

# METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES OF MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES' INFLUENCE ON HUMAN BEING AND GEOPOLITICAL PROCESSES

Andrii KUTSYK

## ABSTRACT:

This article is focused on the conceptualisation of the methodological foundations of the anthropological dimension of the communicative space of media and communication technologies. This text examines various approaches and concepts with the help of which the problems of new communication technologies, in particular social networking sites and messengers, are currently being investigated. The article emphasises that the research methodology of media communication technologies is based and develops in the dimension of an interdisciplinary strategy, which involves the synthesis of philosophical-anthropological, media-philosophical and socio-philosophical approaches, which enables a complex and multifaceted study of the relationships and mutual influences between media technologies and development of personality and social practices, political and geopolitical processes.

## KEY WORDS:

communication, information society, media, methodological approaches, person, politics

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## 1 Introduction

The emergence and accelerated development of digital information and communication technologies, the spread of social media and messengers determine a new stage in the development of the information society and interpersonal communication. The hypermodern world is becoming a world of interactive exchanges, global social interactions and accelerated transformations. Time and space barriers disappear in communication, which is transferred to the virtual dimension. These processes have a significant impact on all spheres of life of a person and society, actualising not only the technical and communication aspects of the development of the information network society, but also a wide range of complex philosophical-worldview, moral-ethical, socio-cultural, psychological problems. Among them are qualitative changes in the nature and forms of interpersonal communication, problems of virtual (network) identity formation, changes in value and meaning priorities, formation of new varieties of socio-cultural creativity, new forms of public activism, etc.



Andrii Kutsyk, PhD.  
Faculty of Artes Liberales  
University of Warsaw  
Nowy Świat 69  
00-046 Warsaw  
Poland  
andriikutsyk@gmail.com

Andrii Kutsyk holds a PhD. in Philosophy of Media (Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University, Ukraine) and MA in Eastern European Studies (University of Warsaw, Poland). He is a research scholarship holder at the Artes Liberales Faculty at the University of Warsaw, Poland, a member of the *Research Institute for European Policy* and a secretary at the *European Journal of Transformation Studies* (indexed Web of Science database) as well as a freelance journalist.

The virtualisation of human life is gaining more and more scope, a long-term presence on the Internet is becoming commonplace for the vast majority of people today. The modern Internet environment, in which a person is immersed, transforms not only the life world of an individual, but also human nature itself, outlook and value orientations. Under such conditions, at the current stage of development of the information society and the formation of the digital media space, the anthropological aspect of media philosophy, problems of human and technical interaction, virtual socialisation and virtual identity are actualised. The socio-humanitarian potential of social networks and messengers needs to be reconsidered not only as new forms of communication, but also in terms of their influence on a person, their worldview, lifestyle, self-presentation, socio-cultural creativity, civic activism, etc.

The accelerated transformation of the life world of a modern person as a result of total media mediation caused the growing interest of representatives of humanitarian knowledge in the philosophical, anthropological and social aspects of the media. In this context, an analysis of the methodological foundations of the study of the impact of media communication technologies on human existence and geopolitical transformations in the conditions of the information society is important.

## 2 Theoretical Overview

Radical transformations of all spheres of social life and human life under the influence of mediatisation and informatisation caused the growing interest of scientists in this issue, moving it to the epicenter of the philosophical and humanitarian discourse. Among the great variety of theoretical concepts, we will try to highlight theories and concepts that have the most important methodological significance for the study of the problems of transformational processes in the modern information society. First of all, we are talking about theories that analyse the qualitative features of modern socio-cultural development and human life, caused by the accelerated progress and spread of information and communication technologies. Among the most recognised is the theory of information society, the contours of which were first outlined in reports presented to the Japanese government in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and deepened in the works of Japanese scientists Hayashi and Masuda.<sup>1</sup>

