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MEMIRONY: REBOUND OF RELATIONSHIPS IN MEMES

The study researches the mutual influences of memes and love or sexual relationships. It displays, that, on the one side, the topic of relationships is one of the most common and in many ways defines Internet memetics as a whole. On the other side, creating and sending memes became an important part of contemporary relationships and support them. Memes help to remember key point of successful relationships and this knowledge is a constituent of their background and allow develop them and, at the same time, strengthens their sustainability through good emotional context. Regarding this, the study displays, that memetic humour, even in its most sharp or black forms plays a positive role. Based on this the research introduces and considers the new concepts of memirony and metahumour. So, the study affirms, that memes are part of post-postmodern eventuality, more relatable and sincere than postmodern. Relatable, truth-to-life memes, in comparison with too intellectual memes, helps maintain closer relationships through genuine love game. The research put special attention to a linguistic component of memes, meme «languages» in particular. Except for basic memetic conceptions by Limor Shifman, Douglas Hofstadter, Susan Blackmore, etc., and the cognitive approach of Daniel Dennet, the study is based on the conception of love as a comedy by Alenka Zupančič and laughter as a linguistic appearance by Mladen Dolar, the conception of the relationships between sincerity, comedy and charm by Graham Harman, etc. The research was conducted on the material of Internet memes, as well as other works of contemporary art that demonstrate the importance of humour for relationships.

Keywords: *memirony, meme, metahumour, relationships, post-postmodern*.

1. Introduction

«In many senses, Internet memes can be treated as (post)modern folklore, in which shared norms and values are constructed through cultural artifacts such as Photoshopped images or urban legends» [Shifman, 2014, p. 15], – writes Limor Shifman, while stressing the close connection between computers and romantic love in a contemporary context. At the same time, he attracts attention to semantic remixing and mashing up in memes. In memetics, birdsong like a meme often also is regarded allows unite common and unique and this makes it an inexhaustible source of inspiration for relationships are continuing. Combining these considerations in humanitarian environics, it is worth noting the special *relevance* of meme research in this field.

In this regard, the most interesting question is whether creating and sending memes influence human love relationships. This influence can be seen especially clearly in the romantic beginning of a relationship, the so-called candy-bouquet period, which in this regard can even is even often called the candy-meme period. However, creating and sending memes can help maintain a high level of inspiration in a relationship at various times. The *novelty* of this study lies in the attempt to find out how it is happens, combining meme studies and contemporary philosophical approaches to relationships.

The first *task* of this research is trying to design a difference between postironical and metaironical memes first of all. Both postirony and metairony are post-postmodern appearances because of more importance of comical effect than sense and deal with depth and sincerity and generate New Sincerity. However, their differences elude since there are too many considerations of postirony and metairony, what caused their changeability at present and also their being in a stance of becoming in general. Postironical and metaironical memes may be interpreted in different ways as contemporary art. Adding up different points of view, it can be said, that

postirony makes a pass to depth and sincerity, but reverses a sense, making it unobvious or abstract and therefore especially hard to understand. As for metairony, it is rather a search for comical moments in ordinary, not refined as in postmodern conditions, life, and irony over an irony. Metaironical memes are hard to understand because they partly merge with a description of reality. That is why Marcel Duchamp reckons metairony as the irony of indifference, and Roland Barthes – as the rapture of language. At the same time metaironical memes as usual less sharp and more kind and, using the expression of Quentin Meillassoux, contain light irony, not turning into ironizing. In connection with this, it would better entitle them metahumouristic memes. If postironical meme may doesn't seem funny because of its complication, metaironical or metahumouristic meme may doesn't seem funny because of its sincerity and kindness. Among other things, this marks also a shift from postmodern coldness and apathy to post-postmodern warmness, desire and love. Showing how this shift occurs in memes is the *goal* of this study.

2. Conceptualization of relationships meme's comical aspects

Jacques Lacan argued, that in comparison with the jouissance, love is a comic feeling, which humanizes the jouissance. On the strength of this argumentation, Alenka Zupančič reveals the discrepancy or disharmony of love and comedy: «tragedy and comedy are not simply symmetrical, as the above description might suggest. The fact that in comedy satisfaction precedes the demand, affects the very nature of the satisfaction, which becomes, by definition, a supplementary satisfaction (and is no longer the impossible complement of the demand)» [Zupančič, 2004, p. 135]. In this case, a shift from desire to satisfaction means also a retroactive shift from supplement to complement, which provides an unexpected incentive bonus through both pleasure in surprise and surprise at pleasure. Comical non-relation, which works, as both mode and condition of relation are duplicated: «A "happy" love encounter is the non-relation in its purest mode, or perhaps more precisely, it is a non-relation as redoubled. Not only do we not get what we asked for, on top of it (and not instead of it) we get something that we haven't even asked for» [Ibid., p. 137]. This duplication generates a minimal difference as a mere nothing of a partner from herself, who becomes even more beloved, without a caustic irony, but with soft humour. So, it is better to use the concept metahumour for rather a connection that disconnection of human beings, even if this connection is problematized.

