Middle range theories in the research of information and communication media systems

Evgeny Dugin

Academy of Media Industry, Russia

Abstract

The article analyzes the theory and methodology of media systems research. The author considers the possibilities of studying modern media through the application of middle range theories, which will result in changes to the traditional approaches grounded in philological and historical methodologies.

Keywords

In the present context of multimedia the traditional notions such as "news media", "mass communication", "mass media" and others don't fully reflect the work of the press, television, radio, Internet and other channels of preparation, accumulation and dissemination of information in society. Media space has seen many changes as the new opportunities of interaction with audience appeared: various gadgets have become irreplaceable; channels of information dissemination by the means of global networks and communication systems have become widely used. With the development of the new roles, functions and structures by each of the traditional and new media channels *information and communication media systems* are formed.

The terms which could explicitly characterize the media processes have been selected for several decades. This is a standard development of scientific searches which means the graduate comprehension and reinterpretation of such a complex phenomenon as media functioning in society. The term "information

Corresponding author:
Evgeny Dugin, Academy of Media Industry, 105/2 Oktyabrskaya street, Moscow, Russia.
E-mail: e.dugin@yandex.ru

and communication media systems" may seem to be exaggerated. However, this is only at first glance. Collecting and disseminating information, having an opportunity to conduct a dialogue with the audience online the present-day media perform *informative and communicative functions*. Along with that, the functioning of all media industry channels and resources has all the characteristics of a system.

Information and communication media systems may be characterized as a brand new, multiple and complex phenomenon which is oversaturated by information and communicative opportunities requiring the development of some previously unknown communicative strategies of audience interaction (to be more precise for the interaction with communicative communities) that have their own opportunity to produce information and to enter the communication both on the horizontal and vertical levels of media systems. There is an ongoing competition, fight for the audience, for users, for new information and advertising markets etc. between all the elements of the information and communication media systems. At the same time the system phenomenon considered requires a comprehensive analysis and elaboration of new theories, methodological reasoning and study approaches. In this sense the results of the resent international sociological project "Generation's View: Future of the Media, Leadership and Communications" are rather indicative. According to the project the youth is expecting the emergence of the new mass media in already five years time. It is typical for all the survey participants, both for the youth and the professional community, to agree on the opinion that in the short and mid-term perspectives media landscape will be defined by social networks, digital editions and *even not yet existent types of the media*.[1] The term introduced in this article "information and communication media systems" does not contradict this prognosis.

The emergence of the previously unknown media types will inevitably require new methodological approaches and methods of their comprehension which should already be found and applied nowadays in spite of the existent restrictions and terminological inaccuracies.

When considering this subject matter for the first time some fundamental ideas and questions arise. What are conditions, factors and mechanisms of the new information and communication media systems' development? Which opportunities of the media systems are available in relation with communicative communities? What are the consequences of media systems' functioning in the modern society for an individual and for the generations to come? Which theories may be valid for the comprehension of the present-day information and communication media processes? Researchers and working journalists

in the present-day multimedia conditions are inevitably faced with these questions.

Traditional methodological and theoretical approaches to studies of the place and role of the media in society which are connected with dissemination analysis, frequency of audience appeals to the media, turned out to be inapplicable for journalistic creativity. High abstractions and models of academic science most frequently don't fully correspond to the media communication practice and to the real conditions. The most sophisticated methods of media measurement in advertising placement, used by advertisers and advertising "sellers" turn out to be ineffective in writing texts, shooting and directing screen works, in journalistic creative works as a whole.

The author in no way is close to a thought that the resource of the classical methodology and systematic theories has been exceeded. This refers to overcoming of certain limitations inherent to some particular disciplines, which are now studying media processes. For instance, in thesis studies for degree in journalism, it is required to additionally justify the philological matter of a work relying on the content analysis. However, a researcher of communication processes cannot find and solve a problem only by analyzing the content. Therefore, almost in every dissertation, the analysis of the media content is often supplemented by sociological surveys data reflecting the audience reaction to the performance of the press, television and radio. It is fair but along with that it reveals the limitations that exist in the application of the philological methods in the studies of information and communication media systems.

