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Social background of the emergence of CATV

Dismantling of unitary society and birth of multidimensional society

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What will CATV change?

CATV is being closely watched as a new information medium in urban areas. To be honest, its true nature has not yet been fully clarified.

Speculation, speculation, and debate about future possibilities abound, but few people have an accurate picture of what role this new medium will play and the society that will be created by it.

Nevertheless, CATV is changing things. The change will not be rapid or far-reaching. CATV is slowly changing things locally, from the bottom up. The information media have expanded their networks quite rapidly in the past, whether it be radio or television. However, this expansion was done from the top, so to speak. Radio and television can be likened to a loud rant. These quickly spread throughout the country. Even as far away as Rishiri Island in Hokkaido and beyond, the talk of the town was the NHK drama series and the Tokyo gubernatorial election. It quickly covered the narrow Japanese archipelago in a single color. The Japanese archipelago has been painstakingly covered with such a canvas that it does not allow for any secret gaps.

But CATV is different. It never rants loudly. It signals and whispers secretly to its companions. On a canvas painted gray, it drips a vivid drop of viridian, or draws a strip of Prussian blue. But now, not even the color appears; CATV is rather submerged in the depths of gray. When another light is shone on them, they may reveal their respective vivid colors all at once.

At first glance, CATV is an ordinary product. It is a wired transmission of TV using coaxial cables. Some even say it is anachronistic. That may be so. Since Marconi's radio transmission in 1896, radio-TV electromagnetic waves have traveled around the globe. The emergence of communication satellites has further helped this. Moreover, from radio's long wave and medium wave to TV's ultra short wave, TV relay and radar's microwave and even millimeter wave are being developed. Not only that, but even radar communications are now being researched. With the almost limitless development of wireless applications in the air, many people may be tempted to say, "What's the use of wired transmission now?"

On the other hand, the key to communication up to now has been how to expand the network. This is especially true in the case of Japan, where newspapers have a circulation of 1 million,

a decrease that is unique in the world, and radio and television also focus on how to expand their coverage and establish a network. This is why CATV, which targets a single local area, seems anachronistic. CATV began as a functional measure to prevent poor reception. It is similar to a communal antenna on the roof of a building, called MATV, and is not new.

What exactly is CATV, which at first glance seems to be anachronistic and backward, changing? We will have to wait until the next generation to find out for sure. However, it is not a dream of the future. It has already begun today, based on a seemingly anachronistically solid technological base. The only question is what new functions or roles will be added to it in the future.

In fact, CATV was first called Community Antenna Television, and was originally a communal antenna to address the problem of poor reception in difficult-to-view areas. The system was only to receive the signals from a high-performance receiver, amplify them appropriately, and transmit them to the receiver, but this system has enabled the highly accurate images and the use of intermediate channels that were previously unavailable due to interference. It also made possible independent broadcasting using intermediate channels, which is a different dimension from the initial measures to prevent poor reception. Thus, CATV is also called "Cable Television," and its initial meaning as a measure against poor reception has faded away. What will happen in the future remains to be seen. But what can be said with certainty is that there are still many possibilities. The meaning of "C" may change one day. In the sense that it always has the potential to change, it may be called Changeable TV.

Transformation of the Information Society

The modern era is called the Information Age, and modern cities are also called information cities. Modern society is an information society. The information society is considered to be the progression of the mass supply and processing of information by the mass media, as well as the homogenization and simultaneity of information. This is certainly one of the major trends of our time. However, there is another reaction at work precisely because of this. The first is selectivity and self-assertion in response to the massive supply of information, the second is diversification and pluralism in response to homogenization, the third is the desire for informal communication in contrast to formalization, and the fourth is the increasing desire for participation in order to escape from the information society and its imaginary image.

