



Possible Risks of the Metaverse and the Posthuman: The Separation of the Economy and the Money

*Metaverse ve Posthumanın Muhtemel Riskleri:
Ekonomi ve Paranın Birbirinden Ayrışması*

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the reflections of the integration between culture and nature, which is promised in the philosophies of technology, in the context of metaverse and posthuman examples. The dichotomy between culture and nature can lead to many new dichotomies in the contemporary daily life. Especially with the modern period, some dilemmas have emerged between mathematics and humanity, technology and social life, science and religion, social media or metaverse and real life, and money and economy. In order to solve these dilemmas, individualization has been developed in the contemporary period. In fact, 20th century societies are largely individualized and middle-class societies. While individualization promises to solve existing dilemmas, it can lead to increasingly deeper human problems. The most important of these problems is that virtual life, which was invented to assist real human life, has turned into something that suppresses and manipulates the real life. For example, the money, which has four different functions, is now destroying the financial economy with a single function-the symbolic exchange value function. In addition, like the social media platforms, the metaverse is presented in a format that is more real than real life. Here, there is also an intervention in the function of religion. There are serious efforts which are made to

substitute simultaneous virtual belief and ritual logic instead of real time and life experiences of the religion and the belief. Especially Islam is not a religion suitable for this intervention and target. Because Islam is primarily a worldly religion and remembers the afterlife in terms of what it promises. For Muslims, the religious rituals cannot be performed on a virtual level and separate from the real lives of other people. This separation from real life is the most advanced version of alienation and the most radical version of individualization. After the descriptions of metaverse, posthuman and economy, the article deals with this alienation and also criticizes alienation, which also means the separation of economy and money.

Key Words: Metaverse, Posthuman, Economy, Money, Individualization, Islam.

ÖZ

Bu çalışma, teknoloji felsefelerinde taahhüt edilen kültür ile doğa arasındaki bütünleşmenin metaverse ve posthuman örneğindeki yansımalarını incelemektedir. Kültür ile doğa arasındaki dikotomi günlük yaşamda birçok yeni dikotomiye yol açabilmektedir. Özellikle modern dönemle birlikte matematik ile insan, teknoloji ile toplumsal yaşam, bilim ile din, sosyal medya ve metaverse ile gerçek yaşam ve para ile ekonomi arasında bazı ikilemler ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu ikilemlerin çözümü için çağdaş dönemde bireyselleşme geliştirilmiştir. Aslında 20. yüzyıl toplumları büyük ölçüde bireyselleşmiş ve orta sınıflaşmış toplumlardı. Bireyselleşme mevcut ikilemleri çözmeyi taahhüt ederken gitgide daha derin insani sorunlara yol açabilmektedir. Bunlardan en önemlisi gerçek insan yaşamına yardımcı olmak için icat edilen sanal yaşamın gerçek yaşamı baskılayan ve onu manipüle eden bir asla dönüşmesidir. Sözelimi dört farklı işleve sahip olan para günümüzde tek bir işlevle -sembolik değişim değeri işleviyle- sınırlandırılarak finansal ekonomiyi tahrip etmektedir. Ayrıca sosyal medya platformları gibi metaverse de gerçek yaşamdan daha gerçek bir formatta görücüye sunulmaktadır. Burada dinin işlevine de bir müdahalede bulunmaktadır. Gerçek zaman ve yaşamdaki din ve inanç deneyimleri yerine eşzamanlı sanal inanç ve ritüel mantığı ikame edilmeye çabalanmaktadır. Özellikle İslam dini bu müdahale ve hedefe uygun bir din değildir. Çünkü İslam dini öncelikle dünyevi bir din olup vaat ettikleri bakımından ahireti anmaktadır. Müslümanlar açısından dini ritüeller sanal seviyede ve başka insanların gerçek yaşamlarından ayrı yerine getirilemez. Gerçek yaşamdan bu ayrıştırma yabancılaşmanın en ileri ve bireyselleşmenin en radikal versiyonudur. Makale metaverse, posthuman ve ekonomiye dair tariflerden sonra bu yabancılaşmayı ele almakta ve aynı zamanda ekonomi ve paranın birbirinden ayrışması demek de olan yabancılaşmayı eleştirmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Metaverse, Posthuman, Ekonomi, Para, Bireyselleşme, İslâm.

