

# HUMANITY FLOW IN CENTRAL- ASIAN DIGITAL ART-HISTORY: THE ASTRAL NOMADS MODEL

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**Abstract.** Currently, during the COVID-19 pandemic, cultural actors are faced with the urgent problem of preserving humanitarian values using digital tools. The countries of Central Asia are lagging behind the global process, which has introduced an imbalance in the digital presentation of world artistic heritage. The aim of this study and project is to organize an online art history of post-Soviet Asia in the complex context of human destinies, stories and facts, through the creation of an interactive book and website.

During the research process, the author followed the cross-methodologies of critical analysis and digital archiving. That is, analytical constructs were founded and documented by archival materials and scientific sources through a hypertext system. In turn, the hypertext system has something in common with the philosophical concept of the “rhizome” – one of the key concepts of the philosophy of post-structuralism and post-modernism, introduced by J. Deleuze and F. Guattari.

In the course of this research, materials of contemporary art from Central Asia were collected from the studios of artists, and an archiving system was developed in accordance with international standards. In 2013, the online resource *astralnomads.net* was developed and launched, which took its name from the unfinished novel by the artist Sergei Maslov *Astral Nomads*. The novel described the adventures of Kazakhstani artists on a spaceship in the future. The study asks questions about the timeliness and necessity of digital archiving of art collections. These processes are not just technical innovations here, but an indicator of the compliance of the country’s cultural policy with the new humanitarian challenges of the era.

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that, despite lagging behind global trends in archiving, the processes of digitalization of archives and art collections are gradually building up in the region. The study proposes a model of the *Astral Nomads* resource as a pilot project for the preservation of the heritage of art of the 20th–21st centuries.

**Keywords:** rhizome, new normality, local modernity, metadata, post-Soviet Asia, digital archiving.

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## Introduction

The author started artistic and curatorial career at the beginning of the 1990s

in Kazakhstan and has been always hearing the request for the history of contemporary art in the region. Local actors asking: how did contemporary art appear

in Central Asia? Curators and critics from abroad looking for interesting artists from the region and requesting structured information within them. People usually asking: who is this or that artist and why he/she is acting in this particular way? And just a few persons can talk within the requests, but without any proper publications, making sense of a holistic picture of this epoch in the region.

However, a few enthusiasts are making what is possible in these circumstances. Among others the author has been working for 15 years on the digital art-history of Central Asian contemporary art – curating several local and international exhibitions, setting up digital resources, making publications, defended PhD thesis, and lecturing in the field. The main aim of the author's activity and this research in particular is collecting images of artifacts, structuring texts and archiving materials, writing specifications for data, organizing metadata, and creating the web-resource with data and metadata display. The research has a structure and a huge amount of rough materials, which have to be organized and described adequately, using the methodology of both art-history and Information technology. Finally the project's aim is to develop an online accessible art-history of post-Soviet Asia in the complex time and meaning context – in the broader flow of complex philosophic, political and social determinates.

The author has personal reasons for that aim. First of all, I am a member of the Central Asian art-community and the lack of art history of the region is my hurt. I percept Contemporary art legacy in Central Asia as very fragile, due to social turbulence, unstable economic, permanent migration of people, and absence of funding and governmental support. The second reason is the gap that exists on the map of international art history in the place of Central Asia – a huge region with rich artistic traditions. The third one is about the legacy

of my precursors, teachers, and colleagues in art, who already gone and I feel my responsibility to fix their artistic testament in useful, scientific form. Once upon a time, in 1999 I decided to be an independent curator and I left the team of the artist Rustam Khalfin. He shouted after me: “I invite you into the history, and you leave!” (Sorokina 12). I left and became a curator, Rustam has gone in 2008, but I always hear his invitation into the history.

