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Dear readers!

Information technologies' rapid development and global events have damaged live communication for many and made it impossible for some (referring to the COVID pandemic and the ongoing war), all the while leading to an increase in online communication in all areas of human activity. More specifically, these two factors have affected our culture, essentially moving millions of people's work online, whether it be in media, music, performance arts, painting, museums, or library fields, among others. Thus, researchers who are now involved in studying new practices related to cultural products' creation, their interpretation, and their distribution are developing the trend of cultural virtualization, stating that this is the next big step in advancing our modern society.

A large portion of this continuum of cultural research is dedicated to works devoted to using artificial intelligence in various forms of digital art.

It is this exact situation in our culture that researchers are documenting and analyzing, whose work has become the content of this issue of "Skhid": **"Digital Transformations in Culture"**.

We will now briefly present each article on this issue.

Using these methods, Ukrainian researcher ***Mary Chikarkova***, with the help of some examples, shows that the use of artificial intelligence in art changes the nature of art itself. In doing so, she not only provides specific facts but also demonstrates various approaches to researching this topic, all the while citing opposing viewpoints. This way, those who are for AI art consider that this form of artistry is the next step in the development of avant-garde trends, and those who oppose it see these tendencies as a degradation of art, arguably its death.

In the field of digital painting, as the author shows, we are already encountering the use of AI (the most famous example being the android Ai-Da) that can paint in various techniques and using various tools. But ever since a painting generated by this AI won a legitimate art competition, questions have been raised regarding its authorship and the viability of such works' participation in competitions for actual human artists. Discussions on the art-centered platform ArtStation indicate that a majority of artists reject the artificially generated works as "real" artistic works.

Today, in music, it is possible not only to generate melodies but also to create imitations of certain styles or musical artists, all the while raising even more questions about the nature of true creativity and its limits. Another use-case scenario of artificial intelligence in music has been the creation of AI artists, who also end up receiving a large amount of virality. In the video game field, AI can create not only levels for a specific game, but it can go a step further and generate entire gaming worlds, and in some cases, even complete games. In photography, artificial intelligence can generate images of non-existent people.

Considering these facts and all other opinions of authoritative experts, the author concludes that artificial intelligence is devoid of organic human creativity and only knows how to compile assets from other human creations instead of generating its own artistic works. Therefore, it will continue to be used in the artistic sphere primarily for rough drafts; a good example of this would be design development, but it is very unlikely to ever learn to create genuine content that shows originality. At the same time, its use in art poses a number of difficult questions for humanity: how do you even evaluate non-anthropocentric creativity? Should we host separate art competitions from now on, or should AI-generated content be evaluated on par with man-made "products"? Who do we even consider the author of the created works of art – the person behind the prompt or the ones and zeros that generated it? Finding answers to these questions is a matter of the future.

In his research, ***Kostiantyn Raikhert*** mentions some philosophical considerations about the possibilities of artificial intelligence having creative capabilities. The author shows that artificial intelligence can be considered creative only when it creates something new through imagination (or its equivalent) and by referring to the so-called "background" (its intuition, experience, background knowledge, values, stereotypes, etc.), and its creative activity should be either necessary or arbitrary. The necessary creative activity is associated with solving specific tasks, say, within the framework of technical inventions or scientific discoveries. Arbitrary creative activity is associated more with spontaneous, aimless, and purposeless human activity. This type of creative activity occurs when the subject of creativity has free time, leisure, hobbies, is playing games, or feels bored.

Based on these two types of creative activity, we can distinguish two different types of creative artificial intelligence: uncreative AI, which performs necessary creative activity associated with its prompt, namely effectively solving specific problems and tasks, and creative AI, which performs arbitrary creative activity, namely creating solely for the sake of creation itself. Actual creative artificial intelligence is possible only when this AI is given full autonomy, has the freedom to dispose of this autonomy, and understands how to manage its own freedom.

Nigerian researchers ***Patience Owe, Philomena Effiong Umoren, Fabian Okalla, Kizito Nzube Alaekwe, Christian Chuddy Oduenyi, Emeka Williams Etumnu*** speak on how digital technologies are changing modern media. In particular, they presented the results of their assessment of the impact of these technologies on basic journalistic practice among other journalists from Imo State. There has also been an evaluation of their new access to digital technologies, including how familiar they are with this newfound technology and how much they (digital technologies) are a motivating factor in the advancement of professional journalism. The final results led to the conclusion that digital technologies have greatly aided and improved the professional process of gathering, producing, and distributing news, thus having a significant influence on today's journalistic practice. The study recommended media organizations adopt a transition to digital television and embrace it among journalists.

