Biographical article

Eternal Present?
From McLuhan's Global Village to Artificial Intelligence

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Abstract. Herbert Marshall McLuhan (1911–1980) was a Canadian philosopher, philologist, literary scholar and media expert. Andy Warhol famously said that in the future everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes. As for McLuhan's fame, it stretched over decades. His ideas that technology can influence and shape society have been widely discussed up to this day. McLuhan's work is regarded as an important conceptual contribution to media theory, and his term 'global village' is widely used by students and scholars, practitioners and theorists in the field of communication. The authors of this article attempt to analyze the contribution of McLuhan, as a communication expert and influential technodeterminist, to understanding the media of the 21st century. It is concluded that, despite the abundant criticism regarding the naivety and "unscientific" nature of his approach, the lack of empirical evidence for the theory he put forward, his passion for technology, as well as his belief in the decisive role of the media in the development of culture and society, McLuhan's ideas still inspire researchers. The concept of 'global village' in the modern information world has not only retained its relevance – it describes the laws of the functioning of the digital society in the best possible way. The Internet and social networks have confirmed Marshall's postulate that communication technologies enable people to become increasingly involved in one another's lives.

Key words: global village, media, electronic communication, technological determinism, Internet, society
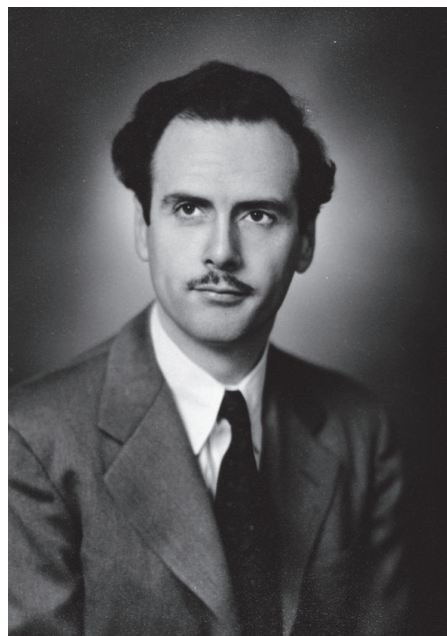
Introduction: visionary and intellectual

Marshall McLuhan is one of the most important and certainly the loudest modern thinkers, his views have had a huge impact on the formation of ideas about the media and their impact on the development of man and civilization. Many still perceive this intellectual from Canada as a 'guru' of modern communication technologies.

Herbert Marshall McLuhan was born on July 21, 1911 in Edmonton, Canada. He was educated at the University of Manitoba, where he studied English philo-

logy, geology, history, Latin, astronomy, economics and psychology. In 1943 he received his doctorate from the University of Cambridge. In different years he taught at St. Louis University (USA), Assumption College in Ontario and St. Michael's College of the University of Toronto (Canada). In 1959–1960 McLuhan directed the media project of the National Association for Educational Programs on television and radio broadcasting channels of the US Department of Education, and in 1963 he co-founded the Center for Culture and Technology (for research on the impact of technology and media on human mental and social life).

During his life he published many books, the most important of which are: *The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of Industrial Man* (1951), *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (1962), *The Medium Is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects* (1967), and *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964), which is his most famous book. Marshall McLuhan died on December 31, 1980 in Toronto.

How logical is it today, several decades after the publication of his main works, to reflect on the concepts set forth in them? Maybe McLuhan's 'patina-covered' ideas are only worthy of textbooks on the history and theory of media? This question is today at the center of the discussion of both supporters and opponents of his theory. Adding to the controversy is the fact that McLuhan himself did not behave like a typical respectable scientist. According to P. Zawojski (Zawojski, 2005), he was more like an 'illusionist', especially after the publication of his most sensational books.

