# Media Culture of a Globalised World: Evolution of Language Technologies

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As a world civilisational phenomenon occurring at the turn of the 20th–21st centuries, globalism has affected not only politics and economics, but also culture. Moreover, due to the expanding system of media communications and increasing mobility of images and symbols of the information age, which has profoundly affected methods of thinking and system of science and education, the globalisation of the world socio-cultural space can be seen as reflecting many aspects of the current "spirit of the time". For this reason, various discussions currently taking place in the humanities are related to the nature and consequences of cultural globalisation including the sphere of language technologies, which influences the dialogue of cultures in the globalised world.

On 24th–25th April 2020, the online International Conference "Dialogue of Cultures in the Age of Globalization and Digitalization" took place. The Conference was organised by the Chair of Cultural Studies and Socio-Cultural Activity of the Ural Federal University along with the Ural Branch of the Scientific-Educational Society of Cultural Studies of Russia. Papers in the current issue of *Changing Societies & Personalities* are devoted to the main theme of the conference, including the language of culture. It was Martin Heidegger who put forward the idea that language is the "house of being" of humanity (Heidegger, 1927/1993, p. 220). In this regard, the methods of language formation, its evolution, main trends and development are the subject of research interest, which also includes the language of media culture as an information-age phenomenon that affects the process of globalisation.

An important factor of contemporary media culture is how representations of reality in the context of globalisation and digitalisation increasingly affect public consciousness and the process of socialisation on individual level. Whether for realising one's creative abilities or learning the "other", contemporary communication technologies (digital cinema, television and photo, multimedia systems, computer-related art, social networks and mobile communications)

facilitate an interactive mode of communication. Consequently, when researching contemporary media culture, it is necessary to use an integrated approach to its analysis as a system of information and communication, including the culture of production and transmission of information, as well as the culture of its perception (Kirillova, 2016).

The global socio-cultural space combines diverse media, such as print, visual, audio and audio-visual, each having its own sign system and language utilised as a means of conveying meaning. During different periods of the 20th century, the functions and characteristics of the media language were the focus of research by Mikhail Bakhtin, Roland Barthes, Walter Benjamin, Jean Baudrillard, Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida, Julia Kristeva, Yury Lotman, Mashall McLuhan, Kirill Razlogov, Umberto Eco and others. Their works interpret the transformation of iconic systems of media culture, as well as the specifics of new digital media, which is based on the "human-machine interaction". The new tendencies are analysed in the works of Norbert Bolz, Jean-Jacques Wuneburger, Manuel Castells, Niklas Luhmann, Lev Manovich, William J. Mitchell and Erkki Huhtamo.

The most in-demand forms of media culture are on-screen. A cinematic narrative, interactive visualisation of texts, search engines, a mobile phone interface, etc., are all variants of media screen forms having their own linguistic communication forms. One of the pressure points of contemporary media culture is the dramatic increase in informational scope, producing a wide variety of socio-cultural effects. Although we often evaluate media products (books, articles, films, photo, computer or television programs, social advertising, video clips, websites, etc.) in terms of language and information aesthetics, there are other cultural dimensions to take into consideration, such as "authorship", "co-authorship", "perception", "type of media", "concept", "new media", etc.

The present editorial paper is aimed at identifying specific features of virtualisation of media culture as a phenomenon of a globalised world and considering the evolution of language technologies of different media as methods of codification and representation of reality, including the specific language of a modern digital screen, which promotes cultural dialogue and polylogue.

## Transformation of Media Culture as a Sign System

An important research issue consists in the transformation of media culture as a sign system, forming an important factor in representing reality, which has gone from written culture to audio-visual and digital cultures including the search for a new language as a codifier of reality and retransmission of meaning. The structural-functional method used in the present paper not only helps to determine the key functions of media culture (informational, cognitive, communicative, compensatory, integrative, mediative), but also to identify specific features of the languages of different media: written (book), visual, audio and audio-visual. If the basis of the language of written culture is the letter, for audio culture it is a sound denoted by a musical note, while for visual culture it is an iconic sign. Thus, the aesthetics of the

frame becomes the basis of the language of audio-visual media culture. A special place is given to the analysis of the digital screen language, which promotes dialogism and polylogism in communication. Here, the use of a synergistic approach allows the interdisciplinary character of the study to be taken into consideration.

