

# ТВОРЧЕСТВО МОЛОДЫХ ИССЛЕДОВАТЕЛЕЙ

## CREATIVITY OF YOUNG RESEARCHERS

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Научная статья



### Платформизация китайского общества: капитал, труд и технологии

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**Аннотация.** Каждый момент времени в нашей сетевой жизни проходит на различных платформах, и это глубоко изменило образ жизни людей. Это может привести к мысли, что социальная платформа уже стала социальной реальностью. Однако на самом деле социальная платформизация представляет собой непрерывный процесс, описывающий функционирование социальных систем, оказывающий на них влияние и контролирующий их через товарную логику платформ. Сетевая социальная платформизация привела к драматичным изменениям в организации традиционных обществ. Тем не менее, в отличие от западной социальной платформизации, китайская социальная платформизация подверглась влиянию государственной системы, и трансформация оказалась недостаточной. И это не означает, что коммерческие платформы менее влиятельны в Китае. Таким образом, вопрос о том, как справиться с трансформацией общества, основанного на платформах, с учетом китайских особенностей, становится предметом обсуждения в современных исследованиях в области коммуникации. Именно на этом фоне данная статья рассматривает влияние коммерческих платформ в Китае и механизмы их действия через призму марксистской политэкономии и коммуникационных исследований. Цель данной статьи заключается в исследовании влияния коммерческих платформ на китайское общество и определении его причин в контексте социалистической системы с учетом китайских особенностей. С политической, экономической, социальной и технологической точек зрения статья дает новую перспективу для размышлений на эту тему. Для достижения цели статьи использовались методы качественного исследования, такие как индуктивное обобщение явлений и литературный анализ, а также методы PEST-анализа для исследования менеджмента. Статья представляет дедуктивный анализ природы китайской социальной платформы и описывает влияние и вызываемые платформой кризисы. Автор приводит следующие результаты: во-первых, в условиях социалистической системы с китайской спецификой коммерческий платформенный капитал сдерживается властью, не теряя динамизма, а наоборот, развивается и растет в идеологической технологии «обмена» и «связи», и является реконструкцией способов работы и социальных отношений в китайском обществе. Капиталистические акторы, стоящие за коммерческими платформами, активно продвигают платформизацию общества. Их целью является использование

платформ в повседневной жизни и способствование дискурсивной ассимиляции «прибавочного труда» и «воспроизводства труда». Это позволяет им коварно добиваться эксплуатации работников и извлечения прибавочной стоимости. Непосредственной целью социальных платформ является изменение способа накопления капитала. Во-вторых, коммодификация является основным ядром логики платформы, охватывая специфические коммодификации пользователя, коммодификации услуг и коммодификации данных. В-третьих, в процессе социальной платформизации капитальная мощь платформы усиливает приверженность людей к платформе посредством объединенной силы «данные + алгоритм», затем глубоко проникает в повседневную жизнь через инфраструктуру платформы, а затем осуществляет виртуализированную социальную интеграцию на основе децентрализованной организационной структуры платформы, тем самым реализуя трансформацию социальных отношений и социальной структуры в платформу. Результаты проведенного качественного анализа свидетельствуют о том, что платформизация общества привела к реструктуризации социальной власти. Рост частной власти платформы повлиял на власть государства и правительства. Однако, существенная черта капитала — приносить прибыль — может привести к потенциальному общественному кризису.

**Ключевые слова.** Социальная платформа, воспроизводство рабочей силы, коммерциализация, идентификация данных, инфраструктурализация, социальная интеграция.

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Original article

## Platformization of Chinese Society: Capital, Labor and Technology

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**Abstract.** Social platformization is not a reality, it is an ongoing process that describes the commercialization logic of the platform entering the operation of the social system and influencing and controlling it. Based on this background, this paper examines the impact of commercial platforms on China and their mechanisms of action. The purpose of the study is to clarify the impact and the mechanism of business platforms on the Chinese society. By using a qualitative research approach, the study finds that, the capital subject behind the commercial platform actively promotes the platformization of the society to revolutionize capital accumulation process. Its purpose is to make the platform a daily life, and promote the isomorphism of the words of "surplus labor" and "labor reproduction", so as to realize the exploitation and grab of surplus value covertly. Commercialization is the essential core of platform logic. In the turning process of social platformization, the capital forces enhance the platform stickiness of the people with the help of the joint force of "data+algorithm", penetrate into the bottom of daily life through the

