of the psychological characteristics of the personal perception of students in the preparation of organizational approaches and the selection of motivational tools, is especially significant for the field of education.

Maintaining a beneficial psychological atmosphere in the framework of educational activities is possible due to the formation of a trusting relationship between the teacher and students. "Building through empathy, pedagogical authority, student favor, interpersonal personalized trust plays a key role in overcoming didactic uncertainty" [8, p. 102].

"Speaking of interpersonal personalized trust, it can be argued that its level directly depends on the professional competence of the teacher, including communicative, intellectual-pedagogical, informational and regulatory components" [9, p. 280]. Intellectual and information components are formed on the basis of cognitive experience and knowledge of teachers, the constant updating and development of which make it possible to predict potential risks and changes in the education system, to respond in a timely and rational manner to crisis situations by mastering new didactic methods and innovative opportunities.

The integration of modern technologies also reflects the flexibility of educational structures and responsiveness to external digital changes, which allows students to assimilate the trends of our time and not be afraid of progressive solutions.

Smoothing information uncertainty is possible by mastering information and communication capabilities in the field of organization, regulation and control of external processes. Mastering the skill of information search (critical analysis, selection and systematization of data), students can assess the reliability of facts, their value and relevance. Therefore, critical thinking, taking into account a broad outlook, contributes to the construction of causal relationships in the events taking place, and, accordingly, eliminates information vagueness and fragmentation.

In the process of organizing educational activities, not only the interaction of teachers and students is important but also regulating and consistency of all educational units. Taking into account the multilevel institutions of higher education, the elimination of uncertainty is possible only through the cooperation of teachers and employees, coordination in activity approaches, clear internal administration and management.

The integrity of the educational system and resilience to unforeseen circumstances is determined by its integrative capabilities and inclusiveness. The didactic openness of curricula to various types of educational activities (formal and non-formal education, digital and information education, etc.), together with the availability of an educational environment that takes into account the variable needs and capabilities of students, contributes to the formation of additional competencies, such as: tolerance, empathy, mobility, responsibility, etc.

Within training sessions, the development of the skill of resistance to information uncertainty is possible through the inclusion of pedagogical principles such as: dichotomous analysis and the environmental method. As V.K. Raev defines, "Dichotomous analysis is a tool for removing information uncertainty by dividing and classifying parts of division objects. This approach makes it possible to: define parts of an object or structural inclusion; identify the hierarchy between parts of an object; evaluate the complexity of the object's structure; discover the system properties of the study object and answer the question «weather this object is a complex system or not»" [10, pp. 10–11].

Such an analytical study of phenomena and events on the principle of “from complex to simple” allows us to effectively process information excluding minor indirect elements and structuring fundamental knowledge.

The environmental approach implies taking into account and using the capabilities of the environment for pedagogical purposes [11, p. 22]. In conditions of information uncertainty, the concept of “environment” can mean a set of external factors and conditions that form the guidelines for people’s life (educational resources, information and communication tools, socio-cultural processes, etc.). In this case, the functional tasks of teachers are: adaptation of experimental methods, use of high-tech tools, arrangement and design of the educational space in accordance with the trends of our time [12, p. 182].

Opportunities to explore ways of building resilience to information uncertainty should be clearly monitored over time. Assessing the progress of students through qualitative methods (observation, interviews, discussions, content analysis) will allow you to structure the personal and collective experience of students, their achievements and unresolved aspects. Such studies reveal skill development curves in response to external changes.

Based on the above-mentioned information, we can generalize that the multiple unforeseen challenges of today’s reality have their own value and significance in the education system. Firstly, they contribute to the didactic modernization of educational structures and the constant development of the teaching staff. Secondly, rational collision with uncertain circumstances contributes to building student adaptability and resilience, which is crucial for future professional implementation. In addition, mastering the mechanisms of overcoming information uncertainty helps to reduce anxiety and contributes to the psychological stability of the personality, which in the future will allow specialists not only to effectively cope with problems, but also to transform and reorient them in the direction of career growth and development.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** The study showed that the current state of society and the labor market, which is characterized by volatility and rapid changes, requires the development of the skill to adapt to uncertainty for the successful career of young professionals [2].

Professional identity and self-realization is possible only if there is a high personal tolerance to uncertainty. The meta-analysis showed that students with a high level of information resilience have clearer ideas about their career goals, show greater confidence in their own knowledge and professional skills, and respond to unforeseen situations flexibly and rationally.

The results of the study seem to be especially significant for the field of education in order to modernize the didactic environment. Understanding the organizational features of building a pedagogical system contributes to improving the ways of coordinating all hierarchical elements in higher educational institutions. The study of the psychological aspects of the formation of students’ professional identity makes it possible to modernize existing curricula, methods and didactic approaches focused on personalized learning, humanization, tolerance, as well as the development of critical thinking, self-organization and responsibility skills.

As a basis for future research, it is appropriate to conduct an empirical component analysis of changes in the process of building the professional identity of students through resistance to information uncertainty at various stages of training and qualification activities.

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## PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY OF CULTURE



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Original Theoretical Research



### Linguistic and Cultural Analysis of Texts on Rostov-On-Don Urban Discourse

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#### Abstract

**Introduction.** In the contemporary humanities paradigm, the city is interpreted as a text. This approach makes it possible to conduct research focused on the specific information that such a text can convey within the context of urban discourse. Therefore, the need to study urban texts as tools for shaping local identity in a multicultural society during an era of global change is becoming increasingly relevant and significant. The aim of this study is to identify the specific linguistic and cultural markers in texts of the urban environment of Rostov-on-Don and to determine the cultural connotations associated with local identity.

**Materials and Methods.** The study focused on the city's most significant elements: urban graffiti and murals, signs, slogans, advertisements, urban folklore, as well as the connotations that shape perceptions of the city and attitudes toward it. A comprehensive combination of linguistic and discursive analysis methods is employed, taking into account semiotic, ethnolinguistic, and sociocultural aspects, which allows for the identification of key linguistic and cultural markers reflecting local identity.

**Results.** It has been established that the linguistic and cultural specificity of texts in Rostov-on-Don's urban discourse is characterized by hybridity, combining traditional and global elements; regionalisms that emphasize local identity; and visual mythologization that references literary images associated with the city's history.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** The texts of Rostov-on-Don's urban space form a polyphonic discourse in which linguistic devices, dialectal elements, and symbolic images construct the city's unique semiotic space. Rostov-on-Don's urban discourse creates a unique cultural code that combines local traditions with global trends.

**Keywords:** urban discourse, city as text, semiotic space, cultural code, graffiti, murals, urban folklore, multicultural image, hybridity


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*Оригинальное теоретическое исследование*

### Лингвокультурный анализ текстов урбанистического дискурса Ростова-на-Дону

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#### Аннотация

**Введение.** В современной гуманитарной парадигме город трактуется как текст. Этим обусловлена возможность вести исследовательские поиски в фокусе специфической информации, которую такой текст может транслировать в условиях урбанистического дискурса. Поэтому необходимость изучения городских текстов как инструментов формирования локальной идентичности в условиях мультикультурного общества в эпоху глобальных перемен приобретает все большую актуальность и значимость. Цель исследования – выявить специфику лингвокультур-

ных маркеров в текстах городской среды Ростова-на-Дону и определить культурные коннотации, связанные с локальной идентичностью.

**Материалы и методы.** Материалом исследования послужили наиболее важные элементы города: городские граффити и муралы, вывески, слоганы, реклама, городской фольклор, а также коннотации, определяющие восприятие города и отношение к нему. Используется комплексное сочетание методов лингвистического и дискурсивного анализа с учетом семиотического, этнолингвистического и социокультурного аспектов, что позволяет выявить ключевые лингвистические и культурные маркеры, отражающие локальную идентичность.

**Результаты исследования.** Установлено, что лингвокультурная специфика текстов урбанистического дискурса Ростова-на-Дону характеризуется гибридностью, сочетая в себе традиционные и глобальные элементы; регионализмами, подчеркивающими локальную идентичность; визуальной мифологизацией с отсылкой к литературным образам, связанным с историей города.

**Обсуждение и заключение.** Тексты городского пространства Ростова-на-Дону формируют полифонический дискурс, в котором языковые средства, диалектные элементы и символические образы конструируют уникальное семиотическое пространство города. Урбанистический дискурс Ростова-на-Дону создает уникальный культурный код, сочетающий в себе локальные традиции и глобальные тренды.

**Ключевые слова:** урбанистический дискурс, город как текст, семиотическое пространство, культурный код, граффити, муралы, городской фольклор, мультикультурный образ, гибридность

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**Introduction.** The modern city is a complex semiotic space where verbal and nonverbal signs form the cultural code of the territory [1]. Every city has its own unique code, a system of linguistic signs that require interpretation [2, p. 45], upon which urban discourse is built.

The linguistic character of cities has attracted the attention of many scholars, including historians, architects, cultural studies scholars, and philosophers. Linguists initially approached this issue from a sociolinguistic perspective [3]. In contemporary research, the city is viewed from a semiotic perspective “as a cauldron of texts and codes” [1, p. 325], and it is noted that language in the city’s text is characterized by opposing tendencies – on the one hand, toward differentiation, and on the other, toward integration [4]. The text of the city helps us understand how language arose, developed, and spread, and what contribution a particular social group has made to the evolution of the Russian language and Russian culture [5, pp. 257–258].

Various global trends in the evolution of urban daily life are making urban space more open. This openness creates room for the free incorporation of elements of the city’s semiotic code, which constitute key features of its essence. Modern cities – are complex systems in which physical structures interact with cultural, social, and economic processes. Communication is largely determined by the fact that city dwellers constitute a multinational and heterogeneous society. The language of communication among city dwellers is also characterized by heterogeneity [6]. City residents demonstrate variability in linguistic means and cultural characteristics in the texts they produce. It is precisely in textual activity that individual and group socio-cultural principles and stereotypes manifest themselves [7, pp. 12–13]. Therefore, the need to study urban texts as instruments for constructing local identity in the context of global change is becoming increasingly relevant.

This publication is devoted to a sociolinguistic description of the urban discourse in Rostov-on-Don, the largest city in southern Russia. The aim of the study is to identify the specific features of linguistic and cultural markers in texts about the urban environment of Rostov-on-Don and to determine the cultural connotations associated with local identity.

As the largest multiethnic city, Rostov-on-Don serves as a prime case study for this research, as it possesses a unique linguistic and cultural environment where the past meets the present and where the region’s historical, social, and economic characteristics are reflected. Founded in 1749 as a border fortress, the city has evolved into a key economic and cultural hub that embodies imperial, Soviet, and postmodern legacies. However, to date, a comprehensive analysis of its spatial organization – one that synthesizes semiotic, synergetic, cultural-historical, and textual paradigms – has remained almost entirely outside of academic discourse. This paper attempts to analyze the city’s most important elements: the marker categories of urban streets and squares, textual representations, and their inherent leitmotifs.

Rostov-on-Don demonstrates how the urban text becomes a battleground of meanings: its mercantile past, Soviet symbols, migration dynamics, and digitalization form a multilayered “palimpsest.” All these cultural, social, and historical layers influence linguistic processes that manifest in texts [8]. “Reading” the city’s text requires taking local characteristics into account: from Cossack identity to the role of the Don River as a natural and cultural axis. The study of Rostov-on-Don

as a “local text” confirms that the concept of the “urban text” remains a tool for revealing the uniqueness of a place in an era of globalization, which is increasingly giving way to “glocalization” (from “globalization + localization”).

As a text, Rostov-on-Don possesses many dimensions. This study demonstrates how different layers and their interactions form a complex urban system.

**Materials and Methods.** The research methodology is quite complex, as is the problem itself: it employs a comprehensive combination of various methods, ranging from linguistic and discursive analysis. Ethnolinguistic and sociocultural aspects are also taken into account. Together, they allow us to identify the linguistic and cultural specificity of texts functioning in urban space. The research material consists of the most significant elements of the city: marker categories of urban graffiti and murals, textual images on signs and billboards, advertisements, and connotations that shape perceptions of the city and attitudes toward it. The sample includes 155 items: billboards (35), signs (35), slogans (25), graffiti (20), murals (15), and urban folklore (25).

**Results.** An examination of trends and patterns in urban communication across various sectors of Rostov-on-Don, a city with a population of over one million, presents a fascinating picture. It could serve as highly valuable material for linguistic research. It is important to note that Rostov-on-Don is a multicultural city and the capital of the Rostov Region. Its history and culture are closely linked to the cultural development of our country.

An analysis of Rostov-on-Don as a “local text” confirms that the city, as a text, possesses multiple dimensions [9, 10]. In this sense, it is interesting to examine how different layers and their interactions form the city’s complex semiotic system. An analysis of the most important marker elements of urban discourse that shape perceptions of the city and attitudes toward it – such as graffiti and murals, signs, urban slogans, advertising, and urban folklore – allows us to draw the following conclusions:

1. Graffiti and murals, as a form of public discourse, combine protest, historical memory, and irony, using dialectal vocabulary to mark local identity.
2. Advertising hybridizes global and local codes, turning ethnic stereotypes into commodities.
3. Urban folklore adapts to the digital environment while retaining its function as a social mirror.

Next, we will support our conclusions with specific examples from urban discourse.

### **1. Graffiti: Between Protest and Local Identity**

Graffiti and murals in Rostov-on-Don function as semiotic markers reflecting social and cultural conflicts. Our analysis has identified their main connotations:

– Historical memory: images of Don Cossacks, quotes from M.A. Sholokhov’s novel “Quiet Don”, such as the graffiti on Pushkinskaya Street that reads: “*Here they spoke the Don dialect*”. Another example is the mural on the end of one of the buildings on Pushkinskaya Street: a depiction of a young woman scattering gold coins around her. The older generation unequivocally associates it with the turbulent times of the past, and the woman is called Sonya Golden Hand. However, young people tend to associate this image with the revival of Rostov-on-Don, its hospitality, and generosity.

– Political protest: protest themes are expressed in anti-war slogans (“*No to war!*”), stylized, among other things, as Cossack proverbs (“*The Cossack sows peace – war has not taken root*”).