Still little is known about the nature and unpredictable character of the media industry development in connection with the digital revolution and the rapid spread of information technologies, and it would be premature to say that some theories have lost their relevance. Another matter is that alternative and additional methodologies, based on research principles which could naturally combine the academic theory achievements with the rapidly developing media industry practices, are in demand.

The theory of journalism and mass media has always followed the socio-political and socio-economic theories, which mainly revealed total dependencies of an individual on the social and state structure, on scientific and technological progress. According to these theories, it seemed that a change of a social system was enough to transform the way of thinking, and that a person could become different, having read the "right" texts or having watched a good movies and television programs. But each time it did not live up to the expectations since any transformations of external and internal world of a person turn out to be fruitless without a deep inner work on oneself.

Thus, for example, the tendency of personification in the use of modern information and communication technologies is well within the framework of a solipsistic (from Latin "solus" – "single" and "ipse" – "self") doctrine that rejects an objective reality and recognizes individualized consciousness as the only and undoubted reality. The extreme form of subjective idealism as the basic statement of the solipsist doctrine was formulated by Aurelius Augustinus Hipponensis in the following aphoristic form: "Si fallor, ergo sum" ("If I am mistaken, therefore I exist") (Blessed Augustine: 73). This phrase can also be interpreted as: "It is me who must exist, and the existence of anything else is doubtful". And if we continue the logical chain further, we will notice that the well-known statement "Cogito ergo sum" ("I think, therefore I am") belonging to the great French philosopher Rene Descartes, almost word by word reproduces the statement of Augustine "I doubt, therefore I think, therefore I am". Thus even the great minds used to borrow some thoughts of predecessors without making references. For contemporary researchers, that lack the in-depth analysis in studies and, unfortunately, reject the origins of the ideas and theories, such a simplified approach has almost become the basis of methodology.

The virtualization of reality is considered to be the most typical of the present-day tendencies of communications development. It was picked up by Russian researchers from the essayist judgments of a French sociologist Jean Baudrillard and in effect it is a development of the solipsist traditions, stated by an English philosopher George Berkeley in 1710 in his program work "A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge". According to G. Berkeley those things that people usually call material objects in fact are a range of ideas in human conscience. As far as the sensible world is concerned, it exists only in our perception. Thus, if a human cannot visualize in his mind an image of something than this "something" does not exist in reality in accordance with a well-known statement of G. Berkeley "esse est percipi" (Latin – "To be is to be perceived"). The study of the phenomenon of reality virtualization is based on the sensual theory, on the psychological laws of perception. Media technologies foster the reorientation on the inner world of senses, emotions and inner turmoils of a person. The mentioned tendency is proved (illustrated) by, for example, an overwhelming interest in selfies which reflects the necessity of an individual in self-actualization by the means of fixing a standard experience and as a result in self comprehension. According to the futurologists' prognoses this century of information will be followed by an epoch of psychology with a more delicate socio-psychic information and therefore with a refined change of the whole information and communication media system with a natural combination of rational and sensual-visual structure.

The virtual reality where the information and communication media system advocates the values of conceit, self-love, rivalry, cynicism, cult of violence is trying to substitute the true reality with all might and main by of information channels and rigorously picked up facts. In pursuit of ratings and incomes the meanings and quality of human capital are being overlooked. For some two decades the youth has accustomed to an aimless pastime. According to sociological studies "doing nothing" in the youth sphere has become a stable tendency. (Gorshkov, Sheregi, 2010: 191)

Crisis, negative phenomena in socio-economic and political spheres are not explained by the weak economic backdrop or imperfection of laws and concepts of the state construction, but rather by the nature of psyche that is built into human genes. "The orientation on dominance and material values, anger and greediness lead to the formation of an aggressor and consumer, semiautomatic biobot that is easily manipulated. When people do not control their consciousness, other powers begin to manipulate and control their behavior. It leads to the moral and mental degradation and opens up possibilities for psywars. That may be psywars on the global scale, taking place along with global wars and leading to the degradation or destruction of the whole mankind" (Rubel, Savin, Ratnikov, 2016: 493).

