



## Can Shakespeare Survive Globalization?

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### ABSTRACT

*Advancement in information technology helps people around the world connect in a unified global culture. This technological development encouraged universities to interact effectively with students from different nationalities. Higher education systems in developed countries became exporters of the commodity of education to developing countries. Universities are equipped with the strategies to compete internationally, increase their effectiveness, and competitiveness.*

*Here, in my paper "Shakespeare" connotes the "literature of England" or colonial literature. The Theory of post colonialism explains the shift of paradigm from the so called "imperial literature" to the literature of the colonized. Globalization results in the rapid cross national flows of people goods, capital and information which in turn dissolves the nation into the common mould and may cause countries to lose their traditional values and culture. The national identity has been dissolved into a global identity. Thus when globalization which is decentralization, deterritorialization, redrawing boundaries, or any number of other terms signifying current spatial realignments questions the national identity, identity politics gets intensified. In the present curriculum when "Shakespeare" is no more relevant, regional literature gains more importance. One of the paradoxes of globalization, which in its current form challenges the power and autonomy of the nation-state, is that it first developed in connection with the expansion of the nation-state. It is a paradoxical situation that in the era of "neocolonization", regional writings gain notice and thus works of Ponkunnam Varkey, Sara Joseph, Beerankutty and the like are incorporated in the text books of higher education realm. This paper, aims at establishing the change in the concept of 'text' besides discussion on substitution of "imperial literature" in higher education with regional and national literatures.*

### KEYWORDS :

### INTRODUCTION

"I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any", a nationalistic perception of a global culture expressed by our Father of nation, Mahatma Gandhi. Yes, when dimensions of "culture" get broadened across nations, identity of nation states should not get displaced but expanded by global identity. Globalization has broadened the scope of education. Globalization has influenced the educational philosophy and classroom practices all over the world. "It may be that consciousness of a global society, culture, and economy and global interdependence which are the cornerstones of globalization, and these consciousness and interdependency have saliency in knowledge based enterprises ... there is certain inevitability that higher education institutions, because of their cultural, social, and economic roles, are caught up in and affected by globalization. (Levin, 2001, p. 9)" The process of learning English by reading English literature is 'retold' now as learning by reading literatures in English. "Shakespeare" in my title "Can Shakespeare survive globalization" connotes colonial literature or imperial literature in English education. Should imperial literature enjoy the status of Royal Tongue even in the days of literatures in English?

### Globalization and Literature

According to Jan Aart Scholte, globalization can be conceived in terms of "internationalization". From this perspective, "global" is simply another adjective to describe cross-border relations between countries and globalization designates a growth of international exchange and interdependence. In English literature, the term "internationalization" may refer to the acceptance of writings by "people of colour" when the literary scene in Britain has been transformed so substantially in the past fifty years by the presence of writers of African, Caribbean, Indian subcontinental, and Sri Lankan descent. When globalization refers to a process of removing government-imposed restrictions on movements between countries in order to create an open, borderless world economy, it is "liberalization". English literature too is liberalized from the judgements based on imperial canons, either British or American. Globalization becomes westernization or modernization especially when our culture gets Americanized. There is a 'celebrity club' of Indian writers who pander exclusively to the western palate and are prolific producers of fiction meant only to export. Globalization is "deterritorialization" when it says that social space is no longer wholly mapped in terms of territorial places, territorial distances and territorial borders. The expansion of diasporic literatures in English, is explicit in a postnational, global flow of deterritorialized cultural products appropriated, translated, and recirculated world-wide particu-

larly contemporary texts such as Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Interpreter of Maladies*, Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke*, and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*.

### Shift in Paradigms

Today it is literatures rather than the old colonial or classic literature. The focus of literature remained largely on the Greek and Roman classics and the literatures of the major modern Western European powers, but a confluence of factors contributed by the impact of globalization in the late 1980s and early 1990s led to a greater openness to the wider world. Globalization impacts a shift in paradigms and the so called idea of 'empire' and imperial literature perceived as literary canons.

### World Literature

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe used the concept of *Weltliteratur* in several of his essays in the early decades of the nineteenth century to describe the international circulation and reception of literary works in Europe, including works of non-Western origin. World literature can be seen as an elliptical refraction of national literatures. World literature is not a set canon of texts but a mode of reading: a form of detached engagements with worlds beyond our own time and place. It is therefore uniquely placed to examine cross-cultural contacts and exchanges.