– Popular culture: Memes with a local flavor, such as the “*Rostov*” cat with a saber, are conveyed not only through images but also in spoken and written language.

– Graffiti with linguistic features: the use of South Russian dialectisms, such as “*чиркамь*” (to cry) and “*баз*” (house). Another example is hybrid forms of inscriptions: “*Ростов – наихач*” (from the Armenian “խաչ” (khach) – cross, but in slang – an ethnic stereotype).

– Socially critical graffiti: for example, graffiti in the area of demolished pre-revolutionary buildings reading “*Restore the historic appearance!*” or “*Rostov is not a dump!*” as a form of environmental activism. Such messages call for a mindful approach to urban space.

– Artistic murals: for example, a *portrait of Chekhov* as a reference to the region’s literary heritage; or an image of a Cossack with the inscription: “*The Don is our everything*” as a mythologization of the Cossacks.

Consequently, graffiti and murals serve as visual markers of local history, while their textual elements function as a form of social expression.

### **2. Signs: Bilingualism and Local Branding**

– Russian-English hybrids: for example, “*DonPlaza*” (a blend of “*Don*” and the English “*Plaza*”), or “*RostovGrad*” (a play on the historical name “*Nakhichevan-na-Donu*”).

– Traditional names: for example, “*Donskaya Biblioteka*” (rus. *Don Public Library*), where the emphasis is on regional identity.

As we can see, signs in urban spaces reflect both processes of localization (the use of place names) and trends toward globalization (borrowings from English).

### 3. Slogans: Constructing Urban Identity

– Official: Position the city as a business hub: “*Rostov-on-Don is a city of great opportunities*”.

– Informal: “*Rostov is the capital of the South*”, a popular slogan emphasizing the city’s status.

Slogans serve as a tool for constructing local identity; they shape the image of Rostov-on-Don as a dynamic and significant city.

### 4. Advertising: Multicultural Coding and the Commercialization of Traditions, Regional Flavor, and Wordplay

An analysis of advertising texts revealed the following trends:

– Use of dialectal expressions and local vocabulary: for example, “*The authentic Don flavor*”. In advertisements for local products, the emphasis is on authenticity. In another example, “*Kuban Milk*” is branding based on regional identity (a reference to a neighboring region).

– Elements of wordplay: “*Rostov is the city where everything tastes great!*” (a pun linking gastronomy and quality of life).

– Hybridization strategies:

Examples of local brands: at the “*Kazachiy Dvor*” café, the advertising slogan “*Вкус Дона в каждом куске!*” (*The taste of the Don in every bite!*) uses dialectal vocabulary (the word “*кусок*” (*bite*) is dialectal). At the “*Nakhichevan Sweets*” store, the advertisement for the product “*Tama – soul of Armenia*” (*Gata is soul of Armenia*) features a combination of Armenian ornamentation and Russian-English text.

Examples of global trends: Anglicisms in shopping mall advertisements: “*Rostov Mall is your crush*” (from the English *crush* with meaning *infatuation*).

Examples of ethnic markers: Ukrainian motifs in advertisements for agricultural products: “*Сало – душі радість!*” (Ukrainian: *Lard is joy of the soul!*).

These and other examples show that advertising exploits ethnic stereotypes as a commercial resource, creating an “*exoticized*” multicultural image of the region. Advertising copy shapes the image of Rostov-on-Don as a city with rich culinary traditions.

### 5. Local Folklore: Oral Narratives and Digital Mythology

An analysis of oral and digital texts has revealed a diachronic transformation of folklore:

– Traditional forms: proverbs, such as “*Born on the Don, never married*” as an ironic take on bachelorhood. Anecdotes: “*A Cossack in a restaurant: “Charge it to Moscow!”*” as a stereotype of Cossack generosity.

– Digital folklore:

Memes in public groups: “*A woman from Rostov: I’m bringing fish from the market, it’s not for you, it’s for the cat*” (a reference to a love of animals and local humor). Another example is challenges on social media and video-sharing sites: “*Say ‘баз’ instead of ‘дом’, get a Don accent*” (rus. *dom* means *house*).

It is clear that folklore is evolving from oral narratives to virtual formats, while retaining its role in strengthening the community.

Rostov-on-Don is a blend of languages and cultures that are interconnected yet preserve the linguistic and cultural characteristics of different ethnic groups. At the same time, we can observe the formation and evolution of a specific urban dialect. This dialect is interesting in that it mirrors, like a mirror, the trends in the development of the Russian language within a multi-ethnic society. The city’s dialect is a cultural phenomenon. Its manifestation in a regional form adds to its significance and academic interest.

The linguistic and cultural space of Rostov-on-Don is characterized by: hybridity (traditional and global elements); regionalisms that emphasize local southern identity; and visual mythologization (Cossacks, literary images).

**Discussion and Conclusion.** The texts of Rostov-on-Don’s urban space form a polyphonic discourse in which historical memory, ethnic diversity, and global trends intersect. The analysis demonstrates that language serves not only as a means of communication but also as a tool for constructing cultural identity in the context of “*glocalization*”.

Linguistic and cultural analysis has confirmed that the texts of Rostov-on-Don’s urban discourse form a unique cultural code that combines local traditions and global trends. Further research could focus on a comparative analysis with other cities in southern Russia (Krasnodar, Volgograd) and on studying residents’ perceptions of urban texts.

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***Конфликт интересов: авторы заявляют об отсутствии конфликта интересов.***

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## RELIGIOUS STUDIES



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Original Theoretical Research



### Technological Religiosity as Digital Idolatry: An Anthropological and Neurocognitive Analysis of “Deus in Machina”

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#### Abstract

**Introduction.** This article examines the phenomenon of technological religiosity as a form of digital idolatry emerging amid the anthropological crisis of the digital age. The aim of the article is to demonstrate that digital technologies are ceasing to be a neutral tool and are beginning to influence the ontological foundations of human existence, transforming religiosity, identity, and ways of experiencing the sacred.

**Materials and Methods.** The methodological foundation of this study is an interdisciplinary analysis at the intersection of philosophical anthropology and the study of religion. The theoretical framework draws on the concepts of E. Fromm, P. Tillich, M. Scheler, G. Marcel, M. Heidegger, N. Berdyaev, C. Taylor, as well as contemporary researchers of digital religiosity and posthumanism (J.-C. Larche, E.S. Elbakyan, D.D. Veliyev, N.K. Hayles, and others). The empirical material includes cases of the virtualization of the sacred (online communion, AI confession, the art project Deus in Machina, and the phenomenon of “Googlism”). Hermeneutic analysis of cinematic narratives is employed as cultural symptoms of anthropological transformation. Data from neurocognitive studies are utilized to support the thesis regarding identity transformation.

**Results.** It has been established that the digital environment naturally gives rise to quasi-religious forms in which technology replaces the transcendent principle and acquires the status of ultimate reality. It is demonstrated that technological idolatry has deep philosophical and anthropological foundations, described in the concepts of anthropolatry, “ultimate interest,” and quasi-religion. It has been revealed that the virtualization of religious practices, the sacralization of communication, the cult of the algorithm, and transhumanist projects represent various manifestations of a single process, the replacement of religious experience with its technological simulation. Neurocognitive data confirm the formation of a “digital personality” and the transformation of identity under the influence of the digital environment.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** It has been concluded that the key threat of the digital age is not linked to technology per se, but to an anthropological transformation in which technical systems begin to perform quasi-religious functions. Technological idolatry is interpreted as a form of deviant religiosity arising from the misuse of technology (παράχρησις) and the loss of ontological hierarchy. The distinction between the use of technology (χρησις) and its sacralization is emphasized. Criticism of digital idolatry does not imply a rejection of technology, but points to the need to protect human spiritual autonomy and preserve the transcendent dimension of religious experience.

**Keywords:** technological religiosity, digital idolatry, cyber-religiosity, deviant religiosity, quasi-religion, anthropological crisis, digital identity, artificial intelligence, the sacred, transhumanism, posthuman, cyber-allure, chresis and parachresis

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## Технологическая религиозность как цифровое идолопоклонство: антропологический и нейрокогнитивный анализ «Deus in Machina»

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### Аннотация

**Введение.** Статья посвящена анализу феномена технологической религиозности как формы цифрового идолопоклонства, возникающей в условиях антропологического кризиса цифровой эпохи. Цель статьи – показать, что цифровые технологии перестают быть нейтральным инструментом и начинают воздействовать на онтологические основания человеческого бытия, трансформируя религиозность, идентичность и способы переживания сакрального.

**Материалы и методы.** Методологической основой исследования является междисциплинарный анализ на стыке философской антропологии и религиоведения. Теоретический каркас опирается на концепции Э. Фромма, П. Тиллиха, М. Шелера, Г. Марсея, М. Хайдеггера, Н. Бердяева, Ч. Тейлора, а также современных исследователей цифровой религиозности и постгуманизма (Ж.-К. Ларше, Е.С. Элбакян, Д.Д. Велиев, Н.К. Хейлз и др.). Эмпирический материал включает кейсы виртуализации сакрального (онлайн-причастие, ИИ-исповедь, арт-проект Deus in Machina, феномен «гуглизма»). Используется герменевтический анализ кинематографических нарративов как культурных симптомов антропологической трансформации. Для подтверждения тезиса о трансформации идентичности привлекаются данные нейрокогнитивных исследований.

**Результаты исследования.** Установлено, что цифровая среда закономерно порождает квазирелигиозные формы, в которых технология замещает трансцендентное начало и приобретает статус предельной реальности. Показано, что технологическое идолопоклонство имеет глубокие философско-антропологические основания, описанные в концепциях антропологии, «предельного интереса» и квазирелигии. Выявлено, что виртуализация религиозных практик, сакрализация коммуникации, культ алгоритма и трансгуманистические проекты представляют собой различные проявления единого процесса – подмены религиозного опыта его технологической симуляцией. Нейрокогнитивные данные подтверждают формирование «цифровой личности» и трансформацию идентичности под воздействием цифровой среды.

**Обсуждение и заключение.** Сделан вывод, что ключевая угроза цифровой эпохи связана не с технологиями как таковыми, а с антропологической трансформацией, при которой технические системы начинают выполнять квазирелигиозные функции. Технологическое идолопоклонство интерпретируется как форма девиантной религиозности, возникающая в результате злоупотребления технологиями (*παράχρησις*) и утраты онтологической иерархии. Подчеркивается различие между использованием технологии (*χρήσις*) и её сакрализацией. Критика цифрового идолопоклонства не предполагает отказа от технологий, но указывает на необходимость защиты человеческой духовной автономии и сохранения трансцендентного измерения религиозного опыта.

**Ключевые слова:** технологическая религиозность, цифровое идолопоклонство, киберрелигиозность, девиантная религиозность, квазирелигия, антропологический кризис, цифровая личность, искусственный интеллект, сакральное, трансгуманизм, постчеловек, киберпрелесть, хресис и парахресис

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**Introduction.** Modern digital technologies are penetrating the ontological foundations of human existence, functioning not only as tools but also as a “generic prosthesis” that compensates for the loss of human natural abilities [2, p. 36]. This process is accompanied by a profound anthropological crisis, within which the blurring of boundaries between humans and technology leads to a transformation of identity and religiosity [2, p. 40].

One of the key symptoms of this crisis is the emergence of technological religiosity, in which the digital environment gives rise to quasi-religious forms (“cyber-religiosity,” “click-Christianity”) that replace the transcendent with an immanent algorithm. Research by D.D. Veliyev shows that digitalization affects neurocognitive structures, forming a “digital personality”, meaning a hybrid identity optimized for the logic of interfaces [4, pp. 585–586].

Internet culture fosters the emergence of syncretic pseudo-religious forms that combine elements of Gnosticism, techno-utopianism, and Manichaeism [9, pp. 238–239]. In these forms, technology acquires a quasi-sacred status, serving as an immanent surrogate for the transcendent. Instead of engaging in genuine spiritual quests, humans capitulate to the

machine. As V.R. Legoyda emphasizes, “the dehumanization of humans poses no less of a threat than the humanization of artificial intelligence” [10], a point that is symptomatic of contemporary philosophical reflection on the digital age.

The aim of this article is a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon of technological religiosity as a form of digital idolatry at the intersection of philosophical anthropology, religious studies, and neurocognitive research. Research objectives: 1) to identify the philosophical and anthropological foundations of technological idolatry; 2) to analyze the religious studies manifestations of cyber-religiosity as a deviant form of religiosity; 3) to interpret the phenomenon through the lens of anthropological transformation from the “buffered self” (Taylor) to the “digital identity” (Veliev), taking neurocognitive data into account. The relevance of this study stems from the need to comprehend the internal anthropological challenge of the digital age, manifested in the replacement of the transcendent with immanent technological surrogates and the formation of deviant forms of religiosity.

**Materials and Methods.** The methodological foundation of this study is an interdisciplinary analysis at the intersection of philosophical anthropology and religious studies, drawing on data from neurocognitive research. The theoretical framework is based on the concepts of E. Fromm (“market personality,” “cybernetic religion”), P. Tillich (“ultimate concern,” quasi-religion), M. Scheler and G. Marcel (ontology of idolatry), as well as critical philosophy of technology (M. Heidegger, N. Berdyaev, K. Jaspers). Concepts of post- and transhumanism are of great importance for the critique of techno-utopian projects and the understanding of anthropological reconfiguration, particularly the works of N.K. Hales on the irreproducibility of embodied consciousness and F. Ferrando on philosophical posthumanism and techno-reductionism. To analyze the digital transformation of religiosity and verify the anthropological thesis on the transformation of identity, the works of contemporary researchers are drawn upon: D.D. Veliyeva (the concept and neurocognitive data on the formation of a hybrid “digital personality”), E.S. Elbakyan and A.P. Zabiako (cyber-religiosity as a deviant form of religiosity), and J.-C. Larche (“religion without God” in new media).

The empirical basis consists of cases of the sacralization of the sacred (online communion, the Deus in Machina art project, the phenomenon of “Googlism,” and the sacralization of AI).

Hermeneutic analysis of cinematic narratives is used to identify cultural patterns representing the sacralization of technology and anthropological reconfiguration in the digital age.

