

MEDIA PHILOSOPHY: ITS ESSENCE, STAGES OF FORMATION, AND THE SOURCES OF AXIOLOGICAL THINKING

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Annotation: This article discusses how the rapid development of the global information space and the deepening impact of digital technologies, together with the growing informational and psychological influence on human cognition, significantly increase the global need to explore media philosophy and its axiological foundations.

Introduction

Across the world, including within the European Union, the Asian Development Bank, and various other regional institutions, strategies are being formulated to strengthen information security, foster independent thinking among young people within the information sphere, and advance media education grounded in ethical norms. The document Global Framework for Media and Information Literacy Indicators, approved by UNESCO in 2023, introduces methodological approaches aimed at cultivating media competencies—particularly axiological thinking—among learners of different age groups. Research institutes dedicated to media philosophy are operating within leading universities worldwide, which in turn necessitates the refinement and further development of scholarly and methodological approaches in this field.

In our country as well, extensive reforms are being implemented in this field. In particular, within the framework of the concept “New Uzbekistan – an Enlightened Society,” introduced by the President, issues such as enhancing the information culture of youth and fostering their critical and conscious attitude toward media influences are being advanced as urgent priorities. The “Digital Uzbekistan – 2030” strategy adopted in 2021, the 2022 “Concept for the Digitalization and Innovative Development of the Education System,” as well as Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 133 of March 30, 2023, collectively provide for the gradual integration of media literacy and media-philosophical approaches into both general and higher education systems. In higher education, one of the core objectives identified within academic programs is the formation of students not only as professionally competent specialists but also as individuals possessing ethical-aesthetic values and a mature socio-informational culture. Consequently, the development of a methodology for advancing media-philosophical knowledge on an axiological basis has become an urgent and necessary requirement of the contemporary era.

Methods

In the context of globalization, the rapid advancement of digital technologies, and the expanding influence of mass media, society’s relationship with information is undergoing fundamental transformation. In particular, the thoughts, worldview, and system of values forming in the consciousness of the younger generation—including university students—are increasingly shaped through media channels. Under such conditions, the need to develop media-philosophical knowledge as a factor that determines human consciousness, moral criteria, and social orientation has become an urgent priority. Approaching this process from an axiological perspective—namely, examining which values students derive from media and by what criteria they distinguish truth from falsehood—has become one of the core tasks of contemporary education and upbringing.

In today’s information society, the concept of “media” has evolved into a complex social phenomenon closely intertwined with social consciousness, culture, ethics, and ideology. This



transformation has led to the emergence of a new conceptual domain within philosophy—media philosophy (philosophy of media). Media philosophy, in essence, is an interdisciplinary field that philosophically investigates information tools, communication systems, visual-cognitive experience, and their role within human thinking, social consciousness, and systems of values.

The term media philosophy derives from the combination of “media” (from the Latin medium, meaning “means” or “channel”) and “philosophy” (from the Greek philosophia, meaning “love of wisdom”). Conceptually, the term refers to the philosophical analysis of how information media influence our knowledge about the world, the values formed on the basis of that knowledge, and the processes of human consciousness. Within this definition, media philosophy does not merely examine how information is received or processed; it also encompasses the philosophical, ontological, axiological, and epistemological dimensions of these processes.

Methodologically, media philosophy possesses an interdisciplinary nature, developing in close connection with fields such as philosophy, information theory, sociology, psychology, semiotics, cultural studies, political science, and linguistics. It is particularly intertwined with communication theory and the philosophy of information. Thus, media philosophy seeks to explain, on a philosophical basis, how information is produced in social life, by whom and with what intentions it is disseminated, how recipients respond to it consciously or unconsciously, and how these interactions give rise to systems of values.

Classical branches of philosophy—particularly ontology, epistemology, and axiology—constitute the theoretical foundation of media philosophy. From an ontological perspective, concepts such as mediated realities and the simulacrum (a copy that resembles reality but replaces it) acquire central significance. For instance, J. Baudrillard interprets mediatization as a process in which simulacra come to occupy the place of reality itself. From an epistemological standpoint, media is regarded as a crucial instrument that shapes human knowledge, influences the perception and comprehension of reality, and frames cognitive experience. It is through media that individuals interpret the contemporary world and construct their judgments, yet such interpretations may often be manipulated, distorted, or politically conditioned.

Results

An axiological, value-oriented approach within media philosophy makes it possible to organize this process more effectively. Within this framework, three core components acquire particular significance: informational consciousness, critical thinking, and media literacy.

