

Logos, Pathos, and Entertainment

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Abstract. Various new entertainments using information and media technologies have emerged and have been accepted among people all over the world. Casual and heavy games, communications using mobile phones, blogs, and twitters are such kinds of new entertainments. It is important to discuss the basic characteristics of such entertainment and to which direction they would direct our societies. In this paper, a comparative study of entertainment in developing countries vs. developed countries, in old days and in nowadays will be carried out. Also future relationship between entertainment and our society will be described.

Keywords: Entertainment, new media, logos, pathos, Plato, The Tale of Genji, Illiad.

1 Introduction

New technologies such as network technologies, information technologies, and media technologies are rapidly changing our society; human relationship, our life style, our communications, and so on. Entertainment is one of the areas to which these new technologies are influencing strongly. One good example is games. Playing computer games and video games are one of the common daily activities of people especially for young generation. Also online-games are becoming very popular among young generation in US and Asian countries. Another good example is communications. People communicate with their families and friends using e-mails, mobile phone based mails, SNS, twitters, etc. Until 1980s communication media such as telephones were mainly used for business communications. However nowadays communications are something more than business conversations and became everyday entertainment.

There are lots of discussions on these phenomena but most of them are observing only what is happening in our society and reporting the fact that more and more people are spending time for these new entertainments. However unfortunately there are only a few considerations on the basic reason why these new entertainments have been accepted by people all over the world. Some of the fundamental questions are; Is this a totally new phenomenon in our long history or not? Which aspect of our society is changing based on the introduction of these new entertainments and how much. Also more difficult question to answer is that to which direction these entertainment is leading our society. In other words what would be the future of our society where it is expected that people would spend more time for enjoying entertainment than now.

In this paper, the author will try to answer these questions starting from the question of what is entertainment. It will be clarified that in the long human history people have tried to clearly separate logical aspect of our behaviors and emotional aspect, in other words “Logos” and “Pathos.” Consequently we have succeeded in hiding the great power of emotion only to our private aspect our life.

However, new media such as games and mobile phones have strongly affected this relationship between logos and pathos and have partly destroyed it. What is happening nowadays is that people show emotional aspect of their behaviors even in formal situations. More distinctive fact is that this tendency is more obvious in Western countries.

Finally based on these considerations it will be anticipated to which direction our society is going forward. Also it will be discussed what we should do to keep that basic identity as human being.

2 Positioning of Entertainment

2.1 What is Entertainment?

It is well known that there are more than several billion people facing starvation even now all over the world. For these people it is crucial to obtain food to survive for tomorrow or even today. In the global level conferences/meetings such as World Economic Forum [1] how to cope with this problem has been one of the most serious topics.

On the other hand in developed countries new types of entertainment have emerged and are emerging such as chat on mobile phones, games on game machines and PCs, etc. People tend to spend more and more time by enjoying these entertainments. There have been big concerns and complaints against such a trend. The basic logic of such complains is that compared with other human activities such as learning, trading, industrial production and so on, entertainment is not productive. In other words it would be complained that entertainment is only a waste of time.

But is this true? Then why there are already established huge entertainment industries including movie industries, game industries, sports industries, and so on. And why there are huge needs and markets for such entertainment. Probably we should be careful when we discuss this topic.

2.2 Origin of Entertainment

What is happening now is not a totally new phenomenon. In the old era human life was simple. Human carried out farming or hunting to survive. And when they are not occupied with these works, they entertained themselves by various means. In other words we could say that food is strongly related to the physical sustainability of ourselves. At the same time we could point out that entertainment is related to the mental/spiritual sustainability of ourselves.

Then the era of civilization came. Human introduced various types of activities such as art creation, business activities, learning/teaching, religious activities, etc. Because of these activities entertainment became considered as a secondary activity in our life. Although entertainment retained a certain part of our everyday life, it has not been considered as essential part of our life (Fig. 1).

