



## Virtual and Real Interaction: Philosophical Aspects of the Transformation of Ukrainian Society in the Era of Social and Information Technologies

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### ABSTRACT

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Key trends of modern social progress involve active transformation of communication strategies and social interaction under the influence of digitalization. Ukrainian society, as part of the global community, is influenced by the dynamics of the information and communication space and the rethinking of the significance of the virtual world for effective collaboration. New challenges of modernity, including artificial intelligence, information extraction from human memory, etc., necessitate an objective public response. The purpose of the article is an extended analysis of aspects of public transformation in the context of interactivity and the impact of virtual interaction on socio-cultural dynamics. The study examines the potential of social and information technologies and media resources in terms of impact on the development of society, updating trends, and changing the format of communication interaction. The relevant risks and potential benefits of the global digitalization of public space are highlighted. It is emphasized that modern algorithms and virtual reality can potentially lead to a destructive transformation of the personality, excessive absorption by the digital environment, and loss of identity. It is substantiated how information technologies affect the understanding of reality, freedom, individuality and social interaction. The key ethical dilemmas of modernity are considered. The definitions of “network society” and “virtual interaction” are reconsidered. The key philosophical aspects of the transformation of modern society are identified, in particular, the change in human identity and the concept of freedom, the rethinking of reality, changes in the social structure, and epistemological problems. It is substantiated that the current stage of social development is characterized by a number of problems in the communication sphere, which require synergy of the socio-cultural basis and a stable national identity.

### KEYWORDS

civil society, digitalization, social and information technologies, socio-cultural development, virtual interaction, philosophical background.



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## Віртуальна та реальна взаємодія: філософські аспекти трансформації українського суспільства в епоху соціально-інформаційних технологій

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### СТАТТЯ

### АНОТАЦІЯ

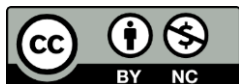
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Ключові тренди сучасного суспільного поступу передбачають активну трансформацію комунікативних стратегій та соціальної взаємодії під впливом цифровізації. Українське суспільство, як частина глобальної спільноти, зазнає впливу динаміки інформаційно-комунікативного простору та переосмислення значимості віртуального світу для ефективної колаборації. Нові виклики сучасності, серед яких – штучний інтелект, вилучення інформації з людської пам'яті тощо, зумовлюють необхідність об'єктивного суспільного реагування. Метою статті є розширений аналіз аспектів трансформації громадськості у контексті інтерактивності та впливу віртуальної взаємодії на соціокультурну динаміку. У дослідженні розглянуто потенціал соціально-інформаційних технологій та медіаресурсів у аспектах впливу на розвиток суспільства, актуалізації трендів, зміни формату комунікаційної взаємодії. Виокремлено дотичні ризики та потенційні переваги глобальної цифровізації суспільного простору. Акцентовано, що сучасні алгоритми та віртуальна реальність потенційно можуть призвести до деструктивної трансформації особистості, надмірного поглинання цифровим середовищем, втрати ідентичності. Обґрунтовано, яким чином інформаційні технології впливають на розуміння реальності, свободи, індивідуальності та суспільної взаємодії. Розглянуто ключові етичні дилеми сучасності. Переосмислено дефініції «мережного суспільства» та «віртуальної взаємодії». Визначено ключові філософські аспекти трансформації сучасного суспільства, зокрема, зміну людської ідентичності та поняття свободи, переосмислення реальності, зміни у соціальній структурі, епістемологічні проблеми. Обґрунтовано, що нинішній етап суспільного розвитку характеризується низкою проблем у комунікаційній сфері, що потребує синергії соціокультурної основи та стійкої національної ідентичності.

### КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА

громадянське суспільство, цифровізація, соціально-інформаційні технології, соціокультурний розвиток, віртуальна взаємодія, філософське підґрунтя.

## 1. Introduction

The evolution of the development of modern society is most fully represented in the positioning of a person in the information, communication and socio-cultural field. The specifics of interaction, at the same time, are determined by current trends in the development of spiritual, material culture and the sphere of human relations.

The nonlinearity of thinking and the active search orientation of modern society determine the vector nature of social dynamics. The rapid development of digital technologies endows the field of communication with interactivity and barrier-free access, which is accompanied by a number of challenges, including the risks of manipulation and spread of disinformation, the growth of social polarization, and the leveling of the importance of emotional intelligence.