Informational consciousness refers to an individual’s capacity to respond deliberately to information transmitted through media, to distinguish truth from falsehood, and to evaluate any piece of information based on its source, purpose, sphere of influence, and value-laden content. Media philosophy provides the philosophical foundation for cultivating such consciousness: Does media convey reality or replace it? To what socio-cultural criteria does this information appeal? Engaging with such questions enables the student to make decisions within an axiological, value-based mode of thinking.

Critical thinking constitutes a fundamental pillar of media philosophy, teaching students to approach media sources with skepticism, to discern the intentions embedded within each piece of information, and to expose ideological manipulation in visual or textual content. Critical thinking, in turn, encourages students to make conscious choices in constructing their system of values: Does this information serve the truth? Whose interests are represented through this image or message?

Media literacy has become one of the essential competencies of contemporary education. Within the context of media philosophy, this concept refers not only to the ability to navigate information flows correctly, but also to the capacity to preserve one’s personal perspectives, and to produce and consume content with ethical and cultural responsibility. From an axiological



standpoint, media literacy is viewed not merely as a technical skill but as a tool that shapes moral, cultural, and ideological consciousness.

The integration of media philosophy and axiological thinking demonstrates particular practical significance in educational and formative processes. Although media channels expose young people to a wide range of information, the crucial question is: On the basis of which values is this information being interpreted and internalized? An axiological approach provides a profound answer by cultivating students' inner world, their decision-making criteria, and their capacity to distinguish truth from falsehood. Thus, studying media philosophy on an axiological basis becomes a means of strengthening spiritual and ethical immunity in the age of information.

This approach is grounded not merely in "receiving information" but in understanding, selecting, and evaluating it. Students begin to perceive themselves not as passive objects of informational influence but as active subjects within informational processes. They do not simply consume content distributed through social networks, news platforms, or mass media; rather, they engage with it through ethical, spiritual, and social responsibility. The integration of media philosophy and axiological thinking represents a strategic alignment that ensures value-based personal development in the information age. Particularly for fostering stable moral-normative principles in the consciousness of youth, and shaping them as ideologically, ethically, and socially resilient individuals, this integration must become a core theoretical and practical criterion within education and upbringing.

Discussion

In Western philosophy, media philosophy emerged as an independent field in the second half of the twentieth century, although its theoretical roots can be traced back to ancient thought. Plato's ideas concerning "shadows" and "truth," his skepticism toward modeled or mediated representations of reality, as well as Aristotle's reflections on language, classification, and perception, collectively laid the ontological groundwork for media-philosophical inquiry.

However, it was in the modern era—especially with the expansion of communication technologies such as radio, television, the internet, and artificial intelligence—that media philosophy began to form as a distinct epistemological discipline. In this regard, Marshall McLuhan's well-known assertion that "the medium is the message" highlighted the need to focus not on the content of information but on the form through which it is transmitted. According to McLuhan, the medium of communication (such as television or the internet) shapes human cognition more profoundly through its form than through its content, leading to transformations in social perception.

Jean Baudrillard further deepened these ideas by arguing that the images of truth disseminated through media—simulacra—do not reflect reality but instead generate artificial replicas of it. Based on his theory of simulation, media do not transmit real events but rather the representations constructed about them, and these representations gradually replace social reality itself. As a result, individuals no longer live in direct relation to authentic reality but exist within "hyperreality"—a synthetic, media-constructed version of the world.

Neil Postman, in turn, exposed the detrimental effects of media on social consciousness through a distinctly critical approach. In his view, media prioritizes entertainment over thoughtful reflection, thereby fostering a cultural environment in which critical thinking is supplanted by passivity, moral indifference, and a crisis of values. In works such as *Technopoly* and *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, Postman offers a profound analysis of how technology and media mechanisms contribute to the artificialization of culture.

Although media philosophy did not emerge as a distinct academic category within classical Eastern thought, approaches to language, information, truth, and spirituality have historically been grounded in value-based and ethically oriented analysis. Thinkers such as Abu Nasr al-



Farabi, Abu Rayhan Beruni, Alisher Navoi, and Imam al-Ghazali articulated essential ideas concerning the moral responsibility of speech, the spiritual value of disseminating knowledge, and the social functions of informational practices.

For instance, al-Farabi emphasized language and communication as the primary means of shaping human cognition—an emphasis that aligns closely with the core concerns of contemporary media studies. Navoi, likewise, underscored the necessity of educating the human mind through *kalom* (speech), guiding individuals toward truth, and promoting social responsibility and virtue. From this perspective, Eastern intellectual tradition has long upheld the principle that speech, sources of information, and their influence must be under constant moral and ethical oversight. This principle resonates strongly with the axiological orientations of modern media philosophy.

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