

Globalization and Literature

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Abstract

The present study analyses the relationship between post-colonialism and globalization, and why globalization is called neocolonialism, how do Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Arvind Adiga and other literary figures engage with neocolonialism and globalization. The present study is analytical and qualitative in nature.

Key Words: Colonialism, Globalization, literature, neocolonialism, and Post colonialism.

Introduction

Globalization is a concept very difficult to define, especially because the term or concept has come to refer to a gamut of variables interlocking and trends so much so that once the term 'Globalization' is mentioned it evokes a lot of passion and emotion. Whereas the perception of globalization dominant in Western Europe and North America is the existence of extensive opportunities for economic development of the world and significant contribution to make better the people's condition of existence. The Third World perception of globalization is that of a harmful process that maximizes inequality within and among states. We can say that globalization, Integrating and fragmenting the world, uniformity and localization, increased material prosperity and deepening misery and homogenization and hegemony, is a complex process and phenomenon of antinomies and dialectics.

Main Arguments

How does culture relate to globalization of markets and economies? Or how do the trends of money market affect literature and language? These issues have surged to prominence in the current social, economic and political scenario and should necessarily be addressed.

To social, political and economic pressures Literature has always been subject. The most recent phenomenon has been the outburst of the powerful post-colonial discourse writing back to the empire and asserting its own identity and cultural and national individuality. post-colonial times Literature reflected the increased flow of individuals from one country to the other mostly to the land of colonizer and dealt with consequent issues like migration, hybridity, multiculturalism, loss of identity and disappearance of rigid national identities.

Globalization hurried this process and resulted in the uniting of cultural practices and increased marketing of culture through influx of MacDonald's and Pizza Huts, etc., in all metropolitan cities and through the celebration of special days like Valentine's Day, Father's Day, etc. The visible impact of globalization can be found in the metropolises across the world which have suddenly become cosmopolitan and metro-cultural. This is neocolonism making it felt not through violent political strategies, but by slowly and quietly confiscating the markets as well as culture.

Origin of Globalization

Some scholars place the origin of globalization in modern times; others trace its history long before the European age of discovery and voyages to the new world. Since the mid-1980's the term *globalization* has been in increasing use and especially since the mid-1990's and in literature especially much has been written on globalization and responses to globalization. On one hand, many researchers scrutinize and explore works of literature so as to find reflections of diverse globalization themes within the texts and contexts and also to verify the realities of globalization through literary forms. On the other hand, literature and literary studies are developed into a platform for supporting, evoking and interpreting different social, political, literary, and cultural concepts within the globalization realm.

Globalization, Westernization and Modernization

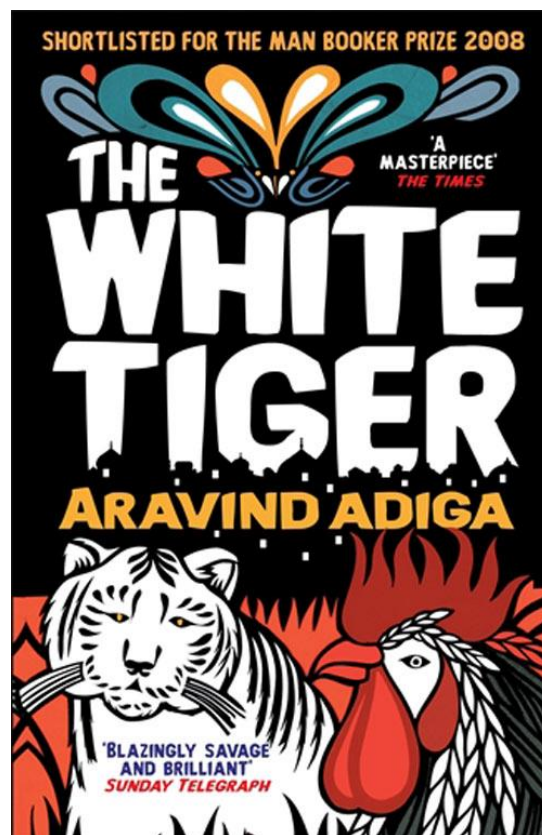
There are many literary figures especially from ex-colonies who have equated globalization with westernization or modernization. Following this idea globalization is changing whereby the social aspects of modernity (capitalism, rationalism, industrialism, bureaucracy, etc.) are spread the world over normally destroying pre-existent cultures and local self-determination in the process. Literary authors are convinced of the fact that

