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Certainty and negativity: An Analysis of Digital Publishing Process in "the society of transparency"

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Abstract

Byung-Chulhan analyses the symptoms of the era of self-display and self-exposure of subjects in the digital age around the concept of "the society of transparency", criticizes people's excessive pursuit of transparency in today's society, and gives suggestions on how to get out of trouble based on this. Based on Byung-Chulhan's analysis of the the society of transparency, this paper focuses on the publishing industry, the core industry of knowledge content production in the current society, analyzes the flow changes of certainty and negativity in the publishing industry driven by the wave of technology, and comprehensively warns the upgrading and iteration of the publishing format from the critical perspective of Byung-Chul han to the society of transparency. At the same time, it makes suggestions for publishers and readers to work together to get rid of the dilemma, and calls for more attention and care in the face of increasingly transparent social forms.

Keywords: the society of transparency, publishing, digital reading, digital publishing

1. Introduction

According to the 2021 Press and Publication Industry Analysis Report of the China Press and Publication Administration, the export value of digital publications exceeded that of traditional publications and periodicals for the first time in 2021, with a total export value of \$1,052,300, of which digital publications were \$56.3, accounting for 53.5% of the total. From the perspective of readers, the "2022 China Digital Reading Report" shows that the number of digital reading users in China reached 5.3 million in 2022, a year-on-year increase of 4.75%. Nowadays, the replacement of paper reading by digital reading is clearly visible, and the pace of digital publishing transformation has further accelerated due to increased demand.

At the end of 2022, Open AI launched an artificial intelligence product called ChatGPT, and AIGC based on the development of ChatGPT's own technical capabilities has attracted public attention in all aspects of content production. Throughout the development and changes of publishing history, technology evolution plays a vital role in its process. The development of today's media technology and the promotion of AIGC naturally outline a new era for publishing.

The content produced by publishing is a spiritual product for human consumption and can be transformed into meaning. The rapid practice of AIGC technology represented by ChatGPT in the publishing industry proves its value in improving content productivity to a certain extent. With the continuous popularization of technology, its application space will be further expanded. Looking at the present, if publishing is taken as a perspective, AIGC will undoubtedly bring huge development opportunities for its transformation and upgrading.

In the era of capital digitization, a large amount of information aggregated by data has been used for human survival and access, and has become the new normal of social life. More than just reading, books have been digitized from paper in early impressions to square words on the screen, and people's lives have shifted from face-to-face actual communication to cyberspace interaction. When living people are deciphered by information and displayed in cyberspace by data in every detail, everything must become publicly presented and processable information in order to exist, which is in line with the information society constructed by digital technology in Byung-Chul han's "the society of transparency".

While we can see the continuous progress of publishing with the help of digital technology, we can also learn from Byung-Chulhan's critical exposition on the society of transparency to further think about the hidden concerns behind the upgrading and transformation of publishing in the society of transparency.

2. The society of transparency and audience dilemmas

2.1. Meaning of "the society of transparency"

In "the society of transparency", Byung-Chulhan defines the characteristics of the society of transparency—"what a society of transparency in the digital age pursues is not the moral purification of the soul, but the maximization of interests and attention."

He divided the characterization of a the society of transparency into six forms: Affirm societies, intimate societies, showcasing societies, accelerating societies, information societies and monitoring societies, and consider the six forms to be mutually inclusive rather than independent.

The so-called "transparency" means that everything must become publicly presented and processable information before it can exist. The essence of "transparency" is to require things to remove their negatives or exclude others in order to "smoothly" integrate into the exchange of capital and information, and become operable, calculable, controllable, and arrangeable. Because only in this state of "transparency" can the various systems of society be "synchronized" or "integrated" in time, and capital and information can accelerate the exchange and proliferation. Transparent societies seek to make things that can be smoothly "synchronized" or "integrated" and the "certainty" of their speed of communication, thereby gradually turning societies that previously had negative factors into integrated "the society of positivity".

Byung-Chulhan does not carry out purely abstract academic research out of the social field, but always takes "the living state of real people" as the basis point, deeply criticizes the living predicament of the society of transparency in the digital age under the control of capital, and explains in detail how to resist this predicament and reach a better future.

In the book, Byung-Chulhan focuses on analyzing the symptoms of the era of self-display and self-exposure of the main body in the digital age, perspective and diagnose the pain of survival in which people suffer from deep alienation and self-exploitation due to excessive pursuit of transparency, and attempts to prescribe a "prescription" to help people effectively resist the plight of survival in a the society of transparency in order to drive people to build an ideal the society of transparency in the true sense.