The pace of development of Ukrainian society forms new requirements for contemporaries: critical thinking, resilience, adaptability, responsiveness, and media literacy have become integral conditions for high-quality interaction in virtual reality and reality. The issues of harmonious implementation of digital communication solutions to the traditional basis of social development are of particular importance. These aspects require an expanded understanding of the philosophical background within the framework of an interdisciplinary approach.

## 2. Literature Review

The progress of social and information technologies today acquires the features of a leading society-forming factor. A number of publications by contemporary authors are devoted to the problem, in particular, Causadias (2020) [2], de Oliveira (2020) [4], Kovalchuk and Ovsyankina (2020) [11], Rachmad (2025) [15] and others. Philosophical understanding of the socio-cultural transformation of society is carried out in the populations of Niu et al. (2022) [14], Rochefort (2025) [17], Inglehart (2020) [10], where the authors actualize new ethical issues related to data privacy, cybercrime, social inequality through access to technology, and responsibility for actions in the digital environment.

As Couture et al. (2024) [3], Dunleavy and Margetts (2025) [6], Lynn et al. (2022) [12], information technologies have a significant impact on the formation of personality, create new forms of self-expression and, at the same time, pose risks to the stability of the human "I". Analyzing the potential of the system of values, identity and civic position, the authors determine the socio-philosophical essence of the information culture of the future.

Donelli (2019) [5], Fuchs (2021) [7], Gil (2023) [8] explore the philosophical context of rethinking reality under the influence of digital transformation and emphasize that the blurring of the boundaries between the physical and virtual worlds actualizes the question of the essence of being and human identity in cyberspace. Certain aspects of the problem are addressed by Biancardi et al. (2023) [1] and Hadiati et al. (2024) [9], highlighting the need to develop critical thinking and strong ethical beliefs in modern society.

Modood (2017) [13], Rochefort et al. (2025) [17] promote the importance of affirming the national-cultural identity of society, assimilating motivational-value aspects and the cognitive sphere. According to the authors, the identity of the modern personality, immersed in mixed reality, is seen as an indicator of a successful synthesis of individuality and modern socio-cultural position, which is the basis for true awareness of oneself and others as carriers of national uniqueness.

## 3. Problem Statement

Taking into account the multifaceted nature of the phenomenon under study, the issues of harmonious development of civil society in the era of social and information technologies require special attention. The article is aimed at an extended analysis of the aspects of public transformation in the context of interactivity and the impact of virtual interaction on socio-cultural dynamics.

## 4. Methods and Materials

The methodological and theoretical basis of the work was formed taking into account the priority principles of the implementation of system research, based on an integrated approach. In order to fully

disclose the problem, a number of theoretical research methods were used, in particular, historical-philosophical and philosophical-cultural methods, holistic and systematic analysis, synthesis, methods of comparison, generalization and some others.

Holistic and systemic analysis, as well as synthesis, were used in order to isolate the most significant aspects and basic concepts of the phenomenon under study. The dialectical method, comparison and generalization were used in order to detail the system of definitions, single out basic categories and theoretical generalizations, and form the concept of the integral process of development of society.

The historical-philosophical method provided for an effective combination of theoretical-logical and empirical-historical scientific methods, while the main principle was the unity of subject-content and methodological aspects of philosophical knowledge.

The philosophical-culturological method is provided for use in the context of the initial categories of philosophy. At the same time, the basis was an approach to the phenomenon under study, based on the concepts of integrity and generality, as well as the interdependence of individual elements.

## 5. Results and Discussion

Social development should be positioned as a synergy of the processes of development of spiritual, material culture, and the culture of human relations. The philosophical aspects of the transformation of society in the era of social and information technologies relate to changes in the worldview, values and the way people interact. Information technology influences the understanding of individuality, reality, freedom, and social interaction.

Digital technologies provide virtually unlimited access to huge amounts of information, changing the format of communication, forming digital identity, and blurring the boundaries between the virtual and real worlds. The same technologies provoke new questions about freedom and privacy, digital inequality, manipulation and ethics of the use of artificial intelligence (Rachmad, 2025 [16]).

The specifics of the development of modern civil society are manifested in the cultivation of the role of innovative technologies, including artificial intelligence. Obscuration of empathic attitude towards others, manifestations of indifference and superiority as a secular behavioral model, become characteristic. Social networks and instant messengers create new forms of communication, which can lead to both bringing people closer together and feeling isolated. The expansion of the cultivation of freedom of speech and access to information is accompanied by the risks of cyberbullying, the spread of hatred and disinformation, which destabilizes society.

