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# THE PROBLEM OF IDENTITY IN THE ASPECT OF FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

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### Abstract

Based on a conceptual synthesis of approaches: Marxist, analytical philosophy, existentialism, the article presents the problem of identity from the perspective of freedom and responsibility. Social transgression as a transitional state of society creates a space of uncertainty, risk and heterogeneity. The ambivalent nature of the influence of multimedia on the socio-psychological status of an individual leads to radical changes in identification processes. Spontaneous structural genesis of self-created reality forms a new subject of sociality. A person in a variety of communicative interactions participates in the construction of this reality. The space of freedom is expanding and, accordingly, various risks and the degree of responsibility for the choice of a person increase. The article substantiates that freedom and responsibility in the existential and social dimensions are modes of identity, which reflect its essence. Responsibility is a kind of the protective mechanism for maintaining self-identity of the individual. It revealed that identification risks arise from contradictions in reality and contradictions in the inner life of a person. Depending on the risks, there are different types of responsibility that prevent identity crises. This is the responsibility for existential attitudes, the choice of a life project, in relation to the risks of loss of self-identity and in relation to intersubjective interactions. A person is responsible to himself and to society for the fundamental choice of the meaning of life and activity.

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# 1. Introduction

From the point of view of the classical philosophical tradition, proceeding from the linear paradigm of the historical and cultural process, one can foresee scenarios of the future. Modern reality does not fit into the logocentric modernist discourse. Therefore, from an epistemological point of view, it is necessary to move beyond the framework of classical descriptive models, that is, a breakthrough into another discourse. The concept of "transgression" is associated with the categories of edge, limit, becoming, and entered philosophical terminology thanks to the works of postmodernists. In the second half of the twentieth century, the phenomenon, surface, border increasingly raised by philosophers of a number of schools to the rank of being.

Digitization is changing the essence of social processes. There is a transition of social being beyond the boundaries of its traditional existence. Transgression appears not only as a destructive act of violating boundaries, but also as a constructive phenomenon of creating a new sociality. Media communications acquire an ontological status, not only modify the nature of sociality, but also become an ontological object themselves. The very concept of "practice" is transformed, which constitutes the ontological foundation of sociality. In the context of classical philosophy, practice is understood as the activity of social actors to transform reality. Practice is the mode of existence of an objective historical process. Therefore, the transformation of social practices under the influence of telecommunication technologies means a radical change in the very substance of the social (Mamedova et al., 2018). Because of the virtualization of social practices and relationships, the attributes of social existence - space and time - have transformed. There is a gap between space and time, the connection between which no longer is mediated by a specific place of implementation of social action and communication (Mamedova, 2012). The information space turns into the equivalent of the real, and sometimes into the dominant environment of human existence, where various relationships unfold. In the real social space, the processes of social atomization, alienation take place, and in the information space, virtual communities are formed that do not depend on the real social division. New forms of social consolidation are emerging. The Internet is becoming a place for social segmentation, social consolidation and identification.

Freedom and responsibility are important manifestations of identity that reflect a human's relationship with the world and with himself. Social transgression as a transitional state of society creates a space of uncertainty, risk and heterogeneity. The orientation of the development of culture is determined by ambiguous factors that give it a non-linear character. The complex interconnection of real and virtual components of cultural and historical development is determined in terms of synergetic by bifurcation processes. A new form of subjectivity is emerging, which corresponds to a new self-created reality. A person in a variety of communicative interactions participates in the construction of this reality.

# 2. Problem Statement

The total digitalization of society, covering all its spheres from the economy, social, political relations to the sphere of culture and education, leads to radical socio-cultural transformations. These changes are so fundamental that we can talk about the transition of social life to a different quality, which characterized by uncertainty, variability, heterogeneity. As a result, the space of freedom (real and virtual)

expands significantly, which increases the role of personal responsibility for choice and exacerbates the problem of identity. Creativity, freedom, responsibility become the main characteristics of identity.

# 3. Research Questions

Heuristically promising is the study of identity from the point of view of freedom and responsibility based on a conceptual synthesis of approaches: Marxist, analytical philosophy, existentialism. The diverse forms of real and virtual self-representation, communication and association, actualized within the framework of an interactive social network environment, transform identification processes, expand the space of freedom and increase social and existential responsibility.

### 4. Purpose of the Study

This study aims to analyze the main conceptual foundations of the problem of identity from the point of view of freedom and responsibility in the context of social transgression.

