



DIGITAL CULTURE AS A HUMANITARIAN PHENOMENON

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ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the analysis of the virtual world from the standpoint of culture. Computerization and internet bore the new ontology of educational interaction and made new educational order. The procedure of getting knowledge and prominent component of knowledge as a value are changed, that is the culture of getting knowledge and its application is changed. Digital culture becomes opposite to humanistic pedagogics, specifies new values and meanings of genesis. This is the result of changes in educational environment and becomes the reason for changing the nature of humanism itself. The lack of ethical norms, spiritual aspects is one of the main problems of the digital reality phenomenon. Along with the undoubted practical benefits of digitalization, the claims of "numbers" to replace a person in art look dangerous, since they can deprive a person of spiritual development. The 21st century has entered as the digital age. The digital economy, digital money, digital crime, digital culture, digital hygiene, digital death, and even digital immortality have emerged. Digitalization is a natural stage in the development of society.

KEY WORDS: digitalization, digital communication, cyberculture, digitality, virtual life, Pythagoras, Plato's "Cave".

DISCUSSION

The philosophical origins of digital culture as a special reality, and not just a set of tools, can be seen in the works of Pythagoras and Plato. In Western culture, it was Pythagoras who was one of the first to see and substantiate that number is the basis of the universe. Moreover, the number has an independent essence and is ideal not only as a form but also in ethical terms - the number does not allow lies. The pythagorean ratio of elements and geometric figures, as well as the establishment of a connection between numerical ratios and musical tones, undoubtedly, are the threshold of modern culture, where a digital, a virtual matrix is superimposed on almost all of its spheres. One of the most important conclusions of the Pythagorean school for us is the conclusion that number allows us to overcome the chaos of the current reality, harmonizes it. If we turn to modern research in the field of information technology, then most of them are devoted specifically to the problem of protecting a person

from internal (own body, if we talk about medicine) and external elements by visualizing their dynamics¹.

Plato developed and strengthened the ideas of the Pythagoreans in many ways. The world of Plato's ideas is, in fact, that digital reality that can only be imagined, cognized and modeled on eternal forms, which each time the transitory earthly visible world is recreated. Our world is just a projection of the ideal. Here one cannot fail to point out the parallel to modernity and the "Simulation-Based Design" paradigm used by high-tech companies, when creativity is based on and the creativity of the designer, mathematical models are laid that satisfy the objective function that is required from a certain product²

¹ Бухановский А.В., Иванов С.В., Нечаев Ю.И.

Интерпретация динамики судна при воздействии разрушающихся и экстремальных волн при функционировании бортовой интеллектуальной системы // Нейрокомпьютеры: разработка, применение. — 2011. — № 6. — С. 19–28.

² Цифровое проектирование. Алексей Боровков о системе 3D-моделирования, краш-тестах и



2.5 thousand years ago, the philosopher Pythagoras said that everything can be expressed in numbers. He brought this idea from the Karnak Temple in Egypt along with the "Pythagorean pants" theorem. Pythagoras also said that every 10 thousand years everything repeats itself "numerically" (i.e. literally). Perhaps our civilization repeats the path of the previous civilization?

Microsoft edition "Digital Culture: your competitive advantage defines it: "Digital culture is a shared, foundational and deeply rooted underlying assumptions, values, beliefs and norms that characterize how an organization encourages and supports the use of technology to get the job done most effectively."³ Information in the modern post-industrial era acts as one of the bases for the functioning of social processes, moreover, information exchange is a condition for the relationship between them. The information space through the global network expands human capabilities, allowing to overcome geographic, political boundaries, making the world cultural values available for contemplation to everyone, "Virtualizing" the economic sphere of human life. The speed of distribution of information flows leads to a situation of total digitalization of social processes and the life of individuals.