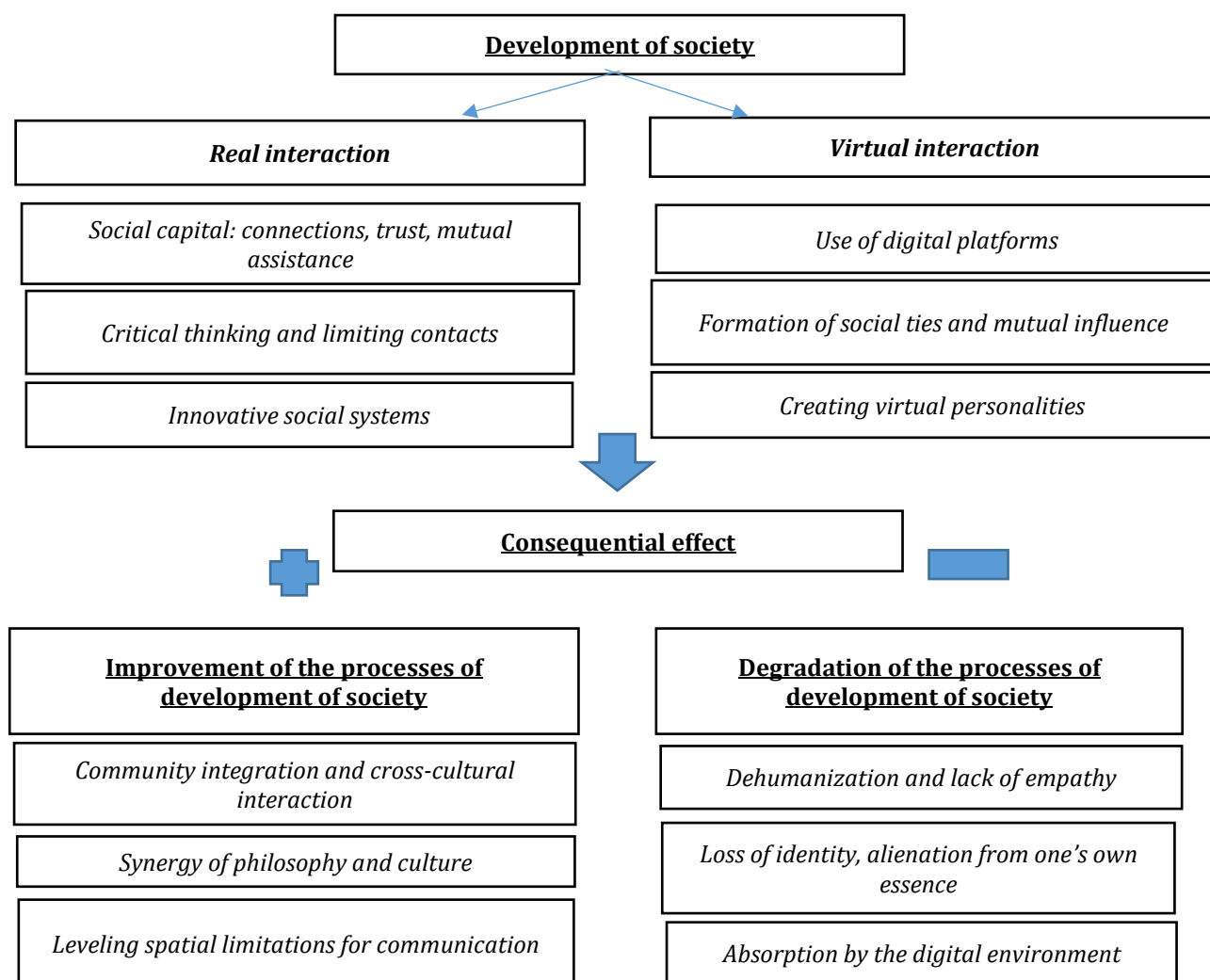
A "digital" person has an overly virtualized consciousness and acts at the same time as a creator, carrier, and consumer of virtual phenomena. Unable to distinguish between the real and the virtual, a modern person in the virtual space works, learns, communicates, and consumes information (Gil, 2023 [8]).

"Homo virtualis" is focused only on virtuality. This phenomenon is characterized by the frame nature of the worldview, which makes it possible to quickly respond to numerous information flows. Virtual reality is positioned in this case as "other" freedom, a way of self-expression on the Web. At the same time, this freedom is illusory, limited, and does not correspond to the concept of true freedom of spirit. Often, excessive immersion in virtual communication destroys real social relationships, generates aggressiveness, has a destructive effect on the spiritual world of a person, and creates a feeling of emptiness. This void is filled by the "virtual person" in the usual way, creating new virtual contacts, increasing the online communication session (Biancardi et al., 2021[1]).