#### 5. Research Methods

The post-nonclassical social and humanitarian paradigm, in which the research is carried out, reflects the structure, attributes and elements of modern communication processes (Luhmann, 2004). From the point of view of research tasks, the methods of synergetic, hermeneutics, phenomenology and general scientific principles are of heuristic importance. The synergetic method allows us to consider modern society as a complex self-developing system, characterized by nonlinearity, variability, bifurcation processes and comprehend how a new order emerges from chaos. The idea of autopoiesis makes it possible to describe a new form of subjectivity that reflects the realities of a networked society as a self-creating and self-observing entity. Hermeneutics and phenomenology provide a methodology for identifying the semantic foundation of a subject's social behaviour, mechanisms for constructing one's own "I", intersubjectivity (Gadamer, 1988; Husserl, 1999). The principles of complementarity and methodological pluralism determine the combination of different point of view of such a complex system as a person; presume a plurality of research programs, applying of various methods to explain identity.

#### 6. Findings

As well as social being, human existence in the new reality is contradictory, the balance on the verge of the virtual and the real. Traditional identification mechanisms are losing their relevance. Identity is defined by various symbolic systems that replace the tradition. The relationship between freedom and responsibility appears in a new way. The modern interpretation of the personal dimension of freedom and responsibility has largely developed under the influence of the Marxist, analytical and existential paradigms.

The Marxist concept of freedom reflects an important aspect of the problem – the relationship between freedom and necessity, the social determination of freedom (Marx & Engels, 1955). Freedom lies in the knowledge of the laws of nature and society, in the possibility of their purposeful use in practice, in

the ability to make decisions competently. As a public person, human exists and learns the world in the system of social relations, where his position fixed by the dialectical unity of freedom and necessity. Freedom is determined by necessity. Necessity, acting as a development trend, objectively has been conditioned by a chain of cause-and-effect relationships. It determines not only the activity itself, but also the range of possibilities in a particular situation. Ultimately, the need is satisfied by the free choice of specific behaviour. At the same time, the activity approach to the problem of freedom and responsibility have emphasized in the Marxist paradigm. Freedom is not a passive perception of reality, not the contemplative attitude to events. On the contrary, freedom engenders the practical self-determination of individuals. Cognitive activity provides the subjects of action with knowledge of objective necessity and thereby define optimal (from the point of view of their position in the structure of social relations, needs and goals of activity) means for using the acquired knowledge in activity. The other side of freedom is responsibility. If freedom means freedom of choice, responsibility is an assessment of a choice, decision, deed, an assessment of their benefit or harm to society and the individual. To be responsible means to anticipate the consequences of your actions, to guide in your actions by clearly defined motives for which a person is ready to answer to society.

Social responsibility is the relationship between an individual and society, which takes the form of a system of mutually corresponding rights and obligations to comply with social norms. Self-determination of a person presupposes the ability free self-realization, for assessing one's behaviour from the standpoint of social interests. This perspective allows us to identify the causal determinants of freedom and responsibility, and in different variations they have been manifested in non-Marxist philosophical discourses.

Analytical philosophy is another influential paradigm that sets the problematic field of understanding freedom and responsibility from the standpoint of a person's self-identity. In modern analytical philosophy, the problem of freedom is observed as free will in the context of the problems of determinism and personality identity. Free will is understood as a condition for the moral responsibility of an individual (McKenna, 2012). Free will, according to the researcher of modern analytical philosophy Volkov (2016), presupposes two conditions. First, the principle of alternative possibilities means that freedom is possible only if there is a free choice among various possibilities. The second principle was autonomy, according to which the subject is free and bears moral responsibility for the committed action, if he is the cause of this action.

Is freedom compatible with the principle of causal determination? In the analytical tradition, different directions identified the solution to this issue, which go back to the classical interpretations of this problem. From the point of view of the conceptual position of the article, the position of compatibilism seems to be significant, according to which free will is compatible with determinism (Fischer, 2011; McKenna, 1998). Another aspect of the problem of freedom and responsibility, which we revealed in modern analytical discourse, is its connection with the concept of personality identity, that is, the specifics of the human personality as a unique, self-valuable, independent phenomenon.

The interpretation of freedom, responsibility, designing a personality proposed in existentialism contains heuristic approaches for analysing identity in the context of social transgression. So, Berdyaev (2005) considered freedom as the basis of being, he emphasized that "personality in a person" is freedom,

that a person expresses his attitude to the world as an relation of creativity, love and freedom, and not determination. Berdyaev's perception of freedom reflects the peculiarities of Russian religious philosophy, which proceeds from the recognition of God as the highest foundation of spirituality, the absolute moral principle. Freedom raises a person to the level of divine, godlike. The philosophical anthropology of Berdyaev proceeds from the unity of man and God focused on the development of free creative beginning in a person who is responsible to himself and the world.

