1-1-2017

On the Front: Aesthetics vs. Popular Arts and Mass Culture - II

Ken-ichi Sasaki
Nihon University, ken_sasaki@jcom.zaq.ne.jp

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.risd.edu/liberalarts_contempaesthetics

Part of the Esthetics Commons
On the Front: Aesthetics vs. the Popular Arts and Mass Culture - II

Ken-ichi Sasaki

6. Problems of aesthetics stimulated by contemporary mass art/culture

A. Art as a fact of market. The first problem concerns the question, why is high art high? Since it does not appeal to most people and is only supported by the non-elite, whence comes the high value attributed to this art? We have only one answer, which is the legacy of the modern ideology of art. High art, particularly the avant-garde, is maintained by the art world as a market. Andy Warhol was an excellent designer but obsessed with the desire to be an artist. I don’t know what Warhol, himself, looked for in art. But the result was clear and striking. He won wealth and fame that were far beyond what a designer could ever expect. In the contemporary world ruled by the American capitalism, wealth and fame are one and the same; it is the wealth that brings about the fame. Once there was fame through poverty, even colored with an aura of sanctity. It was not rare among artists and scholars, for example, Beethoven. Such a legend can hardly be found in our day except, perhaps, in the case of a Mother Theresa. Today, high art is high in terms of economics.

The wealth produced by art is based on different structures in visual art and mass art. That of Herbert von Karajan was of the same nature as that of Elvis Presley and the Beatles. The larger portion of it came from the sales of records and CD, which stand on the classic economics of supply and demand. This system is totally democratic. What applies, on the contrary, to visual art, the works of which are, in principle, one-of-a-kind, is the economics of the auction. If there are two bidders who wish to purchase the same work, its price rises up to the upper limit of one of them. This system is very suitable for such a small market as high art; small in size, though the trade can be very big. The limit price of bidding is determined in terms of the fame of the artist, hence the bidding-up dynamics driven by a dialectics between fame and wealth. Ultimately, however, the fame of an artist is based on the price of high art itself. A Warhol piece does not resemble, in any sense, one by Rembrandt or Van Gogh but the price of his high artworks is determined by the prices given to those classical works. If this legacy should disappear, the economic values of most works of contemporary high art could evaporate, since it is based on the negation of the inherent values the classical works aimed at. But this legacy will not disappear easily, for the art world is an economic system before everything else and thus preserved by vested interests.

B. Interpenetration of art and culture. The second point concerns the ambiguous relation of art to culture. Dewey dared to assert that “the fire-engine rushing by” and “the tense grace of the baseball player” represented the basic forms of aesthetic life in his time, and criticized “the compartmental conception” of art, which separates art from everyday experiences. But in the everyday life of the people today, art and culture are blended with one another. For a young couple thinking of a date spot, a movie theater and a baseball or football stadium are equivalent, and an aquarium, a planetarium, and a beach can equally be included in the list. They also have no reason to exclude shopping and strolling. Of course, the movie is a more intellectual and mentally stimulating experience than the beach. If that is the point, however, the aquarium and the planetarium can offer the possibility of a similar experience. Besides, an art experience is not necessarily intellectual or mentally stimulating; the audience at a rock concert is as enthusiastic as one at a baseball stadium. If we may use the vocabulary of Arnold Berleant, they are enjoying an intensive engagement.

Let’s consider flânerie or strolling as culture. Paying attention to flânerie as a new custom in Paris, the fashionable capital of the nineteenth century, Benjamin recognized Baudelaire, the allegorical poet, as the representative flâneur. Heinz Paetzold counted flânerie among the experiences of symbolic forms, in Cassirer’s sense. He considered that the totality of the symbolic forms, such as science, language, art, myth, morality, politics, technology, and economics, constituted culture. In the modern era, he said, “culture lost its former separation from everyday life and became a decisive part of it.” In fact, the cityscape stimulates the five senses of the stroller with allegorical or symbolic meaning. New buildings and their construction sites show the most advanced techniques and materials. The behaviors of people on the street suggest the orientation of their interests and their view of value. The accumulated history on display relates both change and continuity with the past. In such a way, urban space reflects the whole world extending beyond it. Generally, the city is not considered as art. But this urban experience of the flâneur resembles reading of nineteenth-century Paris in the novels of The Human Comedy (La Comédie humaine) and Les Rugon-Macquart. The fact that many scholars share the method of reading modern novels as documents of cities demonstrates the deep fusion between the “culture” of strolling and the “art” of the novel.