A more detailed justification of this concept was developed by Bell, who created a kind of synthesis of the concepts of post-industrial society and information society. Bell insightfully wrote about the fact that the revolutionary changes in the ways of organising and processing information, which occurred as a result of the convergence of electronic computing equipment with communication technologies, have a decisive impact on the development of society and all spheres of human activity: *“the formation of a new social structure based on telecommunications is of decisive importance for economic and social life, for the methods of knowledge production, as well as for the nature of human labor activity. The revolution in the organisation and processing of information and knowledge, in which the computer plays the main role, unfolds simultaneously with the development of industrial society.”*<sup>2</sup> In fact, it is about the emergence of the latest communication and information technologies, the spread of which fundamentally changes human life, forming a new social order. In the information society, all processes of social, economic, and political development, as well as everyday human life, are structured by information flows, “intelligent technologies”. Information and knowledge, new types of communication become decisive factors of human progress and development. Bell predicts the growth of the role of new elites, primarily the “elite of knowledge, especially the youth”, which is the fastest mastering computer and information technologies.<sup>3</sup>

Some aspects of the theory of the information society are analysed by Toffler, Martin, Webster, Latour, Castells, and others. In particular, Toffler, Martin, and Castells believed that in such a society the free circulation of information will contribute to the deepening of social-democratic transformations, the

growth of quantitative and qualitative levels of public activity, the expansion of opportunities for individual self-realisation, and the achievement of social consensus. Instead, Webster, recognising the leading role of information and communication technologies, critically evaluated the idea of the rise of a new type of democratic society as utopian, considering the information society to be a continuation of capitalism in the form of transnational informational, or network, capitalism, in which information flows are controlled by capital and *“the same imperatives of profit, power and control prevail”*.<sup>4</sup>

Despite all the diversity of approaches, researchers share Bell’s opinion that information and knowledge are becoming the most important strategic resource of society, along with natural, human and financial resources.<sup>5</sup> The main emphasis in modern research and in national and international programmes for the strategic development of the information society is placed on the issue of optimising the use of information and communication technologies to ensure sustainable development on a global and national scale, the realisation of human rights and freedoms and the improvement of its cultural and educational level, the establishment of electronic democracy, and overcoming inequality in access to information and the latest technologies.

The effectiveness of these processes depends not only on the scale of informatisation of society and the effectiveness of cultural policy, but also on the level of education and critical thinking of individuals, and the recognition of the priority of democratic values. As mentioned, the development of the information society is connected with the widespread distribution of electronic media, which has become a universal intermediary in the processes of human interaction with the world and other people. Information technologies form a special global dimension of human existence – media reality, in which a special type of culture – media culture – is being formed. The need for a thorough understanding of the consequences and perspectives of the influence of media technologies on people and society led to the accelerated development of media philosophy and media anthropology. The media-philosophical approach involves focusing the main attention on the understanding of media phenomena and media reality in their historical formation and in the modern socio-cultural context,<sup>6</sup> as well as the development of the appropriate categorical apparatus and methodological strategies for their research. Media anthropology focuses on a complex of problems that concern the position of a person in the global media information environment.

McLuhan was one of the first to pay attention to various aspects of the media anthropological discourse. He distinguishes three stages of the development of civilisation, the features of which are determined, in his opinion, by the form and dominant type of media communications.<sup>7</sup> The first stage is pre-written, where all social interactions are collective in nature and take place thanks to the oral form of information transmission. The second stage is the era of writing and printing; especially here the phenomena of book printing and industrial revolutions, as well as the processes of individualisation, stand out. The third stage, according to McLuhan, is the “electronic society”, a notable feature of which is the transition from book culture to electronic radio and television means of mass communication.<sup>8</sup> In the third stage, collective forms of communication prevail again, but they are now mediated by electronic media technologies. Such a society is defined by a kind of metaphor – a “global village”, because information and the speed of its spread correspond to a conventional ‘village’, where it spreads from neighbour to neighbour. Thus, thanks to the widespread influence of the media, borders become conditional, and the world is more mobile and accessible, time and space distances are overcome. Therefore, an important aspect of the “global village” concept is a certain “compression of the world”, when its scale is measured in our imagination. At the same time, the personal point of view of a person, who becomes dependent on the information reproduced by the mass media, is increasingly levelled. It is worth noting the global universalism of McLuhan’s theory, because it is not only focused on the analysis of the specifics of the means of communication in their historical formation, but also shows how the dominant communication technologies determine the features of the type of society and human perception, its value orientations, worldview component, as well as the direction of further development.

