

INFLUENCE OF GLOBALIZATION ON INDIAN POPULAR NOVELISTS

Dr.P.David Livingstone

Associate Professor, Department of English, Government Arts College, Trichy - 22

Abstract

A work of art is definitely of its and the milieu. Various forces working in the present age influences people in general and subsequently art thought and life. The previously force is globalization. The purpose here is not to analyse whether Globalization is right or wrong or if it is good or bad. It is rather to see how one might profit by studying how powerful globalization has been and how it has influenced popular Indian fiction in English in the recent times.

A few current Indian novel writers are selected for study. The study seeks to find the influence of Globalization in their fictions which are quite popular with most young readers. The purpose is to promote understanding and advancement in literature and in literary criticism.

Introduction

A briefing on beliefs and newly created myths that are operative in pushing globalization, whatever be one's religion, country or race. Some beliefs are readily accepted as universal norms for successes in life most people seem to be united in subscribing strongly to these beliefs often without realizing what they're ready to do to their consciousness.

These beliefs actually and ultimately bring about a stunt in the evolution of the human consciousness. These beliefs are derivations from real progress almost all human activities are designed to suit these beliefs. The concomitant world ideology is what everyone calls as Globalization. These beliefs sustain Globalization.

Beliefs which prepare the way for Globalization

1. Every individual is unique and separate enclosed by one's own skin. One has only himself or herself to rely on. Everyone else is either a friend or a foe only coinciding interest connects one another temporarily
2. Everything is reversible. The problems faced are but interludes. Use tried and tested methods of problem solving. Soon everything gets back to normal.
3. Order demands hierarchy. Order can be achieved by rules and laws and their proper enforcement. The system needs a few people on top. They make rules and legislate laws. Everyone else should obey the rules and accept his position. This is the social and political order.
4. Efficiency is the key: Get the maximum out of every person, machine and organization. It is immaterial whether or not the end product serves a humanly useful purpose.
5. Technology is the answer to all problems.
6. New is always better.
7. My country, right or wrong. One owes allegiance only to one nation, one flag and one government.
8. The more money I have, the happier I am.
9. The future is not my cup of worry. Do not worry about the good of the next generation. Let the next generation look after itself.

The set of beliefs have ushered in Globalization which defines the present civilization. There are some myths that are widely pushed for acceptance through the Media and the World Wide Web. These myths have gained the status of a paradigm. Since the majority of the political class are united in subscribing strongly to these set of ideas. Life Negating Myths:

- Nature is in exhaustible: Nature is an infinite source of resources and an infinite sink of wastes. The present civilization wields powerful technologies. The myths give free reign to the over-use and thoughtless impairments of the natural resources of the earth and over load of nature's self regenerative capacities.
- Nature is like a giant mechanism: Engineer nature as if it was a machine.
- Life is a struggle where only the fittest survive.

Be fitter than others, smarter, more ambitious, more daring and richer and more powerful than our competitors.

- The market distributes benefits: It acts equitably. A successful person benefits himself or herself, his or her family, his or her company, his or her community, his or her country. Wealth "Trickles Down" from the rich to the poor.
- The more you consume, the better you are:
One's ego is satisfied in consumption.
- Economic ends justify military means:

That war is the way to achieve economic and political objectives is a life negating myth like all the others mentioned above.

The authors and their novels are random selections. The objective is to scrutinize the style, design the piece of life they signify and to see if any profound or valid thought about life is stated.

Chettan Bhagat: One Night at the Call Center

The major characters at the call centre are Shyam, Priyanka, Radhika, Esha, Vroom, Military uncle, and Shefali. None of them have grown beyond their adolescent mind set. Even the aged Military Uncle is an exception. The "Deus Ex Machine" element; the God particle at the fag end of the novel is also an adolescent God. They reveal and are representative of the prevailing global culture.

The dialogue between Vroom and Shyam is much interesting.

"...What happened to the reproposal plan with Priyanka?" Vroom said.

Shyam replies. "I have told you. Not until I become a Team leader".

Love for him needs the support of externals like promotions, cosmetics or goods. Love in all its manifestations, is a higher order emotion. But, trade and commerce definitely take love as unprofitable. They place material profit and success as the priority over the deeper under currents of life.