Why isn’t the city regarded as art? The main reason must be the fact that there is no author of a city. Even Haussmann is not the author of Paris. Its real author is the people who have continuously modified the ground design, and it was this forming dynamics that created the passages in Paris and made it unfashionable in the course of time. The typical anonymous work, because of its collective
origin, is folk song, which is the product of many peoples' oral contribution, with a slight deformation caused by a confused memory. Such a phenomenon seems to play an important role in contemporary mass culture. This is our third topic, that is the active participation of audience and, consequently, the non-individuality and anonymity of the author.

C. Open availability. Originally, the author is a relative concept. I have written this text, of which I claim to be the author to the letter. I could, however, only write it at all thanks to many cultural accumulations, such as the genre of scholarly paper, its basic style, and other peoples' thoughts to be consulted and quoted. The modern concept of work is defined by the literality in opposition to the oral nature of folk song, and the author is someone who decides these literal details.

In the contemporary mass arts, in contrast, the oral model of folk song seems to have regained its importance, which makes the position of mass arts strong in their antagonism against high art. From the viewpoint of the creator, a video game is evidently an art; it is constituted by a story, animation, and music. But, being a game, it is not an object of appreciation. Its main part is charged by the player who enjoys it. Video games cannot stand without a participating audience.

This active character of the audience is closely related to a distinctive feature of the media of mass production. Though originally a means for a purpose, contemporary media are a power waiting for unknown purposes, or a possibility that we may call a reversed productivity. Marx noticed that production gives birth to consumers.[57] By seeing that supply yields need, we can grasp the principle of the commodity market of our days. The basic relation is that production aims at filling the needs. But in the advanced stage of capitalism, industry must produce the needs itself and pressure us to buy what we don't need. Now commodity has to bear the power of making us dream, that is, an aura. What does the consumer dream of? Evidently a new style of life available through that commodity.

The consumer's imagination modifies or often even changes the nature of a commodity. To quote a classical case, Edison invented his phonograph as a recorder, which, however, was developed as an audio player. A phonograph is a medium, and a medium, unlike a means, is not determined by its use. Media offers an open availability. Let us remind ourselves of the famous and puzzling words of McLuhan, "the medium is the message." In spite of its paradoxical duality, the meaning seems evident. What we receive from a particular medium does not come from the content of the program but from the medium itself. For example, a TV program is determined by the condition of appealing to the interests of a big audience, in an auditory and visual way. Instead of being the means of sending a message as a program, TV selects, first of all, messages according to its logic of big size. We have to recognize, before the content of the program, this basic condition of media. Indeed, we are inclined to receive the opinion, appealing to the big audience, as the majority view.

The Internet, the most powerful medium today, emphasizes the active commitment of the audience. Thanks to the Internet, a large number of people transmit their messages. What has been done in a small sphere can now be uploaded easily into cyberspace, in the form of photos or movies with music, so that these messages may happen to attract many people and sometimes can become a commodity. This is a popular activity, and those who upload their photos or movies are, so to speak, artists. On the Internet, the people find a space of open availability where they are manufacturers rather than consumers. We cannot sufficiently emphasize this difference of the Internet and TV as two forms of mass media. While TV cannot stand but on a big scale model of commerce, the Internet yields the people a space of open availability for communication, in which they can become a producer instead of staying in the passivity of a consumer.