### Global Literature

Bogumil suggests the term "Global Literature" to replace "world literature" in order to include the reality of a newer format of the "text" and also to take in a wider scope of coverage. Literature in modern day of globalization is a critical reading, writing and thinking course designed to introduce students to the pleasures of exploring, discovering, interpreting, confronting and becoming familiar with human experiences from other cultures and countries.

### Post colonialism and globalization

At this juncture when we consider the ways that culture exists outside the nation-state, it would be ideal to refer to post-colonialism that has addressed questions that are directly relevant to those of globalization. Indeed, much of the language of theories of globalization comes directly from post-colonial theory. Post-colonialism is the critique of the cultural, political, and linguistic power of the West over non-Western cultures and societies; or more generally, the effects of colonization on the latter.

### Two Approaches

Postcolonialism and globalization seem to offer two distinct approaches to the transnational study of literature and literary culture.

While globalization is a postnational phenomenon, postcolonialism is linked to the epoch of the nation-state. It is to note that both colonialism and postcolonialism are integral to the very history of globalization. Postcolonialism is connected to the rise of modernity and the epoch of nationalism, while globalization is understood to be a contemporary, postnational phenomenon connected to the rise of postmodernity.

### Loss of National Identity in Globalization

One of the paradoxes of globalization, which in its current form challenges the power and autonomy of the nation-state, is that it first developed in connection with the expansion of the nation-state and since under globalization the nation-state is being undermined by transnational forces that threaten its traditional power to regulate subjectivity and determine what constitutes cultural belonging. In the earlier phases of globalization, the nation-state linked colonization and capitalism together in the interests of its own expansion, while in its more recent phase multi-national corporations and the mass media have begun to challenge the power of the nation-state. Postcolonialism suggests a historical epoch in which the formerly colonized achieve a measure of power and autonomy through the creation of a postcolonial nation-state. The forces of globalization, however, represent something of an ironic moment for the postcolonial nation-state.

Doesn't globalization, as a historical, political, economic and cultural force, threaten the distinct political structures and cultural identities of nation-states deeply committed to the process of recovering and enriching forms of cultural expression nearly obliterated by colonization? Postcolonial scholars urged a serious questioning of the image of canon in English literature. The global space for white man's sense of supremacy and the pedagogical spirit of anti-colonial modernization died about the same time, the time from when scholars date the beginnings of the contemporary forms of globalization in the late 1970s. We need to guard against making a fetish of hybridity and multiculturalism when it simply represents a "mish-mash" of homogenized Western cultural forms and patterns of consumption, and yes, we need to be wary of celebrating the liberating effects of this "mish-mash" when it is obliterating deep-felt and long-standing forms of cultural behavior.

### Global Market

But when globalization echoes the sense of 'global market', literature that ought to preserve the ideals of people and all the sensibilities which are the part of human life most worthy of preservation tend to be commercialised. A lot of writers working in India feel that to get major distribution, to get noticed, to basically make your way as a writer, you have to write for the global export market. And, particularly in the 1990s, there was this flood of South Asian writers working in English who became the face of a very sophisticated, hip global literature. A lot of the most innovative experiments that we have seen in the past several decades with style, with form, with what you can do with the novel, have come out of postcolonial spaces. Take Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, which is easily one of the most influential novels of the last 30 years. While it looked like a great breakthrough, many writers who did not have one residence in New York and one in Mumbai, but were indeed based in India, found it really hindered their ability to make a living. One of the reasons why literature from new places took off was because of a sense of possibility and something new. Each country retains a homegrown sense of the novel that, while it communicates with the outside world, remains distinct. But this distinct sense of nation is not well portrayed in the writings of post colonial globalised writers. Even for the Indian English writers, English is no more a colonial language. Amitabh Ghosh, Shashi Tharur, Vikram Seth, Upamanyu Chatterjee, Arundhati Roy and others are using it without showing a lack of commitment to Indianness. Those writers who are aware of their inheritance, complexity and uniqueness, express in their work without any conscious effort both tradition and the actual. The present-day crisis in India is the conflict between expediency and universality, and as a result, a large number of writers are in the process of identifying a pattern of problem-solving within the traditional system, vigorous enough to generate and sustain an indigenous process of modernization, which does not need readymade external solutions, and is in accord with indigenous needs and attitudes.