Herbert Marshall McLuhan (1911–1980)
Source: https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Маклюэн,_Маршалл#/media/Файл:Marshall_McLuhan.jpg

The turn of the sixties and seventies was a period of great popularity for M. McLuhan: he was always welcome, his opinion was highly valued, his presence gave importance to events. He became a kind of media star. As is argued by L.H. Lapham (Lapham, 1994), author of the foreword to *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, it is rare for a scientist to suddenly become a major celebrity during his lifetime, straight from his attic workshop. According to this author, due to his mysteriousness and immersion in his own thoughts, McLuhan gave the impression of a person who believed that it was the prophets who should carry prophetic messages, and that the ability to look into the foggy future was a habitual and definite thing (Lapham, 1994. P. 1).

It is interesting to note that only a few then understood the essence of McLuhan's views and ideas. But how did it happen that a person who, according to L.H. Lapham (Lapham, 1994), was a typical 'wiseacre:' good-natured, disorganized, absent-minded and strangely dressed, became a kind of symbol of his time, a guru for his contemporaries, and his book *Understanding Media* in a few

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months turned into a new Bible of the twentieth century? How did the author of the theory of mass culture become a part of it himself?

In this article, we will try to understand the causes and mechanisms for creating the phenomenon of famousness and the scientific contribution of the 'prophet from Toronto', which to this day is envied by many modern researchers who have not received even a little bit of the popularity of the author of *The Gutenberg Galaxy*.

In the fall of 1965, the *New York Herald Tribune* proclaims McLuhan "the most important thinker after Newton, Darwin, Freud, Einstein and Pavlov," from which moment he becomes a welcome guest on various television programs and talk shows (Wolfe, 1965). M. McLuhan readily accepts various proposals, as he is convinced that the media are ideal means for disseminating his scientific ideas. McLuhan's popularity is so high that Woody Allen invites him to 'play' himself in the film *Annie Hall* (it is there that McLuhan delivers the famous dialogue about the role of the media and modern television) (Allen, 1998), and the famous pop art artist Andy Warhol announces professor 'his muse.'

Within a couple of decades of 'TV-presence' McLuhan has become one of the icons of pop culture, but it is this fact that strongly affects the reliable assessment of his achievements, often overshadowing the main ideas contained in the series of works that have remained after him.

Criticism of the theory

For decades, Polish and Russian experts have studied McLuhan's work only by indirect presentations of other authors who quoted his thoughts from the English originals, for example, J. Miller actively discussed with him in the book *McLuhan* (Miller, 1971a). In 2001, a translation of the book *Essentials from McLuhan*, prepared by M. McLuhan's son, Eric, and Frank Zingrone, was published in Poland (McLuhan, Zingrone, 1997). McLuhan's first works published in Russia were *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* and *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (McLuhan, 2003, 2013). Access to the original texts launched a new wave of interest in McLuhan's theory. Already in 2001, K. Loska's book *McLuhan's Legacy. Between Modernity and Postmodernity* (Loska, 2001) was published. In Russia, the study of McLuhan's contribution to the theory of communication was started by I.B. Arkhangelskaya (Arkhangelskaya, 2003). Let us consider the main critical remarks put forward by media experts.

In his theory, McLuhan represented writing and printing as technical inventions that made it possible to shape a person in the image and likeness of a machine. "Printing from movable types was the first mechanization of a complex handicraft, and became the archetype of all subsequent mechanization. <...> Like any other extension of man, typography had psychic and social consequences that suddenly shifted previous boundaries and patterns of culture. In bringing the ancient and medieval worlds into fusion – or, as some would say, confusion – the printed book created a third world, the modern world, which now encounters a new electric technology or a new extension of man" (McLuhan, 1994. P. 190). While recognizing the correctness of the assumption that writing, as a means

of communication, essentially determines our thinking, we cannot agree with the statement that it is the only factor influencing the form and content of cognitive processes (Sokołowski, 2016).

McLuhan's statement about the linear nature of printing, it's purely visual properties, was criticized by J. Miller, who suggested that speech, like written text, also has a linear structure but does not have the simultaneity described by the author of *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (Miller, 1971a, 1971b).

The comparison of visual and acoustic spaces raised some doubts due to the specific characteristics that McLuhan ascribed to each of them. "Civilization is built on literacy because literacy is a uniform processing of a culture by a visual sense extended in space and time by the alphabet. In tribal cultures, experience is arranged by a dominant auditory sense-life that represses visual values" (McLuhan, 1994. P. 98).