It is obvious that both real and virtual interaction in the process of development of modern society are permeated with digital influence. At the same time, their consequences are of a contiguous-polar nature. The general vector of the influence of socio-information technologies on the development of society is shown in Fig. 1.

In the context of the modern philosophical concept of social development, the world outside of man is not seen as possible because it is devoid of any meaning. The conceptual core of philosophy and culture of modern society is the approach of multiple interpretations of meanings. In this context, the integration of man into the process of cognition represents the latest ontological meaning of social progress, in which a person is identified, at the same time, by the main creation of culture and its creator. to position the phenomenon of social progress not only in the context of material and spiritual achievements, but also as a prerequisite for the realization of human essence in the process of

interaction [Causadias, 2020 [2]]. The process of transformation is focused on achieving maximum openness, freedom of choice, inexhaustibility. Creative rethinking of traditional or generally accepted symbols and values finds practical implementation [Hadiati et al., 2024 [9]; Niu et al., 2022 [14]].



**Figure 1. Development of Society in the Context of Virtual and Real Interaction in the Age of Digitalization**

Source: Author's development.

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The network as an integrated communication environment determines the main behavioral reactions of society. The media often act as a subject of manipulation, which implements systematic activities to integrate the necessary information into society [Couture et al., 2024 [3]]. In general, virtual communication is characterized by the mechanism of crowd action, where quickly disseminated and precisely directed information can be promoted through various psychotechnologies. At the same time, it is measured by the level of engagement of the required target audience [Dunleavy & Margetts, 2025 [6]].

Mass communication is impossible outside the social context, which is expressed through the interaction of a person and society. It is not just a type of communication; it is a special social institution

that is influenced by existing realities and at the same time exerts a special evaluative influence on both various social formations and individuals (Kovalchuk & Ovsyankina, 2020 [11]; Modood, 2017 [13]).

At the same time, this potential can potentially be involved in the formation of socio-civic competence, which provides for the development of cross-cultural tolerance, fundamentalization of patriotic beliefs, human-centeredness and humanistic morality, cultivation of key aspects of the national mentality - diligence, freedom, justice, kindness, honesty. The phenomenon of national identity, reflecting the mentality and cultural background of social progress, finds expression in the comprehension of national and ethnic feelings, the assessment of social experience, the formation of ideals (de Oliveira et al., 2020 [4]).

At the same time, through the transfer of socially and culturally significant human traits into the virtual space, a virtual personality is formed, which is symbolic, multiple and incorporeal, which is endowed with a certain autonomy of actions in the virtual environment. This represents a new typology of splitting: the border appears not between the individual and the outside world, as before, but within the personality itself (Donelli, 2019 [5]). The unmerged coexistence of spiritual and physical hypostases in the human person is subject to threatening risks, including the maintenance of a holistic image of one's own "I".

Virtual communication is endowed with a liberating character. This applies to:

- ethical and value characteristics, which implies the absence of barriers in cultural priorities;
- cognitive characteristics, which allows for wider use of information resources;
- emotional characteristics, which involves reducing stress tension through gamification, the use of the "stream of consciousness" in writing, the transfer of fears and complexes to the virtual plane.

Virtual communication has a certain specificity of subject-subject relations, associated with both self-presentation and perception of the Other. The most important aspect of communication is the manifestation of oneself to the Other, the presentation of one's image, beliefs, interests, feelings, etc. (Lynn et al., 2022 [12]). In the reality of traditional communication, these aspects are expressed both in external phenomena – in the manner of communication, emotions, facial expressions, gestures, and internally – in the meaning, content, text, and subtext of statements (Yermachenko et al., 2023 [19]).

The virtualization of communication began with the epistolary genre, writing letters and messages in which people, not being able to communicate in person, expressed themselves and their feelings, ideas, etc. The current level of virtual communication concerns the exchange of opinions, moods, dialogue on forums, discussion of problems on social networks, etc. Communication, however, not only did not weaken, but, on the contrary, became even more significant for modern people, who have largely forgotten how to be alone. Their need to engage in virtual dialogue with others has become almost attributive (Saner et al., 2020 [18]). This is expressed in the almost constant presence of people of all ages on social networks, many hours of communication on game portals, blogs, live magazines, etc.

