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I thought I only had to have an idea (l'homme qui marche) *Unplugged - Academic Non-Fiction*

Jean-Luc Moriceau

Creative non-fiction in journalism uses narrative means from fiction to highlight dramatic tensions of reality; it thus puts the subjectivity of authors at the heart of the writing process, in order to capture the unfolding experience and practice of ordinary people. The life of academics is punctuated by astonishing, ordinary, ceremonial, or dramatic scenes that sometimes take place in liminal spaces but may constitute a core social part of research practice. The Unplugged “Academic Non-Fiction” section is dedicated to sharing these moments.

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The following text attempts a minor usage of English, as the major language in management and organization studies. As Deleuze and Guattari have theorized in *Kafka, towards a minor literature*, a minor usage stutters and stammers the major, breaks with the operation of ‘order-words’, composes a music of words, a painting with words, a silence within words, it is connected to the wider social and political milieu and paves the way for a community to come.

I thought I only had to have an idea... to scatter attractive concepts around, enough to fill 20 pages of text ... and to sky my worldview up to a starred-review. Then I would be thrown up to a throne, with a growing grand crown, showing collections of constellations of my review stars. And just like knocking on Heaven’s door, with no lures or failures, it would make me an author – a solar scholar – someone with a signature... ready for future adventures and raptures. But I had to recognize that having that idea was only the early first step.

I thought I only had to have an idea... but I had to learn that this pretty idea of mine still had to dig deep in history, to be re-colored with the ambient zeitgeist or site gist; and to socially network with other concepts, percepts, and precepts. I had to spend hours, like a rolling stone, studying how masters propelled their dear ideas with tight might, right fight, and night light, adding tons of tones and stacks of sparkles. I had to meditate on how much their styles were like steal stylus, till they instill that my worked-out work was just text about texts: text-based protests against tested pretexts, with contested contexts, and inept incepts. I had to keep on walking.

I thought I only had to have an idea ... but I had to recognize I was homeless and helpless, without the naked knack of a tinker thinker giving my idea depth, height, range, arrangement, derangement, and estrangement ... I had to be taught the magic of forging metaphors to bring roots and routes to the beginning of a thought, the light delights of bright insights, the art of fun pun, and cracking jokes; as well as the feared forces, fierce farces, false frescoes, dark rhetoric, and twisted tricks ... the battle toolkit to survive one

more term (as times, they are a-changin') in this worrisome war zone of academic polemics. To stay alive, dive, strive, and revive ... with a little jive.

I thought I only had to have an idea ... but I discovered I still had to flex it to reflect on its reflection like a reflex of reflexivity, so that it'd tear off its frontiers and bounce on boundaries, taking limits as liminalities, cross-bridging and cross-breeding, remaining mad and nomadic, tasteful but stateless, unfaithful and fateful, disseminating and contaminating, blowing in the wind ...

I thought I only had to have an idea ... but I painfully experienced that this idea still had to learn to perform, in order to transform and reform, to firmly form what it affirmed, in the state of what it aesthetically stated. That it existed only by inflaming, infuriating, and intensifying—making form and content oscillate and vacillate. That it required the patience and conscience to slowly grow with magnitude and amplitude, splendor and candor, grace and praise, shielded from haughtiness and angriness before it mastered martial arts. And when the idea was ready, I needed not to think twice whether it was alright, instead letting it act, impact with tact and tactic, move, move us, move them, and move the moods—with dynamism and humanism.

I thought I only had to have an idea ... but I become aware I still had to give it a voice, and to embody it—offering it a brain, fists, feet, fresh flesh, a belly, and antibodies. Granting it organs, orgasms, odors, and orders, the present of presence, and the consistence of existence: a cute, acute, astute, stout body to expose and impose in cruel duels. And still I had to have the courage, like a tambourine man, to tell the tale of it, to report and support it, to howl and recall it, and to make it haunt and count.

I thought I only had to have an idea ... but I began to understand that I still had to put it on the road again, to think it all over again, and to let it visit the pens of other poets, who would not have cherished it the way I did, but who would violate, rape, and entrap it, reducing and seducing it, but also maybe giving it new grafts and drafts, colors and honors, echoes and cues, and encouraging it to wander and wonder in other tracks and cracks. I had to learn to see without its help, to forget for a moment all philosophy and all always already almighty meaning, to experience the solitude of its lack and the void of its absence, and to witness both its need and contingency. My idea, may you be forever young!

I thought I only had to have an idea ... but I slowly discovered this was a lie. The sense of science is not diluted and polluted by poetry and performativity. Poetry fits, outfits, feasts, defeats, builds, ruins, tilts, and quilts the sensing of sense. It is a long march, but a short rope above the marsh.

Jean-Luc Moriceau is Professor of Research Methods and Accountability at Institut Mines-Télécom/TEM. He is the director of the doctoral program and co-chairs the ETHOS research group within the LITEM research laboratory. His research provides an aesthetical and ethical perspective on organizations and research practices, with an emphasis on affect, performances, and poetics. He is co-editing three books due to be published soon: *L'art du sens dans les organisations*; *S'exposer, cheminer, réfléchir: Composer sa méthode qualitative*; and *Turn to film*.