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A new narration of the concept "identity" and method for teaching identification

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Abstract

The main objective of the current paper is offering a new narration of the concept "identity" as well as a method of teaching identification based on Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. The "formation of identity" is a process happening in the grounding of constant speculative interaction. In the end, identity is a product that begins with self-understanding, is adjusted by other-understanding and leads to co-understanding and the absence of speculative interactions and a constant challenging force are taken as crises.

Keywords: identity, communication, Gadamer, fusion, horizons.

Una nueva narración del concepto "identidad" y método para la enseñanza de la identificación

Resumen

El objetivo principal del presente documento es ofrecer una nueva narración del concepto "identidad", así como un método de enseñanza de identificación basado en la hermenéutica filosófica de Hans-Georg Gadamer. La "formación de identidad" es un proceso que ocurre en la base de la interacción especulativa constante. Al final, la identidad es un producto que comienza con la autocomprensión, se ajusta mediante la comprensión ajena y conduce a la comprensión mutua, y la ausencia de interacciones especulativas y una fuerza desafiante constante se toman como crisis.

Palabras clave: identidad, comunicación, Gadamer, fusión, horizontes

1. INTRODUCTION

The new communication technologies and the information highways therein, and particularly social networks have led to an evolution in the intensity and the extent of the human communications in every corner of the world and therefore they have created a quantitative and qualitative change in the way the humans communicate with one another; meaning that, nowadays, the use of social networks and presence in such highways provide for the enjoyment of massive information within the lowest time possible and conversational, written and visual communication is made feasible in relatively low (financial) costs (Bagheri, 2010). Therefore, cyberspace

allows the users to get familiar with the thoughts and the mindsets of the others more than ever. This is while in the past the recognition of the others was more made in face-to-face interactions in certain geographical and terrestrial environment. Although such an interaction has not been totally put aside, but is now less accentuated; today, with the advent of such phenomena as virtual space has not only challenged the traditional patterns of communication but it has also practically created new conditions in the arena of humans' identities. If the humans comprised of their mindsets and religious possessions or, in other words, if it is said that the "belongings" of an individual formulate his or her identity, these belongings can be potentially influenced and also can influence in readier ways of interaction. This depends on the extent to which a thinking horizon exerts an influence on the other. But, can a third state be also imagined? Or, it can be that in both of the two previous states aligning and being aligned have happened with no control and contemplation and in free interaction. But, it has to be figured out what identity really is and in which of the states it is a crisis and what solutions are offered to tackle it. Besides offering a review of the notions of the experts in this area of identity and crises related thereto, the present article intends to extract the implicit message in Hans-Georg Gadamer's utterances regarding the meaning and conceptualization of identity and the methods of identification as well as the quality of its occurrence.

2. BACKGROUND REVIEW

There are many studies conducted on such topics as identity but a research on the identity in the communication era based on

Gadamer's concept of the fusion of horizons is missing from the study literature. In this section of the article, we deal with the survey of the studies that are found most related to the present study's variables.

Alikhani (2004) in a study called "identity crisis, globalization and its effect on the social, cultural and psychological identity" stated that globalization provides for the emergence of diverse identity, psychological, religious and cultural crises that encompasses pluralism and cultural colonization, change in the traditional social structures, strengthening of secularism, reduction in the social identity and creation of complexity in the social relations.

Giddens (2006) in a study titled "aspects of identity building in the globalization status in regard of the structural problems of social and individual identity" has concentrated on conditions wherein globalization took place. In his opinion, the existence of a novel strategic approach that describes and interprets identity in globalization era is necessary for explaining and understanding the social changes in local, regional and global levels.

Ameli (2005) in a study called "cultural globalization and Muslim identity" has dealt with the construction of an Islamic identity as well as with the general differences between the religious identities in traditional, modern and postmodern cultural environments. In his idea, cultural globalization is in a close relationship with economical and political globalization and globalization and its effect on Muslim identities is not uniform and does not lead to the integration and

homogenization of the Islamic identity with the global culture. Islamic identity takes a decisive position in a great many of the cases and resists the global culture. As for the grafted identities, the intra-individual disputes and confrontations can lead to the identity crisis and end in self-alienation.

