

DISCOVERING THE HUMANITIES



SECOND EDITION

HENRY M. SAYRE

DISCOVERING

The Humanities

SECOND EDITION

Henry M. Sayre

OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

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In memory of Norwell “Bud” Therien, who first envisioned this project, and for whose friendship I will always be grateful. I miss him.

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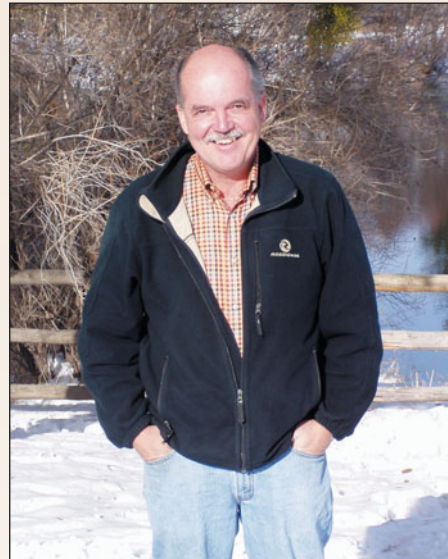
DEAR READER,

You might be asking yourself, why should I be interested in the humanities? Why do I care about ancient Egypt, medieval France, or the Qing Dynasty of China?

I asked myself the same question when I was a sophomore in college. I was required to take a year-long survey of the humanities, and I soon realized that I was beginning an extraordinary journey. That course taught me where it was that I stood in the world, and why and how I had come to find myself there. My goal in this book is to help you take the same journey of discovery. Exploring the humanities will help you develop your abilities to look, listen, and read closely, and to analyze, connect, and question. In the end, this will help you navigate your world and come to a better understanding of your place in it.

What we see reflected in different cultures is something of ourselves, the objects of beauty and delight, the weapons and wars, the melodies and harmonies, the sometimes troubling but always penetrating thought from which we spring. To explore the humanities is to explore ourselves, to understand how and why we have changed over time, even as we have, in so many ways, remained the same.

I've come to think of this second edition in something of the same terms. What I've tried to do is explore new paths of inquiry even as I've tried to keep the book recognizably the same. My model, I think, has been Bob Dylan. Over the years, I've heard the man perform more times than I can really recall, and I just saw him again in concert this past summer. He has been performing "Highway 61" and "Just Like a Woman" for nearly 50 years, but here they were again, in new arrangements that were totally fresh—recognizably the same, but reenergized and new. That should be the goal of any new edition of a book, I think, and I hope I've succeeded in that here.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Henry M. Sayre is Distinguished Professor of Art History at Oregon State University–Cascades Campus in Bend, Oregon. He earned his Ph.D. in American Literature from the University of Washington. He is producer and creator of the 10-part television series *A World of Art: Works in Progress*, which aired on PBS in the fall of 1997; and author of seven books, including *A World of Art: The Visual Text of William Carlos Williams*; *The Object of Performance: The American Avant-Garde since 1970*; and an art history book for children, *Cave Paintings to Picasso*.

Discovering the Humanities helps students see context and make connections across the humanities by tying together the entire cultural experience through a narrative storytelling approach. Written around Henry Sayre's belief that students learn best by remembering stories rather than memorizing facts, it captures the voices that have shaped and influenced human thinking and creativity throughout our history.

With a stronger focus on engaging students in the critical thinking process, this new edition encourages students to deepen their understanding of how cultures influence one another, how ideas are exchanged and evolve over time, and how this collective process has led us to where we stand today. With several new features, this second edition helps students to understand context and make connections across time, place, and culture.

To prepare the second edition, we partnered with our current users to hear what was successful and what needed to be improved. The feedback we received through focus groups, online surveys, and reviews helped shape and inform this new edition. For instance, to help students make stronger global connections, we've thoroughly updated the content in this second edition. Here are some examples of these changes:

1. Chapter 1 includes a new discussion of a Nok head under the topic of Neolithic ceramics, as well as a new discussion of San wall painting in the myth section. This chapter also features a more comprehensive discussion of Shinto, a new

translation of the *Law Code of Hammurabi*, and expanded text from the *Epic of Gilgamesh*.

2. Chapter 4 features new material on Islamic cursive scripts.
3. Chapter 9 is a new chapter on non-Western culture that was completely revised by expert reader comments. It includes a discussion of court life in Japan and the shogunate and a new discussion of the Mayan calendar.
4. Chapter 13 features a new discussion of the British in China and India, as well as European involvement in Africa. There is newly added discussion of England's impact on Egypt as well as extended discussion of European involvement in Africa, including discussion of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The chapter also includes a new Closer Look on Renoir's *Boating Party*.

Through this dialogue, we also learned how humanities courses are constantly evolving. We learned that more courses are being taught online and that instructors are exploring new ways to help their students engage with course material. We developed MyArtsLab with these needs in mind. With powerful online learning tools integrated into the book, the online and textbook experience is more seamless than ever before. In addition, there are wonderful interactive resources that you, as the instructor, can bring directly into your classroom.

All of these changes can be seen through the new, expanded, or improved features shown here.