Olena Hudzenko devoted her work to researching today's culture's innovative aspects of digital transformation. She pays great attention to digital platforms' role in the interaction and exchange of values and information in the context of digital art. The author notes that, in becoming a key catalyst for innovation in the cultural and artistic environment, digital transformation creates opportunities for preserving and popularizing national cultural values while considering various approaches to digital transformation, taking into account both the strategic partnership and its integrated approach, as well as the dynamics of the interaction of technologies, directions, and participants in the process of achieving new forms of activity and increasing efficiency in business. In addition, her article highlights the problems that arise in the process of shifting art objects and cultural heritage into the digital realm, in particular: ensuring property and copyright rights, as well as the potential inconsistencies of terminologies between informational and digital cultures. The article also discusses the individual challenges and prospects of digital transformation for the museum sector, emphasizing the need to create the necessary conditions for each museum separately.

In their article, ***Inna Hurova*** and ***Olga Dobrodum*** analyze various aspects of modern society's development in relation to the digital shift of our culture: the educational process, cultural industries, the artistic department, the use of artificial intelligence, and their many commemorative practices. The authors then cite the origin of the term "virtuality" and its further development in this scientific discourse. The emergence and evolution of the phenomenon of virtuality are associated with the development of information and communication technologies (ICT). This concept of "virtuality" is considered an informational technology space, a technically mediated environment, an informational resource of modern society, and a media environment of culture.

Based on the methodological approaches of researchers around the globe, M. McLuhan and M. Castells, regarding the formation of a new type of culture, we can draw the conclusion that the strengthening of this virtualization process gradually leads to the replacement of the real object space with the space of images, symbols, and signs in many socially important spheres of human life. Next, we can assume that virtuality greatly contributes to the creation of many new technologies of cultural and interpersonal communication while offering a new form of interaction with those remnants that have a new virtual representation. Their article then highlights the embrace of combining online and offline spaces, transforming the Internet into a space for live human communication, everyday activities, and entertainment. The authors also note that modern innovations cannot replace the effect of a legitimate in-person visit, but thanks to this widespread digitization and the rapid development of 3D technologies, people have the opportunity to emotionally react to world events while virtually being at the center of these events.

Virtualization is considered a new representation technology that, in the near future, will largely determine the cultural experience of humanity. The authors show that today the Internet stands before users, including as an integrator of all forms of social reproduction. Various forms of convergence and interrelationships of culture in the Global Web are fixed. Many of the advantages, threats, and risks of wide use of modern information products are explored in full detail in their work.

Bohdan Lomachinskyi analyzes the features of formatting Ukrainian digital libraries and their role in ensuring the humanitarian security of society. The relevance of his research stems from the large practical work that is now being actively carried out in domestic and foreign libraries, which relates to the digitization of library collections and the creation of a national system of digital libraries.

The author first substantiates that the national system of digital libraries is a significant factor in countering the ideological (conscientious) wars of modern times.

His logic for these reflections is as follows: the digital era forms a new type of person, a "digital person," which then gives these libraries the task of developing new strategies for the library service based on its management of knowledge, all the while increasing the level of digital competence of both library workers and its users for maximum efficiency in collecting personal and social digital capital. The author then analyzes the essential features of digital libraries, their advantages compared to traditional libraries, and determines the advantages of forming digital libraries, taking into account the Ukrainian and worldwide experience.

It is there noted that in the Ukrainian library space, the National Library of Ukraine, named after V. Vernadsky, which has created the national electronic library "Ukrainica" aimed at collecting in digital format works about the Ukrainian people, the territory of Ukraine, and all the people who have lived or live on this territory, occupies a leading place in digitizing the national cultural heritage. This will allow all digital library users to gain knowledge about the history of Ukraine, its traditions and culture, the Ukrainian nation and statehood, and its place in world civilization development. In addition, the issue of digitization of library resources requiring additional attention in the name of security for confidentiality, integrity, and availability of their information resources is addressed.

In conclusion, the future-proof strategy to counter ideological wars is this digitization of the national book heritage, all for maximum preservation of national history and identity.

The development of Internet technologies, new media, and the emergence of AI have changed the cultural paradigm of humanity. The formation of digital culture, social networks, and virtualization, which have entered all areas of human activity (science, economy, art, culture, everyday human life, etc.), have become important components of the functioning of modern society. Therefore, the prospects for further scientific research on cultural digitization will be the new problems of new ways and technologies of meaning, the analysis of new systems of self-identification and social interaction, and further integrating AI into our culture.

Issue Editors