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CULTURE IDENTITY IN THE 21ˢᵗ CENTURY

In recent years, researchers have increasingly become interested in the impact of globalization and technology on culture and identity. Cultural issues can be analyzed in the light of identities. Undoubtedly, globalization has had an impact on the nature of identification in the modern world. Technology is becoming one of the chief cultural processes for identity construction and gives rise to a new style of thinking. The implication of interdisciplinary scientific approach has given the opportunity to look at identity issues from new perspectives. However, it remains unclear whether the integration of real space and digital world will lead for the better or for the worse.

The *goal* of the research is to examine the issues of identity formation through digital media and the peculiarities of digital culture. Digital world is considered to present a brand new thinking pattern that is integrated with the "real space". Cultural paradigm of our era enhances the instability of identity in a continuous process of multiple identity formation. Thus, the understanding of identity formation is no longer so straightforward. An American sociologist Marc Prensky makes a distinction between the users of technologies. He invented such terms as "Digital Natives" and "Digital Immigrants". The implementing of this distinction helps to analyze how people of different age categories react to such aspect of digital world as digital communication.

Unlike face-to-face interaction, online communication provides an opportunity for a person to be anonymous and multiple. Media platforms present a modern form for realization of biographical strategy of identity. The distinguishing characteristic of digital construction of biography is that it encompasses private and public. Moreover, digital culture assumes the necessity of self-presentation. A person becomes an entrepreneur and his biography can be compared with investments. In digital space a person can experiment with self-representation. In digital culture people are challenged to think about their identities in terms of multiplicity. This fact can be seen as a cause why people almost never distinguish between the online and offline versions of themselves.

This research is based on the results of the survey which was held among people of different age categories. The results of the survey show that 95% of people under the age of 30 and 48% of those, who are older than 30 years have a profile in social networking sites. The distinction between "Digital Immigrants" and "Digital Natives" is vividly seen in their attitude to online communication: only 37% of "Digital Immigrants" use the Internet for communication, whereas 80% of "Digital Natives" use the Internet mainly for communication. The existence of multiple identities is

proved by the following result: only 6% of respondents can distinguish their online and offline representation.

Due to the use of new technologies our understanding of identity has changed drastically. The process of identity formation becomes more and more dynamic. The absence of the division between "offline" and "online" world affects the pattern of thinking and develops new forms of self-presentation. Moreover, information technologies are profoundly reshaping culture. Recently emerged digital culture begins to hold a dominant position. The understanding of these processes aims to predict the consequences of the use of technologies and provide new perspectives for the study of social changes in the Information Age.

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BELARUSIAN CULTURE AND MYTHOLOGY IN LOSHITSKI PARK

Once American writer Ray Bradbury said, "You don't need to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get people stop reading them" [1]. This quotation refers to the problems of personal culture but can be applied to the culture of a nation. If people stop following their cultural traditions, stop speaking their mother tongue, they in the end will die as a nation.

Therefore, a research into the problems of Belarusian culture and ways of its integration into modern life became the purpose of my paper. To achieve this aim the following tasks were suggested: to study our Belarusian ethnography and the mythology created by our ancestors; to work out an excursion based on this mythology; to adapt our findings for the perception of various categories of people; to popularize the excursion among foreigners by translating it from Belarusian into English and Russian.

Every nation as well as every person has its own character, its own specific destiny and its own unique place among other cultures. The question arises how to find this specificity? The answer lies in the ethnography which is like a "great intellect" of a nation. It is a part of both science and art. It gives a scientific description of peoples and cultures with their customs, habits, and mutual differences.

In this paper I will speak on mythology which is a collection of myths, belonging to a particular religious or cultural tradition. Mythological representations of a cave man were his ways of understanding the world and expressing his attitudes to it. Folklore reflects this perception and, undoubtedly, should be integrated into our modern life. Although the myths may seem naïve and simple at first sight, they contain a great wisdom of the centuries and the problems raised in them in ancient times are relevant even now. Folklore is the part of culture that forms mentality, personality and behavior of every single person. It is like the mirror of life where you can see the world from a different angle. Folklore provides us with almost accurate data about the development of self-comprehension of our ancestors. It forms