

The concept “Information” as a factor in Bernard Werber’s style

Концепт «інформація» як чинник ідіостилю Бернара Вербера

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Abstract

The article investigates the concept “information” and its elements in the general creative activity conception of the French writer Bernard Werber through the analysis of his original work “The Encyclopedia of Relative and Absolute Knowledge”, each short story represents a narrative, a recommendation, a principle, a formula from various fields of popular science. It is pointed out that the author presents some scientific data in a simplified way, other facts are given in a purely professional one, thereby Bernard Werber demonstrates his own competence in the fields of history, mathematics, biology, astronomy, etc., as well as journalistic skills. It is stated that such diverse correlations exist due to the writer's passion for science and history, personal life experience in these areas, and all this ultimately stimulates readers' thinking, which is the main goal of Werber's creative activity. The article explores the correlative plane, which combines data from many branches of science in a historical context, that generally forms an informative complex containing the issues about the history of tribes and peoples (Maya, Aztecs, Arabs, Chinese, etc.), their legends and beliefs (Atlanteans, the origin of a man, pyramids, etc.), wars (episodes of individual military stalemate), religions (conflicts between paganism and Christianity, the Inquisition, etc.), technology and architecture (erection and structure of historical monuments,

Анотація

У статті досліджено елементи концепту «інформація» в загальній творчій концепції французького письменника Бернара Вербера через аналіз його оригінального твору «Енциклопедія абсолютного й відносного знання», кожна новела якої репрезентує певну історію, рецепт, принцип, формулу з різних галузей науково-популярної сфери знань. Відзначено, що автор окремі наукові викладки подає у спрощеному варіанті, а деякі – у суто фаховому, виявляючи власну компетенцію в галузях історії, математики, біології, астрономії та ін., а також журналістські навички. Констатовано, що такі різнопланові кореляції наявні через захоплення письменником наукою та історією, особистий життєвий досвід у цих сферах, і це все зрештою примушує читача активізувати своє мислення, що Вербер і ставить головним завданням своєї творчості.

У межах статті досліджено корелятивну площину, де сполучаються знання з багатьох галузей науки в історичному контексті, що загалом формує інформативний комплекс, який уміщує теми історії племен і народів (майя, ацтеки, араби, китайці та ін.), їхніх легенд і вірувань (атланти, походження людини, піраміди та ін.), війн (епізоди з окремих воєнних протистоянь), релігії (протистояння язичництва й християнства, інквізиція тощо), техніки й архітектури (побудова та структура

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temples), the natural world (features of physiology) people, ants, dinosaurs), games (particularly about chess combining psychological and historical components). "The Encyclopedia of Relative and Absolute Knowledge" also includes the facts about many historical figures who have made significant contributions to the study and formation of the general noosphere. It is concluded that the writer by providing an array of diverse information in "The Encyclopedia of Relative and Absolute Knowledge" gets the reader not only to be a recipient of ready knowledge, but also to set up new tasks that need to be solved, and the main one among them is life mission understanding.

Keywords: Bernard Werber, history, literary creative activity, short story, the concept "information", "The Encyclopedia of Relative and Absolute Knowledge", writer.

Introduction

In the humanitarian development of modern society, the correlation of information elements as a concept and elements of ethnic history, culture, as well as the definition and analysis of sources of such information, means of obtaining, storing and most importantly – use for human benefit. A person must gain knowledge of society development – from despotism to liberalism, from autocracy to democracy, using all available sources of such information, including literary one. Therefore, the most useful is the experience of the writer, who demonstrates certain knowledge and skills with appropriate terminology.

The aim of the article is to investigate the concept "information" and its elements in the general creative activity conception of the French writer Bernard Werber through the analysis of his original work "The Encyclopedia of Relative and Absolute Knowledge". In this sense, it will be useful to get to know his hobbies and interests, which are reflected in his works, marked not only by fantastic illusions, but also by a deep philosophical perception of reality with its historical, political, aesthetic and spiritual features. We also suggest interpreting the stories described by him and commented on by us. These stories are of a wide informative range – both from the life of particular countries, people and the world of animals, insects, as well as biological, mathematical, religious, and even culinary phenomena. In our opinion, this has a cognitive value for common readers, and for scientists who can make appropriate

історичних пам'яток, храмів), живого світу (особливості фізіології людей, мурах, динозаврів), ігор (зокрема розповідається про шахи, що також сполучають психологічний та історичний складники). Також згадано багато історичних персоналій, які зробили значний внесок у дослідження й формування загальної ноосфери.