1 MASUDA, Y.: *The Information Society as Post-Industrial Society*. Washington D.C.: World Future Society, 1981, p. 171.

2 BELL, D.: Social Framework of the Information Society. In GUREVICH, P. S. (ed.): *New Technocratic Wave in the West*. Moscow: Progress, 1986, p. 330-342.

3 BELL, D.: Social Framework of the Information Society. In GUREVICH, P. S. (ed.): *New Technocratic Wave in the West*. Moscow: Progress, 1986, p. 330-342.

4 WEBSTER, F.: *Theories of the Information Society*. London: Routledge, 2014, p. 370.

5 BELL, D.: *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting*. New York: Basic Books 1973, p. 194.

6 Compare to: SOLÍK, M.: *Uznanie ako problém spravodlivosti a jeho mediálna reflexia*. Trnava: FMK UCM, 2021.

7 MCLUHAN, M.: *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962, p. 3.

8 MCLUHAN, M.: *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962, p. 6.

These ideas of McLuhan are directly correlated with the problems of modern information wars, the spread of fake information, the creation of so-called Internet bots and trolls. In addition, a world without borders, where everyone knows everything about everyone, the speed of information transmission, and the variability of its value orientations are also characteristic of modern society. McLuhan's idea of the "electronic society" as a "global village" is actualised today in the new context of Internet communications. With the rapid development of electronic digital technologies and their widespread implementation, we talk about "electronic (digital) society", "electronic democracy", etc. In this context, the concept of "global village" can be considered a certain prototype of the hypermodern digital virtual society. And the facts, when the information precedes the event, become not just an isolated rarity, but the usual models of the existence of the network society.

Pariser calls these processes a "filter bubble"<sup>9</sup> that is, "information bubble", and Jamieson uses the term "echo chamber" in a similar sense.<sup>10</sup> This is a state of intellectual and psychological isolation, a certain 'information vacuum', when in the process of searching for information, a person becomes an object of electronic manipulation, since they are mainly offered information that corresponds to their previous requests in the browser. The consequence of this vacuum is certain types of Internet addiction, the emergence of manipulative online and offline communities, which we call, for example, "Trumpists",<sup>11</sup> "Poroho-Bots",<sup>12</sup> "Ze-Bots",<sup>13</sup> and others. McLuhan clearly shows how different types of media (characters, printing, newspapers, radio, television) for different historical periods acted as those elements that had a decisive influence on the formation of both the characteristics of entire eras and the life of a specific individual. In his opinion, the media is an external extension of human abilities – both physical, cognitive, and communicative.<sup>14</sup> In addition, the scope and possibilities of such expansion are growing with the development and distribution of new generations of media technologies.

It should be noted that it was McLuhan who started philosophical media anthropology. His understanding of media as an "external extension of man" is essentially anthropological. McLuhan considers a person to be the beginning of any media technology, and the technology itself is an extension of the human body.<sup>15</sup> As the Ukrainian researcher Golovei rightly points out, "the Canadian thinker's understanding of the relationship between 'man and media' is devoid of catastrophism, he considers media technologies as a determining factor of socio-cultural development, which steadily expands the possibilities of human perception and understanding. (...) McLuhan focuses on the ambivalent character of the influence of the media on a person. On the one hand, they expand human possibilities, but in the end, they separate from man and gain power over him. Moreover, the development of the technological infrastructure of the human body is accompanied by the consistent 'amputation' of all kinds of human abilities".<sup>16</sup>

