

Media evolution and Daily life: Modernization and mediatization of rural families

Yani Zhang

School of Journalism, Shanxi University, Taiyuan City, Shanxi Province, 030006

Abstract: In the process of medium, the traditional and daily life world of the countryside is undergoing changes. In this process, people, media and social life have organic interaction, and jointly promote the modernization transformation of traditional villages. In the reality of media, the role of media on daily life is not presented as the strong direct impact emphasized by previous studies, but permeates and imperceptibly embedded in daily life. Under the background of the modernization and media development of rural society, the previous research perspectives of “media center” and “passive audience” in the study of media and rural society have been reflected by the academic community, and the subjectivity of “human” as the protagonist of the communication process has emerged and gradually attracted attention.

Key Words: modernization; mediatization; rural families; daily life

1. Rural China in the process of modernization

Along with the process of modernization, as John Thomson has pointed out, the process of mediatization “is to some extent an essential part of modern society, and to some extent..... It is an important reason for the “modern” society we live in today “. Mediatization involves the most important modernization process of society and culture, and has become one of the important aspects of the modernization changes of rural society, accelerating the metabolism of rural social and cultural elements, and embedding in its constant structural restructuring and morphological changes. Although the modernization process of China’s vast rural areas started late, with the introduction of modern materialized communication technology, media and facilities, rural society is inevitably affected by the wave of modern media. In the process of the modernization of rural society, the modern technical media logic is deeply embedded in the social world and daily life of modern rural society, and plays an increasingly important role in the modernization process.

In this process, the change of rural social life is not only the passive response and reception process of the village as the object, but also the initiative and consciousness of “human” as the subject of social practice, constantly exerting the initiative, initiative and consciousness of constructing the living world of self-survival, and exerting the micro-initiative of pursuing modern life in the dual structure of national political and economic discourse and modern technological system. “Modern media, as an important representation of modernity, plays an increasingly significant role in the social practice of the construction of human subjectivity” .

2.the “semi-public” era of rural family media

Beginning in the 1970s, the first type of media to appear in the field of rural families was broadcast media. At this time, although broadcasting entered the private sphere as a media entity, its communication subject, content, form and effect all had significant public characteristics. Its publicity as a political carrier intersected with the increasingly private family life, thus it had the characteristics of “semi-public” media.

“Loudspeaker into the home” integrates private life into the time-space system of collective activities. In essence, most cases are accompanied listening, and radio listening is embedded in multiple scenes of daily life. At that time, entertainment activities were extremely limited, production tasks and domestic labor affairs were also more heavy, and their houses were the most frequent activity places for villagers. As a result, the tentacles of broadcasting extend to every corner of life, embedded in the time and space order of daily life, forming stylized media usage habits and integrating into the regular daily life system.

In addition to accompanying listening, since the setting of radio content has a certain time regularity, listening to radio is embedded in People’s Daily life and provides a reference system for the time arrangement of various life matters. The broadcast of radio content at a fixed time is like an alarm clock, reminding villagers to get up, cook and do farm work at a regular time. By listening to the radio, on the one hand, people arrange their daily life according to the time agenda prompted by the loudspeaker; On the other hand, the media agenda of broadcasting also stipulates and constructs the collectivized time system, prompts and promotes the process of daily life matters, and forms a unified and integrated rural life order for every household. The individualized life time is embedded in the collective time, and the private time concept and life rhythm in the family are incorporated into the unified collectivized time system.

As the first modern media to truly enter rural families, radio operates its related media activities under the rules and regulations of daily life, thus evolving people’s media consciousness in the formation and construction of daily order. In terms of time, broadcasting imperceptibly continues to output media content, and the media agenda is embedded in the agenda of daily life; Spatially, broadcasting enters the private sphere of the family at close range and becomes the accompanying medium of daily life activities. Through the expansion of time and space, family media usage habits are gradually cultivated and become the beginning and foundation of media practice in the family.

3. The “private” media practice in the rural family TV era

TV media began to penetrate into family life in the 1990s and deeply connected with private family life. During this period, the

popularity of television made individual family members more active in the choice and reception of media content, and fixed and daily media behaviors had been formed, which marked the deep integration of media practice and daily life and became an important content in the field of private life. The media practice scene of small family structure deconstructs the collective listening and watching scene, making media practice more private, and almost every family member has the opportunity and possibility of media practice.

In the 1990s, rural families have formed a relatively fixed home space, and watching TV is also one of the most important family daily activities, integrated into the production of this home space, and closely combined with it, laying the foundation for the construction of practical daily life. "Daily life has a boundary, which is the effective radiating limit of human action and movement." The most intuitive physical boundary of daily life is the physical spatial threshold of the "home". One of the most basic questions about daily life is "where" to discuss daily life. Living home space is the most basic space unit on which people survive and develop and conclude social relations, and it is one of the most important aspects of daily life research. The profound embedding and reconstruction effect of mediatization on rural social life is clearly reflected in the spatial dimension of mediatization -- the mediatization of living space. "An important feature of rural society's transition from traditional to modern is the transformation of media space from traditional to modern". Media is deeply embedded in traditional rural daily life space, transforming it into a media space with modern characteristics.

