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The Concept of Platform Capitalism as an Analytical Tool for Studying Creativity in the Digital Age: the Ukrainian Context

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The article examines the transformation of creative labor in the digital economy through the prism of platform capitalism (Srnicek) and knowledge capitalization (Leydesdorff) concepts. The authors analyze how digital platforms (YouTube, TikTok, Spotify, Patreon, etc.) not only provide the infrastructure for content distribution, but also actively intervene in the processes of its formation, setting the logic of algorithmic management, standardization, and monetization of creativity. Particular attention is paid to the Ukrainian context: the platformization of creative labor is taking place in conditions of war, "digital mobilization" of culture, institutional instability, and infrastructural vulnerability, which requires specific adaptation of Western models of analysis to local realities. The authors demonstrate that platforms transform not only the forms of creativity, but also their socio-economic significance: creativity becomes a source of data, an economic unit, and an object of exploitation. At the same time, it loses its autonomy, finding itself within new forms of digital inequality. Using the example of Ukrainian startups, educational initiatives, and creative studios (particularly in the UNIT.City environment), the authors show how the "knowledge economy" is realized in the form of digital products based on scientific developments, cultural content, and algorithmic logic. The proposed perspective opens broad opportunities for further empirical research, including the study of the specifics of interaction between platforms, creators, and audiences in the context of Ukraine's digital post-war reality. This includes analyzing new forms of cultural production in digital ecosystems, the dynamics of income distribution, transformations in the professional strategies of creators, and the impact of algorithmic selection on the visibility and diversity of content. All this creates a foundation for developing more equitable models for the functioning of the creative economy in the digital age.

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Key words: platform capitalism, knowledge capitalization, creativity, digital society, digital labor, monetization of creativity.

Запорожченко Руслан, Грицаєнко Артем, Нікулін Вячеслав. Концепт платформного капіталізму як аналітичний інструмент для вивчення креативності в цифрову епоху: український контекст. У статті досліджено трансформацію креативної праці в умовах цифрової економіки крізь призму концепцій платформного капіталізму (Нік Срничек) та капіталізації знання (Лоет Лейдерсдорфф). Здійснено аналіз того, як цифрові платформи (YouTube, TikTok, Spotify, Patreon тощо) не лише забезпечують інфраструктуру для поширення контенту, але й активно втручаються в процеси його формування, задаючи логіку алгоритмічного управління, стандартизації та монетизації творчості. Особливу увагу приділено українському контексту: платформізація креативної праці відбувається в умовах війни, «цифрової мобілізації» культури, інституційної нестабільності та інфраструктурної вразливості, що потребує специфічної адаптації західних моделей аналізу до локальних реалій. Продемонстровано, що платформи трансформують не лише форми творчості, але й також її соціально-економічне значення: творчість стає джерелом даних, економічною одиницею та об'єктом експлуатації. Водночас вона втрачає автономію, опиняючись у межах нових форм цифрової нерівності. На прикладі українських стартапів, освітніх ініціатив та креативних студій (зокрема в середовищі UNIT.City), показано, як «економіка знань» реалізується у вигляді цифрових продуктів, що ґрунтуються на наукових розробках, культурному контенті та алгоритмічній логіці. Запропонована перспектива відкриває широкі можливості для подальших емпіричних досліджень, зокрема вивчення специфіки взаємодії між платформами, творцями та аудиторією в умовах цифрової повоєнної реальності України. Зокрема, ідеться про аналіз нових форм культурного продукування в цифрових екосистемах, динаміки розподілу доходів, трансформацій професійних стратегій, а також впливу алгоритмічної селекції на видимість і різноманіття контенту. Усе це створює підґрунтя для розробки більш справедливих моделей функціонування креативної економіки в цифрову епоху.