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to analyze the philosophical relations between the reduction of money to only one of the four functions and the substitution of the metaverse for real life¹. These two developments, which have come to the fore as global capitalism, individualization and financial economy provoked digital transformation, contain three important risks. Firstly, money has separated from the economy and has identified only with exchange value which has symbolic interaction (Ernst, 2014: 77). Secondly, the scientific, philosophical and cultural value of human resources and social experiences is being discredited (Hochschild, 2012: 55, 143; Bembolz, 2014: 56-57). Thirdly, both developments lead to the commercialization of belief in God, religious beliefs and practices, which is one of the historical achievements of man (Einstein, 2008: 9-10). The practical consequence of the first risk is the exhaustion of labor and production. Since the nature and the human life will not accept this, the economic growth of those who continue to labor and production will be fast. The practical consequence of the second risk is the loss of trust, free will, morality and ethics. Since the nature and the human life will not accept the second outcome, societies that can keep up and maintain traditional norms at a consistent level will be able to benefit from human resources, which are the most important capital. The practical consequence of the third risk is alienation from one's own history, identity and self. Since the nature and the human life will not accept the third outcome, the societies that can protect belief in God, religious beliefs and practices by purifying them from commercialization will decide what will happen to people in the future. The common result of all three risks, practical consequences, and reasonable inferences is that money must retain its four functions, traditional and modern, and continue to rule the metaverse and other digital environments of real life (Young, 2019: 200-203). The paper proposes to problematize this result through the new radical relations between economy and money.

In this context, first of all, the dilemma between automatization and denying the benefits of the modern civilization needs to be re-evaluated. A new antinomy which has been added to Immanuel Kant's antinomies by Martin Heidegger and Jean Paul Sartre points at the dichotomy be-

1 This article has founded its current form by developing the paper with the same title which was presented at the symposium titled "Metaverse and Religion" organized by Ankara Social Sciences University on 03-04 November 2022.

tween the technology and the free will. Because accepting the civilization, the progress and the technology brings with it commercialization and automatization (Wrathal, 2019: 13-16; Siegler, 2022: 47-48). Only global capitalists can truly profit from commercialization and automatization. The societies that have realized the need to protect human resources and historical capital will not easily accept the blessings of the civilization. Secondly, the economic cost of web 3.0, blockchain and metaverse is not proportional to the domestic production and earnings of each society. In addition, the monetization of the economy and the all kinds of technological possibilities which have made nonfunctional by decentralized finance under monetization can hinder the economy of societies that want to develop. Therefore, thirdly, the monetization of the economy and decentralized finance need to be critically evaluated. Finally, the divine and religious belief, which is the most important example of the historical achievements of humanity today, should be evaluated. Because the issue of belief, which is forced into an internal economic equation with two options between secularism and fundamentalism (Wahba, 2022: 57-60), is actually related to commercialization process in global capitalism age (Einstein, 2008:37-39). Because in the era of globalization and individualization, the secularism includes an economic distribution, while the fundamentalism includes another economic distribution, but the commercialization process includes both. Religious people may seem to be against secularism because they do not realize the reality of commercialization. However, the commercialization determines all options. While the commercialization damages the consistency of religions' truth claims, it can pave the way for the sanctification of technological possibilities such as the metaverse (Mercer, Trothen, 2021: 19-27; Bibri, Allam, 2022: 13, 16-17). One fact that can be drawn from the example of contemporary location of the religion is the risk that a commercialized technology—here the metaverse—becomes sanctified rather than people's historical gains. The substitution of the Metaverse for religious places and times means that it has become sacred (Epstein, 2024). This can seriously damage the operativeness of religions. Because the time and the space habits of religions have created an institutional basis and consciousness over the years. With this new development, institutionalization and awareness being subjected to sudden and major updates for any commercial reason may harm the common sense of religious members.