### Regional literature

This accelerated the emergence of regional literature. In the renewed attempts by states around the globe to defend national cultures, a fence is rarely erected at the border to keep foreign literature from contaminating the social body. Another feature of the post-modernist era was the emergence of writings of the outcasts, as a major literary force. It challenges the tone and context of existing literary canons and decentralises the whole process of a literary movement. It creates an alternative aesthetics and extends the linguistic and generic possibilities of literature.

### New Tendencies of English in Higher Classes

This tendency in literature can be traced in the syllabus of English in higher education. In literary theory, a **text** is any object that can be "read," whether this object is a work of literature, a street sign, an arrangement of buildings on a city block, or styles of clothing. It is a coherent set of symbols that transmits some kind of informative message. In the reformed syllabus or rather globalized syllabus of English in higher classes, 'text' is of a globalised perspective which has included film studies, literature of other non western nations and the like, that will enable them to be globally competent. The epic center of the world's languages is English. English is the one language that connects the supercentral languages with one another and that therefore constitutes the pivot of the world language system. The need to make English studies more relevant cannot be negated. The focus today is not on the author but more on his works. The sanctity of the author is always questioned, while the works, as specimens, the theories, questions and issues they pose is exemplified. Shakespeare is no more heard in English classes for today, what the students are expected to learn is not English Language and Literature but Literature in English and so there must be space for all kinds of literature, even if it means learning it in translation. When we get to language studies there is a need to go beyond Shakespeare. When there is a need to develop communicative skills, to equip and fend for oneself in life, Shakespeare and his language may not be that relevant.. It is a paradoxical sensation when globalization fosters global culture and literature, regional literature is gaining importance and works of Sarah Joseph, Ponkunnam Varkey and such other regional writers are included in the English syllabus in higher education.

Government introduces a new syllabus for English in higher education sector that puts more stress on "communicative English" "It is better to have an English-speaking employed youth than a Shakespeare-reading unemployed youth. This will create armies of children who are good at 'mall culture' and successful in grabbing a job. The shift from semantic, grammar and structure to mere communication has been followed.

Students of the state board may soon get an exposure to the literary genius of stalwarts who introduced Indian writings to the west. Works of Amitav Ghosh, Jhumpa Lahiri, Mulk Raj Anand, Vikram Seth, R K Narayan, Anita Desai, Upamanyu Chatterjee and Arundhati Roy are all set to be part of the English syllabus for higher classes.

### New Paradigms in Days of Globalization

To excel in today's global market place, faculty and students must adopt new paradigms. Cultural skills and sensitivity are keys in the globalization of education. Globalization requires change. Traditional perspectives of higher education and professorial methods of instruction must adopt new paradigms.

When teaching in a diverse student environment, certain techniques can enhance delivery and transfer of training: • Include Visual Aids with Lecture • Incorporate Pictures • Offer a Participative Activity • Include Movies. In higher education, English continues to be the premier prestige language. Careers in business and commerce, government positions of high rank (regardless of stated policy), along with science and technology (attracting many of the brightest) continue to require fluency in English. Fluency is also necessary for the many students who contemplate study overseas. Jobs in information technology-oriented careers (computer software, hardware, and data entry) suddenly enhanced the necessity of knowledge of the English language. In Kerala, India, the Student-Student Interface was designed primarily to involve students in imparting knowledge in the class. The basis of "peer teaching" emanated from the famous quote "To learn more, you should teach more". In this new interface, the professor is

more of a planner than a deliverer. There happens a change in the concept of the role of a “teacher” to a “facilitator”.

### CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that higher education institutions, especially research universities, are among the main agents of global convergence. The evolving global dynamic will bring about the emergence of a set of world centers of intellectual, cultural, and educational strength. The radiance of Royal Tongue has been eclipsed by the Global Tongue. English being the lingua franca of globalization, students should be equipped with globally competent English. Globalization breaks down barriers and connects institutions across the world facilitating knowledge flows, and creation of new opportunities for advanced graduates. This tendency accelerates competition and thus ensures quality. The acquisition of knowledge of indigeneous culture may be processed through the writings of those who have smelt the same flower with same sensitivity and drunk from the same river which is quite contrary to the antique practice of relying to the foreign source. Thus through regional writings our sensations are to be kindled which will be enlivened by multi lingual and multi cultural education .Today there is no ‘Shakespeare’ but we have ‘Shakespeares of each land’ .

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