

Coexistent Perspectives ADCD7001

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Question 7. The Politics of Desire --- Post capitalism and Platform Culture. A brief analysis is made of the emergence of platform capitalism under the background of post-capitalism and platform culture, which makes the new art model and some practical problems facing art creation at the present stage.

Introduction

With the development of science and technology, our life has entered the information age and the era of big data. Data has become one of the important resources of the world economy and even politics. Data has become an important resource in this era. In the future, the mastery and competition of data will be more and more fierce. As a place for different groups to interact, platform has become an organization way for many enterprises based on Internet technology. In a sense, platform has become a business model for building a data-centered economy. At its core, platform capitalism is about extracting more data. By analyzing users comprehensively, big platforms can further expand their reach and become monopolies. Fed by vast amounts of information, machine learning means that the AI technologies of monopoly platforms allow them to pursue more profits and power.

In this interview, originally published in the Los Angeles Review of Books, journalist Tobias Haberkorn talks to Nick Srnicek, author of ***Platform Capitalism***(fig 1), about the nature of digital technology platform companies (like Google, Facebook, Amazon and Walmart) and the risks they pose as monopolies. Finally, in the data age of the 21st century, the global network constitutes the virtual space of the Internet, so both the Internet space itself and the works of art located in it have reduced the characteristics of the connection with the specific physical space. It can be said that due to the development of information and communication technology, artistic creation based on it involves a broader global digital network, thus weakening the interactive orientation of art and physical space. Therefore, art in the digital age is facing a major change: the differentiation of artistic creation and content, as well as the enrichment of content. This will further push us to rethink art in the digital age. With the development of the platform driven by capital, the value of artistic creation is depreciating. The original value and labor force of the originator are ignored. There are many contents created by piracy and secondary modification, and the rights and

interests of the originator are violated. Information is also eroding the market's ability to form prices correctly.

Post-capitalism and platform culture

The emergence of post-capitalism is determined by the slow development of capitalist economy and society. Because of overproduction, in some areas and certain periods, the input of capital is no longer proportional to the output. There is a large amount of capital in western developed capitalist countries. According to the principle of capitalist economics, input and output should be proportional to each other. However, the current situation is that the world economic center is shifting to developing countries. Selling products is the only and best way to multiply capital. How can capital multiply if people have no money to buy it? Although enlightened capitalists such as Gates and Buffett will donate part of the money, it is certain that it still cannot solve the problem of overproduction or insufficient purchasing power -- in fact, for a capitalist, capital multiplication is contradictory to increasing purchasing power. This is because, in order to achieve capital multiplication, you have to reduce the cost, and reducing the cost will have lower purchasing power. There is no doubt that human society has entered a post-capitalist society, because we have entered a great era in which purchasing power resources determine economic growth and scale, not only the absolute amount of capital determines economic growth and economic law. Nowadays, it is undeniable that there are very few good projects and there is a lot of capital waiting to be invested. In other words, people can give people as much money as they need if they have a good project that is sure to make a lot of money. If it had been during the land Enclosure movement, there would have been no need for a large amount of capital to enter the financial and futures markets in an era of economic shortage where the amount produced could be sold. Because of this, the traditional economic crisis turns into a financial crisis and an energy crisis -- both of

which are actually the result of a crisis of overproduction, although this crisis of overproduction is still relative, not because people don't need the goods they produce, but because they have no money left to buy them. On the other hand, if there is a large surplus of money in the hands of the masses, the productive capacity of the world simply cannot meet the needs of the people of the world. What I want to explain is that from the above phenomenon or the analysis of the underlying causes of the above phenomenon, we can draw a conclusion that human society has entered a "post-capitalist" era, and the fundamental sign of this era is that the factor determining the economic scale is shifting from capital to resources such as purchasing power.

