

Neuroeconomics of Beaux-Arts by Johannes Vermeer and the Old Masters¹

Kimitoshi Sato²

Abstract

Appreciating pictures is not just to see what are painted in them, since they are not only seen by the eyes but also understood by the brain. Seeing is practiced both by the eyes' excitation and the brain's interpretation of sensorial information. It has been recently confirmed that highly complicated colors activate the brain. Any picture is regarded as a complex of *Gorman-Lancaster attributes* or *characteristics* such as colors, canvas in the *new consumer theory*. Following Amartya Sen's concepts, painting is considered a functioning of painters. With fuzziness, lovers of beaux-arts sometimes take on a risk to buy faked pictures which can be confirmed to be false by the characteristics used in them. The difference in the value of an authentic work and a fake is exemplified by employing the fuzzy measures. This paper shows the optimization of art lovers, painters, counterfeiters, art dealers, art book publishers and manufacturers of artworks. It is supposed that lovers of art are happiness-maximizing consumers and painters and counterfeiters are happiness-maximizing producers. Art dealers are also assumed to be happiness-maximizing producers to search sleepers, i.e., masterpieces buried in oblivion. All of them are supposed to have their functionings and *capability set à la Sen*. *Neuroeconomics* analyzes the behaviors of Johannes Vermeer and the old masters who attempted to make turn the viewer's gaze upon the most important objects that they wanted to show, which entails to enhance the value of their pictures and makes their devotees to demand their pictures. Different from the traditional economics, neuroeconomics proves how art lovers appreciate and demand pictures after their own heart. Color development and blank space of famous pictures in art books and artworks related to the paintings are very often changed. Their colors are very often made to be more vividly than the originals and blank space is modified to be appropriate size by profit-maximizing art book publishers and artwork manufacturers with an eye to making a strong appeal to the lovers of art and to enjoying an enthusiastic market reception.

Key Words: art lovers' and painters' beings, functionings, happiness function and capability set à la Sen, Choquet integral, forgery, fuzziness, neuroeconomics of beaux-arts as a complex of Gorman-Lancaster attributes or characteristics, intergenerational public goods, sleepers awaken by art dealers, Vermeerlike

JEL Classification: D11, D87, D91, Z11

¹ This paper is presented at the IES Workshops Keio University, January 19, 2024. It appears as Chapter 14 in Sato (2024), *Mechanism Design for Public Goods and Environmental Externalities: Gorman-Lancaster-Sen's Approach*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, England, forthcoming.

² Hibiki and Life Sciences International Association.