

Development of Mass Culture in a Digital Society

Olga Begicheva

A.N. Kosygin Russian State
University (of Design and
Technology), Moscow, Russia
e-mail: olgalvb@mail.ru

Olga Kolosova

State university of
management, Moscow, Russia
e-mail: olga_kolosova@mail.ru

Olga Kulikova

State university of
management, Moscow, Russia
e-mail: kilka2002@yandex.ru

Elena Karpova

A.N. Kosygin Russian State
University (of Design and
Technology), Moscow, Russia
e-mail: pedagogikanet@yandex.ru

Abstract—The mass digitalization of society has led to changes in many spheres of life, including popular culture. The relationship between culture and media is complex; modern culture is difficult to distinguish from how it appears in various media.

Culture in the developed world is spread through the media channels. Just as society is formed and partially formed by messages in the mass media, so it happens with culture. Cultural products and their popularity can influence which media channels people prefer. Conversely, changes in the media and ICT can lead to changes in the way we create culture.

It is useful to think about how the media can influence us to begin to understand the media, their role in society and how they shape culture and are shaped by cultural preferences.

Keywords—Mass culture, intercultural communications, digital society, respondents, Internet, ICT, mass media

I. INTRODUCTION

Mass culture plays an important role in modern society. On the one hand, this contributes to the integration of cultures, and on the other hand, it simplifies the understanding of their elements. This is a contradictory and complex phenomenon, despite the characteristic simplicity that the products of mass culture possess.

Digital mass culture can be characterized as a set of elements, practices and values that arise around the world and are distributed through a single Internet network in general and social networks in particular. Digital mass culture is a meta-culture that has absorbed some features of the participatory culture.

It has been called information or DIY culture (eng. "do it yourself", "homemade") in recent decades. This term describes the type of culture in which the audience turns from consumers into content producers.

Of course, the course of this process was influenced by the mass digitalization of society, which allowed users to form content according to personal interests, generate ideas and share them, unite to create artistic artifacts. Thus, today, mass culture is no longer monocultural, but a multicultural environment.

The greatest contribution to the study of participatory culture was made by the American cultural critic Henry Jenkins. In 2006, the scientist and his colleagues identified five characteristics of this type of culture:

- 1) Relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement;
- 2) Significant support in the creation and dissemination of their works;

- 3) Informal mentoring by generally recognized authorities in relation to "newcomers";

- 4) The belief of cultural carriers in the value of their own cultural contribution;

- 5) The sense of cultural carriers of social connection with other members of the community.

Digital mass culture has also absorbed many features of convergent culture. Convergence is an integration megaprocess in which various processes merge, interact and integrate. In other words, modern media platforms give a chance to perceive information not only in the form of text symbols, but also to view audio, video and photo content.

It should be noted that an extremely important consequence of the technological development of convergence is the comprehensive enrichment of the disseminated information. Jenkins defines this shift towards a more inclusive production process by "Cultural convergence" as an incentive for the emergence of a new collegial folk culture by providing ordinary people with tools for archiving, commenting, assigning and recycling content. Convergent culture is a culture of unification based on developed intercultural communication and the process of mutual exchange of the results of cultural and spiritual activities.

Digital mass culture creates a meta-environment, making it possible to translate cultural codes from online to real life and vice versa.

II. METHODOLOGY

In the conducted empirical research, the hypothesis was accepted that in the conditions of total digitalization, modern mass culture acquires a number of new characteristics, with the inevitable movement into the digital environment.

An online questionnaire was conducted based on the Google Forms platform as part of the study. The social networks VKontakte and Facebook were used to form a representative sample. The total number of the spontaneous sample (N=100) is represented by residents of Moscow, the Moscow region (73 people), a number of other regions (27 people). The analytical study of the obtained data was carried out by methods of statistical, structural-dynamic and comparative analysis. Some of the conclusions were formed by methods of analysis and synthesis, as well as analogy and comparison.

III. RESULTS

The research was conducted to study this issue. The sample of respondents was distributed as follows:

- 30% men;
- 70% women.

By age:

- 30% respondents under the age of 18;
- 50% respondents aged 19 -20;
- 10% respondents up to 25 age;
- 10% respondents older than 25 age.

All respondents had the experience of posting their creative product on the Internet in the form of text, images, audio or video.

To the question of how often respondents are on the Internet:

- 48% said that they go online every hour;
- 39% said that they visit several times a day;
- 13% said that they visit once every few days.

The distribution of answers to the question is shown in Figure 1.

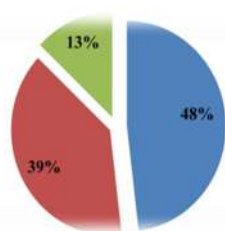


Figure 1. Distribution of the results of the answers to the question: "How often do you sit on the Internet?"

Such a large number of people visiting the Internet every hour proves how much the Internet has influenced the modern world and the development of mass culture. Getting information from the Internet has become a daily ritual for most of the respondents. And only a small part of respondents does not log in to the network every day.