The effect of the Internet is most clearly perceived in cosplay. Its materials are characters of comics and animations (illustration 2a-b), and its formal cause is the Internet. I was shocked by a cosplaying girl on the London tube. People in the same car seemed to be uneasy but also to accept such behavior as an expressive act. Indeed, the word ‘cosplay’ has become part of English vocabulary. Without such a commonsensical reception, a cosplay would simply be an abnormality. That commonsense was formed by the Internet. Someone gets the idea of dressing as a character from the comics and takes a photo of this adventure. Then she or he publishes the photo on the Internet, and the image inspires more and more people who have had the same aspiration.
The Communist Manifesto (1848) indicates that the unification of workers, which should take centuries in the Middle Ages, is now possible within a few years thanks to the railway.[58] Unlike the workers’ case, cosplayers are not driven either by the needs of life or a social theory but a dream that can be efficaciously mediated by visual images. The Internet exercises a unifying power much wider than the railway. A lot of followers were born all over the world, and cosplay is now canonized as art or, at least, as culture.

Just like the railway in the nineteenth century, the Internet was not exploited as a tool of unifying people. The people who began to publish cosplay photos probably did not aim at getting acknowledgement of their activity as art. The possibility was opened by the Internet as a bilateral communication tool. Edgar Morin, the French sociologist, interprets culture as the exchange of dream and reality, such as we perceive in cosplay. His “exchanges between the real and the imaginary” have existed since prehistoric times.[59] In the later twentieth century, Morin claims, these exchanges are realized particularly in mass culture. He remarks that in an impressive way, “the movie Roman Holiday is like reality and the loves of Princess Margret are like a movie.”[60] For Morin, mass culture, such as movies, represents contemporary art. Undoubtedly, cosplay offers a direct expression of this exchange of the imaginary and the real. How, then, is high art different?

As an example of a high art piece that resembles cosplay, we should first bring forward Marcel Duchamp’s Rose Sélavy series, photos taken by Man Ray of Duchamp made up as a woman. (Illustration 3). The imaginary, in this case, is the female, in general, or the eros, unlike the individual characters of cosplay. Individual disguise can be found in the series of self-portraits by Yasumasa Morimura, for example, Portrait Gogh. (Illustration 4) It is also a photo in which the artist puts his made-up face into the scenery of a famous self-portrait of Van Gogh. In these works, indeed, we can discern elements of the imaginary and the real. On the one hand, we find the real beings of Duchamp and Morimura, while on the other, the imaginary, such as the female or the Van Gogh in the self-portrait, and the respective work is formed by the mutual communication between the real and the imaginary. But there is a radical difference from cosplay. Cosplay involves the audience and has thus been growing. This is similar to the links by magnetic force depicted by Plato in his Ion. In contrast, the works of Duchamp and Morimura don’t incite the audience to a new disguise. Being autonomous, they are orthodox inheritors of the ideology of modern art.
This seems to show that Morin’s thesis of exchange between the real and the imaginary does not particularly apply to high art (not necessarily avant-garde). In our day, there is, on the one hand, high art, which takes over the modern ideology of autonomy and is constituted by the solidly determined work by an individual authors, and, on the other hand, with cosplay as its symbolic form, the phenomena of mass culture, which is carried on by anonymous people and disappears after a momentary splendor. While the former insists on the autonomy of the work, the latter aims at an imaginary that should involve many people. The movie is a high art, in the nature of its work, and typically an example of mass culture, in its effect of the exchange between the real and the imaginary.

7. Art-like phenomena in a different universe: popular culture in Edo

Today mass culture and mass arts are quantitatively overwhelming, although conceptually they are considered secondary to high art. It is the effect of modern aesthetics. If we get rid of ideological pressure, a different map of culture may appear. In order to imagine such a possible world, I wish to conclude this article with a concise description of culture in Edo, Japan [63]. I believe it is worthwhile to give a glance at this period when, on the one hand, high culture existed and even common people participated in it, and, on the other, a new popular culture that included haikai, ukiyo-e, kabuki, and ningyō-jōruri theaters, novels, sport, and tourism was created and explosively developed independent of high culture because there was no ideology oppressive to the popular culture, equivalent to modern aesthetics in the West [64]. The following description should be read not as a fairy tale but as something we can compare to our contemporary world.