From an informational and semiotic point of view, media culture comprises a triune system that includes artifacts (from Latin *arte* – artificial and *factus* – made), symbols and signs. The system that serves the purposes of communication can be defined as a language. Based on this, philologist and philosopher Yury Lotman showed that not only works of literature, but also any cultural phenomena may be regarded as texts, since they store special artistic information and are carriers of a certain thought – idea (see: Lotman, 2000, p. 19). Hence, a media culture text comprises both a written message and the additional content of electronic communications: a movie, a television or video film, a television program or clip, computer animation and graphics, website, etc. The language of different media comprises signs and sets of signs ("texts") in which the relevant socio-cultural information is "encrypted", by which means it is empowered to carry content, sense and meaning. Evolving from the era of phonetic writing to the "Gutenberg Galaxy" (McLuhan, 2005), i.e., book culture, and then to electronic civilisation, the media text undergoes changes under the conditions of the modern "Internet Galaxy" (Castells, 2004).

The need for the representation and codification of reality gives rise to ever-new iconic text forms that translate different ideas, images and representations. The text is a connected sign complex and the basis of humanitarian thinking (see: Bakhtin, 1986, p. 281). Therefore, in Mikhail Bakhtin's philosophy of language, the word comes to the fore, in the absence of which there can be no text or dialogue. According to Bakhtin, dialogical relations cannot be torn from the domain of the word, that is, language as a concrete integral phenomenon. Language lives only in the dialogical interaction of those who make us of it. The whole life of a language, in any area of its use (household, business, scientific, artistic, etc.), is permeated by dialogical relations (see: Bakhtin, 2017, pp. 274–275). The problems posed by Bakhtin concerning the *language of culture*, *dialogue of cultures* and *man in culture* concepts turned out to be immensely relevant for researchers working in the second half of the 20th century.

Bakhtin's follower Julia Kristeva stresses that the language of the text, which is not limited to what it simply represents, denotes reality. It participates in the movement and transformation of reality (see: Kristeva, 2004, p. 35). Kristeva argues that, since the text is always polyphonic, it becomes a platform for different ideologies that come out to bleed each other in the confrontation (p. 21). The value of Kristeva's work consists in her enrichment of semiotics with new terms: *hypertext, intertext, genotext* and *phenotext*. These terms, having become central to postmodern culture, denote dialogic and even polylogic relationships with reality, constructed as a mosaic of quotes, a mosaic of signs.

From the perspective of Roland Barthes, media texts are a communication system that connects a person with the world around him, inevitably leading to the mythologisation of reality. The French philosopher argues that the language of media,

like myth, comprises a form, a way of signifying (see: Barthes, 1957/2008, p. 264). Under the terms *language, discourse, word*, etc., Barthes means any significant unit or entity, whether verbal or visual; thus, in the same way as a newspaper article, photography can also be seen as speech. The researcher proves that *language* as a general understanding of the word is confirmed by the history of writing: long before the invention of the alphabet, objects were regular forms of speech or drawings like pictograms (Barthes, 1957/2008).

It is generally understood that writing as a system for recording signs of the natural language or everyday speech was among the greatest achievements of human thought. The master of post-structuralist philosophy, Jacques Derrida, in his works ("Voice and Phenomenon", "Letter and Difference", "Fields of Philosophy", "Positions", etc.) evaluated letters and writing in accordance with the Western tradition as "body and matter", external to "spirit" and "logos". His concept boils down to the realisation that, between man and truth, there is a very significant series of intermediaries, which are located mainly in the sphere of language. Among the key concepts of philosophy of language, Derrida distinguishes the following: *deconstruction*, *difference*, *writing*, and *overcoming of metaphysics*. The language for him is the signifying substance tied to the thought of the signified concept (Derrida, 1972/2007, p. 29). Before the advent of poststructuralism, the German philosopher of culture Walter Benjamin, reflecting on the language of symbols as a "tragic game" of mankind, stated that language should not be interpreted as an instrument of adequate communication, but as an arbitrary form of everything. According to Benjamin, since a thing has a certain spiritual content, then language is involved in any material realisations and manifestations thereof: verbal communication is only a fragment of the functioning of the language. In his famous writing "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936), he revised the language of traditional arts, proving that with the development of photography and cinema, based on a synthesis of technology and creativity, a fundamentally new situation in culture is created that affects the transformation of the language of works of art (Benjamin, 1935/1996, pp. 70–72). Benjamin was among the first to see that the techniques of reproduction removed the object of art from the sphere of tradition, replaced its unique existence with the mass; thus, instead of individual communication with art, modern culture began to offer more and more diverse forms of "mass consumption". Inevitably, this, in turn, influenced the specifics of creativity, leading to its unification and standardisation.