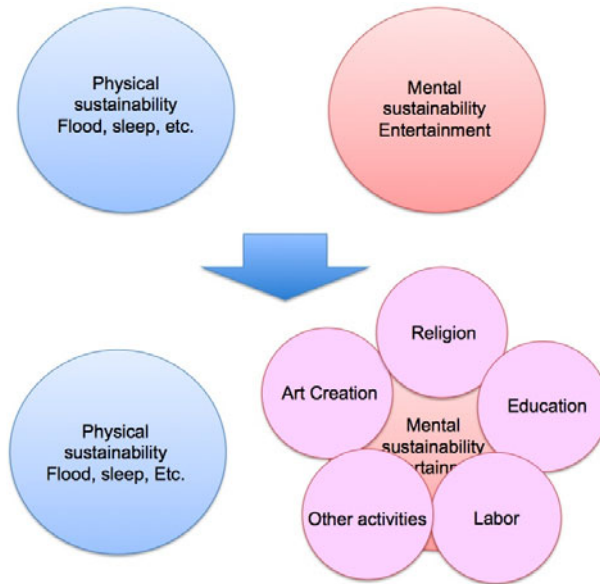


Fig. 1. Physical sustainability and mental sustainability of human being and their changes

2.3 Our Life and Entertainment

Even nowadays sometimes that fact that entertainment is an important part of our life exposes itself. Suppose that people are flying on an airplane. During the flight what people would do is to sleep, to eat, or to entertain themselves by watching movies, reading novels, etc. Only a few people do their business work during flight. This means that in a simple situation, our life style consists of three basic activities such as sleeping, eating, and entertaining ourselves.

What is happening now is in one sense “renaissance of entertainment.” The introduction of new technologies, especially interaction technologies into traditional forms of entertainment has totally reformed and strengthened it. People re-noticed the basic strength and meaning of entertainment recognizing that entertainment is substantial part of their life. This is a key point when we try to understand such substantial issues as the role of entertainment in developed and developing countries, the future direction of entertainment, etc.

3 Entertainment and Developing / Developed Countries

3.1 Entertainment in Developing Countries

The importance of entertainment in developing countries has been underestimated. As is described above, entertainment has been from its origin an essential part of our life. In once sense, its importance is almost next to survival. Even though people in developing countries are not using PCs, mobile phones, game machines, etc., they know the importance of entertainment intuitively. Here is the key point.

We have been wondering and struggling how to introduce civilization into developing countries. It was considered difficult to teach the importance of civilized activities such as education, religion, business, etc. to people facing starvation. However, what is happening in developed countries would make this simpler. By observing the phenomena in developed countries we could say that the merge of entertainment with other activities such as education, business, etc. is emerging. In other words, many of the civilized activities are becoming one form of entertainment. This is in one sense a fundamental change of business models for various human behaviors and activities. Also important thing is that these new business model works even without utilizing cutting edge technologies.

3.2 Renaissance of Entertainment

In other words the border between entertainment and other activities such as education, business, training, etc is going to disappear. This is the reason why the phenomena happening now could be stressed as “renaissance of entertainment.”

This means that many of the civilized human activities contain essence of entertainment and could be enjoyed. It would be better for us to introduce such serious activities as various types of entertainment to people in developing countries. This would make it far easier for people in developing countries to accept civilized human activities such as education, business, etc., because these activities are now interpreted as one form of entertainment and thus are familiar with them.

On the other hand, we should carefully look at the new entertainment enthusiastically accepted by young generation in developed countries. The question is that whether these are actually new types of entertainment or not. When we look into the details of these new entertainments, we found that most of them have their origin in the old forms of entertainment. For example what we experience by playing Role Playing Games is almost same as what we experience by reading fantasies. Another good example is new type of communications. New type of communications such as chats or text mails using mobile phones, twitters are actually reshaped form of old types of everyday conversation among our family members and friends.