## Methods

What methodological approaches and materials are useful for the aim of the research? Throughout the entire period of implementation of the digital project, the author following of cross-methodology of critical analysis and scientific archive. That is, analytical constructs have been based and documented by archival materials and scientific sources through the hypertext system. In turn, the hypertext system resonates with the philosophical concept of “rhizome” – one of the key concepts of the philosophy of post-structuralism and post-modernism, introduced by J. Deleuze and F. Guattari in the book of the same name in 1976 and designed to serve as the basis and form of implementation of the “nomadology” project by these authors. The rhizome must resist unchanging linear structures (of both being and thinking). Deleuze and Guattari describe the properties of a rhizome using two approaches: informal properties (in the form of free text) and formal properties (in the form of a list of individual properties, with a description of each property) (A Thousand Plateaus).

Concerning research methods, the already mentioned – digital archiving which using the principles data and metadata are applied here, following the algorithm created by Murtha Baca (Ph. D., head of the Digital Art History

Access Department at the Getty Research Institute) (Introduction to Metadata). The content bases on interviews, comparative analysis, identifying determinants, proposing hypotheses, and proving them by crosschecking factual documents. During the research, materials from digital archive are using as resources: photographs, videos, texts, and interviews with artists, historians, anthropologists, and cultural scientists. In the future, hyperlinks to existing resources will be used: state archives of film and photo documents, publications of art historians, on-line collections, and QR codes to them. The author is going to involve technical volunteers to this work because of strong connection with young generation art-professionals through teaching position.

In general, the main directions of this heritage preservation can be outlined in the conclusions as follows: collecting through physical and digital donations, creating online and offline collections and resources; focusing on a specific regional direction and time period; focus on reflecting the heritage of contemporary art, fixing its adherents and artifacts; initiating and developing cutting-edge research in art-history; development of strategies and tactics for the collections and their logistic support; search for sponsors and patrons, as well as partners and volunteers. This method can be conventionally designated as “synergetic”, it is used by non-governmental and non-profit organizations that work as partnership initiatives of institutions united by common goals, but representing different countries (for example – Asia Art Archive, L'internationale, Pad.ma, Open.culture, etc.).

What does the research expect and the current stage of development? The research expects to theorize, analyze, and formalize multidisciplinary materials within the contemporary art of Central Asia. The author expects the formal framework of the project to consist of two parts.

The first part is going to be an interactive book about the Art of post-Soviet Asia (1985–2020) – its main actors, events, in historical, anthropological, and philosophical contexts. The second part would be the Internet resource, collecting the data, or links to the data, which refers to the Interactive book content. The resource may comprise different kind of data, such as photos, videos, archive documents, publications as well as metadata for these materials. The resource would play the role of landing page for an Interactive book and would make it possible to investigate the questions within Central Asian modern and post-modern art in a broader and deeper context. Both the Interactive book and resource interrelated and are complementary to each other, but, if necessary, they can work separately.

## Results

As noted above, the situation with digital repositories and online resources in Kazakhstan and Central Asia is predetermined by the cultural agenda of today and the current situation of lagging behind international experience. For several years, an initiative group of the professional community of contemporary art in the region has been negotiating and discussing the creation of a certain resource that could serve as a repository of modern heritage. In 2013, an informal association, the Archives Council of Central Asia, was created, which included: Y. Sorokina (Kazakhstan), L. Akhmadi (USA), G. Kasmaliev and M. Dzhumaliev (Kyrgyzstan), N. Akhmedova (Uzbekistan), D. Kholikov (Tajikistan). The Council supported the creation of a digital resource based on Asia Art + PF. Relevant work was carried out on drawing up an archive strategy, fundraising, a project application, and a grant was received from the Hivos Foundation

(Netherlands) for the development and pilot project of the resource. Since June 6, 2013, the pilot project digital resource Astral Nomads has been operating at <http://astralnomads.net/>.

For the implementation of the project, it was chosen a method, previously designated as “synergetic”, which assumes:

- collecting artifacts through voluntary donations of physical and digital materials from authors and their heirs, creating online and offline collections and resources;
- focusing on the regional direction of Central Asia and the time of the independence period; interest in fixing contemporary art, its main representatives and events;
- support and development of promising trends that change the history of art “here and now”;
- strategic and tactical planning of both collection and monetary resources;
- fundraising and partnership projects.