The sociologist Jean Baudrillard developed an original concept of the linguistic sign system and its intermediary function, translating them into the sphere of politics and economics. He defined the sign as a functional simulacrum (Baudrillard, 1972/2007, p. 17); as a discriminant, the simulacrum structures itself through exclusion, by means of which all virtualities of meaning are shorn off in the cut of the structure (Baudrillard, 1972/2007, p. 207). This means that a symbolic semantic operation must be performed not only on sound or visual, but also on social material, although its implementation requires a completely different logic.

As the German media theorist Norbert Bolz argues, there is now no common media space. Rather, different media are served by different value systems. Different

informational worlds separate democratic, political and cultural boundaries (Bolz, 2007/2011, p. 15). Moreover, according to Lev Manovich, new media is concerned with cultural objects and paradigms enabled by all forms of computing, not just networking (Manovich, 2013, pp. 32–33).

However, none of abovementioned researchers note the significant distinction between auditory and visual communication systems. Let us therefore consider these differences here. Firstly, a structural differentiating factor consists in the time that flows through sound, speech, music and vocalisation. The structuring of visual systems, conversely, is associated with space: in traditional art, forms represented by painting and sculpture dominate, more recently joined by graphics, posters and various iconic sign systems. In computer graphics, as in network animation, the replication of architecture and painting comes to the fore along with photography. It is here that creative forms start to prevail that dependent on a symbiosis of man and machine. According to William Mitchell, there are no "visual media". Instead, he argues that "visual media" is a colloquial expression used for such phenomena as television, cinema, photography and painting, etc. However, upon closer examination it turns out that all the so-called "visual media" also involve other types of perception (especially tactile and auditory), which means that they are mixed (see: Mitchell, 2005, p. 257), that is audio-visual.

In this regard, it is interesting to focus on the language of audio-visual (screen) media culture, which has become the most popular. Screen culture is a special type of culture based on a synthesis of technology and creativity, and the screen is the material carrier of its texts. We can agree with Kirill Razlogov that screen-based culture at the turn of the 20th–21st centuries becomes the most important mechanism for the formation and translation of the norms, customs, traditions and values that form the basis of various communities of people and mass culture in general (Razlogov, 2005, p. 13).

Therefore, it is natural that the content of on-screen culture includes a wide variety of audio-visual forms related to cinema, television, video and computer creativity, including gaming technology and multimedia systems. Consequently, with the improvement of technical artefacts, the screen has evolved from a white canvas onto which a movie is projected to an electronic television tube and then to a computer display. During this evolution, the capability of screens for displaying transmitted images was greatly enhanced. Thereby, the development of on-screen means of displaying reality has determined the formation of on-screen culture. And the terms "screen", "screening", "screen reality", and later "virtual reality" became the key concepts of culture at the turn of the 20th–21st centuries.

The novelty of on-screen forms of modelled reality underwent a qualitative leap into different socio-cultural dimensions represented by computerised representations of pages, providing the dialogic possibility inherent in the new type of "book". Although the fundamentally important concept of "dialogue" is associated with the thought of Russian cultural theorists Mikhail Bakhtin and Yury Lotman, it is usually replaced in Russian discourses with its loan translation from English – "interactivity". Meanwhile, thanks to Kristeva's work in culture and semiotics, the terms *polylogue* (the broad

exchange of meanings between authors and readers) and *intertext* (the general inter-relativity between all texts) have been established, raising Bakhtin's polyphony to a qualitatively new step (Kristeva, 2004, pp. 14–21). Due to the availability of information networks, the computer is becoming an important part of the global polylogue, a new dynamised way of being for culture.

The cinema-driven culture in which reality has long been reproduced is associated with "photogeny" – in Louis Delluc's definition (1924), the aesthetics of the frame, which is common to all modern audio-visual means of communication (animation, art media, television, computer graphics, digital photo, etc.). On-screen media, consisting of synthetic types of creativity in which all previous sign systems are integrated, are influenced by the general laws of the development of technical culture and technological progress. On this basis, a new vision is formed according to a new type of imaginative thinking that integrates auditory and visual forms (Kirillova, 2015, p. 45).

