

Advertising and Women's Space: The Bulldozing of Local Spaces and Narratives

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Globalization and Extinction of Local Spaces

The politics of globalization of local cultural spaces, as a drastic daily phenomenon, is achieving milestones massively. As a multifaceted phenomenon, globalization enjoys more than one form of persuasive channels. Propelled by economic forces and supported eagerly by local profit-mongers in all nations, Western cultural aspects communicated via Western and non-Western sources take precedence and some denigration of non-Western themes and narratives may also take place. However, it simultaneously, directly and indirectly helps the protagonists of consumerism, investors from all nations and related cultural practices in all nations. All this yields good financial harvests and broadens the economic advantages of the proponents.

We need to emphasize that unlike in the recent past, the prime actors of the process of globalization right now are from many nations, both Western and non-Western.

The Role of Advertisement in Promoting Globalization

One essential medium of transformation and communication that functions instrumentally in evolving and adopting a global concept of world, which otherwise seems to be unavailable in a concrete form, has been the enterprise of advertisement. Obviously, the advertisement of products or saleable commodities constitutes the one major step before their arrival and availability in the market. The effectiveness of advertisement determines the fate of products significantly. All the visible and invisible benefits derived through the advertisement agencies, have consequently made the multinational enterprises and the financial institutions of consumerism-oriented and capital block, to seek the help of advertisement agencies.

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Content and Visuals of Advertisement – Focus on Woman’s Body

What is however ironic is that these advertising agencies are an indispensable organ of globalization and these bombard the local spaces by generating sensual environs. And to arouse such sensual sentiments, the incorporation of sexual scenes and massive utility of woman’s body, surfaces extensively.

The question that arises is about the centrality of materialist globalization and within it presumably, what will be the space available to the woman, currently living in varied societal and familial and cultural set-ups?

Is globalization promoting the “Western” woman model and the currently available social position to her as the role model for the woman folk of divergent societies? Is really woman at the centre of globalization, figuring as an emancipated being? Or else simply globalization promotes an institution that wants to exploit her through sexuality, and sexual flavors of globalization, wherein she is but an iconic sexual commodity?

All these things that are basically related to the operational globalization, and functions in the name of advertising enterprise, especially in the context of woman space will constitute the prime concern of present paper.

Woman’s Body

The dominant place given to woman’s body in advertising agency in post-mortem age is recognized by all. The body has emerged as a new reliable, effective, and alluring business and lethal cultural enforcement mantra, especially in the hands of consumer-oriented economy entrepreneurs. The hot concepts like beauty contests, fashion shows, celebrity shows, soap operas, etc., are the very creation of consumer-oriented capital enterprise, so the cultural onslaught is implicit within these iconic concepts as well.

Though through advertisements, the very circulation of the originality of the prime products becomes contestable in the minds of those filled with especially Derridian, Foucaultian

and Nietzschean philosophies, as there are enough loopholes and lacunas refracting through the very advertisements, yet there is no denying the fact that advertising mesmerizes the public consciousness. It acts as a catalyst in the very process of globalization. It casts a magical spell on the gazing eye, and even acts as a reservoir of various discourses that simultaneously clash with each other.

At the same time the central discourse (consumer culture) effectively perpetrates and sets itself off at the place, where from it can maneuver the psychic landscape of the weak culture followers. It acts as a tool of maneuvering, especially the young generation plus the women folk, who otherwise act as deterrence to foreign cultural aggression, as women are the cultural preservers and transmitters, but when the advertisement itself gives space to them, then they become hypnotic and the resistance level is weakened.

The source agency in the name of globalization, manipulates the rhetoric elements, technological advancements and innovative ideas, to sell the duplicate in place of the original. For this, woman's body is used as a conduit to divert the attention from the real to hyper real, and she too realizes that her identity is an illusory construct. She could enjoy the same privileges as her superior center so far has been enjoying. Seeing her image in an appropriated manner, her consciousness is sobered down and she becomes passive to this assault on her previous identity. And she accepts her new role as an (ill) liberalized individual. It gives rise in her mind to the thoughts of equality like that of Eve of *Paradise Lost*, when she sees her reflection in the pond of Heaven and felt the feel of her beauty. It enkindles in her a spirit of inquiry, equality and rebellion as well, and then the inevitable Fall.

Liberalism and Faustianism

Liberalism, if it may not sound fanatic, is Faustianism that seeks knowledge about each and every thing. The consumer culture originated from the West, but is now actively embraced by all. In the guise of liberalism and capitalism, it is smoothly removing the carpet from below the local spaces and leaves them bare. However, Oriental intelligentsia is in a slumber, and does mere rhetoric. Their role as resisting elements is debatable. The question that keeps lurking is that are the marginal cultural norms inhuman and irrational? Obviously, the Orientalists have

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imbibed and ingrained this idea. Therefore, liberalization is thriving day by day. The products of global capital are becoming the part and parcel of local narratives and spaces in a well-knit manner.

