DIVERSIFIED IDENTITY IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

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The problems of the influence of information technology advances on the socio-cultural identification of modern man are considered. The degree of influence of technology on the individual has led to a diversification of identity, combining both traditional forms and new opportunities for positioning oneself in virtual space. In the world of the new technological reality, the human perception of social space has changed. People identify themselves to a lesser extent with ethnic, religious and civic communities, and the boundaries of identity become blurred and lose their clearly indicated scopes. It is noted that identity acquires characteristics such as diversity, fragmentation, variability, contextuality, uncertainty and simulation. Along with the changes in reality, identity is also transforming, and the criteria of identification are expanding, some of which are being lost, while others are being preserved. The article presents the forecasts of Western and domestic sociologists of the XX century about the increasing influence of digital technologies on all spheres of life in the future.

Key words: person, identity, identification, diversification, information society, technology.

[*М.З. Магомедова* **Диверсифицированность идентичности в условиях информационного общества**]

Рассматриваются проблемы влияния достижений информационных технологий на социокультурную идентификацию современного человека. Степень влияния технологий на человека привела к диверсификации идентичности, совмещающей в себе и традиционные формы, и новые возможности позиционирования себя в виртуальном пространстве. В мире новой технологической реальности мироощущение человека в социальном пространстве изменилось. Человек уже в меньшей степени идентифицирует себя с этническими, религиозными, гражданскими общностями, границы идентичности размываются, лишаются четко очерченных контуров. Отмечается, что идентичность приобретает такие характеристики, как разнообразие, фрагментарность, изменчивость, контектуальность, неопределенность и симуляция. Вместе с изменениями реальности трансформируется и идентичность, расширяются критерии идентификации, часть из которых утрачивается, часть сохраняется. Представлены прогнозы западных и отечественных социологов XX века об усилении влияния цифровых технологий на все сферы жизни в будущем.

Ключевые слова: человек, идентичность, идентификация, диверсификация, информационное общество, технологии.

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The problem of identity has become one of the most demanded in anthropological researches of scientists in the modern world. It is no longer enough for a person to answer the question "Who am I"; he or she needs to understand that this "I" is in the process of formation not only during personal formation, but also throughout life is influenced by a variety of socio-cultural and individual factors. In today's ever-changing world, a person

needs a sense of stability, certain identity markers: sex, nationality, religion, citizenship, etc. With the advent of the information society there is a certain transformation of established forms of identity and the emergence of new ones. In the modern world, people are influenced not only by familiar forms of identification, but also by technological innovations that transform stable forms of identity. A person is no longer limited to the usual types of identification in real space, he is still acquiring his "avatar" in virtual space. Information technology has radically changed the daily lifestyle of a representative of modern civilization, people have become totally dependent on the achievements of scientific and technological progress. A person in the information world can no longer imagine the world without "technological toys", gadgets, smart appliances, etc. The dependence on them is getting stronger and stronger every day. We find ourselves in a reality in which "no one knows where science is taking us... We are on a train that is picking up speed, rushing along a track with an unknown number of arrows leading to unknown destinations [9].

It cannot be argued that the impact of technology on human life is a prerogative of modern times, it has always been present in people's lives. It is just that in traditional, industrial and information societies, technologies themselves and the extent of their influence on human beings have changed. The range of abilities of muscle power, horse harness and modern technology is commensurately different. "Man has now created technical extensions for everything he used to do with his body. The evolution of weaponry starts with teeth and fists and ends with atomic weapons. Clothing and buildings are a definite extension of biological temperature control mechanisms. To avoid squatting or sitting on the ground, furniture appears. Electrical appliances, televisions, telephones, and books with which the human voice transcends space and time are all examples of material extensions. Money is nothing but a way of expanding and preserving labor. And modern vehicles work where feet and backs once toiled. In fact, all material things produced by man can be seen as extensions of what man once did with his body or some part of it" [11, p. 299].

The role of technology in identity transformation was considered in the most detail by Marshall McLuhan, who viewed all means of mass communication, from the phonetic alphabet to the computer, as amplifiers of human capacity. The same Canadian researcher coined the term "global village": "thanks to the telegraph and radio, the world has spatially shrunk to the size of one large village" [5, p. 27].