If it is a letter in the written (book) culture that forms the basis of a sign system, helping to compile words and sentences, then the frame is the cornerstone of audio-visual culture. Moreover, the photographic culture of the frame is associated with its use as a means of transmitting a direct impression of a real event. Within cinematic culture, the frame is used as an *editing cell* (Eisenstein, 1956, p. 199), which allows it not only to convey the impression of an event, but also to reveal the meaning of the event in the creation of an artistic vision of reality. It is no coincidence that the classics of Russian cinema Sergey Eisenstein and Vsevolod Pudovkin saw the photographic way of reproducing reality (the frame) as that technical "first phenomenon", forming the basis for the emergence of cinematic poetics, which refers to the possibility of perceiving images on a screen as *sculpting in time* (Tarkovsky, 2002).

Cinema would become a language system that required a different type of perception, changing the very nature of object-subject relations. This led Gilles Deleuze to consider cinema as a kind of material equivalent of Nietzsche's will to power, a place where the philosophy of exacting meaning dissolves, where inchoate images that have not yet been fixed in the picture come to the surface. In capturing and fascinating us, these images appear to represent reality to us; however, this is not reality as such, but rather the reality of desires, forces that enter into relations with each other (Deleuze, 1983/2004, p. 14). A big semantic load in this regard is carried by the frame. As the researcher notes, framing refers to the conditioning of a closed or relatively closed system, which includes everything that is present in the image: accessories, decorations and characters. Therefore, the frame forms a set consisting of a large number of elements (Deleuze, 1983/2004, p. 53).

The universal language of the frame is capable of fulfilling iconic and symbolic functions, as well as those of speech signs, without being identical with any of them. However, the frame itself is a purely formal element – that is, it does not possess independent figurative content (the exception is photography). In addition, the iconic universality of the frame is widely used when working with a computer, where it acquires the features of an artistic image, a dramatic scene and an element of figurative narration; with all these transformations, it preserves the presence of a

moment that does not exist in an artwork created with the language of traditional arts. This synthesis of technology and creativity is what distinguishes the culture of the screen from the classical culture. Owing to the syncretic language of the screen, a number of its elements are important both for creating screen work and for the qualified perception of the audience. Elements of the language of the screen comprise the following concepts: objective and subjective points of view, a point of view and a distorted vision, a picture as a frame, long and short frames, a frame as an "external space", a combination of frames, large, general and medium plans, etc.

Modern culture exists under the conditions of the "digitisation" of media creation, i.e. the creation of a digital image. Here, we can agree with Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, who observes that digital imagery reproduces reality in an increasingly complete form, permitting fantastic manipulations that are almost impossible to recognise as such. Thus, images increasingly come to replace reality (reality and representation are always intertwined), putting more and more under the control of the creator. Although such manipulability allows the quantity of objective information to be increased, it also increases the extent of the possible intervention of the subject, simultaneously affording both greater truth and more dexterous trickery (Wunenburger, 2003, p. 88).

According to the metaphorical definition of Kirill Razlogov, the screen becomes a kind of meat grinder of cultural discourse, transforming the reality effect of the audio-visual image into a mechanism of global falsification, which in turn acquires the appearance of absolute authenticity (Razlogov, 2012, p. 37). This means that the phenomenology of the screen language becomes the main formative principle of modern media culture. Thus, American "media archaeologist" Erkki Huhtamo's suggestion that "screenology" be singled out as a special science is no accident, since the importance of screens in contemporary media practices increases, the task of understanding their cultural roles becomes urgent (see: Huhtamo, 2004, p. 32). An alternative approach consists in the idea of a comprehensive humanitarian science of a globalised world proposed by the present author and encapsulated in the term *medialogy* (Kirillova, 2015).

It was the screen that became the construct of a new parallel world – "virtual reality" – and a new phenomenon – "virtual culture". In the late 1990s, the concepts of "virtual reality", "cyberspace", "virtualisation of consciousness", etc. became such dominant trends that today it is difficult to imagine the socio-cultural sphere without them, whether in terms of theoretical research, artistic practices or media communications.