This means that what information technologies and media technologies have done is to reshape the traditional entertainment keeping the same basic concept. Because of this, although in the early days of video/PC games the game market expanded with surprisingly great speed, it looks that the game market now has reached to a certain saturated situation and various new entertainments are facing the problem of sustainability. Probably we should learn the core concept of entertainment and the directions game industries should go by watching how people in developing countries entertain themselves.

4 Logos, Pathos and Entertainment

4.1 Logos and Pathos

What is happening in developed and civilized countries is actually deep and substantial. By the emergence of new entertainment our society and life style is experiencing a fundamental change.

Let's look back to the old Greek era in which we find the origin of long history of western philosophy. Plato, one of the most famous philosophers not only in Greek era but also in the whole human history, compared human spirit to a carriage with two horses and one driver in his famous book "the Republic" [2]. Here the driver is a metaphor of a rational aspect of human spirit, in other word "Logos." On the other hands two horses are a metaphor of a emotional aspect, in other word "Pathos" (Fig. 2). The former could be linked to the formal part of our life and the latter being the private part. And one of the horse means passion in emotion and the other is instinctive aspect of it.



Fig. 2. Logos and Pathos

By Plato logos was admired as the basis of human rational behaviors. For pathos, passion was admired as the source of human creative behaviors. But instinct was despised as undeveloped and dark side of human behaviors. Also he expected that logos would controls the dark side of pathos, instinct, with a help of bright side of pathos, passion.

This definition and statement by Plato determined the direction of philosophy and morality in Western world. Since the old Greek era, people have been trying to separate logos and pathos in their life. In other words, they have been trying to separate logical way and emotional way of living.

4.2 Formal and Informal Aspects of Our Life

Based on the philosophical considerations by Plato, in the long history of Western society, logos has been considered to be related to the formal aspect of our behaviors; behaviors in social situations, in business scenes, etc. On the other hand, pathos has been related to the private aspect of our activities. In the long history of Western world, people have been trying eagerly to clearly separate these two aspects. In addition to this people have tried to emphasize the importance of logos neglecting another aspect of pathos.

Also in Asian word we have such distinction. For example in Japan the formal aspect of our behaviors is called "Honne" and informal aspect as "Tatemaie." Japanese people have been accused of having Honne and Tatemaie by being said that Japanese people have double principle. However, based on the above observation this is not correct. All the human have formal aspect and private aspect, in other words

Honne and Tatemae. The problem is that as in Asian societies people have not been well conscious of these two aspects, they have not been good at clearly separating these two behaviors. In other words what is to be accused for Japanese people is the confusion of these two behaviors.

One good example is that former prime minister, Mr. Asoh. Once he declared at the parliament that actually he was against the privatization of Post Office when he was a member of Koizumi cabinet. The problem with his behavior is that as he was a member of the cabinet and this formal decision was made within the cabinet, it is not appropriate to express his private opinion at a formal situation. What was worse was that he thought he was honest by expressing his private opinion and could not understand why people accused him of his expressing Honne.

4.3 Approach between Logos and Pathos

However the introduction of new media and entertainment has invaded deeply into our life and has changed our behaviors. It was long considered as civilized and sophisticated behaviors to act logically hiding emotional aspect of behaviors. However, now people tend to expose their emotional behavior even in the formal part of their life. A good example is the way of communications. Nowadays it is common that people communicate with their intimate ones such as friends or family members using mobile phones or PCs even during meetings and dinners. Surprising thing is that communication with our intimates have been a typical private and emotional behaviors.

This means that in our everyday life again emotional behaviors became influential and play a major role, after long years of separation between logos and pathos and priority of logos toward pathos in formal situations. In one sense our behaviors are going back to those in the old era. Also this phenomenon has another important aspect. When observing this phenomenon we notice that there are two fundamental and distinctive features. One is that human behaviors in Western and Eastern world are approaching. Another is that human behaviors in developed countries and developing countries are approaching. In other words, this means that the difference of human behavior styles is disappearing between Western and Asian countries, developed and developing countries. People share the same thinking ways, principle, rules together. In one sense this is good as this is to lower the wall among different people and countries. But at the same time we are losing the local features of cultures we used to preserve in our long history.