Another important aspect of McLuhan's theory is the analysis of media influence on sociocultural processes. He examines how in different eras the means of communication influenced religious and political movements, were catalysts of socio-economic and cultural transformations. The scientist notes the role of printing in the reformation processes, which later accelerated the development of the industrial revolution. Considering the latest era, McLuhan notes the role of radio in ensuring the political success of such different leaders as Hitler and Roosevelt, etc.<sup>17</sup> Subsequently, Toffler in the work *Powershift* continues to develop the ideas

laid down by McLuhan regarding the influence of new communication systems on people and socio-political processes, analysing changes in political regimes under the influence of new information technologies. Toffler notes that the main factor of these changes and the democratisation of societies are information revolutions caused by people's assimilation of new knowledge and the availability of information.<sup>18</sup> If earlier researchers focused their attention primarily on the effects of radio and television, today it is noted that Internet networks (and in particular, social media and messengers) have become a powerful factor in influencing people and the dynamics of socio-political and socio-cultural processes.

Understanding the parameters of human existence in the conditions of the formation and functioning of the network society involves turning to the concept of the "network society" introduced by Castells. He spoke about the emergence of a qualitatively new period of development of the information society. The scientist notes that the information age dramatically increases the productivity of the Earth's population; this will have serious environmental consequences and determines the need to reduce consumption and increase human responsibility for the political, spiritual and ecological spheres of life.<sup>19</sup> Network communications should contribute to the integration of society in order to jointly solve important problems. The concept of "network society" is of key importance in the study of the challenges society is facing at the moment. In *Galaxy Internet*, it was shown how the Internet, in the words of Castells, "a little-known technology that was used only within isolated groups of computer specialists, hackers and counterculture communities, turned into a driving force (...) of the transition to a new type of society – a network society, and through it to a new economy".<sup>20</sup>

The concept of Castells has an important methodological significance for the research of various aspects of the formation of digital society, virtual reality, and online communities. Developing the ideas of Castells, it is worth noting that today the Internet not only caused the formation of the "network society", but also continues to rapidly create a 'new person' and 'new generations'. It is also worth paying attention to the researcher's opinion about the influence of the network on the self-organisation of individuals in the face of geopolitical threats, about new forms of public-political interactions in the configuration of politician (authority) – citizen – Internet. The trends that were discovered by Castells and had a rather prognostic character at that time, are currently analysed by us as an accomplished fact. This mostly concerns the problem of the influence of the Internet, in particular social networks, on changes in the political life of society and the individual.

The Internet has become a catalyst for changes in the consciousness and behaviour of people, as well as in the ways of interpersonal communication, contributing to the growth of the civic activity's level and solidarity. The concept developed by Castells suggests that the creation of virtual communities, the activities of which we could observe in social networks, contributed to the consolidation of civil society and the strengthening of its influence on political changes. As an example, in Arab countries, the Arab Spring revolution of 2011, as well as in Europe – facilitating political changes in Ukraine, during the Revolution of Dignity (2013 – 2014), presidential and parliamentary campaigns (2019), in Belarus (such as so-called Telegram Revolution of 2020) and especially during the new phase of Russian-Ukrainian war from February 2022 up until now.

The scientist's ideas regarding the future dominant status of information become important, where, along with the theory of the "network society", the already mentioned concept of the "information society" is being developed. This theory, which is based on a discussion about the level of influence of information on the economy, socio-political relations and culture, was explained in detail in the author's trilogy *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*. In these books, Castells also examines the political, socio-cultural and economic factors of social development and comes to the conclusion that computer networks in the information age have a decisive influence on them.<sup>21</sup> This opinion of the scientist is relevant for the modern study of communication processes in the space of social networks and messengers, because today 'information' not only contributes to social progress and personal development, but also becomes the main tool of various manipulations, the struggle for human attention, and tools in modern information wars.

9 PARISER, E.: *The Filter Bubble: What The Internet Is Hiding From You*. Released on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2011. [online]. [2023-09-17]. Available at: <<https://cutt.ly/zrVuLqh>>.