Considering the scale of development of information and communication systems, one may speak about their all penetrating and global influence on the formation of value orientations and role models. Despite the critical attitude to television which a number of scholars refer to as an archaic information and communicative means, it remains the main source of media consumption. According to the polls of 2015 the audience devotes about 177 minutes a day to the watching of television programs. Internet takes the second place among the budget leisure time activities which is given 110 minutes of the users' daily time. If in 2015 41% of all the media consumption in the world was streamed through television than according to the prediction this number will decrease to 38% with the Internet taking up 31% of all the time of the total amount of media consumption. The mobile Internet which is used approximately 86 minutes a day may be considered to be a steady trend.[2]

Pandering to audience interests for the sake of rating has transformed the mass media performance as educator and enlightener, as an institute of direct democracy into the "journalism of services" and infotainment servicing of the audience. Specialists notice an increase in numbers of entertaining programs in Russian TV-programs structure. It's noteworthy that the market growth of this segment of programs is typical for developing countries, where the entertaining content is integrated into the "industry of distraction" of public from critical problems in socio-economic and political life (Dugin, 1998: 73).[3]

Managers are prone to explain the increase in numbers of entertaining programs on Russian television by the needs of the audience. The communicative strategy of infotainment has been consistently pursued on the federal channels for several decades. According to the psychological law of "imposed demand" the audience has been taught to spend time mindlessly with some groundling, primitive "entertainment" which, to tell the truth, not only has the function of distraction from critical life problems, but may also *dehumanize* personality. "Gaudy video jokes and light mash-ups may seem trivial and harmless, but as a whole this common practice of fragmentary, depersonalized communication has played down the role of interpersonal interaction as such <…>. The new generation has grown up with lower expectations of what an individual could be and what an individual may achieve" (Lanier, 2011: 14).

Within the tendency of entertainment and individualization of media consumption methods and techniques associated with customizations (customer – client, consumer) are being increasingly applied. As one may know, the main objective of customization is to create the sense that services are being "adapted" to the customers' personal tastes, requests, to meet their personal needs.

If the purpose of mass media and communications was previously interpreted as the development of a world view beyond the sensory experience of a person, now taking into account individualization tendencies and information personalization technologies, it is possible to say, that present-day information and communication functions of media systems along with the creation of the external world view include both sensual and personal experience of a person. The traditional media used to have audience "feedback" with editorial offices by means of letters. Nowadays, with the help of information technologies of customization it is possible not only to track each website user by some special services, but also, more importantly, automatically generate personalized content in accordance with consumers' interests by content, themes, genres and etc.

The emergence of interfaces such as "smart glasses", "smart watch" which have BBC and WSJ newsfeed is gradually replaced by a sensor-receptive systems in the form of virtual reality helmets headed by Oculus Rift. The experiments of tagging human bodies by microchips in order to monitor and record their parameters are also known. News of the changes, taking place in a human body and in his or her mental condition is becoming more important than political situation analysis and reports from the financial sphere. Personality's interest to the inner world stimulates the further development of "selfie-effect". If the traditional media functions have always been viewed as complementary to the reality, the wide use of information technology innovations marks the victory

of the virtual reality over an augmented one. With information technologies an individual, self-mediatized conscience is always within the access of the global network. This interconnection of various scales of reality reflection is the consequence of *mediatization* of human's life and society, which is reflected in the following aspects and tendencies of media system's developments:

- digitalization;
- internetization;
- spread of mobile technologies;
- individualization of developed media resources use;
- media saturation increase;
- multiple media consumption (simultaneous operation of all the types of distribution of television from analog to digital, multiplexes and etc.);
- convergence (unification of television and Internet, smart phones – an emergence of new media platforms as 3-4 screens);
- mobility;
- change from the lineal television viewing to "stream viewing" (more detailed information about mediatization and tendencies of media system development in: Kolomiets, 2014: 119-120; Dugin, 2016: 83-99).

