

The Socio-Philosophical Essence Of The Concept Of The Information Society

Berdibaev Aydos Tolíbaevich

Base doctoral student at Tashkent State University of Economics, Uzbekistan

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Abstract: The article analyzes the socio-philosophical essence of the concept of the information society. Through this concept, the study explores the impact of information, knowledge, and communication resources on individuals and social structures, as well as the processes of social transformation. Special attention is given to interpreting the information society in the context of social development, cultural change, and the intellectual potential of the individual.

Keywords: Information society, transformation, social structures, knowledge resources, cultural change, individual potential, communication technologies.

Introduction: The concept of the information society became a central theoretical framework for analyzing social, economic, and cultural changes in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. This concept primarily represents a new social structure shaped by the influence of information and communication technologies (ICTs) on all spheres of society.

The theoretical foundations of the information society emerged in the 1960s–1970s. The work of American sociologist Daniel Bell, “The Coming of Post-Industrial Society” (1973), played a crucial role in social theory during that period. In this work, Bell analyzed the information society as a new social structure distinct from industrial society. According to D. Bell, the key characteristic of the information society is the transformation of knowledge and information into economic and social value.

Furthermore, Bell emphasized that in the information society, the core sector of the economy shifts from production to the service sector. This transformation, he argued, is associated with the rise of technical and professional specialists as the main labor force of society. As he noted, “in recent decades, the growth of this category of workers has surpassed that of all other major occupational groups.”

METHODOLOGY

When analyzing the literature on the socio-philosophical essence of the information society,

scholars from various countries have highlighted the unique aspects of this phenomenon. The American sociologist Daniel Bell (1919–2011) viewed the information society as a stage in the development of the post-industrial era, while the Japanese sociologist Yoneji Masuda (1924–1995) interpreted it as a new phase of post-industrial society. The Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells, through his concept of the network society, analyzed the information society as a social structure formed on the basis of global communication and information networks.

Similarly, the American futurist Alvin Toffler (1928–2016) explained the information society through his concept of the “third wave,” whereas the American management theorist Peter Drucker (1909–2005) analyzed it in the context of a knowledge-based economy and innovative management.

A comparative examination of these scholars’ ideas reveals a shared understanding that information and knowledge resources serve as the main drivers of social transformation, while their differences lie in the specific elements emphasized and the methodological approaches applied. Based on this, the research methodology focuses on identifying the relationship between the information society and personal culture, the processes of transformation, and the tools of socio-philosophical analysis.

RESULTS

It should be emphasized that Daniel Bell divides the concept of the information society into three key components and analyzes them as interrelated processes.

The first component is the shift from production to services, where the development of the service sector becomes the dominant force in the economy. According to Bell, while the central sector of the industrial society was production, in the post-industrial or information society, the service sector—including finance, healthcare, education, data analysis, and other knowledge-based services—constitutes the most important element of economic development [1, p.38]. This transition fundamentally changes the structure of the labor force, as new social formations increasingly demand advanced knowledge and technical skills in service-oriented professions.

The second component is the central role of science- and technology-based industries, meaning the growing importance of scientific and technological development within the economy. In the information society, both production and services depend on scientific and technical achievements; innovation and technological progress become the primary drivers of economic efficiency. Bell particularly emphasized that “in the information society, science and technology not only modernize production processes but also create new economic sectors and professional fields” [1, p.45]. This process is carried out through research institutes, universities, and high-tech enterprises, which collectively reinforce a knowledge-based economic model within society.

The third component is the emergence of a new elite of technical specialists, signifying the increasing role of highly skilled professionals in scientific and technical fields within the social structure. According to Bell, in the information society, professionals who work with knowledge and technological resources form a new social elite that plays a crucial role in political, economic, and cultural decision-making processes. These specialists must possess not only technical expertise but also the ability to manage information flows, conduct analysis, and implement innovations. The emergence of this elite also leads to new forms of social stratification, as knowledge and technical competence become new criteria for economic and political power.