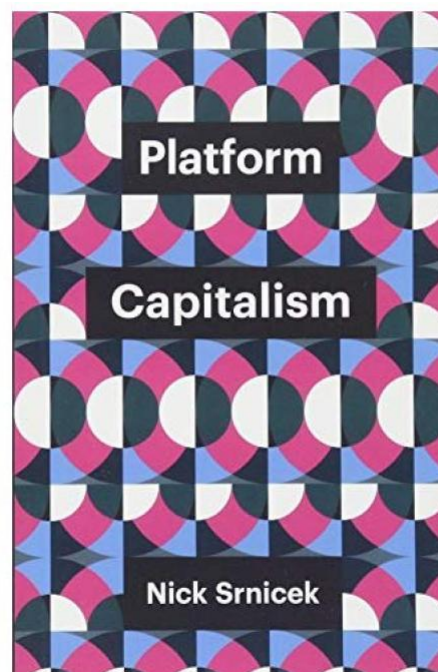


Fig 1 Platform Capitalism Nick Srnicek

Therefore, it can be said that post-capitalism belongs to a resource economy, or that the capital-based and characterized economic era is being replaced by the resource-based and characterized economic era, which is undoubtedly a fact. At present, market economy belongs to the category of "resource economy", while capital economy is an economic system and model of "whoever owns capital owns economy". In this mode, platform culture is developed, because the development of platform intensifies the information flow and data dissemination. Moreover, art has

greater dissemination and influence. Information data, personal concerns and public concerns produced by many individuals and individuals are bound to enrich the content of art. In other words, when many individuals create art from their own perspective, the content production of art will be differentiated and enriched. But be wary of the risks that art will face from the differences implied by the homology of content and space.

The rise of platform culture also represents the revolution of communication technology, enriching the presentation forms of artistic creation and expression, and profoundly influencing the way of existence of art itself. With the rapid development of digital technology and the wave of media convergence, Internet platform media has gradually become an important hub for social connection and information transmission. Under the new communication pattern, the media channels of art communication mainly include professional media, art institution media, we media, and platform media that provide information aggregation and distribution for the above-mentioned actors. In addition to the existing professional media, some art institutions rely on wechat, Douyin and other platforms to establish institutional media, with art activities to attract the public to participate in, share and form a vertical community. As the main body with knowledge, profession, culture and other capital elements in the networked society, art institutions have become the data intersection point and media actors in the vertical field with great potential in the social communication. In addition, the rise of "we media", which represents grassroots culture, has made the public no longer a silent art appreciator, and its popular artistic expression has been spread instantly due to technological empowerment. Art communication has a higher degree of tolerance and openness. Information flow and data in the digital era are increasingly personal and personalized, which is exactly what Internet companies and platforms want to obtain data. In other words, the production and dissemination of content derived from private preferences and

personal data is the raw material for production and capital accumulation of Internet companies and data capital. As a result, content production and presentation in the digital age are at the mercy of Internet companies -- particularly "platform capitalism" and "big data capitalism". Art in the digital space is easy to slip into the production chain of platform capitalism and data capitalism: although an art work on a large Internet platform is transmitted through the Internet platform, it is easy to become a production tool of platform and data capitalism due to the introduction of its own traffic. Therefore, art in the digital age faces a great risk that it will become a tool of private production due to the nature of space itself, the nature and source of artistic content, and the flow of information itself. The ideal state is public discussion, but it is still information flow, in such an environment, it also hurts the rights and interests of many original artists.

The platform is a commercial company with non-public power, and its operating capital does not come from the taxpayer. It is natural that commercial performance should be considered first, and it is absolutely not responsible for promoting public interests at the expense of commercial interests. They are, of course, wary of platform monopolies and agree to take antitrust action when necessary. However, from the perspective of communication, the ownership of the platform is not the reason to avoid the public property of the platform, but also needs to add the user scale and public interest parameters. In some cases, the commercial interests of the platform have to give way to the public interests. The European Economist takes a more radical view, arguing that once a platform reaches the scale of a monopoly, it becomes a not-for-profit basic Internet (similar to public media), and the commercial benefits should be shared by the users who create and share the content, rather than by the platform itself. John Stuart Mill, a 19th century British scholar, had a profound insight into freedom of speech in his famous book ***On Liberty***, which he explored in stark contrast to today's platform capitalism characterized by monopoly and control.