5 Media and Entertainment

5.1 History of Media

It is important to consider why we are losing the separation between formal aspect of our behaviors and informal aspect. As is indicated above the invasion of new media have a strong influence on this.

To explain this let's look back our history of great inventions in media history. The two most impactful great inventions in media history is the invention of written characters and the invention of printing typography. These great invention made

people to think, memorize, discuss, describe, etc. using languages. In other words these inventions made people literal brain dependent. It is noteworthy to say that this mainly happened in Western countries. And based on this the long history of Western philosophy represented by Plato occurred. What happened in Asian countries is somewhat different. Somehow people did not try to clearly separate rational actions and emotional actions. The reason why this happened is an interesting research topic and will be described in other occasions. But anyway for Asian people the concept of separation between logos and pathos has not been so clear.

5.2 Influence of Movies and Telephones

Another two most impactful inventions in the recent history of media are telephones and movies. Nowadays we tend to focus only to recent inventions such as video games, mobile phones, e-mails, blogs, twitters, and so on. Unfortunately we almost forgot the big impact these two media have had on the basic change of our behaviors.

Before the invention of telephone, the formal aspect and emotional aspect of our behaviors was clearly separated. For emotional behaviors, mental distance and special distance were closely related. When we are together with our familiar people such as family members and friends we expose our private/emotional behaviors. We have a strong instinct to be connected with our familiar people. But before the invention of telephone when we were spatially separated from them, as we did not have methods to communicate with them, we had to hide the emotional aspect of us and behaved formally like in business scenes. But after telephone was invented, telephone made it possible for us to be connected to our familiar people even though spatially separated (Fig. 2). And gradually people tend to mix the formal and emotional aspect of our life. This is the fundamental reason why nowadays even during meetings, dinners, etc. people want to communicate with their familiars using mobile phones and smart phones. In other words the telephones has initiated the confusion between rationale and emotional aspects of our behaviors. The role of mobile phones and other recent media is only to accelerate this trend.

The invention of movies has the similar effect. Before the invention of movies people were trained as literal brain dependent and reading and writing were the major intellectual and communication behaviors of people. But the invention of movies introduced “images” as important communication medium. Images have a strong power to influence directly to the emotional part of our brain, or right brain. Therefore after long years of training to rationally use left brain, people began to depend on the usage of right brain. This means that people gradually became emotionally dependent instead of rationally dependent. The recent trend of the excessive use of computer graphics and animations have their origin to the invention of movie. What computer graphics and animation are doing is only to accelerate the trends.

5.3 Future of Entertainment and Media

As is described again after long years of separation between logos and pathos in human behaviors, these two aspects are approaching together and it could be expected that in the future it would merge again (Fig. 3).

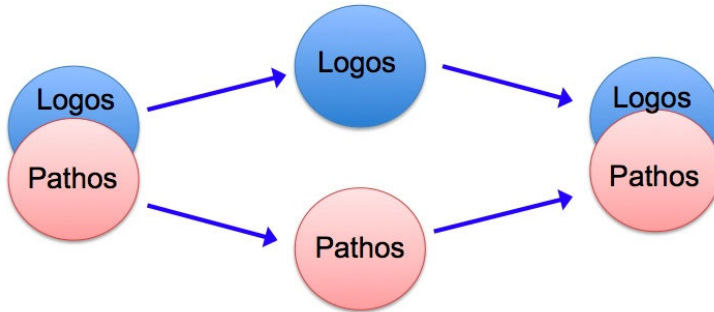


Fig. 3. Transition of the relationship between logos and pathos

What does this mean? Probably there are two aspects. One is that the behaviors in Western and Asians would approach and become identical. As is described above somehow in Asian countries the clear separation of logos and pathos has not consciously been aware nor discussed. Because of this Asian people have been accused as underdeveloped as human beings. But what is happening in Western countries is that their behaviors are approaching toward the behaviors of Asian people [3]. Good examples are their communication behaviors. Nowadays even during such formal events as classes, meetings, discussion, dinners, etc. people tend often check e-mails on their mobile phones and try to communicate with their familiars. When a plane lands and arrives at a gate, the first thing people would do is to take out their mobile phones, turn on the switch, and check e-mails or start calling their family members. There is no distinctive difference between the behaviors of Westerners and Asians.