infrastructuralization of platform, and then carry out virtual social integration based on the delocalized organizational structure of the platform, so as to realize the transformation of platformization of social relations and social structure. The adjustment of social power structure is the essential consequence of social platformization. The conclusions of this paper are that, the rise of private power on platform has impacted the public power of the state and the government, and the essential attribute of profit-seeking capital will result in some potential public crisis to the whole society.

**Keywords.** Platformization, labor reproduction, commercialization, data fication, infrasturalization, social integration.

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## Introduction

Our online life is always wrapped in the platform<sup>1</sup>. «Platform mechanism shapes every piece of our lives, whether in the private sphere or the public sphere» [1] which was described in the book «The Platform Socitey: Public values in a connective world» written by José van Dijck, a Dutch scholar. With the deepening of social media, Taobao, WeChat, Weibo, Tik Tok, Meituan, Didi and other platforms have arranged our daily life in order and quietly dragged us into a world surrounded by platforms. We live on the platform, following the rules set by the platform for us, and the platformization of society seems to have become a social reality. In Van Dijck's view, platforms are divided into *infrastructural platform* and *sectoral platform*. The former mainly refers to Google, Facebook, Apple, Microsoft and Amazon, the five commercial Internet giants in western society. They not only operate their own main businesses, but also link themselves to the social information and network infrastructure system with API interfaces as gateways, providing basic services for sectoral platforms and applications,

such as search, social networking, cloud computing, advertisement, data analysis, and so on. When we all think that Facebook is just a social media application, we don't know that it has already become a «digital empire» with 72 applications that provide customized services for all kinds of end users, advertisers, developers and enterprises, and all kinds of online websites [2, p. 212]. The tentacles of its business operations have explored various aspects of society, politics, economy, and culture. A platform ecosystem centered around these five major commercial internet giants has been formed. The concept of platform ecosystem refers to the discourse metaphor of social platformization, which is the reality of platform logic socialization emphasized by Van Dijck. Our daily life is based on this reality.

But social platformization is not an established reality, but a process, which may last for a long time. The so-called platformization refers to the social transformation carried out according to the logic of the platform [1]. In other words, after the transformation of society, its political system and management mode, economic form, cultural production, or the construction of social relations, individual behavior motivation, etc., are all influenced

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<sup>1</sup> The research object of this paper, "platform", refers to the commercial capital platform, while the government and official-led media platforms are not in the scope of this paper.

by the technical discourse logic of the platform, that is, social platformization is a process of deeply embedding platform logic into the social system and influencing or even controlling the operation of the social system. Whether within the framework of the "technology economy" paradigm or the "culture society" paradigm, we cannot ignore the potential crisis brought about by the growth of commercial capital platforms as controlling forces in the social structure.

### **Research Method**

This study adopts a qualitative research method, such as inductive summary of phenomena and literature, and draws on the management PEST research method to deductively analyze the nature of platforming in Chinese society from political, economic, social, and technological perspectives, and to propose the impact and crisis brought by platforming.

### **Study Results**

#### ***Constructing the myth of discourse isomorphism of «Labor reproduction» and «Surplus labor» is the core motivation of social platformization***

The concept of labor reproduction is one of the core categories of Marxist political economy. In Marx's view, the only source of surplus value is surplus labor, and the expansion of surplus labor is based on labor reproduction. In this respect, labor reproduction is closely combined with surplus value. What the capital subject behind the commercial platform is trying to promote is to realize the discourse isomorphism of "surplus labor" and "labor reproduction". The labor reproduction

refers to the formation or recovery of labor ability of workers, which includes education, vocational skills training, eating, rest and entertainment, as well as medical care, marriage, childbirth and other aspects. For example, after entering an aging society, there is a shortage of labor, which of course has its unique background, but in fact there are problems in the reproduction of labor. When the platform has fully entered people's daily life, such as clothing, food, housing and transportation, that is, when the platform is used as life, people's surplus labor on the platform will be packaged as an active labor reproduction link, and the capital will secretly realize the exploitation and grab of surplus value.