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M. Habib, Research Scholar
Globalization and Literature

international companies have taken up the place of colonizers. They have spread their branches into the economies of all the nations. Sucking out the livelihoods of the downtrodden, unfortunately, they marginalized the have-nots of developing countries like India and Africa.

Globalization in India: Aravinda Adiga's *The White Tiger*



In India the process of globalization started with the introduction of New Economic Policy in 1991 after continuing the import substitution for nearly forty years. As an economic activity Globalization has not remained detached with other cultural aspects of the society. Aravinda Adiga's *The White Tiger* was published in 2008, and before, at the end of that year, it had made its author famous throughout world. I would like to explore it in the light of representation of modern India.

This 2008 Booker Prize winner novel *The White Tiger* studies the contrast between India's rise as a modern global economic giant and the protagonist, Balram, who comes from rural poverty background. Past six decades have witnessed changes in Indian society, and these changes, many of which are for the better, have overturned the traditional hierarchies,

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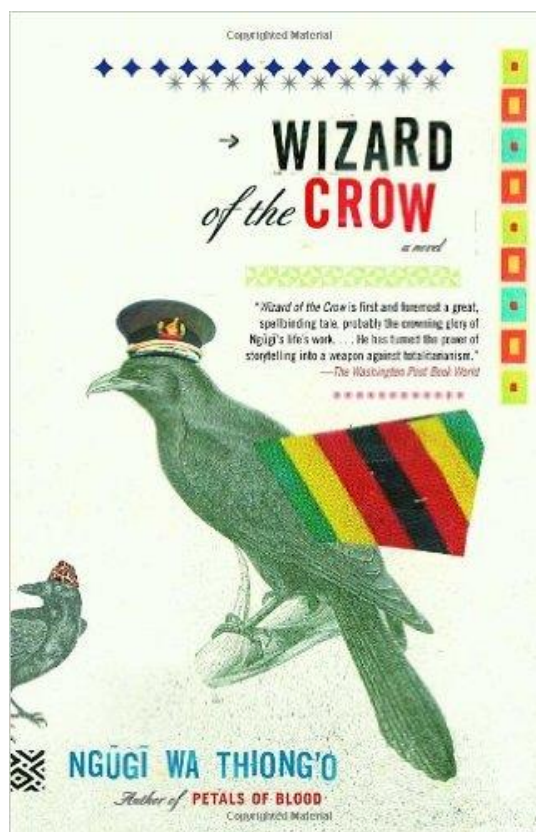
and the old securities of life. A lot of poorer Indians are left disturbed and perplexed by the New India that is being formed around them. However fast Indian economy may be growing, the lives of the poor people still show the grim picture of rural India. Therefore it is clear that the major theme of the novel is to present the effects of globalization on Indian democracy.

Situation in Africa – Ngugi’s Works



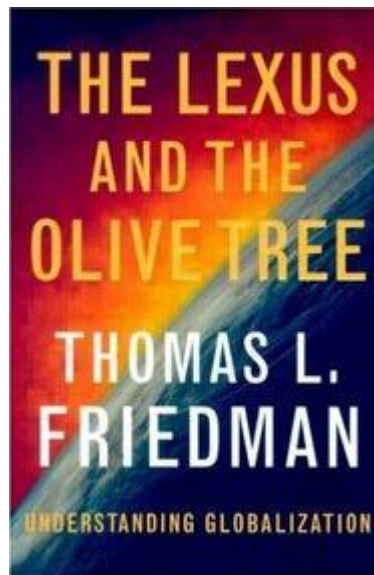
Courtesy: <https://abagond.wordpress.com/2011/12/28/ngugi-wa-thiongo-the-language-of-african-literature/>

Similarly Africa is confronted by yet another phenomenon- globalization -that is of global dimension. In this continent as a whole, writers have been in the forefront among cultural producers in the fight for the survival and wellbeing of the prey - Africa. To them, the concern is with how cultural expression can be used as a tool of preserving cultural autonomy and identity in the face of globalization. Ngugi is such an author and his contribution to this project is enclosed in his novel, *Wizard of the Crow*.



