

INTRODUCTION TO HUMANITIES

Lecture 1 – OVERVIEW ON HUMANITIES

1. Meaning of Humanities

- 1.1. Humanus – Humanitas – Human, Humanity – it refers to the quality of being a human; huma, civilized, cultured)
- 1.2. Branch of Learning – it refers to the study of the arts. As a study, its material object is “artwork” and its formal object is “creativity and appreciation.”

Every creation around you which is made by human beings represents someone's humanity. The chair you're sitting in, the clothes you're wearing, the building you're in, or your home, even the time of day which people created, all are representative of someone's humanity -- their human-ness. In other words, everything that human beings have created can be classified as part of the humanities.

2. Misconceptions on the term Humanities:

It should not be confused with the terms:

- 2.1. Humanism – specific philosophical belief
- 2.2. Humanitarianism – concern for charitable works.

3. Humanities: Art and Science

- 3.1. Art: Skills (Greek techne or technical)
- 3.2. Science: Involves a process.
- 3.3. Social Science: Man as the focus. Art is the subject matter, but art is created by man for man.

4. Humanities vs. Philosophy

Comparison:

Humanities: Man is the source and fountain of all creativity. (Creating Subject)

Philosophy: Man is the starting point of knowledge. (Inquiring Subject)

Contrast:

Humanities: Explicit understanding of artworks – extensions of his being (man).

Philosophy: Implicit understanding of himself as composed of body and soul.

5. Why Study Humanities?

1. Through Humanities, we can be connected to **places** we have not visited, understand the **past or history** which has significance to the present. It makes us encounter **great minds and hearts** of human history.
2. Through Humanities, we will be studying what humans have found **valuable or good** throughout the time.
3. Through Humanities, we experience **connection between culture and community** through different art exposures – museum visits, concerts, theater performance, and support of local artists.
4. Through Humanities, we increase our **respect for cultural and individual differences** through a knowledge of achievements and of world civilization.
5. Through Humanities, we gain a **global perspective** through the knowledge of world cultures.

6. Through Humanities, we will be able to **build up your career**, focus our life, minimize frustration, and most importantly, be able to work as part of an effective team.

Lecture 2 – OVERVIEW ON THE ARTS

1. Art: Concept or Fact?

Art is either a concept or a fact. As a concept, it is subject to be understood and be grasped by any perceiver. Furthermore, it cannot be defined because it springs from the ideas and emotions of man concretized by means of any sensuous material.

But, art as a fact is observable; is that which is known through the senses. It refers then to any creative work of an artist that can easily be described upon noticing the different mediums being used and the context in which it is produced.

2. Art and Experience

All art demands experience. There can be no appreciation of art without experience. An experience is something that affects your life.

Persons Affected by Art Experience:

1. The person of the artist.
2. The person of the percipient.

Characteristics of Experience:

1. It must be personal and individual. It must not exactly be the same as that of any other person.
2. Experience is accompanied by emotion or emotional reaction. You like it or you do not like it.

3. Artist vs. Craftsman

The word art originally meant skill, ability, or craft (corresponding to the Greek *techne* from which we derive the words like technical and technique). In the ancient world, a "work of art" was simply any object that required skill or craft in its production. Only gradually, beginning about the middle of the 17th century, did work of art mean a work of fine or high art.

The artisan or the craftsman is not expected to be original and he is good at his job to the extent that he can successfully follow the relevant rules. A work of a craft is good if it matches the appropriate template and performs the desired function.

The artist must be creative and original. Good art cannot be produced by slavish-rule following and imitation. Great artists are genius whose works transcend the rules and conventions of their time.

4. The Use of Natural Objects in Works of Art

There are some artists who would use the natural objects as they are without changing them in levying or carrying their art work. Take for example, a landscape. Artists charged with the task of landscaping would have to use the stones and other natural materials without even deforming their shape, form and organization. This is the principle of non-transformation.

Under the principle of Transformation, the artists have the necessarily alter the natural objects in carrying their art work because by so doing the idea of the artist, the purpose of the art, and the circumstances surrounding the art can properly be served.

5. General Classes of Artifacts

The three general classes of artifacts include the following:

1. Practically useful, but not disinterestedly pleasing (subjectively pleasing)
2. Both practically useful and disinterestedly pleasing (not subjectively pleasing); and
3. Not practically useful, but disinterestedly pleasing (not subjectively pleasing).