In a traditional capitalist employment relationship, laborers work and employers pay «wages» to maintain or guarantee the reproduction of labor. However, in the context of social platformization, this pattern has changed: the labor subject has changed from workers to netizens; The object of labor changes from material products to information products; The form of labor changes from work to life; The nature of labor changes from material labor to non-material labor (many scholars use the concepts of digital labor and platform labor to express it); The condition of labor reproduction has changed from salary to entertainment experience; The labor relationship has changed from a stable employment relationship to an unstable temporary relationship (gig economy). In the process of this series of changes, it is based on the biggest ideological scam of the platform of «sharing» and «connecting».

On the one hand, the platform tells people to «record a good life» and let people hand over their lives to it in every

detail, because the topological structure of the network makes the information content produced by people on the platform just like commodities, which can be «randomly selected» by all platform users, and the information content produced by the original users can be used as bait to attract more new users to join in. At this time, the content products that all users actively «share» become commodities for people's spiritual consumption. More importantly, people not only produce content products but also behavior data on the platform.

On the other hand, in the traditional employment-labor relationship, the reproduction of labor requires not only the material guarantee such as wages, but also the institutional guarantee such as eight-hour working week, five social insurances and one housing fund, and statutory holidays. However, in the context of social platformization, the new economic forms based on the platform, such as sharing economy and gig economy, further reflect the platform's determination to separate itself from the labor reproduction system, that is, the stable employment relationship is transformed into an unstable temporary labor relationship. However, it should be emphasized that this does not mean that there is no stable employment relationship in the platform, such as the relationship between the platform company and its employees.

The discourse logic of platform economy is the intermediary. The structure of labor relations in the take-out platform is «merchant-platform-rider», and that in the taxi platform is «private car owner-platform-passenger», so do other platforms. This kind of labor relationship structure can be abstracted as the «employer-platform-laborer» model, which points to the connotation

of platform intermediation, and there is a paradox between labor and capital: the labor behavior takes place between the employer and the laborer, but the platform plays a role of «manager». They collect intermediary fees from employers such as merchants, passengers, hotel tenants, etc. The intermediary fees include the wages of the laborers, which are distributed by the platform. The platform formulates the standard of remuneration, the principle of payment, and the labor standards that workers need to abide by. In this process, the platform goes beyond the employers themselves and becomes actual employers, but it doesn't have any stable employment relationship with workers, which makes the reproduction of labor independent of the production process, and the platform doesn't need to provide or pay for labor reproduction. «Avoid the labor security expenditure of long-term contracts, and pass on all risks and costs to workers. With the monopoly of this trading channel, the platform can take part of the trading amount as profit, and obtain large-scale data of personal travel, rental and other privacy. With the establishment of platform monopoly advantage, workers have no choice but to sell their labor» [3].

It is worth mentioning that in the category of sharing economy, idle resources, as means of production, are actually the material basis for labor reproduction, in other words, commodities and consumer goods. Didi and Airbnb are typical representatives of the sharing economy. The means of production in these two economic forms are cars and houses respectively, but the car and houses themselves exist as consumer goods/consumption materials. However, in the mode of sharing economy,

the consumption materials have been transformed into production materials. «The digital platform expands the private living materials that participate in sharing into the material conditions of corporate profits, which is essentially the extension of capital rights in the field of property rights» [4].

The fundamental reason why the platform has such great power is the ideological scam of «sharing» and «connecting» discussed above. The emergence and growth of any platform has its own «active period». «In the early stage, partners and consumers are absorbed at all costs, and development, sharing and cooperation are only the means to maximize the benefits. The ultimate goal of providing services to third parties and users is to absorb data and then realize it» [5].

### **Commercialization is the essential core of platform logic**

In the above analysis, it is pointed out that social platformization refers to the process in which platform logic internalizes into the social operation system. For the capital subject behind the commercial platform, the surplus labor that people do on the platform will be packaged into active labor reproduction, and the capital will secretly realize the exploitation and grab of surplus value. But what is the platform logic? Behind the words of platform «connection», «sharing», «equality» and «interaction» lies the essence of capital's profit-seeking, that is, its trading after commercializing the means of production. From this perspective, commercialization is the essential core of platform logic.