To the question of whether respondents feel connected with other Internet users while being there:

- 70% of the respondents answered "Yes";
- 30% of the respondents answered "No".

The distribution of answers to the question is shown in Figure 2.

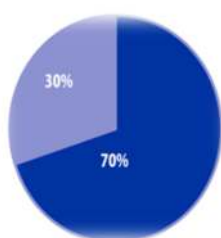


Figure 2. The results of the answers to the question: "Do you feel a social connection with other Internet users?"

This proves that in a digital society, the Internet gives a sense of social connection with other members of the community.

To the question of whether respondents found support in other people at the time of creative self-expression:

- 80% of respondents answered "Yes";
- 20% of respondents answered "No".

This proves that one of the characteristics of mass culture is a significant support for the creation and dissemination of

their works, the ability to unite, to create products of creative activity in the conditions of a digital society.

The distribution of answers to the question is shown in Figure 3.

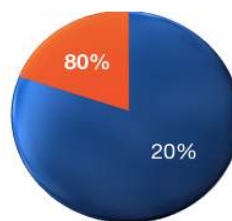


Figure 3. Distribution of the results of the answers to the question: "Did you find support in other people at the time of creative self-expression?"

When asked whether it is easy for respondents to upload their product of creative activity to the Internet, the respondents' answers were distributed as follows:

- 90% of respondents answered "Yes";
- 10% answered "No".

This proves that in the conditions of a digital society, even an ordinary person has everything necessary to easily express himself creatively and spiritually.

The distribution of answers to the question is shown in Figure 4.

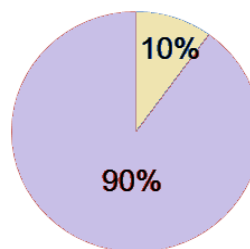


Figure 4. Distribution of the results of the answers to the question: "Is it easy for you to put your creative product on the Internet?"

When asked how often respondents meet with audio-, video content on the Internet, the respondents' answers were distributed as follows:

- 44% answered "Always";
- 33% answered "Sometimes";
- 22% answered "Rarely".

The distribution of answers to the question is shown in Figure 5.

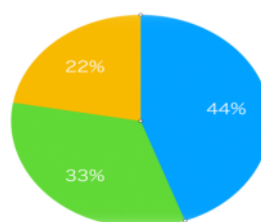


Figure 5. Distribution of the results of the answers to the question: "Do you often meet with audio-, video content on the Internet?"

This proves that modern media platforms give a chance to perceive information not only in the form of text characters, but also to view and listen audio, video and photo content.

This gives great opportunities for anyone to express creative potential and is another characteristic of the digital society.

To the question of how often respondents themselves comment on the viewed content, the respondents' answers were distributed as follows:

- 50% answered "Often";
- 30% answered "Sometimes";
- 20% answered "Never".

The distribution of answers to the question is shown in Figure 6.

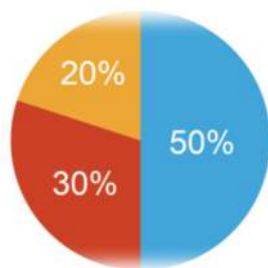


Figure 6. The results of the answers to the question: "How often do you comment on the viewed content yourself?"

This proves that in a digital society, mass culture provides ordinary people with tools for archiving and commenting on content, provides a comprehensive enrichment of the disseminated information.

To the question of whether respondents have ever seen online broadcasts of creative content on the Internet, the respondents' answers were distributed as follows:

- 80% answered "Yes";
- 20% - "No".

The distribution of answers to the question is shown in Figure 7.

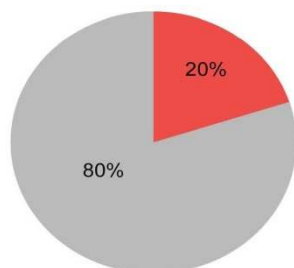


Figure 7. Distribution of the results of the answers to the question: "Have you ever seen online broadcasts of creative content?"

This proves that mass culture in a digital society creates a special environment, making it possible to broadcast unique cultural features from online to real life and vice versa.

Answering the question of whether mass culture can fully realize itself in the digital environment, the respondents' answers were distributed as follows (shown in Figure 8).

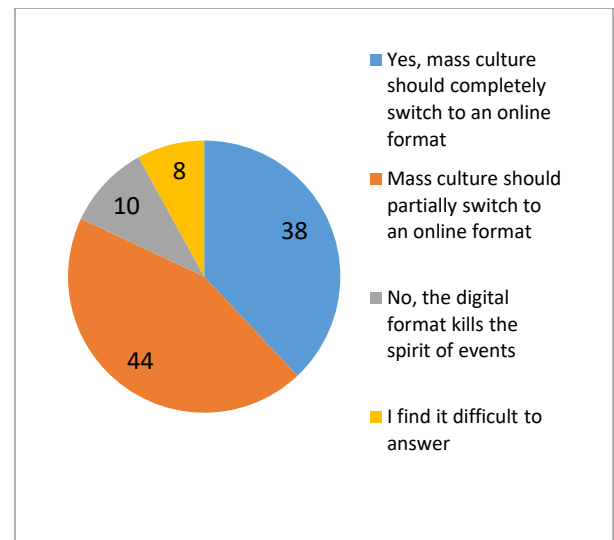


Figure 8. Distribution of the results of the answers to the question: "Can mass culture fully realize itself in the digital environment?"