Thus, not exposure, but the construction of emptiness as nudity. «The comic paradigm [in comparison with a tragic one – *N. Z.*] is not that of incorporation, but, rather, the paradigm of what we could call montage. In this paradigm, the Real is, at one and the same time, transcendent and accessible. The Real is accessible, for example, as pure nonsense, which constitutes an important matter of every comedy» [Zupančič, 2003, p. 69]. Montage of semblances allows continue to love even in periods of desire absence because the partner appears both as the sublime and the banal object, which means sublimation as desublimation. In this case, an object is understood in object-oriented ontology, i. e. as independent from a subject with its narcissism. This understanding also most often is used in memes and provides their realism.

«The Real happens precisely as the impossible» [Ibid., p. 74], it has already happened in a time warp, – insists Alenka Zupančič, stressing unobvious time and place of relationships. A joke is promiscuous and similar rather to a love encounter because can't be funny twice and it needs to find or invent all new and new to exhaustion. During the transition from the instantaneity of a love encounter to temporality, the duration of the relationship comic dialog is preferable to a joke. In a comic sequence satisfaction appears not in the end, but in the beginning and sets the rhythm and dynamic. «In comedy, there is first an unexpected sparkle (a kind of inaugural joke), and the unexpected surplus it produces is not conclusive, but functions as a motor of the subsequent comic sequence. One could also say that the inaugural surplus (or incentive bonus) introduces a fundamental discrepancy that drives comedy further and further» [Zupančič, 2004, p. 139]. This principle causes also the cyclicity of memes and the possibility to continue relationships through sending a funny meme to a partner. Also, this principle is found in comical games, which are training relationship skills. For example, humour about imaginable *Girlfriend*

utility, which is the result of upgrading transform from *Girlfriend 7.0* to the operating system *Wife 1.0* with requires much more resources, may be compared with meme [Shifman, 2014, p. 156].

In memes humour is often black humour. «It works by introducing a crack into the most genuinely felt, serious sentiment; yet is not the same as cynicism. It is above all something the disturbs the monolithic structure of reality (as felt and experienced), injects it with some dialectics, gives rise to thought, as well as to pleasure more awarding than the kind of preemptive gratification that mostly dominates today. Some consider black humour as a more realistic form of humour – but wouldn't it be more precise to say that it is actually an answer to realism; an artifice that cracks it open?» [Zupančič, 2020, p. 288]. Alenka Zupančič signes the end of laughter in cinematical comedies. But it can say, that it rebirth in memes, which is short, but capacious and creates a series, which, on the one side, displays the dynamic of relationships and, on another side, allows to creates a general context of humour for partners, which may a form on relationships.

According to Mladen Dolar «Laughter is different from the other phenomena considered above because it seems to exceed language in both directions at the same time, as both presymbolic and beyond symbolic; it is not merely a precultural voice seized by the structure, but at the same time a highly cultural product which looks like a regression to animality» [Dolar, 2006, p. 29]. So, laughter may be considered both sublime and desublime. Even in a case of sublimation laughing voice is not fetishized as a singing voice. The voice of comical poet Aristophanes in *The Symposium* by Plato is unsuccessfully breaks of hiccups, and, otherwise, on the cover of Mladen Dolar's book *A Voice and Nothing More* a human unsuccessfully tries to interfere with speaking to a comical puppet with his own voice. This shot from the classical horror *Dead of Night* seems like both a meme and a reaction to a meme.

One of the most important causes of this is that laughter is just as unstoppable as a rudimentary scream. That is why animals as inhuman partner or The Other often appears in memes. Limor Shifman attracts attention to the first example of the *Advice Dog* meme, where he answers *Just Do It* on the question of the possibility of a romantic kiss [Shifman, 2014, p. 112]. He and numerous other meme animals appear both as the Others and the significant others and continue the tradition to give animal names to beloved ones. It allows combines humour with tenderness and creates a unique context for partners' intercourse. On the other hand, celebrities in memes, for example, *He/she is a human* or *Leave Smb. Alone*, appear in a more human guise.

At the same time, as Graham Harman notes, an internally free person can make fun of an overly pretentious one, even if she is more important than someone because is too sublime and arrogant as in the memetic phrase *All broads are like broads, and I am a goddess*. That's why human beings send memes to whoever they like and love nicknames, which work, more often are vernacular and comical. Thus the shift from Lacanian «stops not being written» to Žižekian «doesn't stop being written» happens. «This paradoxical – or, indeed, *comical* – coincidence is precisely what tears us (and our lover) from the continuity of our presence in reality, and it does so by *(re)installing us there*, as if for the first time?» [Zupančič, 2017, p. 137]. These new signifiers or designations rather disorient drives as in memetic dialog:

– *You are beautiful, of course, but totally fucked up and bullshit crazy.*
– *Beautiful…*

Despite Alenka Zupančič, that subject is a possibility of objectivation, the object stays itself and the subject partially misses in signification. This break is contingent and the subject tries to signify again and again, what keeps the relationships going. Thus, according to Alenka Zupančič, object-disoriented ontology not so contradicts how much clarifies object-oriented ontology.

According to object-oriented ontologist Graham Harman, sincerity presents itself as such type relations between objects, when a sensual object uptake seriously a real object, but neither contains it nor is contiguous to it. «Existence on the interior of an object is defined by sincerity and involvement, not transcendence and critique» [Harman, 2005, p. 255]. So, a fissure in contingency appears, which makes humour possible. And this humour is a vital, corporeal one and allows realize carnal phenomenology. Therefore, meme-makers often joke about obscene

problems, which makes human beings more sincere and closer to each other. It's interesting, that object-oriented programming also implies interstitiality or in-between.