The vibrant dramatic scene at the restaurant in Chapter Ten, in which Shyam and Priyanka spend their moments of dating, is a pointer. Priyanka is really the more interesting

character than Shyam because he lives her moments in active reactions to the prevailing stimuli. A mother-in-law at the table near was agonizing her daughter-in-law and her granddaughter. The whole scene offers an everyday gossip element. However, the novelist gives a dramatic turn when Priyanka fires on. She turns her self-righteous anger against the mother-in-law and her son who fails to be supportive of his wife. Priyanka threatens them saying that she was a CBI Officer of the women cell.

“Three years, Harassing women is punishable for three years. Quick trial and no appeal”.

The scene is an adolescent thriller, incapable of any profound positioning about life.

In chapter twenty, there is a piece of life worth while to study, try and find out if it demands our contemplation and whether or not any valid thought about life in presented. Esha a colleague at the call centre confides to Shyam her sense of guilt and pain.

“Real Pain is mental pain” Esha said.

“...I don't feel a lot of things” Shyam said.

“Everyone feels pain because everyone has a dark side to their life”, said Esha.

To which, Shyam, who is incapable of a real sense of life replies;

“I have so many - like half a dozen darksides.

I am like a dark sided hexagon”

The Novelist and his characters are incapable of a human dialogue, real and of a serious kind because the globalized culture disables thought of a profound kind.

Esha's pain and guilt are real. She has caused them on herself. She does not look for sympathy but seeks an understanding of life and its under currute. Education and her friends fail to offer. The age has everything else to offer - job, good pay and goods. Esha has thrown a stone into the water of one's consciousness, creating ripples after ripples. The novelist is shrewd enough to portray the predicament of Esha. Her fellow human beings are dehumanized and are incapable of understanding her predicament any further. Shyam fails to see it.

Tricks and unkindness prevail at the call centre. And getting letter off the other is considered intelligence look how they respond to a situation which is life - literatening and situations which are not. The protagonists of the novel are at the risk of an imminent death. The Novelist is inescapable from using a “Deux Ex Machine” or the God as the only route of escape from a tragedy. The only relevant question before one is to find out, how does the author differ from the classics of one's own culture? If so, what has prompted the difference?

Everyone, in the novel, lives in their self inflated egos, seeking pleasure for himself or herself. And God in the scene is pleased to leave them at it and told them to go ahead and fulfil their selfish urges.

Vroom alone has some inkling of his real need. "I want to have a life with meaning, even if it means a life without bed or daily trips to pizza - hut". Vroom reveals his order of material preferences and none of which has given him the sense of living.

Priyanka tells that let her mother be "Responsible for her own happiness" "My focus should be on my own life and what I want".

Military Uncle wants to be with his son and grandson in the US. Radhika wants to divorce Aunj. Esha wants her parents to love her again. She does not want to become a dumb model.

Shyam wants to set up a small web design company. He wants to be worthy of someone like Priyanka. This is what they say in a moment of immediate death.

God says that he was just amazed and pleased. The reader would be amazed too but definitely not pleased because these blabbering are insignificant trivialities. What profound seeking do they reveal? They love themselves, their drinks and their dines and the things they buy. They are still in their teens. Look at the sexual relationship they exhibit. Love of sports, business, politics or religion and even the love between men and women in the novels are equally same. They are press buttons for pleasure just like their promotions and wage increase. Any conflict in dealing with any of these, one attempts to solve it through technology. If technology fails, one seeks violence of any kind to solve it through technology. One could find plenty of such scenes in the globalized fiction writing. Love and sex, for them do not represent vital life flow. Love and sex are consumable pleasures or profit promoting deals. The ideology of globalization compels a belief that if love and sex are taken too personal or emotional, they are liabilities against success. They only want their relationship whose basis is pleased beginning and pleased ending. Almost all these current popular fictions do the same. They are day dream substitutes. Most profound feelings are trivialized and there is a sufficient diet of fun and humour, sizzlers or thrillers. No valid thought about life is presented except jokes about girls crying and girls thank people if they only listen to them.