The spirit of the Internet is openness, inclusiveness and freedom, and the source of this spirit can be traced back to the classical liberalism of Muller and others. Today, when we call for public platforms with the attributes of public power to be locked into institutional cages, I am afraid we must first consider the cage issue of Leviathan.

The art form under the rise of platform culture



Fig 2 Ready Player One

The metaverse is derived from the 1992 American science fiction novel *Avalanche*, which describes a metaverse parallel to the real Internet world: "Wear headphones and eyepieces, find the connection terminal, you can enter the virtual space simulated by the computer, parallel to the real world in the way of the virtual avatar." So the metaverse can be understood as: The previous VR, 3D, blockchain, Internet of Things, cloud computing, AI and the recent 5G technology, to find the application implementation scenario. Build a virtual network world that runs parallel to the real world. Create a more "immersive" and "present" experience. You can actually socialize, work, play, exercise, study, hold exhibitions, have digital assets, and trade. It means larger user base, longer online time, higher ARPU

At present, with the development of information technology, the new concept of the meta-universe has been launched with the help of the development of the platform, and the universe has been built on the platform to create another world that everyone can touch and understand. Meanwhile, the emergence of VR has also pushed this concept based on movies and games to the direction of practical operation in life. The metaverse is a platform, a means, a tool, but it's too easy to think of means and tools as values themselves. We are the same flawed people, and we must continue to make the same old mistakes in the meta-universe, doing the same bad things we did to each other and to ourselves. At the same time, people's sense of "self" is likely to become unprecedentedly empty because of the new technology's refreshing and overcovering of old experience. That is, a system of value that can be exchanged. Everything acquired in the Oasis is a digital asset that can be traded and sold. For example, NFT trading platforms like OpenSea can buy and sell virtual land and build houses in it after logging in with a blockchain account. Build a private villa, use your imagination, build a bar, gallery, exhibition hall, etc. Everything you build is a digital asset that can be sold on the NFT platform. For example, the establishment of an exhibition hall can attract digital artists to hold exhibitions and enjoy various paintings and digital artworks, which can be purchased with digital currency if you like.

Ready Player One sets the whole real world, including the United States, as a mess. Most people have no job, no hope of life, living in a shipping container, so they have to enter the game world in disarray, in search of emotional support and existence value, and use their intelligence in it to find no use. This is a world in which humans become addicted to the virtual world and forget about real life. Everything in reality can be completed in the game, and the real life, but it seems to become a game. People put reality and games before the horse. Theology and philosophy rarely appear in the description of the metaverse. Is the metaverse accelerating the trend that it is not safe to explain the future of the entire world in just one dimension? What's

even weirder is that many people are talking with radical rationality about an event that would shake the very foundations of rationality.

It is exciting to see people plunge into the meta-universe as digital identities that anonymously sever their physical relationships. But the most direct conflict is: this is bound to lead to the intervention and regulation of traditional power, you do not care about it, it will also care about you. So where do you think these conflicts are going? If both stories are just philosophers' thought experiments, then with Elon Musk developing a brain-computer interface, these crazy ideas seem like a dream come true. This is not an alarmist. In fact, the idea of brain-computer interface has already been realized in advance and successfully industrialized "companion hardware", that is, VR (virtual reality) products pushed forward by the concept of "meta-universe". It is also a revolution in the way of human-computer interaction. The development and production of brain-computer interface and VR series products (glasses, head covers, gamepads and various motion-sensing devices) all mean the comprehensive penetration of technology into human body. The result of this technological revolution is said to be a more powerful and immersive experience for users. XR's "immersion" is a key selling point in this year's popular metacomes. As Zuckerberg put it: "You can think of the metacomes as a reified Internet, where you don't just watch content, you're in it." In the same way, all the domestic meta-universe propaganda documents, large and small, are inseparable from the word "immersion": "Create an immersive virtual social platform", "Provide immersive experience based on extended reality technology", "immersive experience that is hard to distinguish between true and false is the core feature of the" meta-universe ", etc. Not only that, but with the rise of the "metacomes", the pursuit of immersion seems to be spreading to every aspect of human life, from immersive screenplays and full-sensory immersive theaters to immersive metacomverse embassies with the force of international law. Immersive

