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# The Value Insistence of the Cultural Production in the Big Data Era

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**Abstract** The ultimate value of cultural production should be realizing human's comprehensive and free development, and deconstructing the ultimate value would result in human alienation. In the era of big data, every domain of human's social life, even the mode of thinking, has been transformed significantly. However, when the big data technology entirely penetrates the field of cultural production especially induces the cultural production depending on the demand forecasting techniques, it would inevitably lead to a worry about value of the cultural production. This paper formulates that the cultural production's essence in the era of big data remains for the purpose of maximizing profit of commercial manipulation based on the modeling analysis of cultural production mechanism in the big data times. If the tendency is not corrected, the two main factors of cultural consumerism prevalence and the instrumental reason dictatorship will gradually deconstruct the ultimate value of cultural production and bring about the alienation of human being. For the sake of avoiding the trend, we should cope with two relationships: one is the people as a means and as a purpose; the other is the instrumental reason and the value rationality, finally giving rise to human's comprehensive and free development rather than human alienation.

**Key words** Big data, Cultural production, Human's comprehensive and free development, Alienation

## 1 Ultimate value of cultural production—comprehensive and free development of human being

Culture is the essence of "humanization", which is generated through the practice activity in the process of presenting human essential power, and human realizes reconstruction in the same process. In the course of the "humanization", people need to constantly overcome various contradictions and obstacles, in order to realize "the person in a comprehensive way, as a whole person, who has its comprehensive nature" <sup>[1]</sup>. Only in this way, could the comprehensive and free development of human being get support from natural culture and meet human internal demand. From this perspective, the ultimate value of cultural production is to realize human pursuit of comprehensive and free development. People's free and comprehensive development concept is a value commitment about future society to human existence and development from Marx. It can be understood from two aspects. The first is the comprehensiveness of the human development. Personal comprehensiveness is not imagined or visional comprehensiveness, but his comprehensiveness of relation of idea and reality <sup>[2]</sup>. Therefore, the comprehensive development of human is that people create a comprehensive social relation through social practice to generate their own nature, thus gradually from free, abundant and comprehensive social relations obtaining comprehensive and free development. The second is the freedom of the human development. Person is a kind of existence, not only because human consider in practice and in theory the class, his class and other class, as its object, and because... people regard itself as the class of existing and living, because people regard itself as common and hence the

existence of freedom <sup>[3]</sup>. "Freedom" as a value category is human nature, because human life activity includes the value pursuit from the start, it is not only the starting point of human development as well as implicated direction and goals of human development. Development is not only for the development of people, but also for the sake of self-transcendence, external forces and external conditions form the basis of self-transcendence. People can't choose the objective world, according to their own subjective world of the ultimate value goal, but can choose the attitudes towards the objective world, and furthermore create a harmonious society in the world. "The comprehensive and free development of human being" as the abstract nature of people, is confirmed and realized in the unlimited expansion of human implementation, and naturally is decomposed by limited reality under the influence of pure objectivism position. The consequences will cause the denial of human nature and eventually lead to the alienation of people. Alienation from the point of Marxism, is the creation of man itself separated from people, becomes a kind of the external force opposed to human, and makes the human consciousness and activities belong to itself. In a state of alienation, people will give up their initiative, and personality of human can not achieve comprehensive and free development, only one-sided even distortional development.

## 2 The cultural production mechanism in the era of big data and the ultimate value of digestion

The big data technology takes "4v" as exterior rules, by trying to collect comprehensive, complete and comprehensive data, analysis and modeling on the depth of the intelligence, digging the potential link between things, to extract the valuable data and information trend, for providing forecast for all walks of life and the trend analysis of forward-looking information, making the massive amounts of information predict value from a tiny view in the era of big data. The big data era is exciting times, according to the

Received: June 19, 2016 Accepted: August 3, 2016

Supported by Research Project of Shaanxi Academy of Governance in 2016 (YKT16005); West Project of National Social Science Fund (15XKS011).