Ключові слова: платформний капіталізм, капіталізація знання, креативність, цифрове суспільство, цифрова праця, монетизація творчості.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary society, which is becoming increasingly digital, including Ukrainian society, is undergoing radical changes in the ways and means of producing, disseminating, and using knowledge (Nieborg & Poell, 2018), which directly affects the nature of creative work. Platform technologies such as YouTube, TikTok, GitHub, and Patreon have become not only means of communication but also influential agents in the creative economy, where knowledge, content, and creativity are transformed into commodities. According to PwC (2023), platforms generate over 60 % of revenues in the global digital creative industries sector, and the global entertainment and media industry grew to approximately $2.8 trillion in 2023, with a further projected increase to $3,4 trillion by 2028. These processes have their own specific characteristics in Ukraine: according to a study by Chuprii, Skokova, and Nastoiascha (2021, p. 18), over 40 % of Ukrainian artists and creators use digital platforms as their main source of professional fulfillment and income, and these figures are even growing in the context of the war (including mass digitalization).

Particular attention should be paid to how platforms transform the very essence of creativity from self-expression to algorithmically optimized content designed to maximize audience engagement (Bucher, 2018; Cotter, 2019). In addition, the phantomization of creative work is accompanied by the emergence, crystallization and growth of multiple asymmetries along many dimensions: between content creators and platform owners, between Western and Ukrainian actors, between the formal autonomy of the artist and their actual subordination to algorithmic priorities. This creates new forms of digital exploitation, in which creativity becomes "invisible labor" within the attention economy (Terranova, 2000; Fuchs, 2014). Thus, the relevance of our research is determined not only by the need to describe a new form of creativity, but also by the need to develop a critical framework for its interpretation as a form of labor, power, and subjectivity in the conditions of digital capitalism and Ukrainian post-war society.

In this context, an important scientific task is to understand how the concepts of platform capitalism and knowledge capitalization help to interpret all these processes not only as an economic reality, but also as a system of social relations in digital creative and cultural production (Liang et al., 2022). The practical task is to develop critical analytical approaches to assessing the transformation of creative labor in the digital age, which is particularly relevant for Ukraine in the context of military mobilization of culture, digital

forms of solidarity, and the breakdown of traditional formats of cultural production. Therefore, another dimension of the relevance of this work lies in the need for scientific understanding of these processes in the context of digital transformation and the development of new theoretical frameworks. They should make it possible to study digital platforms as a space where creative processes become both a social phenomenon and an economic asset, as well as an arena of contradictions, conflicts, and power struggles, where different actors compete for control over algorithms, audience attention, and rules of access to resources.

In this article, we aim to analyze how the concepts of platform capitalism and knowledge capitalization can be used as analytical tools to study the transformations of creative labor in the digital society, for example, in Ukraine. The aim of this article is to critically examine the transformations of creative labor in the digital economy through the lens of a combination of conceptual approaches to platform capitalism (Srnicek, 2016) and knowledge capitalization (Leydesdorff, 2010), with a focus on identifying new forms of digital inequality, algorithmic management of creativity, and mechanisms of exploitation of intellectual labor, especially in the Ukrainian context of war, digital mobilization of culture, and innovative ecosystems.

The article presents three interrelated findings. First, it introduces the concept of Ukrainian-style platform capitalism as a special configuration arising at the intersection of global algorithmic and local crisis-institutional regimes. Second, it proposes an operational framework for capitalizing on knowledge in creative industries in wartime, where knowledge and creativity act as a joint asset of data, attention, and symbolic capital. Third, a model of "hybrid platform-knowledge capitalism" is formulated, describing the coupling of platform logics (algorithmic selection, rent) with the "university-business-state" triad in the practices of EdTech, media production, and startup ecosystems in Ukraine.

1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite the dynamic growth of research in the field of digital labor and platform studies, most of it focuses on Western democratic contexts with stable institutional infrastructure and a developed and regulated creative industries market (Bucher, 2018; Nieborg & Poell, 2018). In addition, key topics include algorithmic content management (Cotter, 2019), digital inequality (Schradie, 2011), the precariousness of digital labor (Fuchs, 2014), and the concept of "free labor" in the cultural economy (Terranova, 2000). In the Ukrainian context, especially in the context of full-scale war, the digital environment functions differently, namely as a tool for social mobilization, a means of cultural resistance, and a platform for the survival of creative labor.