## Virtualisation and Digitalisation as New Paradigms

The philosophical and cultural understanding of virtuality can be represented as the dynamics of the following key reading possibilities: (1) virtuality as a non-existent reality; (2) virtuality as an unknown reality; (3) virtuality as a utopian or ideal reality; (4) virtuality as an inner world subjectively experienced by an individual; (5) virtuality as an imaginary, imitation reality ("pseudo-reality"); (6) virtuality as an information and technical space, i.e. cyberspace, a technically-mediated environment, forming an

information resource of modern society and the media environment of modern culture (Usanova, 2013).

The mainstreaming of the problems of "virtuality" has a significant impact on modern culture, contributing to the transition of society to the "network type of existence" (in Castells' expression), the establishment of direct and equal relations of "everyone with everyone", providing the possibility of more accurate, operational accounting of personal requests by institutional structures and fundamentally transforming the entire communication system. Therefore, one of the most important skills acquired by a visitor of virtual space is the ability to independently choose the conditions for their own activity, which fundamentally contradicts any suggestion that the computer monitor is the same kind of "zombie box" as the TV. Obviously, in extreme cases, such a selection may come to resemble the split personality of a schizophrenic (Zvezdina, 2015, p. 386); nevertheless, in most ordinary circumstances, the ability to quickly switch between tasks or perform several functions at once is undoubtedly a useful skill. The same observation can apply in the perception of virtual reality.

The transformation of the information sphere in which a person lives causes to reconstruct his or her thinking and perception, resulting in the ability to quickly switch from considering one item of information to another (Zvezdina, 2015, p. 387). As a consequence, a person operates not so much with holistic concepts and complex logical chains, but rather moves between fragmentary images, situations and representations. It turns out that, for the emerging new consciousness, the outer surface of the event is of interest more than the essence of the whole set of premises and possible outcomes. Although one of the disadvantages of this type of thinking entails an increasingly shallow perception of information, one of the major upsides is an unprecedented increase in the speed of its processing.

At the same time, studies in modern humanities subjects increasingly focus on the variability and instability of reality – above all, on the fact that it is "virtual", i.e., connected with spiritual and symbolic formations. Moreover, it can be stated that games, illusion and chance as variations of the pseudo-real existence become dominant worldviews in modern culture; everything turns into an element of gambling and gaming: socio-cultural practices, commerce and politics (Usanova, 2013).

Today, a special communicative role is given to the language of the digital screen, based on digital encoding (computer, tablet, smart-phone, etc.), which not only tells us something using a frame or visual images, transmitting a "picture", speech and music, but also comes to talk to us directly. As a consequence of the interactive mode, we come directly into contact with it – that is, it becomes our interlocutor. At the same time in Bolz's figurative definition, a computer is worn as a "dress" serving as an information assistant, that is the direction of paradigm shifts determined by the progressive digitisation of our lives (Bolz, 2007/2011, p. 14). Paying tribute to "computerisation" as the main cultural phenomenon of the turn of the 20th–21st centuries, Bolz argues that the computer is a technical medium creating a learning environment; it is an artifact that can be fully described functionally. Therefore, to reveal the instrumental potential of computers, digital cameras and modern mobile phones implies understanding their

language and codes, since new computerised media are technologies that rigorously mathematise the world (Bolz, 2007/2011, pp. 89–90).

Thus, the new media comprise a combination of language technology and digital computing. According to Manovich, this definition of *digital media*, which became popular in the late 1990s, is not very successful, since it reflects only one idea – the idea of digitalisation. In his opinion, a more appropriate term would be computer media or programmable media (Manovich, 2017, p. 31). Manovich proposes introducing new directions and concepts related to digitalisation and the latest language technologies: *web science, natural language processing, vernacular culture, digital heritage*, etc. (Manovich, 2016).

Highlighting the role of the Internet as a means of free global communication (Castells, 2001/2004, p. 5) and as a socially distributed "human memory", we should keep in mind that some representatives of the humanities are biased towards the Internet space due to the predominance of economic interests in it and concomitant mass flow of false information. In a recently published book, Geert Lovink, the founding director of the Institute of Network Cultures (Netherlands), provides a critical analysis of the growing contradictions in social networks, such as fake news, toxic viral memes and online addiction, which generates "platform nihilism" (Lovink, 2019). Michael Stevenson, an American populariser of online science and education, speaks of the need for "the dynamics of the interaction of cultural and symbolic forms of capital within cyberspace" (Stevenson, 2016, p. 1100). Digital media researcher Zizi Papacharissi believes that "online networked platforms, supportive of Big Data and a variety of similar analytical formulations, blend interpersonal and mass storytelling practices variably, offering a reconciliation of primary and secondary orality tendencies and tensions" (Papacharissi, 2015, p. 1099).

