

Capitalization of Culture, Value of Culture, and the Development of Cultural Industries

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The rise of creative industries in this century has aroused strong interest in the concept “cultural capital” in academia. Cultural capital can be understood as various forms of cultural resources that achieve significant appreciation in existing economic, political, and cultural structures through active and rapid reproduction, thereby influencing changes in existing economic, political, and cultural structures, including production relations with capitalist characteristics. The capitalization of culture negates the original ecological value of culture, denies human needs for culture, undermines the true value of cultural exchange and creation, and can easily lead to the formation of cultural hegemony. However, the process of cultural capitalization and the changes in cultural values within it indicate that the capitalization of culture is to some extent an inevitable historical development. The new cultural capital has demonstrated tremendous power in promoting the development of contemporary creative industries and producing cultural masterpieces. Of course, this first requires it to refuse to become a tool for economic capital and digital technology.

Keywords: cultural capital, cultural value, cultural industries, new cultural capital

Introduction

In 1997, the Blair government in the UK proposed a concept “creative industries” and for the first time, the government introduced policies to promote the development of creative industries worldwide. This quickly sparked a wave of enthusiasm for the development of creative industries internationally. Today, the development of creative industries has achieved significant results. The creative industries has also become an important force in promoting political, economic, and cultural development of various countries. The attention and reflection on the creative industries has also become a research hotspot in the relevant academia. Many terms that can establish connections between cultural, economic, and political fields have aroused strong interest among researchers and sparked heated discussions. Cultural capital is among them. Whether it is research on popular creative industries or related political, economic, and cultural studies derived from them, cultural capital is undoubtedly a powerful tool, but its value is not limited to tools. The more profound value of this concept lies in its ability to provide a powerful and in-depth revelation of the current reality of cultural capitalization. It can provide ideas for how to evaluate cultural value in this reality and help to plan and guide the practical development of contemporary creative industries.

The Emergence and Research Significance of Cultural Capital

The concept of cultural capital was first clearly and comprehensively proposed by French sociologist Bourdieu. However, as early as when Karl Marx was writing *Capital*, he had already had unformed thoughts on

cultural capital that could be inferred, and after Bourdieu, many scholars from different disciplines were constantly reflecting on this concept out of research interest.

Marx regarded capital as something built on certain social and historical relationships. The object continuously sucks on surplus labor, with the primary and sole purpose of “multiplying itself and creating surplus value” (Marx, 2004a, p. 269). However, he did not absolutize the harm of capital to culture. Instead, while acknowledging the harm of capital to culture, he also emphasized the positive significance of capital in cultural production. Capital sometimes reproduces “basic education, business knowledge, language knowledge, and so on” (Marx, 2004b, p. 335) more rapidly, easily, universally, and inexpensively. This is because the participation of capital in cultural production promotes the rapid, easy, widespread, and inexpensive accumulation of culture. Culture accumulated in this way enables it to be quickly, easily, universally, and inexpensively reproduced following existing cultural laws and patterns. The rapidly, easily, universally, and inexpensively accumulated culture is cultural capital. Cultural capital follows the operational logic and organizational principles of capital due to its participation in cultural production. It constantly sucks creative labor, with sole purpose of enhancing itself and creating cultural surplus value. Therefore, in Marx’s view, cultural capital can be understood as culture that can create cultural surplus value, which contains the production relations of capitalist society.

Bourdieu’s understanding of cultural capital is consistent with Marx’s, but there are also differences. The consistency between the two lies in the fact that Bourdieu and Marx both focused on the capitalization logic of cultural production and took cultural capital as culture that can rapidly and continuously reproduce itself. The difference between the two lies in Marx’s profound observation that the capitalization logic of cultural production is a unique phenomenon within capitalist society, which contains the production relations of capitalist society, while Bourdieu regards the capitalization of cultural production as a universal law of human social cultural production. In addition, Bourdieu’s discourse on the forms and the movements of cultural capital is more refined. Bourdieu pointed out that cultural capital is a cultural resource based on “taste”, including elegant artistic temperament, superb appreciation ability, and profound knowledge. It can be divided into bodily forms (knowledge, education, skills, interests, and emotions composed of mind and body), objective forms (knowledge carriers and cultural expressions such as books, paintings, antiques, and cultural relics), and institutionalized forms (academic diplomas, qualification certificates, industry licenses, etc.). Cultural capital can be passed down from generation to generation through “reproduction”: “There is a direct correlation between the identifiable cultural capital property possessed by the father and the degree of success” (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, p. 74). Different forms of cultural capital can be transformed into each other under specific conditions. While, the same applies to cultural capital, economic capital, and social capital under specific conditions.