Under the influence of information technologies a new type of media consumer, who is commonly referred to as the "user" is being formed. Unlike the traditional audience, the user is not satisfied with the ready information product. By becoming the subject of the communicative model, he has the ability to control the relationships with the media, thus creating his own media space. The user lives in conditions of "cognitive dissonance" and (in accordance with the effect of the "public opinion loop" of Elizabeth Noelle-Neumann) constantly emphasizes his uniqueness, while at the same time being afraid of being different (Kolomiets, 2014: 164-165).

Ideas of the content presentation, aimed at activating meanings, symbols and cultural codes are also changing. It is indicative that there may be not the meanings themselves, but rather mechanisms that may stimulate the emergence of new meanings, moods, associations which affect the transformation of thinking patterns and behavior of different audience groups. The content itself in multimedia conditions is also undergoing changes in accordance with the following tendencies:

- graphomania, decrease in text quality criteria, the emergence of "user content";
- spread of crowd sourcing technologies;
- the predominance of the entertainment in media content, which suggests the advance of the entertainment society, but not an information one;

- customization of content;
- reduction of the content duration;
- multimization of content delivery in any space and at any time;
- immediacy of content delivery/ receiving (instant messaging) by SMS messages belongs to the new type of communication, reminding interpersonal communication but at the same time having opportunity to save and broadcast content (Kolomiets, 2014: 131, 136 – 137).

Taking into account the tendencies of personification of the human interaction with media systems considered, it is possible to assume that the paradigm of the classical methodology of mass media studies, which operates the mass character categories, is transformed into non-classical theoretical and methodological approaches which in particular are based on the consideration of individual differences (Dugin, 2005: 197 – 204).

At the same time the theory of communication based on the audience participation in the production and consumption of media product is becoming more widespread. In particular the founder of the "*Theory of the Participatory Culture*" Henry Jenkins fairly supposes that it is the participation of users in the production of media content that turns an information channel into communication medium. In addition, the media product should contain not only the elements aimed at the audience perception, but also technologies and mechanisms that encourage communicative communities to participate in content creation process. In support of the "*Theory of the Participatory Culture*" the users are encouraged to share stories (transmedia storytelling), on the multiplatform basis, with the use of crowd sourcing technologies and other forms of interaction with the media. The logic of audience participation in the media production based on the digital technology is subjected to the computer program algorithm. The creative part is based on the combinatorial thinking according to which for the creation of the comprehensive picture one needs, as if it were a puzzle, to complete the "semantic puzzle" from the prepared set of elements, in fact, without contributing anything new to the subject of the future media product. In other words, the "*Theory of the Participatory Culture*" presupposes the *imitation of the communicative process* which has no aim of introducing real changes in politics, economics, social and everyday life of the population and bringing anything new.

The application of the "*Theory of the Participatory Culture*" to the Russian realities seems to be dubious considering the unprecedented growth of public mistrust to the media. Unless the audience participation is planned in advance as *"imitative"* media model. The real conditions are as such: about 70% of the population do not trust the media and do not believe in the possibility to change anything in the socio-political, socio-economic life of a city, region, village or

an institution. According to the studies conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences only 15% of the respondents expressed confidence in their opportunities to influence the state policy in general, 20% – on the actions of the regional government, 25% – on the local government and local institutions.[4]

It is not difficult to see the direct dependence between the degree of trust and the level of authorities: the lower the level of authorities the less trust they have. However, at the same time there are more opportunities to influence authority actions and vice versa.