Зроблено висновок, що письменник через надання масиву різнобічної інформації в Енциклопедії примушує читача бути не лише реципієнтом готових знань, а й ставити перед собою нові запитання, на які потрібно знайти відповідь, і головним серед них є розуміння своєї місії в житті.

Ключові слова: Бернар Вербер, письменник, Енциклопедія, історія, новела, елемент концепту «інформація».

generalization of such information and use it in their further research.

Theoretical Framework

One of the most expressive factors of any writer's literary creative activity is autobiography which not only determines the plot or the range of characters, but also explains the thematic scope of the work or its individual elements, for example, the professional affiliation of heroes who show certain knowledge and skills as well as the corresponding terminological designations. And the more diverse hobbies the writer has had in his life, the greater the range of his competence is in the various areas described in his works.

The spectrum of this competence can be described as an informative concept, which is most evident in historical works, where not only the plot reproduces the realities of a certain time period in human life (direct dimension), but also individual elements related to the author's logical mental speculations according to modern perception of those historical events (indirect dimension).

These are, for instance, the some kind of sarcastic attitude to the elements of the Soviet past by its contemporaries, for example, Oleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who had realistic views and showed authorial competence in describing the events and characters of that time. "In his acclaimed literary and historical works,

Solzhenitsyn exposed the brutality of the Soviet regime". (Pearce, 2011, p 102).

Borys Akunin's critical attitude and how he accurately depicted the details of the old era, which he had studied and described through the prism of modern logical perception. The use of history in Akunin's works is not aimed at promoting a nostalgic view, but rather at deconstructing this idealisation by showing the negative as well as the positive aspects of this era, and their relation to the contemporary time. "Akunin asserts that Russians' most precious possession is their great literature, and that by saturating his works with allusions to this literature, he caters to the tastes of sophisticated readers". (Baraban, 2004, p.396).

Such writers possess broad conceptuality that covers not only their work, but the world perception in general, not only literary style, but a way of life (Chomsky, 2006). For example, Solzhenitsyn and Akunin are known as humanist writers, whose subject area includes issues of human rights protection, anti-totalitarianism and anti-militarism.

And if the former A. Solzhenitsyn spent last years of his life in his homeland as a recognized hero by the people and the state, the Nobel prize winner, the latter B. Akunin deliberately left his native Russia seeing no democratic future. That is, they perceived humanism differently (and possibly imperialism). These differences can be determined by examining verbal means correlation of creating the writer's artistic world and his general conceptual complex (system of multi-level worldview – cultural, intellectual, religious or spiritual) and psychological foundations (psychological archetype, temperament, etc.) (Malenko, 2010, p. 50). The notion "concept" itself needs analysis.

The notion "concept" "constitutes a multidimensional culturally and socially significant formation in the collective consciousness and is objectified in one or another language form" (Kosmeda, &Plotnikova, 2010, p. 41). This is confirmed by V. Maslova (2004), who thinks if there is cultural information in a language unit, then there should be a category that correlates two different semiotic systems (language and culture) and allows not only to compare them, but also describe the interaction. In her opinion, this is a concept.

O. Kahanovska (2013) proposes considering the concept as a text-forming category, the functioning of which affects the semantic, pragmatic and compositional structure of a

literary work. According to K. Holoborodko (2010), concepts are determined by associative ties of words, which are means of correlating the linguistic picture of the world with an individual author's conceptual picture of the world. V. Kononenko (2008) points out that the concept enters the literary discourse not only as an integral element, but also as a component of its formation, the very existence of the text. That is, the concept is not only a constituent of the literary text, but also an element of its organization.