The God in the novel talks of himself as the winner voice. The idea is too state and very conveniently deceptive. It is deceptive because the commercial advertisers and the media can easily manipulate the winner voice to their advantage. The miner voice is the creation of the external world beginning from home followed by the rest of the machinery of the society like the schools and other institutions of the state and religion. The God in the scene gives a common pep talk on success saying one need a medium amount of intelligence, a bit of imagination, self confidence and the ability to face failures.

Indian civilization has gods that are aesthetically acceptable, demanding one's contemplation reverence and worship is far from his recluse and such a great civilization could not offer help to the writer is a pity. The novelist God is merely a play to cover his ability to grasp; the being within him God is merely a miner call, an ego satisfying flag posting, very convenient for consumerism. The God character in the novel does not enlighten them of the real infinitive living which is not ego - centric. He encourages them

to live at the level of one's own calculative mind aided by technology and with a formula for material success. This is the new age mantra. The idea of God presented in these pages only goes to trivialize religion and God and level them down to make a highway for globalization.

There is a motivational element to some of these novels and it is sure formula for promoting a reading. The prologues are ingenious and an interesting dragnet. While the epilogues are add-ons. Both are imaginative and creative too. But the question is : what profound thoughts do they provoke about the pieces of life as presented by the novel?

The novels are as interesting as the human interest stories of journalism carries details of please, dates and answers to all "wh" questions. So does the novel ensuing the ploy of a reality show bringing in everyday news items. Journalism is in the style of a quick interesting gossip. And so is the globalised novel. Its evergreens are supplied by the success of journalism and the reality shows and Tele serials on Television. The foresee elements fulfil the gossip craye of the present millieux. They have a lot of make-believe elements too. Almost all character do not grow beyond adolescence. They show adolescent aspirations. Their reactions to, troubles, pains, sorrows of ever fear do not show any maturity other than adolescent behaviour. And globalisation thrives on gossip loving societies, feeding with stories of macluives, merchandise, success and economic progress how to make money being the top priority. Almost all the protagonist exhibit these inherent tendencies.

Aravind Adiga: The White Tiger

'The White Tiger is a better novel, artistically racy in language, aggressive in its vituperative stand against the ugly sordidness everywhere in "Darkness" or seen in Laxmangarh or the lives of people at Delhi. One appreciates the skills of artistic imagination in his comparing of powerful and dominant land lords to animals - "the Buffalo", "the Stork", "the wild Boar", "the raven" and "the Mongoose". The picturiaciation of the civilisation of the people at the those places is very realistic but the anger, his resentment and her attitude represents a hate campaign against the very new and women he organically balanced with in his earlier life till the time when he murderously breaks free from his servant master relationship.

The intelligence displayed in the protagonist is diabolise. There is a skilful artistic manovering to justify the entrepreneurial spirit for cash-centred success. The economic ends struggles to justify the anti human and life negating action. The art here fails miserably for want of a profound reverence for life. The dramatic success and aggressive language post using is quite unhelpful to human continuity on the planet.

Through, it offers a real taste of the human predicated in the area called "Darkness" in the north, the novel is a product of the age of globalling action a product as subjecting and as spicy as the junk food that hangs in the stalls. The relevant questions are,

Does the life portrayed in the novel provoke a profound piece of living? It wroth one's contemplation?

The novel may be right in evoking a deep sense of righteous anger against the innumerable incidents of injustice and in human treatment of a large number of innocent rural poor folk. There is real pathos in it. Balram tells that the people before independence were in the cages and are now let into the jungles where politicians are the predators. Balram feels that the poor masses are in a "Rooster Coop". The sentiments are right and are expressed in a fine medium. But, not what light and freedom does the novel suggest people to walk. The diabolic trap is clear. The protagonist in the story walks into the dimming lights of market oriented living and one is clued into an enjoyment of cash, curry and consumerism, a subtle denial of a satisfaction.

The narrative is in the design of a journalistic detailing, categorising people and places in terms of their commercial potentially and industrialization. Nations are judged or labelled on the basic of what they have or have not "No drinking water, electricity, sewage system, public transportation, sense of hygienic, discipline, courtesy or punctuality".

The protagonist prides himself with exuberance that there trivialities matter more than a healthy cultured state of the mind. His jingoistic nationalism is quite clear.

"Only three nations have never let themselves be ruled by foreigners, China, Afghanistan, Abyssinia... I admire".