Technology has changed modern man, and to understand the role of technology in shaping and transforming identities, we need to understand our emotional dependence on technical innovations. The development of high technology has led to a paradoxical situation: Instead of liberating a person, freeing up space for development, they, on the contrary, enslave, limit and stupefy. Everyone has probably experienced a sense of helplessness and confusion when they discover that they have forgotten their phone. Small useful inventions turn from assistants into "masters", without which a person begins to feel his vulnerability and insecurity. Things that were created to meet human needs are beginning to generate new needs. A person becomes addicted to brands; owning new models becomes a manic temptation for consumers. Modern gadgets have become more than just "wearable", they have essentially fused with humans, crossed the border of the world of objects and entered the territory of the subject. A person turns from a self-sufficient person, a subject influencing an object, into "a person with limited abilities". As long as man is capable of treating modern gadgets and other technological gadgets as mediating objects of action, his identity will not be undermined. Electronic gadgets, as "smart" as they may be, are just helpers that make our lives easier, and they should stay that way. They should not have an irreversible effect on our physical body or psychological state. Man is able to exist autonomously without any technologically advanced assistants.

Technical means have always been inseparable elements of culture, determining conditions of social development. At the same time, for thousands of years, they only made it easier for man to do certain things, without significantly transforming his natural abilities. Modern technologies in the course of their use not only expand and complement its capabilities, but also transform higher mental functions. Modern communication technologies mediate mental processes. In the recent "analogue" past, when a phone could hold a couple of dozen numbers while a person kept at best 2-3 phone numbers in their head, the memory function is completely shifted to the gadget. A few years ago, students would rewrite the schedule and write down lectures, but now they take pictures of everything. Students lose the ability to write calligraphic handwriting and motor skills in their fingers, but gain the ability to type quickly on a relatively small touch screen keyboard. The skill of counting in the mind, literate writing without the help of auto-checking spelling and comprehension of long texts are lost. Modern technology is a determining factor in the transformation of higher mental functions in the information society. And the loss of some abilities is accompanied by the acquisition of others. Over the course of one generation, a number of technologies have changed that are fundamentally superior to the previous form.

To comprehend the processes of identity diversification in the new socio-cultural reality is possible only in the context of the events of the last decades of the XX century. From the mid-1960s to the present, Western sociologists and social philosophers, such as D. Bell, D. Risman, O. Toffler, A. Touraine, Y. Masuda, M. Castells et al. The issue of the most developed countries entering a qualitatively new stage of social development, characterized by them as post-industrial, or information society, whose main distinction is the determining role of information technology in all spheres of people's lives, is being actively discussed. Human society's worldview cannot remain the same in the world of the new technological reality, where the former integrity of culture is disintegrating into a multitude of counter- and subcultures. In this pluralistic reality, a person ceases to identify with a particular community, such as nationality, religion, party, stratum, or state; the boundaries of identity become blurred; there are no clearly delineated contours of identification. Identity acquires characteristics such as diversity, fragmentation, decentration, variability, contextuality, uncertainty, and simulation. In the eclecticism of contemporary reality, the main thing becomes "not to be", "not to have", but to seem and to simulate.

Back in the early 1970s, the American sociologist D. Bell suggested that a key role in the new society would be assigned to information and the electronic means of its distribution, and the computer would become a symbol and also a material carrier of the technological revolution, it would fundamentally transform society in the second half of the XX century [1, p. 470]. Before our eyes, the prognosis of D. Bell has come true, we are living in this reality whose name post-industrial theorists have not yet definitively decided on. As the name of the new stage of society development researchers offer different concepts "super-industrial civilization" or "society of the third wave" (E. Toffler), "scientific society" (M. Poniatowski), "technotronic society" (Z. Brzezinski), "civilization of services" (G. Furastier), "information-computer" (J. Masuda), "informational" (M. Castells). "Modern culture is clearly more informative than any that preceded it. We exist in a media-saturated environment, which means: life is significantly symbolized, it takes place in the processes of exchanging and receiving - or trying to exchange and not receiving - messages about ourselves and others. Recognition of the explosive growth of meanings leads many authors to say that we have entered the information society" [10, p. 518].