The problematic nature of this division was pointed out by D. Theall in his book *The Medium is the Rear View Mirror* (Theall, 1969).

D. Czitrom in his book *Media and the American Mind: from Morse to McLuhan* accused the author of *The Mechanical Bride* of 'hard' technological determinism and the lack of a methodological basis for the study of social phenomena. In his opinion, unlike Harold Innis, McLuhan did not attempt to combine 'aesthetic' social theory with elements of dialectical thinking, he based his vision of historical changes exclusively on the critical method, replacing history with the concept of myth (Czitrom, 1982).

Another Czitrom's objection is that McLuhan refers to the concept of 'technological naturalism' to explain the relationship between man and technology (Czitrom, 1982).

And in his third objection, he points to the complete absence of a political-economic dimension in the analysis of the impact of the media on social reality (Czitrom, 1982).

McLuhan is often criticized for his distaste for modern democracies, anti-modernism, and adherence to conservative Christian values.

Hans Enzensberger argued that McLuhan was unable to create a coherent theory that would rationally explain social changes: he accused his opponent of idealism, reductionism and political conservatism (Enzensberger, 1970). However, it must be admitted that McLuhan himself repeatedly said that he had no theory. It is worth recalling his well-known phrase: "I don't explain – I explore" (Stearn, 1967).

Armand Mattelart drew attention to the peculiar 'fetishism' of McLuhan's views on the role of electronic media isolated from the social context (Mattelart, 1994).

John Fekete emphasized that McLuhan's concept of social evolution is based on the myth of the destruction of culture; moreover, his writings do not analyze the influence of the media on the political dimension of power (Fekete, 1969).

Only Arnold Hauser saw the 'Toronto visionary' not only as a proponent of a utopian vision of the future or a conservative lamenting the lost past, but also a shrewd critic of the present, whose view of the role of the media provided a new model for the analysis of popular culture (Hauser, 1970).

However, it should be admitted that, despite the fact that McLuhan's ideas look one-sided and extremely simplistic, they played a significant role in changing

ideas about the role of the media in the life of society and individuals (Goban-Klas, 2000) and had a fundamental impact on the views of many cultural theorists of the 1980s and 1990s: Baudrillard, Postman, de Kerchove, Crocker, Levinson (Loska, 2001).

It was the inspired thought of McLuhan, contained in his numerous works, that provoked a kind of intellectual agitation, the main axis of which was an attempt to explore the nature of the media.

In this regard, we cannot but agree with Ursula Kusio, who believes that the condition for a fair assessment of McLuhan's works is knowledge of their historical and intellectual background – that is what makes it possible to catch the inner logic of his thinking – this is a necessary minimum, otherwise positive assessments may look naive, whereas negative ones may be seen as biases (Kusio, 2020).

Style as message

Marshall McLuhan described the formation of a new electronic reality in a colorful, plastic, metaphorical language, which also caused rejection among his opponents. Recall that, being a literary critic by education, for years he had been in contact with the refined style of English literature – this is what had a serious impact on the technique of his writing. In his doctoral dissertation *The Place of Thomas Nash in the Study of His Time*, McLuhan carefully analyzed the style of the works of T. Nash (1567–1601), full of allegories and metaphors; later he transferred this style to his own books, making the transition from the history of English literature to the problems of mass culture.

What is unique and original in McLuhan's writing style? It is enough to see the titles of the subsections in his book *Understanding the Media*: *The Spoken Word: Flower of Evil?* (Part II, Subsection 8), *Money: the Poor Man's Credit Card* (Subsection 14), *Clocks: the Scent of Time* (Subsection 15), *The Photograph: the Brothel-without-Walls* (Subsection 20), *Motorcar: the Mechanical Bride* (Subsection 22), *The Typewriter: into the Age of the Iron Whim* (Subsection 26), *The Telephone: Sounding Brass or Tinkling Symbol?* (Subsection 27), *The Phonograph: the Toy that Shrank the National Chest* (Subsection 28), *Radio: the Tribal Drum* (Subsection 30), *Television: the Timid Giant* (Subsection 31). Or, for example, an excerpt from the chapter *Telegraph: the Social Hormone*.