THE DICHOTOMY OF AUTOMATION AND UNCIVILIZED SOCIETY

Over the past century, the German philosopher Heidegger and the French philosopher Sartre have warned all humanity of a dichotomy which contains a split between the naturalness of life and technology. Both warnings were significant. But especially in Heidegger's criticisms, there was a question of taking refuge in past histories without technology. Researchers have determined that this contains a deadlock (Wrathal, 2019: 14-15, 21). However, today we have to accept the dichotomy stuck between the automation and lagging behind the civilization. Because the economic needs have determined the possible ways which the both attitudes can follow. Commercialization can invest in both attitudes as a global process, and every commercialization is actually on the side of the technology. It is also the case that the economy has surrendered to the financial economy as a fundamental factor that determines traditional community organizations and innovative community organizations. This fact is at a developed level and has some characteristics that can validate Heidegger's insoluble criticisms (David, 2019: 133-134). Therefore, the following question can be asked: Can people and societies maintain their economic existence by ignoring the yields of civilization to some extent?

Today, indigenous cultures who have come under the influence of the global capitalism are alienated from the nature and their own history to the extent that they adapt to digital technology. Here, the alienation means the passive participation of human subjects or individuals in a network of relations that they cannot control and manage. The inspiring concept for Heidegger, Sartre, and others who are analysts is alienation. Because all critical philosophies refer to the thoughts of the German philosopher G. W. F. Hegel. According to Hegel, the alienation, as a process that started with the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, can be overcome by the labor-gain relations that the human subject or individual acquires in a free market. There is no consciousness for the human subject other than the relationship between labor and earnings (Eecke, 2008: 27, 49-50). According to Hegel, the fact that the free market is based on subjectivity can make it ethical. However, radical subjectivity in politics is not possible. In that case, as an answer to the question posed

above, the people and the societies need to make maximum calculations and manage to benefit from the yields of the civilization within a strategy. Because the civilization itself is an economic investment. Passive participation in modern civilization must be managed correctly. This may involve some inhibition of the popularization of using the technology at the expense of delay (Eecke, 50-56).

When it comes to the financial economy, it is understandable that other societies, which are considered to be post-colonial, except for metropolitan societies that dominate labor-earnings relations, take a traditionalist attitude. What is the traditional here is not a stable concept or consistent norm. The image of “the traditional” includes the search for potential alternatives to the financial economy. The main purpose is to create a temporary resistance against the financial economy, which does not involve any real activity other than the exchange of banknotes or cryptocurrencies. Because the financial economy cannot be sustained when there is no market. People’s need for the yields of technology is actually less than the financial economy’s need for the Market. It is almost impossible to take refuge in a stable traditional attitude within the existing networks of the economic relations. But it is possible to make the financial economy feel the opposite. The traditionalist attitude is itself an economic investment and is mainly driven by the digital technology society. Because the number of traditional societies that do not use technology at all is few. Demonstrating the traditional attitude against the financial economy’s standardizing the societies functions as a strategy of the indigenous societies. Otherwise, in beginning, the traditionalist attitude itself does not correspond to a perfect economy (Jia, 2020: 230-238).

WEB 3.0, BLOCKCHAIN, METAVERSE AND AVATARS

Concepts such as web 3.0, blockchain, metaverse, and avatar are the newest concepts in the tech society. These concepts include new possibilities and opportunities of the commercial technology. In addition, these concepts, which contains new stage of an evolutionary direction that affirms automatization, promise to minimizing real relationships between the people. This is because the greatest risk to humans is humans. So it can be said that machines are not as dangerous as humans. In a way, the real meaning of a possible conflict between the humans



and the machines is a war between a group of the people who manage the machines and the people who are less fortunate than those people. All the wars recorded by the consciousness in the world take place only between the people. This detail is important in understanding the digital technology society. The metaverse and the avatars cannot be understood without understanding web 3.0 and blockchain technologies.