If we take a closer look at the digital environment we live in today we can see that it is enveloping us – digital technologies are present in all aspects of our lives. Today we use digital technologies without noticing them – they are present in all business segments, underpinning our financial transactions from cash-tellers to stock market trading. Traffic control systems, medical and other equipment, elevators, etc., are today controlled or enabled through digital systems. "Most forms of mass media, television, recorded music, film, are produced and, increasingly distributed digitally. These media are beginning to converge with digital forms, such as Internet, the World Wide Web, and video games, to produce a seamless digital landscape"⁴

This generation perceives the format of traditional culture with an established system of values through the prism of numbers and emerging consequences: such as clip culture, screen culture, the

концепции «Simulation-Based Design»
[Электронный ресурс] // ПостНаука. Режим
доступа: <https://postnauka.ru/video/63239> (дата
обращения: 01.05.2018)

³ Digital culture: your competitive advantage (2017).
Microsoft Corporation. 25 p.

⁴ Gere, Charlie: Digital Culture. London, Reaktion
Books, 2002

culture of computer games, etc. The main phenomena that determine a single modern digital culture include a personal computer and all the variety of digital devices: the Internet, artificial intelligence, system and application software, computer graphics and virtual reality systems, digital formats of traditional media communications (books, photographs, audio and video recordings, digital TV, etc.), computer games, technological art⁵.

Digitalization as a social phenomenon became widespread in the 60s-70s of the 20th century, it is characterized by three main characteristics:

1. All kinds of content are moving from analog, physical and static to digital, simultaneously becoming mobile and personal. Moreover, the individual gets the opportunity control his personal content, send information requests, form an individual trajectory of information activities.
2. There is a transition to simple communication technologies (technology becomes only a means, communication tool), the leading characteristic of the device and technology is controllability.
3. Communications become heterogeneous: vertical, hierarchical communication loses its relevance, there is a transition to a network structure of communication⁶.

"Digital culture" is another concept that combines many research approaches. For many researchers, the use of this definition does not mean a fundamentally new vector of research. The choice of this category for them is associated with the desire to leave for the prefix "cyber", which has technocratic connotations, and the recognition that digital technologies have become an organic part of modern life. It is no coincidence that the main body of works devoted to digital culture ⁷falls on the period when they began to talk about the establishment of Web 2.0, or the second generation Internet with its interactivity, focus on the mass user. Hybridization

⁵ Галкин, Д.В. От кибернетических автоматов к искусственной жизни: теоретические и историкокультурные аспекты формирования цифровой культуры [Текст]: автореф. дис. ... д-ра философ. наук / Д.В. Галкин. – Томск, 2013. – 51 с.

⁶ Сергеева, И.Л. Трансформация массовой культуры в цифровой среде [Текст] / И.Л. Сергеева // Культура и цивилизация. – 2016. – Т. 6. – № 6А. – С. 55–65

⁷ Digital Cultures: Understanding New Media/eds. G. Creeber, R.Martin. N.Y.: Open University Press. 2009; Hand M. Making Digital Cultures: Access, Interactivity, and Authenticity. Ashgate Publishing, 2008



of online and offline spaces have intensified, Network has turned into a space of human communication, everyday activities and entertainment, in "anthropo-space", as S.V. Tikhonova narrates⁸. K. Basset, speaking of the need to build a social theory that takes into account these changes, describes a new stage in the development of digital technologies and their impact on society as a stage of "post-cyberspace"⁹.

The concept of "digital culture" as well as the concepts of "cyberspace", "cyberculture" has different interpretations. For some researchers, exploring digital culture is simply exploring the transition of mass media from analog to digital. Here, digital culture is actually identified with new media¹⁰. With this approach, changes associated with changes in the mass media system, but going far beyond its limits, remain outside the field of analysis.

For other researchers, studying digital culture means analyzing a wider field of artifacts and practices, the emergence of which became possible thanks to digital technologies: computer games, the Internet, computer graphics, technological art, etc.¹¹. The study of digital culture through the analysis of its main phenomena allows us to determine its specificity, but, it seems, limits the subject of research.

It seems that digital culture research is not limited with the analysis of digital technologies, formats and gadgets, but affects the most different aspects of the life of a modern person, involves an analysis of the changes themselves practices and products of human activity. So, the study of digital

culture involves not only an analysis of its phenomena, which is important in itself, but turns into a study of what happens to culture in the era of the spread of digital technologies.