In the field of ethno-cultural aspect, which is relevant in modern Ukraine, information can play a decisive role because the direct impact on ordinary people has ethnically marked elements, due to which such information acquires the status of a concept. This is noted by L. Masenko (2005) in terms of bilingual opposition, the same is stated by other modern Ukrainian scholars – N. Averianova and T. Voropaieva (2020) studied the issues of Ukrainian citizens' identity; S. Derevianko (2021), F. Hayavi, and R.D. Ardakani (2017) analyzed psychological aspect of conceptuality; I. Honta, T. Pastushenko and N. Borysenko (2019) examined the language markers related to ethnophobia included in a complex of humanistic concepts; Peculiarities of local management in the historical and social contexts were studied by A. Vergara-Romero and R. Sorhegui-Ortega (2020), and issues of social justice in the research of famous philosophers were analysed by Z. Kieliszek (2020), O. Bakalinska, V. Holubieva and O. Vynnytskyi (2019).

Therefore, the correlation of information elements as a concept and elements of ethnic history, culture, as well as the definition and analysis of such information sources are relevant for research.

Methodology

From the methodological point of view , the study of concepts within the literary source, in particular literary work, involves the analysis of the latter, and therefore the application of deduction and induction as general scientific methods, and more specific methods of dialectical reflection and systematic analysis, as well as pure scientific methods in this field, namely analysis of literary text and scientific literature, which will help to identify the correlation of theses in several scientific fields, such as philology, computer science, history, public administration, conceptology.

Results and Discussion

According to the above definitions, in particular, the concept of "information" and its elements in a historically marked literary work are realistically connoted under the condition of the author's careful and critical attitude to the history of mankind through the prism of his own life experience and logical perception. At the same time the critical attitude is seen in a long-term archival research during which the writer not only finds information that corresponds to his concept, but also studies the opposite versions.

In this sense the French writer Bernard Werber also stands out with his scientific approach that adds informativeness and reality to the events described. In addition to archives he studies the literature on biology, zoology, mathematics, technology and, of course, history (Werber, 2020). Therefore, we aim to explore the concept of "information" and its elements in his general creative activity conception.

Werber's first hobby was drawing, which distinguished him from his peers and gave preferences at school. Later he was interested in electronics, modeling, astronomy and, of course, history. In addition, he studied music and wrote his first literary works. Even later the future world famous writer attended criminology courses and developed this knowledge, regularly watching court hearings, where he accumulated information for future detective descriptions. The same informational productive effect is shown by studying at a journalism school and active participation in theatrical activities.

Such practically supported information (skills and knowledge) is revealed in his further literary work. In particular:

- perception of the world through the prism of artistic vision is represented in the descriptions of nature and interior, the external features of the characters in his novels; some novels (such as "The Ants") also emerge from the experience of composing / drawing comics;
- fascination with modern music is manifested in the description of individual songs "Doors", "Nirvana", "Pink Floyd", etc., where Werber focuses on lyrics marked by abstract symbols and formulas typical of English rock music of the 70s (for example, in the novel "The Laughter of the Cyclops");
- astronomical experience is manifested in the novel "The Butterfly of the Stars" and occasionally in other works by the writer;
- historical interests are shown not only in relevant situations with the ancient Egyptians, Maya or legendary Atlanteans, but also in a methodical approach to the analysis of certain historical events or phenomena (for example, the study of the humor history or various versions of human origin);
- conflicts and methods of journalism and jurisprudence are described professionally in the trilogy "The Father of Our Fathers" which is based on journalistic investigations.

The informative component of Werber's work is also represented in its scientific features, primarily in the field of biology, in terms of which the existence of such insect species as fleas (the story "The Adventures of a Flea"), ants, bees, aphids and others is described (the trilogy "The Ants"). Geography (some African countries, including Egypt, as well as Latin America and South Korea), physics, and mathematics are also given in this way.

Various puzzles and formulas are often mentioned in all of his novels. For example, in dilogy "The Thanatonautes" and trilogy "We, the Gods". The existence and development of many animals – both living and prehistoric are described in details ("Tomorrow the Cats", "The Father of Our Fathers", "The Ultimate Secret").

Thus, throughout his life Bernard Werber had been forming the complex of knowledge and skills from many branches of science, which laid foundations for his novels and short stories. He benefited greatly from practical journalism which he had studied hard. B. Werber had been writing the novel "the Ants" for 12 years and was eventually forced to give up considering and using the bulk of the material gathered.