Early modern times in the history of Japan, the Edo period, lasted a long 260 years, from 1603 to 1867. In contrast to the period of Westernization that followed, the government strictly controlled the foreign trades so that culture was substantially formed from inside. It is, then, curious to find there similar phenomena to the West. The basic reason of this similarity is that it was a peaceful time following a long civil war. The military government in Japan adopted a policy of pacifism. Under this political situation, similar to the West, in the modern era, where noble men needed a new proof of distinction different from the sword, which they found in elegance, the Japanese warriors were also oriented to learn culture, including gakumon (philosophy or science). Confucianism was the gakumon par excellence, and its doctrine justified the feudal order. Learning gakumon as or art (see below) was also spread among the people.

Besides, this peace encouraged commerce, the subsequent wealth becoming the capital for developing culture. In the second half of the seventeenth century, the first prosperity times, Saikaku Ihara, from Osaka, wrote a book entitled, Nippon Eitai-gura (The Eternal Storehouse of Japan), which is a collection of success and failure stories of merchants, with appended moral lessons. It includes descriptions of the aspirations of rich merchants to acquire culture and stories of ruin following excessive absorption. Their culture included poetry, ball game, allow game, flutes, hand drums, incense smelling, and the tea ceremony.
Since these were traditional aristocrat games, we easily understand what upstart merchants looked for in such culture. After commercial success, they wished to acquire the marks of high society, which meant they had to learn all those arts, for aristocrats had mastered all of them. These activities were generally called gei (技), which means, literally, competence. This is a remarkable difference from Western modern art: it is not a matter of appreciation but of practice. The poetry included on this list was of the same nature. People were not interested in simply reading classical poems but in composing poetry themselves.

People’s ambition to rise socially was clear, and we find such a vitality not only among successful merchants but among all kinds of people throughout this period. This became the driving force of popular culture. The first step was to acquire literacy, and among those who learned classical texts were born scholars who constituted an intellectual community, a Republic of Letters. Along with the schools for the ruling class, many private schools were created, mainly in cities, where pupils could learn, in addition to literacy, the art of calculation, the spirit of Confucianism, and even something of the tea ceremony, flower arrangement, and the basics of etiquette. People not only wished to be respected but also to learn. Especially for merchants, the need for learning was acute. The commercial custom was credit transaction, so calculation and literacy, for the purpose of noting accounting, were vital for them.

The basis of this general leveling of culture was the art of printing as a mass media, and we can describe the whole picture of popular culture of this period from this viewpoint. Print was categorized into two groups, by content. The first group was comprised of Buddhist and Confucianism texts and classical literature, and the second of calendars, newspapers, ukiyo-e, and entertaining novels for the people. While the demand for the first was small, the second were commercial products and needed to be printed in bulk. Corresponding to these two different needs, there were two different types of print technology available, woodblock printing and type printing. Curiously, contrary to what happened in Europe, the woodblock printing became dominant. The main reason was that the types, made of wood, were rather fragile and could not produce a large number of copies. In response to the increase in demand of the popular publications, woodblock printing was adopted, making it possible to print several thousand copies.

The second effect of this new print was the possibility of juxtaposing text and images on the same page. In East Asian culture, calligraphy and drawing had been closely related because both were the arts of brush strokes with black ink. So, writing a poem or a word onto a drawing being customary, the juxtaposition of word and image on a printed page was a natural development. This style oriented the development of ukiyo-e in the context of print business.

From the availabilities opened by the medium of print were born several new forms, mainly vulgarized texts of gakumon (philosophy or science) and ukiyo-e. Ukiyo-e, in particular, yielded the effect of gathering different cultural activities to form a constellation like Western “art,” but without general name and with different constituents. Among the publications for a wide public, material was mostly distributed through circulating libraries. It is interesting that the business of renting books, especially in the form of the peddling trade, was found in Japan and in the West at the same time. In Europe, however, most popular novels circulated through this network were of lesser quality. In contrast, in Edo there were no novels categorized as pure literature, and among popular novels were found masterpieces. Beside learning gakumon and reading novels for pleasure, the people wished to get news. Although the government prohibited the publication of news, newspapers were clandestinely published.