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depth of combination between big data technology and all walks of life, and it speeds up the emergence of new technology and new application, transforms the mode of production of the entire society and organization, and even the human's way of thinking and life, and becomes the underlying motivation of the economic development and social progress. Also great changes have taken place in cultural production field, such as American episodes "House of CARDS". Previous film and television drama production mainly relies on the television station and production company and broadcast dependent on the brand effect of broadcast platform, so the audience can be only passive to accept. In 2012, a video broadcast site Netflix prepared to launch self-made drama. On deciding what and how to take, Netflix abandoned the traditional production way, applied the big data technology. Based on the analysis of every click operation about 30000000 subscribers in the site, Netflix found that a lot of people among his users are still in the demand of the classic "House of CARDS" by BBC in 1990. There are a lot of people from the audience like director of David Flincher and actor of Kevin Spacey. Netflix boldly predicted that a film and television works which can meet these a few elements at the same time is likely to sell robustly. Then, the "House of CARDS" appeared, obtaining a great success. Netflix website publicized all the entire series of episodes, users can freely choose what they want, completely subverting the traditional sets of a week broadcast mode. After great success of "House of CARDS", film and television industry boomed immediately amid the trend of applying the big data technology. We can see that the cultural production in the era of big data can be divided into four links, data collection, demand forecasting, production and marketing. First of all, the cultural production enterprise collects vast amount of information about consumers and cultural productions of all kinds of structured, semi-structured, and unstructured data; secondly, based on the deep and smart analysis and modeling on the messy data, it predicts cultural product demand of most consumers and consumer favorite cultural elements; thirdly, it integrates prediction results, and ways of cultural production. Finally, based on the forecasted consequence, the finally products are created, copied and put in the market, and sold in the market for continuing to collect the relevant data in order for the next forecast and production services. In the four links, any link is inseparable from the support of big data technology.

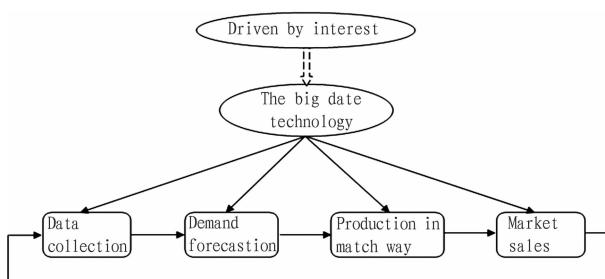


Fig. 1 Mode of cultural production in the big data era

The essence of the big data, however, is only the latest form

of knowledge economy and the digital economy, whose deep root is still for profit maximization of the business driver. This can be illustrated from the statement of "big data-the future of new oil". When cultural production begins for the service of the profits, what kind of cultural product market is not only people's choice but also under the influence of the production cost and profit expectation. In this sense, the obvious commercial control and selection mode is the real essence of big data era cultural production. Driven by the dual role of interests and big data technology, the culture of the era of big data production presents its own characteristics. First, the purpose of the cultural production lies in realizing the maximization of profits. As mentioned above, consumer demand for forecasting technology meets the spiritual needs of consumers as a starting point on the surface, but in fact this is a selective action, and it remains a business driver of profit maximization. Second, the process of cultural production depends on big data technology. The cultural production as a commodity instinctively urges to find its consumers, only the cultural products can meet consumers' needs. Therefore, enterprises must rely on the huge amount of data for consumer demand in order to guarantee the cultural production for marketable demand. Third, the way of the cultural production is mainly the match way production. The match way production of cultural products, taking Chinese traditional medicine "prescription" meaning, which uses the big data technology to predict consumer taste, gradually forms a number of factors such as subject matter, conception and expression way which are collocated and combined, finally constituting commercially valuable products in all kinds of culture. Fourth, the effect of the cultural production only provides people with entertainment and recreation services. In the era of big data, cultural production is no longer the pursuit of classic, but for the moment of "entertainment", it is destined to get vulgar and blindly caters to the mass aesthetic for cultural production, hence the lack of depth of traditional culture causes the huge gap between quantity and quality. In our times, everything seems to contain its opposite. We see that machine has the magic power of reducing human labor and making the labor more productive but causes hunger and excessive fatigue. The new source of wealth, as a result of something strange, incredible and magical, became the source of poverty. The victory of the technology seems at the cost of moral corruption. As humans increasingly control nature, individuals seem to increasingly become slaves of others or their own slaves of despicable behavior. Even scientific pure lights only shine on the ignorant dark background. All our discovery and progress, which seem that the result is to make the material force, has the wisdom of life and people's life becomes dull material strength<sup>[4]</sup>. The ultimate goal of using big data technology is to maximize its cultural product output and profit, this is the goal of the most cultural production enterprise. If not correct, big data technology application results would run against its research and development intention, eventually leading to the alienation of people. First, the big data era caters to the consumer market demand, safeguards the industrial