As research by Marino (2024) shows, TikTok has become a frontline visual communication space where emotional content is combined with algorithmic optimization. Other studies (Mejova et al., 2025; Nate, 2025) emphasize that digital infrastructures in Ukraine are becoming a kind of "digital battlefield" where creativity is transformed under the influence of information warfare and the need for rapid visualization of collective experience. Ukrainian analytical reports (Oliinyk, 2025) also point to serious infrastructure challenges, such as unstable internet access, legal uncertainty in the field of copyright, and vulnerability to cyber threats, which determine the deformation of the trajectory of digital creativity compared to global trends.

At the same time, contemporary research increasingly criticizes platform rent (Couldry & Meijas, 2019) and the concentration of digital power (Zuboff, 2019), where platforms are not merely intermediaries but infrastructural actors that control data circulation, attention capitalization, and social visibility. As platforms expand their algorithmic governance, they increasingly shape not only cultural content becomes visible, but also what forms of creativity are economically viable. In this sense, the concepts of "platform feudalism" (Srnicek, 2016; Langley & Leyshon, 2017) and "digital rent" (Steinberg et al., 2024) provide an understanding of new forms of exploitation emerging at the intersection of cultural creativity and data as an economic resource. These frameworks emphasize that platforms behave like rent-seeking landlords: they own the "digital land" (infrastructures, datasets, audience pathways) and charge creators for access through fees, commissions, or algorithmic prioritization. As a result, cultural production becomes embedded in systems where ownership and control over data are concentrated in a small number of global corporate actors.

Contemporary philosopher and social theorist Srnicek (2016) has proposed a conceptual framework for analyzing how digital platforms have become leading actors in the global economy. In particular, he traces

how the evolution of socio-economic and technological conditions (from Fordism to post-Fordism) has contributed to the emergence of a new economic formation based on digital infrastructures, data processing, and networked logic of interaction (Narayan, 2022). While Fordism in the first half of the 20th century was based on large-scale industrial production, standardization, and a hierarchical division of labor, at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, it was gradually replaced by models of flexible production, data-driven management, and dynamic interactions in a digital environment. This shift has given rise to platform capitalism as a logic for organizing economic activity, in which platforms simultaneously act as intermediaries, infrastructures, markets, and employers. This type of economy not only changes the modes of production, but also transforms the very nature of creative labor, subordinating it to algorithms, engagement metrics, and the logic of continuous capitalization of knowledge.

2. THEORIZING DIGITAL PLATFORMS

The global financial crisis of 2007-2008 was a catalyst for the transition to new forms of economic organization based on digital technologies, large-scale data analysis, and cross-border e-commerce. During this period, tech giants such as Google, Facebook, Amazon, Netflix, and others stepped up their presence, offering growth models that did not rely on traditional industrial cycles but instead used data as their primary resource (Khalil & Zayani, 2021). This is how platform capitalism began to take shape – a new form of capitalist economic organization centered on digital platforms (Langley & Leyshon, 2017, p. 25), i.e., digital infrastructures through which different groups (consumers, producers, advertisers, etc.) can interact and exchange goods, services, or information.

In other words, modern platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, Spotify, and Instagram have become infrastructures (Kenney & Zysman, 2016) that provide creative industries with tools for their work. They are not just channels for distributing content, but also intermediaries that regulate access to audiences, and this process itself has been made possible by the development of algorithms that analyze user preferences and offer personalized content. Algorithms have replaced traditional "curators of creativity" such as editors, producers, or gallery curators, because today, to be successful, an artist, musician, or video blogger must consider not only the aesthetic side of their work, but also its "friendliness" to platform algorithms.

However, this creates ambivalence: on the one hand, platforms democratize access to audiences, allowing anyone to become a creator, but on the other hand, they reinforce content standardization by promoting what works best within commercial logic (Gillespie, 2010). Our research position is that the platformization of creativity does not open so many opportunities as it disciplines creativity, forcing it to function according to the logic of the data and attention market. It changes the very essence of creative activity from a process of self-expression to a process of optimizing content according to invisible algorithmic criteria. As a result, creators work not only for their audience, but also for the "machine" that determines who will see their work and when.