Functions of Advertising

Advertising is not a recent phenomenon if seen minutely. It has been used by even epic masters when Sophocles used it as a source of providing tragic paradox, when he used Jacosta's body as a magnetic center that bewitches the post-mortem reader as well, to know the details of this mythic drama. It shows the power of perception of the so called intellectual circle. The so called Classic masters, too, played with women's body that otherwise was, and is so sacred in every culture/religion and is the very source of creation, but has been reduced to something that is being gazed upon by the public in open, with only a voyeuristic eye.

One under the discursive emancipatory hollow slogans shuns all the moral constructs of his/her culture and is reduced to a mere spectator. Seeing the body of woman (not connected to the viewer in any kinship or relationship) in public is ignored, but if it is his/her own kin's, then how controversial and deadening a shock it gives! Foucault was right to a larger extent, when he brought the implicit sexualisation aspect as a new discourse, to deliberate upon the cultural constructs that are intentionally created by the powerful elite mafia, but does this mean that the eastern intellectuals are less capable of conceiving ideas?

Forced Emancipation in Advertising

Criticizing things tabooed earlier in public domain has been the trend, but how far is it mandatory that women body be pasted on the front page of a book that is meant for children, garment that is meant for men, a drug that is meant for a child, and movie that is meant for monkeys. The body of man could equally fit the place, then why this unwanted (d) emancipation?

When in the very name of emancipation, woman's body is made an object of public display, a commodity and a source of advertising. Doesn't this mechanical treatment of her irritate the soul and conscience? Doesn't she lose her freedom? Doesn't she become an

ambivalent object? She is considered to be a transgressor as well as a role model. She is in an identity-crisis phase, a third space, therefore, a dangerous commodity.

How This Advertised Women Body Affects the Psyche of the Onlooker - Disorders

What type of narratives are being constructed by these advertising notions, when the women body is fragmented, her identity is being challenged, and a new fragmented identity is imposed upon her by these celebratory, illusory constructs. Her original identity is distorted. She loses her real self. How this advertised women body affects the psyche of the onlooker. It breeds violent erotic instincts in the minds of the onlookers. It breeds neurosis, violence, gang rapes, scandals and trafficking, etc.

Its impact on the women folk and younger generation especially who gaze at it, is aptly brought to limelight by Objectification theory of Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997. They revealed that “women are taught to internalize an observer's perspective of their own bodies that results in appearance anxiety, thus living much of their life in third person, which is self-objectification. It also results in eating disorders, because they don't want to look fatty. Some other disorders are unipolar depression and sexual dysfunction, for which Brooks coined a term centerfold Syndrome, the causes of which are biology, instinct and survival of the fittest. It is characterized by:

- 1: Voyeurism
- 2: Objectification
- 3: Trophyism
- 4: The need for validation
- 5: The fear of true intimacy”

Impact on Materially Less Advanced Cultures

Though to some literary pundits, the argument may sound myopic and subjective, but it really perturbs the individual psychic landscape in particular of any sound mind, and collective psyche of the materially less advanced cultures in general. A teenager, who constantly gazes at the advertising hoarding, becomes so neurotic and erotic that he becomes the part of a gang rape.

Manipulation through Advertising

Advertising agency has become so aggressive that it even manipulates girls and boys, who just are entering into puberty phase as soft targets for the flow of global capital. Though the so called liberal intelligentsia of Eastern origin would boast of liberalization of everything, but are they ready for such impending dangers. One becomes very irritated, when he sees in advertising hoarding the open bosom of a lady, when the message could have been effectively conveyed without succumbing to this tactic.

According to Fredrickson and Roberts there is “emphasis on one body part, while all other parts of the body are ignored which comes in the domain of Dismemberment advertisements”. A religious minded garment seller too under the spell of postmodernism succumbs and shuns his coyness, and becomes a puppet. The erotic instinct is same from the inception of man, there has been no change in the physiology of human beings, only in social set up there is visible change.

One should not be deterrent to progress, but if it is at the cost of sacrifice of one's cultural sister, mother, daughter and wife, then appropriation is must. Moreover, is the literary critic, cultural scholar and modernized mob ready to contemplate on this type of cultural aggression. Is it not cultural erosion? Is it not ravishing of morals, and is it not suicidal from Oriental perspective?

Advertising Ethics?

Well, advertising ethics is a must. Balance and surveillance is a must. The resisting knowledge has to be allowed to circulate itself through the conduit of advertising itself. It must not be viewed as something derogatory and retrogressive, rather the pressure must be exerted by intellectual circle to let a healthy advertising atmosphere mushroom, otherwise local cultural spaces will shrink and collapse.

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