capital interests mode of cultural production, and meets the requirements of people's senses, but it deconstructs the people for transcendence of dimension and the resistance of dimensions, makes people lose thought depth and critical consciousness, assimilates people among technical rules. This kind of "strange, incredible magic" essence is people's own desire. Desire constant stimulation, and people become their slaves of desire, as a result, people become the only obedient "one dimensional man". Second, in the big data era, people are facing cultural products aimed at needs, produce the paradox of "the infinite possibilities of choice and selection of no possibility", lose the ability of rational criticism, thus losing the freedom of consumption. Common cultural power such as the ideology of big data technology to the person's rule of alienation has made people lose freedom and creativity. On the basis of the commodity economy, the falsity of cultural products will be inevitably produced. Although the cultural production enterprises still emphasize the personalized goods, whose essence is just the transformation of external appearance, the substance is still maximizing profits. People under the modern industrial culture see all kinds of cultural products on the market which seems to have individual character, originality, but in fact various art forms are covered with a layer of hypocrisy. External appearance increasingly becomes self-evaluation basis, but under plenty of external appearances, "one-dimensional" human has unfortunately become the common.

### 3 Analysis on the factors of cultural production eliminating the ultimate value

**3.1 The prevalence of cultural consumerism** Consumerism is a kind of value and life style that human one-sided commodity consumption emphasizes. The material first, pleasure first, ignoring the spiritual value, neglecting the development of people, upholding material desires, advocating sensory stimulation<sup>[5]</sup>. In the prevalence of consumerism, people's consumption purpose is not to meet the practical demand but to constantly pursue the satisfaction of desires which are generated and stimulated by human being. The consumerism invades the domain of cultural production, which brings cultural consumerism that refers to cultural production forfeiting the spiritual pursuit and becomes a tool for obtaining the economic benefits. Cultural production erodes the value of spiritual culture and turns to consumer production with no difference of consumer commodity goods. Traditional cultural production derived from the creator's instinct demand of spiritual promotion like the silkworm making the silk. The cultural production in the data era analyzes consumer's cultural demand through the massive amount of data to predict cultural factors popular in marketing and cultural types, and maximize profit to direct the process of cultural goods. In the essence consumption is the way to meet the demand. Once the relationship is reversed, the alienation of consumption would come out meanwhile the human alienation would also happen. Consumer behavior in cultural consumerism has deviated from its essence, because the behavior is to meet the distortional

demands which are forecasted and endless. These so-called apparent demands stem from consumer's spiritual demands, but meet the demands of capital profits in fact. So human being transforms to become a gear of huge production machine, people are not only enslaved by material life fields but also constrained by spiritual life fields. This kind of distortional demand stimulated by distortional supply results in constantly objectifying subjects. This kind of person is not a person as a purpose but a means, which becomes a way to obtain profit by others. Cultural production created from this has become completely a part of the multifarious commodity world under the exchange relationship, and it is locked in a fixed frame, turning into pure consumer goods. Independent quality cultural production no longer existed, human being, overemphasizing entertainment, leisure, overwhelming the culture's ideology, eroded the process of reconstruction by culture. Human gradually forfeit subjectivity, which further deepens the alienation between human being and human essence.

### 3.2 Technical rationality displaying one-dimensional instrumental rationality

Technical rationality, as a combination of human rationality value and scientific technology, is the unity of instrumental rationality and value rationality. Value rationality solves why to do and instrumental rationality gives answer to how to do, they both have mutual contact and mutual transformation, mutual promotion of their inner link. Instrumental rationality and value rationality was put forward by Max Weber firstly, and he thinks that instrumental rationality is based on the external things' situation and other people's behavior of expectation which is used as a condition or means, in order to realize purpose of the achievements suitable for one's own rationality and consideration<sup>[6]</sup>. In short, in the instrumental rationality's logic, human and outside world are only a material for scheme and a tool to maximize the value. Relative value rationality through a particular behavior by consciousness, from the view of ethics, aesthetics, religion, or any other interpretation, is also an unconditional inherent value of pure faith, whether it is success or not. It means that value rationality concerns the value of behavior, concerns human survival meaning and value, is the ultimate care of the people. Technical rationality suitable for history is a kind of progress within reasonable ranges, but if instrumental rationality is considered as only representation of technical reason, it is one-dimensional, obvious in the cultural production activity in the era of big data. Cultural production should mostly reflect subject value of human and determinate creation spirit. But in the big data era, reaching the summit of prevalence of scientific application, the relationship between instrumental rationality and value rationality in cultural production fields suddenly breaks down, showing the dictatorship of instrumental rationality and silence of value rationality. Thus cultural production activity manifests the character of dehumanizing, it is not publicizing the nature of human, instead it becomes alien and denies the human nature, forfeits the subjectivity position of human. In this process, value rationality gradually loses the ultimate care of human existence meaning and dialectical introspec-

