



THE CONCEPT OF IDENTITY AS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PHENOMENON: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND LITERARY REPRESENTATION

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ABSTRACT

The concept of identity, as a central category in contemporary psychology, sociology, philosophy, and literary studies, constitutes a multilayered phenomenon that demands comprehensive interdisciplinary analysis. This article examines three fundamental principles of identity: the principle of conscious personal integrity (E. Erikson), the principle of multiple identities (H. Tajfel, J. Turner), and the principle of social constructivism (P. Berger, T. Luckmann). Particular attention is devoted to the literary representation of the identity concept in the works of N. Scott Momaday and T. Kaipbergenov.

KEYWORDS: Identity, principle of conscious personal integrity, multiple identities, social constructivism, national identity, literary image, comparative literary studies, Momaday, Kaipbergenov

INTRODUCTION

The concept of identity represents a key construct in contemporary humanities and social sciences, encompassing psychology, sociology, philosophy, and literary criticism. Identity may be understood as a dynamic and relational structure that takes shape through the individual's interaction with the social environment, cultural contexts, and inner psychological processes. In the social dimension, identity provides a sense of group belonging; in the personal dimension, it serves as the foundation for developing self-esteem, goals, and values that guide behavioral strategies and life choices. Identity is not a static construction but a continuously evolving phenomenon that calls for interdisciplinary inquiry.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE CONCEPT OF IDENTITY

1. The Principle of Conscious Personal Integrity

Erik Erikson conceptualized identity as an integrative sense of conscious wholeness, inner continuity, and personal self-sameness [1]. Within this framework, identity is formed on the basis of the individual's subjective experience as they reflexively come to terms with their place in sociocultural reality. Erikson introduced the notion of the "psychosocial moratorium" — a period during which a young person has the opportunity to experiment with various roles and value orientations without making definitive commitments [2]. This principle underscores the importance of self-awareness and self-reflection in the ongoing process of identity formation throughout the life course.

2. The Principle of Multiple Identities

Henri Tajfel and John Turner's Social Identity Theory places emphasis on the multiplicity of identities that arise through the categorization of oneself and others according to various social parameters — ethnic, professional, and cultural [3]. Identity emerges as a dynamic construction, subject to change in accordance with the context of social interactions. Turner elaborated on this in his Self-Categorization Theory, demonstrating that the degree of identification with a group is determined by the specific social context and the motivational state of the individual [4].

3. The Principle of Social Constructivism

Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's social constructivism regards identity as the product of social interaction between the individual and society [5]. Identity is presented as a dynamic and contextual construction, shaped in and through social practices. Language, discursive strategies, and social norms play a pivotal role in the construction of identity. An integrative approach brings together all three principles — personal integrity, multiplicity of social belongings, and a constructivist view of self-determination — thereby achieving a holistic understanding of the phenomenon in all its dimensions.

THE LITERARY REPRESENTATION OF THE IDENTITY CONCEPT

The Native American author N. Scott Momaday, in his novel *House Made of Dawn* and in the essay *The Way to Rainy Mountain*, explores the formation of identity through the loss and recovery of connection with the tradition of the Kiowa people [9]. For Momaday, identity is constructed at the intersection of oral narrative, ritual memory, and natural landscape — elements that correspond to Erikson's notion of "conscious integrity." The identity crisis of the protagonist is simultaneously a crisis of cultural self-determination for an entire people.

The Karakalpak writer T. Kaipbergenov gives literary embodiment to the principle of multiple identities in his novels: his protagonists exist simultaneously within the space of folklore, historical memory, and contemporary reality [10]. By employing mythological imagery as an instrument for constructing national identity in the spirit of Berger and Luckmann, Kaipbergenov transforms the literary text into a vehicle for cultural self-preservation. A comparative analysis of both authors reveals that identity in literature operates simultaneously at the personal, ethnocultural, and universal levels.

CONCLUSION

In sum, the three fundamental principles — conscious personal integrity, the multiplicity of identities, and social constructivism — constitute a theoretical framework for analyzing both real and literary forms of self-determination. The study of the literary representation of the identity concept in the works of N. Scott Momaday and T. Kaipbergenov opens a productive avenue for comparative literary studies: despite their geographical and cultural distance, both authors draw on analogous strategies of narrative self-identification rooted in the oral tradition

and mythological heritage of their respective peoples. This confirms the universal character of the problem of identity in literature and the scholarly value of its interdisciplinary study.

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