We suggest viewing platforms as algorithmic normalization modes, in which aesthetic decisions are adjusted to probabilistic distribution rules. The production cycle includes content → metadata → audience behavioral signals → re-ranking → feedback revisions, which leads to standardization of format and pace. This leads to the following testable hypotheses: H1: compliance with the platform format (length, rhythm, titles) has a stronger impact on visibility than genre/theme; H2: The share of "invisible labor" is positively correlated with visibility growth but has a diminishing return. H3: The presence of external audience sources (cross-platform) reduces the sensitivity of visibility to algorithmic updates.

The interaction between creative industries and platform capitalism has a profound impact on contemporary culture and social relations, as one of the main features of this process is the phenomenon of the conditional "democratization" of creativity (Schradie, 2011). Indeed, today, all you need to create and distribute content is access to the internet and basic technical equipment, such as a smartphone, free software, or a minimal sound recording device. This accessibility expands the opportunities for self-expression for millions of users. However, this democratization is, in fact, as can be reasonably predicted, superficial and contradictory, as it creates new forms of inequality. More detailed examination of the democratization of creativity in the context of platform capitalism reveals both a trend toward ochlocracy and oligarchization in the creative industries. Ochlocracy manifests itself as the opening of broad access to self-expression for, so to speak, "amateurs" (the rise of the incompetent masses). Oligarchization manifests

itself as the emergence of a minority of the most successful actors who are best adapted to the conditions of platform capitalism. They set trends and monetize their success.

It is not only talent or ideas that play a decisive role, but also the quality of promotion, optimization for algorithms, and the availability of resources, in particular access to professional equipment. Just compare, for example, the capabilities of an author who records a podcast on a smartphone at home with those who use studio-grade microphones – the technical advantage is noticeable both in the sound and in the subsequent promotion of the content. These differences form a platform hierarchy: the most popular creators get millions of views, sponsorship contracts, and the opportunity to invest in even higher-quality content, which in turn increases their visibility in recommendation feeds. In this way, platforms do not simply provide access to an audience, but institutionalize digital inequality, creating a vicious circle where success provides the resources for even greater success, and invisibility leads to even greater marginalization. The sources of this inequality can be found in the very logic of platform capitalism, which combines network effects, algorithmic selection, and the capitalization of attention as the main unit of value in the digital economy.

The fundamental feature of platform capitalism is that data is becoming a new key resource for the economy (Steinberg, Zhang, & Mukherjee, 2024, p. 4). Like oil in the industrial age, data is the basis for forecasting, optimizing business processes, and creating new markets. Platforms collect huge amounts of information about their users, which allows them not only to provide more personalized services, but also to generate significant profits through advertising models or the sale of analytical tools. As N. Srnicek (2016) points out, platform capitalism has several specific features that distinguish it from previous forms of economic organization. For example, platforms create an infrastructure where user interactions become a source of data; the more users there are on a platform, the more valuable it becomes; algorithms play a key role in platform capitalism by managing interactions between users; platforms not only provide access to the market but also set the rules of the game; the digital nature of platforms allows them to grow rapidly with minimal additional costs.

In other words, we have a situation where, on the one hand, platform capitalism creates unprecedented opportunities for the masses by opening access to global markets, facilitating the spread of knowledge, and enabling the use of innovative tools for learning, creativity, and self-expression. Digital platforms allow independent creators to bypass traditional institutional barriers, such as publishers, studios, or television companies, and interact directly with their audience. This has given rise to new formats of the creative economy, from podcasts and streaming to educational courses and digital art. On the other hand, however, it is the very structure of platform capitalism that lays the groundwork for new forms of inequality and digital exploitation: it is the platforms that appropriate user-generated data and use it to optimize profits, primarily through targeted advertising or the sale of analytics services. Their algorithms determine what content becomes visible, thereby creating unequal conditions of access to audiences, which creates a situation where creative work is nominally accessible to everyone but is in fact monopolized by platforms and a small number of actors.