However, these years were spent learning how to master a more subtle craft, consisting of creating characters and situations, finding the original miseen scenes and dramatic tension stage directing. As a result, Werber was the best Young Reporter Award winner for the material about ants on Ivory Coast. Consequently, his work combines scientific and journalistic (informative) constituent elements.

In the study of the concept "information" and its elements in Bernard Werber's creative activity we pay attention to his original work "The Encyclopedia of Relative and Absolute Knowledge" (Werber, 1993) which combines a lot of useful information, collected by the writer within the age of 13 to 19 years old., where the

scientific data are mixed with legendary ones, forming interesting microhistory and putting forward new issues.

Not the answers themselves, but the ability to put new questions is the writer's priority, because it stimulates readers' thinking. This is the aim of some other works by the writer, namely, directly ("The Tree of Possibles", "The Book of Travel") and indirectly (all of his works, since conceptually they all provide information).

Unifying (conceptual) mission of "The Encyclopedia of Relative and Absolute Knowledge" (hereinafter The Encyclopedia) is that its fragments are mentioned in each of Werber's novels, supporting the storyline development by the particular scientific or legendary informative features. And vice versa, this book can be seen as a brief thematic summary of the writer's creativity activity.

According to the theory of cognitive poetics the presentation of the information by the literary work author is intended for a reader's creative interpretation (Tsur, 1992). Addressing him ("you") Werber proves the value of such cognition, from the turning page energy ("an electron motion – a particle crisis – a microcosm change") to energy explosion in the Universe that brought life on Earth. That is, the reader ("you") can (relative probability) give birth to the new Universe, and therefore a priori is endowed with unlimited power.

This person's "power" is seen as the ability to use the information provided, and therefore we divided the Encyclopedia into separate branches of knowledge. For example, among the laws of economics, the author analyzes Parkinson's conception according to which it is pointless for a successful enterprise to recruit creative employees, who may destabilize working environment and harm the company executives.

The author's anthropological and ethnological researches, the results of which are presented in the subsequent novels, describe tribes of America, Africa and Asia. In the Encyclopedia it is a Malaysian tribe the Senoi that has the name "people of dreams" because all their human activities are related to compliance with various requirements obtained through dream signals. The world of dreams was seen as the reality that demanded gratitude, gifts and requital to those people who had been seen in a dream.

Werber singles out the ethnologists' findings about the absence of conflicts in such a society,

its mental stability as work was required only to ensure the minimum for living. In this research the writer deals with two themes of his creative activity – the phenomenon of sleep that may be even manageable in his opinion (novel "The Sixth Sleep"), and negative human interference in nature (in the described story the Senoi tribe disappeared because of deforestation).

Another informative short story deals with the astrological tradition of the Maya who developed the well-known prophetic calendar in which everybody's future corresponding to life stages and passions was coded. Marriages and wars were also predicted. People greatly believed in their fate and the inevitable doomsday was seen as the real end of life, that is why mass suicides of whole families and cities were committed. The author focuses on the fact that it was a highly developed civilization, so it is an example of psychological suggestion of the entire nation.

Werber explains the geometry of the pyramids as follows: the Egyptians, Aztecs, and Maya used their conservation properties by placing a product in the center of the pyramid, two-thirds of its height. To do this clear proportions must be observed, which the author calculated mathematically. And most importantly, each side of the pyramid must face one side of the world. The mathematical calculations also show the phenomenon of the traditional size of an A4 sheet (21 x 29.5 cm), which is the standard of proportions discovered by Leonardo da Vinci. The core of it is that this proportion will not change if you fold this sheet in half (A 5, etc.). A similar phenomenon is the Klein Bottle, which is absolutely paradoxical (it is a vessel whose neck is connected to the bottom, and therefore the entrance is the exit, the external is internal, the internal is external, which the author compares to the universe).

If in these examples cognition is dominant, then most of the short stories in the Encyclopedia provide information that causes other reflections, shows a different side of the phenomenon. For example, an offensive word may be etymologically opposite in meaning. The author gives the following examples from the French language: "an idiot" primarily means "special, unlike others", "a fool" is "one who walks without a stick, support, does not rely on anyone, that is an independent person", and the adjective "stupid" is etymologized as "surprised", that is one who is struck by something new. Thus, the social connotative layering in these cases eliminate a priori the positive meaning of the words.