One type of capital can be transformed into another, or one subspecies of economic or cultural capital can be transformed into another (such as real estate transforming into industrial capital or a literary or historical cultivation transforming into economic cultivation), which in turn means a change in property structure. This change is a condition for maintaining the total amount of capital and the vertical position of social space. (Bourdieu, 2016, p. 210)

Bourdieu’s detailed explanation of cultural capital quickly aroused the interest of many scholars in various academic circles. Overall, these scholars’ definitions of cultural capital can be roughly classified into five types: The first is to understand cultural capital as the ability of culture. American sociologists James Fisher, Alvin Gouldner, John E. Roemer, and Erik Olin Wright believe that cultural capital is the ability of cultural structures shaping social politics; Pier Luigi Sacco, along with Giovanna Segre, Guido Tabellini, Muhammad M. Khan,

Wen Chengshao, and others, believe that cultural capital is the ability of cultural value-added economy; American anthropologists James S. Coleman, Fikret Berkes, Carl Folke, and others believe that cultural capital is the ability of culture to transform nature; Zhu Weijue and others believe that cultural capital refers to the ability of cultural structure and cultural activities. The second is to understand cultural capital as the value of culture, with representative scholars including Australian economists David Throsby, Jin Xiangyu, Wu Peng, Wang Yun, Long Zhihe, Gong Yingchun, and others. They generally regard cultural capital as the accumulation of cultural value manifested in the form of wealth, which can lead to the continuous flow of goods and services (Throsby, 1999). The third is to understand cultural capital as cultural resources, with representative scholars including American sociologists Jonathan S. Turner, Hao Dahai, Chen Qingsheng, and others. They generally regard cultural capital as “cultural resources that can play a positive role in promoting the development of social concepts, behavior patterns, and lifestyles” (Chen, 2007). The fourth emphasizes the complex connotation of cultural capital, with representative scholars including Li Peixin. Li Peixin (2006) believes that cultural capital includes both materialized cultural capital and symbolic cultural capital, as well as cultural resources such as ideas, consciousness, and concepts that are inherent in individual literacy. The fifth interpretation of cultural capital is that it is a specific mode of cultural production and circulation that contains capitalist production relations, with Liu Zhaofeng being a representative scholar (Zhang, 2023).

On the basis of comprehensive reflection on classical Marxism, Bourdieu, and the thinking of representative scholars in the Chinese and foreign academic circles on cultural capital after Bourdieu, cultural capital can be understood as various forms of cultural resources that achieve significant economic, political, and cultural value addition through active and rapid reproduction, and then affect the structural changes of existing economy, politics, and culture. This cultural resource contains production relations with capitalist characteristics. Cultural capital endows culture with resource, active reproduction, rapid appreciation, and structural characteristics. It is essentially the result of cultural capitalization.

However, it is worth noting that although cultural capital contains production relations with capitalist characteristics, it is not a unique product of capitalist society, but an inevitable result of human society's development in post-industrial society. After the “Third Wave”, electronic media dominated the production of knowledge and information in the post-industrial economy, and culture, as the content that information technology can carry, thus constitutes an important social productive force. At the same time, it is becoming increasingly evident that countries are cooperating to establish a community with a shared future for mankind by downplaying ideology. Therefore, although cultural capital contains production relations with capitalist characteristics, it is not limited to capitalist society in a sense, but will exist universally in the entire human society in the post-industrial era.

Since cultural capital is widely present in the entire human society of the cultural economy era, its impact on the emergence and development of current culture cannot be ignored. The current cultural capital mainly relies on various contemporary communication media, especially emerging digital media, to complete its operation and circulation. Digital technology is not only limited to the dissemination of cultural capital, but has also permeated the entire cycle of cultural capital, including production, consumption, derivative production, and reproduction. With the ubiquitous and constantly upgrading digital technology, the production of culture is becoming increasingly distant from the original ecological context in which culture was born. The original connotation of culture is gradually being emptied, losing its physical existence and its own referent, leaving only the signifier that has been emptied. Culture has transformed into hollow sounds or images without real meaning, “reduced to

some exchangeable symbols/values” (Baudrillard, 2009, p. 79). Against the backdrop of increasing cultural capitalization, the infiltration of cultural signifiers in social, political, and economic life is becoming more and more profound and extensive, even to some extent replacing the real political and economic life itself. The production and reproduction of this symbol and system itself is an active and holistic process, in which many scattered and unconstrained desires separated from the real labor process are invested, and the existence of the real labor process is denied (Baudrillard, 2009, p. 80). The capitalization of culture has brought four possible consequences to the development of culture.

Firstly, it may negate the original value of culture. Since culture has become a signifier in cultural capitalization, the original exemplary significance of culture no longer exists. In a society surrounded by various signifiers, people purchase cultural products and receive cultural education not because of their exemplary significance, but because they hope to obtain material benefits through signifier, such as recognition of their social status and reputation, or economic profits. People’s acceptance of culture is not for the sake of the culture itself, but rather “to be used as a symbol that can highlight you” (Baudrillard, 2001, p. 48). This transforms aesthetic experience from a complete, comprehensive, and profound state to a superficial state of formalization and symbolization, reducing aesthetic activities from the highest realm of human spirit and emotion to a narcissistic emotional identification and release (Wang, 2021).