Unlike traditional companies, platforms focus on intermediation and data management, which become the main resource for their activities. N. Srnicek distinguishes several types of platforms based on their functions and monetization models (Srnicek, 2016). This typology provides an understanding of the diversity of platform capitalism and its impact on the economy and society. First, there are *advertising model platforms* (Google, Facebook, YouTube), which derive most of their revenue from targeted advertising that uses user behavior data, and the model itself is based on collecting, analyzing, and selling data to advertisers. On such platforms, content becomes the “currency” of attention, where creators optimize videos, posts, and other products according to algorithms designed to keep users engaged.

Secondly, there are *cloud service platforms* (Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud Platform), which provide infrastructure for storing, processing, and analyzing data used by other companies and organizations. Such platforms create the basic infrastructure for deploying innovative projects, including EdTech and multimedia services. Thirdly, there are industrial platforms (GE Predix, Siemens MindSphere) designed for data integration and analysis in industry, for example, based on the Internet of Things. Thanks to these platforms, new types of media installations, interactive objects, and interactive art at the intersection of urbanism, design, and digital technologies are developing.

Fourth, there are *product platforms* (Apple ecosystem, Sony PlayStation, GoPro+Quik), which create ecosystems where hardware devices are integrated with software and services provided by the platform itself. They can be described as creative interaction ecosystems in which users not only consume but also produce content. Fifth, there are *lightweight platforms* (Airbnb, Uber, Fiverr, Patreon), which minimize their own assets by acting as intermediaries between users who simultaneously provide and consume services. These platforms therefore enable creativity to be monetized directly: freelancers sell illustrations, music, and texts, while independent authors receive support through subscriptions.

The platform typology proposed by Srnicek (2016) allows for a systematic analysis of monetization and organization strategies for digital ecosystems. In this context, the innovative environment of UNIT.City in Kyiv[1], one of the largest Ukrainian technology parks, is a prime example of the application of this typology in the real context of the digital economy. The empirical basis for the analysis includes open data on UNIT.City's activities (official website, public reports, acceleration program data), profiles of resident startups, and descriptions of projects in the creative industries and EdTech.

First, advertising platforms such as Meta or Google Ads function as the primary promotion channels for startups, effectively setting the rules of market entry. This reliance does not merely shape marketing strategies but also exerts a formative influence on product development itself: app interfaces, content formats, and tone of voice are optimized to align with algorithmically determined audience preferences. As a result, product design becomes inseparable from platform logic, where visibility and engagement metrics guide key decisions. A vivid example can be seen in educational tech startups, which frequently prototype lesson formats and video lengths on TikTok or Instagram Reels to test audience retention before scaling these solutions into full-fledged platforms.

Secondly, cloud platforms such as AWS and Microsoft Azure have become critical infrastructure for the development of VR/AR-intensive products, especially in the media, game design, and digital education sectors. Their scalable computing power and storage capacity enable startups to generate high-fidelity simulations, process massive amounts of 3D-data, and deploy interactive environments without investing in costly local servers. At UNIT.City, for instance, several residents – from virtual architecture modeling studios to developers of military training simulators – leverage cloud computing to create immersive, realistic worlds that later serve as educational tools, creative sandboxes, or training platforms. This integration not only accelerates product development but also lowers entry barriers, making advanced XR technologies accessible to smaller teams.

A special place is occupied by so-called product platforms, such as Patreon or its Ukrainian counterpart Buy Me a Coffee, which are actively used by creative teams from the resident community to support their projects through crowdfunding or subscription models. It is in the UNIT.City environment that we can see how these platforms not only expand opportunities but also create structural challenges: small creative studios working in game design, digital arts, or music are forced to constantly adapt to new platform requirements, from content format to algorithmic stylistics.

