

問題例 2. 以下の下線部分の英文を日本語に翻訳しなさい。

Throughout history, human beings have occasionally found themselves caught between two very different ways of perceiving reality. Certainly that was the case in the closing days of the 17th century. (中略)

Today, we live in similar times of great tumult, of failing orthodoxies and radical new possibilities. After two centuries of industrial production and commerce, the use of mass human labor yoked to fossil-fuel-powered machines in factories, offices, and commercial businesses is slowly falling by the wayside. New, more sophisticated and “intelligent” technologies are steadily replacing human labor in every industry and professional field. We are making a great transition to smaller, elite workforces collaborating with increasingly smart computer and robotic technologies. (中略)

Physics and chemistry, which have dominated the era just passing, influencing every aspect of our existence, including the smallest particulars of our way of life, are making room for the age of biology. (中略)

The computer and the telecommunications revolution have given birth to the Internet and the World Wide Web, marking a great change in the way human beings communicate. “Access” has become the all-encompassing metaphor for a generation of people who can now connect with one another via an electronically mediated “central nervous system” that spans the globe. The new “speed of light” society is changing the way we conduct business. The market economy, steeped in the exchange of goods and services between sellers and buyers, is found to be far too slow to accommodate the new speed of commercial life. In the coming era, the exchange of property in markets steadily gives way to access to services and experiences in networks. In a society where time itself is the most scarce valuable resource, suppliers retain ownership of property and users pay for the time they spend accessing goods and services. Subscriptions, leases, time-shares, licenses, and rentals become the preferred way of doing business. The new “temporal” economy is characterized by falling transaction costs and diminishing profit margins, forcing commercial enterprises to introduce a radical new business model based on “shared savings” arrangements among network partners. The transformations from property exchanges to access relationships and from profit margins to shared savings are beginning to restructure commercial life around the world.

Our notions of what constitutes culture is also radically changing. Giant content companies like Disney, Universal Vivendi, AOL-Time Warner, and Sony are mining cultural resources all over the world, transforming them into paid-for experiences of every kind. The high-end income earners—the top 20 percent of the world’s consumers—now spend almost as much money on experiences as on basic goods and services.

A younger generation of cultural activists who oppose the new commerce are waging an escalating battle against “branding,” life-style marketing, and new kinds of retail franchising and entertainments, all of which they believe are leading to the homogenization of culture. They argue that the new global cultural commerce is a threat to the world’s cultural diversity, and they seek protection of indigenous cultures. The commercial sphere’s effort to subsume the cultural sphere and become the sole arbiter of the human story represents a great turning point in the relationship between commerce and culture with profound long-term consequences for every society.