Secondly, it may negate people’s need for culture. Marx once pointed out that human needs are the prerequisite for social production, and the purpose of human production is to “start from the real, living individual itself” (Marx & Engles, 1982, p. 103), satisfying various human needs. However, the capitalization of culture means that the consumption of culture does not stem from the human subject’s need for culture, but from the following and adaptation of cultural signifier. As Baudrillard said,

Consumption does not originate from the objective needs of consumers, or from a final intention of the subject towards things: on the contrary, in the system of exchange, in the system of material differences, in a code system that implies relationships, in a prescribed value system, there exists social production - the functionality of commodities, and individual needs can only follow and adapt to it, while rationalizing this basic structural mechanism and suppressing it. (Baudrillard, 2009, p. 58)

At this point, the need for culture is no longer an expression of the subject’s own behavioral motivation, but has become a pursuit and adaptation of the human subject driven by the production and reproduction instincts of the capital system. This kind of following and adaptation is based on a certain symbol (item/symbol) and distinguishing code: “Consumption is a system that maintains symbol order and organizational integrity” (Baudrillard, 2001, p. 69). The need for culture is no longer the driving force behind cultural production. The production of culture actually creates people’s desire for culture. Culture has completely lost its connection with the true need for culture.

Again, it may negate the true value of cultural exchange and cultural creation. Under the conditions of cultural capitalization, true cultural exchange is inevitably replaced by the exchange of cultural signifier. The exchange of cultural signifier strips various cultural resources from their original ecological contexts, and reproduces, restructures, and organizes them according to the logic and rules of capital. The result is that the new culture produced will inevitably become a pure signifier system, signifier organization, and signifier text without contextual support. The exchange of various cultural resource signifiers presents as the reproduction, restructuring, and reorganization of cultural signifier, whose exchange value is actually mixed with their use value. The exchange of cultural signifier only reflects the function of exchange value, and loses the true meaning

of exchange value. Baudrillard pointed out that in terms of symbols, the distinction between use value and exchange value has disappeared. The “creation of culture” carried by cultural signifier is no longer a true cultural creation, but a cultural production that regards culture as a purely materialized product. The true value of cultural exchange and cultural creation is thus negated in the process of cultural signifier exchange.

Finally, it may be more conducive to the formation of cultural hegemony. The concept of cultural hegemony originated from Gramsci. He pointed out that state rule is not only achieved through coercive and violent tools, but more importantly, through ideological consciousness to control the vast majority of the people, allowing them to identify with and follow the ideological and moral concepts, value systems, and behavioral rules of the ruling class from the bottom of their hearts. The control of this ideology is cultural hegemony. It is more effective than political hegemony. Undoubtedly, there was cultural hegemony before cultural capitalization. At that time, cultural hegemony was mainly manifested as the implementer of cultural hegemony using political power and state machinery to create culture, spreading the ideology of the ruling class from bottom to top. After cultural capitalization, in the context of cultural reproduction, restructuring, and reorganization according to the logic and rules of capital, in order to pursue rapid value appreciation, cultural products will be more in line with the consumer psychology of the audience, which in turn makes cultural hegemony more quickly and deeply implemented among the people. This is reflected in the fact that the ruling class of society produces cultural signifier using their own ideology as a coding rule, and produces a large number of highly false, controlled, coercive, and affirmative popular cultures. These popular cultures recklessly carry out functions such as deception, preaching, domestication, and defense against the masses. “The repetition, uniformity, and omnipresence of modern popular culture tend to lead to automated reactions and thus weaken the power of individual resistance” (Adorno, 1991, p. 160). This fully reflects the direct consequences of the social ruling class using capitalized culture to create cultural hegemony. The cultural hegemony created by developed countries through the capitalization of culture in the international arena also follows the same pattern of “cultural imperialism”.

The capitalization of culture endows it with resources, active reproduction, rapid appreciation, and structure, but it may negate the original value of culture, human needs for culture, and the true value of cultural exchange and creation, and even lead to the formation of cultural hegemony. This actually leads to the overall alienation of culture and related cultural activities such as cultural creation, dissemination, and reception. At this point, an important question emerged: in the current cultural and economic context, can culture only survive through capitalization? If the answer is yes, how should we evaluate culture now? If the answer is negative, then in what way should culture survive in the current social context? These issues involve the capitalization process of culture and the cultural value changes inherent in it, as well as the development direction of contemporary cultural industries.

