**Theme 9: Arts and politics**

**COURSE TEXT and WORKSHEET (required to be completed and submitted)**

**Name and parallel group (A or B): ………………………………………………………………………..**

*Before you read*

**Warm-up questions**

Are art and politics related to one another? How can art help the

governments to control the society? Are political artworks valuable like

other artworks? Can an artist be a politician or the other way around?

**Skimming the text**

Read the text’s title (headings and subheadings) and

 Write some of the text’s keywords in the following blanks.

……………… ……………… ………………… ………………

 Write the names of some important people and places given in the

reading passage.

……………… ………………… ………………… ………………

 Read the first sentences of each paragraph. What do you think the

reading is probably about?

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

**Group work (classroom task)**

Discuss the following terms in groups and compare your answers with

your partners.

 Cold war  Political movement

 Anti-war art  Political campaigns

 Steryotyping  Political cinema

*Part Ι. Reading*

**Arts and Politics**

[1] Considering *Groys*, “art has its own power in the world, and is as much a

force in the power play of global politics today”, it should be mentioned

that for such a politically-intractable phenomenon, the greatest artists and

social critics believe that “art is useful as a tool for political change”.

There are, nevertheless, examples where artists employ art in the service

of political change.

[2] The connection between music and politics, particularly political

expression in music, has been seen in many cultures. Although music

influences political movements and rituals, it is not clear how or even if,

general audiences relate music on a political level. Time has shown how

music can be used in anti-establishment or protest themes, including anti

war songs, although pro-establishment ideas are also used, for example in

national anthems, patriotic songs, and political campaigns.

[3] A range of contemporary classical composers of socialist or Marxist

sympathies have attempted in often quite radically different ways to relate

their politics to their works. Primary amongst those from the earlier 20th

century are *Kurt Weill* and *Hanns Eisler*, both of whom moved away from

atonal idioms that had become prominent in their time, feeling these to

alienate audiences, towards music and music-theatre that had roots in

popular music (for example cabaret songs), though with sophisticated

harmonies that reflected their musical background.

[4] Racist music or white power music is music associated with and

promoting neo-Nazism and white supremacy ideologies. Although

musicologists point out that many, if not most early cultures had songs to

promote themselves and denigrate any perceived enemies, the origins of

Racist music is tied to the early 1970s.

[5] Political Cinema in the narrow sense of the term refers to political films

which do not hide their political stance. This does not mean that they are

necessarily pure propaganda. The difference to other films is not that they

are political but how they show it. Political cinema is a cinema which

portrays current or historical events or social conditions in a partisan way

in order to inform or to agitate the spectator. Political cinema exists in

different forms such as documentaries, feature films, or even animated and

experimental films. Form has always been an important concern for

political film makers. While some, like pioneering *Lionel Rogosin*, argued

that radical films, in order to liberate the imagination of the spectator, have

to break not only with the content but also with the form of cinema, the

falsely reassuring clichés, stereotypes and conventions of film making.

[6] In the history of theatre, there is long tradition of performances

addressing issues of current events and central to society itself,

encouraging consciousness and social change. The political satire

performed by the comic poets at the theatres had considerable influence on

public opinion in the Athenian democracy. Shakespeare is an author of

political theatre according to some academic scholars, who observe that

his history examined the machinations of personal drives and passions

determining political activity and that many of the tragedies such as *King*

*Lear* and *Macbeth* dramatize political leadership as human beings driven

by the lust for power; in later centuries, political theatre has sometimes

taken a different form. Sometimes associated with cabaret and folk theatre,

it has offered itself as a theatre “of, by, and for the people”. In this guise,

political theatre has developed within the civil societies under oppressive

governments as a means of actual underground communication and the

spreading of critical thought.