## Results

**The Theoretical and Philosophical Foundations of Technological Idolatry.** The phenomenon of technological idolatry has deep roots in 20th-century critical philosophy. E. Fromm traced its origins to the “religion of production”—the hidden foundation of industrial society, where the individual is reduced to an “appendage to the economy and technology,” serving the very machines they have created [17, p. 224]. This system gives rise to the “market personality”, i.e. the commodity-human (analogous to the consumer-human), whose value is determined by the success of self-presentation. Behind the facade of agnosticism and Christianity lies a “cybernetic religion”: by imagining oneself as a god thanks to technogenic power, a person in reality becomes a slave to machines: “We have deified the machine and equated ourselves with God, since we serve this machine” [17, p. 223]. According to Fromm, industrialization has elevated man to the status of an idol, leading to the denial of God and the spread of modern paganism, in which man himself becomes the object of worship [16, pp. 180–181].

This process finds its historical precursor in the concept of anthropolatry (the worship of humanity), introduced by K. Leontiev. Anthropolatry is a belief not in God, but in “earthly man and earthly humanity,” in the ideal dignity of the individual elevated to an absolute [5, p. 269]. By displacing belief in the Supreme Principle from consciousness, it leads to a spiritual crisis and the loss of cultural foundations.

The deep anthropological mechanism of idolatry is revealed by M. Scheler and G. Marcel. Scheler asserted that the need for absolute being is an essential trait of humanity: there is no choice as to whether or not to have this idea; the choice lies only between its rational and irrational embodiment. Ignoring this sphere creates an inner void, which a person unconsciously fills with finite things (money, nation), elevating them to the status of an absolute, i. e. engaging in fetishism and idolatry [20, pp. 4–5].

Marcel expanded on this idea, noting that catastrophe begins the moment a person, imagining himself to be the absolute, severs his ties with the “Other.” The pursuit of an illusory “freedom” from the Supreme Principle leads to self-destruction, and “poor abstractions”, class, race, ideology, which are incomparably inferior to the true Absolute, become the objects of a new idolatry [11, p. 137].

P. Tillich provided the most rigorous conceptualization of the phenomenon through the introduction of the concepts of “ultimate concern” and “quasi-religion.” According to Tillich, the essence of religion is formed by “ultimate concern”, an existential passion directed toward “ultimate reality.” However, this passion often deviates from the highest goal, and then finite realities (nation, science, ideal) are elevated to the level of the ultimate, becoming idols [13, p. 161]. This is how

secular quasi-religions arise: pseudo-spiritual formations in which “preliminary, finite realities are elevated to the level of the ultimate” [13, p. 140]. This is the modern form of idolatry that Scheler and Marcel warned about.

Following Fromm’s logic, one can conclude that in the context of the “death of God,” humans strive to take God’s place, but this endeavor is doomed to failure. In striving to become God, man turns into a “non-human” and ultimately sacrifices himself to a new “god” – technology – renouncing his own power in its favor [16, p. 181]. Technology, created as a tool for the deification of man, itself becomes an absolute idol.

This understanding is shared by other 20th-century thinkers. M. Heidegger saw technology as a “framework” (Gestell) that transforms the world into “raw material” [19, pp. 221–238]; N. Berdyaev warned of a conflict between spirit and machine leading to dehumanization [1, pp. 143–163]; O. Spengler viewed technology as humanity’s Faustian strategy for enslaving nature, which ultimately turns against humanity itself [21, pp. 454–494]; K. Jaspers noted that technology creates a “new environment” that threatens human essence [23, pp. 99–239]. What they have in common is the thesis that technology has ceased to be a neutral tool and has become an autonomous force claiming the place of the traditional Absolute.

***Empirical Manifestations of Cyber-Religiosity: From the Virtualization of Ritual to the Sacralization of AI.*** The virtualization of religion, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, naturally gives rise to quasi-religious forms (cyber-religions, online religions) in which technology replaces the transcendent element. As E.S. Elbakyan notes, digitalization provides unprecedented access to religious practices, but at the same time destroys the communicative core of parish life – the direct encounter of believers in sacred space [22, pp. 104–117].

The most controversial manifestation of this trend has been the practice of online communion, introduced by priests of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine and described by some analysts as a “liturgical breakthrough” (in quotes). Virtual parishioners, participating in the broadcast of the service, placed bread and wine in front of their monitors, believing that the “offering of the Holy Gifts” was being performed remotely. Such a practice, which ignores the ontological nature of the sacrament as an encounter with God in a specific place and time, demonstrates a fundamental anthropological reconfiguration: the sacred is reduced to informational content available “on demand” (albeit a forced one).

This process corresponds to the mindset described by A.P. Zabyako. In this mindset, “computer technologies acquire the status of a supreme value, are endowed with the qualities of sacred objects and the attributes of divine entities; in the coordinate system of this mentality, computer virtual reality acts as the highest reality, a super-valuable otherworldly existence lying beyond the boundaries of ordinary existence and dominating it” [6, p. 32]. E.S. Elbakyan explicitly classifies this type of cyberreligion as a quasi-religion – a pseudo-spiritual formation in which priority is given not to the transcendent, but to technology itself and its functional capabilities [22, p. 109]. This is a direct realization of P. Tillich’s concept, in which ultimate reality (the digital interface) is elevated to the level of the ultimate, becoming an object of worship.

It can be said that during the pandemic and post-pandemic periods, we are witnessing the institutionalization and normalization of trends that were previously described as marginal or futuristic. Whether we like it or not, technological development has a profound impact on religiosity and spirituality at the anthropological level: at the level of our very understanding of the sacred, community, and ritual. Practices that would previously have been considered impossible or blasphemous from the perspective of traditional dogma are now becoming the subject of discussion and are even being implemented, which indicates a fundamental shift in the perception of the boundaries between religious experience and its technological simulation.

“Homo communicans” and the digital reconfiguration of religiosity. Norbert Wiener’s cybernetic utopia, which elevated communication to the status of a condition for humanity’s survival against entropy, was interpreted by F. Breton – to whom Larche refers in his work – as a secular theology that gave rise to the anthropological model of homo communicans: “the communicating human” [9]. In the digital age, this project has materialized in the phenomenon of the “connected human” (homo connecticus), for whom constant connectivity becomes an end in itself, replacing a transcendent orientation.

New media are transforming into a quasi-religious cult. The role of the Absolute is played not by God, but by the immanent totality of communication. Everyday practices, from checking notifications to sleepless nighttime “surfing” on social media, take on a ritualistic character, forming a kind of quasi-asceticism in which self-restraint is directed not toward spiritual transformation, but toward maintaining a continuous presence in the digital stream. Ritualization manifests itself in cyclicity. The day begins and ends not with prayer, but with connecting to the network, which structures identity around the act of communication.

This process is visualized in the works of contemporary artists. Antoine Geiger’s series “Sur-Fake” depicts the literal “sucking in” of a human face into a smartphone screen – a metaphor for the loss of the human image (imago Dei) in favor of the digital interface. Such a transformation marks the transition from religion as a connection with the Supreme Being to religion as connection itself – a quasi-religion in which the very process of communication is sacralized.

As J.-C. Larche notes, this is a “religion without God” and “spirituality without the Spirit”, where the technological interface becomes the sole mediator between the human being and the world [9, p. 250].

**Anthropological Reconfiguration: From the “Buffered Self” to the “Digital Identity”.** The digital transformation of religiosity is rooted in a profound anthropological shift, described by C. Taylor as a transition to a state of the “immanent frame.” In this state, the individual is confined within the horizon of the immanent, and their consciousness takes the form of a “buffered self” – an autonomous center alienated from the transcendent dimension of being [14, p. 19]. For such a subject, traditional Christianity, with its demands for asceticism, self-sacrifice, and devotion to the Supreme Principle, becomes semantically inaccessible.

The digital environment is not the cause of this trend, but rather an amplifier of it. As D.D. Veliyev demonstrates, adaptation to digital reality gives rise to a “digital persona” – a hybrid identity whose patterns of behavior and communication are optimized for the logic of interfaces and algorithms [4, p. 586]. This new configuration of selfhood naturally generates quasi-religious practices: from “click-inity” (a “like” in response to a request instead of prayerful support) to algorithmic confession (via phone, email, pastoral forums, etc.) forms in which the depth of religious experience is reduced to a mechanical action or verbal template.

I.A. Ilyin referred to this state as “the death of the religious act”, i.e. the loss of the spirit’s living orientation toward God [7, pp. 126–127, 131]. Deprived of the will toward a transcendent Object, religiosity begins to “invent a god for itself,” and technology provides unprecedented opportunities for this. Quasi-religious forms from the cult of communication to the deification of AI become a logical product of a new anthropological reality in which religion is modified to meet the demands of a “buffered” individual oriented toward immanent comfort.

**Transhumanism as a Quasi-Religion and the Final Stage of Idolatry.** The virtualization of religiosity is merely a prelude to a more radical project: the creation of a “new human” (post-human) through a synthesis with technology. As far back as 1999, the renowned researcher N.K. Hales embarked on an in-depth analysis of this concept. She is convinced that “the posthuman does not in fact signify the end of humanity. Rather, it marks the end of a certain understanding of the human...” [27, p. 286]. And further: “It is not the posthuman as such that proves deadly, but the grafting of the posthuman onto the liberal-humanist conception of the subject... the notion that ‘you’ can, of your own volition, upload yourself into a computer and thereby, through technological domination, attain the highest privilege, i.e. immortality...” [27, p. 286].

The transhumanist movement (Humanity+) proposes overcoming biological limitations through genetic engineering, bionics, and neural interfaces, with the goal of technological immortality and cognitive “enhancement” [9, pp. 242–244].

As J.-C. Larche notes, behind the rational rhetoric of transhumanism lies a distinctly religious impulse: an offer of “salvation” not through a connection with a Higher Power, but through the technological transformation of the body and consciousness. Technological progress is sacralized and takes the place of God, forming a quasi-religion with totalitarian ambitions, the pursuit of global influence and the recoding of human nature itself [9, p. 244].

It is important to distinguish between transhumanism – a movement rooted in the ideals of the Enlightenment and representing, in Onishi’s words, “ultra-humanism” and critical posthumanism (N.K. Hales, R. Braidotti) [15, p. 26]. While the former proposes a radical “enhancement” of humanity through genetic engineering and neural interfaces, the latter deconstructs the very anthropocentric framework underlying technoutopia: “... the subject in posthumanism is fragmented; its fragments are impermanent, complex, and, most importantly, do not presuppose a key role for Anthropos” [8, p. 26].

The weakness of transhumanism, as F. Ferrando notes, lies in a “techno-reductionist interpretation of existence”, which ignores the ontological status of corporeality and reduces the human being to an algorithm-controlled object [15, p. 26]. It is precisely this reduction that underlies technological idolatry. Ultimate reality (the interface) is elevated to the level of the absolute, becoming an object of worship.

Even cinema captures this anthropological reconfiguration as a cultural symptom. Narratives ranging from “The Matrix” (1999) and “A.I. Artificial Intelligence” (2001) to “Ex Machina” (2014) and “The Creator” (2023) reflect the transition from an external worship of technology to an internal fusion with it. This is the essence of the transhumanist project.

The series “Altered Carbon” (2018–2020) is of particular diagnostic value. In the world depicted, “stacks” (digital carriers of consciousness) allow a person’s identity to be uploaded into new bodies. This plot is a direct allegory of the transhumanist utopia of “digital immortality”. And the new caste of “Mafs” (long-lived individuals), who imagine themselves to be gods, vividly illustrates Fromm’s thesis that the human desire to become a god through technology leads to the loss of one’s own nature.

In the world of technological innovation depicted in this series, the spiritual aspect of human life, religion (Neo-Catholicism), comes to the fore, prohibiting the transfer of consciousness as a “violation of the divine plan.” This creates a conflict between traditional religion and the technological “salvation” program.

Overall, the series depicts the final stage of idolatry: the replacement of transcendent salvation with technological immortality, in which a person voluntarily renounces their holistic existence (body, soul, and spirit) for the sake of illusory control over death. This is a quasi-religion in which an algorithm replaces the Absolute.

In reality, this trend has already moved beyond the realm of futurology. Elon Musk’s Neuralink project, which implants neural interfaces into the human brain, confirms the accelerating pace of the transhumanist agenda [24].

**Google as the “Digital God”.** In the public consciousness, the Google search engine is endowed with divine attributes: omniscience, omnipresence, and the ability to instantly fulfill any request. The satirical project “Googlism” (“Church of Google”), which proclaims “the one and only god, whose existence requires no faith,” paradoxically captures a real phenomenon: technological objectivism as a new form of quasi-religion, where the algorithm also replaces the transcendent.

This substitution gives rise to an ontological transformation – the formation of new passions. As T.A. Hagurov demonstrates, the digital environment reinforces egocentrism and narcissism, the “primary deviant consequence” of which is “the loss of compassion, empathy, and the behaviors based on them” [18, pp. 44–45]. Constant online presence, seeking approval through “likes,” and comparing oneself to images of others; all of this generates vanity and pride, “the person becomes an idol unto themselves” [18, p. 44]. K. Lash calls this a “culture of narcissism,” in which Christian virtues (humility, mercy) are supplanted by the cult of the self [9].

This process marks the completion of the cycle of anthropolatry described by K. Leontiev. By renouncing their connection to the Supreme Principle, humans elevate themselves to the status of an absolute – but now in the hybrid form of a “digital persona,” whose identity is optimized for the logic of interfaces [4, p. 586]. As D. Dyson notes, the paradox of this dependence lies in the fact that “everything human beings do to simplify work in computer networks, at the very same time... allows the computer systems themselves to more easily control human beings” [26, p. 347]. Technology created to expand freedom becomes a new idol demanding total worship.

It follows that Googlism is not mere irony – it is a symptom of a profound anthropological crisis, i. e., voluntary dehumanization through the substitution of the transcendent with an immanent surrogate.