Thus, in Bell’s theory, the main structural components of the information society are closely interconnected. The development of the service sector relies on the achievements of science and technology, while science and technology foster the creation of a new class of technical specialists. Together, these processes

profoundly transform the economic, social, and cultural structures of society, leading it toward the post-industrial stage.

It should be particularly noted that the Japanese sociologist Yoneji Masuda (1905–1995) was one of the first scholars to propose the concept of the information society as a new stage of post-industrial development. In his 1980 work “The Information Society as Post-Industrial Society”, Masuda provided a detailed analysis of how information and communication technologies influence all aspects of social life, demonstrating their role in shaping a new type of social structure [2,25].

According to Masuda, the information society represents a new phase in human social evolution, in which information and knowledge emerge as the primary social and economic resources. Information and communication technologies affect various spheres of life — including the economy, culture, education, politics, and social relations — leading to the formation of new social classes and professional elites. Masuda emphasized that through information technologies, the economy develops new forms of production and services, where knowledge and information resources serve as the main productive elements.

At the same time, culture within an information society also adopts new forms based on knowledge and information, resulting in transformations in social life and cultural values. Thus, in Masuda’s view, the formation of an information society is closely linked to technological progress, which generates new structures in the economy, culture, and social organization. This, in turn, initiates a profound transformation across all areas of human activity and social life.

The socio-philosophical essence of the information society lies in recognizing the central role of information, knowledge, and communication technologies in contemporary social development. The Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells (1932–2023) described the information society as a “network society”, in which information flows and communication infrastructures function as the main mechanisms of coordination for social, political, and economic relations [3,18]. From this perspective, the social structure differs fundamentally from traditional hierarchical and centralized systems, forming instead through dynamic and multifaceted information networks. This transformation enhances the adaptability of society and deepens its global interconnectedness.

The information society also emphasizes the unique

role of the individual in both personal and social development. According to the American futurist Alvin Toffler (1928–2016), the expansion of information and knowledge leads to a “knowledge revolution”, enabling individuals to optimize their social activities through their own intellect, will, and creative potential [4,45]. This process stimulates the intellectual and spiritual growth of the individual, while working with information resources enhances one’s social responsibility and ability to make culturally informed decisions.

The economic and cultural dimensions of the information society are equally significant. The American management scholar Peter Drucker (1909–2005) emphasized that an economy based on knowledge and information becomes the central element of human activity, contributing to social stability, justice, and innovative progress [5,30]. A knowledge-based economy not only optimizes production and service sectors but also helps reduce social inequality by ensuring equal access to information resources. Moreover, it reinforces justice and transparency within society, creating conditions for sustainable and inclusive development.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the socio-philosophical essence of the information society lies in the information-based interconnection between the individual and society, the knowledge-driven economic and cultural development, and the transformation of society through the advancement of communication and social networks. It not only enhances economic efficiency but also fosters social justice, cultural harmony, and new forms of individual development.

At the same time, the development of the information society fundamentally transforms the process of formation and improvement of personal culture. An economy based on information resources and knowledge requires the continuous development of an individual’s intellectual, practical, and spiritual potential. Moreover, through social networks and communication platforms, individuals gain broader opportunities for self-awareness, decision-making, and participation in innovative activities. From this perspective, personal culture in an information society serves not only as a means of developing individual knowledge and morality, but also as a socio-cultural factor that actively contributes to the transformation processes of society.

The information society stimulates the integration of the intellectual, moral, and aesthetic components of personal culture, enhances an individual’s social responsibility, and encourages the effective utilization

of resources necessary for innovative growth. At the same time, personal culture serves to regulate social interactions, ensure the ability to navigate information flows effectively, and adapt to both global and local information systems. As a result, the information society and personal culture emerge as mutually reinforcing systems, uniting the transformation of the individual with the modernization of society.

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