Haji Hosseini (2002) in a study called "identity crisis and social deviations" has come to the conclusion that identity crisis with its great many of the aspects is a key factor in expanding the domain of social deviations including the necessary needs of the current society.

The extract of the prior studies can be stated in the following statement that if the humans' thoughts and thinking horizons go astray from their rising point and from the culture governing the society the individuals therein will be inflicted with a crisis, i.e. potential interaction and communication can be considered as an identity crisis. As it was mentioned, the status quo of the world, on the one hand, makes interaction and communication necessary and, on the other hand, individuals, the social classes and their governing states should make efforts (claim) the preservation of their own identities. But, the issue here is what could be done for now?

Identity

Jenkins (2002) defines identity as "identity, in the Latin language, bears two major denotations: the first expresses the absolute similarity, to wit one thing is similar to the other; the second

denotation talks of distinction that assumes consistence and continuation in the passage of time". This way, the identity includes a concept of similarity from two various angles. The concept "identity" establishes two probable proportions simultaneously between individuals or objects; the similarity and difference in identity means being unified but from two different aspects: being like the others of the same class and being like oneself in the course of time (Khaksepar, 2012).

The term "identity" was first offered by Erikson. He describes identity as a general internal feeling. In his mind, identity is the process in which individual changes are combined with the social needs for the future. Castles (2001), as well, knows "identity as the signification based on a cultural feature or an associated collection of cultural traits that are given priority over the other semantic sources. Based on this definition, the identities have always been generated and regenerated". But, there is also provided a rather different description of identity that knows identity as a concept related to the semantics. Semantics is not the inherent characteristic of an individual and/or a society rather it is the product of the agreements and disagreements and it is considered as a one hundred percent relative concept and as opined by Niche "identity cannot be described within the format of an absolute concept rather it is a concept in the process of being generated"; also, Hall approaches identity in a dialectical ground and defines identity in our beings and not beings (Ameli, 2005). In between, there are others who have realized the genetic features (traits) and the learning process (role) as the two fundamental factors giving rise to the formation of

identity. This same role or assuming of a role exerts a mutual effect between what we and the others do and our identities are confirmed or rejected accordingly (Bovini, 1994). Or, it can be stated that "identity" is a "self-recognition based on accepting a role that is determined by one's own self or by the others or a combination of both. Such accepted roles determine our behaviors in various situations". Besides the general descriptions, the experts of the field have enumerated criteria and factors for the formation of identity. It is imaginable that if identity and its formation as well as its criteria lay outside the definition thereof by every individual or group then it cannot be called identity or it might have been troubled. For example, regarding identity, Giddens (2006) deals with discussions on personal identity, modernity and globalization. He believes that "change in the form of personal identity and the globalization phenomenon have constituted two local and global dialectic poles during recent times". Contrarily, there is another group who has made talks of an independent and intact identity in the communication era and introduce the topic of original identity; but, Giddens (2006) is of the belief that even the changes in the very private aspects of personal life has a lot to do with widespread social contacts. An array of different factors influences the relationships between personal identity and social institutions. Such a "reflectivity" of the modernity era is expanded to the depth and subtle parts of the humans. Or, the theories describing elements for the identity have considered them as posing a crisis in case that they are found outlying the presumed identity.

Stewart Hall and Dr. Ameli (2005) point out the followings as the elements constituting identity:

1) Continuity: an "I" that is constantly repeating itself and in fact a person who loses his or her "I" features no identity.

2) Distinction: it is an element that creates "identification" in discussions pertaining to identity.

3) Love: it is an accentuated tendency towards identity the opposite point of which is a hatred that is a barrier to the identities.

4) Special Prominence: identity is not consisted of an individual's all being or not being rather identity is their prominence (Ameli, 2005). They believe that the emergence of crisis in individual and social identities is not far from expectation in case that any of these foresaid elements are missing.

Communication

Coley defines it as:

 "Communication is a mechanism based on which and by means of which human relations form and the entire intellectual manifestations and the means for transferring and preserving

them within the spatial and temporal frameworks are developed based thereon. Communication embraces all relations, facial expressions and behaviors and movements and the tones of voice and words and writings and prints and railroad and telegraph and telephone are instruments that are currently being made to overcome time and space" (Mo'tamednejad, 1992: 14).

