

The Dynamics of The Transition from Real Social Identity to Identity Formed in The Digital Space

Botirov Zafar Saydullayevich

Independent researcher of Samarkand state pedagogical institute, Uzbekistan

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Abstract: This article analyzes the dynamics of the transition from real social identity to identity formed in the digital space from socio-philosophical and pedagogical perspectives. It highlights the transformations occurring in the mechanisms of self-presentation, self-identification, and the performance of social roles as a result of the widespread dissemination of digital technologies and social networks.

Keywords: Social identity, digital identity, identity transformation, virtual space, personality construction, social networks, media influence, algorithmic environment, youth consciousness, critical thinking.

Introduction: In the 21st century, the rapid development of digital technologies is bringing fundamental changes to all spheres of human life, in particular to the processes of self-awareness and self-presentation. From a socio-philosophical point of view, identity is the process by which an individual realizes his or her "Self," determines his or her place in society, and feels belonging to a certain system of values. In traditional societies, identity was formed mainly under the influence of stable social institutions such as family, neighborhood community, nation, religion, and cultural environment. This process was characterized by historicity, continuity, and the inseparable connection of social experience. In classical sociological and philosophical views, identity is interpreted as a stable construction formed within the system of social relations. For example, George Herbert Mead emphasized that the individual "Self" emerges in the process of social communication, while Erving Goffman, comparing social life to a "stage," substantiated that the individual presents his or her role in accordance with the expectations of society. Thus, real social identity has always been formed in interaction with the social environment and regulated by social norms. However, with the emergence of the digital space, the mechanisms of identity formation changed significantly. The virtual environment is giving the individual the opportunity to reconstruct oneself, present oneself selectively, and even create several

identities in parallel. On digital platforms, a person can form new images and roles regardless of his or her real social status. This process intensifies the flexibility and fragmentation of identity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of the transition from real social identity to digital identity has been widely covered in modern socio-philosophical and sociological studies. The theoretical foundations of the concept of identity, first of all, go back to classical social theories. In particular, George Herbert Mead, in his theory of symbolic interactionism, substantiated that the individual "Self" is formed in the process of social communication¹. According to him, the individual understands oneself through the attitude of others, that is, identity is the product of social interaction. Also, in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Erving Goffman compared social life to a theater stage and showed that the individual presents oneself differently in different situations². This approach serves as a methodological basis for explaining the process of creating a profile and image in the digital space. The "profile" on social networks is in fact interpreted as a modern manifestation of the performative identity emphasized by Goffman.

In the modern interpretation of identity, the processes of globalization, informatization, and late modernity appear as decisive factors. In his work *Modernity and*

Self-Identity, Anthony Giddens emphasizes that in modern society identity is not rigidly determined by traditional norms; on the contrary, it is a “reflexive project” consciously shaped by the individual. He writes: “In the post-traditional order of modernity, self-identity becomes a reflexively organized endeavor” [3]. That is, in modern society the individual independently manages the process of choosing his or her life path, determining values, and reinterpreting the self. According to Giddens, in traditional societies identity was more often determined by social institutions such as family, religion, neighborhood community, and profession. However, under the conditions of modernity, this stability weakens, and the individual turns into a “subject constructing” his or her own biography. This process intensifies even more with the expansion of global information flows and communicative systems. The digital space takes this reflexivity to a new stage. Social networks and online platforms provide the individual with the opportunity to constantly edit, update, and visually present his or her identity. Changing profile information, posting photographs, and presenting personal opinions and positions to the public — all this strengthens the dynamic, constructive, and performative nature of identity. As a result, identity now appears not as a stable social role, but as an open project that is constantly reworked. The model of reflexive identity that began under the conditions of globalization and modernity takes on an even more complex and multilayered character under the influence of the digital environment. This requires a deeper understanding of the socio-philosophical essence of the process of transition from real social identity to digital identity.

One of the researchers who studied the issue of digital identity in depth is Sherry Turkle. In her work *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet*, it is emphasized that the Internet and the virtual space allow the individual to test the self in different forms and present it in a multifaceted way. Turkle describes the Internet as a personal “space of experimentation,” where users have the opportunity to reconstruct their identity through experiment [4]. In her view, the online environment softens traditional social constraints, which allows the user to create different images on different platforms and to maintain several identities at the same time. As a result, identity acquires a multilayered and fragmentary character. Turkle also emphasizes that “Online environments allow users to explore multiple and parallel identities” [4], that is, users can experiment with their “selves” in several directions in the virtual space. In her later work *Alone Together*, Turkle analyzes how digital technologies

affect a person’s real social relations and the process of self-awareness. She shows that the convenience of online communication sometimes leads to the reduction of face-to-face relationships and changes the user’s mode of self-presentation. As a result, users often shape their virtual image differently from their identity in real life, which indicates the transformation of the traditional model of integral identity. In Turkle’s concept, digital identity appears not as a stable and single “Self,” but as a construction characterized by constant renewal, experimental changes, and multidimensionality. This approach shows that the process of transition from real social identity to identity formed in the digital space is even more complex and dynamic.