Graham Harman also considers that humour is one of the most adequate shifts for displaying an object's colliding metaphysics. First, he polemizes with postmodern thinkers Jacques Derrida and Donald Davidson, which in his opinion consider that all metaphors are successful, all jokes are funny, and herewith «are skeptics, master debunkers of any secret realm» [Ibid., p. 124]. Whereas object-oriented ontology alludes to the innermost reality of things in their thinghood and then only from the allure of things depends on whether will humour individually works or not, comedy occurs or not.

This intellectual tactic may be compared with Alenka Zupančič's approach to humouristic relationships with the support of a new exclusive signifier. Both deal with peculiarities of post-postmodern sex objectivation, which no longer implies repression of object by subject, but democracy of objects in Levi R. Brayant words. Posthumouristic memes also imply object-object relationships, in which jokes on the inmost topics are possible, but at the same time, these jokes are out of the tendency to offend. If even the sharpest humour works, «allure, which splits objects from their notes while preserving or even inaugurating the connection between them» [Ibid., p. 254] happens.

However, to avoid of «neurasthenic jargon of the postmoderns» [Ibid., p. 107] Graham Harman supposes to put attention not to a new signifier, but to a new object or, at least, José Ortega y Gasset's feeling-thing with their ingenuousness. Also, Graham Harman follows Henry Bergson, when connects comical with innate sincerity and naivete of objects. «What, then, are the materials of the comic art? The answer is not colors, shapes, sounds, or moods – but *sincerity*, that bedrock form of innocence with which all being is laced from the start» [Ibid., p. 130] and further: «Any situation that brings a laughable form of sincerity into play will result in comedy» [Ibid., p. 136]. Yet when Graham Harman adds charm to sincerity and comedy, it brings hypocrisy and courage into a situation and the carnival of things occurs. He admits, that «When metaphor works, is always charming: we cannot help noting the sheer sincerity of existence» [Ibid., p. 137–138]. Thus, he admits also postmodern simulated form and disguise, which, among other things, proves that the post-postmodern continues to contain postmodern features. In memes, a disguise may reach such an extent as in post-conceptual art that most recipients require an «explanatory team» in the comments to them.

In this connection the development of Hegelian understanding of womanhood as the eternal irony of the community in the feminist understanding of femineity, womanliness as masquerade (Joan Copjec, Joan Rivière), performance (Judith Butler) and eiron (Miglena Nikolchina). Their process character is counterposed to the pretentiousness of repeal (Aufhebung) and therefore memetic phrase *I got comedy* sounds so postironical. So, the common memetic topic of cosmetics and make-up may be considered as an embodiment of the principal female ironical disguise, which repeats in different masks. This refers to Deleuzian considerations about the masking of repetition as différance, which avoids the monotony of nudity in relationships. Gilles Deleuze considers irony as a modern form of comical and humour as postmodern form of comical. The post-postmodern form of comical is post- or metahumour. According to, say, Peter Wolfendale's *Object-Oriented Philosophy: The Noumenon's New Clothes*, sincerity as nuanced honesty is more corresponds with fidelity, meaning what one says is preferable to authenticity as being oneself. This authenticity may be the deepest: *when ur girl sends u memes it's bc she is in touch with her ancient paleolithic gathering instincts and is essentially gifting u the hard-earned berries of her daily labour. appreciate them*. Such an extreme depth combines with superficies in a common occurrence, when similar utterances are used as memes themselves in the metamodernist vein.

New comprehension of sincerity connects with understanding, that love and friendship suppose laughing together on corny, stupid, silly and even obscene jokes. This creates a vernacular space, in which we not so joke or laugh, but find ourselves joking or laughing as Diane Jeske notes. Thus, we together get an experience of jouissance, which is just moderately limited by language just like in memes such as humouristic folklore, paroemias or artisanship from

metamodern point of view. Meme *It's better to make the partner laugh than sexual satisfied* is so popular because it is approved by psychological research, that partners, who laugh together are more satisfied sexually as well. So, love is preferable due to it is not overburdened by obligation as friendship and is closer and more saturated emotionally. If, as Pascal Quignard notes, Roman sexuality was more filled with fear, but Greek – with commotion and laughing and therefore more lenient and appropriate in post-postmodern eventuality. «We can become acutely aware of another's vulnerabilities and needs, vulnerabilities and needs that may be fairly common, but are somehow more real and more affecting when put in the context of a familiar deprecating laugh, a tolerant and affectionate smile directed toward oneself, or a simple memory <…>» [Jeske, 2019, p. 18]. In this regard Diane Jeske's conception is similar to Alenka Zupančič's: in both cases, a partner is beloved for what she is. This *is* includes *was* because the significant other becomes significant in funny simple memory – memirony. To better explicate the peculiarities of this concept it is possible to write it as mem/ir/on(r)y, which seems like a piece of orfo-art as a part of meme culture.