The archive format assumes the presence of an off-line server storage for collecting digitized data and an online resource where prepared and formatted information can be available to users. A special “engine” of the archive was developed, which allows the moderator to enter and correct information. The online version is designed in such a way as to give the impression of an unusual space, but at the same time not to distract the attention of users from the collection. The style of design development can be called post-minimalist,

since it uses the principles of minimalism, but allows for unusual inclusions (title in the style of minimalist science fiction, moving mottos, interactive elements, etc.). The resource works in Russian and English, which allows you to cover the post-Soviet and international space (see *fig. 1*).

In terms of structure, the archive contains about 500 (five hundreds) titles of multimedia (photo, video, animation, sound, pdf-books) off-line artifacts (in the digital storage) and about 350 (three hundred and fifty) articles on-line (in the network). The online archive site includes sections such as:

- Library;
- Personalities;
- Art leaflet;
- Radio Voyager;
- Except AN.

The site interface is equipped with a convenient navigation system where you can search for information by name, title or keyword. The collection of the archive contains works of Central Asian artists. The artifacts collected in the archive were made in various media: painting, graphics, photography, installations, performances, actions, video art and so on. Of course, some of the mediums cannot be reflected as they are, therefore, the collection mainly contains photographs, videos and media files.

The archive library and all projects with more than one image are bound in pdf format. The “engine” of the site is equipped with a pdf-viewer –

for the possibility of flipping through books, and is also linked with the YouTube channel for viewing video files.

Conceptually, the project was lined up as a metaphor for a space that does not imply affiliation with a state or commercial structure or even a non-profit

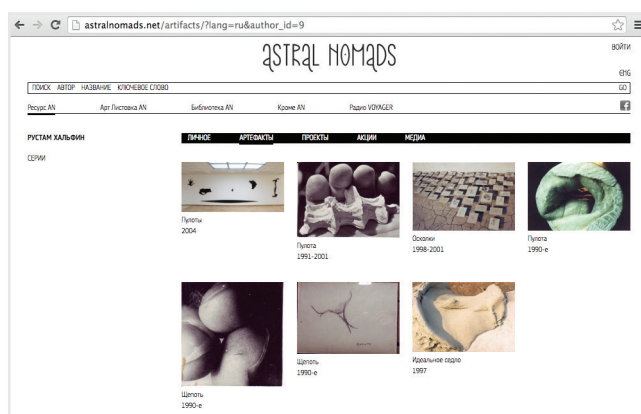


Fig. 1. The screen-shot of the resource <http://astralnomads.net/>

institution, the resource acts as a kind of space, involving artists of Central Asian region, as if gathered into one space station. The mythology of the project is associated with the work of one of the pioneers of contemporary art in Kazakhstan – Sergei Maslov.

Shortly before his death in 2002, Maslov began writing a novel called “Astral Nomads” (from where, in fact, the name of the project was taken), which was dedicated to the life of most contemporary artists in Kazakhstan. Everything was possible in the novel – to move to any point in the universe, transform space and time, follow hyperlinks, etc. (see *fig. 2*).



*Fig. 2. Sergei Maslov, «Baikonyr 2», 1990s, multimedia project*

Unfortunately, the novel was not completed; the artist went into another world, leaving his paintings and his notes. Since Sergei had no heirs, except for his friends and colleagues, it was they who became the custodians of his paintings, drawings, notebooks, albums, zins (samizdat) magazines in their own apartments and studios. This method of preservation, however, is not relevant to the significance of Maslov's legacy, and all these materials require cataloging, organizing and digitalization in order to reflect the peculiarities of the artist's practice and the fullness and depth of his influence on the development of local art scene, which he helped to take place.

Those artists who continue to live and work “here and now”, like Maslov, are often in a state of such “weightlessness” – they are known in the most distant parts of the Earth, but are still not recognized in their homeland, their works are scattered across collections worldwide famous museums, but not represented in Kazakhstani ones. But the most important thing is that their history exists only in the talks of friends and in the memory of colleagues.