According to the study, the analysis of the public trust level to the state and public institutions also reveals the dependence of trust from the financial position of respondents. The high standard of living in metropolitan cities contributes to the increase of public trust to the government institutions and state governance. At the same time, such factors and living conditions of metropolitan-city inhabitants as a rational way of life, high level of education, engagement in intellectual and creative activities, access to alternative sources of information, determine a low level of trust of the citizens to the information and communication media system.

The lowest level of trust to the media system, authorities and management, socio-political, socio-economic institutions is observed in the regions, territories, areas and republics of the country with the concentration of the main human capital assets with the lower level of material status. Thus, 77% of the Russians polled claimed that their own financial situation worsened during the last year, 57% expected the further decline in the standard of living in the nearest perspective, 82% described their personal socio-psychological state as negative. More than half of the Russians notice an increase in anxiety (31%), irritability, exacerbation and aggression (26%) among the people around them.[5]

In the studies of psychoemotional moods dynamics in the Russian society, an accumulation of negative tendencies caused by the deterioration of financial and status situation, revenue declines and the simultaneous rise in prices and tariffs in housing and public utilities is marked. As a result, only the one third of Russians have positive attitude to their life and people around them.

The recipient's level of education is also the fundamental factor that reduces people's trust in governmental bodies and media system. Many years' researches record an unprecedented decline in credibility to institutions that ensure the interaction of the government and population, in particular to the press, television and radio broadcasting. Over the past ten years, the confidence indicator has declined by more than 10% (in case of the press: 37%–23%; television: 43%–30%).[6]

An important factor affecting the participation of the population in the functioning of the media industry is the structure of the value-based orientations. The analysis of worldview positions and attitudes reveals the strengthening of self-oriented and activist views and positions. If ten years ago the group of "self-sufficing" was almost half the group of "dependent" (34% versus 64% in 2005) nowadays the sociological surveys indicate the "convergence" of these groups (48% and 52% respectively).[7]

It is believed that the group of "self-sufficing" Russians in the nearest future may come to the leading position. Thus, according to a sociological research, the access to information, communication in social networks among the Russians polled is almost at the very end of the scale of values, communicative capabilities and skills (10% of respondents).[8]

It is interesting to note for comparison that sociologists from the University of Würzburg (Julius-Maximilians – Universitat Wurzburg, Germany) and the Nottingham-Trent University (Great Britain) conducted studies according to which almost one third of the respondents (29%) appreciate their own gadget more than parents and friends. For 37.4% – smartphone and their loved ones have almost the same importance. 16.7% of the respondents spoke out about the extreme importance of the gadget in their lives.[9]

Such significant differences in the value scale between the Russian and western youth make questionable the correctness of the extrapolation of western theories to the Russian society, where other socio-psychological attitudes of society, models of communication behavior, systems of values, credibility in media system, governmental institutions and management are observed.

However, Russian researches make use of theories, paradigms and recommendations of the western analysts. It may be explained by the lag of Russia in the sphere of information technologies. According to the study conducted by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), our country is left behind the world leaders in the sphere of digital development at the average by 5-8 years. With the high speed of the innovations spread and global changes along with the lack of coherent actions of the Russian economic system participants in stimulating the digital component, the digital technological gap may be 15-20 years and it seems impossible to overcome it.[10]

It should be admitted that the Western theories of communication have more experience of information and communication systems studies in the market conditions. It does not mean that there should be direct borrowing and adaptation of the western methodology to the studies of Russian media systems.

If we compare mentality, value orientations, socio-psychological attitudes of the Western and Russian population, we would see considerable differences, that

were shown in the example of the use of gadgets by young people. A complex and contradictory situation has emerged in comprehension of the Russian practices in functioning of the information and communication media systems. On the one hand, groups of theoretical views on the abstract level persuasively explain and prove functions, structure and specific aspects of information functioning in society. On the other hand, numerous empirical studies that serve advertising and image companies do not set targets to create some conceptual theoretical generalizations. As a rule most of these studies are not processed with an aim to formulate theories. Moreover, pragmatically oriented studies invariably limit the information and communication activity to "customisation" and "conceptual provision of services" which emerged in commerce and management. That is what happened not only in the advertising sphere but in the media system activity as well.

