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## **THE PROBLEM OF IDENTITY IN THE CONDITIONS OF INFORMATIONAL SPACE**

*Based on the analysis of the processes of informatization of the society and the formation of a virtual communicative space, the authors reveal the mechanisms of their effects on human socialization. In particular, such characteristics of the network communication as anonymity, fragmentation, mosaic, frequency significantly alter the space of identity, on the one hand, expanding its capabilities, on the other one, simplifying and unifying its forms.*

***Key words:** information technologies, communication sphere, network society, identity, multivariate.*

Among the social and technical features of the informative society, the creation of an online community and the usage of the network technologies were important that provides a new society with new features, which are amplified by the processes of globalization. The complexity of a new social sphere requires the comprehension of disputed processes of the social informatization and their impact on the forms of person's self-determination. The combination of global and local, the increasing of density of information and the increasing of a number of alternatives, the virtualization of social relationships and other factors determine the direction of the study of identity formation in the conditions of a new technological reality.

The transformation of the nature and forms of communication in the area of a network society happens, new forms of human activity, his/her socialization and identity assert. The problem of the impact of informa-

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.35288>

tion technologies on a person is actively discussed by many researchers, who note that the change in the structure of the society, the development of social mobility and the overall dynamism of the world facilitate the transformation of identity.

The works by V.Inozemtsev, M.Kastels, McLuhan, E.Masuda, A. Toffler, and D.Ivanov, O. Minakov, A.Nazarchuk, G.Pocheptsov, L. Reiman and others are dedicated to the analysis of a network society, in particular, the specific of the internet-communication. The concept of identity and its transformation in the conditions of network technologies is characterized in the works by modern philosophers Z. Bauman, J. Baudrillard, P.Virilio, U. Eco, and Y. Babaeva, M.Gromyko, V.Tarasenko, and others. They note that in the conditions of the formation of a network society a human personality undergoes many influences and significant transformation that is why his /her development becomes increasingly important and needs social and philosophical reflection.

The aim of the paper is to analyze the impact of the Internet-communication on a person and forms of its identity in the conditions of network systems. Its implementation involves the following tasks: to investigate the specificity of a mass media and communicative space, consider the mechanisms of its effects on a personality and socialization processes.

A new society is more often characterized as a society-network built on the principles of the hypertext and intertextuality. The formation of a network society changes the very livelihoods of people, the areas of their social life; this applies to national politics, and the everyday life of a person. The processes of globalization, social mobility, the emergence of the transnational fragmented and open culture set the stage for the individual's transformation. A network – «... it's not just a way to transport information and the opportunity to its process ... It provides many options for a person not only to obtain data required for professional work or in everyday life, but also to realize himself/herself among the same users, that is not always can be realized in the social reality» [4, p.62].

A modern person is forced to form his/her own reality himself/herself, constructing its facets of a virtual reality and always changing the contours of his/her own individuality. As noted by A. Toffler, we can assume that the specific transformation of identity through the Internet is that a modern person has more freedom compared with a representative of the traditional society. «... We do not get a ready mental model of the reality, we have to constantly form and reform it. This ... leads to greater individualization, to demasswidening both a personality and a culture» [5, p.229]. Vast amounts of information causes a person to develop his/her own approaches to structuring and learning. The similar processes change not only the techniques

of information processing, but also transform the very identity. Those, who find themselves capable of analyzing and structuring of a constant change and processing of the ever-increasing volumes of information, not only have the opportunity to form their identity more fully, but also to realize themselves as individuals in the community network. The mass media and communicative space affects the main principles of the individual's basic characteristics (freedom, activity and creativity).

One of the basic characteristics of a new society is multivariance of the individual existence as the domination of the separate and individual principle over public and social, the diversity over the uniformity is the foundation of a society based on a new type of reality – a virtual space. The idea of mosaic is embedded in the very foundations of a network society, and only it determines the development of both a society and a man.

A characteristic feature of the Internet-space is its internal heterogeneity and plurality, decentering and depersonalization of the author; it refers to the dissolution of the author in the system of a network communication. New communicative practices are formed with their own specifics, including the possibility of online voting, polls etc. A new communicative space increases the dynamics of a new identity, multivariate vectors of behavior and life goals are formed, that is determined by variability of the social and virtual reality. As noted by V. Tarasenko, a modern person is “a clicking person”; it means he/she lives in the world of kiberreality – unlike the reading person from the world of libraries. This is a personality, who is in the constant formation, and the peculiarity of information assimilation becomes the transition to a non-linear arrangement and the perception of information.

The information flows are of an impersonal nature, that is why the internet-communication occurs either as an impersonal exchange of the blocks of information texts or as a technical cooperation within a specific algorithm. «These texts deal with neither ontological things, nor with genuineness, because they are basically directed to another – to deontologization of the world of knowledge and of knowledge about the world» [2, p.177]. It should be emphasized that the anonymity and the emotional impoverishment of virtual communication become some of the defining factors of identity transformation. The anonymity means that a person, engaging in communication, can hide his/her name, gender, age, and other social characteristics, or «take» any set of social characteristics and status at his/her discretion.

A human freedom, to Z.Bauman's mind, is one of the important characteristics of a modern individual, but it creates a constant feeling of «freedom of horror, even terror of total freedom caused by not the exceeding of individual's capabilities, but the destruction of prohibitions and erratic actions in the useless searches of a reliable and continuous way» [1, p.77].

The formation of a new cultural space is accompanied by its fragmentation, openness, «so-called strips» that affects the human personality who gets the features of mosaic, discontinuity, nonlinearity and incompleteness.