Commercialization refers to the process in which online or offline goods, activities, emotions, ideas, services and

other elements are transformed into tradable goods by the network platform [1]. The value of these tradable goods can at least be measured by flow (attention), data, money and other criteria. The commercialization logic of the platform is mainly reflected in the commercialization of users, services and data.

«Free» is the most common and even a default mode in the platform, but behind this mode is the discourse logic of «exchanging personal information for free service» [6, p. 132]. Dallas Walker Smythe, one of the founders of the political economy of communication, has already bluntly stated in the book *Communication: The Blind Spot of Western Marxism* that the mass media produced and disseminated TV programs and works to provide «free lunch» for the people, but in this process, the people were sold to advertisers and service providers in the form of ratings and listening rates, thus completing the commercialization of the audience, as was the online platform. At this time, advertising became its most important income. Sina's hot search list, Baidu's search ranking, and the rankings of major application stores are all the results of commercialization of users. The platform has strong network externalities, namely network effects, which means that «with the increase of the number of users of a product, the utility of a single user of the product from the process of using the product also increases» [7, p. 425]. In fact, every user, terminal or processor in the Internet can be regarded as a network node. The network is composed of nodes, and each node can be connected with each other. This means that every new user will increase the utility of the original users in using the platform, because the connection re-



lationship in the platform will increase with the increase of user nodes. As Metcalfe's law describes: the value of a network is directly proportional to the square of the number of network nodes. «Free» is one of the strategies to enhance its network effect.

Secondly, there are freemium model services in the network platform, that is, the basic services provided by the platform are free, but some functions and services are charged, such as the common platform membership system, advance on-demand services of video websites, etc. There is a strong connection between paid services and free services, and users are constantly summoned to make form a kind of «Zeigarnik effect», that is, there is an instinct to accomplish things in human beings, and paid services often convey a consumerism value of «you can achieve your goal as long as you pay». Users' paying habits are constantly cultivated in the free value-added mode, and the commercialization of services is realized in this process. Of course, another form of commercialization of services is as a multilateral market, which collects commissions or service fees from both parties to the transaction as its income. For example, the rental platform «Ziroom» collects service fees from the owners and tenants respectively, and the transportation platform Didi and the take-out platform Meituan all adopt the draw mode.

The third level of platform commercialization mechanism is the commercialization of user data. «Different from the traditional mass media model, the platform commercialization is not only related to the commercialization of users, but also around the commercialization of user data that can be personalized and aggregated in a specific time and space» [8]. The importance of user

data to the platform will be discussed in detail below. The commercialization of user data is mainly reflected in data peddling, that is, the third party can access and develop the user data of the platform in order to participate in the platform economy. As early as 2013, Alibaba bought an 18 % stake in Sina Weibo through its subsidiary company for USD 586 million, and launched a cooperative product «window recommendation», that is, when users in Weibo publish products about Alibaba's e-commerce platform, the user's page in Weibo will automatically launch two products associated with this product. Weibo's open API interface enables Alibaba to access its user data, and this cooperation also became the origin of the socialized e-commerce model of «e-commerce platform + social media», and Weibo provided the core data resources for Ali's personalized recommendation.

### **The mechanism of social platformization**

The above discussion is to solve a premise question, that is, whether there is any basis for why the commercial capital platform should drive the social platform turning. In this section, we try to answer a feasible question: how did the social platform turn become a reality? That is, the mechanism of social platformization.

#### **(1) Platform control of «data + algorithm»**

In the early Internet research, user data was regarded as a companion. With the deepening of social media, people and platforms are deeply embedded with each other. At this time, user data is no longer a derivative of network technology, but becomes people

themselves, and people are digitized in the platform. «Technology companies gradually become data companies, and user data becomes their primary resource» [1]. The so-called datafication refers to the existence of the network platform that converts things that have not been converted into data before into data [9, p. 85]. Datafication is the technical basis for realizing platform commercialization logic.