It should be noted that, in an age of globalisation and digitalisation, on-screen (audio-visual) culture takes on a dominant role, partially "eating up" the book. Screen culture has a wider range of distribution and closer feedback between the contacting parties, i.e., between the creators of cultural products and their consumers. What, then, did screen culture bring that was new and valuable? First, a new type of communication based on the possibilities of a person's free access to the "information space". The free dissemination of information has made the media space a constant meeting place for people seeking harmony in the vast information world, allowing a consideration of the multidimensional specificities of diverse cultures. At the same time, it became the basis of a new kind of thinking. However, the cultural phenomenon of the Internet has influenced not only the new communications system, but also politics. According to Castells, the Internet is a communication medium that for the first time made it possible for many people to communicate with many others at any given time and on a global scale; this is not just a metaphor, but also a technology and an instrument for facilitating activity (Castells, 2001/2004, pp. 6–7). The concepts of *virtual reality*, *cyberspace*, *virtualisation of consciousness*, etc. have become not just fashionable trends; today it is difficult to imagine the socio-cultural sphere without them. Although the virtual space was created as an instrument, it overcame the functions of means, becoming a medium, i.e., a platform of life and socio-cultural activity. Thus, in becoming the

virtualisation of consciousness, the network came to influence major developments in the very essence of human thinking.

Another property of virtual consciousness is polyphonism, which describes participation in virtual communication not as a dialogue – that is, as a sequence, as a logical chain of individual replicas – but rather as a polylogue, i.e., the collaborative product of multiple participants. This is a consequence of the very scheme according to which time and space is constructed online, since connected by the principle of hypertextuality – a set of interwoven links, whose image may be visualised as forming a web-like structure. Hence, the perception of any object of virtual reality – namely, the attitude towards it as a product of the collective mind – is formed as a result of the interaction of several actors, often anonymous. The computerisation of text has thus had an enormous impact on the transformation of the entire process of perception of the surrounding world. Automated writing means increasing the "productivity" of creating a written product, which, as a result, affects the speed of response to external stimuli in general. In addition, the perception of the text as a collage or mosaic was the result of an increase in the amount of information, which is incapable of being perceived in totality. This information ultimately breaks up into the simplest elements – fragments or "clips" that are primitive and easy to perceive and transmit. For the perceiver, the other side of this simplification often experienced in terms of the loss of a holistic picture of the world.

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This introductory paper shows that, due to globalisation and digitalisation in the 21st century, an essentially dialogical – or polylogical – form of knowledge about the world has emerged that allows the acquisition of interactive and multimedia modern knowledge. A myriad of texts, static and moving images are thus circulating in the global information network, comprising the sphere of audio-visual language technologies and new media strategies that demonstrate the universality and interactivity of the screen along with its ability to facilitate the dialogue and polylogue of cultures in the globalised world.

In the search for a new language as a codifier and a transmitter of meanings, contemporary media culture has become virtualised. Through representing reality with the help of a digital screen, it has become a construct of "virtual culture", which contributes to a new type of communication based on the possibility of free access of the individual to the global information space. The priority of screen media culture has rapidly grown to become the globally dominant form. Thus, the Internet has become a kind of "mirror-screen" of the life of the entire planet.

For the reasons discussed above, the study of the language of new media as a way of coding and representing reality, along with the influence of new media on the processes of socialisation and adaptation of the individual in the globalised world, has become one of the most urgent tasks of the humanities in the 21st century. Due to their interdisciplinary nature, these problems present themselves at the intersection of cultural studies, philosophy, linguistics and psychology. This approach became the

basis of the discussion at the International Conference "Dialogue of Cultures in the Age of Globalization and Digitalization", the materials of which are presented in the papers of the current issue.