3. Relationships memes relatability

When relationships represent a game in a game, which is too sublime in connection with returned beauty as Jan Němec writes in his metafictional novel *Possibilities of Love Novel* [Němec, 2019]. Although he also accepted, that the past is an aggregate stance of the present and art is a part of reality at the end of the novel he experiences a shame. It happens because he doesn't share the vernacular life with a partner, preferring to watch porno. The situation is quite the opposite in Miranda July's metamodern novel *The First Bad Man*. The main character dissolves to non-existence in a life that becomes 'silky'. Her lips are 'silky' too, but sometimes kisses are shorter and turn to previous kisses' abbreviations or tracks and so memironical and also more intimate and sincere, because have a more deep significance. At the same time, Miranda July's character praises the joke. «The joke was, *Can you believe people? The tacky kinds of things they do?* But it had another layer to it, because imitating crass people was kind of liberating – like pretending to be a child or a crazy person. It was something you could do only with someone you really trusted, someone who knew how capable and good you actually were» [July, 2015]. This is an excellent explanation of what complicated postintellectual and postironical memes often contain brutal humour. It serves to more deep closeness through appearing relatability and truth-to-life. This closeness may be touching to tears and be described by the meme phrase *Relatability got in the eye*. Moreover, memes themselves, especially metamemes, memes about memes are also a kind of relationship like in a meme *Having a girlfriend that sends nudes or having a girlfriend that sends memes*.

Relatability in memes maintains through actuality and freshness. Old memes are considered as faked orgasms and are 'hoary old chestnut', regarding such meaning of nut as ejaculation. The meme phrase *Nice guys came last*, which may be continued as *Bad guys came first*, also hints at the principal offensiveness and obscenity of meme culture. There are many memes about old sexting messages as cringe messages. A paradox contains in old sexting cringe at all, which also often becomes a meme topic. An outcome of this paradox is found in Constance de Jong's novel *Modern Love*. The character of the novel, who is both highly sincere and highly artificial, declares: «I drop my control and my vow, my pretensions for inner and outer order» [de Jong, 2017, p. 11]. Orders fold in Lacanian Moebius band and, as a result, grammatic and metaphoric cross and mix with reality. The character of Chris Kraus's novel *I Love Dick* is also both highly intimate and highly constructed. As in the meme series, describing the moving of relationships from their start to continues or ending up, she can perceive flaws of the partner with humour with time. More exactly, just they are the source of humour and, otherwise, just humour can help to continue relationships. «Transcendence isn't only lightness; it's attained by will. And why do we crave lightness so? Lightness is a '60s lie, it's Pop Art, early Godard, *The Nice Man and the Pretty Girl (With Huskies)*. Lightness is the ecstasy of communication without the irony, it's the lie of disembodied cyberspace. Through his medium John Ford, Kitaj is telling us that matter moves but you can't escape its weight. The dead come back to dance not as spirits but as skeletons» [Kraus, 2006, p. 204].

Memory about this peculiarity is fixed through art, first of all in memirony. However, connection with other arts stays close and memes may become their objects as in metapaintings of Mauro C. Martinez. (See pictures). He notes, that memes are cheaper and faster than paintings and this lets to develop a tendency of human being's continuation in art piece. It is especially noted in a case of metairony and metahumour, when the parody is hard to distinguish from the original regarding its sincerity. Furthermore, according to Nathan Poe's law, parody and original coincide on limits.

1. Mauro C. Martinez. Metapaitings

This tactic also displays, how memes overcome the limits of the Internet and allow 'go outside and play'. «I believe that it is this quality of the Internet, the overabundance of options, which made the idea of the "end" of the Internet such an appealing one to early users» [McNeill, 2009, p. 91] – confirms Lynne S. McNeill. This consideration may be correlated with a tyranny of choice problem, which Renata Salecl puts. However, post-postmodern shift of attention from sex to love or, at least, selective sex with a significant other, through intimacy leads to increase memes dissemination. «Sex means intimacy, and intimacy means sharing memes» [Blackmore, 1999, p. 143]. Susan Blackmore holds, that memetic evolution is 'Lamarckian': «Where memes are transmitted horizontally, they can travel quite independently of the genes». [Ibid., p. 133]. It leads to realizing non-reproductive sexuality in Foucauldian meaning. As a result, as Grant Kien insists, we are all situationists now and live discrete life. It includes part-time protest and détournement (diversion). On the one side, cultural appropriation and Ironic Camouflage are used [Kien, 2019, p. 122, 224]. From another side even Hipster racism and sexism are used too: "Sexism is OK if it's ironic" [Ibid., p. 129]. It proves, again, the necessary balance between uttermost sincerity and irony as in a meme *Homophobia high key sounds like jealousy*.

Bradley E. Wiggins even suggests that in a such way, we may meme-ing ourselves to death, meaning the symbolical death of the subject in different understanding and continuing as intertextuality. He doesn't prefer to stress not so the connection of the meme concept with Greek mimema as Richard Dawkins, who accentuates first of all mimetic imitation. He uses Greek enthymeme to explain the memetic effect. Continuing in a semiotic way Bradley E. Wiggins insists: «the Babadook functions as a *synecdoche*: a visual phrase used to represent a larger whole. In this case, it semiotically refers to the anxieties and pain that might be associated with coming out to one's family and friends (similar to the desire in the film to renounce and expel the Babadook). <…> The Babadook as a meme (enthymeme, visual argument) functions as an excellent metaphor for this distinction» [Wiggins, 2019, p. 121]. Although The Babadook in the meme is often visually presented as a Black queer, it hints at B in LGBT and, further, turns in 'babashook' in everyone's closet with a special epistemology, using Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's approach.

