



# Russian prospects for ethics in data driven political communications

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One of the functions of philosophical reflection of complex system processes is flashing the edge of the noosphere and cosmological perspectives, boundary meanings and horizons of anthropo-technological development. Blockchain is not just a distributed ledger, but the beginning of a new level of digital eternity. Similarly, for a harmonious co-evolution of man and machine, it is necessary to conceptualize the socio-anthropological and socio-cultural models of communication in which a virtual augmented reality, created in conjunction with organic, inorganic and hybrid entities are not alien worlds, but our total life-world, Umwelt, to be exact – Cyberumvelt.

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## Russian prospects for ethics in data driven political communications

Big Data allows the creation of various clusters responding to expectations of audiences. In fact, we are talking about the radical expansion of the marketing approach, of which is the literal realization of the great project of humanism of the Enlightenment with its slogans. 'Everything for the benefit of man!', 'Everything for the sake of man! 'Man is the measure of all things!', allowing not only the realization, but also the encouragement of any need. The clustering of markets, audiences, the electorate and target groups has reached down to individual personalities. Marketization displaces traditional positivist sociological and political science studies. Persuasive examples that attract broad public attention were Brexit and Trump's victory, which allegedly were provided by non-trivial political technologies working with Big Data, e.g. programs like OCEAN.

But, the main thing is the ambiguous consequences of such marketization, including political communication and morality. This is a paradoxical situation. The growth of the amount and availability of information is accompanied by a divergence in society. Thanks to social networks, online self-sufficient communities are formed, the members of which are husking each other, fighting for the purity of rank and showing aggressiveness toward other communities. Society is increasingly turning into a realization of the movie 'Matrix': scattered cocoons which generate online maya (visible lows) of offline social and political life.

Thus, there are exceptional opportunities for populist manipulation in politics, when each cluster receives its message – the expected and desired response to its aspirations and hopes. In fact, this is the worldwide current political reality. Both in Europe and in the United States, there are growing trends of populism which are associated with national and regional isolationism. In Russia, the latest initiatives of the government regarding the provision of information security consolidate the trend 'governed by electoral democracy' to control the Internet and social networks. Studies of Russian political scientists at the St. Petersburg State

University (Suslov 2016) and Krasnodar State University (Mart'yanov & Lagutin, 2017) over the past few years show the tracing of all social networks from the same accounts. This confirms once again that modern marketers have received powerful tools for controlling the behavior of individuals, not only in terms of propaganda, building (painting?) a meaningful picture of the world, but also in styling the motivation (nudge) to commit the necessary actions.

Thus, political marketing in the Big Data paradigm is a challenge for democracy, morality and law, and maybe civilization. Prospects for overcoming this tendency toward growing divergence, disunity and total manipulation could be linked to other information and communication technologies, such as blockchain, which create technological platforms of trust with the prospect of expanding such platforms to all new activities: finance, expertise, management, etc. However, we can assume that the combination of Big Data and blockchain, with their inevitable integration with the Internet of things (IoT), is fraught with a rigid fixation on certain values and norms, thus generating totalitarian tendencies. In relation to this subject, there is inevitably a temptation to implement the plot from another film – the 'Truman Show' – but from a data science point of view for every citizen and society, as a whole.

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## Big data, political communication and terrorist threats: Russian experience in ethical dimension

The Data-driven channels of political communication are very important for both antiterrorists and terrorist activities when 'terrorism should be viewed as an alternative form of political communication' (Bradley, 2016). So, as more sophisticated political communication becomes armed with Big Data, it will be more important to: (1) minimize the access for terrorists to these new technologies; (2) search in advance for methods of counteracting terrorists which have even some limited access to Big Data tools; and (3) estimate and control the risks of any political communication equipped by Big Data in the framework and interests of the civil society.

With serious terrorist challenges, the Russian government has already partnered with different security firms like Kaspersky Lab to better understand how it can leverage its Big Data to catch extremists. With counterterrorist goals, some mobile network operators of Russia (e.g. MegaFon) propose to process all information files using Big Data tools and to store the results of this processing. For example, the Center of Research of Legitimacy and Political Protest in Moscow started in 2015 a program which received the name 'Laplace's demon' (n.d.). The system monitors