The Capitalization of Culture and the Transformation of Cultural Values

The emergence of cultural capitalization is certainly not achieved overnight, but has a profound historical accumulation and a long development process. It gradually emerged in the process of cultural development. Overall, the development process of culture can be roughly divided into three periods: the first period is when culture serves as a cultural paradigm. The period of culture as a model is very long, from ancient and modern times to the emergence of mature cultural industries in the mid-18th century. The exemplary culture is a product of the pre-industrial society defined by Daniel Bell (1997, p. 11). The material resources of pre-industrial society

were mainly manifested as natural resources such as land, and the main forms of social organization were slavery and feudalism. The level of social productivity in pre-industrial societies was low, and technological growth could not keep up with population growth. This has resulted in almost no change in the gross domestic product of humanity for thousands of years. In the relationship between humans and nature, humans appear immature and weak, blindly subject to the domination of nature and constantly frustrated. Survival became the primary concern for people at that time. At that time, people longed to transcend secular life and achieve eternal happiness. Culture therefore generally embodies a transcendent color. The philosophy and literature of ancient Greece and Rome embodied the animistic idea of worshiping nature. Although the thinkers of the pre-Qin era in China held different views, the ultimately victorious Confucianism also advocated a culture that transcends real life, originated from the Zhou ritual tradition, and has benevolence, forgiveness, sincerity, and filial piety as its core values. The cultural traditions of ancient Greece and Rome run through the entire pre-industrial society of the West. Even after the collapse of traditional religions and the realization of the Renaissance, people continued to explore fundamental issues related to human survival, such as morality, love, death, and loyalty, through various forms of philosophy, literature, history, art, and other cultural forms. And Confucianism in China has dominated almost the entire pre-industrial society, always practicing its ideal of rebuilding the order of ritual and music.

The transcendent color of culture in the pre-industrial society period mainly reflects three characteristics: first, it has spirituality. In the face of nature, people in pre-industrial societies were in a strong disadvantaged position. In order to escape the endless suffering brought by nature in reality psychologically and confirm the meaning of their existence, they strongly emphasize the distinguishing feature of human beings from the natural world, which is spirituality. This culture is typically reflected in spiritual products such as philosophy, literature, history, art, and religion. Secondly, it has the function of educating. Spiritual cultural products not only confirm the meaning of human existence, but also set ideals for human reality and establish practical norms for realizing these ideals. In ancient Greece and Rome, people emphasized the worship of nature in culture and established corresponding specific norms of respecting nature in behavior. For example, Pythagoras worshipped the circle, so not only himself but also his disciples were not allowed to step on soybeans. Even during the Renaissance and later Enlightenment periods, the object of worship shifted from nature to humans, from human emotions to human rationality, and the educational function corresponding to culture and ideals continued to be implemented. Before the beginning of the Renaissance, the construction of universities, which served as professional educational institutions for scholars and artists in Europe, was the best proof of this. Chinese Confucianism teaches its followers to actively practice core values such as benevolence, forgiveness, sincerity, and filial piety through “entering the world” and “making rituals and enjoying music”. Thirdly, there is a general emphasis on free creation. Although the culture of the pre-industrial society had a strong normative and educative color, none of these cultures were not freely created. People in ancient Greece and Rome were very tolerant of cultural creation. For example, Plato (1982, pp. 6-7) believed that the obsession of artists in their creations could be understood and should be respected. Artists are driven by a divine power during their creative process, falling into a state of madness and acting recklessly until their works are released. During the Renaissance and even the Enlightenment period, the works of philosophers, writers, historians, and artists were completed without utilitarian purposes or coercive demands, emitting a strong humanistic color from beginning to end. Although China’s pre-industrial society was constrained by Confucian norms, it also left room for cultural freedom and creation. For example, Confucianism has been able to freely reflect and reform at the academic level throughout dynasties, and the free creation of various arts such as poetry, painting, calligraphy, and architecture has been recognized and encouraged.

The spirituality, educative function, and emphasis on free creation of culture enabled pre-industrial society culture to transcend nature by confirming human self-spiritual power, thereby affirming the meaning of human existence and reflecting the nature and character of a cultural paradigm that transcends economic foundations.

The second period is the era of culture as cultural industries. The alliance between culture and industry is inseparable from the progress of modern technology and the success of the Industrial Revolution. According to Bell's (1997, p. 11) classification, after the pre-industrial society, the entire human society entered the industrial age. Industrial society is marked by the emergence of the steam engine, whose material resources are mainly machines, and the main form of social organization is the capitalist system. The level of productivity in industrial society has significantly improved compared to previous industrial societies, with highly developed science and technology represented by machines, continuous accumulation of social wealth, and increasingly developed commerce. In this context, the logic of industry gradually permeated into people's work and daily life, causing changes. These changes are reflected in the increasingly refined and specialized division of labor in society, the gradual scaling up of production, the increasing centralization of the economy, the enhancement of social mobility, the replacement of blood, and geographical relationships by business relationships as the main social relationships among people, the significant improvement of social democracy, the replacement of rural areas by cities as the main place of residence, and the increasingly developed means of transportation, communication, and dissemination. The continuous conquest of nature through machine production and the active pursuit of change constitute the core driving force for the development of industrial society. People are no longer as weak and immature as in pre-industrial societies, blindly subject to the domination of nature. However, the negative impact of industrial logic has become increasingly prominent in the process of industrial society, such as the rigid isolation between humans and nature, severe squeezing of living space, high pace and strong competition that exhausts both physical and mental health, and the estrangement of relationships between people. This makes the culture of the entire industrial society exhibit an industrialized nature, becoming a mechanical content and diverse external forms of culture. For example, Western modernist novels, poetry, painting, music, architecture, etc. all describe irrational emotions such as loneliness, emptiness, absurdity, unfamiliarity, and alienation of human individuals in industrial society in terms of content, but in terms of form, they all pretend to be obscure and constantly innovate. And various cultural products such as movies, TV programs, popular music, and popular novels that rely on mass media dissemination have been criticized by Frankfurt School theorists as a typical combination of content similarity and "pseudo individuality" in form.