2.2. The information survival dilemma of the audience in a the society of transparency

Byung-Chulhan believes that the transparent relationship is like a pool of dead water with no vitality, and now the society is forced to structure by a large amount of information data, and the transparent state presented also reduces human beings themselves to functional components in the system. In the face of the huge amount of information, human beings are moving towards barrenness in another dimension. As an industry that carries and disseminates human knowledge and information in the digital age, publishing in the digital age needs to face the dilemma of the audience's information survival in a the society of transparency, and then prescribe

the right medicine in the development and upgrading of publishing practice.

2.2.1. Empty thinking in the survival dilemma of a society of transparency

Nowadays, the amount of social information is constantly expanding and growing, but the room left for human beings to make logical judgments is gradually shrinking. A the society of transparency cannot tolerate any gaps in information and vision, but both ideas and inspiration need gaps. In the rolling information torrent, the flood of affirmative information is flooded, and it preemptively delineates the interval dimension for the audience to obtain information.

A large amount of information and images have full effects, but when the space for negative information is compressed, people are constantly fed by affirmative information in numb likes, and eventually it is easy to form a self-centered information cocoon house. The seemingly friendly affirmative society does not inspire the audience to think negatively, and the society that loses thought and introspection is lazy and hollow.

2.2.2. The camouflage of freedom in the survival dilemma of a society of transparency

Byung-Chulhan believes that the flood of information and transparency is turning the entire earth into a panoramic prison, and people have voluntarily delivered themselves to the monitoring and attention of the panoramic view through self-exposure and self-display, and actively contributed to the digital panoramic prison.

The media empowers the audience so that everyone has the freedom to express themselves in the Internet field. In an affirmative society, anything must be displayed in order to exist, and people's information is added value in the viewing, so they actively structure themselves into commodities and publish them on the Internet to obtain display value. And this freedom to sell self-information will eventually become a shackle of data in the control of capital, and the audience will be caught in the ubiquitous digital monitoring.

The transparency of the information has narrowed the distance between people and extended the realm of human expression and display, and the network trace has become a concrete person's waiting projection in cyberspace due to the precise description of users. What is undeniable is the acquisition of some freedoms, but what cannot be ignored is that the gaze and discipline that come with freedom also eat back the people under the society of transparency.

2.2.3. Aesthetic distortion in the survival dilemma of a the society of transparency

Byung-Chulhan pointed out that in the era of capital digitization, social information has shown explosive growth. Although it is conducive to improving the transparency of the entire society, the complexity of information has brought about difficulties in people's response and processing. In order to process this information more quickly and efficiently, people often want this information to be presented in a simpler form. Therefore, the image form such as photos and posters is favored by people in the digital era because it is convenient for people to obtain information quickly.

The current content production process serves to chase traffic, the creation should cater to popular hot spots, the presentation form should be short and fast, and strive to catch

the attention of the audience at the fastest speed in the information flood. On the one hand, because of its fast update speed, people do not have time to stop and think about what is really beautiful, on the other hand, things are completely exposed in people's sight, bringing the most direct visual impact to people. The newborn AIGC creation has even pulled the efficiency production to the maximum threshold, feeding efficient and high-quality output works through a large amount of high-quality content, but the real aesthetic value behind its content creation has been criticized.

3. Publishing of "affirmative" in a the society of transparency

In the process of book publishing, the main processes include topic selection planning, review of manuscripts, book pricing, book production, and book marketing. In the digital age, book publishing has also achieved digital development, and people's reading methods have changed a lot, bringing severe tests to the publishing industry. With the application of big data and information technology in the whole publishing process, book publishing is showing a transparent pattern of affirmative flooding.

3.1. Certainty in the preparation for publication

In the current preparatory work for publishing from topic selection planning to book production process, the participation of big data makes it highly open and transparent. On the one hand, it is undeniable that the pricing and production links are inseparable from the support of massive market data. The price of books is one of the important factors that consumers consider when choosing to buy books. The setting of book prices is affected by factors such as cost, profit, production quantity, market demand, price status of similar books, consumer psychology and brand. Book publishing units use big data to effectively analyze the price status of similar books, consumer psychology and other influencing factors, and more scientifically price books to achieve their own sales goals, brand goals, and profit goals. Entering the link of mass production of books, big data can systematically analyze the popularity of books, sales data and social influence, and provide key support for the decision-making of book publishing units through scientific evaluation of the market, so as to reasonably determine the number of prints, reduce inventory pressure, and make the target benefits of book publishing units reach expectations.