The two forms of drama born in the second half of the seventeenth century, kabuki and bunraku, or joruri, eagerly adopted the hot topics of the day. Bunraku, or joruri, is a puppet theater accompanied by singing and reciting. This theatrical form was developed especially in Osaka but there were many people, everywhere, who learned its song. Its text parts were therefore published and sold well. Those who learned joruri singing bought these books. The same phenomenon was found in haikai. Haikai is the most popular art even now, practiced by several million people. Those who practiced haikai supported the publication of haikai books, which, in return, increased the popularity of this short poetry. The popularity of haikai came largely from its aesthetics of realism. A basic idea of haikai is expressed in a famous phrase of Bashō: go, that is, eternity and fashion, that coincides curiously with the definition Baudelaire gave to modern beauty. Unlike Baudelaire’s fashion, however, Bashō’s fashion was truly popular and realistic. Otherwise it would be hard to understand the extraordinary number of people who practiced this poetry.

Also remarkable is the influential power of ukiyo-e in unifying different forms of culture. Ukiyo-e, in multi-colored woodcut, appeared about the mid-eighteenth century. In this field, several genres were formed according to the tastes of the people. We have four major genres of subject: theater (illustration 5a-b), sport (sumō wrestling, illustration 6), eroticism (illustration 7), and landscape (illustration 8).
Ill. 5a Inside of a Kabuki theater by Toyokuni Utagawa.

Ill. 5b Prosperity Scene of Theater Town by Toyokuni Utagawa.

Ill. 6 A Sumo Match by Toyokuni Utagawa.

Ill. 7 Bishūrō, the house of eros in Yoshihara, Edo, by Kunisada Utagawa, 1861.
Ill. 8 Late Autumn Scene of the Temple Mii, by Hiroshige Utagawa, ca. 1834.

Ill. 9a Portrait of Ōtani Onitsugu the 3rd, (actor) by Sharaku Tōshusai
(Courtesy of Chiba City Museum of Art).
The popularity of stars and idols increased the demand for ukiyo-e, which in turn stimulated people's aspiration for them to increase their popularity. We had a story of a waitress at a tea house who became an idol in Edo as the effect of being portrayed in ukiyo-e (Illustration 10). As for the theater, not only the scenery of the theater and portraits of actors but also a kind of announcement of new program was produced, too (Illustration 11). The block print's advantage of presenting words and image was well suited to this purpose of preview and advertisement.
This was urban culture. In contrast, the landscape genre took as its subjects not only cityscapes but also many different provincial places (Illustrations 12 and 13). The fact that the famous Hiroshige painted stations on the main traveling roads of the époque suggests the tight link between ukiyo-e and tourism. His series of one hundred scenes of Edo functioned as a message advertising the attractiveness and vitality of the capital to people in the provinces.
Indeed, a large part of the demand for ukiyo-e was for gifts. Hiroshige was a man of the first half of the nineteenth century, and landscape ukiyo-e came later than other forms. But tourism had come into vogue already in the second half of the seventeenth century. Though strictly controlling people’s migration and movement, the government tolerated pilgrimages to temples and shrines, and Ise, the central sanctuary of Shintoism, attracted a particularly large number of visitors from all parts of Japan. According to a document from the beginning of the eighteenth century, there were about 500,000 visitors per year. One century later, in a special year (Illustration 14), the number rose to five million or 20 percent of the total population. This pilgrimage naturally became an occasion for visiting other tourist spots on the way out or back and gave people a luxurious once-in-a-lifetime experience. Though the vogue of landscape ukiyo-e arrived later, much practical materials concerning journey had already been published, including illustrated guides, advices or warnings, and shopping guides.