Maslov as an artist felt such an outcome and predicted a digital space for his legacy: “The main events begin to move into hyperlinks, which will take a more active part both in the real process of life, already too dramatized, and in the novel. What to do? The sabers are drawn from their scabbards. To turn back or to remain silent is to die. Full speed ahead!” (Maslov 27).

The practices of the artists represented in the Astral Nomads project are an opportunity to convey greetings to their colleagues from other parts of the world. But the greeting is sometimes so difficult and takes a long time to make its way through time and space.

The projects that our artists did were very often dedicated to the work of other artists, whom they had never met in person, but whose work inspired and nourished them. These projects, however, provided an opportunity to rethink and revive the most significant ideas of the 20th century and, perhaps, the resource will become the tool that will help to develop further this global artistic dialogue. Digital space can become the space where these and other astral nomads from Maslov's novel can find common ground with thinking people around the world.

Despite the conceptual poeticization of the formal body of the resource, in the production of the content that constitutes the resource, there are many technical issues and rules within which the collection is formed:

1. all artifacts are subject to description according to metadata standards. This is done in order to be able to embed the content of the resource into world databases and search engines;
2. all data and metadata are duplicated to comply with safety regulations on additional media and in the cloud storage;
3. all metadata are entered into tables in EXCEL format, with the assignment of a separate unique code.

The technical difficulties of the process seem to be an obstacle for many art historians. The problem of working with new media is acute for the museums of Kazakhstan and Central Asia. To create the preconditions for a more active development of the digital archiving method, Asia Art + PF initiated the project of the Mobile Virtual Museum based on the Astral Nomads resource. The project was prepared and launched with the support of the Goethe-Institut Almaty, within the framework of the “Zeitmaschine Museum” project – (Museum as a Time Machine, 2013–2015). In April 2015, the project was introduced as a Mobile Virtual Museum in the workflow of the Exhibition Hall of the Artists' Union of Kyrgyzstan Gallery in Oak Park (see fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Mobile Virtual Museum in the workflow of the Exhibition Hall of the Artists' Union of Kyrgyzstan Gallery in Oak Park, Bishkek, 2015

In June 2016, the project has been operating at the site of the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan

within the framework of the exhibition “Look into the Future: Contemporary Heritage” (Astana) (see fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Mobile Virtual Museum, the exhibition “Look into the Future: Contemporary Heritage”, National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Astana, 2016

The virtual exhibition was shown at the Nevzorovs Museum (Semey, 2016). Moving Museum took part in the frame of touring regional exhibition “The Stories of the Great Steppe” in March-August 2019, in three cities of the Republic of Kazakhstan – Shymkent, Taraz, and Taldy-Korgan. The tour was stopped because of pandemic of COVID-19, but to be continued in 11 more regional cities of Kazakhstan.

Within the framework of the pilot project of the Mobile Virtual Museum, a special program is being carried out, which includes:

1. development of the concept of the existence of a mobile virtual museum in the space of cultural institutions;
2. development of a special innovative space for broadcasting museum materials (using information kiosks / tablets and an Internet access point);
3. continuous development and replenishment of the resource <http://astralnomads.net/> with new information in Russian and English;
4. development and implementation of a special educational program for a mobile virtual museum, including: a series of seminars and lectures on contemporary art; holding a round table dedicated to the current problems of art

and culture in the region; holding a competition for a critical article on contemporary art in the region.

What benefits can cultural institutions receive from a partnership with the Mobile Virtual Museum project? In our opinion, the following:

- a new exposition site on the basis of a museum or other public institution – information kiosks / tablets with the ability to access the Internet;
- huge growth of the audience, due to Internet users and youth oriented to new technologies;
- a different level of information distribution, taking into account all modern standards of attribution of works of art;
- trust of partners and founders who have the opportunity to have an accessible transparent picture of the functioning of a cultural institution;
- synergy of interdisciplinary effect – strengthening through cooperation of different areas of culture (library, scientific, archival, philosophical, museum, etc.);
- an incentive to create and develop its own archive base that meets all modern criteria;
- functioning of a special program on the basis of a virtual museum;
- wider distribution of the cultural organization as a partner of the virtual museum through the online resource <http://astralnomads.net/>.
- the presence of a real Museum of Contemporary Art on the basis of a traditional institution.