The chapters of his book begin innocently and a little tritely, but only to heighten the tension instantly, like in Alfred Hitchcock's films.

"The wireless telegraph was given spectacular publicity in 1910 when it led to the arrest at sea of Dr. Hawley H. Crippen, a U.S. physician who had been practicing in London, murdered his wife, buried her in the cellar of their home, and fled the country with his secretary aboard the liner Montrose. The secretary was dressed as boy, and the pair traveled as Mr. Robinson and son" (McLuhan, 1994. P. 271).

Further, the reader learns that the described liner was one of the few ships equipped with Marconi's wireless telegraph. Owing to this, the captain, having read about the Crippen case in the newspaper, was able to notify Scotland Yard of the murderers among the passengers, and the police were able to quickly arrest them. Eighteen months later, the British Parliament passed a law requiring all passenger ships to install a 'wireless telegraph' as standard equipment.

How does McLuhan himself comment on this event?

"The Crippen case illustrates what happens to the best-laid plans of mice and men in any organization when the instant speed of information movement begins. There is a collapse of delegated authority and a dissolution of the pyramid and management structures made familiar in the organization chart. The separation of functions, and the division of stages, spaces, and tasks are characteristic of literate and visual society and of the Western world. These divisions tend to dissolve through the action of the instant and organic interrelations of electricity" (McLuhan, 1994. P. 272).

This passage is a typical example of McLuhan's test, in which the unconnected is connected, where the story of one murderer moves on to the idea of the 'destruction of the pyramids' and the emergence of 'literate societies'. These transitions in the text, fluid associations, breakage of the main thread of the narrative and interweaving of new stories into the text are more characteristic of a modern novel than a scientific monograph. However, McLuhan was not embarrassed. The main thesis of his work is contained in another phrase, written in a different, more scientific style:

"We live today in the Age of Information and of Communication because electric media instantly and constantly create a total field of interacting events in which all men participate. Now, the world of public interaction has the same inclusive scope of integral interplay that has characterized only our private nervous systems" (McLuhan, 1994. P. 274).

What is actually the essence of the conclusions contained in the cited work? Unfortunately, it is difficult to say for sure, since McLuhan's text is chaotic, metaphorical and incomprehensible, and his appeals to historical figures are rather aimed at increasing the persuasiveness of the argument presented.

"Having glanced at the major trauma of the telegraph on conscious life, noting that it ushers in the Age of Anxiety and of Pervasive Dread, we can turn to some specific instances of this uneasiness and growing jitters. Whenever any new medium or human extension occurs, it creates a new myth for itself, usually associated with a major figure: Aretino, the Scourge of Princes and the Puppet of Printing; Napoleon and the trauma of industrial change; Chaplin, the public conscience of the movie; Hitler, the tribal totem of radio; and Florence Nightingale, the first singer of human woe by telegraph wire" (McLuhan, 1994. P. 278).

In this passage, McLuhan's original thought, though clear and transparent enough, becomes obscured and almost unreadable. What does it mean, for example, to call Charlie Chaplin 'the public conscience of cinema'? This great director, creator of numerous comedies such as *The Gold Rush* or *The Kid* never aspired to be anyone's conscience. Then why such fantastic associations and linking Napoleon to Hitler in one sentence? What is it: the typical style of the poet, a device of inspiration or a conscious manipulation designed to shock the reader once again? This is another riddle characteristic of McLuhan, who was reluctant to comment on what had already been written. The text of his scientific discourse had to defend itself.

In his book *McLuhan Misunderstood: Setting the Record Straight*, R. Logan puts forward two suggestions as to the reasons for such a confusing language of McLuhan.