Some believe that communication technology diminishes continuity, distinction and love in regard to the identities as a result of which identity crises are inevitable. Communication process, especially the internet, weakens and destroys the element of love and affection to identity via placing the individuals in a diverse and pluralistic environment, providing them with the ability to get in touch with cultures that are sometimes endowed gazing glaze by the representation industry. With the elimination of such a love and affection to identity, the element of continuity will be subsequently dismissed because it is the feeling of attachment that results in continuity. On the other hand, the globalization process that has coca-colonized the identities via facilitating communication (Ameli, 2005) will destroy the element of distinction through homogenization and standardization of the identities and this per se will extend the domain of the crises. Crisis means tension or conflict or a state of imbalance and deviation from the truth. More precisely, crisis can be regarded as a special situation or temporal and special frame as a result of which the ethnic group of concern (women, men, etc.) have fallen short of accurate recognition of their own existential truth and rights as well as presenting them to the others as caused by special historical or newly-emergent conditions in such a manner that the group has not only been unsuccessful in drawing a line between imagination and reality but it

has also been incapable of gaining a clear insight thereof (Alta'ee, 1997).

In some thinkers' ideas, the most serious crisis with which an individual can face occurs when the identity is undergoing the process of formation. The crisis is serious in that lack of success in encountering it is followed by many outcomes. An individual lacking a well-formed and serious identity will face numerous problems in the course of his life and, particularly, in adulthood. Erikson reminds that identity crisis may happen at any time and it is not specific to the adolescence (Ibid). Having an inappropriate understanding of one's own culture and its relationships with the other cultures will cause crisis; also, economic and social difficulties in countries experiencing transition are more intensified causes of crisis in regard of individual identities that will manifest itself in social forms later on (Alikhani, 2004).

In the meantime, globalization, as well, accelerates the disintegration of the time and place due to the astonishing signs of progress made in communication technologies and tears down the threads binding the social space with the certain territory and place more than before. This way, social affairs are freed of the narrow and limited circle of space and expand into a far wider space. In the meanwhile, the traditional role of the cyberspace provides for the social life's space-centeredness more than ever; while place can be more increasingly delimited and bordered, space dodges any delimitation and demarcation effort. The place is always inclined

towards registration and intensification, but space makes the affairs more fluid and free. Place creates a gap and separation and space brings about closeness and aggregation. Deterritorialization stemming from globalization causes some sort of identity crisis because it undermines the place's ability of identification and turn place in a complicated cultural space. Time is also an identity-constructing factor. Time and space are the necessary conditions of finding an identity. Stewart Hall expresses that if we consider identity as a representational system, then time and space should be recounted as its main coordinates. Globalization (and the development of communication) creates a timeless world and it in fact destroys a major source of identification (Golmohammadi, 2001).

Another important indicator of identity crisis is the "values conflict" in a macro-social level and inability to control such a phenomenon can threaten the social coherence or the social being. This is exactly what causes value conflicts with the identity in the confrontation with the other cultures as a result of the expansion in the communication process which will end in a final crisis in identity. The crisis is serious in that its unsuccessful handling would be accompanied by a great many of the consequences. When crisis strikes, nobody exactly knows who everyone is and what he does because nothing is clear. A person is a today something and another tomorrow. Everyone becomes like a person who has lost his sense of navigation. He takes several steps towards a direction and then in another direction and maybe quite opposite to the first direction.

The human being with identity crisis falls into turmoil and disorders of a pure environment and is infatuated in a wistful situation wondering which direction to take. Evolutions in the concepts of place and time, as well as multi-reservoir nature of identity, is inter alia the serious and essential outcomes of the communication revolution and information society in the new era each of which are known to have imposed variegation, instability and even crisis on identity. The modern communication technologies have made changes in the concepts of time and place while place and space feature high identification abilities. More clearly, the delimitation and demarcation features of place provide for this chance of the human beings to acquire the required security and comfort through feeling distinctiveness, stability and group attachment (Castles, 2001). In fact, three particular identity-formation task of place are laid upon the foundation of its capability of being demarcated and delimited. But, the modern technologies eliminate borders, places and spaces and make individuals exposed to instability and crisis. Since pace as compared to space is more capable and able to satisfy the needs to stability, distinction and social attachment, the information and network society create some sort of instability, looseness and lack of persistence in identity and mentality via Deterritorialization and making the social life more space-oriented. Castles (2001) believes that the new communities are all inflicted with some sort of identity crisis following the expansion of human communications and the variation of the identities and they are seeking to immune themselves against the adverse effects of identity crises through construction of defensive dams that he terms resistant identities and programmed identities.