10 JAMIESON, K. H., CAPPELLA, J. N.: *Echo Chamber: Rush Limbaugh and the Conservative Media Establishment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 18.

11 Remark by the author: Proponents of the political ideology and style of public administration of the 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Donald Trump.

12 Author's note: Term that describes the most radical supporters of the former president of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko. This term also refers to fake accounts in social networks that write comments in support of Poroshenko.

13 Remark by the author: Activity of supporters of President Volodymyr Zelenskyi in social networks aimed at idealizing their leader and radical criticism of their opponents.

14 MCLUHAN, M.: *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1964, p. 5.

15 MCLUHAN, M.: *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1964, p. 177.

16 GOLOVE, V.: *Filosofskaya antropologiya media: Analiz metodologicheskikh podhodov. Aktualnye problemy mirovoj filosofii, razvitiye cheloveka, ego soznaniya, nraivstvennosti*. Astana: Izd-vo ENU im. L.N. Gumileva, T.1., 2018, p. 93-102.

17 MCLUHAN, M.: *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1964, p. 58.

18 TOFFLER, A.: *Powershift: Knowledge, Wealth, and Power at the Edge of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. New York: Bantam Books, 1991, p. 419.

19 CASTELLS, M.: *The Internet Galaxy: Reflections on the Internet, Business, and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 165.

20 CASTELLS, M.: *The Internet Galaxy: Reflections on the Internet, Business, and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 9.

21 CASTELLS, M.: *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture Volume 1: The Rise of the Network Society*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2010, p. 656.

In this context the theory of communicative action by Habermas is relevant and has significant methodological potential for the study of issues related to the processes of constructing social reality. It also proved its relevance in the study of the processes of human inclusion in the postmodern communicative space, in which such categories as “intersubjectivity”, “communicative mind”, and “communicative action” are leading. Habermas considers communication to be the basis of a person’s life world, and at the same time – the main factor in the formation of the social structure of society. The researcher draws attention to language as a fundamental factor in dialogic interaction between people and the creation of meanings in the process of communication.<sup>22</sup>

Habermas’s problematisation of ways to achieve mutual understanding in the process of speech communication is the basis for understanding and analysing modern public communication platforms that are formed in the virtual space of social networking sites and messengers. The use of these categories is also appropriate during the analysis of modern messenger communication, which can take place at the level of a fully-fledged dialogue, adequate argumentation, which leads to mutual understanding, contributing to social integration. At the same time, inadequate forms of communication are quite common in this space, in which the language of enmity prevails, a dispute for the sake of a dispute without any rational argumentation; such forms of communication are destructive for people and social structures. Moreover, such a state of affairs causes a certain chain reaction, because, not realising the senselessness of network controversies, individuals increasingly and more often participate in social network discussions without logically proving the truth of the given thesis in the absence of concentration on argumentation by each of the actors of the conversation.

Dmytrenko, analysing the critical social theory of the German thinker, pays attention to argumentation as the main construct of dialogical communication “Me-You”. In particular, Dmytrenko notes: “*The German thinker defines communicative rationality as certain universal structures that constitute the practical processes of argumentation.*”<sup>23</sup> Habermas himself, reflecting on the logic of “argumentation” and its application in the theory of communication, linguistics, ethics, aesthetics, theory of actions, emphasises the importance of this concept for “*(...) linguistic mutual understanding and action in everyday life, or at the level of methodically organised experience, or systematically organised discourse.*”<sup>24</sup> When studying social media and messenger communication, the problem of speech understanding and argumentation almost comes to the fore. Turning to this concept became appropriate when justifying the distinction between social media users into the “generation of social networks” and the “generation of smartphone messengers”.<sup>25</sup> It is also worth noting that communication in the virtual space of social media and messengers quite often has a simulative nature. In this context, the concept of simulacra and simulation developed by Baudrillard becomes even more relevant. Baudrillard believes that the modern sociocultural space is dominated by simulation processes, when the real is replaced by signs of the real, the difference between ‘true’ and ‘false’, ‘real’ and ‘imaginary’ is erased.<sup>26</sup> In addition, there is a kind of “devaluation of signs”, which partially or completely lose connection with reality, turning into simulacra. According to Baudrillard, simulacra prevail in the modern information media space, which distorts the process of communication, devaluing its meaningful component. “*We live in a world where there is more and more information and less and less meaning.*”<sup>27</sup> notes the philosopher and adds: “*Before us is a well-known giant process of simulation (...). More and more often information is filled with this kind of illusory content.*”<sup>28</sup>