On the one hand, his style was a kind of provocation that fit within the framework of his theory, this was how he wanted to focus the attention of his colleagues and students on the hidden effect that the new means of communication produced: "I am in the position of Louis Pasteur telling doctors that their greatest enemy was quite invisible, and quite unrecognized by them" (McLuhan, 1994. P. 19). McLuhan did not want to tell readers about the impact of new media, he wanted them to discover for themselves the content of this influence.

On the other hand, as his biographers emphasize, he liked to joke, anecdotes and jokes were part of his research methodology (Logan, 2011).

Technological determinism

Technological determinism, according to B. Dobek-Ostrowska, is an original concept that cannot be treated as either empirical or critical one (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2004). Technological determinism is a theory that gives technology a central role in changing society and civilization. The term was coined by the American sociologist Thorstein Veblen (1857–1929). His book *The Engineers and the Price System* presents technology as the root cause of social changes (Veblen, 2001). Among the pioneers in this field, we should mention such names as Siegfried Giedion, Leslie White and Lynn White. The ideas of technological determinism were also developed by Marshall McLuhan in collaboration with Harold Innis.

Technological determinism is based on the assumption that all social phenomena, including those in the field of communication, are determined by technological factors. Both authors assigned a significant role in the processes of communication and organization of society as a whole to the media and technologies used by the dominant media in a particular historical era.

The traditional philosophy of technology, as pointed out by A. Kiepas (Kiepas, 2006), was largely speculative, as it often ignored the essential aspects associated with its development. At the turn of the sixties and seventies of the 20th century, a peculiar field of knowledge was formed – anthropology of technology, – centered on the study of the impact of technology on humans and social relations. Related to this view is the formulation of technological determinists that technology is "an extension of the natural human organs" (McLuhan, 2003).

Having analyzed the works of Innis and McLuhan, we can conclude that this is the first use of technological determinism in the science of communication. Their works formed the basis of media determinism and marked the beginning of a series of studies that continued, criticized and creatively transformed the ideas of its founders (Sokołowski, 2016).

G. Marshall (Marshall, 2004), analyzing McLuhan's works, accuses him of a simplistic view of the role of the media in social development. McLuhan certainly believed that the media made an important, if not dominant, contribution to social, political, cultural, educational, and economic transformation, as evidenced by his famous metaphors: "medium is the message," "the media are 'living whirlwinds of power'." However, the question remains whether McLuhan was a naive technological determinist. Of course, he did not develop a clear scientific methodology: his scientific discourse is more like avant-garde poetry than a boring

text of scientific research, where numbers, tables, charts, percentages, and 'hard data' support the argument and content. According to R. Logan, McLuhan believed that the relationship between the media and society can be described only non-linearly; in a certain sense, he anticipated the concept of co-evolution and the theory of complexity or emergence (Logan, 2010). A reference to this view can be found in McLuhan's work written in 1955: "Any change in the means of communication will set off a chain of revolutionary consequences at all levels of culture and politics. Because of the complexity, the components of this process, prediction and control, are impossible" (McLuhan, 1955).

Another weak spot pointed out by critics in McLuhan's theory is that he overemphasized the role of the media in shaping society while ignoring political and economic factors (Marshall, 2004). However, according to Coupland (Coupland, 2010. P. 187), McLuhan was not only far from ignoring political and economic forces, but he practically predicted the profound changes that occurred much later. For example, his book *Take Today: The Executive as Dropout* (1972), co-authored with Nevitt, was focused exactly on the impact of the media on economics and politics.

Thus, accusations against McLuhan of technological determinism are mainly aimed at devaluing his contribution to the development of media theory. But, after all, determinism has been the basis of many explanatory sciences: Newton, Faraday, Maxwell, Einstein and Darwin were also determinists.

McLuhan's books were lively and exciting, they aroused the interest of a wide range of readers in the second half of the 20th century, due to which, for example, the edition of *The Gutenberg Galaxy* amounted to 100,000 copies. Many authors of that time could only dream of such popularity.

However, what is the value of Marshall McLuhan's theory for the present: maybe his 'hard' technological and media determinism is a thing of the past? Is it worth returning to the theses set off half a century ago, given that the most important role is now played not by television thoroughly studied by McLuhan but by the global network?