Digital culture is analyzed in a number of works on philosophy, sociology and cultural studies. In cultural and philosophical aspects, digital culture is interpreted as a new form of being, "third nature" (traditionally the second nature means "culture" as a whole), continuing the natural habitat and the "world of things". "A person acquires a new being in virtual space, while the value of the real world is gradually shifting towards the virtual. The border between them is blurred, illusion in relation to being intensifies"¹². Like any type of culture, digital culture determines the lifestyle, motivation, communication features, human behavior. D.V. Galkin¹³ considers digital culture at several levels of understanding, and this approach seems to be lawful and applicable in the course of further reasoning.

If we take a closer look at the digital environment we live in today we can see that it is enveloping us – digital technologies are present in all aspects of our lives. Today we use digital technologies without noticing them – they are present in all business segments, underpinning our financial transactions from cash-tellers to stock market trading. Traffic control systems, medical and other equipment, elevators, etc., are today controlled or enabled through digital systems. "Most forms of mass media, television, recorded music, film, are produced and, increasingly distributed digitally. These media are beginning to converge with digital forms, such as Internet, the World Wide Web, and video games, to produce a seamless digital landscape" Charlie Gere proposes that the extent of the presence of digital technologies in our lives points to the existence of a digital culture. He states that "digitality can be thought of as a marker of culture because it encompasses both the artifacts and the systems of signification and communication that

⁸ Тихонова С.В. Социальная мифология в коммуникационном пространстве современного общества: автореф. дис. ... докт. филос. наук. Саратов, 2009. С.27-28.

⁹ Bassett C. New Maps for Old?: The Cultural Stakes of '2.0' // Fibreculture Journal. 2008. № 13. URL: http://journal.fibreculture.org/issue13/issue13_bassett.html.

¹⁰ Participation, Remediation, Bricolage: Considering Principal Components of a Digital Culture. URL: <http://www.slideshare.net/RemingInSydney/what-is-digital-culture>

¹¹ Галкин, Д.В. Digital Culture: методологические вопросы исследования культурной динамики от цифровых автоматов до техно-био-тварей [Электронный ресурс] / Д.В. Галкин // Международный журнал исследований культуры. – 2012. – № 3. – С. 11–12. – Режим доступа: http://www.culturalresearch.ru/files/open_issues/03_2012/IJCR_03%288%29_2012.pdf

¹² Сергеева, И.Л. Трансформация массовой культуры в цифровой среде [Текст] / И.Л. Сергеева // Культура и цивилизация. – 2016. – Т. 6. – № 6А. – С. 55–65

¹³ Галкин, Д.В. Digital Culture: методологические вопросы исследования культурной динамики от цифровых автоматов до техно-био-тварей [Электронный ресурс] / Д.В. Галкин // Международный журнал исследований культуры. – 2012. – № 3. – С. 11–12. – Режим доступа: http://www.culturalresearch.ru/files/open_issues/03_2012/IJCR_03%288%29_2012.pdf



most clearly demarcate our contemporary way of life from others”¹⁴

Computer culture, virtual culture, cyber culture, e-culture, Internet culture, new media, convergence culture, digital culture are all relatively new terms that are today widely used in scientific and popular literature. Scholars from various disciplines have examined the impact of this new media on various social aspects of virtual space and its impact on the real sphere and they have changed their views on digital culture many times over a relatively short period of time. When stand-alone PCs were in focus the emphasis was on interface; when communication possibilities were added emphasis had to be put on interaction, and ICTs were no longer seen as tools but we started to think of their context as a space. Although interlinked, as they both frame our experience, the virtual and real spheres were clearly delimited. As ICT further progresses in its development towards miniaturization, the boundaries are no longer clear. There is another shift taking place “from the virtual foreground to the material background”, as pervasive computing focuses on embedding specific ICT-based elements into the ambient background of local physical spaces.⁷ Thus, rather than not real, virtuality starts to mean “a tacit aspect of material reality” (Hawk and Rieder, 2008). This means that reality has also been transformed into information space where material objects are becoming media objects as they potentially become information flowing through global networks. Ambient intelligence, ubiquitous computing and the “Internet of Things” are new terms that were recently introduced into discussions about digital culture. This indicates that culture and digital culture evolve and are becoming more interlinked as they frame our experience – more closely, one and the same¹⁵.