Thus, neither the theoretical approach of the academic studies, nor the pragmatic line of research can't provide a conceptual statement of the general theory of the information and communication media systems. More than half a century ago a famous American sociologist Robert K. Merton believed that the creation of the "general theories" for the information, communication and social processes was preliminary. It seems that this position still remains as the common theory of communication has not been developed yet. In practice, is it necessary to explain pragmatic goals or economic aspects of an advertising campaign by methodological means of "general theories"? A set of conventional explanations, empirical methods and methodologies is quite valid for these aims. Can empirical studies develop or restrain the development of the theory? This question requires special analisys.

Media system is something more than just the traditional media. It is mainly the development of horizontal connections between people on the basis of information and communication technologies, which probably unite the society more than the vertical ones. In this sense media systems are some special social institution which in particular conditions performs the function of an "institute of direct democracy" (Dugin, 1990; Dugin, 2005: 32-49).

The present-day theoretical concepts justify the statement that "there are no humanitarian grounds to consider the audience or business to be the cornerstone criteria in journalism. The evaluation of success by business criteria is the product of the epoch rather than men".[11] In other words, the sense of media system functioning cannot be only limited to business and revenues. On the whole, media did not appear as the result of business. From the very first steps they completed the functions of informing and stimulating relations between different social layers, in particular between power structures and

people. It is the different matter that later business made the media serve the trade, customer demands and advertising. However, that are not the only spheres of media system functioning. It would be a methological mistake to study only the business sphere of information and communication media system functioning.

The analysis of the total relations that arises as a result of interaction between the audience and the media system, may become one of the leading theoretical and methodological directions of research of information and communication media systems. It's about the studies of relationships, their functions, structures, modalities, intonations and other characteristics that are included as the constituent part of consciousness, actions, and behavior motivation of audience and even the decision-making algorithm. The methodological foundations of such an approach are limited to the framework of interaction schemes between "theory and facts". In such cases, the theory is bound to perform an orientation function when creating tools for ordering and organizing systems, classifying, typologizing, systemizing facts and phenomena. However, typology and classification cannot be applied as independent theories. They are rather *pre-theories* which may be used as basis to formulate conceptual theoretical statements. Russian working-outs in the sphere of media systems appear to be, on the one hand, *metatheories*, on the other hand – *micro theories* in the form of a typological level of media research. These, of course, are important stages in the comprehension of information and communication processes. However, unfortunately, so far, the results and conclusions of these research trends can be applied only in educational purposes. It is not possible to talk about the creation a certain unified theory of media systems as a working tool to improve the effectiveness of journalistic activity.

Since neither the academic studies nor applied researches can justify conceptual theories suitable for the development of the practice of the contemporary information and communication systems. The truth is, as always, somewhere in the middle. The theories of middle range may resolve this contradiction. It is generally accepted that the theories of middle range appear in researches as a kind of intermediary between theoretical and methodological statements, working hypotheses and a set of empirical data. Theories of the middle range have different interpretations and explanations. The author of the "middle approach" Robert Merton strictly defined the theory as "a complex of logically interconnected assumptions from which empirically verifiable hypotheses are derived, and an empirical generalization as a separate statement summarizing the observed patterns of relations between two or more variables" (Merton, 2006: 97).

Dialectic connections and transitions from empirical data to theoretical generalizations and back on the following round of the analysis generate new senses and give the grounds to believe that the theory of media systems may be the special theory of the middle range theories studying scientific and practical aspects of mass communication process. It is also important to note that theories of middle range are capable to synthesize an interpretation of interrelations between behavioural models, actions of a person within individual distinctions and social structures. In other words to explore that problem field which, as a rule, serves as the subject of description, analysis by the means of journalism.