Information redundancy, simulation of reality, devaluation of meaning are increasing with unprecedented growth in the scale and speed of communication processes. Baudrillard calls it “the ecstasy of communication”.<sup>29</sup> According to the philosopher, this leads not only to the undermining of the social, but also to significant deformations of the human life world. The total acceleration and growth of the amount of information deprives a person of the feeling of security, the possibility of solitude; “*this is the end of the*

*inner and intimate*”. “*Stripped of a stage and crossed over without the least obstacle, the schizophrenic cannot produce the limits of his very being, he can no longer produce himself as a mirror. He becomes a pure screen, a pure absorption and resorption surface of the influent networks.*”<sup>30</sup> Thus, these ideas of the philosopher remain relevant for understanding the existential aspects of the human situation in the modern information and communication space of social networks and messengers.

Finally, I would like to highlight the concept of “rhizome”, introduced by Deleuze and Guattari. This is concept which is directly related to all processes of the information society development. Using the idea of “rhizome”, it is worth emphasising several principles of this concept, which are quite acceptable for the analysis of modern digital society, and in particular the Internet. First, it is the “principle of plurality” noted by the researchers. The Internet, in particular social media and messengers, is a modern version of the rhizome as a decentralised network. They are characterised by such important characteristics of rhizomorphism as nonlinearity, deceneration, processuality, diversity, the ability to reconfigure, generate new versions and relationships, etc. Equally important provisions of the interpretation of “rhizome” are the “principles of connection and heterogeneity”: any line of the rhizome can and should be connected to any other point of it.<sup>31</sup>

These “principles of connection and heterogeneity” are inherent in the processes currently taking place in the online environment. This endless information flow generally has no ‘source’ or ‘beginning’ as such, no ‘centre’, because like a web, it can spread everywhere, so it is extremely difficult to destroy and limit it. Exactly this process of functioning of information once again confirms its rhizomatic character. Deleuze and Guattari in this context noted: “*The rhizome can be broken, destroyed in any place, but it is restored by following one or another of its lines, as well as by following other lines.*”<sup>32</sup> Therefore, this idea of constant restoration of the lost puzzle and the inevitable connection of various broken points confirms the importance of the concept of “rhizome” for the study of the Internet space, social networks and messengers, as well as the activities of digital society and virtual reality.

### 3 Conclusion

In conclusion, changes in the functioning and life of a modern individual due to the influence of media technologies can be attributed to the qualitative features of the development of both an individual and modern society. We note that for the first time the influence of digital media as a driving force in the formation of an information society, and at the same time a new type of person – a ‘digital person’ – was investigated in the works of Japanese scientists Hayashi and Masuda, and later developed and deepened in the concepts of “information/post-industrial society” by Bell and Toffler and others.

The entry of a person into a new era of information civilisation, due to the emergence of qualitatively new communication technologies, has caused significant changes in all spheres of an individual’s life, changing the person themselves, their worldview and world attitude, creating a new dimension of their being – media reality. It can be noted that the concepts and works of McLuhan, based on his ideas about the formation of an electronic society and electronic means of mass communication, explain that this ‘Me-individual’ is the beginning and basis of any technology. It can be seen that today’s man has become the creator of the social networks and messengers, combining “hot” and “cold” media on one platform, but at the same time he has become addicted to this platform. These processes confirm the opinion about the ambivalent nature of the coexistence of man and media, because McLuhan says that having expanded the capabilities of a person, the media also made the individual dependent on themselves, which negatively affects the behavioural model of human existence, threatens the freedom of life choice, and opens opportunities for manipulation.