## Discussion

How does the project connecting with humanitarian questions of the epoch?

The project is connecting with a few interdisciplinary issues in the fields of art-

history, information technology, philosophy, and sociology. Because of recent events and the pandemic of the COVID-19 regime, the possibilities of online work come to the fore in the instrumental form of the scientific community.

It's already more than 1 year when we need to make our professional research using information technology as the main source of knowledge. Now it is obvious that the need to have properly organized archival resources that allow working in remote mode is coming to the fore.

The most advanced institutions of science and art, since the advent of the Internet, are gradually transferring their information base to online access. This forward-looking strategy has paid off and proven viability in the new environment. The online format has managed to become the standard of the “new normality”, which dictates the need for a presence on the network. If there is no information on the network, it is as if it does not exist at all.

The challenge of the “new normality” has made the institutional gap between transit and developed countries even wider. Shortcomings in cultural policy and funding for the cultural sphere now make transit countries outsiders of the circulating research information. We believe that cultural actors of transit countries have to narrow the gap and provide the world with professional information in our field. The infringement of the information base throws back the transit countries in conceptual issues of the discourse of sustainable development and postmodern anti-imperialism.

The current situation violates the principle of diversity – cultural and biological, which is an important factor in human survival on the planet. The lagging behind the transit countries and the dominance of the developed ones disrupt the natural processes of evolution and adaptation and reduces the entropy of systems, which leads to the collapse of civilization and massive losses. We argue

that one such loss might be the legacy of modern and postmodern art in post-Soviet Asia. This unique heritage is the key to the equal entry of the renewed art of the independent nation-states of Central Asia into the community of contemporary world culture. This heritage is an index of democracy in the region and maintains a complex balance between national and international archetypes, concepts, and meanings. The phenomenon of post-Soviet art in Central Asia can be substantiated using the term “local modernity”, which is declared in the works by Arjun Appadurai (socio-cultural anthropologist, sociologist, and philosopher), Charles Esche (director of the VanAbbe Museum) (*Navigating the Planetary: A Guide to the Planetary Art World – Its Past, Present, and Potentials*), Roger Burgel (curator and art director of Documenta 12) (*Zurich Issue: Dark Matter, Grey Zones, Red Light, and Bling Bling*), and other thinkers of our time.

Summarizing the discourse of “local modernity”, it can be argued that we all live in local modernities, that there are fundamental differences, but there is no longer a center from which innovation flows and is formed. Instead, there are various paradigms of modernity that can be disrupted or re-formed in our time of postmodernity. Local modernity indicates the insufficiency of the existing models of correlation between the global and the local, in particular, the center-periphery model.

Local modernity discourse refers to the discussions of post-colonial and de-colonial philosophy and its resistance to the dictate of the so-called “Western” view on cultural development. The critique of the perception of Central Asia, proposed by Alexander Humboldt in the 19th century, as an amorphous transit zone between great civilizations; Western view of the region as a “Unknown Land” and the Silk Road as the main attraction at all times; These and similar

notions are bewildering the region's inhabitants and leading thinkers everywhere. Yet criticism of post-colonialism and de-colonialism is an insufficient optics for understanding the contemporary culture of the region. We argue that in fact, the contemporary culture of Central Asia is a project of Soviet modernism, which designed patterns of national identity with the tools of international discourse. This constructed palimpsest is permeated with the stories of human tragedies and fateful social cataclysms that the USSR system brought to this region. We are sure that the art-history of post-Soviet Asia should be studied and built at the junction of contradictions between post-colonial and post-Soviet discourses.