5.4 Future of Human Being

In one sense this is good as various gaps between the West and Asia have been long time headache for us. Probably we can call this a bright side of globalization. But on the other side there is a danger for this phenomenon. Each country and each race has preserved its own culture. Because of this there is a rich variety of cultures all over the world. This is one of the things what human being can proud of. But the merge of behaviors between West and Asia would mean that this would destroy this rich variety of cultural differences among different countries [4]. It would be a bad dream if we anticipate our future where there is no cultural difference and the people all over the world would be connected to the network all the time and repeat the receiving/sending of shallow text messages. This might be the bad dream shown in the movie Matrix.

There is another interpretation for the merge of logos and pathos. In the case of animals there is no such distinction as logos and pathos. These two are tightly merged together in the case of animals. This means that the merge of logos and pathos might mean that human being would go back to the state of animals. Therefore another bad dream is that we would go back to our very ancient time when human was not well developed and their behaviors were almost those of other animals.

Probably what we have to do is to learn from our history. Both in Western world and Asian world there were eras when logos and pathos were not so clearly separated and still people used to live the life of human. For example in the era of Iliad [5] described by Homer logos and pathos were not clearly separated but the people behaved honestly, bravely, and heroically. We should compare the behaviors of heroes/heroines in the classic with those of present people and learn from them on what our behaviors should be in the future.

On the other hand, in Japan we have The Tale of Genji [6], the oldest novel all over the world. In one sense the behaviors of heroes/heroines in this novel are somewhat similar to those of present day young generation. In the classic novel men and women frequently exchanged short poem called Waka. This was a method of communications for them. This is very similar to the behaviors of young generation nowadays. They frequently exchange short messages using mobile phones, twitters, etc. Then what is the difference? Probably the biggest difference is that exchange of poems is art creation but we could not find any art creation activities in the message exchange of e-mails and twitters. The big question is that how we could ennoble the communication behaviors of network age people. Our good dream would to realize the way of life described in The Tale of Genji in network with new media.

6 Conclusion

Various types of new entertainment represented by games, mobile phones, etc. are being introduced into our society, our life style rapidly. It seems we are in the era of chaos and it is not certain what kind of life style and society we would have in the future. In such a situation it is important to observe the phenomena happening around us carefully and extract some kind of findings, rules, tendencies, etc.

In this paper by trying to answer the question of what is entertainment the author tried to clarify the basic trends that exist behind various surface phenomena. At first it was clarified that human behaviors consists of two aspects, logical and emotional aspects and entertainment is closely related to the emotional aspect.

Then the observation by Plato was referred. He tried to separate logical aspect of human behaviors and emotional aspect of human behaviors. His definition originated the long history of Western philosophy. As entertainment was closely connected to the emotional aspect of human behaviors, it has been considered as informal aspect of our behaviors and thus has been considered to be hidden, although entertainment is an essential aspect of our life as well as eating and sleeping.

Also it was pointed out that the recent development of information and media technologies made it possible for us to notice the importance of emotional aspect of our life. In that sense what is happening is the renaissance of entertainment. But on the other hand this means that logos and pathos that have been clearly separated in our long history are going to approach and even merge together.

Also it was pointed out that there are several dangers for such a trend. One is that the cultural differences that made the history of human being very rich might fade away. Another is that the behaviors of human will go back to those of animals.

So far there is no clear solutions to these dangers. However finally it was mentioned that one way to solve this difficult situation is to look back and learn from

our old history. In our history we had several eras where logos and pathos were together like in the era of Illiad and The Tale of Genji. Probably by learning from the behaviors in these famous classics we could imagine the future we are directing.

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