It embodies, in Bradley E. Wiggins opinion, a kind of neo-Dadaist semiotic taking into account René Magritte's *The Treachery of Images* and readymade. So, postirony appears including a visual layer of memes, which, as literal stylistic, content, etc. may be cringe-worthy. «Regardless of

the millennial component, a *neo-Dadaist semiotic* is characterized by the following, in no particular order: dark humour; distanced irony; disillusionment; horror/shock at the modern age (but with no direct or explicit deliberation on that which horrifies or shocks); bizarre and absurd expressions; self-deprecation; cringe; offensive humour; scatological references» [Ibid., p. 140–141].

Romantic irony preserves from sublime trauma, but builds the wall often through a game and can lead to relationships breaking up. The solution to this problem may be found in the operation not to object, but to abject in Julia Kristeva's meaning. The abject is both attractive and hideous, which causes productive oscillation in relationships. In memes this oscillation seems careless, but displays, that everyone is worth love in all her appearances. According to Joe Saunders's approach such a love is a response to someone's property-less general essence and doesn't allow asserts something like 'Sorry, I don't like your soul anymore'. For displaying qualities and essence, her-ness plexus Joe Saunders suggests an unobvious space model, like Lacanian ones, which contains universality, individuality and particularity [Saunders, 2022, p. 139]. This model is hard to understand in vernacular life, which images in memes on pictures.
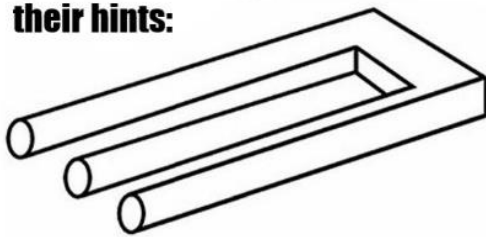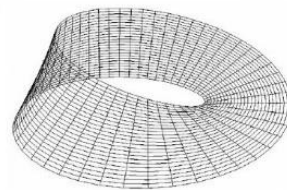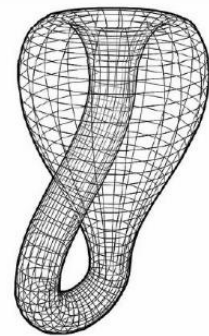

2. Works by unknown authors. Untitled

Particularity from the times of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling sorts with love chemistry, elective and exclusive. Joe Saunders writes: «This peculiar attraction that we feel for some people and not for others is often overlooked. But if we want to take love seriously, we should pay attention to it. <…> I remarked that philosophical systems are, in part, defined by which phenomena they take seriously. This also applies to accounts of love; they are, in part, defined by the phenomena of love which they take seriously, and I contend that contemporary accounts of love often overlook chemistry» [Saunders, 2018]. Alan Soble suggests «Take seriously the joke, "Is sex an autonomy-killing, mind-numbing, subhuman passion? Yes, but only when it's good." Work out its personal, social, and ethical implications» [Soble, 2017, p. 320] and Charles David C. Reeve considers love as principally confusing, frantic and rapturous, a rupture of talking. This situation is quite exactly described in *She Wants Revenge*'s song *Animal Attraction*: «But you don't have the patience for the smallest conversation <…> This could be so dirty that it just ain't right». However the best example of inhuman passion is the meme *Let me pass, I will suck him* (See picture of this meme anonymous painting).

3. Work by an unknown author. Let me pass, I will suck him.

If traditionally even sexual love considers as not only sensual, but also sensible and even rational feeling in comparison with passion. Then in Georges Bataille's works sublime love concedes to transgressive sex, which is connected, among other things, with laughter. Nowadays in connection with intimacy transformations, noted by Anthony Giddens, it is considered that love can't stay Socratic or Platonic, love is sexual anyway and contains a fraction of frictions. Besides, corporeal frictional spasms from laughter are preferable that anxious thrills or other vibrations.

Greta Christina's essay *Are We Having Sex Now or What?* is like a meme series. She counts her lovers and a result of this counting is several punchlines. At first, she didn't count women as a null, hole in the system, but when she left binary, she left counted at all. Neither pleasure and fun nor corporeal contact can't be a criterion of sex. The line between sex and non-sex becomes a quite wide space and in this case, a sign of sex is a real-life experience, but not only thought 'it is'. «It's not that sex itself has to change things all that much. But knowing you've had sex, being conscious of a sexual connection, standing around making polite conversation with someone while thinking to yourself, "I've had sex with this person," that's what changes things» [Christina, 2017, p. 34]. In postironical culture joint laughing at memes may be valued even higher than sex itself, disregard for the favorite mem of a partner may be a reason for the quarrel, laugh at another person's favorite meme may be a cause of jealousy. On the whole, this situation may be described through the meme *Yeah sex is cool, but have you ever…* If it continues as *laughed on memes together* it becomes the meme studies statement itself.