Based on the above material, the new identity is not considered as an accepted identity by the possessors of thoughts because they have applied reforms like Deterritorialization, eradication of the traditions and similar cases along with the crisis in identity which signifies that the preservation of intellectual and physical belongings and attitudinal possessions determine the originality and the identity of an individual and these are the things that are deemed good. To confront such an important issue, numerous and diverse decisions have been made in different communities. Some groups do not basically adopt positive approaches to information technology and others in a second stage do not welcome some aspects thereof, and exert restrictions on individuals' applications of information technologies as well as an array of the other decisions. But, can this novel identity be not called crisis or fake or damaged identity?

Philosophical Hermeneutics

Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics are tied to understanding and its existential structure and it aims at describing the nature of understanding. In such a perspective, the occurrence of understanding is pendent upon several elements: historicity, tradition, language, prejudgment and the fusion of the horizons; these elements and prerequisites have latent in them the interaction between the "I" and "other". The prerequisites of understanding serve the actualization of a mission transcending the hedges of human affairs and Gadamer's names them building (education).

Bildung

In Gadamer's ideas, Bildung is a mission that guides the human beings towards unity in general affairs and getting freed of the insular individual perspectives. It causes coordination and compromise of an individual's self and ego and enables the recognition of one's own presence in another; in fact, building surpasses the limits of what a person knows with no intermediation. Bildung is the ability to accept what is different from us and it is the discovery of the very overall perspective by the assistance of which the individual can understand "an objective matter in the intrinsic freedom of its context" (Farhadpour, 1992: 23). Bildung, physically, means a harmonic shape and organ, an element formulating the humanities atmosphere and sets the necessary conditions for making an assessed judgment of the other cultures and traditions. Bildung is the coordination and unity between historical awareness and aesthetical awareness; of course, it is more a common sense or interest rather than being intellectual (Ibid). The common sense, in Gadamer's idea, is the yield of human life in a social-historical world that is accumulated and truth can be readily understood thereof; It is this same sense that helps us evaluate something but we do not seem to have an always clear-cut and objective reason for it. In the humanities, understanding of the others entails surpassing the self-conceit and attainment of an overall perspective. For a mission like Bildung to be actualized, Gadamer's speaks of elements that are prerequisites of understanding.

Elements of Understanding in Philosophical Hermeneutics

Historicity: In terms of the mankind's historicity", Gadamer takes a more radical approach than Heidegger. Knowing mankind as being history-oriented, Gadamer confirms all the human beings' actions and reactions based on his historicity; for instance, the effectiveness of history and tradition on understanding, the semantic plurality of the effects, the endlessness of understanding as an action and so forth are all within the framework of the mankind's "historicity"; In his mind, making a distinction between correct and wrong prejudgment takes place in the process of understanding within certain interval, but he, himself, defines the scale for separating the correct from the wrong prejudgment, to wit the temporal interval, as "clearly, the temporal gap is something different from the extinction of our interests in a subject matter, time interval is something that allows the matter's real meaning surface completely. But, searching and exploring the real meaning of a text or an artwork will never end and it is in fact an endless process. Gadamer proposes this subject within the format of "effective history" principle and/or "a historically influenced awareness" and expresses that it is in fact a principle out of which the entire philosophical hermeneutics can be induced. Gadamer's intention of "effective history" is conveyed in saying that the power of tradition considering what it belongs to is in such a manner that the commentator is influenced by that tradition even in case of its opposition or reaction thereto. Understanding is not an exclusively subjective action and something that can only be derived from the Interpreter's mentality rather it is more of an effective historical nature.

Understanding the context of any subject is rooted in a complete prior history (Va'ezi, 2007). In fact, this is not history that belongs to us rather we belong to history and are born out of it.