As the first known network example of the Internet, web 1.0 was in use from 1989 to 2004. The property of web 1.0 was that people could use the computer, but not interact with it. So the users could have only read in web 1.0 (Ejeke, 2022: 13-16). Web 2.0 was in use from 2004 to 2012. The property of web 2.0 was that people could interact with the computers and all kinds of internet usage tools. So the users could have read and have written in web 2.0 (Ejeke, 17-20). Web 1.0 was designed in 1989, web 2.0 was designed in 1999. Since 2012 the people are aware of web 3.0, but web 3.0 was designed in 2006. In web 3.0, besides reading and writing, it has become possible to live in a common network at the 3D level. Since 2012, web 3.0 has been tried to be developed. The purpose of this network is that people do not need an outside network provider during any interaction. Now the people will be able to interact with the other people and the objects using all objects in the common network of objects. Thus, the safety of people can be maximized. Corporations, organizations and governments will not be able to control the people. This design is still under development (Ejeke, 23-29). Meanwhile, the concept of cloud came into question with web 2.0 and it corresponds to the functions that include the storage and the infrastructure service. For example, internet providers such as TTNET in Turkey and international tools such as Google Drive are known examples of cloud. Prior to web 3.0, these storage and infrastructure services led to centralization. In Web 3.0, the cloud is defined at the decentralized level (Ejeke, 21-22).

Blockchain can be defined as the new technology for the new “ledger” or “database”. Relationships between the three parties, contain sending, addressee and recorder center in previous digital ledgers were not reliable enough. Because the sender and the addressee could not be sure of each other, and sometimes there were problems with the third party. The blockchain technology has committed to eliminate this centralization of third part to remove the problems. As a young entrepreneur, Satoshi

Nakamoto has developed both blockchain technology and the first coin since 2008. The blockchain technology and web 3.0 work together. Both mediate decentralized financial relations (Palladino, 2019: 1-2; Ragnedda, Destefanis, 2020: 1-2; Swing, Nakamoto, 2021: 134).

The concepts such as metaverse and its concepts are considered and possible with web 3.0 and blockchain technology. Wilson J. Davis' definition of the metaverse is eye-opening, as one of the first to write on the metaverse and the avatar at a professional level. According to him, "the metaverse could be defined as a multi-user real-time virtual space where individuals worldwide can connect via a network, co-exist, socialize and exchange value" (Davis, 2021; 8). Based on this definition, the metaverse can be considered as a new stage of the social media platforms that have come into use with web 2.0. The problem of centrality continues in social media platforms and the people cannot protect their privacy. In addition, 3D interaction is not possible in social media (Russell, 2022: 15-20, 35-36). In addition to solving these two problems, Metaverse brings new possibilities and opportunities for communication, advertising, marketing, business meetings, education, health, justice, politics, religion and entertainment. It should be noted that different areas of social life such as the education, the business, the entertainment, the advertising, the religion and the art, especially the banks, will exist by using the metaverse. Each of these processes will be possible through the people's use of the avatars to get rid of physical and biological barriers. For example, distances can be considered as physical barriers, old age, disability and diseases can also be considered as biological barriers (Davis, 2021: 8-9).

In the meantime, it is necessary to place particular focus on two literatures which are similar to each other. The literature of metaverse and the literature of "second life" developed in parallel with each other in the 2000s. The "second life" literature, which clearly points to a similar possibility with the metaverse meaning "second world" and involves using social media platforms in 3D, has developed in competition with each other. Although this detail has not been reflected in the texts yet, there are some differences. "*Second Life* was launched in 2003 by Linden Lab, whose CEO Philip Rosedale served as the public face of the company" (Virgilo, 2022). However, the metaverse seems to have suppressed the market.



The avatars can be defined as virtual identities of users in the metaverse. The users will be able to perform shopping, entertainment, marketing, advertising, meetings, education, religious rituals and other activities on the metaverse platform with these identities that have not yet been determined and are intended to remain anonymous (Davis, 2021: 18). Another concept, NFTs, is designed as digital art and as a each piece in which the environment in which the avatars will live is arranged. The digital architecture of the metaverse environment can also be called NFT in general (Peter, 2021: 190). The most important fact here is that the metaverse is an investment subject and framework.