In her article "The Dichotomy of Public/Private in the New Media Space", Alla Drozdova emphasises that the new environment of network media has caused a real revolution in our concept of reality by transforming public spaces and audiences, as well as modes and mechanisms for the functioning of the private sphere through the creation of online modes of communication. In a mediatised culture, the boundaries between public and private have been fundamentally changed. In creating a new mode of visibility for social cultures and subcultures, the phenomenon of multi-screening allows us to rethink the public-private dichotomy. In this way, new media have led to the sphere of private life being absorbed by the public sphere not only in terms of facilitating discussion, but also in becoming a means of control by the state, the market and advertising. In turn, in coming under the domination of specific private or group interests, which only achieve temporary commonality, the public sphere itself has been transformed.

The modernisation of the modern theatre space, as discussed in Lilia Nemchenko's "Theatrical Dialogue in the Digital Age: From the Director's Theatre to the Theatre Onscreen", is of no less interest. As the author notes, the nature of the theatre for a long time allowed it to withstand the challenges of information and then digital culture, whose prerequisite consists in the principle of replication. As such, the theatre already possessed the characteristics of a virtual object, information about which is stored exclusively in the memory of a professional critic or spectator. In becoming an object of digitalisation, the theatre both loses its virtual status and acquires a new format of existence and pragmatics: this can be seen not only online broadcasting, but also a unique manifestation of theatre in a cinema – Theatre HD.

In "Art in the Age of Globalisation: Dialogue of Cultures (Ural Opera Ballet Theatre's Production of the Opera *Tri Sestry*)", Andrey Shishkin and Olga Morozova similarly draw attention to the importance of theatre as a means of dialogue between cultures in the practice of contemporary musical production operating in the global intercultural space. In this regard, the staging of the opera *Tri sestry* ("Three Sisters") at the Ural Opera Ballet provides a vivid example of the fruitful interaction of artistic traditions of different cultures (Russian, European, American) in creating a new synthetic image. Although such connections involve various paradoxes, multiple levels of historical experience coexist in the space of this musical performance without contradiction, giving birth to a new modern work of art.

In their article entitled "Cultural and Educational Practices in the Museum Environment: Transmission of Cultural Heritage", Natalia Simbirtseva, Galina Kruglikova and Elena Plaksina consider a distinctive problem in the age of digitalisation and globalisation consisting in the preservation of cultural heritage. The authors consider practices included in the educational environment of the preschool-, school- and university levels in terms of the cultural and educational potential of actual and effective mechanisms for transmitting memory about values and meanings, places, objects of material value, etc. The virtualisation of

the contemporary museum space makes it possible to present projects at different levels that target a wide range of visitors in the offline space.

An interesting analysis of intercultural dialogue is presented in the article by Ksenia Muratshina entitled "Cultural Exchanges between Russia and Turkmenistan: Structure, Dynamics and Defining Features". The purpose of the article is to identify forms, features, factors and dynamics of the development of cultural cooperation between Russia and Turkmenistan over the past decade (2010–2020). The content of the concepts "cultural exchanges" and "cooperation in the field of culture" is considered by the author in the light of intergovernmental documents signed by Russia and Turkmenistan. The article also refers to interviews, materials from public organisations and news archives from the media of both countries.

In "Chinese Migration and Cross-Border Practices in the Russian-Chinese Interaction in the Far East: Four Stages of Intercultural Dialogue", Olga Zalesskaia considers how the problem of the dialogue between cultures has exacerbated the problems of relations between different states in the age of globalisation on the example of Chinese migration, which, as a factor in cross-border practices, reflects the historical process of relations between the two largest world civilisations. She concludes that Chinese migration, which still has considerable potential in terms of various levels of cross-border practices, is capable of becoming an effective mechanism in the development of Russian Far Eastern territories due to its strategically transparent and culturally sensitive approach.

The Book Reviews section contains a review by Andrei Dudchik of the book by Julian Baggini entitled "How the World Thinks: A Global History of Philosophy". The analysis is based on the project of the modern British philosopher Julian Baggini, which realises his understanding of the relationship between philosophy in its historically changing forms and culture in a broad sense, as well as substantiating the heuristic potential of studying the history of philosophy in its global dimension as a basis for fruitful intercultural dialogue.

In the same section, one also can find Danis Sultanov's review on the book by A. Kumankov "Voina v dvadtsat' pervom veke" [War in the 21st Century], as well as Georgy Vedernikov's review on J.-F. Caron's "Contemporary Technologies and the Morality of Warfare. The War of the Machines".

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