Back to the global village?

The 'global village' is a term coined by McLuhan in his books The *Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (1962) and *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964). In his works, he showed how, as a result of the discovery of electricity and the subsequent development of electronic means of communication, the globe 'shrank' to the size of a 'village' (the time of implosion came) and it became possible to instantly transmit messages from anywhere to any place in the world. Today, the global village is one of McLuhan's most famous ideas, – the term is actively cited in numerous scientific and journalistic papers,as well as in everyday dialogs.

However, R. Kapuscinski notes that this McLuhan's term, applied to today, can lead to a false understanding of modern culture: "As early as in the beginning of the 1960s, when television was still in its infancy, Marshall McLuhan used the term 'global village.' McLuhan was a Catholic with great missionary passion – he imagined that the new environment would make us all brothers living in

the same community of faith. After all, the essence of the village lies in the fact that its inhabitants know each other closely, interact with each other and share a common destiny. Meanwhile, nothing similar can be said about the society of our planet, which rather resembles a nameless crowd in one of the largest airports, a crowd of people in a hurry, indifferent towards and unfamiliar with each other" (Kapuscinski, 2004. P. 1).

A different point of view is held by I.S. Fiut, who believes that it is McLuhan's achievements that are the key to a deep interpretation of the functioning and influence of the media on people at the beginning of the 21st century (Fiut, 2005): "After three thousand years of specialist explosion and of increasing specialism and alienation in the technological extensions of our bodies, our world has become compressional by dramatic reversal. As electrically contracted, the globe is no more than a village. <...> They can no longer be contained, in the political sense of limited association. They are now involved in our lives, as we in theirs, thanks to the electric media" (McLuhan, 1994. P. 7).

What does this mean? Perhaps the point is that electronic media, thanks to the feedback network, unwittingly connect through a series of successive extensions of individual subjects with a single collective subject of knowledge (knower) that makes up the whole, humanity. As a result of these extensions, the whole world becomes a global village, the patterns of existence of which influence the forms and content of our perception of the world.

The Gutenberg Revolution, the emergence of book-printing and its rapid spread led to the collapse of an earlier civilizational formation based on the medieval tradition, which had been dominated by oral communication based on auditory perception. Book-printing made the means of communication accessible to many, led to the development of writing, education and reading. The discovery of electricity at the beginning of the 20th century marked the time of television, which made vision the leading channel of knowledge. In visual experience, the world transforms – it shrinks, because through television one can find oneself in the most remote parts of the planet, see what was previously perceived as distant and unknown, – reality becomes mosaic: the periphery becomes important whereas the center disappears. Developing knowledge is beginning to be perceived as a collective therapy, and the audience of electronic media consists of 'graphic people'. In communicative practice, this leads to the fact that more and more persons enter into correspondence.

Created through the use of modern communication channels, including the Internet, the world is presented by postmodernists as 'new Middle Ages,' the form of social organization of which is precisely the global village described by McLuhan.

Today, the famous term coined to analyze the impact of television has not only retained its relevance: it now claims to describe the 'global information environment'. Due to the development of the Internet and research into the phenomenon of the Web, the once tarnished idea of a global village has become relevant and inspiring again.

In the same way as the culture of writing once destroyed oral culture, pulling people out of tribal primitive communities, electronic means of communication, extending human meanings, imposing form and content on them, more deeply involving them in the global collective experience, turn people to a close com-

munity, village, neighbors, nourished together by pop culture. Thus, are we really returning to a forgotten form of communal existence, similar to a community of tribal nomads, in which everyone knows about everyone, and it is easy to obtain the missing information from a 'network' neighbor?