**Chatbots and Deus in Machina: Algorithms as Surrogates for the Supreme Being.** In the digital age, a new phenomenon of technological idolatry is emerging: users, interacting with chatbots like ChatGPT and its counterparts, often attribute traditionally divine attributes to them, just as they do with Google: omniscience, impartiality, and normative infallibility. An illusion of dialogue with a super-mind arises, whereas in reality we are dealing with statistical models devoid of soul, consciousness, free will, and conscience, for which the primary focus is the discipline of thinking according to the laws of formal logic.

This phenomenon points to the emergence of “cyber-charm”, a particular religious danger of the digital age, in which an algorithmic surrogate of the sacred creates the illusion of a spiritual experience, replacing genuine contact with the Transcendent and depriving people of the opportunity to establish a genuine connection with It.

Technology, which initially served as a mediator in the realms of communication and knowledge (and very quickly “re-qualified” itself to play the roles of personal psychologist, teacher, doctor, and, more recently, friend and even lover), begins, at the behest of humans, to claim the role of spiritual mentor and, in extreme cases, the role of the ultimate source of meaning.

Much like the phenomenon of false spiritual guidance, artificial intelligence (a quasi-mentor), even if it formally reproduces “correct” answers, does not lead to spiritual transformation, but rather fosters dependence on itself, supplanting genuine pastoral guidance and diverting focus away from the Divine.

The culmination of the virtualization of religious experience was the art project Deus in Machina (“God in the Machine”), realized in 2024 at the Catholic Chapel of St. Peter in Lucerne (Switzerland). The project consists of a holographic chatbot in the image of Jesus Christ, hearing confessions through a grille [25]. Artificial intelligence, trained on texts from the New Testament, formally reproduces correct theological formulas, creating the illusion that a living priest can be replaced by an algorithmic system.

The title of the project takes on a literal and unsettling meaning. Whereas in ancient theater, “deus ex machina” referred to a deity artificially introduced into the action by means of a mechanism, here a radical inversion occurs: God does not appear through the machine, but is himself reduced to the machine. The algorithm acts not as a mediator, but as a surrogate substitute for the Supreme Being.

Meanwhile, the essence of the Sacrament of Confession lies in a personal encounter, which presupposes the presence of a living witness endowed with a conscience, responsibility, and the capacity for compassion, not to mention a special priestly grace. Artificial intelligence, devoid of consciousness and spiritual experience, is capable only of reproducing verbal templates, remaining ontologically empty.

The popularity of Deus in Machina speaks not so much to a technological experiment as to a loss of understanding of the nature of the sacred and a willingness to accept algorithmic substitution, which corresponds to the traditional concept of spiritual enchantment transposed into a digital context (cyber-enchantment).

Deus in Machina represents the culmination of a phenomenon that, in a broader context, manifests itself in all digital chatbots. It is about voluntary dehumanization through the substitution of the transcendent with an immanent technological surrogate, about the illusion of spiritual experience in the actual absence of an ontological foundation, and about dependence on algorithmic intermediaries instead of a living spiritual mentor.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** The analysis conducted leads to the conclusion that the primary threat of the digital age is not linked to the autonomization of technology per se, but rather to an anthropological transformation in which technical systems begin to perform quasi-religious functions, replacing the transcendent source of meaning.

In this context, the transhumanist project of “digital immortality” appears as an expression of a fundamental ontological illusion: the notion that information can be separated from its embodiment. As N.K. Hales convincingly demonstrates, information, just like human identity, does not exist outside of concrete, local, and irreproducible forms of bodily existence; the loss of form signifies the loss of the very mode of being, and therefore cannot be compensated for by any manipulation of data [27, pp. 48–49].

From a philosophical and anthropological perspective, this illusion serves as one of the foundations for the emergence of deviant forms of religiosity, in which technology is sacralized and acquires the status of an ultimate source of meaning. The digital environment, by transforming the subject’s cognitive and perceptual structures (D.D. Veliyev), creates the conditions for such sacralization, though it does not determine it. Human choice remains decisive, expressed in the distinction between *χρησις* (*chresis*), i.e. the use of technology within the horizon of human wholeness for the common good, and *παραχρησις* (*parachresis*), its idolization and abuse, as emphasized by V.R. Legoyda [10].

Thus, criticism of digital idolatry does not imply a rejection of technology, but calls for the restoration of an ontological hierarchy in which the technical once again occupies a subordinate position in relation to the Transcendent. It is precisely in this distinction that the boundary lies between the use of technology and its sacralization – a boundary that determines the possibility of preserving humanity as a spiritual being in the context of the digitalization of existence.

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## RELIGIOUS STUDIES



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### Key Aspects of Buddhism Integration into the Russian Education System

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#### Abstract

**Introduction.** The growing interest in Buddhist education is linked to the geopolitical shifts and civilizational transformations currently taking place in the world, which necessitate viewing it through the lens of multipolarity, given the role of Buddhist nations for Russia. The aim of this article is to identify the distinctive features of the integration of Buddhism into the modern Russian education system. The article identifies types of interaction between religion and education and sets out to demonstrate that the integration of Buddhism and secular education represents a new form of contemporary interaction.

**Materials and Methods.** The methodological foundation is a systems approach, which allows us to view religion and education as social systems that interact with one another. A structural-functional approach is applied to study the integration of religion and education. General scientific methodology is employed in the form of analysis, synthesis, deduction, and abstraction. A post-secular paradigm, pioneered by J. Habermas, is applied to examine the relationship between the religious and the secular.

**Results.** Modern education is characterized by the active integration of religion, which shapes the spiritual and moral foundations of the individual. Buddhism is no exception; its teachings, by their very nature, constitute a continuous educational process that has historically been carried out in monasteries. At the same time, modern Buddhist education is also concentrated in institutions established at datsans. Several vectors of development in Buddhist education are noted. The first aspect is traditional spiritual Buddhist education; the second is the study of Buddhism as part of secular disciplines; and the third is the integration of Buddhist and secular educational institutions. The study presents an example of the integration of Buddhism and education at the Dorzhi Banzarov Buryat State University, where a bachelor's program in Buddhist philosophy is being implemented for the first time in collaboration with a Buddhist university.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** At present, there is a consistent government strategy aimed at supporting and promoting the development of Buddhist religious organizations, as well as advancing Buddhist educational discourse. This policy is implemented through a range of measures, including financial support, a legislative framework, and assistance in institutionalizing Buddhist educational programs.

**Keywords:** society, education, religion, secular education, religious education, Buddhism, Buddhist education

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## Интеграция буддизма в систему российского образования: ключевые аспекты

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### Аннотация

**Введение.** Повышение интереса к буддийскому образованию связано с геополитическими изменениями и цивилизационными трансформациями, которые происходят сегодня в мире и детерминируют необходимость рассматривать его с точки зрения многополярности, учитывая роль буддийских государств для России. Целью статьи является выявление особенностей внедрения буддизма в систему российского современного образования. Выделяются типы взаимодействия религии и образования, поставлена задача доказать, что интеграция буддизма и светского образования – это новый тип современного взаимодействия.

**Материалы и методы.** Методологической основой является системный подход, позволяющий рассмотреть религию и образование как социальные системы, находящиеся во взаимодействии. Структурно-функциональный подход применяется для изучения интеграции религии и образования. Используется общенаучная методология в виде анализа, синтеза, дедукции, абстрагирования. Применяется постсекулярная парадигма, пионером которой является Ю. Хабермаса, для рассмотрения соотношения религиозного и светского.

**Результаты исследования.** Современное образование характеризуется активным включением в него религии, которое формирует духовно-нравственные основы личности. Не является исключением и буддизм, учение которого по своему содержанию является постоянным образованием, которое исторически осуществлялось в монастырях. Вместе с тем современное буддийское образование также сконцентрировано в институтах, созданных при дацанах. Отмечается несколько векторов развития буддийского образования. Первый аспект – это традиционное духовное буддийское образование, второй – изучение буддизма как элемента светских дисциплин, третий – интеграция буддийских и светских образовательных учреждений. В исследовании продемонстрирован пример интеграции буддизма и образования в Бурятском госуниверситете им. Доржи Банзарова, где впервые реализуется программа бакалавриата по философии буддизма в сотрудничестве с буддийским университетом.

**Обсуждение и заключение.** В настоящий момент наблюдается последовательная государственная стратегия, направленная на поддержку и стимулирование развития буддийских религиозных объединений, а также на продвижение буддийского образовательного дискурса. Данная политика реализуется через комплекс мер, включающих финансовую поддержку, законодательную базу, а также содействие в институционализации буддийских образовательных программ.

**Ключевые слова:** общество, образование, религия, светское образование, религиозно образование, буддизм, буддийское образование

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**Introduction.** Modern education takes shape within a multi-faith and multicultural environment. In our view, this is a key feature of Russian society, shaping the goals of education, which consist not only in the transmission of knowledge, but also in the formation of the spiritual and moral foundations of the individual. Today religion plays one of the primary roles in this process. At the same time, there is a recognition that the process of teaching scientific knowledge about the surrounding world would be insufficient without paying attention to the diversity of religious cultures that have influenced the development of our country and the world as a whole. It is also an indisputable fact that the influence and role of religion have grown significantly and now concern not only the interests of the individual but also touch upon issues in all spheres of society.

The relationship between religion and education has long been a subject of interest to researchers, but this topic has gained particular relevance relatively recently, with the active integration of religion into the educational system. In the context of modern education, where the religious component plays a special role, it seems necessary to draw some conclusions based on the specific example of integrating Buddhist education into the secular education system. Among the various forms of interaction between religion and education, the experience of incorporating Buddhist education into the secular Russian education system is of particular interest.

Interest in Buddhist education is linked to global trends, as the realities of the modern world present Russian society with the challenge of establishing a dialogue with countries where Buddhism is traditionally practiced and which offer an alternative to Western civilization. The purpose of this article is to identify the key features of the integration of Buddhism and the modern secular education system and to highlight the main trends in this process, drawing on a specific example of the implementation of an educational program.

**Materials and Methods.** The systems approach was chosen as the primary methodology, as its advantages allow for the study of religion and education as social systems that interact with one another [1, p. 45]. Within this systems framework, religion and education are analyzed as mutually influencing elements of the social structure that perform specific functions and influence one another through their interaction. In addition, a structural-functional approach was used for a more detailed study, making it possible to identify religion and education as structural entities within a single social system and to determine their impact on society as a whole. This methodological choice is driven by the need for a deep understanding of the mechanisms of interaction between religion and education, which allows us to identify the patterns and trends that determine their role in modern society. It should be noted that it was appropriate to use general scientific methods such as analysis, synthesis, deduction, and abstraction, which allowed us to identify connections and relationships between the objects under study. The theoretical foundation of the study was the post-secular paradigm developed in the philosophical works of J. Habermas, which asserts the idea that religion transcends its own boundaries and actively permeates all spheres of public life.

**Results.** When examining the relationship between religion and education, three main models of interaction can be identified. “First, there is secular education; second, denominational religious education; and third, non-denominational religious education” [2, p. 161]. Within this typology, Buddhist education is represented in the form of Buddhist education in monasteries, as a secular course on Buddhist philosophy in higher education institutions within disciplines such as “History of Philosophy,” “Religious Studies,” and “Philosophy of Religion.” Finally, Buddhism is presented as an ethno-regional component of the school subjects “Fundamentals of Religious Culture and Secular Ethics” and “Fundamentals of the Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia”.

It is important to note that Buddhism historically developed as a distinct educational tradition centered on monastic education, where knowledge was transmitted from teacher to student. At the same time, in Russian regions where Tibetan Gelug Buddhism is traditionally widespread, monastic education has largely been preserved, retaining both its authentic features and having undergone modernization. Essentially, Buddhist education has always been linked to the monastery, where socialization, initiation into Buddhist values, and the acquisition of education take place. “An individual’s entry into a monastery involves passing through several stages of education, which can last up to 20 years or more. Completing these stages and earning academic degrees opened the door to higher positions within the administrative, ritual, and educational systems. The educational hierarchy of Tibetan Buddhism includes up to 40 degrees, depending on specialization, level, and monastic and regional characteristics” [3, p. 64].

Currently, Buddhist spiritual education is offered at two educational institutions: the Buddhist Academy at the Aginsky Datsan and the “Dashi Choinkhorlin Buddhist University of the Damba Darja Zayaev” at the Ivolginsky Datsan. The Aginsky Buddhist Academy has been operating since 1998; in 2022, it received a license for educational activities and established three bachelor’s degree programs in Buddhist studies [4]. In 1999, the “Dashi Choinkhorlin” Buddhist University received a state license to conduct educational activities in the field of religious education; in 2004, it received a state license for educational activities. Students (huwarak) receive a higher education diploma and the title of “Lama-Theologian.” These two higher religious institutions are important for training specialists in Buddhist philosophy, who also serve to reproduce the Buddhist clergy and facilitate its initial socialization [5].

Thus, it is clear that with the onset of a religious revival in Russia’s multi-faith society, a process began to shape a new structure for Buddhist education. We see that the 1990s marked the beginning of the revival of spiritual Buddhist education, when the first Buddhist educational institutions were established; for example, the Aginsky Buddhist Academy began its activities with the opening of a school of Tibetan medicine in the Aginsky Buryat Autonomous Okrug in 1993. Schools of Tibetan medicine continue the two-hundred-year-old educational traditions of the Manba Dugana of the Aginsky Datsan.

Having gone through a complex, multi-stage process of licensing and accreditation in the 2000s, these educational institutions evolved into a system of Buddhist education with a solid pedagogical foundation. It should be noted that this was also facilitated by the modernization of the legislative framework, primarily the Constitution of the Russian Federation, where Article 14 states: “No religion may be established as the state religion or made mandatory,” and “religious associations are separate from the state and equal before the law.” It is also worth noting Federal Law No. 125-FZ of

September 26, 1997 (as amended on December 2, 2019) “On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations” [6], specifically Article 3: “the right to freedom of conscience and freedom of religion.”

These legal documents enabled religious organizations to engage in educational activities, thereby expanding their influence. This was of great significance for Buddhist spiritual education. Especially following the long Soviet period during which religion and religious education were banned, this marked the beginning of a process of convergence between Buddhist education and secular education.