Industrialization makes the culture of the industrial society period mainly reflect three characteristics: first, it generally has materialization. Overall, the culture of industrial society expresses a "rupture" with social life in terms of content. In Bell's view, the refinement of social division of labor and the experience of industrial society's social life, such as specialization, can no longer be summarized as culture. Culture has become a pure expression of personal self-experience, presenting an illogical and irrational color, reflecting a "fractured" temperament. In this cultural "rupture", we can see the deep infiltration of machine logic and objectification logic. In the Frankfurt School, this rupture is directly reflected in culture as the emptiness and similarity of content, just like the materialized products produced on industrial assembly lines. Secondly, it is generally consumable. The culture of industrial society has lost its exemplary significance and authority from pre-industrial society due to its materialization, evolving into a product that can be consumed. In industrial society, both modernist art and popular culture products dissolve the "psychological distance, social distance, and aesthetic distance" between them and the audience in terms of content (Bell, 1989, p. 165), like "plain and tasteless milk mixed with water"

(Hoggart, 1998, p. 169), becoming increasingly distant from the complex and infinitely diverse daily life of human nature (Hoggart, 1998, p. 263). This makes the cultural audience of industrial society pay more attention to understanding culture through feelings rather than reason. When facing cultural products, immediate and rich understanding and association replace long periods of calm and profound thinking. The educative function of pre-industrial society culture has completely disappeared in industrial society. Thirdly, it generally has industrial productivity. Unlike the encouragement of cultural freedom and creativity in pre-industrial societies, cultural creation in industrial societies generally has industrial production characteristics. The thinkers of the Frankfurt School have long regarded cultural products as products produced on assembly lines, calling them the cultural industries: "In the context of a democratic industrialized society's mass market, a large number of individuals must participate in the production of 'goods' designed for the mass market" (Lowenthal, 1968, p. 20). Modernist art, in order to better circulate in the commercial society, also carries industrial characteristics in its creation. For example, various art genres such as Fauvism, Dadaism, Imagism, and Stream of Consciousness, such as novels, poetry, painting, music, etc., are highly impactful in their emotional forms, hoping to fully attract the audience's attention and be chosen for consumption.

The materialization, consumerism, and industrial productivity of culture deeply penetrate the industrial logic of industrial society into the production and creation of culture. Culture is filled with "fractured" and irrational emotions, and there is no respect or promotion for human rationality. However, its superficial fancy novelty and exaggerated strangeness are constantly emerging. The continuous updates in form and the weakness and similarity in content have caused culture to lose its authority and exemplary significance in pre-industrial society, becoming a cultural product that has been objectified, consumed, and industrialized. Therefore, unlike in pre-industrial societies where culture was seen as a cultural paradigm that transcended economic foundations, culture in industrial societies is cultural industries that forms an alliance with industry.

The third period is the era when culture serves as cultural capital. The integration of culture and capital is a phenomenon that emerged in Bell's (1997, p. 11) post-industrial society. Post-industrial society is a product of further development of industrial society. The beginning of post-industrial society was marked by the widespread application of electronic information technology in the 1980s, which Bell called "a new intelligent technology" (Bell, 1997, p. 30). The logic of information has gradually permeated into people's work and daily life in this context. This is mainly reflected in the emergence of cross disciplinary and cross disciplinary division of labor in society, the shift of economic structure from commodity production to service-oriented, the emergence of the technical class in occupational distribution, knowledge, and information becoming increasingly the source of social productivity innovation and the basis for formulating social policies, schools, research institutes, and intellectual departments becoming the axis management institutions of post-industrial society, and intelligent technology being widely applied to regulate people's decision-making in daily life. This has enabled people to go beyond the simple materialization brought by machine based industrialization and gain a wider range of knowledge, information, and feelings than industrial society. Actively pursuing innovation in various fields constitutes the basic behavior and value orientation of people in post-industrial society. Of course, the negative impact of information technology logic has also been highlighted in the process of post-industrial society, such as the further isolation of the relationship between humans and nature, the increasing compression of real living space by virtual symbol space, and the fact that entertainment through symbols alone cannot alleviate the physical and mental exhaustion caused by high pace and strong competition. The relationships between people established through information media appear illusory and isolated.