In the Western European mentality, the concept of freedom has political and legal connotations associated with the spread of liberal ideology. Sartre (2021) considered that freedom is the universal ontological foundation of human existence. According to Sartre (2021), man is doomed to freedom, which has thought of a choice from countless possibilities, because, unlike animals, in man, existence precedes essence. A person comprehends his essence throughout his life and is responsible for every action, for every choice. Therefore, a person understood as a "project" creating himself. Under the influence of Marxism, Sartre corrects the understanding of freedom as primordial basis of human existence. He connects self-projection of personality with creative activity. The existentialist understanding of freedom as an absolute value of human existence expands the semantic field of the concept of "freedom", which allows considering the processes of self-actualization and identification in a new way. The interpretation of freedom as an absolute value allows its projection onto the sphere of everyday life.

Freedom is substantiality, immanent in human existence. Man is a creative subject, responsible for himself and for everything that happens. There is no freedom without responsibility - to oneself, to others, to society (Sekatskaya, 2016). Responsibility is the ability of a person to consciously, selectively react, control, and manage his activity in specific circumstances. Modern transgressive sociality creates the basis for a variety of identification risks that exacerbate the need for responsible, relevant personal choices. Identification risks can arise because of contradictions in reality and contradictions in the inner life of an individual.

Responsibility is a kind of protective mechanism for maintaining identity of the individual. Depending on the risks, a wide range of liability options can identify what prevent a crisis and the collapse of identity. Responsibility for existential attitudes, activities bases on consciously made decisions in accordance with these attitudes and values. A person is responsible to himself for the fundamental existential choice of the meaning of life, which integrates all the particular meanings and values of existence, and is the centre of identity. A transgressive sociality gives rise to many risky practices that exacerbate the problem of responsibility. For example, the risks associated with biotechnology, threaten a person's self-identity associated with the authenticity of his bodily organization. The process of comprehending one's Self begins with physicality, which assesses precisely as a social quality through the prism of sociocultural standards. The concept of corporeality implicitly includes a kind of dualism between the real and the ideal, which creates a feeling of dissatisfaction and the desire for improvement (Akchurin, 2005). It is this dissatisfaction, the dualism of the sensation of corporeality that exacerbates the problem of a responsible choice between the temptation of perfection and the risk associated with the use of biotechnology.

However, the most riskogenic ones are network communications, which, transforming sociality, radically change identification processes and at the same time destroy the very phenomenon of identity.

Self-identification of an individual no longer depends on external referents that previously influenced the lifestyle, life path (the authority of ancestors, family ties, traditions. Self-determination of "I" is carrying out through the reflexive use of a wide symbolic context. The very process of organizing networked communities turns into a kind of social practice, which sets the thesaurus (a certain code, language of communication) and habit - repetitive models of interactions in repetitive conditions (Krivykh, 2020). This creates unlimited opportunities for self-expression, free choice of identity. The network identity is built arbitrarily, not supported by a stable system of relationships and actions. It is based on storytelling, relies on simulation practices and is therefore unstable, fragmented and can be an alternative to real identity (fictional biography, gender, etc.).

#### 7. Conclusion

Thus, this study reveals the features of personal identity from the point of view of freedom and responsibility in the context of deep socio-cultural transformations of our time. The transgression of sociality is, on the one hand, a consequence of the avalanche-like growth of communication technologies, and, on the other hand, the cause of a radical change in the existential and social status of a person and his identity. Personality is an active subject of a new sociality who, together with others, constructs this sociality in endless acts of virtual communication.

Network identity, unstable and fragmented, eliminates the very essence of identity - sameness of personality. This paradoxical metamorphosis of identity, as in focus, reflects the risks of identification and the growing responsibility for preserving oneself, one's existential integrity. The responsibility in relation to the risks of loss of self-identity, destruction of identity stability, violation of the social adequacy of possible identity increases in relation to intersubjective interactions.

Identity depends on the amount of information that a person is able to perceive, as well as on belonging to virtual communities largely than to real ones, since the virtual space turns into a significant environment for existence. The contexts of interaction, communicative communities are multiplying. The probability of the formation of a multidimensional personality with a "floating", indefinite identity increases. Therefore, the processes of total informatization create a new subjectivity. The ambivalent nature of the influence of multimedia on a person makes it difficult to build models that predict the impact of a modern technological society on him. Future technologies will base on a balance between creation and destruction. Moreover, it will create many situations of social risk in the multi-vector development of man and civilization. With the expansion of the space of freedom and the associated risks, the social and existential responsibility of a person increases.

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