It should be noted that these educational institutions, on the one hand, continue the traditions of Buddhist monastic education, while on the other hand, in keeping with modern requirements, they also exhibit secular characteristics. Thus, the structure of their educational activities is modeled after secular higher education institutions: admission requirements, start of classes, duration of study, types of classes, forms of assessment, and so on. Along with Buddhist disciplines, students study secular subjects such as sociology, English, mathematics, and many others. Thus, it turns out that the Buddhist education received there, despite its secular form, is filled with religious content.

A new phase in the integration of Buddhist education into the broader education system is currently underway. Russian society is actively undergoing a process of incorporating Buddhist religious elements into educational institutions, driven by two factors. The first is the historical experience of intercultural and interfaith interaction that has traditionally developed within Russian society; the second factor is cultural contacts with the Buddhist world. To support Buddhist education, the “Foundation for the Promotion of Buddhist Education and Research” [7] was established; under its auspices, two international conferences on Buddhism were held in Ulan-Ude in 2023 and 2024, with participants from 13 countries.

The Foundation was established with the support of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and research institutes specializing in the study of the East: Institute of Asian and African Studies of Moscow State University and Institute of China and Contemporary Asia of the Russian Academy of Sciences; and the centralized religious organization Association of Buddhist Communities “Arya Sangha.” This demonstrates, on the one hand, state support and, on the other, the interest of Buddhist religious organizations in the development of Buddhist studies and Buddhist education. In this regard, Buddhist organizations act as key players exerting a certain influence on the development of Buddhist education; they are currently actively involved in organizing conferences and meetings, as well as co-authoring scientific research and educational programs.

In 2024, Buryat State University admitted its first class to the bachelor’s program in “Buddhist Philosophy.” A distinctive feature of this program is that students are simultaneously enrolled at the Buddhist university “Dashi Choinkhorlin.” At the same time, it should be noted that the BSU offers the bachelor’s degree program 48.03.01 “Orthodox Theology. State-Religious Relations,» which is provided by the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, established in 2013. Here, the emphasis is on Orthodox theology alongside general disciplines. It should be noted that in 2024, the Eastern Institute of BSU established a core department of Buddhist philosophy based at the “Dashi Choinkhorlin” Buddhist University, comprising faculty members from both secular and religious universities [8].

Essentially, obtaining such a degree addresses a very important social issue. A student who has graduated from a Buddhist monastic educational institution can continue their education in monasteries in India or Tibet, or work at a datsan of their choice. However, it should be noted that a monastic education does not always guarantee successful integration into modern society. A situation has arisen in which many graduates of Buddhist spiritual universities are unable to integrate into society without a secular education. Consequently, graduates now possess the qualifications of both a clergyman and a secular specialist.

It is also important to note another key aspect of Buddhist philosophy: the idea of a person-centered approach. Education is a process leading to self-realization, grounded in each individual’s unique characteristics. Buddhist education seeks not to dictate, but to help individuals discover their own potential; moreover, it creates a supportive environment for the individual. All of this demonstrates the potential of Buddhist education to foster sociocultural competencies that meet the challenges of the modern world.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** So, Buddhist education today is developing in the following directions: the first is traditional monastic education, structured within a secular framework but with a Buddhist focus. This type of religious education has a long history, which has allowed it to preserve the study of ritual practices and specific Buddhist disciplines, while combining them with a modern secular methodological approach. The second direction is the fragmented study of Buddhist culture within the framework of the school subjects “Fundamentals of Religious Culture and Secular Ethics” and “Fundamentals of the Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia”, the essence of which is based on the axiological aspect of religious content. The third is the study of the origins and philosophy of Buddhism within the framework of secular disciplines in which the religious aspect is not addressed. Finally, a distinct approach is emerging

that involves an in-depth study of Buddhist philosophy as part of philosophy in general, synthesizing secular presentation with religious content. This addresses an important social issue: the integration of the Buddhist clergy into modern society.

Buddhism was originally conceived as an educational doctrine; however, for a long time, there was no need to integrate it into secular education. Nevertheless, today there is a growing need both to expand Buddhist education and to adapt it to modern realities. It should be noted that, of all traditional religions, Buddhism is the least represented in the educational sphere, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

At present, the state's targeted policy to support Buddhist religious organizations is evident. This support is also evident in the development of Buddhist education, which is a crucial aspect of preserving and transmitting the spiritual tradition of Buddhism. Such steps taken by the state include: facilitating the organization of educational programs and creating conditions for the integration of Buddhism into the modern education system.

The development of Buddhist education is largely linked to the nature of contemporary state-religion relations, which are characterized by cooperation between religious organizations and the state. To a large extent, this leads to state support for religious organizations in their efforts to carry out educational activities. It is also dictated by the need to draw upon traditional spiritual and moral values, to preserve national unity, Russian identity, and distinctiveness, the foundations of which, as it turns out, can largely be found in traditional religions.

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## RELIGIOUS STUDIES



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### Religion and Quantum Physics on the Worldview: What a Journalist Writing about Scientific Discoveries in the Context of Modern Technological Civilization Needs to Know?

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#### Abstract

**Introduction.** The purpose of the study is to attempt to define the guidelines and vector of opportunities in the profession of a science journalist for understanding the world of quantum physics relying on key ways of knowing. Through the media representation of the scientist's work, we gain insight into the foundations of scientific knowledge. Understanding this fact actualizes in the new context the implications of the key problems and achievements of quantum nanoscience for humanity as a whole.

**Materials and Methods.** Descriptive and analytical methods are used to determine the specifics of the work of a science journalist. Comparative analysis showed the similarity and difference of opinions popular in the research field on being, nature and man, thereby indicating the loyal relationship between religion and science, in particular, quantum physics.

**Results.** Science journalists bear a humanistic mission. They should lead society and the intellectually developed person to moral improvement. It makes sense for a specialist, who works in the scientific media field, to master basic philosophical concepts, take into account the conventional nature of science, as well as the existing line between the illusory and the real, objectively perceiving current scientific thought so that they will be able to become an effective link between the research organization and the target audience or the so-called "smart non-experts".

**Discussion and Conclusion.** When a journalist cultivates in the target audience a stimulus for further knowledge, they should take into account the fact of the spiritual development of the individual. Society expects that science as a social phenomenon will provide certain new and safe advanced technologies. Knowledge based on the laws of quantum physics is constantly changing, influencing, in turn, a person and the formation of their moral responsibility. A journalist who popularizes and disseminates the advanced technologies ought to be wary of the risk of science profanation or technological fetishism in their work. It is important to take into account the internal dialogue between the scientific and religious worldviews for greater transparency and value correctness.

**Keywords:** religion, scientific knowledge, quantum physics, science journalism, scientific discoveries, advanced technologies

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## Религия и квантовая физика о видении мира: что важно знать журналисту, пишущему о научных открытиях в условиях современной технологической цивилизации?

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### Аннотация

**Введение.** Целью исследования является попытка определить ориентиры и вектор возможностей в профессии научного журналиста для понимания мира квантовой физики, опираясь на ключевые способы познания. Осмысление того факта, что через медийное отражение работы ученого идет проникновение в основания научного знания, актуализирует в новом контексте осознание последствий узловых проблем и достижений квантовой нанонауки в целом для человечества.

**Материалы и методы.** Описательный и аналитический методы применены для определения специфики работы научного журналиста. Сравнительно-сопоставительный анализ показал сходство и различие популярных в исследовательском поле мнений на бытие, природу и человека, обозначив тем самым лояльное взаимоотношение религии и науки, в частности, квантовой физики.

**Результаты исследования.** На плечи научного журналиста возложена гуманистическая миссия: общество и интеллектуально развитого человека привести к нравственному совершенствованию. В этой связи специалисту, работающему в сфере научного медиаполя, чтобы служить эффективным звеном между научно-исследовательской организацией и целевой аудиторией либо так называемыми «умными неэкспертами», имеет смысл освоить базовые философские понятия, учитывать конвенциональный характер науки, а также существующую грань между иллюзорным и реальным, объективно воспринимая актуальную научную мысль.

**Обсуждение и заключение.** Воспитывая в целевой аудитории стимул к дальнейшему познанию, журналист должен учитывать факт духовного становления личности. Общество ожидает от науки как социального явления предоставления определенных новых и безопасных передовых технологий, а основанные на законах квантовой физики знания постоянно меняются, влияя в свою очередь на человека и формирование его моральной ответственности. Журналист, популяризирующий и распространяющий новейшие технологии, должен опасаться в своей работе риска проявления профанации науки либо технологического фетишизма, а для большей прозрачности и ценностной корректности важно учитывать внутренний диалог между научным и религиозным мировоззрением.

**Ключевые слова:** религия, научное познание, квантовая физика, научная журналистика, научные открытия, передовые технологии

**Для цитирования.** Фарберович О.В. Религия и квантовая физика о видении мира: что важно знать журналисту, пишущему о научных открытиях в условиях современной технологической цивилизации? *Научный альманах стран Причерноморья*. 2026;12(1):45–49. <https://doi.org/10.23947/2414-1143-2026-12-1-45-49>

**Introduction.** In the 21st century, man is rapidly plotting a trajectory between robotics and machine learning forward to future quantum information technology. Although, scientists understand that it is incredibly difficult to predict in which field quantum nanoscience will find application, and the experience of past years has proven that the path from scientific invention to technical implementation can be very long, for example, in relation to high-tech materials that must confirm their safety.

Nowadays, the knowledge, developed by fundamental researchers, shows what resources exist and what the potentials are in the near term. Humanity is increasingly striving for practical benefits and the production of economically viable products. Of course, the capabilities of quantum physics promise to be a real help for a leap in medicine, in storing and encrypting large databases, in the production of “smart” materials, and have already led culture to the Internet era. There is another question. Do people want to use this knowledge to form moral values? How should we correctly assess risks and make decisions in a rapidly changing civilization?

It is accepted that science studies the structure of the world, and religion studies morality and human behavior, but “the model of integration of religion and science provides for the possibility of expanding scientific knowledge in the field of traditional religious ideas. If this happens, then it is on the border of scientific and religious knowledge that a field arises in which their synthesis can be carried out with the help of philosophy” [1, p. 33]. S.V. Krivovichev in the book “Science of Believers or the Faith of Scientists: the 20th Century” considers that “there are not any serious contradictions between science and religion” [2].

It is interesting that outstanding scientists such as Gregor Mendel, Sigmund Freud, Albert Einstein, Max Planck “discovered mysterious new worlds, the study of which radically changed our worldview. Science does not act as a guardian of stability and order but as an incorrigible revolutionary who creates creative chaos. It makes our life no more orderly or calm but freer and more interesting” [3, p. 16].

Thus, “quantum mechanics has renewed the interest of philosophers and scientists in fundamental questions about the natural world, human knowledge and God” [4, p. 44]. One of the greatest achievements of science of the 20th century was “the conviction that the human mind and, therefore, science have no reason to reject God and religious knowledge of the world” [5, p.18]. There is a point of view that the main achievement of quantum mechanics is “awareness of the integrity, complementarity of the subject and object, person and world. The observer man in it becomes the co-creator of the creature world” [6, p. 48].

According to the founder of quantum theory, an outstanding German scientist, Nobel laureate in physics and at the same time deeply religious thinker Max Planck, “both religion and natural science need faith in God, while for religion God is at the beginning of all reflection, and for natural science God is at the end. For some He means the foundation, and for others He is the pinnacle of building any worldview principles” [7, p. 35].

In the course of modern discussions, the idea of the so-called quantum theology was even revealed, according to which “the Creator gives freedom to the created world to be in different states but connects the realization of these states with the spiritual position of man... This idea of Creation gives a fresh angle on the metahistoric nature of «the Fall of man», gives credibility to the possibility of a different reality in this world” [8, pp. 261–262]. Nevertheless, supporters of uniting science and religion believe it is possible to take “at least a small but important step in overcoming the stark conflict between humanity’s technological progress and its humanitarian development” [9, p. 198].

We agree that “the expansion of the space of scientific search and the inclusion of theological discourse in it... will make it possible to overcome those materialistic «blindnesses» that today are an objective obstacle to the study of consciousness, and will contribute to solving a number of pressing scientific problems” [10, p. 109].

**Materials and Methods.** Through comparative analysis, the work attempted to emphasize a reflection of a loyal relationship between science, in particular, quantum physics, and religion, in order to identify key similarities and differences in views on being, nature and man. Descriptive and analytical methods are used to define the specifics of a science journalist’s work.

**Results.** How should a journalist who popularizes and spreads the latest technologies work? Following the thought of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia in a number of his sermons [11], the main task is to see the synthesis of religion and science and introduce it into culture. It is necessary to combine faith and human knowledge especially in the age of digitalization, informatization and advanced technologies. This idea, obviously, should be attributed to a specialist working in the field of scientific media field.

Undoubtedly, a journalist who forms an opinion of the audience should rely only on reliable facts and the experts’ point of view. To promote science, you inevitably need to immerse yourself in it. Considering that in the modern scientific and educational space or, as it is sometimes called, an atomized society, a journalist writing about science needs to be armed with knowledge of narrowly specialized spheres (physics, biology, chemistry, computer science, etc.), and sometimes interdisciplinary fields.

For example, such experience is implemented in Germany. In this regard, the modern practice of the Max Planck Research Society in Germany is attractive: during visits to laboratories and participation in everyday experimental work, a kind of networking of scientists and media representatives takes place. This is facilitated by the EICOS (European Initiative for Communicators in Science) programs for specialists in scientific journalism or the field of scientific communications, where not only media lectures, interactive sessions, open discussions take place but also real work with the set scientific task. “Maybe the main meaning of such programs is to break molds that still exist in society regarding science and those who engage in it” [12].

It is also useful for a scientific journalist to know about the conventional nature of science, that is, that knowledge is born by agreement of scientists from the development of hypotheses, and the theory may turn out to be both true and false. In addition, “a scientist always has an intuitive sense of what is scientific and what is not”. These ideas are largely determined by the system of ideals and norms of science adopted by them: ideals and norms of explanation and description, evidence and justification of knowledge, their construction and organization” [13, p. 374]. Therefore, a scientific journalist should report the discovery as a breakthrough to a wide audience, while maintaining strict objectivity and accuracy. That is why, it is necessary to form a practical ability to apply the criterion of scientificity, that is to know the essence of philosophical approaches, to have independent thinking, to know philosophical categories. After all, it is possible that even an unbeliever but “a philosophically educated specialist, both as a specialist and as a person, thanks to their studies in philosophy, is able to correlate their knowledge and skills with the possible limit horizon for their application in general” [14, p. 75].