3. PLATFORM CAPITALISM

The adaptation and resilience of platform capitalism is becoming increasingly complementary to the active development of knowledge society, which is becoming a key resource for economic development. One of the leading researchers studying this transformation is Loet Leydesdorff, whose concept of knowledge capitalization reveals the mechanism of transforming scientific ideas, technologies, and innovations into economic capital (Leydesdorff & Etzkowitz, 1998). Leydesdorff develops this paradigm, pointing out that knowledge not only determines scientific and technological progress, but also becomes a driving force for economic growth, since traditionally the knowledge accumulated in universities and scientific institutes remained within the academic sphere, and its social implementation was ensured by industry through government programs and corporate funding (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1995). With the transition to a knowledge economy, there is a shift in emphasis from material resources to intangible assets,

[1] UNIT.City is Ukraine's first innovation park, opened in 2017 on the site of the former Kyiv Motor Plant. It covers an area of over 25 hectares and combines IT company offices, start-ups, research laboratories, educational spaces, and residential infrastructure. The main investor in the project is Vasyl Khmelnytsky's UFuture holding company.

among which information and scientific developments play a major role. Leydesdorff (2010) emphasizes that knowledge is becoming not just a means of solving specific problems, but also an object of capitalization – a process in which knowledge is transformed into marketable products and services.

Leydesdorff considers knowledge capitalization as a multi-stage process focused on the generation, (re)distribution, and capitalization of new knowledge, with the key aspect of knowledge capitalization being the process of transforming scientific ideas into economically significant results, which are then capitalized. Using the example of the transformation of universities from purely educational institutions into scientific and technological ones, Leydesdorff shows how the process of knowledge capitalization takes place (Leydesdorff & Etzkowitz, 1998). The first and fundamental problem of capitalization is the fact that scientific research conducted by universities, laboratories, and research centers forms a knowledge base in which knowledge is created because of theoretical analysis or applied experiments. Knowledge is then transferred from creators to users through publications, conferences, patents, and information exchange systems, after which the process of transforming knowledge into marketable products and services begins, which can be achieved through patenting, licensing, start-ups, etc.

Illustrations of the concept we have analyzed show the development of Ukraine's technological and innovative sector, where developments in universities and start-up environments have been commercialized and successfully integrated into real markets, for example artificial intelligence solutions developed by Ukrainian IT companies and researchers in partnership with universities (in particular, within Radar Tech) are used in military analytics, logistics, process automation, cybersecurity, and augmented reality interfaces. A striking example of the capitalization of applied knowledge is the development of Ukrainian satellite analytics systems, such as EOS Data Analytics, which combine scientific research in the fields of geoinformatics, machine learning, and environmental monitoring. Scientific research in the social sciences, cultural studies, and digital communications is also actively being transformed into educational products, multimedia platforms, and cultural initiatives. For example, online educational platforms such as Prometheus and EdEra integrate academic knowledge into scalable digital formats that are accessible to a wide audience.

These processes require not only scientific expertise, but also intensive interaction between science, business, and government, which Leydesdorff describes through the "triple helix" model. This model demonstrates that successful capitalization of knowledge is only possible with close coordination between these sectors: universities create fundamental knowledge, business implements it in production, and the state provides the financial, legal, and political conditions for interaction. Within the spiral, all three actors change their traditional roles and form flexible partnerships (Kunwar & Ulak, 2023, p. 8).

In the Ukrainian context, this mechanism began to gain momentum after 2014, when several universities started cooperating with the startup community, civil society organizations, and technology parks. A notable example is the partnership between the National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute" and the Sikorsky Challenge innovation platform, which functions as a scientific, educational, and venture cluster. In 2023, this structure supported more than 30 startups (Stefanovych, 2023), eight of which were founded by KPI students and graduate students, and their developments (drones, sensors, IT solutions for the military) have already been tested or commercialized within state defense programs. We define this phenomenon as a "hybrid model of platform-knowledge capitalism" because it simultaneously relies on the algorithmic logic of global platforms and the processes of knowledge capitalization in local innovation hubs (startups, educational platforms, scientific and creative clusters). In this model, knowledge and creativity become not only commodities or data, but also a means of cultural mobilization, where economic value is combined with symbolic value, for example, in digital projects that simultaneously generate profit and serve as tools of cultural resistance to war.

Hybrid platform-knowledge capitalism refers to the combination of two accumulation circuits: *platform* (data → attention → advertising/subscriptions → rent) and *knowledge* (R&D → prototype → startup/ licensing → revenue/social impact). In the Ukrainian case, circuit (B) partially compensates for the risks of (A): creators diversify their income through educational products, B2B services, and the donation economy, reducing their dependence on a single algorithmic metric. The model predicts that clusters with dense Triple Helix connectivity (university – business – government/donors) demonstrate less dispersion of creators' revenues under the same algorithmic shocks.

