

India and the Global Future of the Humanities

Alex Kostova (University of Sofia)

In this text I aim to bring into focus how the Indian tradition could contribute to the framing of a contemporary vision for the future of humanities. I will address this aim through a threefold division that explores (1) the theoretical scaffolding of the conceptualization of the role of the Humanities in India, (2) the practical implications of this conceptualization and (3) the way (1) and (2) translate into a dynamic framework for the future of humanities that takes into account the plurality of visions that should shape this debate in a global world.

First, I will map the analytical principles upon which the post-colonial understanding of the role of the Humanities is based. Here I shall explore Tagore's model of disentanglement of the relation between knowledge and power and distinguishing pluralism from relativism and Gandhi's model of truth (*satya*) as rooted in the function of a distinctive operation (ahimsa) that ultimately leads to freedom of thinking and acting. Second, I will show the practical dimension of this vision. The explicit emancipatory potential of the Humanities emphasizes the cultivation of a non-normative reasoning that gives the form, but not the content of what a moral or emancipatory operation is. Third, it would allow us to outline a vision for a dynamic role of the humanities that is more capable to accommodate the acceleration and rapid progress intrinsic to a technological age, rather than having universal framework for the future of humanities.