The task of a science journalist is not just to translate science into a generally understandable language, turning heavy reading into entertaining scientific pop in an accessible form, or to promote scientific cooperation through the great possibilities of the media space but also to urge to think that artificial intelligence, competing with natural, literally enters into battle, gradually blurring the boundaries. A person persistently invades God's plan. In fact, "the decision on the validity of risks is ultimately always based on a subjective assessment that takes into account knowledge and values. Discourse without a systematic knowledge base remains a discourse that ignores the moral quality of options for action, helps immorality break out" [15, p. 16].

It is clear that "the special status of scientific rationality in the value system of a technogenic civilization and the particular importance of the scientific-technical worldview are determined by the fact that scientific knowledge of the world is a prerequisite for its transformation on an expanding scale" [13, p. 100]. In this regard, through the lens of analyzing and promoting advanced technologies, especially in the still largely unexplored realm of the quantum microworld, scientific journalism should demonstrate that a new path of spiritual experience is possible for the human of the future. This path may arise from the dialectics of science, making it even harder to uphold moral foundations, responsibility for spiritual security, and an ecological mindset while striving to avoid blind permissiveness, technocratic illusions, and the split between scientific and religious knowledge. At the same time, amid interethnic and interfaith conflicts, science can serve as a bridge for reconciliation, or, conversely, as an arena for ideological struggle in the race for science-intensive technologies.

Science journalists bear a humanistic mission. They should lead society and an intellectually developed person to moral improvement. It is necessary to take into account not only the actual state of things and the actualization of scientific research results but also the attitude of the state, business community, and industrial partners to these achievements. "Quantum magic" fascinates consumers, those in power and industrialists, on the one hand, who show confidence and enthusiasm for startups, innovative businesses and high-tech developments. On the other hand, information about prospects, advantages and risks often leads the parties not to agree but rather to "polarization of existing positive or negative attitudes" [15, p. 15].

The rapidly spreading ideas of transhumanism about creating a superman with superpowers, speculating on innovations, technological fetishism, and the tendency toward scientific expansion (aimed "not only at forming an artificial environment but also at modifying humanity itself" [16, p. 337]), are key factors for science journalists. They help form an objective view of current scientific thought and recognize the line between science and illusion. After all, God gave a person the assignment to learn and become better and kinder. Nevertheless, "modern physics has opened the door to a new and broader view of the relationship between the human spirit and reality" [17, p. 127].

**Discussion and Conclusion.** Thus, the constant leitmotif remains the desire of people to determine the algorithm of the world order or "revelation" about the nature of physical reality. Therefore, in the segment of quantum research of journalistic practice, the authority of scientists, beliefs or fears of society, philosophical foundations and the spiritual heritage of mankind remain.

In the conditions of modern technological civilization, the significance of these aspects in the activities of a journalist who writes about scientific discoveries is beyond doubt. On the contrary, the analysis convincingly demonstrates that one should be afraid of the risk of science profanation or technological fetishism. For greater transparency and ethical integrity, it's important to consider the inner dialogue between scientific and religious worldviews. The topic of covering and promoting advanced research in the media requires periodic analysis, especially with every high-profile invention, innovative technical solution, or general growth in knowledge.

When sparking interest in further knowledge among the target audience, journalists must consider the audience's spiritual development. Society expects science, as a social phenomenon, to deliver new, safe advanced technologies. Meanwhile, knowledge based on quantum physics laws is constantly evolving, which in turn shapes people and their sense of moral responsibility.

We echo the question from British physicist and mathematician Roger Penrose: "Are our ideas about the world around us, governed by classical and quantum physics in their modern sense, adequate to describe the brain and mind?" [18, p. 324]. The answer may lie in the search for life's meaning and purpose, and in forming a values-based worldview, especially on the eve of the quantum information era.

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## THEORY AND HISTORY OF CULTURE



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Original Theoretical Research



### The Visionary European Geopolitics of Ioannis Kapodistrias: Socio-Political and Spiritual-Religious Aspects

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#### Abstract

**Introduction.** In today's world, questions regarding the role of the individual and their influence on the formation and development of a nation-state, as well as its interactions with other countries, remain highly relevant. The purpose of this article is to reconstruct the socio-political and spiritual-religious views of Ioannis Kapodistrias, which are essential for understanding his visionary European geopolitics. Main objectives: to analyze the activities of Ioannis Kapodistrias as an outstanding politician and diplomat; to identify the socio-political and spiritual-religious views of Ioannis Kapodistrias; to determine the role of Kapodistrias as an individual in building relations between the peoples of the Greek state and the European community.

**Materials and Methods.** The study employs general scientific research methods, including the method of universal connections, the method of comparative analysis and synthesis, the descriptive method, and scientific generalization. The underlying methodological framework of this work is based on dialectical and systems approaches.

**Results.** The visionary European geopolitical vision of Ioannis Kapodistrias was aimed primarily at upholding Greece's political, socioeconomic, and spiritual-religious independence, as well as at maintaining and developing relations with European states, including, first and foremost, Russia. The Greek president sought to create for his compatriots an independent European-style state based on the values of the Enlightenment and professing the Orthodox Christian values inherent in the Russian state.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** It has been concluded that, during his brief tenure as head of the Greek state, Ioannis Kapodistrias of Kiveritis contributed, through his visionary geopolitical efforts, to the restoration of Greece and its political independence, as well as to the choice of a religious path for the country's development. This study may serve as a basis for further research into the activities of the first Greek president and for assessing his outstanding contributions to his compatriots and foreign partners in his political, socio-economic, religious-educational, and diplomatic endeavors.

**Keywords:** Ioannis Kapodistrias, Visionary European Geopolitics, and Its Socio-Political and Spiritual-Religious Dimensions


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Оригинальное теоретическое исследование

### Визионерская европейская геополитика кивернитиса Иоанниса Каподистрии: социально-политический и духовно-религиозный аспекты

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#### Аннотация

**Введение.** В современной действительности актуальны вопросы об определении роли личности и ее влияния на становление и развитие отдельного государства и взаимодействие с другими странами. Цель статьи – рекон-

струкция социально-политических и духовно-религиозных взглядов кивернитиса И. Каподистрии, необходимых для понимания его визионерской европейской геополитики. Основные задачи: проанализировать деятельность Иоанна Каподистрии как выдающегося политика и дипломата, выявить социально-политические и духовно-религиозные взгляды кивернитиса И. Каподистрии; определить роли личности Каподистрии в построении взаимоотношений между народами греческого государства и европейского сообщества.

**Материалы и методы.** Используются общенаучные методы исследования: всеобщей связи, метод сравнительного анализа и синтеза, описательный метод и научного обобщения. Исходной методологической идеей работы являются диалектический и системный подходы.

**Результаты исследования.** Визионерская европейская геополитика кивернитиса Иоанниса Каподистрии направлена прежде всего на отстаивание политической, социально-экономической и духовно-религиозной независимости Греции и на поддержание и развитие взаимоотношений с европейскими государствами, включая в первую очередь Россию. Греческий президент стремился создать для соотечественников независимое государство европейского типа, основанное на ценностях эпохи Просвещения, исповедующее православные христианские ценности, присущие русскому государству.

**Обсуждение и заключение.** Сделан вывод, что Кивернитис Иоаннис Каподистрия в течение непродолжительного времени своего правления греческим государством своей визионерской геополитической деятельностью способствовал восстановлению Греции и ее политической независимости и выбору религиозного пути развития. Данное исследование может послужить материалом для дальнейшего изучения деятельности первого греческого президента и определению его выдающихся заслуг перед соотечественниками и зарубежными партнерами в его политической, социально-экономической, религиозно-просветительской и дипломатической деятельности.

**Ключевые слова:** Иоаннис Каподистрия, визионерская европейская геополитика, социально-политический и духовно-религиозный аспекты

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**Introduction.** The relevance of this study stems from the recent surge in interest in the role of the individual in history and their influence on the formation and development of the state. Ioannis Kapodistrias (Ivan Antonovich Kapodistria) was one of the outstanding figures of the national liberation movements in early 19th-century Europe, a man who in many ways was ahead of his time and shaped it. Kapodistrias also left a significant mark on Russian history [1]. A study of the multifaceted and diverse activities of Ioannis Kapodistrias allows us to identify the socio-political and spiritual-religious views of Greece's first president and to determine their impact on European states.

As head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Empire, Ioannis Kapodistrias represented the interests of Russian foreign policy as well as those of the Greek Republic and European states. His achievement lies in securing a rightful place for the Russian state among European nations. The essence of Kapodistrias' diplomatic activity lay in his commitment to the legal foundations of international relations, his opposition to unilateral interference in the internal affairs of other states, and his desire to ensure the stability and sustainability of the peaceful order among European states [2]. Ioannis Kapodistrias conceived the idea of creating an organization that foreshadowed the United Nations.

The purpose of this article is to reconstruct the socio-political and spiritual-religious views of Ioannis Kapodistrias, which are essential for understanding his visionary European geopolitics. The object of this study is the visionary European geopolitics of Ioannis Kapodistrias. The subject of this study is Kapodistrias's socio-political and spiritual-religious views.

**Materials and Methods.** The primary methods employed in this study include the methods of universal connection, comparative analysis and synthesis, the descriptive method, and scientific generalization. The underlying methodological framework of this study is based on dialectical and systemic approaches. The study of archival data, scholarly works, historical sources, memoirs of contemporaries, letters, and diplomatic documents formed the basis of this research.

**Results.** Ioannis Kapodistrias, a man of letters of his time with a thorough knowledge of philosophy and medicine, began his diplomatic career in his homeland, Greece [3]. In 1800, at the suggestion of Russian Admiral F.F. Ushakov, Ioannis Kapodistrias became secretary of the Legislative Council of the Ionian Republic, or the Republic of the Seven United Islands. In 1803, he was appointed State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Ionian Islands, and in January 1809, Count Ioannis Kapodistrias, a native of the island of Corfu and a Greek patriot, arrived in St. Petersburg

and became a confidant of Russian Tsar Alexander I. From 1814, Kapodistrias effectively became the head of the Tsar's foreign policy office of the Russian state [4, 5].

A significant event for the Russian state and for Capodistria himself was the signing of the peace treaty with France in Paris. Throughout his service to the Russian sovereign and the state, Capodistria distinguished himself by his complete selflessness, both in financial matters and in his official duties. His boundless modesty, absolute restraint, and candor were combined with a sense of obedience, which gradually strengthened and increased his positive influence on Alexander I [6].

According to N.I. Karamzin, Kapodistrias deserves to be called “the most intelligent man at the present court.” While continuing to live in the capital and enjoying success in his service at the Russian embassy, Kapodistria never ceased to think about the fate of his Greek homeland. In 1821, an anti-Turkish uprising led by Alexander Ypsilanti took place. Kapodistrias did not support a letter from Ypsilanti, the leader of the Eterist rebels in Bessarabia, calling on Russia to drive the Turks out of Greece and Europe. He was opposed to hasty military action, as was the Russian Emperor Alexander, who had no desire to start a new war with Turkey. Despite the common interests of Kapodistrias and Alexander, from the early 1820s their relationship began to weaken, as the Russian emperor, fearing revolutionary sentiments in Europe, was prepared to seek a rapprochement with Austria and did not wish to go to war with the Ottoman Empire. These disagreements with the Holy Alliance and Alexander in 1822 led Capodistria to decide to distance himself from the conferences of the European powers on Greece and not to participate in their preparation or discussion in official reports [7, 8].

While in Switzerland, Kapodistrias began actively supporting the Greek revolutionaries with money, weapons, and food. The Greek Revolution of 1821–1829 served as the catalyst for the emergence of the Philhellenic movement within the international community. English, American, and later French philhellenes came to the defense of the young Greek republic and flocked to Greece. Russia did not remain indifferent to the Greeks' heroic struggle for independence [9].

It was particularly important to the Greeks that Russia was at that time the only Orthodox country with close historical and cultural ties to Greece. Furthermore, Russia saw the development of trade and economic ties with Greece as advantageous, especially since most Greek ships sailed under the Russian flag. The peoples of the Balkan Peninsula saw Russia as their ally in the struggle for national liberation and counted on it in their campaigns against the Sultan's yoke on the Balkan Peninsula. These calculations were reinforced by a sense of religious, national, and cultural kinship with Russia [10].

In the spring of 1827, the question of electing a president (ruler) of Greece became a pressing issue. Kapodistrias's authority and experience were of paramount importance to the Greeks. Count Kapodistrias once again found himself at the center of Greek political life. On April 2 (14), 1827, the Third National Assembly of Greece, sitting in Trizene, elected Kapodistrias for a seven-year term to the post of *kyvernitis* (literally “helmsman”), that is, the ruler and political head of Greece. While in Europe, *Kyvernitis* Ioannis not only dealt with foreign policy and economic issues to defend Greece's interests but also fought for a significant expansion of the borders of the future Greek state. Kapodistrias had to counter the foreign policies of Turkey, England, and France, which viewed him as a Russian agent. According to researchers, the “political death” of young Greece would have been inevitable had it not been for the political neutrality of Kapodistrias, who had “a certain pro-Russian lean” [11].

The fate of Greece, “which was looked down upon as a beggar” [12], became clear following the events at Navarino in October 1827: the Turkish fleet was destroyed by Russian, British, and French forces. In early January 1828, Alexander Ypsilanti, released from an Austrian prison and terminally ill, upon hearing of Kapodistrias' decision to return to Greece, managed to whisper “Glory to You, Lord” and died [13].

Discussion and Conclusion. Kapodistrias's return to his homeland in January 1828 as head of state enabled him to fulfill his duty to Greece and to his compatriots: “to protect the people from the horrors of anarchy and to provide them with the opportunity to gradually achieve national and political revival.” As a result of a prolonged and brutal religious war, the Greek state and its population were in a state of utter ruin, with a population that had become embittered and violent. Kapodistrias's goal was to transform Greece into a European-style state based on the values of the Enlightenment.