[7] A new form of political theatre emerged in the twentieth century with

feminist authors like *Elfriede Jelinek* or *Caryl Churchill*, who often make

use of the non-realistic techniques. During the 1960s and 1970s, new

theatres emerged addressing women's issues. These theatres went beyond

producing feminist plays, but also sought to give women opportunities and

work experience in all areas of theatrical production which had heretofore

been dominated by men. In addition to playwright, producers, and actors,

there were opportunities for women electricians, set designers, musical

director, stage managers, etc.

*Part ΙΙ. Word study: Pronunciations, definitions and examples.*

***Translate (in writing) and learn the following vocabulary:***

**Alienate (v.) /**ˈeɪlɪəneɪt/

Cause (someone) to feel isolated or unfamiliar.

*They urge us to break down the barriers that* ***alienate*** *us from nature.*

**Arena (n.) /**əˈri:nə/

(1) A level area surrounded by seats for spectators, in which public events

are held. (2) a place or scene of activity, debate, or conflict.

*He fell down in the skating* ***arena*** *and broke his leg.*

**Atonal (adj.)** /eɪˈtəʊn(ə)l/

(1) Not written in any key or mode. (2) Not harmonious.

*He loved listening to* ***atonal*** *jazz, and though it drove her crazy.*

**Denigrate (v.) /**ˈdɛnɪɡreɪt/

Criticize unfairly, disparage.

*It is more fashionable to* ***denigrate*** *than praise the media these days.*

**Guise (n.) /**gīz/

An external form, appearance, or manner of presentation, typically

concealing the true nature of something.

*Reality came under the* ***guise*** *of the economy.*

**Heretofore (prep.) /**hɪətʊˈfɔː(r)/

Before now.

*What* ***heretofore*** *was private is now published for all.*

**Intractable (adj**.) /inˈtræktəbəl/

Hard to control or deal with.

*It was a careful simplification of an* ***intractable*** *problem.*

**Liberate (v.) /**ˈlɪbəreɪt/

Free (a country, city, or people) from enemy occupation.

*We have a responsibility to work together in the coming months to solve*

*these problems and* ***liberate*** *our economy.*

**Machination (n.) /**ˌmæʃɪˈneɪʃn/

A crafty and involved plot to achieve your (usually sinister) ends.

*Be honest and forget* ***machination*** *for reaching to your goal.*

**Patriotic (adj.) /**pætrɪˈɒtɪk/

Having or expressing devotion to and vigorous support for one's country.

*To be a good soldier one should feel* ***patriotic****.*

**Pertain (v.) /**pəˈ(r)teɪn/

Belong to something as a part, appendage, or accessory.

*Does this* ***pertain*** *specifically to this case?*

**Pioneering (adj.) /**pʌɪəˈnɪərɪŋ/

Involving new ideas or methods.

*His fame rests on his* ***pioneering*** *work on the wood.*

**Satire (n.) /**ˈsætīr/

The use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize

people's stupidity or vices.

*His novel contains a biting* ***satire*** *on the social classification.*

**Supremacy (n.) /**suˈpreməsi:/

The state or condition of being superior to all others in authority, power,

or status.

*For economic* ***supremacy*** *firstly one must attain military* ***supremacy****.*

*Part ΙΙΙ. Exercises*

**A. Open questions (classroom task)**

Based on the text you have read, answer the following questions orally.

1- Are all the artworks political necessarily?

2- Should art be at the service of politics or vice versa?

3- How do you see the ‘political art’?

4- Which type of art do you think to be more political?

5- Have political artworks been successful in creating political change?

**B. Comprehension check**

Read each statement and decide whether it is true or false. Write “T”

before true statements and “F” before false ones.

…..... 1. Music is the most political art.

……. 2. White power music is music associated with equality of

different races and nationalities.

……. 3. Political cinema is a cinema which portrays current or historical

events or social conditions in order to agitate the spectators.

……. 4. Radical films break not only with the content but also with the

form of cinema.

……. 5. ‘Feminist' theatre emerged in the twentieth century.

……. 6. ‘Feminism’ was a political philosophy caused by artworks.

**C. Multiple choice questions**

Read the reading passage carefully and select the most appropriate

answer for each of the following multiple-choice test items.