tion metaphysics direction. Plenty of personal life experience is manipulated by instrumental rationality, so human multi-dimension existence, human spiritual demand, human inner experience and emotion are also neglected. Nevertheless, the dictatorial ending of instrumental rationality can not be anything but self-constraint and self-ruin. Firstly, oneself in others' eyes is another, equally any others possess the notion of egocentrism. The rule upshot of instrumental rationality only leads people to become a tool, resulting in instrumentalization and fragmentation of human and loss of subjectivity. Secondly, both pure instrumental rationality and value rationality are also not self-sufficient and can not realize human's comprehensive nature. Alienation nature of instrumental rationality, at the level of anthropological ontology, is from non-self-sufficient to self-sufficient, becoming unique and ultimate scale of human existence. But instrumental rationality does not

have the regulation of purpose but only the means. As a result, if the instrumental rationality of self-sufficiency deviates from the meaning entitled by value rationality, the instrumental rationality for the existence of the people will not show its meaning.

#### 4 From alienation to the comprehensive and free development of human

The value insistence of the cultural production in the big data era does not mean abandoning the big data technology, but means correcting the direction of the cultural production and points to the cultural progress and the future. Therefore, we need to stick to ultimate value of human's comprehensive and free development and properly deal with two pairs of relationships:

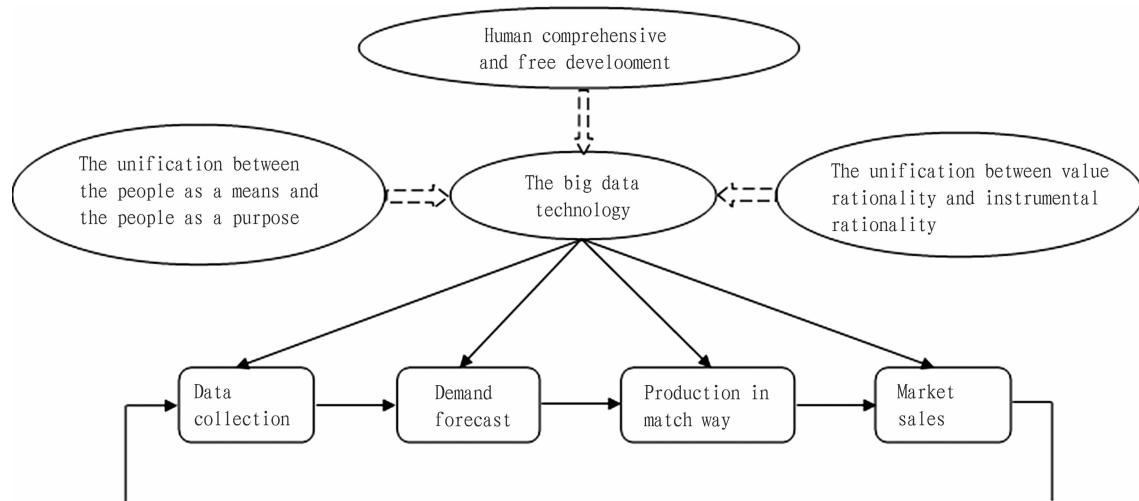


Fig. 2 The idea mode of cultural production in the big data era

**4.1 People as a means and a purpose** In the process of cultural production in big data era, people become the tools and means which make for others to meet the needs and realize the purpose. There is no doubt that people as a means have objective existence, because the person is real power to achieve its purpose, and people use more and more means to promote the development of human society. But if people as a means is not built on the basis of people as a purpose, people are alienated. Marx holds that people's conscious and purposeful practice creates the social history, also creates human beings. People's practical activities are all from the purpose of concept through corresponding cognitive activities and practice, finally achieving purpose. The practice of human has the functions of means for human's ideas into reality. In the process of social and historical development, people show their own value by creating social value for meeting the needs of themselves, others and society activities. Human activities are the process of the people as a purpose and also the process of considering people as a means to achieve the purpose. That is to say, all the activities of human beings are for the sake of human beings, for their comprehensive and free development. At the same time,