In the context of cultural memetics Douglas Hofstadter rhymes *meme* with *theme*, *scheme* and even *même* (French *even, same*). «When I first heard the French saying *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*, it struck me as annoyingly nonsensical: "The more it changes, the samer it gets" (in my own colloquial translation). I was not amused but nonetheless it stuck in my mind for years, and finally it dawned on me that it was full of meanings. My favorite way of interpreting it is this. The more different manifestations you observe of one phenomenon, the more deeply you understand that phenomenon, and therefore the more clearly you can see the vein of sameness running through all those different things. Or put another way, experience with a wide variety of things refines your category system and allows you to make incisive, abstract connections based on deep shared qualities. A more cynical way of putting it, and probably more in line with the intended meaning, would be that superficially different things are often boringly the same. But the saying need not be taken cynically. Seeing clear to the essence of something unfamiliar is often best achieved by finding one or more known things that you can see it as, then being able to balance these views» [Hofstadter, 1985, p. 253]. This passage implicitly contains also memironical considerations. Repetition allows fixing a problem in a humouristic form and as such an approach result appears dramedy in art, first of all, meme series, including meme series *Meme is funny, but the situation is uncanny*.

In the context of object-oriented ontology object is principally uncanny, especially dark object. From this point of view, Jacques Derrida's hauntology as a specter study is compatible with Jacques Lacan's ontology of shame (French *hontologie*). A shame in Lacanian understanding is paradoxically the one non-obscene and connected with a thinking emotion and death from a laugh isn't different from death from a shame. This compilation allows getting the work of mourning done. Covering the shame and reproach for the mistakes happens with the help of language and thereby memirony helps to rid of specters and illusions and continues relationships in post-postmodern memetic vein. In memes shame or, more often, cringe for the past a human being experiences when she grows wiser and develops. In philosophical anthropology, the openness and ability to develop a human being explains, among other things, her exclusive aptness to both laugh and blush with shame. This situation in a sex context may be displayed through the meme *Hide your genitals, but only wear clothing* <clearly masculine or feminine> *which represents those genitals making it impossible to ignore*. This meme also discovers the role of illusion in sex life as well as in memes *I was too busy imagining sex with you* or *So realistic* whereas the woman in the picture declines. The last also displayed the trauma of the Real and sometimes for a successful

relationship it must be escaped. Memirony of this contains in memes, where somebody doesn't want to articulate her desire but wants to partner guesses the desire or better discovers a hidden unconscious desire. Also, the partner may intentionally support illusions like in the meme *Apologize to her and say you didn't want to be right* when she didn't right obviously. In other cases partner, otherwise, intentionally deals with the trauma of the Real to exacerbate desire, her own or his partner's: *I like strong, powerful men. Such fun to not obey them* or

> *He: Don't get on my nerves.*
> *I, the fun of stirring the pot: Or what?*

In contemporary culture women, practicing such a strategy of behaviour, are considered not hysteric, but having a rich emotional palette.

However full escape from illusions may mean the end of relationships because importance of imagination as a psychic register. Letting go of past illusions is displayed in memes *When the guy who <stole your girl* or another variant*> dies, RIP, Buried* and others. The reasons for this may be different. The simplest is often and more painful and often appears in the meme *Hurt me*: remembering about the need to wake up early, washing white and colored clothes together, using a metal spoon with a tefal pan, etc. More complicated reasons are sextual: the partner didn't answer right away on message, didn't add a smile to it, didn't answer the way you imagined in your head, etc. Conflict is an important part of relationships and sometimes, if real reasons for this are absent, arguments like the partner having eyes and seeing other girls or the partner breathing or even blinking loudly go to work. Such absurd pretenses are the most expository: eventually, anybody both loves and hates a partner for her being. The level of general absurdity increases when remembering the beginning of relationships. Thereat reasons to love were *she also likes to breathe and trees, which give the possibility to breathe*, *she also likes bread*, etc. The lacks of a partner during this period seem like cute features, which are often themed in memes. Balance of love and hatred, heinamoration in Lacanian words, is best maintained through humour and fixed through memirony. In this case, it may be an ironical comparison of the beginning and nowness of relationships.

4. Multiplicity of relationships memes and conclusion

The seriality of memes proves both memory and renewing, because, as Daniel Dennett notes, meme is a concept that is literally alive and a human being is an interplay of memes, biological and cultural. In the case of internet memes, a picture stays the same, but a text varies in many ways, often through errative, intentional mistakes during using Stonks' language or imaginary pet's speech. Then this transformed speech is used by lovers as pets with endearing names and this creates a comic, but cute effect. Speaking about animals Jacques Derrida reminds first of all his pussy-cat, because namely, pets are to a greater extent animal-word, animot in French. In his parlance animot contains animated word (French *mot*) and is a homophone of animals (French animaux) in all their multiplicity. Derrida calls on us to accept and free animots in, for and like human beings: «*Ecce animot*. Neither a species nor a gender nor an individual, it is an irreducible living multiplicity of mortals, and rather than a double clone or a portmanteau word, a sort of monstrous hybrid, a chimera» [Derrida, 2008, p. 41]. In contemporary vernacular culture a human being's names, including it in the symbolic register of the Other, an animal, but a partner. Assigning animal names, or names common to animals, takes the partner out of the symbolic register of the Other into the space of the non-human. An animal, in this case, can take the place of the Other, like a meme cat is shooting lovers.