On the other hand, in the stage of planning and reviewing manuscripts, book editors can improve their work efficiency and professional ability with the help of big data technology, which plays an important role in improving the quality of book editors and publishing. There is still a lot of controversy at the application level of AIGC. As Li Jiechen said, publications should reflect the will of people, and AI is not the subject of responsibility. The core idea of a publication is composed of planning and manuscripts. If domesticated AI technology is applied on a large scale in this link, the unique spirit of human thought will be replaced by mechanical code output.

3.2. Certainty in the Later Work of Publishing

With the rise of digital reading, the market for paper books is being crowded, and greater marketing efforts are needed to promote its "display" to the public eye. In the book marketing link, a large amount of data with affirmative value plays an important role in the accurate marketing of books.

At present, the book marketing process should be combined with user needs to build a good marketing model. Book publishing should be centered on the needs of readers. It is necessary to continuously provide readers with personalized works and services in order to occupy a more favorable position in the market. Data is the most objective form of measurement of demand.

The current publishing industry analyzes the reading habits of readers to deeply tap their potential needs, and based on this, optimize their own published content to enhance the stickiness between readers and books. The application of big data information collection, analysis and data mining functions, to build and improve the network service system. New media marketing such as e-commerce live streaming and short video marketing have also become an important means for publishing units to boost book sales and brand building. Some publishing units choose different marketing products and marketing solutions based on the characteristics of different channels of traditional e-commerce and live streaming and other new media e-commerce and their user portraits. Actively develop new media channels and new marketing methods to drive brand marketing and word-of-mouth communication; The marketing process emphasizes shorter and faster, pays attention to user preferences and market segments, and improves marketing accuracy.

4. Publishing in the society of transparency: "Negative" Driving

4.1. Decentralized content production mode

The development of digital technology promotes iterative updating of content production models. On the one hand, the market demand for paper reading materials is declining, and digital reading continues to develop. The content originally presented through type lead is more accurately and intensively expressed as a knowledge graph. The content organization and production must be carried out through the intermediate plug-in technology or intelligent technology of natural language processing. On the other hand, the publishing industry serves knowledge content, and the production mode of knowledge content has experienced a mode from expert production to user production to artificial intelligence production.

AIGC-driven publishing industry innovation has greatly improved the efficiency of publishing content production. Professional capabilities will be advanced in the professional capabilities link, and the production speed is getting faster and faster. In serving the spiritual and cultural needs of the masses, AIGC will also generate significant values and functions.

4.2. New Path for Publishing Integration Development

Under the pace of technological innovation, the national top-level design is also actively promoting the integrated development of the publishing industry. Under the guidance of the "Opinions on Promoting the Implementation of the National Cultural Digitization Strategy" issued in 2022, publishing units have generally increased

The overall deployment of strong integrated development, accelerate the exploration of new models, new fields, and new formats of integrated development, and promote traditional publishing business and emerging publishing business simultaneously.

The publishing industry's integration and development mechanism has been further improved. In terms of resource

integration, product forms, technological innovation applications, operating models, service methods, and management mechanisms, it has comprehensively promoted the development of publishing integration and achieved remarkable results. At the same time, the rise of new business forms and new models has opened up new paths for the development of publishing integration.

4.3. New publishing format of human-machine collaboration

While recognizing that the huge amount of information is entrenching the society towards transparency, the advantages of technological innovation cannot be denied. In today's publishing work, AIGC is used to improve the efficiency of content generation, data is used to judge the market demand trend, and technology is used to do a lot of affirmative work that can be replaced in the publishing process. This also means that human workers are liberated to a certain extent, so that they can put more time and labor into negative work. The clarity and transparency of affirmative work in publishing also means that redundant processes are simplified, and publishing work that originally required a lot of manpower to complete can now be easily delivered to emerging technologies. This is a elimination and screening of low-end content output, and also puts forward higher knowledge and technology requirements for publishing industry editors in the new era.

5. Effective ways to resist the plight of the society of transparency

While critically examining the the society of transparency in the digital age, Byung-Chulhan also actively explores ways for people to get rid of the barriers of the the society of transparency, and gives suggestions on three ways: "condensing life", re-establishing relationships with others, and "de-mediaization" to achieve individual self-liberation. The publishing transformation of the the society of transparency is also faced with issues that need to be explored urgently. As readers who accept the transformation and publishers who promote upgrading, they need to adjust to themselves in the context of this change, so as to work together to adapt to the digital tendency of knowledge under the irresistible technology trend.

5.1. Defence against "out of media"

As the publishing format continues to move closer to digitization, electronic reading and paper reading have become two opposing diversions to a certain extent. The content on portable terminals such as mobile phones and computers stands out in the information flow, and often attaches more importance to the design of the form of expression, making the presentation of the content closer to the sound and picture combination in visual culture. The combination of sound and picture is a flowing symbol. Readers are easily deprived of the time of immersive thinking in visual culture. The content acquisition of multiple senses leads to overloading of information, losing the room for logical observation, judgment, and inspection of facts and truth.