It should be noted that self-presentation is becoming an extremely important thing in the world of virtual communication, consuming considerable time and requiring considerable imagination. Self-presentation becomes ontologically important, because in the information world, life functions according to the principle: if you are not online, you do not exist. The content aspect of self-presentation is the subject's "profile", his Internet page, describing his personal qualities, interests, contacts and other traits that, according to the developers of social networks, should characterize a person in online communication (Rochefort, 2025 [17]).

It should be noted that the need for virtual communication can develop into a form of dependence, a constant desire to immerse oneself in the flow of transmitted and received information. the separation of children from their parents, the alienation of people from real communication due to the specifics of certain professions related to computer technology (Inglehart, 2020 [10]). The growth of such relationships also generates a special type of fear of real communication, the so-called nomophobia, which consists of the desire to avoid real acquaintances and relationships with people.

Mass communication media are a concentration of enormous potential, which, depending on the conditions, can be both positive and negative. Communication in modern society develops under the influence of information technologies and actively "absorbs" them into its structure (Fuchs, 2021 [7]; Pappas et al., 2023 [15]).

It can be summarized that the virtualization of communication gives rise to new characteristics of communication in modern society, including:

- 1) increased attention of a person to himself, his moods, momentary thoughts and feelings, which inevitably and immediately become public domain;

- 2) the need of the mass audience to broadcast personal thoughts and feelings – satisfying this need increases a person's sense of self-security, self-confidence;
- 3) minimalism of "feedback";
- 4) chaotic nature of the content of communication, inherent weakness and unstructured flow of messages;
- 5) "radio effect" – instant dissemination of information throughout the network;
- 6) freedom from censorship, the ability to express one's own thoughts without restriction;
- 7) the ability to attract attention to yourself, while actually remaining hidden;
- 8) the principle of "communication for the sake of communication", when the vast majority of information does not carry new content and is valuable in itself in terms of communication or entertainment.

The new functions of virtual communication, first of all, are: global socialization as the creation of a global communication environment for the "open world"; instant informing and notification of all participants about current events and phenomena; creating conditions for informal, uncensored communication as a form of rest, relaxation and pleasure; adaptation to social activity of people who have problems with real communication; the abolition of boundaries between social status, location and languages of communication.

Thus, virtual communication in the information world becomes not only a means of communication, a communication technology for remote persons, but also an independent phenomenon, acquiring its own value and influence on a person who is going through the phase of virtualization of his personality. Studies of this phenomenon are contradictory, because along with the observation of positive trends in the development of communication, communications of the information society are characterized by "social myopia". Technologization fuels the so-called "rapid interaction", when the time required for communication is sharply reduced due to the use of advanced technologies. This, on the one hand, saves time for communication participants, but on the other hand, can negatively affect its productivity. communication, it would be fair to say that this problem is global, since the existence of humanity depends on its proper functioning.

## 6. Conclusions

An extended analysis of the aspects of public transformation in the context of interactivity and the impact of virtual interaction on socio-cultural dynamics, implemented within the framework of the study, made it possible to comprehensively study the new challenges of digital modernity. The potential of socio-information technologies and media resources in terms of influencing the development of society, actualization of trends, changes in the format of communication interaction is endowed with a dualistic character in the philosophical context.

Social development in the digital age is positioned both as a space of opportunity and as a space of threat, because, on the one hand, it offers the potential to level the spatial aspect of communication, self-presentation and creative development, and on the other hand, it weakens criticality and traditional moral norms, causes information oversaturation, and stimulates emotional reactivity. Obviously, modern algorithms and virtual reality can potentially lead to destructive transformation of the personality, excessive absorption in the digital environment, and loss of identity.

Information technologies have a significant impact on the understanding of reality, freedom, individuality and social interaction. The key philosophical aspects of the transformation of modern society should be the change of human identity and the concept of freedom, rethinking reality, changes in the social structure, and epistemological problems.

The algorithmic nature of socio-cultural development can lead to the risk of transformation of the individual, his absorption by the digital environment, which actualizes the problem of increasing media literacy, developing critical thinking skills and strengthening universal humanistic values.

Ukrainian society is currently at the stage of radical transformations, which can change the trajectory of prospective development in the context of greater interactivity and the impact of digital media. A sustainable society implies a pronounced support for cultural and national identity, a real assessment of social experience, and the formation of true ideals.

Promising scientific developments should focus on the development of an educational and philosophical concept of strengthening national identity in the era of total digital integration.

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