the human must use means of themselves to realize their own purposes— realize the ideal of people as purpose through their own labor. In this process, people are the goal and human activities are means. People are purpose and means to achieve the purpose. Person is the organic unity of purpose and means. Person is the unity of purpose and means, which has the following implications for the cultural production in the era of big data. First, on the relationship between human and object, human is more important and more fundamental relative to the nature of all things, the history of the ultimate point is to improve everyone's comprehensive and free development. This shows that in the process of cultural production, we should properly handle the relationship between human beings and the material interest, and always regard people as center, regard the comprehensive and free development of people as value pursuit of cultural production, to encourage people to realize the free survival, autonomous activities and self-improvement. Second, in the relation between oneself and others, they are all the purpose and means. If people only see others as a means of making a profit, and don't want to treat others as purpose, even set his happiness based on others' suffering in order to

achieve one's purpose by means of controlling others, people are mutually exclusive, conflicting. In the end, anyone's objective of the comprehensive and free development can't be achieved.

**4.2 Value rationality and instrumental rationality** Instrumental rationality is the source of human rationality and innovation, and the value rationality is the foundation of human social harmony and progress, which embodies the human pursuit of value and the meaning of life. Instrumental rationality and value rationality can not split. The combination of them is the Line of Ariadne to guide human to overcome the ultimate value of cultural production to be decomposed, the fusion of them is the intrinsic need to realize human's comprehensive and free development. First, the value rationality provides emotional support to instrumental rationality, and the instrumental rationality provides realistic support to value rationality. On the one hand, in the big data era, electronic information technology develops rapidly, value rationality can make people think about the meaning of life and value, and explore the realization of the human's comprehensive and free development, and determine the direction, content, form, and others of cultural production, and become spiritual motivation of instrumental rationality. On the other hand, the deepening of instrumental rationality makes big data technology penetrate into all fields of social life rapidly, so the social relationship becomes complex. In the social life, human's all kinds of ability to improve such as the ability to cogitate, think and act, gradually improve human's conscious thinking for value rationality, which provides practical support for achieving the sublimation of the value rationality. If people ignore the value rationality and just focus on instrumental rationality, it will lead to the loss of people's subjectivity and decomposition of ultimate value of human comprehensive and free development. The premise which instrumental rationality dominates is the die of main body in the work<sup>[7]</sup>. Also, if ignoring the instrumental rationality just focusing on value rationality, the cultural production will completely depart from the "dream", and the result can be frustrating. Therefore, in the era of big data, instrumental rationality and value rationality can not be ignored in the process of cultural production. Only by the harmonious unification of them can we ensure reasonable scale of technical rationality, and then guarantee the human's comprehensive and full development. Second, the value rationality is the body, and the instrumental rationality is the application. The harmonious coexistence of instrumental rationality and value rationality does not mean that they are in the same position; the value rationality is more important. In the era of big data, cultural production should be done in the boundary of human's ultimate value, and it can not be calculated and quantified by instrumental rationality. We can not just depend on the instrumental rationality and technology to realize the

problem of human comprehensive and free development, the instrumental rationality can never replace the value rationality. In the cultural production of big data era, there is a need to rely on instrumental rationality to realize people's essential strength target, and appreciate the value of life at a deeper level of self-consciousness to provide an opportunity for the sublimation of value rationality. When people rely on instrumental rationality to expand the practice of cultural production and see the broad prospects of the development, people's demand for comprehensiveness and free development will also acquire great anticipation from low level to high level.

## 5 Conclusions

Marx once pointed out that the comprehensive development of individuals, their social relation as their mutual relationship, was also subject to their joint control, not a product of nature, but the product of history. To make this kind of personality a possibility, the development of the ability would reach a certain extent and comprehensiveness, which is built up based on a precondition of the exchange value of the production. Only by this type of production can we generate alienation with ourselves and with others simultaneously as well as universality and comprehensiveness of personal ability and personal relationship<sup>[8]</sup>, which indicates that the alienation of people is the necessarily accompanying phenomenon in the process of human nature evolution. Although big data technologies aggravate the alienation of people in a specified period, it is still essential to abandon the alienation of human. With the development of economy and the evolution of human society, the alienation of people's ultimate ending must be the comprehensive and free development of man.

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