Culture is always in development, but it becomes important that these changes are occurring rapidly. Increasing rate of change generates the phenomenon of time compression as a constant time compression by events. If we try to describe the growth of technological discoveries that have influenced culture through the image of the 24-hour scale on the dial, then we will see that “the speech appeared at 21 hours 33 minutes, the letter - at 23 hours 52 minutes. The world saw the first book at 23 hours 58 minutes, and a little over a minute later, at 23 hours 59 minutes and 14 seconds, a printing press with movable letters appeared -Gutenberg's

invention. In 33 seconds people got radio and television.”¹⁶

A philosophical understanding of these processes is necessary, because it is capable of significantly ahead of its time, and there are plenty of such examples in the history of philosophy. It is unlikely that Plato, using the famous metaphor of the cave, could have guessed about modern technologies that, in a certain sense, will turn this mental model into a kind of reality. The author of these lines, returning once after a lecture on ontology (during which he was just telling a student about the term “Generation Kopf unten” (literally “generation with a bowed head” popular in Germany), passing through the hall of the educational building, I noticed that in the darkest corners there were many students, each holding a gadget in his hand. They absolutely did not communicate with each other.(unless only through the same gadgets). It was a realized image of Plato's cave - people immersed in the world of shadows, and chained to it,not even by someone consciously, but only by their own attachment to the virtual world in a smartphone¹⁷.

The influence of digital culture on the formation and development of personality is not only technogenic, but also humanitarian in nature, but the sixth technological mode itself, within the framework of which digital culture develops, will change not only the world around a person but also the person himself. One of the main problems of digital culture is the lack of ethical reflection both in relation to the past and to the present and the future, which is also due to the infinite perfectionism. An equally important problem is the relationship between digital culture and art. If digital technologies are an addition to art, a way of amplifying it, then digital here does not pretend to be a culture, being within the framework of analog. But if we talk about replacing the subject-person in the field of art with the subject-number, who will write poetry “like Pushkin”, music “like Mozart” and make films “like Fellini”, then it will be necessary to state the death of “the last person” (F Fukuyama), from which the basic spiritual need - for creativity - will disappear as almost the only one that allows one to overcome the biological principle.

¹⁴ Charlie Gere.*Digital culture*.London: Reaktion Book. 2002. 9-15 pp.

¹⁵ Aleksandra Uzelac, Biserka Cvjetianin. *Digital culture: The Changing Dynamics*. Institute for International Relations Zagreb, 2008.12-p.

¹⁶ Vinterhoff-Shpurk, P. (2007), *Mediapsikhologija. Osnovnye printsipy* [Media psychology. Basic principles], Gumanitarnyi tsentr Publ., Khar'kov, Ukraine

¹⁷ Миронов В.В. Платон и современная пещера big-data // Вестник СанктПетербургского университета. Философия и конфликтология. 2019. Т. 35. Вып. 1. С. 4–24. <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu17.2019.101>



Works in various scientific fields - art, archeology, computer science, law, interdisciplinary sciences - demonstrate that the concept of "digital culture", "digital heritage" covered various aspects of the sphere of culture and the growing role of digital technologies in this area has significantly increased needs of society.

The digital culture itself as a category, despite the presence of signs of an independent culture, remains to a greater extent a cultural phenomenon, since it lacks key cultural indicators: productivity, typification, reproducibility, etc.

As a phenomenon, digital culture contains a number of problems, the main of which are related to epistemology and ethics. So, the colossal amount of information, the point nature of its receipt, the constant simplification of the methods of working with information have been significantly simplified, but at the same time weakened the cognitive abilities of a person in terms of knowing the whole and the reasons. And the absence of ethical guidelines in the digital space, conditions for ethical reflection makes it irrelevant precisely as an integral culture, once again indicating the status of the phenomenon. Let us recall that Plato did not consider the phenomenal to be genuine precisely because of its temporality, impermanence, constant transformation, and illusion. These are the features of the digital space phenomenon.

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