entertainment, immersive teaching, immersive marketing... The human brain, "immersed" in a nutrition bowl, appears to be more than just a philosopher's humor.

"How does a plan mature? This is obviously the most mysterious and subtle of processes, It is not at our disposal, It's progressing in the subconscious, Formed on the wall of the soul." Tarkowski's quote has stuck with him because he poetically describes the process by which inspiration is formed. It is not easy for an artist to get a "good idea", and a "good idea" that can be recognized by the present is even rarer. Not everyone is a Tarkowski. As Ingmar Bergman said of Tarkowski, "The first time you see a Tarkowski movie, it's a miracle. Suddenly I felt myself standing at the door, but I never got the key to open it. It was the room I had longed to enter, and he was free to roam in it. I felt inspired and inspired that someone was finally bringing out something I had wanted to say for so long but didn't know how to do." Every artist longs to make something of value in the dark groping that will bear the spirit of The Times, but countless poor worthless works are made. The latter for a mediocre and persistent artist is often sentimental but merciless anger, even this kind of suffering is no less than suffering. Artistic creation is often a ruthless thing, others are pregnant, maybe you are just constipation, are very painful, but the result is very different. In my opinion, even in contemporary art where discourse power is more important, good and bad, precision and nonsense are easier for a person who has studied art for a long time to feel intuitively. Shen Congwen said, "Great works are not produced by how clever a writer is, how proud he is, how great he thinks he is, or how good he is at boasting fame. There is only one way, and that is to do it honestly." Honesty, sincerity is a very important part of doing art for a long time. Every year, in the annual Exhibition of the Ducet Academy of Fine Arts, I see some works of unsatisfactory quality, but then I meet the author next to the works. When I look up and down, I find the natural unity between the author and the works, which makes you feel that the author is sincere and sincere in bringing you the world he understands, even though the world

he brings is not perfect. The artists who have moved from their school days to the center of the art hall are not only creating their own aesthetics, but many of them have used their aesthetics to pay homage to, or borrow from, the old masters. Of course, there is a fundamental difference between borrowing and copying, but some lovely artists can confuse things. For example, Picasso once said: "Good artists copy, great artists steal. We don't feel ashamed when we steal great ideas from others." This quote seems to be a copycat, but if we want to fully understand it, we have to start with where it came from.

In the autumn of 1918, Picasso and Matisse held a joint exhibition. However, Cubists were not satisfied with the classical techniques used in Picasso's new works from this period, and they called for Picasso to be expelled from Cubism for "only copying". In the face of the flood of blame, Picasso did not mind, he said humorously: "Copying others must, copying oneself is shameful." Turning around, he laughed again at Gokoto and said, "I got rid of them at last." This sentence is actually Picasso in order to throw off the believers at that time "angry words." Picasso had the temper of a child. He wanted to make himself feel better by saying something that would disgust his disciples. On the other hand, Picasso, who was successful at that time, was indeed greedy and constantly "learning" from others, ancient people or young artists at that time. Knowledge and inspiration are just like iron sand adsorbed on a magnet. If a magnet without magnetic force is used, no matter how much we stir the iron sand, not a grain of iron sand can be adsorbed. A great artist is a great magnet, he has a strong ability to absorb inspiration and knowledge, and transform them into their own creation. From this point of view, Picasso as a great artist, he undoubtedly has unparalleled absorption power. "Sensibility" is a necessary condition to become an excellent artist, but it is definitely not enough, otherwise your good "sensibility" may only become a good material in the eyes of those excellent artists.

