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WALTER BENJAMIN (1892-1940)

“The illiterate of the future will not be the man who cannot read the alphabet, but the one who cannot take a photograph.”

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According to Walters, photography has transformed the entire nature of art and the humanity's entire mode of existence during the mechanical age. Its ability to reproduce the reality diminished the uniqueness and authenticity, which he called "aura".

Even though photography could be considered as a form of art, especially in its early stages, it was obvious for Walters that it would become a tool for politics and masses as we know it now.



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The earliest art works originated in the service of a **“ritual/cult”** Its purpose was to capture a tradition and aura of the time and place that is unique, beautiful, and authentic. Even though Walters said that “man is created in the image of God and God's image cannot be captured by any human machine”, he admitted that an early photography, which was not intended for mass mechanical reproduction, could be considered art as well.



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The mechanical reproduction separated art from the dependence on ritual. Simultaneously, photography became a tool for promotion and spreading political propaganda. Its main purpose was to provide an evidence of reality to the masses. Nowadays, the technology became available to almost everyone in the world so it lost its artistic value, as Walter predicted almost hundred years ago. It brought things closer and overcame the uniqueness.