Theories of the middle range act as special micro theories which include a set of methods, working tools of research within the algorithm of the structure and functional analysis of social systems offered by R. Metron (motive - action - result) (Merton, 2006: 201-207).

In addition, middle range theories don't only have to unite wide theoretical statements with working hypotheses which are formulated in empirical researches, but also to suggest an algorithm, humanitarian technologies and realization of ideas, enshrined in the theoretical and methodological concept, in particular, to be the basis for the development of communicative strategies of certain media system channels. According to the concept of the outstanding Russian-American sociologist Pitirim Sorokin, which he proposed while developing of the theory of structure and dynamics of the corresponding class of the sociocultural phenomena, the middle range theories may be assigned to special sociological theories of media systems. In the analitical review connected with the search of the system of the general sociology, P. Sorokin draws a distinct line between "finding of the facts" and "consistency of the middle range generalisation" (Merton, 2006: 92).

It appears that for the study of media functioning in the new multimedia conditions the middle range theories should satisfy the following demands:

- explain the entire model of the communicative cycle including the functioning of institutions, processes and mechanisms of their functioning;
- consider the multiple aspects of media systems and complexity of interaction of all elements of media communication with diverse interests and aims of the participants;
- understand the digital inequality as varios degrees of application of digital media technologies, starting with their spread on a certain territory and finishing by the skills and frequency of their application in every-day life.

Development of the middle range theory in a research of information and communicative media systems offers broad and fruitful perspectives for the analysis of social networks. In particular the "method of social coordinates" introduced by P. Sorokin allows us to reveal not only preferences and value orientations of users, but also motives of social behaviour and social actions according to the status and social position of a personality. Connections within the communicative communities and the relations in short form project the role models of a structural and functional configurations of various social communities, socio-cultural strata of society.

Following the methodological approaches of P. Sorokin on justification of a socio-culture as one of civilizations that has its mentality, worldview, ideology, it is possible to define the subject field of media system as sociocultural space of meanings, set of material and spiritual cultures, as well as behaviour models, actions, laws and behaviour patterns that are developed and followed by a person. Application of the "communicative space" concept which is frequently postulated in Russian researches narrows down the scale of understanding of media system and, most importantly, simplifies the understanding of a role of a human being, his motivations and social actions.

However, the application of the middle range theories introduced in this article is possible in condition of changing of the traditional methodological approaches to the journalism which exist within philological and history scholarship. Considering the technological effectiveness of the present-day media systems, the traditional philological approaches to the classification, revealing of the role and functions of mass media and studying of the texts without considering the "feedback", appear to be insufficient for the complex research of the madia and journalism. The media system theory justification cannot entirely rely on technology-related transformations may that be the generational changes of gadgets or the ways of content delivery. As the famous software specialist Jaron Zepel Lanier claims: "In future with the arrival of the so-called "post symbol communication" <…> people will need to be considered separately as some unique category <…> as any gadget may bore you, but the *in-depth sense* (emphasis added by me. – E.D.) is the most attractive potential adventure available" (Lanier, 2011: 300).

Creation of the sense, the enhancement and interpretation of the sense, recreation of the sense of the image and symbolism of the social reality space which are the basis and result of communication – that is the subject and problematic field of the new middle range theories of the information and communication media systems (Dugin, 2015: 130-139).

It is rather obvious that the changes of methodology, transformation of the methods, object and the subject of the study will demand changes in traditional professions from the Higher Attestation Commission of the Russian Federation in conferment of higher degree in methodology of journalism and methods of sociological sciences which have the studies of communicative institutions and processes within their problematic field. There are some implications to these changes at the Faculty of Journalism, Lomonosov MSU and in the Academy of Media Industry where the researches of the new media, media sociology and media system economics have been undertaken during the lasts decades (Project studies of Vartanova E.L. (Vartanova, 2014, 2015), Kolomiets V.P. (Kolomiets, 2014), Dugin E.Ya. and Kokhanova L.A. (Dugin, Kokhanova, 2013) and many others).

Notes

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