An orfo-art, especially memetic, with cute philonyms allows the creation of a carnival identity and varieties of non-human partners images, which work towards refreshing relationships. In Lacanian parlance, this practice may be designated as lalangue or linguistery and, in Barthesian parlance – as logorrhea, i. e. connection of a language and jouissance. Varieties of memetic philonyms seem the most appropriate new signifiers, which prove to continue relationships «is if for the first time». It may bulk as hard work but appears as a funny play of loving partners. As Eric Gans, who develops post-millennialism as post-postmodern trend,

insists «Successful couples are those who stay in love, whose love matures and changes its forms of expression, but remains as intense as ever. There need be no end to these changes; the more the couple have experienced together, the more material they have for the little dialogical games lovers never tire of playing with each other» [Gans, 1995]. Eric Gans insists, that after a millennium with its sexual trouble, it can love again and joke about love, which often happens in memes: *In life, you need not only to try everything but also to try something not to try.*

On the one side, this situation may be described through the memetic phrase *I have achieved comedy*. However, from the other side, this phrase conceals one more supplementary layer of irony. The comical effect can't be achieved once and for all, it needs infinite jest in David Foster Wallace understanding. A meme with its seriality may be considered as infinite jest and this allows to designate a meme as post-postmodern appearance. In this regard meme is like a comical serial, which allows trying everything, even love as one of the characters in the serial *Girls* by Lena Dunham. Lee Konstantinou considers this serial as an example of relational art, as well as creations of Miranda July or mumblecore cinema, as one of the postironical methods [Konstantinou, 2017, p.98]. Relational art differs in that it's both middle-brow and uncomfortable, awkward because of the dissemination of intersubjective margins like in the Internet, memes in particular, from which relational art with all its relatability comes.

Remembering Douglas Hofstadter's rhyming *meme* and *scheme* allows memes can be considered as subversive schemes of conditions, situations and events. So, if ironical memes subvert modern and schematize postmodern then post-ironical subvert postmodern and schematize post-postmodern. As for metaironical and metahumouristic memes, they may don't seem like a meme at all and are metamemes in some sense as far as it is a memes of a high level with many layers of irony. Regarding memes about relationships, the considered schematizations are most clearly traced in the memetization of corporality.

On the one side, memes as a contemporary kind of art display body-positive thinking. As examples of this it is worth to mention *It's not extra weight, it's extra kissing spots* or *When heated, everything expands, so I'm not fat, I'm hot* memes. However, on the other side, the caustic humour of memes means laughing at the physical lucks of a partner and, more important, the person itself. As Lucy Vine notes in his *Hot Mess* novel, it's so hard to be naked even alone if your partner looks perfect, that you even have to wash in shapewear [Vine, 2017]. As far as men are concerned, the most corporeal issue is a split between the mind and penis. In memes a penis may be displayed as another head in pants, which suggests apologizing, complimenting or congratulating the woman when the mind is offended or angry at her. Miran Božovič considers this situation as bicephaly, which, in comparison with the acephaly of George Bataille, allows the mind to catch itself red-handed [Božovič, 2002]. In memes a plot about memes promises often meets: *Ask what you want, I will promise everything.* Men may add *Let's see* then. But if the promise didn't keep, *«Let's see» may fall off* like a body organ, most likely the penis or even the phallus as the embodiment of not only power but also responsibility. One of the ways out of this dilemma can also be considered a meme *I would fap, but condemningly.*

Another way it can be mentioned searching for extra weight reasons, for example, the behaviour of a partner: *While you are gaining the courage to approach her and confess your feelings, she eats and gets fat.* In this case not a single person, but pair is being objectified. In the context of postmodern atomism, which is from Delezian point of view is like Lucretian one, a human being as a nomadic singularity, processual, changing, fluid and sexual is actualized. In a post-postmodern context, object-oriented ontology in particular, also pair and amorous relationships are actualized and even objectified. «For the sake of simplicity, we can say that the romantic relationship is composed not of *two* objects, but of *three* objects. Here you have the two people involved in the relationship, as well as the amorous relationship itself. The amorous relationship is an object independent of the two persons in the amorous relationship. While initially this sounds very strange, we should here recall how couples talk about their relationships. They talk about being in a relationship, about how the relationship is going well or is in a state of crisis. Likewise, friends of couples often treat couples as units, behaving as if one person cannot be

invited to dinner without inviting the other» [Bryant, 2011, p. 217]. Mereology of Levy R. Brayant supposes, that a part is more than a whole, i. e. this approach doesn't reduce singularity, but a being in a relationship has even more responsibility and readiness to respond. The high level of this responsibility is often displayed through memirony such as in the *Girls* serial or the meme in the phrase *When you want to kiss her up to death, that's love.*

In such a way multilayer memirony functions, such as in another relationship memes on the popular topic of adultery and betrayal. Again, on the one side, memes often display a tendency to free relationships. However, from the other side, also it can be found very sharp joking about jealousy up to jealousy of a person, which as a partner only in imagination or to imaginary rival as in memes *My future unknown husband may be spending time with chicks, When you see a girl all over your man, who not really your man and you shouldn't be mad because he isn't your man, but that's your man, Your penis gets up on the morning, Your heart vibrates into* you, *Some air comes in and out of you, Alarm clock calls every morning* or

– *You are the most beautiful of all existing persons on this planet?*
– *Does he mean that someone more beautiful exists earlier?*

It may seem, that the issue of jealousy isn't actually regarding the popularity of polyamory and ethical polygamy. However, in post-postmodern eventuality, couple love is actual again. Therefore, jealousy may appear when one of the partners isn't determined in her choice. Memirony of this situation is described in a meme *When we find a special person, it begins to seem to us that we haven't been everywhere yet, we haven't seen everyone.* The issue of jealousy may continue in a mature relationship and be combined with the issue of extra weight again. Thus, the meme *I'm not fat, I just have a wide bone* take turns into the meme *I'm not jealous, I just have a bone wondering what a slut it is.*

Among very popular «language» memes such as the language of rat, language of cuckold, etc. a special place is occupied by the meme

– *Say something in jealous bitch language.*
– *Maybe let your bitches tell you?*

In this meme, the partner refuses to continue a conversation at all and suggests that the alleged rival speak, while animalizing her.