Gadamer does not believe that the claim for or the hope in truth should be discarded in the investigation of history. In Gadamer's opinion, our most often uninspected prejudgments make us stay bound to the tradition and therefore provide for our restrictions to single methods. To put it differently, historians and scientists (natural or social sciences) speak of the realities; and, their very confrontation and connection to reality make them remain unconfused in the world of hallucinations. Our understanding of the history is the yield of horizons' fusion and it is obtained independent from our volition. Here, the independence in the occurrence of our understanding does not mean our involuntariness in the process of understanding rather our shoulder part of the understanding process. An individual (or the society) cannot alone direct and shape understanding. Understanding is the result of the fusion of horizons. Tradition: it is as well connected to the historical aspect of the humans and of a great influence in interpreting a text. Being attached to a history and a tradition is concealed in the context of understanding and interpretation. Of course, from Gadamer's viewpoint, the domination of tradition does not mean full-scale imposition of limitation on humans rather it is indicative of the real epistemological limitation of the mankind. In other words, tradition is not the barrier to our real recognition of our own selves, the others and the world.

Language: In Gadamer's mind, language is the necessity of the mankind's existence. Language is the territory of mankind's social being and it is the fundamental common factor of humans' understanding. Mankind understands himself and the world within the framework of language. Human beings are always within the periphery of language in their cognizance of themselves and the world. Gadamer states that:

> "It is through language that an existence can be understood". It does not mean that the reality or the entity of a being resembles the words and lexicons rather he asserts that our understanding of the realities can be expanded and perfected by means of language. Our interpretation of the world is a language matter. In fact, language is the real indicator of the limitations; language always surrounds us" (Madani, 2003: 8).

Prejudgment: in Gadamer's opinion, mankind does not go to a text with an empty mind rather he approaches the text with a constellation of expectations and prejudgments. Every understanding of a text begins by prejudgment. Prejudgments not only are no barriers to the understanding but they are also the necessary condition. These prejudgments are rooted should be sought in tradition, inquiries and expectations. There is no truth in the notions stemming from our perspectives and interpretations. Everyone interprets the mankind and the world based on his or her own human perspectives. Our needs are even an essential presumption in understanding the world.

Fusion of Horizons: one other element of understanding, as opined by Gadamer, is the fusion of horizons. Gadamer holds that

humans' understanding and sublimity are created as a result of binding the horizons. By horizon, he means the same standpoint from which we look at different things. Gadamer states that "horizon is the same hermeneutic position of an individual who gets involved in understanding the texts and the subjects based on the expediencies thereof". "The fusion of the present horizon with the past horizon or, generally, the fusion of horizons interprets the text". Therefore, it appears that the fusion of the horizons is the result of bilateral involvement of the commentator's mind and an unsystematic dialectic act that outputs a product called understanding. Gadamer knows fusion of horizons, as the most fundamental of his notions in hermeneutics, a gain obtained via language and he calls the instant in which the understanding perfects as the "unanimity instant". This is the instant at which time the interpreter's language mixes with the language of the work and a shared language is acquired.

Gadamer knows understanding as the product of "fusion of horizons". In his idea, interpreter's horizon and the text's horizon are both effective in understanding. According to Gadamer, "fusion of horizons is a form of open and exposed conversation whose product is not predetermined and we not enter a dialogue not only with a neutral mind but also with our entire biases and values and prejudgment". It can be concluded from Gadamer's sayings that the conversation of the traditions with all its prejudgments and biases is

the only way to get to the truth and that the people know language as a means to reach for understanding, but Gadamer realizes it completely refuted and too narrow a look, knows language as the breath to understanding and nothing else should be considered as its precedent or descendent.

Gadamer believes that in reading a text we are, first of all, seeking for a truth and a content that it is intending to articulate, meaning that we try to come to an agreement over a shared topic and if we fail to achieve a common topic, it means we have not been able to understand it based on our own logical reason. In addition, Gadamer introduces the subject of other acceptance. In the process of fusing the horizons, we encounter another being and, resultantly, meanwhile getting familiar with the other horizon we get to know our own selves, as well.

The agreement is achieved via language and in conversation, in such a way that Gadamer states that inquisition is linked to the concept of a text. Understanding a text or, better said, understanding the meaning of the text is like finding an answer to a question. In his mind, the subject encountered as an object does not require direction, supervision and manipulation in the course of dialectic understanding. In such an approach, the subject posits a question by finding an answer to which we share understanding it. In such an understanding model, the foundation of subject-object is

collapsed because seemingly here the subject becomes the identifier of the appositive. Such a sharing of understanding is made feasible in conversation. In fact, if an individual wishes to adopt a dialectic approach, s/he should sit conversing with the subject and in such a dialogue enough opportunity should be given to the subject to talk and be revealed. Dialectic is the art and the technique of directing a dialogue. Imagining understanding as a conversation, understanding and interpretation are considered as an event that happens as a result of a dialectic conversation between the interpreter and the text. Understanding is essentially an influenced historical event.

