




The Transparency Society

By Byung-Chul Han

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The Transparency Society By Byung-Chul Han

Transparency is the order of the day. It is a term, a slogan, that dominates public discourse about corruption and freedom of information. Considered crucial to democracy, it touches our political and economic lives as well as our private lives. Anyone can obtain information about anything. Everything?and everyone?has become transparent: unveiled or exposed by the apparatuses that exert a kind of collective control over the post-capitalist world. Yet, transparency has a dark side that, ironically, has everything to do with a lack of mystery, shadow, and nuance. Behind the apparent accessibility of knowledge lies the disappearance of privacy, homogenization, and the collapse of trust. The anxiety to accumulate ever more information does not necessarily produce more knowledge or faith. Technology creates the illusion of total containment and the constant monitoring of information, but what we lack is adequate interpretation of the information. In this manifesto, Byung-Chul Han denounces transparency as a false ideal, the strongest and most pernicious of our contemporary mythologies.

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The Transparency Society By Byung-Chul Han Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #176015 in Books
- Published on: 2015-08-19
- Released on: 2015-08-19
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x .40" w x 5.00" l, .20 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 70 pages

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Korean-born German philosopher Byung-Chul Han teaches philosophy and cultural studies at Berlin's University of the Arts (UdK). In the past few years, his provocative essays have been translated into numerous languages, and he has become one of the most widely read philosophers in Europe and beyond. His work is presented here in English for the first time.

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