The information about the origin and the essence of some games is characterized by the same diversity of reflection. For example, the theme of chess occupies the prominent place in the writer's novels (including "Third Humanity" and "The Ultimate Secret"), and therefore the origin of the game and the description in its ancient form is not surprising.

From Sanskrit it is "chaturanga" which existed long before our era in southern India as a game for four. All the attributes of the game presented the social stratification of the society: the cube had on each side an image of one of the main castes in India: a vase (clergy), a sword (military), an ear / a tick (peasants), a coin (merchants), chess pieces meant positions and symbols (a vizier, a minister, an elephant, a tower, an officer and four pawns). The author draws a parallel with the cards: a stick became clubs; a coin was diamonds; a vase associated with hearts; a sword stood for spades.

This theme is continued by the description of the three-side game that the author offers to modern children, as it develops cognitive thinking. Three parties (a chicken, a fox, a snake) represent not only the social opposition "good against bad", but also the third party as neutral. Each participant should be in the role of each party and feel that there are no clear contrasts, and you need to be able to communicate with each other, as well as be responsible for their own actions, without shifting responsibility onto others. In the Encyclopedia, Werber describes the game "three stones" which also involves a complex strategy of bluffing and prudence.

Biology and physiology are represented in short stories about homeostasis (a parallel is drawn between the innate ability of the body to self-regulation under the influence of the environment, everyday situations connected with alcohol and nicotine intake, as well as the story with King Mithridates who was used to taking arsenic); DNA and RNA (with the example of the silkworm, one cell genes of which can produce a billion proteins of silk thread in four days, and this natural miracle gives people light and comfortable clothes); cerebral cortex (it constitutes each person's vocabulary with logical systems of thought, automatic mechanisms of speech, and it is its development that resulted in the dominance of intelligence over carnality).

Fauna in Werber's works reveals not only certain phenomena (for example, the description of the cat's life in the novel "Tomorrow the Cats"), but also historical features, which are described, for

example, in the novel "The Father of Our Fathers". In the Encyclopedia the author speculates about dinosaurs, their physiology, species similar to humans such as stenonychosaurus that showed the ability to analyze the surrounding world, and therefore could further build a technological civilization, and we according to the science fiction writer would be in zoos and circuses.

The writer's entomological studies which formed the basis of his trilogy "The Ants" are presented fragmentally in the Encyclopedia. For example, the short story about subway crickets is about tropical insects which, having arrived in France, created their civilization in the Paris subway, where the warm climate is constantly maintained between the rails. The author describes the life of crickets from mating games to means of survival. And in the short story about the cult of the dead Werber provides the information about the ants of Indonesia that show respect for the dead queen, continuing to feed her after the death. This attitude towards the dead is peculiar only to people. This corresponds to the life description of ants in the above mentioned trilogy as a civilization with its own architecture, economy, military tactics, etc. So, insects are identified with humans in several planes.

Finally, we observe the transformation in the world of insects, numbers and geometric shapes into social phenomena. That is, these social and biological phenomena build a unified research conglomerate. This is how the ideosphere is formed, which exists according to the same laws as the biosphere, namely the emergence of an idea, development, mutation and disappearance due to a certain different idea (for example, the idea of communism which gradually lost its followers and eventually returned wild capitalism to post-communist countries).

The author emphasizes the modern accelerated process of idea mutation through the possibilities of information dissemination on the Internet, and therefore not only negative, but also positive ideas may have a short existence, as in the biosphere which does not show any morality.

The short story "Noosphere" analyzes this phenomenon, which is associated with the processes in the human brain and the general information sphere of mankind. Werber reduces this to a creative process, when the artist is only a receiver who is able to capture the idea in the collective subconsciousness with the right hemisphere of the brain and with the left hemisphere reproduce the concept "in search of

the chosen one" in the noosphere in the Encyclopedia. Such a person is also called a medium who receives a signal from the certain general information system (God or the Cosmos). For example, PanteleimonKulish called Taras Shevchenko such a person.

