

The Studies of the Humanities in Relation to the Struggle for Freedom and Human Rights

Abstract

My lecture will examine the vital role of the humanities in evaluating and criticizing social and political phenomena from both ethical and philosophical perspectives especially in the defense of human freedom and human rights. The faculties of the humanities, constitute a platform where the unfolding of past events and theoretical expositions of the present are being taught in depth and the diversity of human resources of thought are being explored. Here as the past meets the present, courageous criticism and analysis of the present can be developed unbound by restraints or preconceptions for the benefit of better future. Judicious and analytical research may confirm or challenge accepted norms while constructively criticizing prevailing knowledge and order.

Major concepts in various disciplines that have affected events over the past two centuries were first formulated in lecture halls and seminar rooms of the faculties of the humanities –academic freedom, criticism of totalitarianism, divisional justice, social justice, relativity, gender studies, human rights, freedom of knowledge, free accessibility of data, critical discourse, discrimination, dialectic analysis, Disability Studies, power relations, post- colonial criticism, civil society, fair trade, inclusion, hegemonic narratives, silenced and marginalized voices, critical theory, freedom of speech, racism, minority rights, cultural criticism, freedom of the press, cultural construction of reality, minority rights, multiple identities, universal rights, tolerance, pluralism, queer studies, socio-political oppression, Identity politics, suppressed memories, conscience's objection to war, and patriarchal order. It is hard to imagine how the last few centuries would have looked without them. I will conclude in short reflection on the history of illiteracy, its motivation and benefits.

I will contend that every country must demand to foster and protect its faculties of humanities as treasuries of the knowledge, art and creativity which together integrate the past with the present, as nurseries for inspiration utilizing and exploiting knowledge

and criticism for the improvement of the present standing in the front lines of the struggle for a better future