All these challenges can be embodied by the tools of digital archives and reference resources based in developing countries, but available everywhere and merging with the cultural heritage of humankind.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of studying the problems of preserving contemporary heritage and, in particular, digital offline and online storage facilities in Kazakhstan and Central Asia, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Museums and public institutions of culture in developed and transit countries of the world have been using the method of digital storage already in the second generation (more than 24 years). During this time, international agreements, conventions and standards have been developed that make it possible to unify digital information and provide an opportunity for free exchange of data, while ensuring their safety and copyright. The world is working to preserve heritage in a new information paradigm of transparency and accessibility



of the heritage of mankind. Three main types of institutions can serve as an example of successful preservation of heritage — state and interstate institutions supporting the historical cultural heritage; wealthy corporations focused on fixing world heritage from archaic civilizations to contemporary art; public organizations proactive in digital archiving.

- Kazakhstan and Central Asia are lagging behind in the digital archiving process by more than one generation. In the region, there is most often a situation where cultural and art workers realize, but do not identify the degree of lagging behind, which is the primary impetus for development. The strategic vision for the development of digital, and especially online storage, in the region is announced at the government level. In the field, the digitization and publishing program on the Internet is underperforming for various reasons. When almost all cultural institutions have websites, most of them serve advertising and bureaucratic purposes. Nevertheless, there is a clear trend towards more active use of digital technologies — websites have been created, a certain number of museum exhibits are being digitized.
- The problem of unification of data and metadata is not yet at the forefront of digital archiving, due to its initial status. The region has not created the appropriate infrastructure and specialists in the field of standardization of artistic data have not been trained. Public activities to accelerate the development of this area take place and have been developing.

- The digital resource “Astral Nomads” has brought contemporary art from Kazakhstan and Central Asia to a different level of existence. First, with its help, a more voluminous picture of the circle of discursive practice of the contemporary art region is seen. Secondly, the legacy of artists (especially those who left) is recorded in the form of an image and all the necessary information. Thirdly, art, remote from the cultural centers of the region, is becoming available at the global level. Fourthly, the existence of a collection united by one resource legitimizes the presence of contemporary art in the region, demonstrating the amount and depth of this practice in a spatial-temporal context. The process of launching the “Astral Nomads” digital resource and the Mobile Virtual Museum fulfills the mission of catalyzing the development of digital preservation of cultural heritage in Kazakhstan and Central Asia.

As a kind of parting manifesto, the author on behalf of the creators of the archive perceive the words of H.-G. Gadamer, “The pantheon of art is not a timeless present that appears to pure aesthetic consciousness, but the act of a historically collected and accumulated spirit. Aesthetic cognition is a way of self-understanding. But all self-understanding is carried out on something external that is understood and includes its unity and isolation. To the extent that we find a work of art in the world, and in a separate work we find the world, it does not remain an alien space for us, into which we are magically transported for a moment. Rather, we learn to understand ourselves in it, which means that we remove the non-continuity and pinpoint of experience in the continuum of our being” (Gadamer 142).

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## **ОРТАЛЫҚ-АЗИЯЛЫҚ САНДЫҚ ТАРИХЫНДАҒЫ ГУМАНИТАРЛЫҚ АҒЫМ: ASTRAL NOMADS МОДЕЛІ**

**Аңдатпа.** Қазіргі уақытта COVID-19 пандемиясы кезінде мәдениет қайраткерлері цифрлық құралдарды қолдану арқылы гуманитарлық құндылықтарды сақтаудың өзекті проблемасына тап болды. Орталық Азия елдері әлемдік көркем мұраны ұсынуда теңгерімсіздік енгізетін жаһандық процесстен артта қалып отыр. Бұл зерттеу мен жобаның мақсаты интерактивті кітап пен веб-сайтты құру арқылы посткеңестік Азияның адам тағдыры, оқиғалар мен фактілердің күрделі контекстінде онлайн-тарихын ұйымдастыру болып табылады.

Зерттеу барысында автор критикалық талдау мен цифрлық архивтеудің кросс-методологиясын ұстанды. Яғни, аналитикалық конструкциялар гипермәтіндік жүйе арқылы архивтік материалдармен және ғылыми дерек көздерімен негізделіп, құжатталды. Өз кезегінде, гипермәтіндік жүйенің «ризом» философиялық тұжырымдамасымен ортақ қасиеттері бар – бұл Дж. Делуз және Ф. Гваттари енгізген постструктурализм мен постмодернизм философиясының негізгі ұғымдарының бірі.