The works of art, most of the times, fall under the third class.

Disinterested – not determined by any personal or subjective interest. We take pleasure in something because we judge it beautiful in itself, rather than judging it beautiful because we find it pleasurable.

Example: I like this artwork because it reminds me of the safety and warmth of our hometown. It is your own pleasure that serves as the criterion in judging the art as beautiful. Artworks are beautiful in themselves no matter they could give us subjective pleasure or not.

6. Natural objects vs. Artifacts

The following are the arguments that would separate each other from a single category:

1. Works of art can express ideas or feelings, but nature cannot.
2. Works of art--like sentences, but unlike natural objects--can mean something. This point can perhaps be better put another way: works of art, like sentences, but unlike natural objects, can embody communicative intentions. Take for example, reading a poem. Through it, we are presumably entitled to ask, "What is trying to say?" We are certainly not entitled to ask such a question after looking at a waterfall or a cloud.
3. Works of art can imitate nature (and can be applauded for doing so), but nature cannot imitate nature.

7. Characteristics of Art Works

The various characteristics of an art work are as follows:

1. They are man-made;
2. They are universal;
3. They are united;
4. They are diversified;
5. They are expressive;
6. They are creative; and
7. They are beautiful.

8. Resemblance theory in Art Work

This theory would mean that work of art may closely resemble nature, but it can never duplicate nature in as much as it is only man-made. The photographic art is somewhat closest to this theory. The pictures or photographs you'll get are somewhat similar to the original specimen but even then, they are only the records of the subject or a scene.

9. Art is Everywhere (Universal)

In every age or country, there is always art. Wherever we go, whether it is a city or a province, here or abroad, we surely have to pass buildings of various sorts---houses, schools, churches, stores, etc. Some of them appear attractive and inviting, some do not. We look at some of them with awe and admiration.

We find art also in the clothes and the accessories we wear, in the design of our furniture and furnishings; in the styles of the vehicles we use. We find art objects in the home and in the community, in religion, in trade and in industries.

Art is universally present in all forms of human society and in every generation because it serves some fundamental needs.

10. Common Among Art Works (Unity)

The one thing that is common to all the works of art is the tie that relates a painting to a song, a play to a dance. The most basic relationship is that the arts are concerned with emotions; with our feelings about things. When a person sees a picture he thinks is beautiful or a play he thinks is exciting, he feels that is lovely or stirring. His reaction is primarily emotional.

11. Diversity in Arts

The arts are remarkable in their diversity, not only in the subject matter but also in the materials and in the forms. No rules can govern either in creation or in the appreciation. The artist is influenced by the world around him, so that his work reflects the time and the place in which he lives. If artists or critics do set up rules to follow, other artists and critics will prove the rules false. Arts change as life changes. Authorities in arts state that the work of an artist must be judged against the background of the time in which he lived.

12. Questions About Arts

1. Background:
 - a.) What is the work of art about? (Subject)
 - b.) What is it for? (Function)
2. What is it made of? (Medium)
3. How is it put together? (Elements and Organization)
4. What is its mood, temper, and personality? (Style)
5. Is it good? (Judgment)