In this way, print media, including ukiyo-e, mediated or united gakumon or knowledge the people aspired to, entertaining novels, theater and music, sport, eroticism, and tourism to establish a network of equivalence among these cultural fields. There was no ideological tie for this effect. To be sure, there was a tradition of high culture but as a minority matter. High culture and popular culture were segregated, with an outstanding creativity and volume on the side of the popular. Since there was no oppressive ideology of high culture, people enjoyed their cultural activities without any feeling of inferiority, so that they formed, through their behavior, a new constellation of cultural fields. The totality of this new culture without theory can be characterized in terms of the forms of activity, that is, practice and appreciation. In addition to the traditional factor of practice, appreciation appeared in this period as a new element of culture. In other words, aesthetic life for the people was born. In the early part of this period, the traditional high culture that an upstart merchant in Osaka wished to get as a sign of distinction was mostly not a matter of appreciation but of practice: kicking ball, differentiating incenses, making and serving tea, arranging flowers, playing the flute, and so on. The merchants needed to learn and practice them every day in order to acquire such abilities. They had to bilden themselves, so to speak, through these forms of culture to become cultured from inside. This practical or active learning was found in popular culture, too. Haikai was a typical case. As mentioned above, many common people made haikai. Learning the songs of jōruri was also very popular. Gakumon, or science or philosophy, was learned to know how to go on living. So gakumon was required to be useful. The predominance of this practical activity was and still is the basic character of the Japanese and, generally, the East Asian cultures.

However, a new factor of cultural life was appreciative consumption of cultural products. Theater and sport, and ukiyo-e, in particular, were not practiced but appreciated by the people. Appreciation was a new style of behavior in the people’s history. It goes without saying that this appreciation was still active, and that the audience were more like one at rock concert than one at a classical recital. There was no code of disinterestedness. In a kabuki theater, for example, people enjoyed not only the play but also eating, drinking, and chatting. I am convinced, however, that in spite of this noisy ambience, the audience was concentrating on the performance when celebrated actors appeared on stage.
For the Japanese people, appreciation was a new style of consuming culture. It was a possibility opened up by the new technology of print that, according to the market principle, linked several cultural fields and invited the people to actively participate in them. Beyond such appreciation, however, there was also practice. This practice did not necessarily have the educational function it had in the traditional aristocrat culture but was rather hedonistic in nature. This active engagement, colored with hedonism, was the mark of the townsman enjoying urban culture.

8. Some remarks in guise of a conclusion

What can we learn, on behalf of the contemporary mass culture, from this panorama of cultural life in the Edo period? To conclude this article, I recapitulate some points of the description developed above.

What I had in mind when I had the idea of comparing the contemporary with the Edo culture was the problem of the grouping of cultural fields, in relation to the concept of art, which is changing. The concept, in general, is based on the grouping of facts or things that is formed by our daily experience. The problem is closely related to that of practice/appreciation as forms of experience. The Japanese concept that is the most similar to Western art is ねがい(ねがい), meaning competence. For the people of the Edo period, the main ねがい they practiced were poetry (haikai), music (singing/jōruri songs), and gakumon (philosophy or sciences). The original forms of these activities were given by the high culture but I have the impression that people were doing these activities for pleasure rather than from the motive of getting a mark of high class. Remarkable is the position of gakumon that is included in 哲学(しにく) Philosophy/science as pleasure is something of which we seem to have socially lost the sense. ねがい, in the Edo popular culture, testifies that high culture has an attractive power by itself.

While ねがい or the art as practice was the usual form in Japan, appreciation created a different grouping of cultural fields. In the Western world, where appreciation was the standard mode of artistic experience, this was a new form for the people in the Edo period. This was made possible by the new technology of print as the mass medium that was born thanks to the economic prosperity. This fact reminds us that this was also the case in Western modern times. The aesthetic world, in the sense of appreciation, was newly created for the people in the Edo period. Ukiyo-e, among many other print products, played an important role of grouping cultural fields. Theater, sport, landscape/tourism, and the erotic were its major subjects. All these were the objects of appreciation, and ukiyo-e, that mediated them, was the second power of appreciation. Along with gakumon and novels, all these forms of appreciation constituted a group of culture different from Western art. This fact from the Edo culture suggests a strong probability for the concept of art to change.

