EMERGING TRENDS IN HUMANITIES

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Abstract

The paper aims at defining the emerging areas of researches in Humanities. At the outset, the paper defines the difference between Classical Humanities and Critical Humanities, and further introduces three different emerging trends in Critical Humanities, namely Spatial Humanities, Digital Humanities and Public Humanities.

Keywords

Critical Humanities, Spatial Humanities, Public Humanities, Digital Humanities, aims of Humanities, Classical Humanities, Literary Theory, Geocritical Edward W. Said &Cultural studies.

1. **Classical Humanities**

Humanities as an academic discipline was introduced in the universities, colleges and schools to enhance the human mind to the extent it develops a sense of relationship of human society to urge a realization of the value of all that is beautiful, divine, good, and loving. Thus, the aim of humanities was retained to entertain, to please, to help in isolation, to encourage, to enthrall, to instruct and to inform. Besides, humanities urge the sensitivity in the mind of readers. However, classical humanities demanded aesthetic and moral goodness as subjects to it. It never welcomes the interventions, question awaking factors or replications. Except some critical historical, theological and cultural notions like Renaissance and French Revolution, classical humanities never embrace question awaking factors. In the departments of Classical Humanities, we are taught to appreciate and how to defend the arguments stands for "for and against" the text. Text is thought as a work of art, a work of imagination, a work of imitation and representation. Some realists who wrote against aestheticians, some replications like Thomas Paine's 1794 pamphlet *The Age of Reason*; Wollstonecraft's *Vindications*, so on; some innovative critical ideations of Rene and Wellek's Theory of Literature, Frye's Anatomy of Criticism, and of course Freud's concept of dream and writer as dreamer are the instances of the outset of shift in humanities. But, after sixties we observe a paradigm shift in Humanities which reflects a break up with the all facets of classical humanities traced before sixties. To this paradigm shift in humanities, we call Critical Humanities which, by nature, is assimilative, accumulative, hybridized, unpredictable,

and hyper-realist discipline of knowledge. Becket's *Waiting for Godot*, Ionesco's *The Chair* and so on are examples of a new wave of artistry: an artistry to question the unquestioned subjects. These works are not works they are texts made of multifarious textures of references and citations embedded in words—part articulated, part unarticulated just as they are unrepresentations of the unrepresentable and unpredictable human lives.

2. Critical Humanities

Critical Humanities is the most innovative emerging trend in humanities in later years of the past century and imputed a new paradigm to see the subjects in the present century. The meaning of critical refers to breaks in the traditional canonized approaches to humanities. The word 'critical' can also be understood with reference to Heideggerian concept of 'turn'. The word can also be interpreted in terms of Paul de Man's the results of resistance to theory. The word 'critical' can also be clarified by understanding the process of dismantling the texts and disseminating them in multilayers of interpretation. Thus the critical humanities stands for an epistemic discipline which allows the text or content analyst to put forth the questions, interventions, and interrogations in order to develop a new world of thinking that can change the orthodox into the contemporary. All the postcolonial interventions and hybridizations are the examples of the results of critical thinking and its revelation into the arts and writings. The rewriting canons, negritude, the Fanon's idea of national culture, Derridean concept of geopsychoanalysis, Said's critiques of the history of Western ideas and so on are the examples of the reflection of critical Humanities.

In fact Critical Humanities is based on the thoughtful testimonials of human rationality. It tastes the human rational level. It examines the extent of your far-reaching capability while traversing in the world of innovations and ideatic inventions. Writings in critical humanities are subsumed into the unquestioned and marginal questions related to all assets, affiliations, and factors of human beings.

Paul de Man in *Resistance to Theory* attempts to show the same world of innovation that comes from outside the philosophical traditions. He traces the critical practices of the sixties as nothing but acts of extension of ideas. What he wants to see in the departments of Humanities is that research questions, which establish a new world of interpretation and meaning. It is therefore, he argues that literary theory is emerged out of itself as Saussurian linguistics emerged in literature and anthropology. Critical Humanities bears the same emerging factor. Rationality is given to human beings as something that can justify men as incomparable beings among species. And, institutions of Human sciences i.e. Humanities tests the level of rationality of human beings. And, the level of rationality can be reflected through all pretexts and texts which function to show the glimpses of Law, Literature, Aesthetics, Politics, Psychoanalysis, Ethics, Technology, and Representation and their allied.

Critical Humanities has implanted the questions related to how geographical spaces, places affects the dwellings, and life-styles (the subject of spatial humanities); how changes in methodologies of researches in humanities can influence the creative energies of the learners (the subject of Digital Humanities), and how knowledge related to the protection of human institutions, beings, and human psychology explores and exposes national problems and legal

problematic to people of the country (the subject of Public Humanities). These questions express the wisdom to bring about a change in the system and aware the law of changeability.