The more information technology advances, the more pronounced these trends become. The fact that the United States, the most economically advanced country in the world and the one with the most advanced information technology, has produced the largest number of hippies is a testament to this phenomenon. The fantasy society they are creating with LSD and

marijuana is called a drug community, and they are creating their own highly unnatural, yet completely personal and unique information world in their own consciousness. It is an escape from and reaction to the mass homogeneity of information, and in a sense, a challenge to the modern information society.

In Japan, the information society has not reached the same extreme level as in the United States. However, there are people who are afraid of the wave of the information society, whether consciously or unconsciously. They seek out bars, clubs, coffee shops, snack bars, and a place to hide out with friends. Humans have an instinctive fear of being homogenized and numbered. It would be unnatural for all 3.6 billion people to be homogenized. Americans and Germans, Vietnamese and Tahitians, are all different. It makes sense that they are all different. If one person meets someone who knows exactly the same things, thinks exactly the same way, and acts exactly the same way, it is as unnatural and as marvelous as meeting someone who looks exactly like you.

Everything is different, and that is why we exist. If they were exactly the same person, nothing would come from their interaction. Information is formed because each of us has different knowledge, ideas, and ways of acting, and each of us reaps the harvest and creates something new. Identification is even the enemy of creation, just as nothing is born from a man and a man, or a woman and a woman.

Information is valuable because of this difference. The information society is oriented toward the massification and homogenization of information, but this is a self-contradiction that leads to the valuelessness of informatization. In order for the information society to persist, it needs to be saved by new media.

The Emergence of CATV

CATV is a world of information that has never existed before. In terms of the breadth of its coverage, it falls somewhere between mass communication and personal communication.

CATV, on the one hand, enables the mass supply of information, and on the other hand, it reserves the possibility of self-assertion and choice within the scope of locality, and thus, it is a form of regional pluralism as opposed to national homogenization of information. CATV responds to the demand for regional pluralism as opposed to national homogenization of information. It also leaves room for other informal communication while still maintaining formal communication. And by providing the necessary terminal equipment for the imaginary image of informatization, the receiver can simultaneously be the sender and the receiver can be the sender of the information. For the majority of the masses who are looking to break away from the mass world but are unable to break into the drug community, CATV may provide a new world and a place where they can quietly recover their self-assertion.

Similar media in terms of coverage include local newspapers, public relations for municipalities, and community newsletters. American newspapers, which are mainly regional newspapers, can be considered somewhat similar. However, in general, Japanese regional newspapers are weak and are usually prefecture-based.

CATV differs from these newspapers in that it is first and foremost a medium with a TV screen, and its geographic coverage is linked by the physical relationship of cable. CATV differs from the above while fulfilling the functions of the above-mentioned similarities. Even if the areas covered are similar, the differences in information function are quite significant.

CATV Communities

It is said that communities have been destroyed in modern metropolises. The scope of human activity has expanded, and spheres of life have intersected. Workplaces are separated from residences, and residences are no longer more than mere neglas for men. Regional problems have not disappeared. Schools and daycare centers, hospitals and health care, garbage disposal and sewage systems, road pavement and traffic safety, and other problems that can only be solved locally are piling up. However, the actual living conditions of the residents have expanded too far beyond the local community.

On the other hand, there are calls for the rebuilding of new communities. This is because some kind of community restoration is needed to solve these regional problems and, by extension, to protect the lives of the citizens. Currently, the need is recognized in this metropolis, but the leverage to rebuild the community has yet to be found.

In such a situation, CATV has the potential to create an information community. It is a physical world connected by concrete cables that share the same information, rather than mental elements such as a sense of belonging to a community or a love of one's hometown. This community has a modern dual structure that is both invisible and visible at the same time, as it is connected to the invisible medium of information through visible cables. The world of CATV, where common information is shared and locality is limited, predicts a new kind of community.

The establishment of communities in the midst of the storm of mobility and widening of areas is difficult to achieve by simply allocating administrative divisions and local facilities such as schools.

Administrative boundaries no longer have any meaning in the realities of life, and regional facilities, while they may be more meaningful than administrative boundaries, are only a problem for a limited age group. Regional ties in large cities require new solidarity in the form of information communities.