In contrast, the printed text is a combination of semantics, linear arrangement and logical structure. Reading paper books puts forward higher requirements for deep reading ability, which requires readers to devote themselves to observation, understand the meaning indicated by the text

symbols, and through judgment, association, and demonstration, figure out whether the sentences are correct, whether the facts are accurate, and whether the logic is clear, and then promote the formation of rational thinking.

In the current society full of affirmative information, people's "likes" and statements are captured and recorded by data. Recently, capital has built an information siege centered on audience preferences for profit. Knowledge acquisition in the digital field is also inevitably in the monitoring of panoramic viewing. At this time, paper reading has become a utopia that escapes digital monitoring.

While calling on people to resume in-depth reading on paper, the publishing industry should also deeply realize its great responsibility: how to make paper-based books not lag behind the flood of the times, use technology to strengthen the immersive interaction between paper books and readers, and let the real high-quality content hidden behind the short and fast information flow come to the public and radiate the brilliance of wisdom.

5.2. Re-establishing the association with the other

Digital reading takes the Internet field of the interconnection of everything as the presentation carrier, which is destined to involve the connection and interaction with others, and has recently spawned a new reading mode -- social reading, which takes the social reading platform as the media, focuses on readers, encourages readers to interact, and personalized text reading

On the one hand, the social nature of digital reading is reflected in the fluidity of text interaction, which is no longer one-way acquisition of knowledge, but two-way communication with the author or other readers to deepen the cognition of the text. On the other hand, text transmission is also fluid, and readers can extract and share texts across platforms to achieve independent integration of fragmented knowledge.

Byung-Chul Han points out the importance of reconstructing distance from others, arguing that today's society is full of enthusiasm for "transparency", and it is imperative that people cultivate a passion for distance. Because the existence of distance is of positive significance to promote people's communication, improve life experience and broaden spiritual vision, especially to provide a protective barrier for people's living environment, people's private space is truly protected, which is conducive to people's sense of security.

Readers accept content input with the goal of acquiring knowledge, rather than alienating reading into an interactive tool in the process of socializing. Publishers should also strengthen the control of online reading platforms, beware of social noise in the process of reading, always give way to form to content, and give readers the freedom to choose whether to "disconnect" or not.

5.3. Leisure time meditation

Byung-Chul Han believes that people living in the digital age are behind the phenomenon of a society of transparency that is monitored every moment. The rapid development of digital surveillance technology is one reason, and people's active pursuit of transparency is also a key factor that cannot be ignored. Contemporary scholar Zhou Xian pointed out that landscape as an abstract representation is always watched by people, and contemporary landscape society is turning from possession to display. People's display of reading content, state, and bias aims to construct their own personal image.

To change that, the audiences who read in the digital age need to change. Byung-Chul Han believes that on the one hand, one should enhance one's self-reflection consciousness, such as whether the reflection of oneself really makes in-depth speculation in reading, and whether reading is alienated into the display of self-image. On the other hand, it is necessary to improve the ability of self-research and judgment, although digital technology can provide people with a large amount of information because of its intelligence, and the integration of these information through algorithms can provide people with the "optimal solution". But the audience needs to stay awake in the face of a lot of information and the "best solution", be loyal to their own value judgment, and not sink in the digital flood.

6. Conclusion

The information transparency brought about by the torrent of technology is inevitable. In the society of transparency, Byung-Chul Han reflects on and criticizes the impact of the rapid development of digital technology on individuals and society, which has important indication and warning significance for the transformation and iteration of publishing in the new era. However, Byung-Chul Han's theory ignores the progress and significance of science and technology itself. Standing on the new start of big data and AIGC jointly changing the production mode of knowledge content, the new publishing format is still a spiritual and cultural activity based on the inheritance of the essence of human civilization. Technology only brings changes in the form, publishing "thought is king, content is king" spiritual and cultural attributes have not changed, the change is only the new technology spawned by the new production process. The publishing industry should make reasonable use of the gain of technology to build good reading products and reading environment; Readers should develop a good habit of using fragmented time to read, according to their own reading interests and development needs, reasonable choice of electronic reading and paper reading, really read and enjoy the reading process, improve reading quality and reading efficiency.

In the information society where everything is transparent, big data is still the most precious thought of mankind that cannot be easily snooped. How to make technology not erode the independent space of thought but expand the territory of thought is a topic that everyone in the the society of transparency needs to work for together.

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