The media practice of "watching TV" is embedded in the pragmatic home layout, that is, to serve the convenience, comfort and practicality of daily life, and to center on the practical needs of People's Daily life, so that the practical activity of watching TV and the surrounding home layout naturally integrate, reflecting the wisdom of rural families' daily life. Livingstone observed that "the front door" of the family was a symbol of the separation of family life from public life, while "the bedroom door" separated the adolescent's individual space from family and public life. In rural China, the trend of intergenerational separation popular in the 1990s is accompanied by the segmentation of living space, which is also accompanied by the independence of media practice. Regardless of whether the son and the elderly live separately after marriage, preparing a separate marriage room for the son in the family home is a must for every elderly person. The public space of the family is a public activity area, while the marriage room needs to meet the basic living functions independently and constitute an independent private space. The "marriage room" will separate the individual space from the public family life. The wedding room needs to prepare the corresponding supporting home media, so that it is convenient to watch TV in their respective rooms without interfering. The segmentation of the living space builds the corresponding segmentation of the media practice scene, and the miniaturized media space of the marriage house is "nested" in the whole family media space. The division of residential space has laid the foundation for the practice of independent television, and the need of the latter has prompted the former to play a role. There is a relationship between the media practice of family members watching TV and the home pattern. In the process of the transformation from traditional home pattern to modern home pattern, family members constantly construct their own living space through subjective media practice, adjust, repair and rearrange the home pattern, and transform the traditional family pattern into modern media space. At the same time, the home pattern also forms the restriction and extension of media practice. It can be seen that the home pattern and media practice constitute an interactive relationship and construct each other in daily life practice.

4. "Individualized Media Practice" in the Internet Era of Rural Families

By the end of 2008, the number of Internet users in rural China reached 84.6 million, with an annual growth rate of more than 60%. During this period, with the development of intergenerational separation of rural family members, migrant work and staying behind, the practice scene of family collective media tends to deconstruct. As an individualized contact tool, mobile phone has gradually become a new powerful media in the family under the dual promotion of technological development and social needs. With the continuous iteration and upgrading of network technology, personalized media such as mobile phones and computers appeared in rural families during this period, and personal mobile phones gradually replaced collectivized family landlines and evolved into "life assistants" that could meet the diversified and personalized life needs of individual families. Internet and intelligence began to gradually penetrate into daily life, the status of the previous powerful media in the family - TV has been impacted, and the scene of collective family watching TV and watching images has gradually deconstructed. It is followed by the use and mastery of media by individuals in the family and the extension of their active functions, which enables the development of "individualized" media practice and provides an opportunity for individuals in the family to innovate media practice and use media to develop individualized daily life.

"In the virtual world enabled by electronic communication technology and the Internet, opportunities and information resources are utilized in a very different way than in the physical world. In cyberspace, access to resources and interaction among different individuals is the result of the intermediation of communication technology, which is more dependent on one's access to the technology and ability to use it, and the time and money it takes to overcome physical barriers is less important." In the past, the older generation who have mastered authoritative knowledge and experience resources in the "physical world" have lost the right to practice in the media world, and the traditional experience with heavy time and energy costs cannot compete with the flat technical training. Although the old generation is in the position of "authority" in the traditional experience and practice, due to the limitation of its media practice, the old generation, as a "digital vulnerable group", is faced with the situation that the content of their personal experience cannot be transmitted and no one listens to it. The young generation born after 90 years have access to media networks at an earlier stage of their lives. As "digital semi-immigrants", apart from family education in the early stage of their lives, media has become an important source of information for them, and they have established more deep-rooted media practice habits, which enables them to participate in traditional experience and practice. To a large extent, they maintain a sense of alienation from traditional experience and practice, and become "avoiders" of collectivized experience field.

Kurdisti believes that in a mediatized society, media can replace the original sources of historical knowledge to a certain extent, and become a new source of norms and precedents that people follow in their actions. At the same time, it provides people with an interpretive framework of contemporary context, which facilitates people to realize the current interpretation of past knowledge. Traditional experience is framed by the media world, so as to construct a new interpretation of traditional experience. Heterogeneous experience brought by media practice provides a new action and cognitive reference system for people, and also provides a new perspective and context for social individuals to observe and experience society. Through “digital feeding”, the young generation and the middle-aged and elderly generation, who are “in a dominant position in the formulation of new rules and the guidance of new ideas”, realize the transformation of traditional experience and practice in the media practice process of searching, watching, sharing and learning on the Internet media.

5. conclusion

The research of “media practice” derived from the western media theory emphasizes that people can make use of the objective attributes of technology itself to meet the needs of private practice, construct a new communication and interaction situation, and thus form a public activity space, and emphasize that people can “change the way they construct society” through media practice. In the context of rural communication, “people”, as the subject of communication, are deeply connected with media technology and communication context. Through media practice, people in rural families develop a variety of media-related habits and corresponding orders in their daily life practices. The living habits and order of media have been formed in daily life practice, and have imperceptibly affected and constructed people’s family daily life. In the future, taking media practice as the research orientation and realizing the close connection between media practice theory and rural practice may become a new path and a new entry point for related research.

References:

- [1] Stig Shava. Media of Culture and Society [M]. Translated by Liu Jun et al. Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 202:9. (in Chinese)
- [2] Guan Congyan. A historical investigation into the formation of human subjectivity in rural family media space: A case study of Zisui Village in Gansu Province [J]. News Enthusiast, 2020(6):31-34.
- [3] Dunconice Heller. Daily life [M]. Translated by Yi Junqing. Chongqing: Chongqing Publishing House, 1993:256.
- [4] Paul Adams. Geography of Media and Communication [M]. Translated by Yuan Yan. Beijing: Communication University of China Press, 2020:190. (in Chinese)
- [5] Shava. Media of Culture and Society [M]. Translated by Liu Jun et al. Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 202:150 (in Chinese).

Author: Zhang Yani, Graduate student, School of Journalism, Shanxi University, Taiyuan City, Shanxi Province, 030006