1- Shakespeare has been ……………..

A) a political author of theater.

B) a actor of political theater.

C) an author of political theatre.

D) A director of political theater.

2- ‘Supremacy’ in paragraph 4 is closest in meaning to …………….

A) expression. B) superiority.

C) certainty. D) controversy.

3- ‘Racist music’ dates back to…………….

A) 1960s. B) 1970s.

C) 1980s . D) 1990s.

4- A new form of political theatre emerged in the twentieth century

with …………….

A) communist leaders. B) racist actors.

C) feminist authors. D) realist authors.

5- The overall tone of the reading passage is …………….

A) academic and technical.

B) informative and serious.

C) light and silly.

D) critical and bitter.

**D. Word formation**

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate words from the following table.

Make necessary changes.

**Noun Verb Adjective Adverb**

alienation alienate alienating

denigration denigrate denigrating

patriot patriotic patriotically

satire satiric/satirical satirically

1- After his wife death, he suffers from many psychological problems

and has ………….. all his friends.

2- No one can forget his ………….. attempts during the war.

3- Every ………….. does have an important point to make.

4- He quitted the job due to the ………….. words of his boss.

5- She is too polite to criticize openly, instead she tries to imply

…………..

**E. Synonym finding**

Find a single word in the passage which means:

1 however, but (para.1) ……………………..

2 complain (para.2) …………………….

3 movement (para.2) …………………….

4 known, famous (para.3) …………………….

5 indicate, mention (para.4) ……………………..

6 inevitably (para.5) ……………………..

7 excite, stir up (para.5) ……………………..

8 drastic, essential (para.5) ……………………..

9 cruel, unfair (para.6) …………………….

10 appear, come up (para.7) ……………………..

**F. Matching**

Match the words in column Ι with their appropriate equivalents in

column ΙΙ. Insert the letters in the parentheses provided. There are more

choices in column ΙΙ than required.

**column Ι column ΙΙ**

1 isolate (……) a. foolish

2 vigorous (……) b. secretive

3 stupid (……) c. free

4 authority (……) d. noticeable

5 liberate (……) e. energetic, powerful

6 considerable (……) f. power

7 underground (……) g. favorable

h. separate

**G. Cloze test (classroom task)**

There are some missing words in the following text. Find the best

choice for each blank and mark it in your book.

George Orwell wrote the book *Animal farm* from November 1943 to

February 1944, when the wartime union with the Soviet Union was at its

height and Stalin was ….(1)…. highly by the British people, a

circumstance that Orwell hated. It was ….(2)…. rejected by a number of

British and American publishers, including one of Orwell's own, Victor

Gollancz. Its publication was thus ….(3)…., though it became a great

commercial success when it did finally appear. *Time* magazine chose the

book as one of the 100 best English-language ….(4)….. It also featured at

number 31 on the Modern Library List of Best 20th-Century Novels. It

….(5)…. a *Retrospective Hugo Award* in 1996, and is also included in the

Great Books of the Western World selection.

**1**. A) known B) helped C) regarded D) noticed

**2**. A) normály B) ultimately C) finally D) initially

**3**. A) delayed B) started C) finished D) fastened

**4**. A) poems B) novels C) stories D) fictions

**5**. A) sold B) found C) lost D) won

**References**

Esche, C., and Bradley, W. (2007). *Art and Social Change: A Critical Reader*.

London: Tate Publishing Co.

Groys, B. (2008). *Art Power*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

102 *English for the students of art*

Hoffman, F. (2003). *Survey of American Popular Music* . Sam Houston State

University Press.

Silver, L. (1993). *Art in History*. New York: Abbeville Press.

Van Gelder, L. (2002). *Footlights: Indoor Activity.* New York Times Company

Source: KHAGHANINEJAD, Saber Mohammad. *English for the Students of Art*. Fars: Shiraz University Press 2016. ISBN 9789644626636.

(Adapted for Academic English course, Catholic theological faculty, Charles University, Prague.)