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Afterword

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In theory, we started the process of thinking specifically about putting together this volume on how technology interacts with the processes of creation, commerce, commentary about, and consumption of cultural goods, only after the papers in the Standing Workgroup sub-theme for the EGOS 2017 conference came together. In reality, however, the topics covered in this volume, and indeed in the 'Call for Papers' for that EGOS sub-theme, have been of relevance to scholars and citizens for some time now—how, if at all, does technology, associated with

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machines and insentience, affect the very things, viz. expression and symbolism, that make us human? While this question has been relevant for several decades now, as Sgourev shows in this volume in his historical study of painting, the scale and speed at which digital technologies change and evolve is such that the topic gains special significance today as the digital medium has permeated every stage of the value chain in the creative and cultural industries. This was shown in the various chapters, like from pitches for crowd funding, in the chapter by Pershina and Soppe, over professional struggles in Cultural Journalism, in the chapter by Plesner, to new ways of reaching audiences, as shown in the chapters by Romanelli on museums, on visual art by Hartmann, and on film distribution and film exhibition by Solidoro and Viscusi. Our attempt in this volume was to shed light on some crucial aspects of this relationship between technology, creativity, and markets for cultural goods by drawing on a multitude—organizational, institutional, sociological, and cultural—of perspectives.

While the authors in this volume certainly have provided multifaceted insights into these questions, like all good research, these chapters, individually, and taken together, also raise questions that suggest directions for future scholarly investigations. For instance, the chapters by Sgourev and by Hartmann taken together suggest that scholars may need to expand the definitions of 'art' based on the possibility of the rise of new, technically advanced media, or even technologies that 'create' art (such as the artificial intelligence program that wrote a 'poem' or 'made a painting'), thus casting doubt on the very definition of artistic endeavors that has been widely accepted. Cattani et al., Collas, and Furnari, having raised the specter of a world of markets that are entirely mediated by digital technologies, thus question the very foundations of organizational and institutional literature, going beyond the limited scope of cultural and creative industries. How should scholars in the field think about traditionally, demarcated boundaries and constituents of institutional and organizational fields (even beyond the creative and cultural industries), when the digital medium provides the infrastructure for all parts of the supply chain in an industry?

In the context of creative and cultural industries in particular, if all steps, from creation, commerce, through commentary and consumption can be accomplished with the help of digital technologies, do we have to examine more critically the assumption that cultural goods have symbolic meaning and value, or that they embody (or intentionally challenge) beliefs and norms accepted by society? This further leads to the higher-level question of whether the seamless interpenetration of producer, commentator, and consumer roles that the digital medium has rendered possible (the so-called democratization movement) is a net positive or net negative impact. At this point in time, the jury is out on this question, as, anecdotally, the popular press provides articles that bolster both sides of the argument. It is, therefore, up to scholars to take a rigorous approach to addressing this question, which has serious and deep social as well as economic implications. The debate about digitalization and the Internet seems, however, to be changing. One example of research on the negative, social, and economic implications of the Internet is Shoshana Zuboff's book, '*The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*' (Zuboff, 2019). In a seven-year-long study, Zuboff has studied Google, Facebook, and other Internet-based social media and service providers, their modus operandi and associated business models. She identifies a new era of capitalism—Surveillance Capitalism—with Internet-based business models thriving on surveillance, gathering and sale of user data.[1] Information gathering, retrieval, storing, protection, and use are highly contested issues in particular in relation to the 'Four' (Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google) (Galloway, 2017), due to their monopolistic status (Iansiti and Lakhani, 2017).[2] These debates are conducted under headings of 'privacy rights,' and 'democracy' in the wake of numerous data leaks and associated scandals like, for example, Facebook's sale of data to Cambridge Analytica.[3] The use of big data and other forms of utilization of user-generated information and the resulting data protection regulations are all highly relevant for creative industry organizations as well. We find that more research is needed and would welcome further research into these issues in a context of creative industries.

Other issues of relevance for creative industries firms and organizations are related to intellectual property rights and how they are handled in the digital age. For example, previously when we as consumers bought music in the form of a record or CD or a movie on a DVD, we owned it and had the right to sell it again. However, in a digitalized world, when we buy and download a song or stream a film, we do not own it and cannot re-sell it. Another topic related to immaterial and intellectual property rights concerns how to make Internet services like Youtube, Facebook, and Instagram pay the artists for their music, film, images, and texts produced.[4] More research on digital business models and artists' intellectual property rights are also important topics for further research within the creative industries, we find.

Many industries and organizations claim that they are special and unique. We would call for the examination of structural variation in creative industries—both across the various creative industries and over time. This would allow us to consider the multiple ways in which similar practices and arrangements, like for example how the use of digital technologies and intellectual property rights is handled or how evaluative practices are organized or can change. Particularly in times of rapid change, comparisons of structural features of a given creative industry as it changes over time can provide valuable insights with regard to dynamics and mechanisms for transformation and change.

Finally, we hope that the chapters in this volume spark interest also in studying the opposite phenomenon—how, if at all, does humanism and human input change the perceived value of creative and cultural goods, in a world where human imperfections are all being eliminated by efficient and unerring technologies. This is a question that encompasses all the social, artistic/cultural, and economic dimensions that constitute the creative and cultural industries and is therefore one we, the editors are eager to see answered. We hope that readers of this volume will take up the challenge to address some of these questions and illuminate our understanding of the individual artists, firms, and markets that collectively make life worth living.

Notes

1. This book is not her first book on digitalization and its impact on society. In 1988, she published her influential and acclaimed book '*In the Age of the Smart Machine*' (Zuboff, 1988).
2. For more favorable accounts of Google and Apple see, for example, Schmidt and Rosenberg (2014) '*How Google Works*' and Lashinsky (2012) '*Inside Apple*'.
3. These leaks and scandals have called for various political initiatives for regulation like, for instance, the recent introduction of European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that aptly demonstrates the many questions this data moment invokes.
4. The Internet-based services are regulated by the so-called Safe Harbor regulation from 2001, which was made with the ambition to enable and increase information exchange, connectivity, and business activities as much as possible. Since then 'the Four' and other Internet-based services have developed to large commercial platforms, some of which with almost monopolistic, global position. EU has since 2016 worked on a reform of the immaterial property rights.

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