Gadamer puts forth dialectic understanding. In his ideas, since understanding is the product of the subject's activity, it has to take place for the interpreter. Understanding is an event that happens to us beyond our wants and actions and we expect its actualization (Va'ezi, 2007).

In Gadamer's hermeneutics, the importance is given to the elements of understanding as well as to its inseparability from rendering. The element of understanding in Gadamer's hermeneutics is so much credible that the description of understanding performance has been posited as the objective of Gadamer's hermeneutics philosophy by some. He, himself, in a great many of the cases, withdraws from paying a direct attention to the principles of correct interpretation of a text; instead, he seeks to

illuminate the truth of understanding, so for the same reason, he emphasizes that understanding should be signified as part of meaning actualization process at every stage of interpretation (Madani, 2003). From Gadamer's perspective, understanding is an event. It is an unpredictable happening and it cannot be directed. It is an involuntary and unrepeatable event that happens following a conversation at a specific instant which is termed as the instant of horizons' fusion and destiny-making instant by Gadamer.
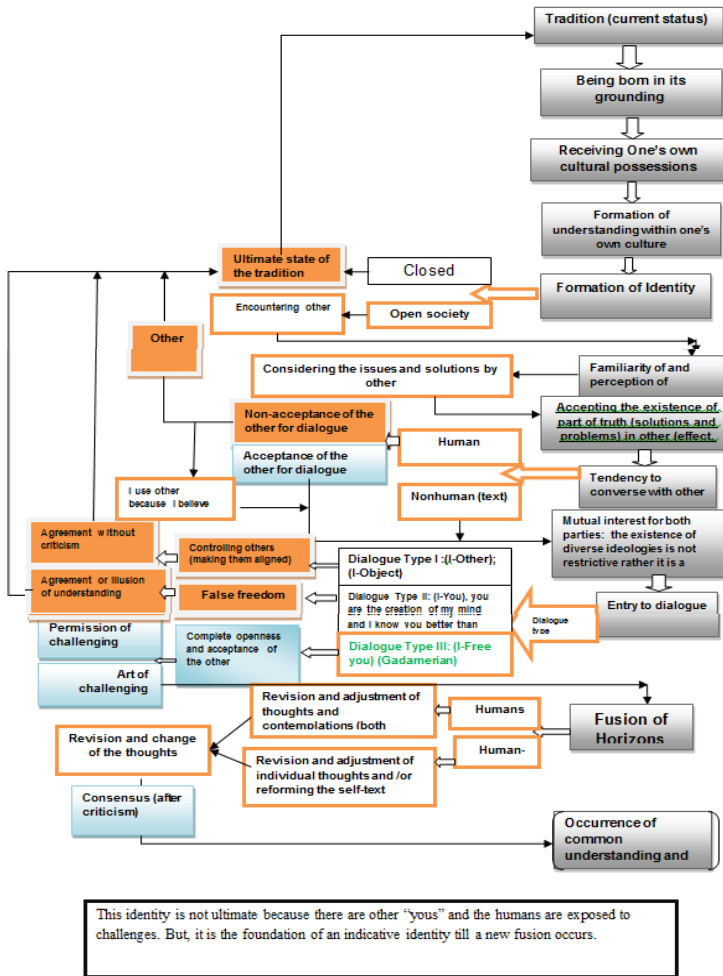
The fusion of the horizons is yielded following the inquiring-answering by the interpreter and understanding results from such a fusion and an unpredictable dialogue between the horizons and a new horizon forms in every new understanding. It is for the same reason that Gadamer knows understanding as more a generative activity than a reconstructive one because reconstruction, in its strict sense, is not feasible. We are surrounded by our semantic horizons and it is impossible for us to abruptly free ourselves of our interests, presumptions and questions as well as expectations and engage in the perfect reconstruction of the past semantic horizons (Va'ezi, 2007). From Gadamer's viewpoint, there is no such a thing as understanding unless by the intermediation of language; language is the general aspect of all understandings (Ibid) and understanding is enumerated as a language-oriented phenomenon. Therefore, there is a subtle relationship between language and understanding in such a manner that in the absence of language no

understanding would come about; and, since hermeneutics is the knowledge of rendering a text, the only pre-understanding available to hermeneutics is language. Gadamer calls this relationship a 'verbal game" (Ibid).