Lecture 3 – FOUNDATIONS OF THE ARTS (Man and Society) FUNCTIONS OF THE ARTS

Man and Art

1. Art arises first of all from an **artist**, who refers to the man, the “maker” of the works of art. It is therefore the **nature of man** that he/she is an artist. Quoting AK Coomaraswamy, “**The artist is not a special kind of person, but every man is a special kind of artist.**”
2. Art is an expression of man as **creative**. This can be elaborated from the concept of man as a “person.” A person is derived from the Greek word “**prosopon**,” which means “**before an eye**” (**pros – toward or before, opos, genitive of eyes; optic**). That which is something “before an eye” is a “**mask**.” Normally, a mask is worn by an actor in theatrical presentations. With this concept, we could say that man or person is an **actor**. As an actor, he/she is the **author** of everything. He/She **performs** and he/she **creates** anything he/she wants.
3. Art is a **rational** creation of man. As Gorgias puts it: “I cannot fairly give name “art” to anything irrational.” Man is essentially a “**rational animal**,” according to the Greek philosopher, Aristotle. This points to a **dichotomy** in human nature --- we are part **animal**, but we are, at the same time, part **spirit**. We have all animal urges and appetites. We seek food and drink, comfort and warmth, and the satisfaction of all the other animal impulses. But we should seek to find a **balance** in our lives between what is of the flesh and what is of the spirit. It is the very essence of man that they are artists, are makers of things necessary to live a life in which the **needs of the bodily life are satisfied** at one and the **needs of the spiritual at the other**. Art satisfies our bodily desires, needs and pleasures, but man **does not live on bread alone (that which is material; changeable and transitory)**. This alone is not enough. Man still hankers or looks for **spiritual aspect of art** --- that which is of **beauty, unity and order** (those which are considered as absolute realities in Plato’s philosophy; something **unchangeable and permanent**).
4. Man as an artist is reckoned in the **evidence of history** that there has never been a time when men and women have not been artists. That this is no new development in human nature is evidenced by the **cave paintings** of our very early **ancestors**, who, working in the very intractable material of their cave walls produced lively representations of the art.
5. Through art, man might be able to understand himself, express his own passions and desires, communicate with others; appreciate and acknowledge the kindness of others, and build a world or a society that is so pleasurable and enjoyable to live in.

Functions of the Art

1. The **personal functions of art (art and the individual)** are the most difficult to explain in any great detail. There are many of them, and they vary from person to person. We will limit to the following:
 1. **Order** – it gives order to a messy and disorderly personal world.
 2. **Chaotic** – it gives chaos or disorder when the artist feels life is too boring, staid and ordinary.
 3. **Therapeutic** – for both the artist and the viewer. For example, the choice of music for hospitals, mentally disturbed patients, massage parlors.
 4. **Religious and Spiritual**
 5. **Biological** – ways to adorn and decorate ourselves in order to be attractive enough to others.

2. Art has **social functions (art and society)** when it addresses aspects of (collective) life, as opposed to one person's point of view or experience. Art performs social function when:
 1. **Influencing Social Behavior (Collective Behavior).** Many works of art influence the way we think, feel or act. It may cause us to laugh, arouse indignation, or as a source in changing, correcting, improving the human condition or shaping the society (social change).
 2. **Display and Celebration**
 - **Sculpture and painting** are commemoration of personages in society. The statues of national heroes that grace our parks and plazas.
 - **Rituals** have played an important role in people's lives and have influenced the growth of certain arts as well.
 - **Festivals** – involve rituals of some kind, and these in turn, employ arts. Examples: Sinulog in Cebu, Moriones Festival in Marinduque, Ati-atihan in Kalibon and Diyandi in Iligan.
 3. **Social Description** - Artwork reveal how people thought, felt, and lived in certain historical period. For example, the painting that portrays the many people one in planting or harvesting rice, describes the value of unity, camaraderie and bayanihan spirit among Filipinos.
3. **The physical functions of art** are most easily dealt with. Works of art that are created to perform some **service** have physical functions.

Form and Function – The function of an object generally determines the basic form that it takes. A chair is so designed as to allow the seated body to rest comfortable on it. Its different parts (back, arms, legs and seat) are harmoniously related to one another and integrated into an object that fulfills its particular purpose.

In **architecture**, the design of a building is determined primarily by its operational function. A place of worship requires a big hall for the congregation to gather in; a school should serve a number of students. These considerations determine the height of the building, the number of floors, the sizes and shapes of classrooms, the location of doors and windows, the traffic patterns and the location of facilities.

In **community planning** (more than a group of buildings), planning should be done to avoid overcrowded areas which have brought about many social problems ranging from health to criminality. It takes into consideration the assignment of areas (residential, industrial, and commercial) for proper land use. This planning involves the efficient organization of buildings, roads and spaces so that they meet the physical and aesthetic needs of the community.

As marketing tool, **advertising** serves several functions. It identifies products and differentiates it from others. It communicates information about the products, its features and its location of sale. It also induces consumers to try new products and to suggest reuse. Moreover, it stimulates the distribution of a product as well as increases product use. Additionally, advertising builds value, brand preference, and loyalty. Finally, it lowers the overall cost of sale. Every advertiser should learn all of these functions in order to gain understanding or insight of the roles of advertising in the business or market.