Ngugi's mind is busy with themes of colonialism and globalization and with life in a politically troubled Kenya. Ngugi attacks universalism and wants African unique elements to be identified and not to be clouded by globalization or universalism. His *Wizard of the Crow* permits an understanding of the over-determined origins of dictatorship: on the legacies of colonialism, the lingering interference of Western states and corporations, and the failures of national leadership.

Globalization's Effect



In *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, Thomas L. Friedman tries to describe the forces that are globalizing the world at the end of the twentieth century and their effects on environment. Fredric Jameson in his essay “*Notes on Globalization as a Philosophical Issue*,” presents his explicit account on globalization. Through most part of his book *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, Robertson elaborates on various aspects of the sociologist’s and social theorist’s eye-catching concentration on culture and its relation to globalization from 1990s onwards.

Planetaryity

In 2001 and at *The Globalcities Conference* held at Michigan State University Gayatri Spivak made her contribution on globalization debates. Her new concept of “planetaryity” makes a different turn in social and cultural globalization debates. Another dignified authority on the subject of cultural aspect of globalization is undoubtedly Homi K Bhaba. Micheal Hardt and Antonio Negri’s *Empire* (2000) is an influential account of the revolutionary potential of globalization. *Globalities: Terror and its Consequences* is the title of the paper Spivak presented at the Globalcities Conference held at Michigan State University in 2001, where she describes her stance on the politics of globalization.

English Literature and Globalization

The critic Gikandi, in his essay, explores the problems that arise in connection with reading globalization through English Literature, starting with the overly optimistic

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assumption, bolstered by postcolonial theory, that globalization represents the end of the nation-states and the proliferation of cultural relationships characterized by difference and hybridity. Nico Israel says that globalization's impact on literature in many ways with both positive and negative associations. Anthony Pym's essay, "*Globalization and the Politics of Translation Studies*", is very important. Pym sees globalization as a consequence of technologies reducing the costs of communication.

The special issue of the journal *South Atlantic Quarterly* (summer 2001) focuses on the fate of literature as a discipline in the age globalization and connects its debates with established arguments linked to postcolonialism. The concern of Liam Connell's essay "*Global Narratives: Globalisation & Literary Studies*" (2004) is to elaborate a prefatory account of how globalization can be understood as a textual characteristic. Some texts which deal with globalization are – Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997), Vikram Chandra's *Red Earth and Pouring Rain* (1995), Mohsin Hamids *Moth Smoke* (2000), Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006), Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000).

Role of Pulp Fiction

Pulp-fiction has also taken globalization into consideration. Works like Neelish Misra's *Once upon Timezone* (2006), Swati Khushals' *Piece of Cake* (2004), and Brinda Narayan's *Bangalore Calling* (2011), among others are consumed with the death of heterogeneous culture amid globalization. Cheetan Bhagat's *One Night @ the Cell Centre*, is at once a Romantic Comedy, with spiritual undertones and a motivational management guide that critiques positive neoliberal narratives around globalization and capitalism just as it champions them with nationalistic rhetoric.

Conclusion

The term *globalization* term has been in increasing use since the mid-1980s. Many researchers explore works of literature so as to find reflections of diverse globalization themes within the texts and contexts and also to verify the realities of globalization through literary forms. Other literature / literary studies are developed into a platform for evoking, supporting and interpreting different social, political, literary, and cultural concepts within the realm of globalization.

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