This view is shared by Manuel Castells, an eminent researcher of the network society. He argues that the media are an expression of our culture, and culture is formed on the basis of the media, which at the present stage of the development of the information society correspond to most of the signs proposed by McLuhan in the early 1960s and called by him the 'McLuhan Galaxy' (Castells, Cardoso, 2005). However, Castells believes that today we are entering a new era of communication definitely different from the one that McLuhan imagined. From his point of view, despite the fact that the media have indeed become globally connected and television programs circulate on the global network, we live not in a global village but in shacks that are produced worldwide and distributed locally. In the age of television, when viewers were provided with more and more diverse source material from which each could construct their own picture of the universe, the McLuhan Galaxy remained a world of one-way communication rather than interaction. This way of extending industrial logic into the realm of signs cannot, despite the genius of McLuhan, express the culture of the information age, in which the process of information processing goes far beyond one-way communication. The screen acquired a computer and the Internet. Only then was the recipient able to speak (Castells, Marody, 2013).

Conclusion

The global village is now becoming a global city. Our life is increasingly being digitalized: it takes place in cyberspace: online forums meet people who, hundreds of kilometers apart, have lively discussions, exchange opinions, flirt, trade, have sex, exchange music files, give professional advice, look for necessary information and have fun, thereby filling their professional or free time.

Despite the fact that the brilliance of Marshall McLuhan's concept has faded somewhat, it has been able to ignite the fire of interest in the issue of the role of the media in the life order of society. The second generation researchers and theorists in the field of communication – Neil Postman (*Amusing Ourselves to Death*, *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology*), Paul Levinson (*The Soft Edge: A Natural History and Future of the Information Revolution*), Derrick De Kerckhove (*Skin of Culture*), Joshua Meyrowitz (*No Sense of Place: The Impact of Electronic Media on Social Behavior*) – continue to develop McLuhan's ideas, although, truth be told, their statements often contradict the position of the *maître*. Today, the third generation of technological determinists has appeared – the so-called 'tech-enthusiasts' – supporters of robotization and the introduction of artificial intelligence into new areas of human reality.

The third generation quotes McLuhan rather than really understands the essence of his concept. Paradoxically, McLuhan, who at the end of his life did not think much of the growing role of computers, after his death became a kind of patron of the Internet, as he announced the creation of a global village, which unexpectedly stuck together with the concept of the World Wide Web (Płonkowski, 2006. P. 50).

It is impossible to complete the discussion of Marshall McLuhan's work without touching on the question of his attitude to artificial intelligence. Would he have admired it as a 'hard' technological determinist, or would he have warned against its total dominance? McLuhan was fascinated by the world of media at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s, so one can assume that he would certainly have subjected the issues of robotization and digitization to a thorough analysis, showing both new ways of development and the abyss into which humanity could recklessly slide.

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Вечное настоящее? От глобальной деревни Маклюэна к искусственному интеллекту

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Аннотация. Маршалл Герберт Маклюэн (1911–1980) – канадский философ, филолог, литературовед и специалист в области медиа. Энди Уорхал однажды сказал, что каждому человеку в жизни выпадает 15 минут славы, слава Маклюэна растянулась на десятилетия. Его идеи о том, что технологии могут влиять на общество и детерминировать его, широко обсуждаются до сих пор. Работы Маклюэна рассматриваются как важный концептуальный вклад в теорию медиа, а его термин «глобальная деревня» (global village) широко используется студентами и учеными, практиками и теоретиками в области коммуникации. В статье предпринимается попытка анализа вклада М. Маклюэна, эксперта по коммуникации, влиятельного технодетерминиста, в понимание медиа XXI в. Делается вывод о том, что, несмотря на обилие критики в адрес наивности, «ненаучности» его подхода, отсутствия эмпирических доказательств выдвинутой им теории, увлеченности технологиями, веры в решающую роль СМИ в развитии культуры и общества, идеи Маклюэна сих пор вдохновляют исследователей. Концепция «глобальной деревни» в современном информационном мире не только не утратила своей актуальности, она как нельзя лучше описывает законы функционирования цифрового общества. Интернет и социальные сети подтвердили постулат Маклюэна, согласно которому коммуникационные технологии предоставляют людям возможность все более активно участвовать в жизни друг друга.

Ключевые слова: глобальная деревня, средства массовой информации, электронная коммуникация, технологический детерминизм, интернет, общество

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