MONETIZATION OF THE ECONOMY AND THE RISKS OF DECENTRALIZED FINANCE

It is necessary to remember together a few important developments of the last ten years. Firstly, the global community has increasingly adapted to the financial economy. It means that driving profit from the token/symbolic money has substituted to the money which contains producing the common benefit. The production takes place through the objectivization of a tangible and visible benefit. Many societies have prioritized industrial investments and more recently digital investments and artificial intelligence over than agricultural investments. The second is the discrediting of the world's economic centers—for example, the dollar, the euro, and the pound. This means the transition to a decentralized economy. The decentralized economy works its way through the decentralized finance. The third is the adaptation of people and societies to digital life in the Covid-19 Pandemic. This means that the real life is losing the credibility and virtual commerce is becoming widespread. The previous two developments could be noticed with the Pandemic. Fourthly, as a result of these three developments, the symbolic money has replaced all measurement of value. Thus, the money has come to be identified only with the exchange value, yet it included the use value, the exchange value, the measurement value and the storage value before. The money as a measurement value is also reduced to ownership of the symbolic money instead of the money which contains the production. The monetization of the whole economy and the decentralization of finance are transforming all human experience. The process of monetization which has no the center

and the direction is an unfortunate development for people and societies (Baudrillard, 1999: 29-30; Hess, 2014: 80-95; Özdemir, 2022: 18-19).

The main subject of this study, which investigates the possible risk practices of the metaverse and the posthuman through the separation of the economy and the money, is not the statistical and numerical content of monetization. The issue here is the transformation and relatively the dissipation of human beings and disabling of their historical achievements. Without his historical experiences and obtainments, the man will not have a mind that he has accumulated. In addition, when the meanings in the established language and culture are distorted, communication will be impossible. Moreover, when the symbolic/token money becomes a criterion, human resources and qualifications will not matter. However, in discourse, everything is for man (Özdemir, 20-21). In order not to fall into this paradox, experiences such as the existence of divine belief, the religious belief and the religious practices provide a kind of insurance for the people. Because the religious beliefs, whether accepted as true by some people or false by some other people, constitute the essence of human history (Welker, 2014: 105-107). Undoubtedly, these analysis are operative for Western religions such as Judaism and Christianity. However, the religion of Islam and Muslims can also be affected by the same facts.

In order to understand the decentralized finance and the possible risk areas, it is useful firstly to definite the money. The money essentially means the common benefit which has been produced based on labor to supply with the people's needs (Özdemir, 2022: 19-20). In this universalizable definition, the three components which contains the needs of people, labor and common benefits are important. The decentralized finance subordinates the needs, the labor and the common good. Because it does not appeal to all people, yet only to the digital technology era and prioritizes the needs of earning of those who have the symbolic/token money (Aramonte, Huang, Schrimpf, 2021: 21-35). This case narrows the scope of representation of the metaverse and the posthuman. In this way, the economy can turn into pure profit, and the terms metaverse and posthuman can turn into pleasure practices. Because those who do not have symbolic money will not be able to earn in decentralized finance, and those who do not earn will not be able to invest in the metaverse technology and the posthuman. This may mean that the total worldly labor given accumulates in the hands of a group of people as money, but many people in need die. The more the money's travel supposedly democratizes, the more the people become as a slaves of mon-



ey distributors. Both have a consistency to each other. Therefore, controlling the people and exerting of power around the world is not done through institutions, but through symbolic money, which has in fact become the criterion of all human relations. In this context, the decentralized finance is not a good thing. Because symbolic money becoming the criterion and institutions becoming dysfunctional may sabotage the social realization of common sense and judgment. The existence of individual freedoms should not undermine common sense and judgment. As a virtual network and the second world, the metaverse is unreliable. The posthuman itself cannot signify anything other than a radical natural selection. It can be said it shows that the customer people are at risk with the metaverse offering (Hackl, Lueth, Bartolo, 2022: 14-15, 169, 189).

THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF THE RELIGION AND THE POTENTIAL OF THE METAVERSE TO BE SACRED

In the era of the globalization, the individualization and the digitalization, the real tools and the functions are replaced by the virtual tools and the functions. It seems that the labor can be replaced by the financial analysis, the human beings by the artificial intelligence, the real experiences by the virtual experiences, the ideas by the statistics and the religions by the virtual religions. This simply cannot be approved, because the commercialization of the religion and the sacralization of the metaverse will harm the religions, the people and all historical obtainments (Fortnow, Terry, 2022: 27-28). It should be mentioned about Islam specifically in another context. Because unlike the other religions, Islam is not suitable for the commercialization of the faith. In addition, it is not possible to perform Islamic worship such as to perform prayer, fasting and pilgrimage in the metaverse environment. Instead of all these, Muslims can benefit from the metaverse opportunity for educational purposes. The metaverse seems to be functional for learning the worships through the 3D simulation. When it comes to education, the commercialization will not harm the creed and the spirit of the religion (Tadros, 2011: 50-51).

Two important discussions need to be mentioned here. The first is the dilemma of fundamentalism and secularism, which is constantly being revisited when it comes to the religion. The second is the reality of the commercialization, which governs the dilemma and is the main problem.

The first discussion is continued in Mourad Wahba's book translated into English in 2022. Wahba proposes to divide the views in the contemporary world and the Islamic world into the fundamentalism and the secularism. Although his book contains many different modern and contemporary texts, it is rather open to debate in terms of the thoughts of postmodernism and liberalism. Wahba reduces the Islamic attitude towards the contemporary world to two sharp approaches. He describes those who live nowadays by embracing the contemporary possibilities without any critique as a secular, and those who want to live nowadays by a critique which is based on the past as fundamentalist (Wahba, 2022: 3-82). When his approach is applied to the relationship between the metaverse and the religion, the living of religion in the metaverse can be secular. To criticize this would be a fundamentalist attitude. Probably Wahba would not accept such an interpretation, but that's exactly what comes out of his approach. Instead of the dilemma that he reassessed, the concept of commercialization that governs this dilemma and other divisions should be analyzed.

According to the determination of Dursun Ali Yaz, "Prophets changed the direction of money flow" (Yaz, 2022: 127). This means that the Prophet of Islam has intervened in an unfair money flow and has changed its direction. This economic-based reading may have some drawbacks. But it offers the possibility of a more comprehensive world reading against Wahba's dilemma. For example, the spiritual attainments cannot be easily reduced to any material framework. For this reason, the Islamic rituals cannot be performed in the metaverse environment. On the other hand, the Islamic understanding aims for people to live in a just environment. Religious autonomy that establishes a just life can be damaged when the metaverse, which is invested instead of real life, is taken as the basis for worship. Because the metaverse has its owners and they are also human. No personal or corporate business investment should decide the venue and time of worship. As mentioned above, the only web 3.0-based platform is not the metaverse – there is an alternative "second life" literature to it- and religion as a historical achievement representing the real life cannot be handed over to it. Based on Yaz's analysis, it can be said that when the metaverse decides on the place and time of worship, the religion can become commercialized and the metaverse can be sanctified. Perhaps this is permissible for other religions, because some similarities can be found in some past experiences of Christianity (Jun, 2020: 1-9). But the religion of Islam is not suitable for this.



RE-DEATH OF THE MAN AND THE POSTHUMAN

The following words of Michel Foucault can be applied to the real relationship between the metaverse and the religion. Because Foucault is a thinker who was closely interested in the return of the concept of religion to social life and public sphere as a basic component after the Second World War. His words contain more than analyzes of Heidegger and Sartre: “I understand the unease of all such people. They have probably found it difficult enough to recognize that their history, their economics, their social practices, the language (langue) that they speak, the mythology of their ancestors, even the stories that they were told in their childhood, are governed by rules that are not all given to their consciousness;... They cannot bear (and one cannot but sympathize) to hear someone saying: ‘Discourse is not life: its time is not your time; in it, you will not be reconciled to death; you may have killed God beneath the weight of all that you have said; but don’t imagine that, with all that you are saying, you will make a man that will live longer than he.’” (Foucault, 1972: 210-211)