One of the core functions of data is prediction. Based on capturing, digitizing and analyzing all the behaviors of users on the platform, all the characteristics of users are embodied as indicators. Especially guided by the discourse of technical rationality, people's behaviors, emotions, psychology and needs are regarded as regular and predictable. Therefore, personalized recommendation and targeted advertising have become the most common platform data practices, and «guess what you like» has become the direct logic of platform discourse. The case of Wal-Mart's «beer + diapers» is an excellent footnote of this discourse logic, but many scholars have also raised concerns about information cocoon room. At the same time, it is worth further thinking is the platform forecast user demand is the real demand? Are the platform's personalized recommendations and targeted advertising based solely on users' personal behavioral data?

Thinking about these problems, we can see that the second core function of user data is cultivation. There is a view that the user data obtained by the platform is a kind of original data, that is, the user's behavior is based on their own needs, and the platform is only a tool for data flow. But «data is never unprocessed» [1]. The underlying technical architecture of the platform greatly

affects the interaction between users and the types of data they generate, which is well explained by the technical affordance of the platform. «Because of some natural characteristics, technology has a special effect on people's cognition, attitude, emotion and even behavior, which is dominant in many cases» [10]. The most typical case is the «Chaohua» of Weibo Platform. A simple label «#» forms an aggregation force. Although other subjective factors play a role in this aggregation, it is also the material and technical element of Weibo Platform, that is, «#», which stimulates, amplifies and even produces people's emotional and behavioral motivation. «The platform not only measures certain emotions, ideas and manners, but also triggers and shapes them» [11, p. 2]. Therefore, when making personalized recommendation and targeted advertising, many «tips» of the platform, such as «the customer who bought this item also bought ...» and «this item was marked as a five-star recommendation», stimulate the generation of common emotional experience under the availability of technology and prompt users to take action. Some scholars have summarized it as «ambient virtual co-presence», that is, «users are clearly aware of what others are doing, experiencing and exchanging» [12]. Thinking from this aspect, the data interaction on the platform cultivates users' ideas, needs and actions through the technical availability of the platform, and promotes the generation of new user data, thus realizing «data recycles».

The third core function of platform user data is «commodification». As mentioned above, platforms are not isolated from each other, and platform user data can also flow. As in the case of social e-commerce of «Alibaba + Sina



Weibo» cited above, the flow of data between platforms is realized through API interface in platform technology architecture. However, third-party platforms can only (partially) use the open source data of some platforms in theory, and can only obtain further data usage rights through paid services or partnerships. At this time, the API interface acts as the data management tool of the platform, controlling the third-party platform, and the commercialization of user data is completed in this process.

As far as the algorithm platform is concerned, just like the brain is in the human body, it constitutes the starting point of the platform data practice. On the one hand, as the object product of network technology, the platform organizes various actions driven by algorithms. «An algorithm is a series of instructions input into a machine in order to solve a problem» [13, p. 16], «it is a coding program that converts input data into output results through specific operations» [14]. At this level, the algorithm is mainly in the form of numbers, binary, letter codes, etc., and exists as the operating mechanism of the platform. On the other hand, just because the platform action is based on the algorithm, the algorithm constitutes the existence of the spatial background of the platform, which not only provides the platform actors with technical availability, but also puts forward the requirements and constraints on the action norms. «In a society where media and codes are everywhere, power increasingly exists in algorithms» [15]. At this time, the algorithm exists as the control machine of the platform.

## **(2) Platform penetration as infrastructure**

As the core concept in the field of science-technology study (STS), infra-

structure generally refers to "facilities and institutions that provide common conditions and public services for direct production activities, meeting people's basic needs and realizing sustainable development, generally including transportation, power, communication, water supply and drainage, water conservancy, sewage disposal and other facilities, as well as systems of education, medical care, public health, environmental protection, law and order» [16].