The culture of post-industrial society reflects very different characteristics from pre-industrial society and industrial society, because the culture of post-industrial society is mainly presented in the form of cultural capital. As mentioned earlier, cultural capital is a type of culture that is resource-based, actively reproduced, rapidly increasing in value, and structured. In post-industrial societies, cultural capital is empowered by primary digital technology, deepening its technological nature. The consequence of deepening the technological nature of cultural capital is that the culture of post-industrial society presents characteristics of symbolism, alienation of human nature, dissolution of meaning, and hegemonic consciousness. Cultural capital itself embodies an internal organizational mode of culture, which can maximize the accumulation and deepening of cultural connotations, as well as the localization and instrumentalization of culture to the greatest extent possible. This depends on the logic of using communication technology. If communication technology does not conform to the inherent development laws of culture and uses the operational laws of technology to regulate the dissemination of culture, then the culture presented in the form of cultural capital will be alienated into technological tool symbols. If communication technology can conform to the inherent development laws of culture and spread culture relatively ecologically based on these laws, then the humanistic characteristics of culture presented in the form of cultural capital will be strengthened, enabling culture to truly play an independent role in social life. Due to the limitations of the current development of primary digital technology, the cultural capital and culture of post-industrial society still reflect the characteristics of symbolic symbolism, alienation of human nature, dissolution of meaning, and hegemonic consciousness, which leads to the negative consequences of negating the original value of culture, negating human needs for culture, negating the true value of cultural exchange and creation, and promoting the formation of cultural hegemony.

Therefore, in the culture of post-industrial society, the “fractured” and irrational emotions in industrial society have disappeared completely, not to mention the respect and promotion of human rationality in pre-industrial society. The culture of post-industrial society not only lacks the authority and exemplary significance of pre-industrial society, but also weakens the primitive industrial nature of industrial society. The culture of post-industrial society is completely integrated with the economy, becoming a cultural capital with symbolism, alienation of human nature, dissolution of meaning, and cultural hegemony.

From the analysis of the foundations, values, and characteristics of pre-industrial society, industrial society, and post-industrial society culture, it can be seen that the emergence of cultural capital is not accidental, but rather the historical result of the gradual development and accumulation of culture from pre-industrial society to post-industrial society.

The Development of New Cultural Capital and Cultural Industries

The historical emergence of cultural capitalization and the changes in cultural values reveal that the emergence of cultural capitalization is an inevitable development of history. In the current historical context, culture can only survive through capitalization. However, it is worth noting that the capitalization of culture is not only about the decline of culture, but also an opportunity for cultural innovation and development in the current historical era. The innovative development of culture in the current historical era is mainly presented in the form of cultural industries development based on cultural capital.

As mentioned earlier, the current historical era is generally defined as a post-industrial society. In post-industrial society, cultural capital is closely related to digital technology and has even merged into one. This constitutes a new type of cultural capital distinct from traditional cultural capital. The new cultural capital is

known as the cultural capital centered on the “acquisition” of information technology (Chen, 2021), fully reflecting the integration of digital technology and humanistic culture. It is related to Bourdieu and other related scholars’ understanding of cultural capital, but not completely equivalent. The cultural capital understood by Bourdieu and other related scholars is cultural resources, cultural abilities, cultural values, etc. based on cultural taste, which can be transformed into economic capital and social capital under specific conditions, reflecting the production relations of capitalist society. The new cultural capital still maintains its pursuit of cultural taste and focuses on accumulating cultural resources, abilities, and values based on cultural taste. However, it regards the “acquisition” of information technology as the core of capital, emphasizing the pursuit of cultural taste through the “acquisition” of information technology, and accumulating cultural resources, abilities, and values on this basis.

In post-industrial society, the acquisition and accumulation of new cultural capital are mainly carried out through the operation of cultural industries. The marketing of cultural industries is the exchange of new cultural capital with economic capital, social capital, and other capital. The consumption of cultural industries is the accumulation of new cultural capital, and the creativity of cultural industries is the reproduction and re-creation of new cultural capital based on the accumulation of new cultural capital. The new cultural capital has demonstrated unparalleled power in promoting the development of contemporary cultural industries.