In the field of social phenomena Bernard Werber investigates and refutes some well-known legends and conversely materializes others. For example, in a short story about lilliputians he provides proofs of their existence. They are not dwarfs or pygmies, their bodies have the same proportions as the body of an average person with a height of 40 to 90 cm and weight from 5 to 15 kg. They were found at the end of the XIX century in the forests of Hungary, later people hunted for them. Eventually in the middle of the twentieth century there were fewer than a hundred of them left. This information formed the basis of Werber's trilogy "Third Humanity". In the story "The Aliens" the author supplies readers with ancient information about the representatives of alien civilizations: Democritus, Epicurus, Lucretius who put forward predictions about the existence of other worlds inhabited by humans. However, the Church later opposed such views and even imposed the death penalty for spreading them.

And yet since the seventeenth century many educators have predicted the existence of aliens (Cyrano de Bergerac, Fontenelle, Voltaire and Herbert Wells), but without anthropomorphic features. And only Steven Spielberg describes aliens as apes. Consequently, Werber only states the sources of information about aliens, leaving the question of their existence without his own affirmative or negative reflection.

As far as we know from many sources including authentic ones, the Janissaries are treated as a more real historical phenomenon. The author considers them to be a special kind of troops: the "new police" created in 1329 consisting of orphans who had different ethnic origins and were brought up in a special school. In the Ukrainian epoch, for example, the Janissaries are known for their cruelty, and the meaning of this word is connoted by the semantics of a betrayer, a homeland traitor. Werber emphasizes that they were brought up in such a way that they never thought of taking revenge on the invaders. Eventually Sultan Mahmud II, who feared the military influence of the Janissaries, destroyed them in 1826.

The writer describes historical and social aspects of the information complex together with the

religious theme that occupies a prominent place in his works. Even the trilogy "We, the Gods" is devoted to the phenomenon of the extraterrestrial world. However, this is a controversial view of the well-established philosophical concepts and canons. In the Encyclopedia the author to a greater extent highlights theosophical questions. For example, the story with the proclamation of the next Messiah in 1875 gave rise to the theosophical stream which quickly spread to the USA and Europe.

The Messiah Krishnamurti himself in his public speech confuted such a status, emphasizing the ability of each person without the influence of a group or a leader to find greater knowledge in himself. B. Werber quotes the main phrase from that speech: "Nobody can substitute you on the way to knowledge. And surely there will come a time when you need to follow this way yourself no matter how difficult it is" (Werber, 1993).

This theme is connected with beliefs and legends which in turn creates a historical and geographical conglomerate to explain a particular social phenomenon. For example, for the French such is the island of Mont-Saint-Michel with the mountain of the same name where a lot of events happen, that are described in Werber's novels (including "The Laughter of the Cyclops", "The Ultimate Secret"). This place has been symbolic since pagan times and the Middle Ages (druids, alchemists, early Christians, Templars). The author provides detailed information about the Norman temple built there in 1023 (size, construction), notes the similarity with Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, as well as with Noah's Ark through a detailed description of the construction and comparative parallels from the Old Testament.

Eventually the writer finds the astral basis for the ark temple, it is a ship sailing to another dimension. It should be pointed out that the image of the ark was used by Werber in the novel "The Butterfly of the Stars", although it is not emphasized there. But that spaceship also has two of every living thing of all flesh on board, and in the end there are two left on the new planet, and there is even the theme of a woman's birth from the rib. So, the information correlates with the Bible.

Along with religious conflicts the author provides information about the activities of particular churches, including the Catholic Church where he touches on the subject of the Inquisition which repressed any innovations in science. Such was, for example, the

mathematical “zero” theory which came to Europe only in the thirteenth century and which the Church banned. They even saw in it a diabolical creation, calling zero a “destroyer” (when multiplied, compared to one that left another multiplier unchanged).

Legend and religion as the elements in the concept “information” reveal a lot of identities in the writer’s work including the principled one where religion is the result of the legend spread. This circle includes the main question of cognition, the origin of man, that is directly related to religion and legends which Werber collected from different peoples such as Greeks, Turks, Mexicans, Arabs, Mongols, Sioux and Navajo.