The issue of the algorithmic influence of digital platforms was broadly analyzed by Eli Pariser in his work *The Filter Bubble* [5]. The author shows that social network algorithms shape identity within a certain information framework by reinforcing the user’s existing views. This process significantly affects a person’s worldview and social position. Empirical studies also confirm the growing strength of digital identity. According to data from the Pew Research Center, more than 95% of young people use the Internet regularly, and a large part of them pay special attention to shaping their personal image on social networks⁶. This situation shows that an important part of identity is now being constructed in the virtual space.

METHODOLOGY

George Mead’s symbolic interactionist approach shows the interaction between the individual and society, as well as the formation of the self through social experience. Erving Goffman’s concept of performativity explains the conscious presentation of an individual’s social roles. Anthony Giddens interprets identity in modern society as a reflexive project and emphasizes that the individual consciously “constructs” his or her own life path. Sherry Turkle studies the manifestation of identity in the digital space in a multifaceted and fragmentary form, as well as the user’s possibility of creating several identities at the same time. These theoretical approaches constitute the scientific basis of the research, taking into account the consciousness of young people, the system of values, and social experience in Uzbekistan.

By the 21st century, the following concepts have been increasingly expanding and becoming widespread in the general public consciousness, and this is regarded as a sign of the process of transition from real social identity to identity formed in the digital space.

1. Social identity is the form of a person’s self-

awareness in society, which is shaped through his or her social roles, connection with groups, and the values of society. This concept includes the process of comparing oneself with other people and defining one's self in a social context.

2. Digital identity is the form of self created and presented by a person in the virtual space, particularly on social networks and online platforms. It may be a multifaceted and fragmentary version of real identity and is expressed through the user's online activity, profile, posts, and interactive communication.

3. Identity transformation is the change in the process of forming a person's selfhood, which occurs under the influence of real and virtual space, social context, technology, and culture. This process is manifested through the person's changing social roles, values, and online communication.

4. Virtual space is a space created by means of digital technologies in which people communicate with one another, exchange information, create and preserve experiences. Virtual space plays an important role in the formation of personal and social identity, as well as in the reception of content through media influence and algorithmic recommendations.

5. Personality construction is the process of consciously shaping a person's sense of self. This process is carried out through social experience, cultural values, education, media influence, and interactivity in the digital space.

6. Social networks are tools that ensure users' interaction through online platforms, as well as the creation and dissemination of content. Social networks have a significant impact on personality construction, digital identity, and critical thinking skills.

7. Media influence is the process of influencing the views, behavior, and values of individuals and groups through media means, including television, the Internet, social networks, and other sources of information. Media influence may intensify through disinformation, manipulation, and the speed of information flow.

8. Algorithmic environment is a set of systems on online platforms that automatically suggest content corresponding to the user's behavior and interests. This environment may create an "information bubble," filter content, and play a significant role in shaping personality construction.

In the context of Uzbekistan, the role of national, cultural, and social values in the formation of identity is very important, because they ensure the stabilization of a person's real identity and the process of harmonization with society. For example, the values of

family, friendship, and community determine the basic norms in the social experience of young people, which directly affects their behavior, decision-making process, and ways of self-presentation. At the same time, the digital space creates an opportunity for young people to express identity freely and to experiment, but this process may often come into conflict with traditional values or force them to be reinterpreted in a new context. For example, in presenting themselves on online platforms, young people sometimes strive to align with global trends, modern rules of social communication, and technological opportunities, which creates contradictory situations with national cultural values. For this reason, the research is aimed, from a socio-philosophical point of view, at identifying the mechanisms for the conscious management of a person's digital identity, the preservation of national and cultural values, and their effective expression in the virtual space under conditions of information flow and social interactivity. This approach makes it possible not only to analyze young people's construction of selfhood in the digital space, but also to identify the strategies by which they create their identity while observing social, moral, and cultural norms, and also to show the dynamic connection between real and virtual identity, the degree of harmony and conflict with values. The research serves to gain a deeper understanding of the socio-philosophical and cultural context of the formation of youth consciousness in the digital space in Uzbekistan.

The values of family, friendship, and community stabilize a person's real identity and ensure the process of harmonization with society. At the same time, the digital space creates an opportunity for young people to express identity freely and to experiment, but this process often comes into conflict with traditional values or forces them to reinterpret them in a new context. The connection between real and digital identity, the degree of harmony with values, and the level of potential conflicts are analyzed, which makes it possible to gain a deeper understanding of the formation of youth consciousness in the digital space and its socio-philosophical context.

REFERENCES

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3. C. Gordon Bell and Jim Gemmell, "A Digital Life,"

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4. Bell and Gemmell published a book-length discussion of this project, *Total Recall: How the E-Memory Revolution Will Change Everything* (New York: Dutton, 2009).
5. Thompson notes of his 2007 visit, “MyLifeBits records his telephone calls and archives every picture—up to 1,000 a day—snapped by his automatic ‘SenseCam,’ that