The distribution of respondents' answers shows that most of them believe that mass culture should move to an online format to a greater extent.

The overwhelming majority of respondents answered that it develops and expands their worldview, responding the question of how mass culture in the digital environment affects modern society. The distribution of answers to the question is shown in Figure 9.

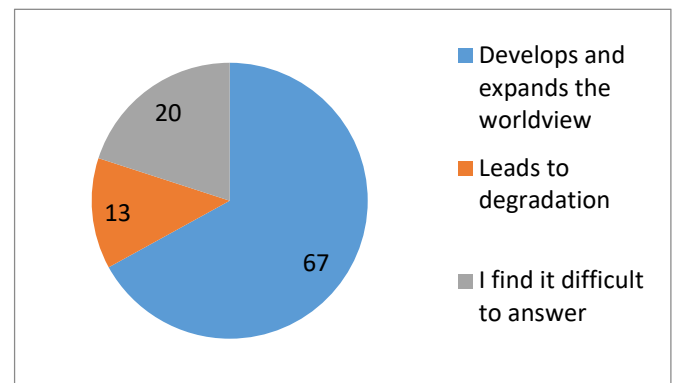


Figure 9. Distribution of the results of the answers to the question: "How does mass culture in the digital environment affect modern society?"

IV. DISCUSSION

The relevance of the study of mass culture and intercultural communication is due to its exceptional importance in the development of human civilization, as a guarantor of the existence of cultures in their current form. As a social phenomenon, it is characterized by many qualities and dynamism, and therefore culture is considered as a generic concept, while cultural contacts take various forms, which are expressed in complementarity and dialogue.

The study of the development of intercultural communication is reflected in the works of Baimurzayeva [1], Belyakova [2], Vinokurova [3], Drach [4], Tarasyuk [5],

Vorontsova [6] and others. The conducted research shows that scientists have made a significant contribution to the formation and development of intercultural communication. However, the implementation of the strategy for managing intercultural communication and the development of mass culture in the context of digitalization requires further meaningful study.

Digitalization is one of the key factors determining the current state of mass culture. Not only has the speed of distribution of cultural artifacts changed – but the mechanics of their creation has changed.

The mass audience has also turned from a consumer of culture into its producer. The collective creation of texts with cultural value has become possible thanks to social networks.

Digital mass culture is not only participatory, but also convergent: with the help of various tools for archiving, commenting and distributing cultural artifacts that the digital environment provides to users, mass culture has gone beyond a single medium and is becoming multiplatform.

V. CONCLUSION

In the course of this study, the following changes in mass culture in the conditions of a digital society were identified:

1) The possibility of creative self-expression is now available to everyone, thanks to the Internet.

2) Relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement;

3) Significant support in the creation and dissemination of their works;

4) The belief of cultural carriers in the value of their own cultural contribution;

5) The sense of cultural carriers of social connection with other members of the community.

6) In a digital society, mass culture provides ordinary people with tools for archiving and commenting on content.

7) Media platforms give a chance to perceive information not only in the form of text characters, but also to view audio, video and photo content. This gives great opportunities for anyone to express creative potential and is another characteristic of the digital society.

8) Mass culture in a digital society creates a special environment, making it possible to broadcast unique cultural features from online to real life and vice versa.

A general analysis of the survey results allowed us to formulate the following research conclusions.

The vast majority of respondents use the Internet every day, while the majority of respondents spend 5 or more hours on the Internet, which suggests that the interaction of society with mass culture is quite close, thus mass culture has a great influence on the usual way of information consumption by society.

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that during the Covid-19 pandemic, people began to spend more time on the Internet and they were completely satisfied with everything, since these respondents found everything they needed in the digital environment and did not feel uncomfortable due to the lack of any information. It is also worth saying that an impressive number of respondents believe that mass culture in modern society should switch to online mode, since such interaction is much more

convenient and saves time, while it does not affect the quality of the information presented.

In the course of the study, it was found out that it is preferable for people in modern society to use online services to study literature, listen to music and watch movies, while moving away from visiting cinemas, reading printed publications and other previously familiar means of information consumption in the offline sphere. Respondents justify their choice by convenience, saving money and time.

An impressive number of respondents believe that streaming services can completely displace the sphere of offline cinemas, which indicates that society is ready for the trend of rapid development of mass culture in the digital environment. It should also be said that the overwhelming number of respondents are of the opinion that mass culture in the digital environment develops and expands the worldview of the public.

Thus, it can be concluded that the development of mass culture in a digital society is being modified and takes on other forms, changing its social role and expanding the range of performed functions.

It can also be argued that mass culture has acquired many new characteristics with the advent of the digital society.

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