Now, let us understand the three major branches of Critical Humanities: Spatial Humanities, Digital Humanities, and Public Humanities:

i.   Spatial Humanities

The classical humanities academicians, who believe in the classical approaches to literature, will never like theinterference of the subjects of geography. Because, they think Geography as a subject of a different stream of knowledge i.e. Social Sciences whereas the subjects related to Social Sciences are the subjects of Human Sciences. The classical Humanities teachers may not be skilled in describing the maps and demographic analysis of the text. The spatial humanities gives training to the learners that they should think about the subjects related to geographic, cultural, and demographic disciplines to understand the vastness of humanities. Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism*, and *Orientalism*are the best instances of practising Spatial Humanities.His works tends the future of what can be called spatial or Geocritical discourses. Anne Kelly Knowles, a faculty at Institute of Earth Studies, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, who is a member of the editorial advisory board for "Historical Geography" , and Amy Hillier, have edited *Placing History: How Maps, Spatial Data, and GIS Are Changing Historical Scholarship* (2008), and David J. Bodenhamer et aledited volume *The Spatial Humanities: GIS and the Future of Humanities Scholarship*(2010) are recommended works for exploration of spatial humanities. These works inform us the concept of Geographic information systems (GIS) and how they have imputed to trace the influence of geographical space on human behavior and cultural development. The formulation of GIS enables learners to examine narration of memory, heritage, archeological artifact, and human experience. Spatial Humanities teaches, thus, human existence in relation with the orienting potentials of a particular landscape or place and time. It tends to develop spatial methods such as content-cum-demographic analysis, animated maps, text-based geographical analysis, multimedia GIS, deep mapping, and other the geo-spatial semantic web and methods of deep contingency,.

ii.   Digital Humanities

Digital Humanities, often known as DH, and computational humanities, maybeconsidered as a branch of Critical Humanities. DH ideates that qualitative study of literature or Humanities can be complimented with quantitative study. In a line, it is a technological reproduction of the analysis of literature. It answers to the questions: Can words be counted? Can counting of words help analyze texts? Can literature be statistically, computationally and technologically studied? The answer is positive and exemplified with works of father Busa and his successors. Today, DH is one innovative approach to literature. The people of classical approaches may not like the DH approach because it demands up-to-date-ness of researches in Humanities and demands the knowledge and skill of computer science.The covering stories about research activities and hosting of this new science of study of the humanities were published in *New York Times*, *Nature*, the *Boston Globe*, the*Chronicle of Higher Education* etc. The refereed journals like *ADE Bulletin, Digital Humanities Quarterly*, and Canadian Society sponsored journal *Digital Studies* are great contributors to the development of new approaches in Digital Humanities.

John Frederick Burrows' *Computation into criticism: a study of Jane Austen's novels and an experiment in method* (1987) is the finest example of computational analysis of Jane Austen's novels and characters. The book imputed for introductory books like *A Companion to Digital Humanities* (2008) edited by Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth, *Literary Art in Digital Performance: Case Studies in New Media Art and Criticism* (2009) edited by Francisco J. Ricardo, David M. Berry*'s Literary education and Digital Learning: methods and technologies for Humanities Studies* (2010) edited by Willie van Peer, Sonia Zyngier, Vander Viana, Berry*'s* edited volume, *Revisiting the Frankfurt School: essays on culture, media and theory* (2011), Matthew K. Gold's *Debates in the digital humanities* (2012), and David M. Berry's edited volume *Understanding Digital Humanities* (2012). These books contributed to exploration of the concepts such as Keyness and keywords, bibliographical references and indexes of Information society, Information technology–Social aspects of Digital media and Critical theory and its computational and statistical study etc. The essay like Jonathan Culpeper's "Keywords and Characterization: An Analysis of Six Characters in *Romeo and Juliet*", David L. Hoover's "A Conversation AmongHimselves: Change and the Styles of Henry James" Kieran O'Halloran's "Performance Stylistics: Deleuze and Guattari, Poetry, and (Corpus) Linguistics" are pragmatic essays in the field of Humanities.

iii.   Public Humanities

The Public Humanity covers a range of activities from public scholarship and interdisciplinary collaboration to civic engagement and service-learning. It is an area of knowledge that represents local to national. Imagining India the idea of 'incredible India', books related to national problems. All the political literary works, arts may be considered the subjects related to Public Humanities. Besides classical works of Franz Fanon, M.K. Gandhi, Jawahalal Nehru, in recent years M.N. Srinivas's*Caste: Its Twentieth Century Avtar*, is an edited volume of thirteen essays on human sensibility formulated with implications of caste considerations, OrnitShani's*Communalism, Caste and Hindu Nationalism: The Violence in Gujarat Belligerent Hindunationalism*, Crispin Bates's*Race, Caste and Tribe in Central India: Early Origins of Indian Anthropometry*, Harish Damodaran's*India's New Capitalists: Caste, Business, and Industryin a Modern Nation*, Dipankar Gupta's *Caste in Question: Identity or Hierarchy* lead a new area of epistemic research in Humanities.In the West, Peter Brooks**,** a Sterling Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature at Yale University and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Scholar at the University Center for Human Values and other critics like Hilary Jewett,Patricia Meyer Spacks**,**Martha C. Nussbaum have noted Public Humanities as a dialogic discipline of knowledge that studies the factors of public provocation, invocation and revolution embedded in Humanities. The study relates itself with public life. Its outset can be traced in the works of Coffee House writers like Swift, Addison and Steele. They tried to expose the public interests and issues related to daily life. Thus, Public Humanities is an anti-symbolic study of relationship of subjects of humanities with public lives.

Martha C. Nussbaum's small book, titled *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* (2012) is a manifesto of public humanities. I think so because, around 190 pages of the book gives a small but an authentic survey of democratic education system and its contemporary facets. She, being the Ernst Freund Distinguished Service Professor of Law and Ethics at the University of Chicago, has pronounced that teaching practice bears serious and great

responsibility to orient the formulation of relationship of an individual with public sphere. Education for profit, for her, and its cruel intrusion in Humanities has spoiled the vision for which humanities was introduced in the system of education.The Truman Capote Award for Literary Criticism awardee (2007), and the editor of *The Public Intellectual*Helen Small of Oxford University is also working in the field.

Thus these areas of new investigations are upcoming signs of new trends in Humanities and this exemplifies the idea that literature is everything and nothing is outside literature.

Recommended Readings and Work Cited

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