The overriding preference for technology and entrepreneurship is quite expressive of the spirit of globalization - "how entrepreneurship is brow, nurtured and developed". The city of Bangalore is assumed an area of "light" in contrast to the North which he calls "Darkness". The darkness is not in the area but in the mind of the protagonists who suffers from and illusion sustained by his unconscious egoistic mind.

"Tell you the truth about Bangalore! Life in Bangalore is great, rich food, beer, night clubs... I am in the light now but I was born and raised in Darkness".

Globalization has a kick for trivialization of Gods. Goddess Lakshmi - "woman in white sari with gold sovereigns dripping down her feet" - for profit.

"Which God's arse? There are so many choices. The Muslims have one God. The Christians have three Gods, the Hindu have 36,000,000 Gods. All these Gods do little work - much like our politicians and yet keep winning re-election to their golden thrones in heaven, year after year"

The design and the calculated anger spring from an anger palpable and clean. It is of a mind that springs from ugly and sordid conditions of the present age

"Hanuman, everyone's favourite God in the Darkness because he is a shining example of how to serve your masters with fidelity, love and devotion - kindly of Gods the foisted on us".

The prevailing darkness for him is the servant master relationship which is slavery. Who are the masters for him? He presumes that the politicians, land lords and the Gods are the enslaving masters. Though the politicians and the land lords are domineering brutal in

pushing the less privileged into “Rooster coop”, like conditions, the Gods don’t compel any one into slavery. One has a choice whether to admire adore and reverence or reject the Gods with a safe conscience Gods are not compulsive elements. They are the highest forms of creative expressions, art forms whose purpose is to offer a movement of timelessness free from the clamour for mundane pleasures. The globalized civilization may find it unprofitable.

As the story unravels, one finds that Balaram is a coward. Or, is he a hypocrite, sly, villainous and dehumanized in reacting to the domineering social back ground? It does not matter to him to be self critical. The globalized world out there is very powerful, compelling and impressive. The idea of success and the mad joy is clear.

“I can’t tell you how exciting it is to me. General Electric, Dell, Siemens - they are all in Bangalore. And so many more are on their way”.

This is the kind of freedom and joys he walks into after having murdered her master without a cause. Dehumanisation begins when one fails to make a sentence upon himself and when one has. Lost-his human consciousness Balram says,

“ I will never say I made a mistake that night Delhie when I slit my master’s throat I will say it was all worthwhile to know, just for a day, just for an hour, just for a minute, what it means not to be a servant”.

The expression is a mere idea, an illusion that deceives the ego.

There is an inherent weakness in the novel. And in Balram the hero. The character of Balram all along is incompatible with the final act of a bloody murder of his own boss Ashok against whom he goes not harbour anger, animosity or revenge either of Ashok he says.

“But I do think about him a lot - and believe it or not I do miss him. He did not deserve his fate.

I should have cut the Mongooses neck”

The real character of Balram as built up by the author would be quite incapable of such a blood letting murder and it would be unsuitable for Balram to call himself a “White Tiger”. The real Balram reveals himself in these words.

“The Lizards face came right up to my face; and then it opened its light green mouth and them]n I fainted for the second time in my life”.

“Uncle Balram fainted in front of the white tiger in the cage”

And Balram himself confesses,

“A tingling went from the base of my spine into my groin. My knees began to shake; I felt light. Someone near me shrieked ... “He is going to faint...” My feet were slipping”.

So Balram has remained all along too sensitive to life and living every where before him. He was very much alive to the blackness and sordidness around him. The protagonist walks from darkness to utter darkness. He dupes himself into a illusionary belief of joy in the cash and curry consumerism. The unreflective hubris of Balram is founded on hope in Electronic city, the multinational companies and the business and goods they would offer. The expected pleasure is one of economic dependence which generates a habit, a second

nature of globalization. These globalization novels do not purpose themselves to awaken of provoke any new bearings in human consciousness.

Conclusion

The study of the protagonists of these novels, the narratives of incidents and conversations revel the prevailing practice of the ideologies of Globalization life for them is a struggle and only the fittest survive. They strive endlessly to be more smarter, more ambitious more richer and more powerful than others. They exhibit an endless craze for technologies and gadgets. Love and sex for them are also pleasure giving consumables. Violence and villainy is considered intelligent step for survival or progress.

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