It is worse to put attention, that in meme languages are also often animal and more often pet. At that it means no less, but a more mature relationship. Animal conditional nudity and speechlessness are well played out in memes *Let's settle this argument like adults; in the bedroom, naked* or *Watching like to swear.* The meme cycle about men's thoughts in a bedroom after sex is especially interesting. While women guess, that men thought about other women, «bitches», men really think about quite serious or curious things because of post-nut clarity. Or men may don't think at all and offer like in the meme *Let's sleep with each other. Who won whom?* At the same time, gluttony is attributed to women, which want *Suck and fuck the whole soul* and then leave men, which cry *Return the penis at least* in pursuit of them.

In this way, gender stereotypes are debunked. The relatability of memes allows awareness, that, for example, men aren't always strong, but *The male ego can hurt just about anything because it is more sensitive than the clit.* Wherein a man in the meme may note *Good thing I wasn't born a girl. It's hard to pretend all your life that you don't want to fuck on the first date.* It may be even said, that thus he memironizes on the vernacular application of Lacanian thought about the non-existing of a woman considering the absence of pure woman desire.

This is the reason for the situation, when, in the meme variant, *She deleted the message because she is no longer the same as a minute ago.* Darian Leader in his book *Why Do Women Write More Letters Than They Post?* asserts, that it is constantly so, because relatable woman's writing, including messages, cannot be not only sent but even completed. «The letter may not be posted, as we just said, for the simple reason that it remains unfinished, but this simple reason suggests another one: the letter is unfinished because *the person who wrote it is unfinished.* As new things happen, she is continually becoming distinct from what she had originally described. Her life is always a little bit ahead of the description, and perhaps the respect for this gap is dearer to a woman than to a man

– who, as we saw, aims to make the gap vanish, to absorb his changing life in language. Men and women are both unfinished, but by posting his letter a man may aim to obscure this; a woman's unposted letter, on the contrary, highlights the unfinished nature of the sender» [Leader, 2002, p. 102]. There remains a widespread discussion in modern philosophy, the polar points of which are the statements that the letter always reaches and that the letter never reaches. In this case, both positions are combined: the letter does not reach, because it is not sent, but simultaneously reaches each point of its continuous path, including the process of writing a letter. In Damian Leader's variant just finishing and sending a message would mean a break of connection and relation.

Sending memes allows sending and non-sending messages at once, using specific post-postmodern relatable citations. The sent meme is a postironic reminder of the impossibility of implementing a fully relatable message and the need to try this implementation. However, the value of memirony consists foremost in the fact that it contains relatable knowledge freed from excessive postmodern theorizing and citation. The assimilation of this knowledge is facilitated by the comic component and the compact visual form of memes. The repeatedly criticized visuality of contemporary culture is here limited through relatability.

As a woman writing and considering the wide specter of memes about relationships, this research also be continued. But now in *conclusion* it would be like to mention, that rebound and development of relationships through creating and sending memes may continue because of the infinite multiplicity of both concrete meme and memes in general.

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МЕМІРОНІЯ: ВІДБИТТЯ СТОСУНКІВ В МЕМАХ

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АНОТАЦІЯ

В дослідженні вивчається взаємний вплив мемів і любовних чи сексуальних стосунків. Воно показує те, що, з одного боку, тема стосунків є однією з найпоширеніших і багато в чому визначає інтернет меметику в цілому. З іншого боку, створення та надсилання мемів стало

важливою частиною сучасних стосунків і підтримує їх. Меми допомагають пам'ятати ключові моменти успішних стосунків, і це знання є складовою їх фону, та дозволяють розвивати їх і, в той же час, зміцнюють їхню стійкість через добрий емоційний контекст. З огляду на це, дослідження показує, що меметичний гумор, навіть у його найгостріших або чорніших формах, відіграє позитивну роль. На підґрунті цього в дослідженні вводяться та розглядаються нові концепти меміронії та метагумору. Так, дослідження підтверджує, що меми є частиною пост-постмодерної подієвості, більш життєвої та щирої, ніж постмодерністська. Життєві, правдиві меми, у порівнянні з надто інтелектуальними мемами, допомагають підтримувати тісніші стосунки через дійсну любовну гру. Особливу увагу в дослідженні приділено лінгвістичній складовій мемів, зокрема «мовам» мемів. Окрім базових меметичних концепцій Лімора Шифмана, Дугласа Хофстадтера, Сьюзен Блекмор та ін., а також когнітивного підходу Деніела Деннета, дослідження ґрунтується на концепції кохання як комедії Аленки Зупанчіч та сміху як мовного прояву Младена Долара, концепції співвідношення щирості, комізму та шарму Грема Гармана та ін. Дослідження проводилось на матеріалі інтернет-мемів, а також інших творів сучасного мистецтва, які демонструють важливість гумору для стосунків.

Ключові слова: *меміронія, мем, метагумор, стосунки, пост-постмодерн.*