Among these sentences, especially the last two sentences are interesting. It is stated here that the discourse and the life, the virtual life and the real life are not the same, and talking about the God’s death does not mean that the human can continue to live freely. In the first words connected with the last words, it is mentioned that the practices of the historical past and the life are forgotten, and in fact, new ones are substituted for them. What this means is that massive change in the styles of relationships can change the humanity. Islam made this change in the name of justice. The metaverse, on the other hand, wants to do it for a group to earn more money and on the pretext of making life easier (Stock, 2022: 9, 31, 68). The content and the scope of the demand in this economic supply equation does not seem to have been adequately examined. It is not clear whether the first thing humanity needs is the virtualization of life or not. There is indeed a significant simplification of the life, but it is not possible to find any analysis in the literature of metaverse about the cost of this facilitation. This case brings to the mind the self-alienation of the man, based on the previous modern experiences. In this case, the posthuman can become a self-alienated human. The longing for uncivilized society may increase if the western civilization or the digital society accepts the metaverse as a criterion.

The separation of the money from the economy or the reduction of money to the symbol of exchange or the replacement of reality by virtual life means the death of the human. Here, the economy includes all the naturalness and real achievements of the human history. Without the humanity, the faith, the knowledge, the virtue and the morality, there can be no real economy. Since the economy in the modern era has been deprived of these historical achievements, the technology has gradually evolved into an algorithm that analyzes mechanical relations. The humans are the creatures that have feelings and need the belief. The man is not just matter. The money reduced to the barter symbol includes virtual and commercial variables. Without the people and the real life, the virtuality and the commerce have no meaning. Therefore, the death of the man and the invalidity of money are synonymous (Sandel, 2012: 10, 28-31, 157-159).

CONCLUSION

This study has tried to analyze the concepts of metaverse and posthuman, which include the nature of a radical stage of individuation. The individuation implies the identification of the man without the community and the regional history. It is now possible to talk about a person who is not the son of the one, the father of the other, or the daughter of the another, and who seeks a personal framework based on himself. The new variant of the individuation in the virtual environment may even involve confining the person completely to himself (or herself). The future of the humanity has been tried to be understood by an analysis made between the concept of the economy before the digital society period and the money belonging to decentralized finance. The replacement of the reality by the virtual environment and the replacement of the entire economy by the money as only a medium of exchange are equivalent to each other (Baudrillard, 1993: 20-22). In both cases, which support each other and rely on web 3.0 and the blockchain technology, the fictitious or the token replaces the essential or the main. According to this study, this fact is against the nature and the culture. Simply put, the money is only a symbol of the labor, and the money as a medium of the exchange cannot overquell the labor.

The religion is one of the most important contexts of the human history, which supports the nature and the culture. For this reason, the changes that the metaverse may bring about in the religion can shed light on the



future of the humanity. Transferring the religious rituals to the metaverse environment, which is an investment issue, will mean the commercialization of the religion. This does not mean that the religion is against the metaverse technology. For example, in the context of the theoretical and the practical teaching of the religion, the metaverse can have a legitimate relationship with Islam. Indeed, the social media platforms have a similar function. The metaverse can offer more effective opportunities for the education. If it remains instrumental in comparison to the primary statuses of the nature, the man, the culture, and religion, the metaverse can be useful. The basic principle here is that what has been accumulated throughout the history should not be sacrificed for a temporary commercial investment. The common demand in the critiques of the modernity and the enlightenment since George Berkeley, Edmund Burke, G. W. F. Hegel, and Søren Kierkegaard was to preserve the human dignity and his (her) central status compared to the commerce. The maintaining the autonomy and the central status of the religion in the relations between the metaverse and the religion is a continuation of the same justified demand. A man-made thing should not rule him (her). Perhaps in some instances of the investigations of the religion, such as of Christianity, some researchers might justify that the metaverse could replace the chapels (churches), for example. However, such a relationship is unacceptable for the using of the metaverse in Islam. Indeed, until recently, the “second life” literature which contained a developed variant of the social media platforms was separate from and rivaled by the metaverse. Now, because the metaverse is more visible, it cannot be treated as if it were the criterion of the reality. More clearly, the man and the reality are two phenomena which is more actual than metaverse. The man and the reality can rule the metaverse, but the metaverse cannot decide the both. Therefore, the metaverse should be structured in a format that helps to the real life, not be structured in a format that influences it.