Philosophical Hermeneutic and Identity

Since the fusion of horizons is a speculative interaction with an "other" with the intention of understanding a subject matter, there would be no understanding in case that such an important issue is not actualized and/or an idea is imposed. In the meantime, two situations are imaginable: 1) egocentricity: in which a thinking horizon tries to dominate the others; and, 2) otherness: which is the result of individuals' fears who take passive stances so as not to be omitted or for lack of awareness. But, being one's own self and preserving one's own possessions, within the course of exerting and taking an influence, is possible on the grounding that the interaction does not lead to "emptiness of one's own self" and, equally, emptiness of the others'. The issue can be seen depicted in the following diagram[1].

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[1] The diagram is excerpted, with some changes made therein, from Khanjarkhani et al (2006), in an article called "understanding oneself, others and together", published in the journal of the basics of education, Ferdowsi University, Mashhad, Iran.

| Tradition (current status) |
| Being born in its grounding |
| Receiving One's own cultural possessions |
| Formation of understanding within one's own culture |
| Formation of Identity |

Closed — Ultimate state of the tradition

Encountering other — Open society

Other

Considering the issues and solutions by other — Familiarity of and perception of

Non-acceptance of the other for dialogue

Acceptance of the other for dialogue — Human — Accepting the existence of part of truth (solutions and problems) in other (effect.

I use other because I believe — Nonhuman (text) — Tendency to converse with other

Agreement without criticism

Controlling others (making them aligned) — Dialogue Type I :(I-Other); (I-Object) — Mutual interest for both parties: the existence of diverse ideologies is not restrictive rather it is a

Agreement or illusion of understanding — False freedom — Dialogue Type II: (I-You), you are the creation of my mind and I know you better than — Entry to dialogue

Permission of challenging — Complete openness and acceptance of the other — Dialogue Type III: (I-Free you) (Gadamerian) — Dialogue type

Art of challenging — Revision and adjustment of thoughts and contemplations (both — Humans — **Fusion of Horizons**

Revision and change of the thoughts — Revision and adjustment of individual thoughts and /or reforming the self-text — Human-

Consensus (after criticism) — Occurrence of common understanding and

This identity is not ultimate because there are other "yous" and the humans are exposed to challenges. But, it is the foundation of an indicative identity till a new fusion occurs.

According to the above diagram, an individual is born and shaped in his own tradition; tradition is the cornerstone and getting familiar with and understanding tradition is a must. Human beings segregation from their tradition is a factor contributing to the emergence of problems in identity and its formation. But, from the

very beginning of birth, the parents' lack of openness[2] restrains the individual's identity to the possessions of the familial society. In fact, an individual's playground is restricted and influenced by the parents. These presuppositions are challenged as soon as confrontation is made with the other's issues and solutions. The same holds within the society level[3]. Of course, a richer culture is imaginable in which case the possessors of that culture can unravel the undiscovered capacities of their culture with it being questioned by the "other"; this is the sublimity of a culture which is not gained in receiving content but through self-understanding as a result of the inquisition. But, the products of a closed society are limited to itself and it fears encountering with other's thoughts and endeavors to evade such confrontations. In philosophical hermeneutics, identity is obtained and sublimed via living with such conflicts. In fact, the objective is enabling individuals to understand (and co-understand) not curbing oneself and the others; the more the interaction scope is extensive, the more diverse will be the view horizons over such grounds. The presence of the other horizons is not only in line with the creation of conflicts rather the creation of a common understanding is intended

