

**IDENTITY CRISIS IN CONNECTION
WITH POST-TRUTH**

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Abstract

Identity crisis and post-truth are like a twin concepts and characterize the man in our “modern” world. The world we live in brings us an existence through the concepts “identity crises” and “post-truth” especially. These concepts also characterize the contemporary world. Technology and economic and social possibilities are the main causes of the person’s crises as an object of their endless requirements. It seems that ‘post-truth’ is a good instrument for the people who thinks everything from the personal standpoints. Post-truth serves unsaturated and unsatisfied feelings and the endless demands of individuals. The endless demands can easily turn into sadness, dissatisfaction, or an identity crisis.

Keywords: *Identity crisis, post-truth, technology, social and personal values*

I would like to discuss first some features of “post-truth.” As it is well known, this world characterizes our present world-view, that is, both our personal as well as public paradigms. In 2016, Oxford Dictionary declared this concept as the word of the year and defined it as “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.” This definition clearly indicates that “truth” does not have any objectivity, but it depends on some of our personal interests.

More about post-truth

According to the philosophical and the theological western traditional paradigm, there is an objective truth independent of our thoughts and opinions. Its existence is absolute and real. We have to manage our behaviors and decide according to this objective truth. Now, it looks like our certain traditional conceptions get destroyed by the concept of “post-truth.” It means that we can no longer talk about commonly accepted trustworthy individuals and public references. Anything can be “true” according to my own personal interests, profits, and utilities. More importantly, national interests may determine “truth” according to their benefits and power.

Post-truth and Moral Relativism

“Post-truth” is different from moral relativism, which is one of the old philosophical disputes. According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, the term ‘moral relativism’ is understood in a variety of ways. Most often it is associated with an empirical thesis that there are deep and widespread moral disagreements and a metaethical thesis that the truth or justification of moral judgments is not absolute, but relative to the moral standard of some person or group of persons. Sometimes ‘moral relativism’ is connected with a normative position about how we ought to think about or act towards those with whom we morally disagree, most commonly that we should tolerate them.

It is clear that the theses of post-truth and moral relativism may be akin in some cases, yet, they are different from each other. Moral relativism denies the existence of absolute moral principles but not of truths. Moral principles depend primarily on culture, history, and geography. However, the post-truth does not refer to any absolute or intersubjective truth since it depends on individual interests. Each individual believes that he/she has his/her own truth, meaning what he/she thinks is true. So, it is clear that the truth may differ according to personal interests, changing ideas, or situations.

Understanding post-truth

Suppose we want to talk about “post-truth,” then we must especially notice differences between knowledge, information, misinformation, and disinformation. Misinformation is information known as “true.” An individual who has misinformation does not know that it is not “true.” Disinformation is known to be false; however, its defender defends it as “true.”

The concept of “true” could be evaluated from a different point of view. The question “what is true?” is an old question I will not be interested in here. On the other hand, as a predicate, as in “it is true,” it implies a belief in the form of “I believe that it is true .”

Information usually has a very subjective basis since it requires my own personal sensations. This kind of information relates my consciousness with physical things utilizing my sensations. The other kind of information may come from my visual and written media. It is acceptable to me since it depends on my pre-judgments, interpretations, interests, etc. It is clear that all kinds of information could be formulated as “I believe that it is true.” This also gives us an opportunity to change any news into information. However, “believing to be true” or “being convinced by anybody” makes it very difficult to differentiate any news, including misinformation, from the information.

As for disinformation, the worst part of the problem that appears to be here is that disinformation is, in fact, fake news that is known as “true.” It is sometimes known that it is not true, however, it is possible to elaborate it as an honest and actual fact. It spreads quickly and easily, and consequently, everybody takes it as true and accepts it as accurate. Moreover, probably this progress will be taken for granted by the public, who are, in fact, innocent sources of misinformation. COVID19 is a characteristic and well-known example of this recent social reality. Post-truth awaits us as a result of such progress.

Disinformations, as well as misinformation, are, without a doubt, very important sources of post-truth. However, it seems that the epistemological character of the relation between “belief” and “information” has a very important role in forming any kind of post-truth.