Firstly, new cultural capital will promote institutional innovation in the cultural industries. Digital technology is a great achievement of the third technological revolution of humanity. It is not entirely focused on improving material production efficiency and accumulating material wealth like previous economic revolutions, but rather has a tendency to attach importance to promoting the high integration of cultural production and material production, accumulating cultural achievements while accumulating material wealth, although this tendency was not obvious in the early stages of digital technology development. This requires the establishment of a reasonable system and operational mechanism to ensure the development of contemporary cultural industries while adapting to new cultural capital. This system and mechanism first need to establish a reasonable cultural industries investment and financing system, promote effective capital from various channels to enter the cultural market, and stimulate and release the endogenous vitality of the cultural industries. When the endogenous vitality of the cultural industries is stimulated and released, with the powerful collection function of digital technology and the convenient conditions provided for creativity, many cultural masterpieces will be produced and accumulated into new cultural capital. However, it is also inevitable to produce some unhealthy cultural products with cultural security issues and intellectual property problems. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a tolerant content management and intellectual property protection mechanism. In addition, the created cultural masterpieces need to be widely disseminated to stimulate a new round of cultural production and accumulate new cultural capital. In this way, it is necessary to establish cross-border, cross regional, cross industry, and cross ownership business cooperation, and create cross-border integrated industrial groups and alliances. Under the promotion of new cultural capital, the cultural industries will naturally establish cultural industries management mechanism that can unleash the vitality of the cultural industries, tolerate and effectively protect intellectual property rights, and help cultural products achieve maximum dissemination. Only such a cultural industries management system and mechanism can stimulate the creative ability of culture, promote technological innovation, help cultural production and material production to be highly integrated with the support of information technology, and achieve the goal of accumulating rich material wealth while accumulating high-quality cultural achievements.

Secondly, new cultural capital will promote the structural upgrading of cultural industries. After entering the 21st century, digital technology has achieved rapid development: Internet e-commerce, Internet finance, 4G, 5G, artificial intelligence technology and so on have been launched. Consumers naturally upgrade their cultural consumption demands accordingly. The constantly upgrading cultural demand stimulates digital technology to continuously optimize and integrate the allocation of cultural production factors, promoting the deep integration of culture and technology. This deep integration naturally gives rise to a continuous stream of cultural creativity and design. The “top IP” centered around different cultural themes has been incubated and thoroughly developed, further generating industrial clusters and new cultural industries formats centered around the “top IP”. The upgrading and transformation of the internal structure of the cultural industries is also, in a sense, a reproduction of new cultural capital. The new cultural capital will become increasingly stable and mature, providing a more solid foundation for the continuous updating and upgrading of cultural products and services.

Thirdly, new cultural capital will drive a marketing revolution in cultural industries. Parallel to post-industrial society is “post-globalization”. Post-globalization “constitutes another core feature of the current era.” Post-globalization requires downplaying ideological confrontation, emphasizing multicultural exchange, multi-party communication, and cooperation among countries and ethnic groups in building a world community culture. Cultural industries bears an unshirkable responsibility for this. This requires creating an open cooperation platform for interconnectivity among countries within the framework of local cultural industries development, maintaining the openness of the world economy and culture, constructing a fair, reasonable, and transparent international cultural trade and investment system, promoting the orderly flow of international cultural production factors, efficient allocation of cultural resources, deep integration of cultural markets, and working together with countries around the world to build a community of cultural and economic interests. The constantly growing new cultural capital can provide a continuous technological and cultural foundation for this platform, effectively integrating media resources, production factors, and marketing communication elements in various aspects of cultural marketing, as well as integrating information content, technology applications, platform terminals, and management methods. This will liberate the marketing and communication of cultural industries from the relatively narrow development space of the domestic region, introduce it into a broader international stage, and achieve a marketing revolution in cultural industries.

Fourth, new cultural capital will promote the improvement of the original ability of cultural industries. As mentioned earlier, the current “post-globalization” emphasizes respecting cultural diversity, recognizing cultural differences, and establishing a cultural exchange pattern of mutual understanding and reference. This requires the creativity and design of local cultural products to not only be accepted by the local market, but also recognized by the international market. In this way, the creativity and design of local cultural products need to effectively interpret the cultures of other countries and ethnic groups to a certain extent, and even form an organic component of the cultures of other countries and ethnic groups. Only in this way can we overcome the barriers caused by cultural differences between countries and ethnic groups, promote mutual understanding and trust among countries and ethnic groups, promote equal dialogue and cultural exchange among countries and ethnic groups in culture, and thus participate in the construction of the world community culture without barriers. The new cultural capital not only provides a method for proficiently utilizing information technology to accumulate cultural resources, capabilities, and values, but also provides sufficient guarantees for the originality and design of cultural products through a new investment and financing system, upgraded industrial structure, and strong dissemination capabilities. This enables cultural industries to quickly respond to the demands of the post-

globalization era, creating original cultural products that can not only take root locally, but also deeply interpret the cultures of other countries and ethnic groups, with international cultural penetration and competitiveness.

Fifth, new cultural capital is conducive to the independent entrepreneurship of individuals in society. The new cultural capital emphasizes the pursuit of cultural taste through the “acquisition” of information technology, and accumulates cultural resources, abilities, and values on this basis. This “acquisition” is largely a social individual’s “acquisition”, rather than having class or group differences like pre-industrial and industrial societies. No matter what social class or group an individual belongs to, as long as they proficiently master a certain type of information technology, they can generate an appropriate amount of new cultural capital by combining their own cultural knowledge, upbringing, taste, books, paintings, antiques, educational diplomas, qualification certificates, and other cultural resources. Then, they can invest the new cultural capital generated by individuals almost without the need for economic capital support into the operation system of cultural industries, market and attract traffic, and even monetize it into economic wealth. It can be said that the new cultural capital has greatly increased the possibility for each individual in society to independently create value and start their own business.

