Chapter 13

Digital Virtual Culture in Metaverse: The Metaculture?

ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the authors approach Culture in Metaverse as Digital Virtual Cultures, or as the Metaculture of Metaculture. They present and discuss subtopics like “The Digital Virtual Culture,” “Digital Virtual Culture in Metaverse,” “Metaculture Formation in Virtual Digital Coexistence in Metaverse.” They finish with a brief conclusion about the chapter’s evidence that the essence of the living and collaborating, the eagerness of “being together,” the sharing, the emoting, the underground power, the imagination, and the dynamics human beings create in their daily lives take part in the construction of all types of culture. They seek to understand “culture” the way it is.

INTRODUCTION

The human beings’ way of living in congruence with the space has turned them into ‘unique’ and particular individuals, recognized as such by emerging paradigm-based theories. Within the dynamic relationship or collaborating between human beings, each group also starts acting in their own way; creating rites to represent emotions, establishing common values and rules for living together and expectancies of life, building culture through this. For Cuche (1999, p.11) “The use of the notion of culture leads directly to the symbolic order, referring to meaning, which is, the point on which it is most difficult to come to an agreement”.

Therefore, within this complex interaction that constitutes culture, the relation between the individual (identity, identification) and the group (social, sociality) occurs under the same complex perspective (individual, difference, and group, similarity), complementary and systemic (the individual builds himself up through the group he constructs) and dynamics (in adapting, in recursion, in reconstruction and in creation). That is why, according to Cuche (1999) in an interactionist
approach, we can say that culture exists through human beings’ interactive action, and that those actions are inserted within a context that needs to be taken into consideration. It is through research on digital virtual spaces developed by the Digital Education Research Group UNISINOS/CNPQ, that we make the distinction between interactions and interactivity, so, when we talk about the action we also mean the interaction between human beings.

Nowadays, with the ease of displacement, communication and interaction, human beings have broadened their knowledge and raised their awareness of different and varied existing contexts. Therefore, when considering the construction of culture through human beings’ action in congruence with the environment, we also evidence diversity and difference in culture, at every change of the nature in the environment.

In this chapter we approach the concepts of identity and culture, constructed along history, in order to reach a reflection on “digital virtual culture” or its emergence, to be able to make some considerations about culture in Metaverses and, combining all these aspects, define the characteristics of Metaculture.

**Identity and Culture in a Dialectic Perspective: Interactionist Grounds**

In Chapter 4 - Avatar: building a “digital virtual self” we stated that the studies on identity and culture emerged at the same time. So, by the time humanity has developed through different cultures, the differences have made it possible to identify the particular characterizations of human beings belonging to a certain group, or, people’s identity. From this perception, identity and culture are not comprehended in a dichotomous way, but in a dialectic one, meaning they are different units but intrinsically related. For Cuche (1999, p.15) “‘Culture’ and ‘identity’ are concepts that lead to the same reality, seen from different angles”.

Human beings construct their identity through identification, in transit and/or in belonging simultaneously to different groups. In this way, the feeling of belonging to a group and/or several ones, the eagerness to live together, results for Maffesoli (1998, 2007) in the underground centrality, meaning that all elements that make social life have a sense, a meaning and a growth.

Humanity constructs itself through modifications, including by its constant migratory processes that, with the advances of digital technology, and Metaverses above all, can be of another nature, such as a digital virtual one. So, they result in new disturbances about the construction of identity, identifications and the ways of relation and interaction in living and sharing. Therefore, as previously mentioned, migration is not only geographical, but also digital virtual. Human beings, when configuring their living and sharing of a digital virtual nature, characterize their group and, through the interaction process, reconstruct the digital virtual identity for themselves and for the group. According to what was discussed in Chapter 4 - Avatar: building a “digital virtual self”, the different identities complement each other, and are congruent and make part of the ‘self’.

When looking at the living, we perceive that there are many ways of collaborating, because for Maffesoli (1998, p.93) “Everyone takes part of the global ‘us’”. According to the author, we create a “collective soul” where there is an ephemeral individual and the reappropriation of the person, that is to say, the sociality – the set of practices that escape the rigid control, a being-together that does not depend on a goal to be reached, and therefore constructs culture.

According to Cuche (1999, p.140), cultural constructions occur in a mixed way, through processes of continuity between two cultures that
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