To some extent, this is not only unfair to the young artists he "learns", but even bordering on evil. In addition, Picasso occupied resources that young artists could not match. Therefore, for the vast majority of young artists, a good idea that is not easy to get, if Picasso "understands" in advance, the consequences are still very serious. It is said that Picasso sometimes visited the studios of young artists, some of whom covered their works with cloth to prevent Picasso from taking lessons. It is a harsh reality that even now there are cases of famous artists "borrowing" (copying) from unknown artists.



Fig3 Jeff Wall (Sudden Gust of Wind) 1993



Fig4 Katsushika Hokusai 1832

Photo artist Jeff Wall was born in 1946 in Vancouver, Canada. He received a master's degree in art history from the College of British Columbia in 1970. He then branched out into photography as an art historian, calling himself the "Painter of Modern Life." "I'm not a painter, and I don't paint," he said. "But I've always reflected the space and consciousness of painting in my work." He found the hidden connection among film, photography and painting, and integrated the advantages of each of the three after the artist's conception. For example, there is no need to say more about the advantages of movies, everyone loves movies, a person to create a "dream" place. But Roland Barthes saw a flaw in him when he said: "I cannot close my eyes to the screen at will, for when I open them it is no longer the same picture; I am compelled to gorge myself endlessly; the cinema must have all other virtues but no contemplative qualities, and I am therefore interested only in the pause."



Fig 5 Jeff Wall (Picture for Women) , 1979



Fig 6 Jeff Wall (Picture for Women)

About this famous scene in Manet's many paintings, French philosopher Michel Foucault dissected it quite brilliantly in "A Certain Look". He once said, "The beer waitress figure you see is almost the whole content of the painting. You see her close to the painter, close to the viewer, close to us. She suddenly looks at us, as if something had happened in front of her that caught her eye, and you see, she's not looking at what she's doing, which is putting down the beer, she's looking at something that we can't see, that we don't know about, and this is happening here, in front of the painting. On the other hand, the painting is made up of one or two, and we can hardly see them, because one of them only shows his side face, and the other one, we can only see his hat. But they are looking, and they are looking, in the opposite direction. What do they see? We don't know, we don't know, because the picture is cut, the scene is here, because their eyes are drawn to it, and the scene is out of our sight." This work alludes to the absolutely invisible scene through the opposite of the eyes. The greatest charm of this painting is the invisible object. What this invisible thing is, in Duchamp's words the grey matter of the brain, is entirely up to the viewer's imagination. "Keep generating ideas, no matter how crazy or far-fetched, and use the gray matter in your brain to make new associations for them. "-Qing," as Jeff Wall put it, "invisible" might be more lyricized. the viewer writes the poem that the artist has erased in the process of making the picture. The viewer writes the poem that the artist has erased in the process of making the picture. Jeff Wall gives a powerful thought to the painting, which he studied repeatedly as a student, through

careful "framing". Such as the boundary between photography and painting, invisible and visible, virtual and real issues, as well as his young attempt to get rid of orthodox photography aesthetics, to create a new photography aesthetics. In my opinion, this work can also reflect the drawbacks of platform culture. Seeing is not necessarily true. Platform is just a means of visual communication, and visual effects can be achieved through technical photography, rather than allowing people to feel the charm of things. Platform culture can better provide free imagination space for human brain, but it also has inauthenticity.

Conclusion

This paper briefly analyzes the connection between post-capitalism and platform culture, as well as the definition and emergence of platform capitalism. The core of platform capitalism is to extract more data. By comprehensively profiling user profiles, large platforms can further expand their business scope and become monopolistic enterprises. And machine learning, fed by vast amounts of information, means that the AI technology of a monopoly platform allows it to pursue more profits and power. Platform capitalism can enrich the diversity of art but also has some risks and drawbacks.

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