The establishment of information communities will be further aided when mutual

communication takes place. Joint information is done in real time, with local participation. When such reciprocity is possible, the community becomes more voluntary. Politically, it will be an opportunity to make direct democracy possible in the information world, and socially, it will be a community of images and sounds spreading in the living room.

In such a situation, traditional local governments will have no choice but to step out of their bounds. Cities and municipalities will be perceived as more familiar entities through the means of information. Municipalities must and will be re-created by citizens once again.

The World of CATV (1) 11 Anti-Management Society

When a new community is rebuilt, people find a base of resistance against the transformation into a management society. As an information society = a management society, people are controlled in their workplaces, in their consumer activities, and even in their hobbies and leisure activities. This trend is now more and more decisive. Until now, the only way to resist a controlled society has been to escape from it.

The world of CATV is an attempt to find a second possible point of resistance against the management society.

Of course, CATV also has the potential to create a locally controlled society. In order for such a society to become possible through CATV, it is necessary to establish an information community through CATV, as mentioned above. At the very least, it has the potential to create new, unmanaged information.

In order to create such a world of CATV, the network must not be too wide. If CATV is mass-produced based on economic principles alone, its unique characteristics will be lost. It is conceivable that each CATV station could be grouped into a block network based on its own identity. This would create a grouping of different personalities, which would give meaning to the group. However, simply expanding the boundaries of a single block would be a form of uniformity that would stifle individuality, and would be an act of CATV suicide.

The World of CATV (2) - The Soft City

CATV also has the potential to change the physical form of cities. The increased number of information channels will allow people to cut out unnecessary things from their activities. For example, shopping can be done via CATV with actual samples from local stores. Housewives can simply tell them how much they need and the rest will be delivered to their homes. In schools, CATV can be used as a substitute for simple knowledge education. In addition, researchers and entrepreneurs can obtain necessary data from CATV, which is connected to a databank. Local public information and community announcements are, of course, sent by CATV, as well as emergency calls.

Even movies are sent here based on pre-set preferences, and there are so many of them that the need for movie theaters is becoming more and more limited, unless one wants a big screen. In this town, unnecessary human and car traffic will be replaced by the flow of information, and urban development centered on roads will be replaced by a new urban development centered on cables. In fact, the amount of information flowing on a 10-meter wide road can be contained by a few millimeters of coaxial cable. Even so, the road is necessary, but the road is relatively deserted. But through the invisible cables, the town is actively moving.

In the future, stocks will be bought and sold, votes will be cast via these cables, and even a single company may replace most of its functions with its own CATV network.

The hard city of roads and buildings will actually consist of a minimum of hard elements: cables and the soft information that flows through them.

Multidimensional City with CATV

The CATV network will become increasingly complex. The network may even be redundant. In the U.S., there are mini-mini CATV stations run by a couple of fishmongers. When countless nets, large and small, for special business securities, leisure, and other purposes, are connected, the city will become a multidimensional information city. Unitary information is a dangerous state of affairs for information without mutual checking and control. The memory of being forced to make decisions about the current situation at the beginning of World War II and during the war based on erroneous information provided by the Cabinet Intelligence Bureau is a reminder of the dangers of unitary information.

In contrast to such centrally controlled, centralized information, multidimensional information is a kind of information guerrilla. We do not know what kind of information will appear and how it will appear. However, in today's complex world, relying on a single source of information tends to make us lose sight of the truth. Even if there is only one truth, it is better to have a variety of information freely available. Even if there is confusion, this will have a much more stabilizing effect than the manipulation of information through centralization.

If a multidimensional information city is created by CATV, it will first of all nurture creative people who use information and create information rather than being controlled by it, and it will also develop human individuality. The coexistence of orthodox information, local information, and guerrilla information will enable people to grasp relatively correct information based on their own judgment, rather than being swayed by a controlled society. The CATV metropolitan sister is such a thing.