**The Purposes of Art**

Human civilization has been fascinated by art since the first man on our planet. Yes, the artwork has emerged from the first appearance of modern homosapiens. Thought they could define theirs designs as artwork, ancient civilization used to imprint signs into stones and make hunting objects of specific form. View today, one could be impressed by the uniqueness and the beauty of these objects. However, the purpose of these ancient “artwork” was to transmit message or survive by hunting for instance. However, today art has a completely different meaning and purpose in our society. In this short paper we will discuss the purposes of art and the view of some prominent writers such as Karl Marx and Benjamin.

Art can be ceremonial (ritualistic). In most African kingdoms, sculpture represented a lot more than a simple object. Most three-dimensional arts designed during that time have mosltly one main purpose; hold the spirit of a GOD. They were venerated and respected. These arts were so precious that they could be the source of the death of an individual who misuses them. In some circumstances only few could have access to such artwork. I believe that art in these circumstances is priceless to these communities. Most fear the consequences carry by the misuse of this ritualistic artwork.

Not only African kingdom uses three-dimensional art but also painted ones. The kings and the queen’s fabrics are designed and painted with symbols that represented the power they have. Even a simple white fabric on the kings could have a very specific meaning.

A modern-day ceremonial art could include the portrait of Jesus with his disciples having their last feast together. Though I would not able to define the meaning in this art exactly, it is central to many Christian ceremonials in churches today. It holds a message and is a guidance for Christians around the world. Ceremonial art to many cultures is unique and priceless. In these circumstances disrespecting ceremonial arts could lead to the conflict; and many conflicts throughout history have Naissance in this kind of misusage. For instance, depicting the symbol of the Buddha in some way could lend one to a prison cell in some Asian countries.

Benjamin would have adhered to this view and principle of ceremonial art. Benjamin loves the idea of authentic art. He dislikes reproduction or alteration of art in any aspect. Art must be conserved and kept away from the general public. This way the interest of the public will increase and its value would be high. The viewer of the copy of an authentic art can not experience or see the meanings and the effects of the real one. The copy is the distortion of the original. For example, in our economic system, why is a the exact copy of a dollar bill with all aspect does not have the same value as the original? But aren’t they the same?

In the previous example, a copy of a bill is obviously not the same as the original. The copy of the original is not printed on the same days and the authors of these two bills are completely different and not connected in any way. In fact, the intention of the author of the original and the copy are not the same. The original is issue to response de certain economical needs which could be not the same need of the copier. This changes the whole purpose of the copied or reproduced bill. One could then suggest that the same applied to art. A reproduced art is illegitimate and holds no resemblance to the original one besides the physical appearance. Even digital reproduction could not be seen at the same standard as the reproduced art. The Digital copy is just another reproduction of the real object this time in the virtual world.

Art could be narrative and functional. In fact functional arts are those designed on object of everyday use. Whereas a narrative art serves generally as storyteller. A functional art to my view could be reproduced as its purpose is not linked to the idea of Benjamin that such arts should be kept away from the general public. Many objects in the ancient Africans kingdoms were decorated in such way. Though some of these objects were solely meant for ritual use, most of them were design for household uses and a mean for the artist to make living. This kind of art is for everyone and offers great accessibility to the general population. It can also be said the functional art can be used to tell history of ancient civilization as well.

In fact, even though Karl Marx did not write any document himself about art, one can infer from his idea of government that Marx would have adhered to this type of art. Marx believes that the working class should be in control of his workforce thus its soul. However, he could also argue on the aspect of the individual who set the price of an artwork. During the industrial revolution unlike today, the price of goods is set by the rich and this could affect how artwork is viewed. The idea that the Government should own every resource and distribute them according the need of the individual could help the artist gain access to it means of production.

On the other hand, a narrative is the more precious type of art. The narrative art tells the story of a period of time in of humankind thus need not to be reproduced. This type of art is best preserve in a place where the general population would need a little afford to access them such a museum. The meaning behind these type of arts can not just be understood by anyone but a person that has studied these arts and knows the story behind each representation of the object. Its quality not only needs to be preserve from reproduction but also the effect of environment around it.

On this aspect of narrative art, Mark and Benjamin bath would have agreed. Benjamin stood for non reproduction while Marx envisioned government ownership of everything. In fact, I do hold the same idea as Marx and Benjamin of this subject. A narrative art should belong to humanity as whole, not an individual. The object is part of everyone's history. I also believe in association such as the UNESCO for holding these standards.

However, Marx would have issues with how art is been used theses day. Some art holds big monetary value that makes them inaccessible to anyone but the rich. The situation today is like the bourgeoisie that Mark disapproved of. During the industrial revolution, most artworks were owned by the upper social class. It served as display of wealth and differentiation among the same social class. The bourgeoisie sets the standard of what is good art and what value it holds. Today, the same could be true. Worker in a manufacturing plant today can not afford the Monalisa art nor can he/she has access to it. The price of the Monalisa is worth what the upper class believes it could, not the general population.

Benjamin would have adhered to the way we threated art in our society. For his main concern was stopping the reproduction of art, the pricing has limited how accessible some of the greatest arts are. However, the technological advancement in today's society has made digital reproduction of less effort. Almost any art can be reproduced today through the lenses of a camera. As stated above, Digital reproducing altered the meaning of art and could abhorrent to Benjamin.

Art is so important in our society today it could lead to pollical tensions. This year alone many African countries have required the French and the British government to return to them the art objects they “stole” during the period of colonization. The concerned government has initially rejected the request of the basis that the artwork needs to be preserved (meeting Benjamin's view) and can only done so by them. However, the international and social pressures had made them change their narratives on the matter.

In conclusion, art is very important in our society today. It participates in the distinction of class in today's society. The wealthy can show their wealth by acquiring the most expensive art. I can also be a store of value like gold for wealthy. Art can allow cultural identity. As discussed above, African countries required the return of the object stolen because of affirmation of cultural identity. Art today still holt its role of functionality as many household objects are decorated on that standard.