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[2] An important point here is that Gadamer does not consider tradition as a foe of reason and freedom the way it was thought in the enlightenment and romanticism eras. Reason is always formed within the context of tradition. Tradition provides for the flow of perceptions to which we are exposed. In fact, Gadamer's interpretations resulted in giving the tradition a second time validity and credibility after its destruction in enlightenment era. But, the issue that has always been prominent for the hermeneutics and the critics is that which tradition is superior finally? Are all traditions correct? As it was mentioned, Gadamer makes an answer to these questions dependent on the openness of the possessors of traditions to the others; besides the issues of this "other", we might be confronted with the problems of the day. The ones having a claim over a tradition should not fear encountering (others) because the existential truth of the traditions can be revealed if they are exposed to the others and if they are allowed to join the game. The issue is clearly vivid in the generation and the weakening of some ideologies or in the survival of some traditions and their one-thousand-year effects.

that the features being beyond the understanding by every single individual. So, reception of tradition, tendency to improve thoughts and interaction along with criticism gradually fortify the individual's adobe of identity.

3. CONCLUSION

In the today's world, the individuals' identities are the product of the fusion of thinking horizons and cultures with which they are in connection. The more the speculative interactions, the more the identification will distance from being controlled. In fact, identity crisis happens in identity being controlled. The difference that can be seen in this regard in the philosophical hermeneutics is that crisis comes in two forms: remaining in one's own cocoon and becoming captives of the others and their cultures. Considering these descriptions, since communication has complicated the identity formation process in the today's world, the setting ill become auspicious for a great many of cultural specialisms in case that elements of understanding (tradition, historicity, interaction and contemplation, fusion of horizons and so forth) are found absent. In fact, if "I" encounters "you" with no interaction and contemplation, it will remain unexposed to criticism hence stagnant even though it promotes "my" identity and if a stronger "you" featuring richer tradition encounters "I" with no interaction and criticism then the ideas will be imposed on 'I". Both of these states are identity crises.

So, the contact and confrontation of the cultures and identities that result from the expansion of communication is not per se a harmful phenomenon rather it can additionally be the source of positive effects on the lives of the individuals. This necessitates that the individuals be fully aware of and completely dominating their own cultural values and, on the other hand, they should have the ability to listen (not surrender) to the others' thoughts. In a speculative interaction as opined by Gadamer, the interaction happens between an individual and another individual or between an individual with his past in the case of the absence of which crisis would arise[4]. Under such circumstances, the individual experiences some sort of contemporaneity and he finds himself in an instantaneous world in the framework of which time cannot be felt while one of the main prerequisites of identity is the feeling of continuity in the course of time and mentality as an awareness of the time; therefore, when the time like continuity is eliminated, the subject unity is lost, as well, and a sense of temporariness and variability dominates the human's mind. Modern communication technologies in the communication era have not only made different groups and individuals have access to various and numerous cultures, but it also makes their world and their social references temporally more closed. This means the individual is provided with both a speculative interaction with his own and the others' past and present. Thus, the few number and even the singularity of the social references in the traditional communities that readily

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[4] In some communities, connection to the past may challenge an individual and the challenge may provide the grounding for understanding the identity. When an individual's identity is defined by a group dominating him, this situation is recounted as crisis-but it is considered a correct process of understanding in philosophical hermeneutic.

supplies the humans' identity needs to social attachment and belonging is diminished and the individual is forced to identify himself with small and large social entities of various types. The identity sources and choices that are offered under such conditions are not only diverse and numerous rather they are also sometimes contradictory. This way, social references, and resultantly the identities, are constantly fluid, in a process of continuously adjusting and reconstructing (themselves and the others). Such a type of learning turns the formation of identity to a conflicting area, but such conflicts happen step-by-step within the course of time and surroundings of a place; it means that the crisis is divided into smaller parts and sections and it resides in the humans' growth process in whole and it does not feature abrupt occurrence and is not therefore limited to a certain period of time or a specific place. In fact, in such a perspective (hermeneutics look), a crisis happens when the entire possessions of an individual are challenged all of a sudden and it considers the identity revolution a crisis not a gradual reconstruction of identity because gradual and continuous reconstruction featuring speculative interaction strengthens the foundation of identity for the presence of numerous supervisors closely following the formation of the identity. There maybe arised a question as to what authority or source determines the supervisors and their qualifications of supervision? Based on the hermeneutics mindset, speculative interaction is important in the process of understanding and sublimation and this does not mean submission to "other". Neither "I" nor "other" is the controller. So, the absence of an opposite pole (other) would cause stagnation and stagnation and residence are brittle.

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