Social media, including the internet and visual and written media, orient and manage our beliefs. They shape our truths. Commercial and political interests promote our emotions. Consequently, instead of old ‘sound truth,’ ‘post-truth’ which consists of beliefs and emotions, form our paradigm.

We can not ignore or undervalue this new paradigm or leave aside it as a contemporary and temporary fact since there seems to be a strong connection between some problems (for instance, environmental problems) and “modern” individuals because of their egocentric values and thoughts that must always be true. Eventually, environmental pollution is a consequence of our endless passions and passions of our ‘own truths’. This tragedy relates to our “modern society” and its egocentric individuals.

What is Identity Crisis?

Let me now say something about the identity crisis (I.C.) before elaborating on it together with the post-truth.

According to Merriam Webster, the definition of I.C. is: personal psychosocial conflict, especially in adolescence that involves confusion about one’s social role and often a sense of loss of continuity to one’s personality; A state of confusion in an institution or organization regarding its nature or direction

It is clear that personal psychosocial conflicts are not new and do not only belong to our contemporary societies. Moreover, we can talk about different kinds of conflicts, for instance, in adolescence and our older periods. Cultural exchanges or differences depending on income may also be a reason for a conflict, especially for I.C. There may be different causes for individual or institutional conflicts, which are also explainable with sociology, psychology, economy, anthropology, and philosophy.

Apprehending Identity Crisis with Post-truth

It is possible to elaborate on the meaning of identity and truth after philosophers like Lacan and Derrida and different philosophical points of view . As to “post-truth,” it is possible to elaborate on its meaning to understand our society and the meaning of I.C. in modern people and society.

From my point of view, I.C. would appear in everybody as well as in society, and it indicates, explicitly or implicitly, the transposition of specific paradigmatic modulations. The agent of these modulations may be different on the surface; however, they come from a common source: the magnificent old concept of “Truth,” yet, in fact, its modern version: the “post-truth.” The crisis would happen during the passage from one modulation to another, depending on the concept of “truth.” If we want to make the right decision, then the “Truth” will be an essential criterion. However, post-truth is replaced with it now, and these new criteria changed our old paradigms and threw us in contradictory feelings.

History indicates progress. Of course, some new facts in this progress may be worse than the former because of wars, illnesses, economic problems, etc. I would like to emphasize that IC may happen from good to better situations during the passage. It seems that the reason for this new kind of IC is that of modern technology with all its applications used by individuals. New technology does not just offer us new possibilities, and it also provides us with new emotions during the passage from good to better situations. Emotions like technology have no limits; they always reflect the new situations, targets, products, and happiness that

depend on them. Every individual seeks new happiness and an endless sense of well-being due to new technological products. All kinds of media define and provide us with new happiness, which provides IC. It seems that unsaturated happiness turns into a dream world full of fake senses of well-being. It is evident in itself that an IC is a byproduct of unsaturated happiness.

Technology offers us new and improved things for communication, sports, entertainment, relaxation, etc. We give existence to our individuality, our solipsistic feelings and achieve freedom. These concepts guide our actions to shape our emotions but without a sense of being satisfied individuals. Consequently, the IC will appear somewhere during this continuous progress due to unsaturated and unsatisfied feelings and endless demands. Post-truth has a vital role in and provides the opportunity for the individuals to see themselves always right. It is clear that “be always right” will be the cause of unsatisfied happiness.

Conclusion

Post-truth, as it is indicated above, is something that is true in relation to personal interests, profits, etc. It means that post-truth serves unsaturated and unsatisfied feelings and endless demands of individuals. However, the endless demands can easily turn into sadness, dissatisfaction, or in short, the identity crisis. Post-truth has two edges; it is a perfect instrument for feeling happy since it can provide a magical world and lead to a charming existence. On the other hand, a dream cannot continue permanently and leads to identity crises. The conflict between the post-truth and the reality, between the personal paradigms and social obligations, causes an identity crisis. I think the concept of “post-truth” could give us a new and different point of view to elaborate on identity crisis in the modern world.

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