

The Humanist Turn

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Much of what has been referred to as the “Cultural Turn” worldwide is actually a “humanistic turn” anchored in history, especially comparative and global history, which becomes acutely apparent in the current COVID-19 pandemic crisis continue to unfold, popping up and down here and there, welling up in countries and regions near or far. If, as said by many, there is longer the old ways of life to return to, what will the post-2020 world for us to “ease in?” The new normal for the mind of the global intellect to be re-situated?

A few things seem clear: academic boundaries will be re-drawn, that between arts and sciences, humanities and lab sciences for instance. Daily needs had made that obvious to all, for the humanists and epidemiologists to be working in the same room, as the team. That there needs an anthropologist in every company, for survey and marketing, or just to figure out what was exactly going on?

Second, many disciplinary subjects (training approaches) are desperately in need of a discursive (?) change, paradigm shift as Thomas Kuhn used to refer to for explaining the Scientific Revolution. The civilizational achievement that all histories are built of (?), old or new, East or West, were begging for depletion and disasters. Now we realize that marvellous monuments and victories might not be so grand to be marvelled at, whether measured by this Enlightenment or that. The strong and powerful way be a march of fools for and by the fools. The weak, and vulnerable might have no reason to be pitied. A turning of tables in dismissive reasoning is definitely long overdue.

Thirdly, myopic (near-sighted) calculation of tangible gains is turning out to be not so profitable, even for marketing capitalism, or in following the games of electoral democracy. History and humanities are in not for elegance or debate, but to allow public health and daily emergencies to be able to go on.

What should our horizons be like for the new normal of the mind then?