Without retelling these stories, we note a few informative elements related to traditional religious attributes: The Greek Deucalion and Pyrrha survived the flood and were obliged to create humanity; the Turks used clay as the material for God’s creation which matured for 9 months; the Mongols also had clay; the Mexicans baked several variants of man from clay: overbaked black (goes to Africa), underbaked white (goes to Europe), perfect one with dark complexion (goes to Mexico).

The Arabs had images of the Old Testament: the angels Gabriel, Michael, Azrael and finally God’s creation Adam. In contrast to these peoples the Sioux and Navajo Indians in legends of human origin describe the situation with the intervention of certain celestial creatures who made a human couple whose descendants had already been in contact with local half-humans (in his novels Werber supports the story about the Atlantean missionaries who taught the local wild ape-like creatures elements of civilization).

The writer’s worldview includes a deep respect for the woman, whom he half-jokingly even calls God’s first creation. Then God made an imperfect man. In the short story about woman’s cult the author expresses this idea: the birth of all civilizations is accompanied by the cult of the Mother Goddess, which is manifested in the relevant religious cults and folk traditions. Thus, in primitive religions rituals were based on symbols of women’s lives: menstruation, the birth of a child, death. With the advent of Christianity Virgin Mary because of her immaculate conception is better perceived by neophytes, former pagans. In Ukraine particularly under the so-called “dual faith” conditions God’s Mother is one of the main symbols of faith.

Later the Church tried to force out women from both the mystical and social spheres, quashing many extraordinary women physically. Men even came up with their own ritual of war. The matter of the opposition “woman against man” Werber solves with the involvement of a physiological factor that has astral significance: it is a woman who is able to correctly perceive the changing world because every month she experiences a cycle of renewal, destruction and again regeneration, she lives by the rhythm of the Universe.

Within the correlation of religious and historical planes the author presents several instructive stories among which we highlight the story of the Anabaptist uprising in the Rhine Valley, 1525. Their religious views were not acceptable in traditional Christianity, and heretics were eventually annihilated. The writer describes some statements in Protestantism as radical ones because they proclaimed the equality of all people before God, direct communion with God despite the lords and priests.

However, we pay attention to the most relevant one, in our opinion. Such as only adults who have made a conscious choice and understand the faith should be baptized. One can even analogize this conflict with the parents’ choice of a name for their child, which from the standpoint of natural law is a violation of his rights.

We also take into consideration the correlation of cultural and political planes in the general information complex. Thus, describing the fate of Italian and Soviet futurists (the author uses the word “Russian”, but, in fact, mostly Ukrainian), who appeared after World War I proclaiming in art the cult of technological civilization, the writer connects them with the totalitarian regimes of Italy and USSR because these artists deliberately became part of the propaganda machine. After that they were killed by their own dictators Mussolini and Stalin.

Thematic areas in the Encyclopedia are also cooking (secrets of cooking bread, mayonnaise, honey), linguistics (cognitive inter-lingual comparisons), the role of individuals in history (Giordano Bruno, Paul Camerer, Thomas More), health (advice in case of a certain disease), sleep (advice on proper sleep), analysis of certain terms (for example, “gnosticism”, “empathy”, “interference”, “palindrome”, etc.). However, all these informative planes are united by one conceptual element – the emphasis is put on the importance of a man as a “powerful” and an

intelligent creation that combines biological and spiritual features.

Finally, we note the ability of the science fiction writer to be a prophet. One such example from the author's works is relevant for Ukraine. This is his prophecy in the novel "The Laughter of the Cyclops": "Ronald Reagan became the first president-actor. In Iceland, Jon Gnarr, a well-known comedian, was elected mayor of Reykjavik. You will see that someday in a great state a humorist will become president" (Werber, 2010).

Conclusions

Therefore, the array of diverse information in "The Encyclopedia of Relative and Absolute Knowledge" collected and provided by the French writer Bernard Werber gets the reader not only to be the recipient of ready knowledge, but also set up new tasks that need to be solved, and the main one among them is life mission understanding. The transformation of the scientific plane (the world of insects, animals, numbers, geometric figures) into a social one is structurally observed. The social and historical aspects intersect with religious themes, the culturological and political planes of the general information complex are correlated. Thus, biological and social phenomena representing the writer's idiosyncrasy are united in one research conglomerate. The data presented in the article can be used for further studies of the French writer Bernard Werber's creative activity conception.

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