Зерттеу барысында Орталық Азиядан келген заманауи өнер суретшілерінің сандық жинағынан материалдар жиналды; халықаралық стандарттарға сәйкес мұрағаттау жүйесі жасалды. 2013 жылы <http://astralnomads.net/> интернет-ресурсы әзірленіп іске қосылды, ол өз атын суретші Сергей Масловтың аяқталмаған романы – Жұлдызды көшпенділерден алды. Роман болашақта қазақстандық суретшілердің ғарыш кемесіндегі шытырман оқиғаларын суреттеді.

Зерттеу барысында көркем жинақтарды сандық архивтеудің уақтылығы мен қажеттілігі туралы сұрақтар қойылады. Бұл процесстер тек техникалық жаңалықтар емес, сонымен қатар елдің мәдени саясатының дәуірдің жаңа гуманитарлық сын-қатерлеріне сәйкестігінің көрсеткіші болып табылады.

Зерттеу нәтижелеріне сүйене отырып, мұрағат ісіндегі әлемдік тенденциялардан артта қалғанына қарамастан, өңірде архивтер мен көркем жинақтарды цифрландыру процестері біртіндеп қарқын алуда деген қорытынды жасауға болады. Зерттеу барысында XX–XXI ғасырлардағы өнер мұраларын сақтаудың пилоттық жобасы ретінде *Astral Nomads* ресурсының моделі ұсынылған.

**Тірек сөздер:** тамырсабақ, жаңа қалыптылық, жергілікті новация, метамәліметтер, посткеңестік Азия, сандық мұрағаттау.

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## ГУМАНИТАРНЫЙ ПОТОК В ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОАЗИАТСКОЙ ЦИФРОВОЙ ИСТОРИИ ИСКУССТВА: МОДЕЛЬ ASTRAL NOMADS

**Аннотация.** В наши дни, во время пандемии COVID-19, перед деятелями культуры остро стоит проблема сохранения гуманитарных ценностей, используя инструменты цифровых технологий. Страны Центральной Азии отстают от общемирового процесса, что вносит дисбаланс в представление мирового художественного наследия. Целью данного исследования и проекта является организация доступной в режиме онлайн истории искусства постсоветской Азии в сложном контексте человеческих судеб, историй и фактов путем создания интерактивной книги и веб-сайта.

В процессе исследования автор следовал кросс-методологии критического анализа и дигитального архива. То есть аналитические конструкции были основаны и задокументированы архивными материалами и научными источниками через гипертекстовую систему. В свою очередь, гипертекстовая система перекликается с философским понятием «ризомы» – одним из ключевых понятий философии постструктурализма и постмодернизма, введенным Ж. Делёзом и Ф. Гваттари.

В ходе исследования были собраны материалы дигитальной коллекции художников современного искусства Центральной Азии; была разработана система архивирования в соответствии с международными стандартами. В 2013 году был разработан и запущен онлайн-ресурс <http://astralnomads.net/>, который взял свое название от недописанного романа художника Сергея Маслова «Звездные кочевники». Роман описывал приключения казахстанских художников на космическом корабле в будущем.

Исследование задает вопросы о своевременности и необходимости дигитальной архивации коллекций искусства. Эти процессы выступают здесь не просто техническим новшеством, но индикатором соответствия культурной политики страны новым гуманитарным вызовам эпохи.

По итогам исследования можно сделать выводы о том, что, несмотря на отставание от общемировых трендов архивирования, в регионе постепенно набирают обороты процессы дигитализации архивов и коллекций искусства. Исследование предлагает модель ресурса *Astral Nomads* в качестве пилотного проекта сохранения наследия искусства XX–XXI веков.

**Ключевые слова:** ризома, новая нормальность, локальная новация, метадата, постсоветская Азия, дигитальное архивирование.

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