DIGITAL IDENTITY AND THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE HUMAN SOUL

Does digital technology alter our identities? Why (not)? How? And what can we do about it? Though a now-constant background to our existence, the nature and consequences of digital technology remains veiled, and lights are only beginning to shine through—giving us as yet an obscured and dim insight. Recent movements in philosophy have provided some fruitful illumination.[1] This panel aims to extend these explorations by asking specifically about the effects of digital technology on the development—or disintegration—of personal identity. In particular, we will consider the themes of anonymity and pseudonymity, the (distortive) mirror of the digital environment and curated self-presentations, and the correspondent increase of divergent sexual attractions and gender identities.

To focus our discussion, we wish to take up these five propositions:

1. The world is dividing into those who want to know the truths of reality and those who want to live in fantasy.

2. The present uses of digital technology are ordered towards production of fantasy.

3. Digital fantasies allow the illusion of creating false personal identities.

4. These false personal identities are not merely significant but also causal of profound psychological fragmentation.

5. Postgender ideologies and divergent sexual attractions thrive in this fragmented environment.

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[1] Books such as Antón Barba-Kay's 2023: *A Web of Our Own Making*, James Madden's 2023: *Thinking about Thinking*, Brian Cantwell Smith's 2019: *The Promise of Artificial Intelligence: Reckoning and Judgment*, Edward Engelmann's 2017: *Nature and the Artificial*, and Anthony Wachs' 2015: *New Science of Communication*—or the Humanitas Technica project at the Lyceum Institute, of which this panel forms a part.