The population of the Greek state comprised four main opposing parties: 1) the People's Party, which portrayed the president as the savior of the fatherland; 2) the *Kojabashi*, or Party of Elders, whose supporters advocated for the fragmentation of Greece into small territories within a federal union; 3) the party of ignorant politicians (envious of the president), who proclaimed themselves statesmen and the president; 4) the *Phanariot* party, supporters of organizing the state along the lines of Moldavia or Wallachia.

Through Capodistria's efforts, a system of government was established in a previously fragmented country: an army and navy, a judicial system, the church, public education, and agriculture; the path to the country's economic development was laid out. The president understood the importance of educating the people politically, the need to provide citizens with freedom and material stability, and the need to eradicate banditry and piracy in the adjacent maritime territories.

Kapodistrias is working to establish a combat-ready, centralized regular army. Such an army will help consolidate the success of the struggle against the armed opposition and prevent an advance by the Sublime Porte. Greece's national officer corps is being replenished by graduates of the first officer training school – the School of Evelpides. I.A. Kapodistrias does not limit himself to financing and providing spiritual care for the army; the Kivernitis issues an order to establish an institute of regimental chaplains.

Kapodistrias took decisive steps to establish a judicial system, the fundamental foundation of state governance. The organization of the courts and their staffing with qualified judges were carried out with Kapodistrias's personal involvement and under his close, direct supervision. Greek lawmaking was guided by models of European legislation. A code of civil procedure was enacted in the country; cities were to be under the control of a magistrate, and each province had a court of first instance. The court system in Greece was intended, among other things, to replace certain social and legal institutions established during the Ottoman era. Through Kapodistrias' efforts, a state administration was established, and a statistical service was created, which conducted the first census of the population of independent Greece [14].

Kapodistrias resolved one of Greece's most pressing problems: the state of the country's economy. Greece was required to repay debts to British bankers and Greek shipowners. At Kapodistrias's initiative, the country began minting its own currency. The main currency became the "silver phoenix," which was worth about one and a half rubles at the time. In addition, copper coins of three denominations were put into circulation: 10, 5, and 1 obol (where one obol was equal to a quarter of a kopeck). The National Mint was established to ensure the production of coins.

Kapodistria's fiscal policy regarding national finances yielded the desired results: the state treasury began to be replenished through the collection of taxes and customs duties by special officials, and the budget deficit gradually began to shrink. The military began to receive small fixed salaries. However, it was not possible to fully resolve all financial problems, which led to discontent with the president's policies, resulting in armed uprisings, the plot against, and the assassination of Capodistria. Capodistria's death brought about changes in the country's political regime: the repeal of reforms, the outbreak of civil war, and so on [15].

The development of agriculture in Greece required a solution to the complex issue of national lands, which took on a political dimension after the revolution. Kapodistrias saw the path to the country's economic independence through the redistribution of land resources: part of the land was to be transferred to landless peasants and participants in the revolutionary events, while another part was to be sold at auction, replenishing the state treasury with the proceeds.

Kapodistrias succeeded in carrying out a partial distribution of land among refugees and veterans despite active opposition from the local landed gentry – the kodzabs – who sought to appropriate former Turkish property for themselves. However, these measures failed to fully resolve the existing agrarian problems.

From the very beginning of his reign, Capodistria faced the complex issue of autocephaly: it was necessary to ensure the well-being of the Orthodox Church and strengthen its position within the state. A decisive step in church reform was taken in January 1828, when the Church Committee was established: a temporary supreme body of church administration comprising five bishops. The next significant reform was the creation of the Ministry of Church Affairs and Public Education, which demonstrated a serious approach to the country's spiritual development and education.

Kapodistrias made tremendous efforts to restore churches destroyed during the revolution and to preserve and protect church property from looting. The president decided to provide state salaries to the clergy and to fund the education system, which was inextricably linked to the Orthodox faith.

Kapodistrias attached particular importance to the issue of training the clergy. Among the first state educational institutions in the country, a theological seminary was opened on the island of Poros. The president nurtured the idea of establishing a Theological Academy in Greece modeled after the higher theological educational institutions of Russia. He entrusted the development of this idea to the renowned scholar and church and public figure K. Ikonomos, who was then in Russia. As early as the summer of 1828, Ikonomos presented Kapodistrias with a "Plan for a Church Academy," which, however, could never be implemented due to a lack of funding. As a patriot and a faithful son of the Church, Kapodistrias was murdered on the threshold of a church [16]. Later, his supporters interpreted this circumstance symbolically: the interrupted connection of the Greek nation's movement toward the revival of the Greek Orthodox tradition.

The development of the public education system became one of the priorities of Capodistria's domestic policy. As a result of the reforms, an extensive network of educational institutions emerged. A historic breakthrough occurred with the emergence of public schools, which opened the doors of secondary education to the common people. It is noteworthy that these educational institutions were funded by the state treasury, which was not particularly wealthy.

A distinctive feature of the new educational system was the synthesis of secular and religious education. Schools were modeled after monasteries, where the acquisition of knowledge was organically intertwined with Orthodox upbringing.

Even such everyday moments as mealtimes became part of the educational process – during meals, students were read the lives of the saints, instilling in them spiritual values and a religious worldview.

The direct involvement of Greek President Kapodistrias made it possible to open an orphanage on the island of Aegina. The Kivernitis's future plans included the establishment of a national university. Educational institutions of that time had curricula and teaching methods in line with European models, since Kapodistrias envisioned an independent Greece modeled after those states, which required personnel trained accordingly.

In Russia, Kapodistria's assassination was received as a tragedy. A.Y. Bulgakov wrote from Moscow to his brother Konstantin on November 1, 1831: "...Zhukovsky told me yesterday the most terrible news, that Kapodistria has been killed by the Greeks. What monsters! The Tsar still hoped that this was not true. God willing! I was struck by this news. After Kapodistria's assassination, a difficult time of civil strife and the gravest trials began for Greece [2].

Thus, Ioannis Kapodistrias played a significant role in the emergence of the new Greek state on the map of Europe. The establishment of the state was the culmination of the Greek people's national liberation movement and a compromise among European powers pursuing their own geopolitical interests [17]. For Russia, Kapodistrias's activities coincided with the national aspirations of the Greeks, who looked to a "protector state" – a role tacitly attributed to Russia following the victorious Russo-Turkish wars under Catherine II.

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## THEORY AND HISTORY OF CULTURE



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Original Theoretical Research



### A Philosophical Analysis of the Crisis in Russian Marxism: The Case of the Don Region's Menshevik Organization

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#### Abstract

**Introduction.** After the end of the Civil War in Russia, the Soviet authorities set about dismantling the Menshevik Party. With the support of the Communist Party, an initiative group was formed in the Don region, consisting of former members of the Menshevik Party, whose main task was the official dissolution of the regional branch. The purpose of this study is to examine the system of views and ideas held by former members of the Menshevik Party that motivated them to participate in the dissolution of the regional branch. Objectives: to examine the activities of the initiative group aimed at dissolving the Don branch of the Menshevik Party; to clarify the political views of former members of the Menshevik Party in the Don region, participants in the movement, and the reasons that led them to take part in the dissolution of the Don branch of the party.

**Materials and Methods.** Documents and materials containing information on the activities of the initiative group tasked with dismantling the Rostov-Nakhichevan Menshevik organization have been identified, analyzed, and utilized. Descriptive, comparative-historical, and historical-systemic methods have been applied.

**Results.** Former members of the Menshevik Party played an active role in the dissolution of the organization's regional branch. An initiative group tasked with dissolving the regional branch of the Menshevik Party was formed amid the Soviet authorities' crackdown on opposition political forces. Another important goal of the group was to elect delegates to the All-Russian Congress, which was to officially dissolve the party within the Soviet Union. With the support of regional party bodies, members of the initiative group managed to recruit former Mensheviks into their ranks and begin the dissolution of the regional branch. Information from registration cards filled out by members of the movement shows that, prior to the Bolsheviks' rise to power, they approved of the activities of the Menshevik party leadership. But after the Bolsheviks came to power and won the Civil War, members of the movement radically changed their political views.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** It was concluded that the movement's members supported the leadership of the Menshevik Party and disapproved of the Bolsheviks' actions. However, after the Bolsheviks came to power, the movement's participants drastically changed their political views. They began to harshly criticize the Menshevik party leadership, which had gone into exile following the Bolsheviks' victory in the Civil War, and fully endorsed the political actions of the Soviet authorities. It is highly likely that former party members concealed their true political views due to the repression against other socialist parties. At the same time, some of them may have actually changed their political views. Despite this, the leadership of the South-Eastern Bureau of the RCP(b) did not allow the initiative group to fully accomplish the goals and tasks set before them.

**Keywords:** action group, Communist Party, Mensheviks, organization, political views

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## Философское осмысление кризиса русского марксизма на примере донской организации меньшевиков

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### Аннотация

**Введение.** После завершения Гражданской войны в России советские власти приступили к разгрому партии меньшевиков. При поддержке коммунистической партии на Дону была создана инициативная группа, состоявшая из бывших членов партии меньшевиков, главной задачей которой была официальная ликвидация отделения на территории региона. Цель работы – рассмотреть систему взглядов и идей бывших членов партии меньшевиков, побудивших их принять участие в ликвидации регионального отделения. Задачи: рассмотреть деятельность инициативной группы по ликвидации донского отделения партии меньшевиков, выяснить политические взгляды бывших членов партии меньшевиков на Дону – участников движения, причины, заставившие их принять участие в ликвидации донского отделения партии.

**Материалы и методы.** Выявлены, проанализированы и использованы документы и материалы, содержащие сведения о деятельности инициативной группы по ликвидации Ростово-Нахичеванской организации меньшевиков. Применяются описательный, сравнительно-исторический и историко-системный методы.

**Результаты исследования.** Бывшие члены партии меньшевиков приняли активное участие в ликвидации регионального отделения организации. Инициативная группа по ликвидации регионального отделения партии меньшевиков была создана в условиях проводимой советскими властями репрессий против оппозиционных политических сил. Другой важной целью группы было избрание делегатов для Всероссийского съезда, который должен был официально ликвидировать партию на территории Советского Союза. Имея поддержку от региональных партийных органов, члены инициативной группы сумели привлечь в свои ряды бывших меньшевиков и начать ликвидацию регионального отделения. Информация из регистрационных карточек, заполненных участниками движения, показывает, что до прихода к власти большевиков, они одобряли деятельность руководства партии меньшевиков. Но после прихода к власти большевиков и их победы в Гражданской войне члены движения радикально изменили свои политические взгляды.

**Обсуждение и заключение.** Сделан вывод, что члены движения поддерживали руководство партии меньшевиков не одобряли действия большевиков. Но после прихода к власти большевиков участники движения резко изменили свои политические взгляды. Они стали подвергать жесткой критике руководство партии меньшевиков, которое находилось в эмиграции после победы большевиков в Гражданской войне и полностью одобряли политические действия советских властей. С большой долей вероятности бывшие члены партии скрывали свои истинные политические взгляды из-за репрессий в отношении других социалистических партий. При этом у некоторых из них могли измениться политические взгляды. Несмотря на это, руководство Юго-Восточного Бюро РКП(б) не позволило инициативной группе полностью выполнить стоящие перед ними цели и задачи.

**Ключевые слова:** инициативная группа, коммунистическая партия, меньшевики, организация, политические взгляды

**Для цитирования.** Аганов А.А., Елдинов О.А. Философское осмысление кризиса русского марксизма на примере донской организации меньшевиков. *Научный альманах стран Причерноморья*. 2026;12(1):56–61. <https://doi.org/10.23947/2414-1143-2026-12-1-56-61>

**Introduction.** After the end of the Russian Civil War, the Soviet authorities set about dismantling the Menshevik Party. By 1923, as a result of political repression and the emigration of its leadership, the Menshevik Party no longer existed as a unified political organization. To finally crush the movement, the Soviet authorities began preparing to hold an All-Russian Congress of the Menshevik Party, which was intended to officially dissolve the organization within the USSR. To this end, with the support of the Communist Party, initiative groups consisting of representatives of the Menshevik Party were established in various parts of the country. Their goal was to hold local congresses of regional branches, the purpose of which was to dissolve the branches and elect representatives to the All-Russian Congress of the Menshevik Party. One such initiative group was established in Rostov-on-Don and Nakhichevan-on-Don in 1923. The objective of this study is to examine the system of views and ideas held by the Don Mensheviks that motivated them to participate in the dissolution of the regional branch. Objectives: to examine the activities of the initiative group aimed at dissolving the Don branch of the Menshevik Party; to clarify the political views of the Don Mensheviks who participated in the movement; and to identify the reasons that led them to take part in the dissolution of the Don branch of the party.

**Materials and Methods.** This study utilizes documents containing information on the activities of the initiative group tasked with dismantling the Don Menchevik organization, which were discovered at the Center for Documentation of Modern History in the Rostov Region. These sources are being introduced into scholarly discourse for the first time. Historiographical studies analyzing the activities of the Don Mensheviks from 1903 to 1917 have been consulted [1]. M.A. Vaskov's work [2] is devoted to the activities of the Don Menshevik organization from its founding in 1903 until the outbreak of World War I. T.V. Shchukina's study [3] is devoted to Menshevik organizations that existed in the Don Army District from 1914 to December 1917. Together with the Don historian S.G. Voskoboynikov, she analyzed the tactics of the Don Mensheviks during World War I in another study [4]. Historian E.A. Ryazantseva [5] studied the activities of the Saratov Menshevik organization in 1922–1924. This study allowed for a comparison of the situation of regional party branches that found themselves in similar conditions. In her work [6], L.A. Boeva noted that the Communist Party actively enlisted the GPU–OGPU in its struggle against the Mensheviks. This made it possible to completely eliminate the Menshevik party [6, p. 63] by the late 1920s. In his work [7], G.G. Kasarov examined the activities of the Menshevik Party in the second half of 1918. The author concluded [7, p. 45] that the position of the Menshevik Party had strengthened in the second half of 1918.