In China, the rise of Internet and network platform is accompanied by «the imagination and practice of modernization and globalization» [17]. Infrastructure construction has never been carried out independently. «It depends on the network built and developed on the basis of existing infrastructure» [18, p. 518], In the 1990s, the information industry developed rapidly. In 1992, the Clinton administration of the United States took the lead in putting forward the strategy of «information superhighway». Since then, strengthening the construction and investment of information infrastructure has become the focus of competition among countries, and «informatization» has become the core discourse of modern narrative. At the beginning of the reform and opening up, Comrade Deng Xiaoping put forward the idea of «developing information resources and serving the four modernizations». The landing of the «High Energy Accelerator» project of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the launch of the «Golden Projects» and the implementation of the «863 Plan» all laid the initial technical foundation for China's comprehensive access to the global Internet and the rise of the network platform. Not only that, in the early stage of the reform and opening-up of the socialist market economy,

private capital gradually entered the information industry. Nowadays, network giants such as Baidu, Alibaba and Tencent have sprung up, and the «infrastructuralization» of the network platform has begun. At the same time, the relevant network policies formulated and implemented by the Chinese government based on national security and other factors have opened up a natural «experimental field» for local Internet companies and network platforms.

With the rapid development of CMNET, its characteristics of mobility, immediacy and scenes have deeply involved people's daily life in the platform. To some extent, the network platform has made up for the limitations of the original infrastructure. Under the connection of «gateway», the transformation of «infrastructuralization» has officially started. This transformation process mainly includes two levels: access and transformation of the original infrastructure. «Gateway» stands for the core principle of infrastructure development, that is, it «provides plugs and sockets, so that the new system can be easily connected to the existing framework with minimal constraints» [19, p. 16]. The gateway plays the role of intermediary and connector, connecting the original infrastructure with the platform. It can be technical equipment or social organization. For example, Taobao connects it with major banks and other financial institutions through Alipay, thus entering the financial infrastructure system. With the help of Cai Niao, the major express delivery services are integrated and linked into the logistics infrastructure system. WeChat also links into the financial infrastructure system through material gateways such as QR codes and cameras. After

the link, it is to transform the original infrastructure system. For example, after the platform is involved, it promotes the continuous digital transformation of national infrastructure.

The degree of social media is getting higher and higher. In the vision of online society described by Manuel Castells, people's online life and real life are deeply bound with the platform, which can't be cut apart. This platform ecosystem reshapes people's lifestyle, cognitive concepts, values and cultural structure, and even «reconstructs the power relationship» [20, p. 323]. The operation of the platform follows the commercialization logic of the capital behind it, and there is conflict and opposition between it and the public value. Therefore, how to reshape the social public value has become one of the core foothold of the platform research.

### **(3) Platform integration for reconstructing social relations**

The process of social integration is the process of social formation. Durkheim's «Social Integration Theory» discusses the problem of how individuals assemble to form a stable and integrated society. In his view, there are two ways of social integration, namely mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity. «The former solidarity is based on personal similarity, while the latter solidarity is based on personal differences [21]. With the development of social productive forces, the social industrial structure has been reshaped, the degree of social division of labor has been deepened, and people are beginning to divide, people each undertake different social functions, but at the same time it also leads to the complexity of society. "Social division

of labor has brought about the mutual adaptation of various social functions and the interdependence of individuals on the basis of differences» [22]. On this basis, a rational and professional community consciousness based on social cooperation is formed.

«Although mechanical integration and organic integration have shaped two completely different social forms, the spatial basis of individual integration into society is common presence» [23]. With the development of Internet technology, social relations have been disembedding and re-embedding. Technology can overcome the barriers brought by time and space to information dissemination and relationship establishment, which makes social integration complete in the form of absence of field, and individuals realize integration in virtual space, thus constructing the structural form of network society. Whether it is mechanical integration or organic integration, the precondition of «presence» makes people obey this «social fact beyond individual level». However, in the virtual integrated network society, the anonymity of absence and the uncertainty of identity make the cyberspace field unable to form the conventional rationality in traditional society to restrict people's behavior, which is also the sociological root of various phenomena such as network spray and network violence. But this does not mean that there are no "rules" in the network society. People's behavior logic is based on the technical settings of the network platform that organizes them. In other words, the operation logic of the network platform has become the code of conduct of people living in it, and the network society has realized the platform transformation in this process.