22 HABERMAS, J.: *Strukturalno izmenenie publichnoy sfery: Issledovanie otositel'no kategorii burzhuznogo obshchestva*. Moscow : Ves Mir, 2016, p. 344.

23 DMYTRENKO, K.: Yurgen Habermas: Vid refleksii do komunikatsii. In *Magisterium. Istoryko-Filosofski Studii*, 2012, Vol. 47, No. 11, p. 38-46. [online]. [2023-10-16]. Available at: <<https://ekmair.ukma.edu.ua/items/1ca920bf-28b5-4b9d-b190-e011a74245fd>>.

24 HABERMAS, J.: *Teoriya komunikativnogo dejstviya (fragmenty)*. Moscow : Voprosy social'noj teorii, 2007, p. 230.

25 KUTSYK, A.: *Social Networks and Messengers in Public and Personal Dimensions: Monograph*. Lutsk : Vezha-Druk, 2021, p. 8.

26 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Simulacra and Simulation*. Michigan : University of Michigan Press, 1994, p.7-8.

27 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Simulacra and Simulation*. Michigan : University of Michigan Press, 1994, p. 17.

28 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Simulacra and Simulation*. Michigan : University of Michigan Press, 1994, p. 119.

29 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *The Ecstasy of Communication*. New York : Columbia University Press, 1987, p. 11.

30 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *The Ecstasy of Communication*. New York : Columbia University Press, 1987, p. 27.

31 DELEUZE, G., GUATTARI, F.: *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, 1987, p. 30.

32 DELEUZE, G., GUATTARI, F.: *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, 1987, p. 33.

Castells was one of the first to talk about the emergence of a qualitatively new period in the development of the information society. The researcher analyses the global role of the Internet, both in the current socio-cultural processes of the information society, and in the future life of a person, the development of the economy, politics, and culture. Developing the ideas of Castells, we conclude that the Internet has evolved so much that today we can consciously talk about the formation of new generations under the influence of the Internet, and about a new type of virtual identity. Of particular importance are the researcher's considerations regarding the influence of the network on the self-organisation of individuals in the face of geopolitical threats, about new forms of public-political interactions in the configuration 'politics (power) – citizen – Internet'. The trends that were discovered by Castells and had a rather prognostic character at that time, are currently analysed by us as an accomplished fact.

The "theory of communicative action" by Habermas, in which such categories as "intersubjectivity", "communicative mind", and "communicative action" are reinterpreted, has significant methodological potential for studying the processes of human inclusion in the modern communicative space. The scientist's assumption about the determining role of communicative processes in the formation and presentation of a person's life world and the structures of the public sphere is important. Habermas's problematisation of ways to achieve mutual understanding in the process of speech communication is the basis for understanding and analysing modern public communication platforms that are formed in the virtual space.

The growth in the scale and speed of communication processes increases the processes of excessive information pressure, simulation of reality, and devaluation of the meaningful component of communication content. In this context, the concept of simulacra and simulation, developed by Baudrillard, is actualised, in particular, his statement that the "ecstasy of communication" leads not only to the undermining of the social, but also to significant deformations of the human life world, depriving the individual of a sense of security, limiting the possibility of solitude, and blurring the boundaries of the internal and external existence. These ideas of the philosopher remain relevant for understanding the existential aspects of the human situation in the modern information and communication space.

It is substantiated that to analyse the specifics of the space of network Internet communications, it is advisable to apply the concept of "rhizome" developed by Deleuze and Guattari. It can be considered that the Internet, in particular, social networking sites and messengers, are rhizomorphic, because they are characterised by such rhizome characteristics as nonlinearity, decentralisation, procedurality, the ability to reconfigure and generate new versions and relationships, etc. Signs of the rhizomorphism of cyberspace are also its network structure, multidimensionality, variability, mobility of the boundary between public and private space.

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