The growth of density of information flows and the use of different methods of manipulation of consciousness also affects the transformation of identity included in the communicative space of a network society. S.G. Kara-Murza analyzes this problem [3]. Although he relies on television as a mass media, but it is appropriate to make some generalizations regarding the Internet-communication. Let us consider some of the techniques of the system, «soft» and deep effect of the mechanisms of transformation measurements of a personal self-determination.

Among the mechanisms of such effects on a personality is a method of repetition as the principle of hypertext foundation of the Internet-online. The structure is designed in such a way that the bulk of the data is repeated many times, thus increasing its memorizing and meaning. This leads to the substitution for recapitulation of evident and reliable, for the informative images of real events and facts.

Influenced by the method of the information repetition, the mosaic structure of a new identity is formed, for which the accentuated repeated information becomes important. Thus, the assimilation of information happens mosaic because there is not any single sequence of its obtaining and storing, special emphasis comes about the certain aspects that sets the situational determination of the individual, and possibly the scattering and general uncertainty justified by the infinity of the information flow.

The process of data and mass media sphere splitting also effects on the transformation of a personality, making it possible to substitute the notional content of information. Typically, the titles are formulated to attract the audience's attention, but often suggest the thought opposite the real news, as a result – the substitution of the content of information. Another mechanism of influence on a personality, closely related to fragmentation, is a method of extraction from the context. The information, extracted from its context, is often significantly distorted and, perhaps, totally contradicts the original data. The hypertext, based on hyperlinks, provides tremendous opportunities for extracting the information from the context. It cannot affect the meaning dimensions of a personality, for which the basic characteristic is to analyze and assimilate the information received from the outside world. Since such information is characterized by fragmentariness and superficiality, then a person loses the depth and certainty, he/she becomes only a user, whose mission is an on-line processing of the information flow.

The means of consciousness manipulating and influence on a personality is a cover by the authority or the individual, or the «public» authority or

the imaginary “sociological research”, when the principle of «all think so» works. This mechanism may be an effective way to influence the personality as there is illusion that someone’s expressed assumption is supported by the entire group of users of the resource, in addition to that the criticisms may be ignored (they are removed by the site moderator or they are peripheral to the user, and therefore insignificant).

In summary, we note that the coexistence of different approaches and opinions, even contradictory statements on the same issue is inherent for a mass media and communicative space. Such contradictory of the cultural space complicates the information orientation of a person, and at the same time it leads to the changes in forms of social adaptation and socialization mechanisms not only in the network system, but also in the social reality.

Such characteristics of the Internet-communication as anonymity, non-verbality, emotional impoverishment, etc., determine the convention of virtual communication. The point is that the person sets himself/herself not only the parameters of his/her identity but creates similar circumstances in the implementation and flow of social interaction. In this case, the anonymity has contradictory interpretations, on the one hand, it is considered as a guarantee of personal integrity, its security and independence, but, on the other one, the anonymity, which threatens to erode the boundaries of identity. According to this, the increasing of social selfishness and indifference, which is manifested in the form of indifference to the social reality and to the people around, is noticed in the network society.

A paradoxical situation is formed. On the one hand, the increasing information flows excite a person more and more and force him/her to structure them himself/herself, as ready models of adoption and standardization of the information flow are absent. That is why a modern person is forced to form his/her own reality, always changing the contours of his/her own individuality. On the other hand, such self-creation at the discretion threatens social atomicity, where independence is bordered on loneliness. The formation of an individual, a nomadic subject-nomad symbolizes the existence of a human-traveler that slides along the surface of the mass media sphere, the infinity and the turnover of which does not need and does not include immersion, contemplation and personal alienation.

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### ПРОБЛЕМА ІДЕНТИЧНОСТІ В УМОВАХ ІНФОРМАЦІЙНОГО ПРОСТОРУ

У статті розглядаються процеси інформатизації суспільства та формування віртуального комунікативного простору. Аналізується суперечливий вплив інтернет – комунікації на людину та форми її ідентичності в умовах мережевих систем.

Досліджуються механізми впливу інформаційних технологій на соціалізацію людини та її характеристики. Акцентується нелінійність цих процесів і парадоксальність нових форм самовизначення в сучасному комунікативному просторі. Зокрема, такі характеристики сільової комунікації, як анонімність, фрагментарність, мозаїчність, повторюваність суттєво змінюють простір ідентичності, з одного боку, розширюючи її можливості, з іншого, – спрощуючи й уніфікуючи її форми.

*Ключові слова:* інформаційні технології, комунікативний простір, сільове суспільство, ідентичність, поліваріативність.

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### ПРОБЛЕМА ІДЕНТИЧНОСТІ В УСЛОВИЯХ ИНФОРМАЦИОННОГО ПРОСТРАНСТВА

В статье рассматриваются процессы информатизации общества и формирования виртуального коммуникативного пространства. Анализируется противоречивое влияние интернет – коммуникации на человека и на формы его идентичности в условиях сетевых систем.

Исследуются механизмы влияния информационных технологий на социализацию человека и его характеристики. Акцентируется нелинейность этих процессов и парадоксальность новых форм самоидентичности в современном коммуникативном пространстве. В частности, такие характеристики сетевой коммуникации, как анонимность, фрагментарность, мозаичность, повторяемость существенно изменяют пространство идентичности, с одной стороны, расширяя ее возможности, с другой, – упрощая и унифицируя ее формы.

*Ключевые слова:* информационные технологии, коммуникативное пространство, сетевое общество, идентичность, поливариативность.

Надійшла до редакції 27.02.15 р.