The most significant risk of misuse of the metaverse is that for the posthuman, the relationship between the real and the virtual is set far from the common sense. Such an order can lead to a social and even a global schizophrenia that is difficult to reverse.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This study explains and evaluates the risk of devices and tools which were developed to facilitate human life and start to replace their original devices. There is a means-end relationship between economy and money, and life and the metaverse. The economy uses the money as a tool when regulating the governance relationship between resources and needs. Here, the money serves four types of functions: storage, measurement, use value and exchange value. In the transition to the posthuman and metaverse period, only the exchange value feature and function of the money can be used and the other three features and functions can be excluded. The symbolic exchange feature and function of the money becoming a unique and widespread presence can sabotage the measurability and traceability of produced labor. Such a development could displace all accepted assumptions about human life and social solidarity until the 21st century. This study examines the nature, the humans, the culture, the religion and the economy as advanced the cultural structures, one by one, together with their new representations, and discusses the risks that the money can bring to life through metaverse technology. Exchange relationships that position themselves through money can be dragged into great chaos if the positions between ends and means are reversed.

The fact that individualization is constantly explained and developed through those who participate from the sidelines, without ever talking about the culture at the center, leads to a radical displacement between goals and means. This displacement may also prevent various social groups, who are already confused by finding each other at the center, from communicating among themselves. This may lead individualization, which seeks an integration between the nature and the culture, to experience absolute dualism. A development such as absolute dualism that may occur between the nature and the culture may destroy the cultural developments that make it possible for the people and the societies to establish the civilizations. This risk, which may be caused by radical individualization through the reduction of money to a single meaning and function, is a very serious risk today.

There is a nature independent of humans and societies. There is a certain cost and limit to making this existence of nature relative to people's experiences and acceptances. When the balance between cost and limit is not set correctly, the societies can destroy the whole of the human life by violating a certain limit. The culture must in any case be subject to nature. The source of the nature is the culture within certain limits and measures, but the source of culture is the nature at the absolute level. This relationship should not be ignored when defining the nature and the culture. Today, the postponement and the marginalization caused by modernity in some negative experiences do not allow some cultures to restrain their materialistic ambitions. A similar version of this situation, which is especially visible in Asian contemporary capitalism, is also

experienced in North America. The minimum cost and maximum profit targets that excessive ambitions desire are close to destroy the balance between the nature and the culture. When the needs for technology prevail over the needs for the nature and the symbolic existence of money exceeds its use value, it can blind people and societies. In this context, the people and the societies need to be very careful.

Martin Heidegger and Jean Paul Sartre warned the humans and the societies about the technology in the 20th century, and Michel Foucault and some other intellectuals warned the humans and the societies about the culture. Commandators of these philosophers have developed an inverse correlation between automated societies and free societies, almost creating a social antinomy between thriving and remaining free. Recently, a similar inverse correlation and the social antinomy interpretation between being religious and being knowledgeable has been presented to the market through the concept of secularization. The inverse correlation established between automatization and freedom is accurate regarding the risk of destroying the balance between the culture and the nature. However, it cannot be ignored that this correlation gives a pessimistic idea and that the people and the societies can actually act cautiously. This article tries to say how the pessimism regarding both culture and religion can be managed correctly. The way to resolve this inverse correlation can begin by preventing the economy from being reduced to a single-functional and single-meaningful definition and experience of the money. In addition, it should not be ignored that the metaverse is only an auxiliary to real life. Otherwise, the humanity may declare its own death.

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Ethics Statement

This study does not require the approval of ethics committee.