This study employs descriptive, comparative-historical, and historical-systemic methods, as well as the principles of historicism and objectivity. The application of the comparative-historical method made it possible to compare the views of the Don Mencheviks before the Bolsheviks came to power and after their victory in the Civil War. The historical-systemic method made it possible to identify the individual elements of the subject of this study.

**Results.** Thanks to the efforts of an initiative group (S.M. Kasyanovsky, P.V. Okhlonin, S.V. Suslov), former members of the Menshevik Party, a meeting was held in Rostov-on-Don on November 16, 1923 [8, p. 100], attended by 11 former Mensheviks. The overwhelming majority of the Mensheviks present (9 people) had joined the party even before the February Revolution; the rest became members after it. The meeting was chaired by the Don Menshevik [8, p. 1] S.M. Kasyanovsky. He and another Menshevik, S.V. Suslov, addressed the assembly with reports. In their reports, the representatives of the initiative group drew attention to the fact that by the time of the meeting, many Mensheviks were beginning to leave the party en masse and join the ranks of the Russian Communist Party.

The speakers noted that the remaining party members were not participating in its activities. In light of the current situation, members of the initiative group proposed to the assembled former party members that they give the “movement an organizational form” [8, p. 1]. Those gathered expressed their views on the current situation. Thus, the Menshevik P.V. Okhlonin noted that at present the main task was “the liquidation of the Don organization” [8, p. 1]. He stated that every Menshevik must independently decide on the possibility of joining the ranks of the ruling Russian Communist Party. Another party member named Golishchev drew the attendees' attention to the fact that, despite its “valuable achievements” in the past [8, p. 1], the Menshevik Party had formed an alliance with the bourgeoisie after the February Revolution.

In this regard, he supported the idea of officially dissolving the Don branch of the Mensheviks. Suslov, the secretary of the meeting, noted that he did not rule out the possibility that the Don Mensheviks might collectively join the Communist Party. It is worth noting that the assembled former Mensheviks shared the Communist Party's view of the party's “treacherous” role during the revolution and the Civil War, which consisted in their betrayal of the working class and their agreement with bourgeois forces. Of course, they may have made such statements because they sought to avoid political repression by the Soviet authorities' punitive organs, but at the same time, it cannot be ruled out that they had become disillusioned with the party itself.

The outcome of the meeting was that the assembled former Don Mensheviks supported the initiative group's proposal to dissolve the Don branch of the party. To that end, they decided to convene a city conference in Rostov-on-Don, at which the former Mensheviks were to adopt an official declaration calling for the immediate dissolution of the Don branch. The drafting of this declaration was entrusted to an organizational Bureau elected at the meeting, consisting of five people.

Two days later, on November 18, 1923, at the second meeting, the members of the Bureau read the text [9, p. 1] of the draft declaration. Its text was fully approved by the assembled participants. The text of the declaration was published [9, p. 1] by the members of the initiative group in the November 20, 1923, issue of the Don newspaper *Trudovoy Don*.

After the text of the declaration was published in the newspaper, the initiative group for the dissolution of the Don branch of the party began receiving letters [10, pp. 18–43] from former party members, in which they stated that they “endorsed the initiative group's declaration” [10, p. 18] and were prepared to sign it. At the meeting [8, p. 6] held on December 9, 1923, the meeting's secretary, Suslov, summarized the Bureau's preliminary findings. Suslov noted that the Bureau had received feedback from former members of the Menshevik Party in the Don region, who supported the idea of officially dissolving the regional branch and had submitted statements of their endorsement of the declaration. He also stated that the Don Mensheviks “viewed negatively” [8, p. 6] toward the speeches made abroad by the leaders of the Menshevik Party, and that their letters had been published in the newspaper “*Trudovoy Don*” by the time of the meeting. Those gathered deemed the Bureau's work “satisfactory” [8, p. 6] and instructed it to publish articles in regional

newspapers outlining the goals and objectives of the initiative group aimed at dissolving the Don branch of the Menshevik Party. In addition, to attract supporters, the Bureau was to hold meetings at enterprises in Rostov and Nakhichevan where former members of the Menshevik Party worked.

Some former members of the Menshevik Party supported the initiative of the liquidation bureau, which was tasked with officially dissolving the movement in the Don region. As part of this process, they filled out registration cards issued by the bureau, in which they answered a series of questions. In them, the former party members, in addition to providing their personal details and the date of their joining the Mensheviks, described what “seemed most correct in the Mensheviks’ program and tactics in 1917” [9, p. 2] (referring to the events between the February and October Revolutions). The other two questions concerned when the former party members experienced a “change of views” [9, p. 2], that is, when they began to doubt the party’s course and in connection with “which issues most shook their Menshevik views” [9, p. 2]. In fact, the discussion centered on various political actions of the party. Other questions concerned the choice of the country’s path of development (through the establishment of democracy or the dictatorship of the proletariat), attitudes toward Soviet Russia’s withdrawal from World War I, the Civil War, the Bolsheviks’ policy of “war communism” from 1918 to 1921, the national question, and the intelligentsia. The last two questions concerned the former Mensheviks’ views on the introduction of the New Economic Policy in Soviet Russia and their attitude “toward the military discipline of the Communist Party” [9, p. 2]. Of course, it must be noted that the responses of the former Mensheviks cannot be fully trusted, as they may have refrained from expressing their true views on a particular issue out of fear of political repression by the punitive organs of the Soviet authorities.

Former members of the Menshevik Party gave similar answers to most questions. In the Mensheviks’ program and tactics of 1917, party members were drawn to “cooperation with bourgeois parties” [9, p. 2], “universal suffrage and a parliamentary republic” [9, p. 7], “the parliamentary method of struggle” [9, p. 8], support for the idea of convening a Constituent Assembly and “opposition to civil war” [9, p. 13], the nationalization of industry, and the introduction of democratic freedoms [9, p. 17]. Such answers indicate that the former Don Mensheviks fully supported the party’s course, which required the implementation of a minimum program, that is, to overthrow the monarchy, establish a democratic republic, carry out political and socio-economic reforms through the convening of a representative body such as the Constituent Assembly, and form a coalition government that could include representatives of right-wing parties. On these issues, the Mensheviks sharply differed from the Bolsheviks, who were advocates of implementing the maximum program. It called for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the rejection of capitalism; that is, before the Bolsheviks came to power, the Don Mensheviks did not advocate for radical reforms in various spheres of Russian society, as evidenced by the registration cards they filled out.

Former party members gave varying accounts of when they first began to question the political course of the Menshevik Party. For some, this shift in views began after the Bolsheviks came to power [9, p. 16] and the attempts to establish Soviet power in the Don region in early 1918; for others, it occurred during General A.I. Denikin’s rule in southern Russia (1918–1919), and the reason was the policy of “compromise” toward the “bourgeoisie,” as well as “slander and criticism” [9, p. 17] directed at the Bolsheviks. Another reason cited for the vacillation was the “counterrevolutionary work of the Mensheviks” [9, p. 10] in Finland, Hungary, and Germany – where attempts to establish Soviet power ended in complete failure—as well as in Georgia [9, p. 8], where Soviet power was established in 1921. For some Mensheviks, the rejection of party ideology occurred in 1920, that is, after the Bolsheviks’ de facto victory in the Civil War. The Menshevik P.V. Okhlonin noted [9, p. 13] that the shift in his views began in late 1920, when he saw signs of the introduction of the NEP, yet at the same time he approved of the policy of “war communism,” which reveals clear contradictions in his ideological views.

Most of the questionnaires filled out by former Don Mensheviks indicate that they were not in favor of establishing a democratic system in the country. They believed that “social reforms” [9, p. 24] could only be carried out through the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only one Menshevik [9, p. 23] opposed its establishment. Unfortunately, he did not explain in the questionnaire the reasons for his opposition to its establishment. In fact, most Mensheviks became supporters of Bolshevik ideology, under which no compromises with other political forces were possible, despite the fact that the party leadership had previously opposed the establishment of a dictatorship.

Former members of the Menshevik Party were opposed to World War I. An analysis of the documents suggests that they supported the Soviet government’s signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on March 3, 1918, which led to Soviet Russia’s withdrawal from World War I despite enormous territorial concessions. They also believed that, under the conditions that arose after the Bolsheviks came to power, a Civil War was inevitable [9, p. 30] in the country. They believed that only by destroying its opponents in the Civil War could the proletariat build a “better life” [9, p. 27]. In fact, they supported the view of V.I. Lenin, who believed that if the working class came to power, a Civil War would inevitably break out in the country due to the actions of the former “exploitative classes.”

When asked about their attitude toward the Bolsheviks' policy of "war communism," the overwhelming majority of Mensheviks approved of its implementation. They believed that the Bolsheviks' pursuit of this policy during the Civil War was necessary and inevitable for the defeat of their political opponents. Only the former Menshevik L.A. Grachev stated in his questionnaire that he considered the implementation of the "war communism" policy to be "an incorrect step and tactic" [9, p. 17]. In fact, the former Mensheviks supported the Bolsheviks' actions during the Civil War, in which the Soviet authorities nationalized enterprises and seized necessary resources from the countryside through food requisitioning, because this system had proven effective and allowed them to defeat their political opponents.

As advocates of proletarian internationalism, former party members noted on their registration cards that they supported all actions taken by the Communist Party in resolving the national question. Like the Bolsheviks, the Mensheviks believed that after the overthrow of the monarchy in Russia, it was necessary to remove all national restrictions that had existed in late imperial Russia. They believed that resolving this issue would strengthen the position of the working class and help overthrow the capitalist system in Western countries.

Former Mensheviks viewed the actions of the Russian intelligentsia during the revolutionary events of 1917 and the Civil War with disapproval. Some Mensheviks acknowledged the important role of the intelligentsia in "Russia's liberation movement" [9, p. 9], but noted that after the February Revolution, it had renounced radical action and failed to take the lead in the workers' movement, as it did not believe in the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat in the country. In fact, in their documents, the Mensheviks declared the "treacherous" role of the Russian intelligentsia, which, in their view, had betrayed revolutionary ideals and was unwilling to transfer power to the workers. The Bolsheviks held a similar position.

The former Mensheviks also viewed the introduction of the New Economic Policy favorably, though they regarded it as a "temporary phenomenon" [9, p. 30]. They believed that implementing this policy would restore state-owned industry and pull the country out of the severe crisis that had arisen following the end of the Civil War. At the same time, they viewed the NEP as a transitional stage from capitalism to socialism and did not share the concerns of some Bolshevik party leaders. In fact, they supported the viewpoint of V.I. Lenin, leader of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and head of the Soviet government, who had initiated the introduction of this policy. The information in the registration cards allows us to conclude that the former Mensheviks supported the strict discipline established within the Bolshevik Party, under which Communists who disagreed with a particular decision were required to submit to the decisions of the majority. At the same time, strong "military discipline" [9, p. 42] within the Bolshevik Party, according to one of the Mensheviks, was necessary for victory over "capitalist governments" [9, p. 42]. Of course, the Mensheviks with extensive pre-revolutionary experience remembered the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party in 1903, at which the party split into two factions: the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. One of the reasons for the split was the issue of strict centralism, which the Mensheviks opposed. It is quite possible that, in time, the former Don Mensheviks came to recognize that the iron discipline established by the Bolsheviks had led to their victory, the seizure of political power, and the defeat of their opponents in the Civil War.

The Don Mensheviks managed to accomplish a great deal as part of their efforts to suppress the movement in the region. Their representatives took part in the work [10, p. 129] the Donetsk Provincial Conference of Former Social Democrats, which took place on January 12, 1924, in Bakhmut, and from February 1 to 3, 1924, they participated in the sessions of the All-Ukrainian Congress of Former Members of the RSDLP (Mensheviks). At that congress, its members allocated two seats [10, p. 138] to the Southeast for the future All-Russian Liquidation Congress. After the congress, the leaders of the initiative group appealed [10, p. 10] to the South-Eastern Bureau of the RCP(b) for permission to hold a regional conference of former Social Democrats to elect representatives to the All-Russian Congress, which was to officially liquidate the party. But upon facing a refusal from the South-Eastern Bureau of the RCP(b), the Mensheviks began to realize that their work was coming to an end. On May 18, 1924, they held a liquidation meeting [9, p. 48], at which they condemned the actions of the party leadership, which was abroad, for having split the party. In connection with the party leadership's "treacherous" policy toward the working class, the meeting stripped it of the right to speak on behalf of the regional branch. Former party members were advised to join the Communist Party. At the same time, the Communist Party leadership refused to convene an All-Russian Congress to dissolve the Menshevik Party. Consequently, in the fall of 1924, on the instructions of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), all initiative groups working to dissolve the movement in the regions were disbanded.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** Thus, the initiative group established in Rostov-on-Don to dissolve the Don Menshevik organization succeeded in getting its work organized and in recruiting former Mensheviks who fully endorsed the actions of the Dissolution Bureau. The registration cards filled out by former Mensheviks, despite the similarity of their answers, reveal a shift in their ideological views between 1917 and 1923. An analysis of these cards leads to the conclusion that, prior to the Bolsheviks' rise to power in October 1917, the Mensheviks fully supported the party leadership's course, which consisted of implementing the minimum program (establishing a democratic republic and carrying out a series of

social reforms). In this, they differed from the Bolsheviks, who advocated the implementation of the maximum program, that is, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the rejection of compromises with other political forces.

However, following the Bolsheviks' rise to power and their victory in the Civil War, the ideological views of the members of the Menshevik Party began to shift. An analysis of documents shows that, as political repression against the party by the Soviet authorities began, former Mensheviks started to criticize the actions of the party leadership. Of course, former Mensheviks may have provided false information on their registration cards to avoid political repression, or their ideological views may have genuinely shifted over time. Former Mensheviks almost entirely supported the political reforms carried out by the Communist Party between 1918 and 1921, which sharply contradicted the ideological views they had previously held. Despite this, the leadership of the South-Eastern Bureau of the RCP(b) prohibited former Mensheviks from holding a regional conference of former Social Democrats to elect delegates to the All-Russian Congress, which was intended to officially dissolve the Menshevik Party throughout the country, and the initiative group itself was unable to fully achieve its objectives.

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