The advantages of institutional innovation, structural upgrading, marketing revolution, improvement of original ability, and assistance to individual entrepreneurship in cultural industries can naturally be attributed to new cultural capital. However, new cultural capital also has issues that must be guarded against. If these issues are not handled properly, they will have the same tremendous power to harm and even destroy the development of contemporary cultural industries.

The most criticized aspect of new cultural capital is its alliance with economic capital. Scholars have pointed out sharply that the new cultural capital “stands behind social and economic capital” (Chen, 2021). The reason is that the profit driven nature of capital enables economic capital to keenly perceive the huge business opportunities behind information technology, and quickly participate in the process of information technology operation and application, establishing a close relationship with information technology, forming a cycle of using economic capital to drive information technology innovation, and using information technology innovation to help accumulate economic capital. Information technology to some extent determines the game and return rate of economic capital, and the investment of economic capital will provide sufficient conditions for the continuous innovation of information technology. If things continue like this, the new cultural capital is likely to fall into the hands of those who control economic capital to control society and build a tool for the capitalist social system.

Another criticized issue of new cultural capital is its excessive reliance on information technology. The excessive dependence of new cultural capital on technology generally leads to three negative consequences: firstly, it is easy for people to be alienated by digital technology. The immersive experiences of artificial intelligence writing, AR, and VR, as well as the precise push of cultural content based on big data algorithms, have brought people wonderful experiences and created the illusion that information technology is omnipotent, leading to a certain degree of worship of digital technology. The result of the worship of digital technology is that people voluntarily accept the rational training of technology, lose their vitality and subjectivity, and become alienated by digital technology, becoming a certain technological tool.

Secondly, it will lead to the loss of the cultural taste and spiritual connotation of production. If the new cultural capital overly relies on information technology, it will lead to the decisive role of information technology operators in the production of cultural content. And the operators of information technology are largely held hostage by the profit seeking instinct of economic capital, controlling the direction of cultural content production based on the standard of how much commercial profit they earn. This can easily lead the content of cultural

production to develop towards vulgarity, losing the taste and spiritual connotation that culture should have, as well as the “spiritual charm” praised by Benjamin. The acquisition of culture is usually accumulated through activities such as acquisition, reading, and comprehension, which naturally form a unique temperament and charm. If cultural production is manipulated by information technology, the taste and temperament of culture will be replaced by technological displays such as “cool” and “clickbait” in cyberspace.

Thirdly, it can lead to the exclusion or even replacement of cultures with taste and spiritual connotations by hollow cultural symbols. The “culture” produced by excessive reliance on information technology, which loses its taste and connotation, can only be an empty symbol that simulates culture in form. It does not rely on natural sensory experiences such as hearing, vision, and touch in cultural production, but instead relies on digital technology simulations. At best, such a “culture” can only be a representation of trendy technology, but it will spread and diffuse on a large scale in social life with the support of digital technologies such as big data, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and the Internet of Things, excluding or even replacing genuine culture with taste and spiritual connotations, making human social life completely digitized and commercialized.

To correct these drawbacks, the new cultural capital must pay attention to “de instrumentalization”, that is, the new cultural capital refuses to become a tool of both economic capital and digital technology. The core essence of “de instrumentalization” is to deepen the integration of digital and cultural capital, and develop information technology that can fully serve the production and dissemination of cultural taste, spiritual connotation, and spiritual charm culture. This can enable humans with natural vitality and creativity to forever become the masters of information technology, without being alienated, while also to some extent preventing the erosion of culture by economic capital. A culture with cultural taste, spiritual connotation, and spiritual charm will construct an aesthetic utopia, which to some extent demonstrates a revolutionary spirit of criticizing reality and naturally exerts a restraining force against authoritarian and unequal social systems. This new type of cultural capital that is “de instrumentalized” will naturally not help those who control economic capital to control society and build a capitalist social system.

However, it is worth noting that traditional cultural capital such as knowledge, education, taste, books, paintings, antiques, academic diplomas, qualifications, etc. will not disappear with the emergence of new cultural capital. They will coexist and empower each other for a considerable period of time. However, if they want to enter the operational track of cultural industries, they first need to be transformed into new cultural capital, because new cultural capital is the core cultural capital of post-industrial society, which currently uses information mechanisms as the main production mechanism and information resources as the main material resources. Of course, the new cultural capital also needs to constantly overcome its own drawbacks, avoid the control of economic capital, eliminate the problem of technological colonization of culture, so that culture can continue to maintain its own taste, connotation, and “spirit”, and thus enable information technology to blend more appropriately and deeply with culture. This new type of cultural capital that is “de instrumentalized” can ensure the high-quality operation and development of cultural industries, making it a fertile ground for cultural growth in post-industrial and post-globalization societies, and cultivating high-quality culture of our era that combines the characteristics of the times and classic values.

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