Some scholars believe that «the realization process of virtual integration is to match and bring together the supply and demand in various fields of social life across time and space and organizational boundaries with the technical architecture of platform enterprises as the link and carrier, thus bringing convenient experience to users» [22]. According to the data released by CNNIC, as of December 2022, the number of Internet users in China was 1,067 billion, and the Internet penetration rate reached 75,6 %. At present, the number of apps monitored in China's domestic market is 3,72 million <sup>2</sup>. Such a huge number of online platform apps cover almost all areas of our social life. As stated at the beginning of this article, the platform arranges our daily life in order, and we are quietly dragged into the world surrounded by the platform. Eating and buying food depend on the take-out platform, shopping depends on the e-commerce platform, marriage and love depend on the dating platform, and travel depends on the taxi platform. Even when traveling by public transportation, the mobile map APP makes our daily life unable to escape the «entanglement» of the digital platform. Big data has become a powerful helper for major digital platforms. In the above, the data-driven mechanism of the platform, the mechanism of prediction, cultivation, and commercialization are introduced, which makes people have a deeper compliance with the digital platform, and the platform dependence of people's daily life is unavoidable. Furthermore, there is a trend of separation and re-integration between the online society and the real society.

<sup>2</sup> The 48<sup>th</sup> Statistical Report on Internet Development in China. China Internet Information Center (CNNIC), 2021. p. 23.

On the one hand, the network society is no longer a simple extension of the real society, but a new form of social existence which is based on the real society and rebuilt. On the other hand, as the social subject, «human» randomly switches between the two social beings, blurring the boundary between them, and showing the characteristics of re-integration between the two forms of social existence, thus constructing a two-sided society. As Custer said in the book *The Rise of Network Society*, «the network has become the organizational mode of various major human activities» [24]. With the in-depth development of the media society, the network platform has become the main field of people's actions, and a new social relationship model has been produced in the platform.

Granovett's «embeddedness» theory holds that «most actors' behaviors are embedded in social networks» [25, p. 486–487]. He emphasized that actors are not isolated individuals, and economic and political actions are embedded in social relations. The analysis of social behavior must be based on the analysis of social relations. Talking about behavior without relationship will make the investigation of behavior into a superficial dilemma. Social relations guide the development and continuation of social behavior. Individual behavior needs certain principles and standards as guidance, and the relationship that is constantly constructed in behavior plays this role. However, the relationship between them is not a simple one of deciding and being decided, guiding and being guided. They constantly interact and complement each other in the social situation, and point to a higher level category-social structure in the dynamic construction.

Social structure is the result of the interaction between social behavior and social relations. When the construction of social relations is branded as a digital platform, the underlying logic of social structure has been transformed into a platform in this process.

### **Conclusion: Social platformization and the transformation of social power structure**

The platformization turn of social makes us clearly see a fact: the social power structure has changed. Weber believes that "Power means any opportunity to carry out one's will even if one encounters opposition in a social relationship, regardless of the basis on which such opportunity is based» [26]. No matter in any context, power presents a dominant force, and «social platformization» implies the discourse logic that the platform grows into a dominant force in society, and becomes a powerful corner of the social power structure. Zuckerberg even puts Facebook on the same level as the government to tell it. Power structure refers to the relationship pattern of all power subjects in society. Generally speaking, the structure of social power consists of three forces: political state power, capital market power and people's social power. For a long time, power and politics have been bound, and the structure of social power presents a regular triangle structure. State power is located at the fixed point of the triangle, while market power and social power are separated at the bottom of the triangle structure. However, with the development of the Internet platform, if the social platform turns into reality gradually, in this power structure, the market power will rise, even forming an inverted triangle or a

vertical obtuse triangle structure. Some scholars use the concept of «power diaspora» to describe the process of power flowing from the state to the market. At this time, the capital and market forces represented by the platform will «involve the core power areas of sovereign countries, challenge and share the government-centered governance system of nation-states» [27]. Limited by the length of the article, this paper has no intention to discuss the generation mechanism of platform power too much, as well as the specific changes and structural models of social power


integration brought about by the rise of platform power. However, the platform control pointed out by social platformization deserves our deep thought: the rise of platform in China has its unique institutional factors, and it has gradually developed and expanded under the background of the socialist market economic system with Chinese characteristics. At present, we still have to actively meet the market economy, but we cannot control the society with private capital, which may lead to the extreme consequence of centralization-publicity.

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