The standardization of life in the information age has led to the leveling of differences between people through the influence of mass technology. We live in a reality described already in 1920 by Y. Zamyatin in his novel "We": millions of people wake up at the same time, leave their apartments, and travel in crowded transport to their place of work.

Having worked their allotted hours, they return home at the same time, where they watch the same shows offered by the mindless pastime industry. The next day is not much different from the previous day. Modern technology completely controls our life and determines its rhythm. One does not have time not only to be alone with oneself, but the opportunity to be oneself at all. The modern state machine is not interested in thinking independent people, it is more aimed at suppression of personality and levelling of identity. According to E. Tofler, the arrival of the "third wave" society qualitatively changes the understanding of identity: "the identities that are chosen become more short-lived, and people accept or reject any component of their identities faster than ever before" [7, p. 278]. According to Toffler, a clip culture is forming in which instead of long "threads" of ideas connected to each other, we are dealing with new images and representations - "clips" of information: "Instead of receiving lengthy, correlated 'strips' of ideas, collected and systematized, we are increasingly being fed short, modular bursts of information - advertisements, commands, theories, scraps of news, some truncated, truncated bits that don't fit into our former mental sockets. The new imagery ... is presented in a strange, transient, incoherent form" [8].

In the new reality, the individual, as an independent subject of identification, is assigned an increasingly smaller role and placed under a total network "microscope". From the point of view of the ideologists of the new digital world, high technology should automatically solve all the accumulated problems: Digital transparency will rid us of terrorist threats and crime, robotization and automation will free up time for creativity, self-development, etc. But the problems of society and the economy of the future lie not only in the transition to new technologies, but also in the transition to a new social structure, especially since new means of production, as K. Marx wrote back in his time, do open up new opportunities for the organization of labor, production, leisure, education, i.e. the whole totality of social relations [6]. Back in 1997. by the prominent Russian sociologist A.A. Zinoviev in his novel "The Global Humant hill" projected a vivid picture of the future, in which the Western world wins, preserving and strengthening its world domination [3, p. 320]. The result is the degradation of the individual and all spheres of social life. In this book, A.A. Zinoviev is strikingly accurate in predicting the increasing role of information technology, the Internet in the life of the individual and society as a whole. The society described by the author is characterized by social, moral and even biological degradation of human personality. The image of the superman, in which all features of the spiritual and moral personality disappear, degradation and primitivism is present.

Speaking about intellectual degradation of society in his last philosophical work "The factor of cognizance" by A.A. Zinoviev notes that there have appeared "millions of people capable of solving partial practical problems, but totally deprived of the ability of the intellect of the fundamental" [4, p. 331]. From his point of view, the most important feature of "fundamental intelligence" is a person's ability to pose questions about the meaning of life, human destiny and the fate of all mankind. Modern civilization is more concerned with the creation of artificial intelligence, which will not only imitate human intelligence, but may as well replace it. At the present level of development, the correlation between technology and reality is becoming increasingly elusive. Man, who does not understand the principles of technical innovations, can no longer imagine his existence without gadgets that provide access to the information space. Man has become a hostage to his own creations. Spatial certainty is replaced by virtual reality, in which the inhabitant of the network simultaneously moves and stays in place, traveling while sitting in an armchair at a computer. Having gained unprecedented access to the unlimited world of information, social networks, the modern user does not realize that in front of the computer screen, he is not only accessing information, but also leaving confidential information about himself. "The digital revolution has provided entirely new opportunities for control: A person can now be identified by vid-

eo image, voice, DNA, fingerprints, retina, unique palm vein pattern and other parameters. Technology of geosteering, mobile communication and Wi-Fi Internet access made it possible to record his movements along the entire route. Today, a person passing under the camera's lens or talking on the phone may not realize that at this moment his identity and coordinates are automatically established. Modern technology is able to do this without making the object aware of it [2, p. 79].

As long as we use the Internet as a tool and mean that facilitates human capabilities, such as searching for information, establishing contacts, choosing entertainment, then it is even useful, but to absolutize it, to make it the only source of communication, to fall into slavish dependence on it - means to submit to a surrogate of reality, imitating its authenticity.

A person's identity is transforming along with the changes taking place in the modern world, the criteria of identification are expanding, some of which are irrevocably lost, but at the same time to preserve one's identity a certain stability is necessary, fixing us in this socio-cultural reality.

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