Thus, theoretical analysis of platforms and knowledge capitalization reveals key challenges facing societies. This primarily concerns algorithmic management of creativity, as platforms use algorithms to manage content visibility and promotion. On the one hand, content creators do not always understand how algorithms work, which makes it difficult for them to adapt their creativity to platform requirements. On the other hand, algorithms often promote content that is more profitable, which reduces the diversity and originality of creative products. Equally serious is the problem of losing local and cultural diversity, as local cultural forms and independent creativity become less visible in the global digital space, while algorithms encourage the creation of clichéd products that are easily adaptable to mass tastes.

One of the main problems with platform capitalism is the concentration of profits among the owners of platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Spotify, who receive a significant share of the revenue from user-generated content while paying them only minimal compensation. On music platforms, for example, most of the revenue is distributed among a small number of popular artists, while independent musicians receive microscopic payments for streams. On content platforms, on the other hand, creators depend on advertising revenue, which in turn depends on the number of views, likes, and comments controlled by platform algorithms. This exploitation of creative labor under platform capitalism poses a complex challenge that requires rethinking the role of platforms in the digital economy, as unequal income distribution, dependence on algorithms, and threats to cultural diversity are issues that cannot be ignored.

In this context, we propose introducing the category of "Ukrainian type of platform capitalism", which describes a specific form of combining the logic of global digital platforms with the conditions of war, institutional instability, and cultural mobilization. Unlike classic Western models, where platforms operate in stable market and legal conditions, the Ukrainian type is shaped by constant crisis challenges: from infrastructure disruptions to regulatory uncertainty regarding copyright and financial mechanisms. This makes platform capitalism in Ukraine not only an economic phenomenon, but also a sociocultural mechanism for survival, where creativity becomes a resource for collective solidarity. The sociological difference of this type lies in its hybridity: creators are simultaneously included in global algorithmic hierarchies (YouTube, TikTok, Spotify) and local innovative ecosystems (e.g., UNIT.City). Thus, Ukrainian platform capitalism exists in two dimensions – globalized and locally adapted. This duality gives rise to a new form of "digital stratification": some actors are integrated into international chains of visibility and monetization, while others remain marginalized in the internal information field.

CONCLUSION AND RESEARCH PROSPECTS

Thus, we attempted to critically combine two theoretical approaches – Srnicek's concept of platform capitalism and Leydesdorff's model of knowledge capitalization – to analyze the transformations of creative labor in the digital economy, considering the specificities of the Ukrainian context. We proceed from the assumption that it is the intersection between the algorithmic logic of digital platforms and the knowledge economy that creates new forms of structural inequality, which profoundly affect both creative industries and the mechanisms of knowledge production, distribution, and monetization.

First, we have shown that digital platforms not only serve as infrastructures for content distribution, but also actively intervene in the processes of its formation, transforming the logic of creativity in accordance with algorithmic priorities. This leads to a decline in cultural diversity and encourages the standardization of content focused on virality rather than aesthetic or intellectual value. The novelty of our approach lies to analytically integrate the conceptual foundations of the knowledge economy into a critique of platform logic, emphasizing that creative activity is becoming a specific form of capitalized knowledge that is produced, managed, and evaluated through digital infrastructures.

Secondly, the concept of "knowledge capitalization" has been reinterpreted in the context of digital creative industries: creative content is seen as a form of intangible asset that is not only consumed but also aggregated, commercialized, and reproduced in the form of new products and services. In this sense, platform logic becomes a mechanism not only for the dissemination of knowledge, but also for its transformation into market value, often without adequate compensation for creators.

Prospects for further research also include expanding the theoretical framework by incorporating concepts of the digital precariat, platforms as a form of algorithmic governance, and digital rent theory. Against this backdrop, the proposed study should be seen as an attempt to outline the theoretical and conceptual framework of the problem area, which should be supplemented by empirical verification,

particularly in the context of the transformations of creative labor in conditions of war and social instability in Ukraine.

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