

# INDIVIDUATION AND SALVATION IN THE ERA OF SOCIAL MEDIA

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## ABSTRACT

*How has the virtual reality of social media impacted our self-image? Has increased communication and possibility for public self-expression brought us closer to ourselves and others? This paper proposes to examine the negotiation of intersectional postmodern social identity via a brief examination of the functions of social media, in the framework of individuation and personality integration. The historical role of tradition and modernity / postmodernity / metamodernity will be explored; suggestions will be offered for the creative use of social media as an instrument of self-expression, and the future of individuation in the era of social media will be discussed from a depth psychological perspective. The impact of this technological development on our psychology is then viewed in the context of an Orthodox Christian understanding of salvation.*

**Keywords:** social media, self-image, individuation, salvation, Orthodox spirituality, theosis, postmodernity, Jung, psychology, theology

## Introduction

### *The birth of social media*

Funded initially by the US Department of Defence investigating the time-sharing of computers in the 1960<sup>s</sup>, technological advances which led to the internet we know today mushroomed in the six ensuing decades. The internet has grown from its initially specialized and localized academic and technical use to a global popular phenomenon, ultimately becoming the almost essential modern home accessory it is today.

Beginning in 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic with its requirements of physical isolation, social distancing and lockups, has reinforced the importance of public internet access, and changed the character of work/home boundaries. Ironically perhaps, the