Looking at it from a different angle, we find the Edo culture testifies the importance of mass media. In Edo, it was print medium that yielded the culture of appreciation for the people. In our days, it is the Internet that is the most important mass medium. The Internet opened the possibility of cultural practice for the people. In other words, the people became producers instead of consumers of culture, thanks to the Internet.

These mass media in Edo and in our day produced two different forms of combined expression. In Edo, the woodcut print realized the juxtaposition of text and drawing, or word and image, in the same space. On the Internet, movie and sounds are combined, in the popularized version of talkie technology. Multiplying the modes of expression is a trial to improve the accuracy of the representation and to stimulate the imagination. So far as it concerns the accurate representation, the talkie is better than Edo print. But beyond a certain limit, a reproduction of the real weakens the imaginative commitment. If we put into question the artistic expressivity, we should have to deepen the study of the function of the imagination on this aspect. It is related to the interaction of the imaginary and the real.

My last point is the current events as an aesthetic. Dewey’s remark on this point holds good for the behavior of the people of the Edo period. Though the government prohibited the circulation of hot news, newspapers were published and the people seem to have bought them for pleasure. Double suicides and revenge were the most popular subjects of Kabuki and Jōruri theaters, presented under fictional settings, in different places and times, and pseudonyms of characters. To quote just one case, Chūshingura (1748) is one of the most successful piece of Jōruri and Kabuki, in which the subject was taken from the revenge forty-seven samurai made on behalf of their ancient master (1702).

Along with the classical case of the Persians, by Aeschylus, such repertory raises the problem of the aesthetic quality of raw materials or subjects offered by newspapers and weekly magazines. We should ask why the subject of a drama or novel must be fiction. Especially in the popular art or culture, we have to ask, with Dewey, what is wrong with a real story as to its aesthetics quality? Indeed, a hundred years later, we find no difference between a real story and a fiction.

Ken-ichi Sasaki
ken_sasaki@jcom.zaq.ne.jp

Ken-ichi Sasaki has published books in English and Japanese as well as many papers in English, French and Japanese. Some of his work in English includes
Endnotes

[51] Warhol's following word is suggestive. “Business art is the step that comes after Art. I started as a commercial artist; and I want to finish as a business artist. After I did the thing called ‘art’ or whatever it’s called, I went into business art. I wanted to be an Art Business-man or a Business Artist. Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art.” (Andy Warhol, The Philosophy of Andy Warhol, Hartcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975, pp. 100-101, quoted from Andy Warhol, 1956-86: Mirror of His Time, Exhibition catalogue, Tokyo, 1996, p. 44).


[57] “Production therefore creates the consumer. …Production not only provides the material to satisfy a need, but it also provides the needs for the material.” Karl Marx, Critique of Political Economy, Appendix 1, “Introduction to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,” transl. by S.W. Ryazanskaya, Laurence & Wishart, 1971, in: https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/appx1.htm. A similar observation is found in McLuhan in terms of “new technology”: Understanding Media—The Extension of Man, 1964, (The MIT Press, 2001, p. 183).


[60] Ibid., p. 44.

[61] The present Tokyo was called Edo before 1868. The government was moved from Kyoto to Edo in 1603 to create a new era. During the Edo period, there were three major cities: Kyoto as the center of the traditional culture, Osaka the city of commerce, and Edo the seat of the political power. The popular culture I describe is that of the townspeople from Osaka and Edo, and with the progress of time, the creative power of Edo became dominating.

[62] In this part treating the popular culture in the Edo period of Japan, I leave out, in principle, all referential notes. Indeed, all cultural facts that are mentioned are learned from several Japanese books specialized in each field that, however, I fear might not interest most readers of this English paper.

[63] I mean by realism simply that poets took their motifs and subjects mainly from their life experiences.

[64] The teaching of Bashō about this idea is recorded down by Dohō Hatttori, one of his main disciples, in his theoretical book, Sanrōshi (later than 1702).

[65] In this respect, it is very similar to the German Kultur.