

Summary of the Thesis

Globalisation and its Impact on Contemporary Indian Art

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GLOBALISATION AND ITS IMPACT ON CONTEMPORARY INDIAN ART

Globalisation as a subject has received tremendous attention and circulation since the early-1990s. It has also found interest in various fields, ranging from that of serious academic debates to that of becoming a fashionable and colloquial word. The very span of its spread hints that globalisation has had an engulfing presence, as it has found relevance in various, and at times uncorrelated, rather diverse fields regardless of their size and gravity. Thereby it wouldn't be erroneous to say that there barely seems to be a possibility for escape, and a low possibility of being untouched by this phenomenon in contemporary times. Speaking about the academic interest, it spans across various disciplines, from that of economics, sociology, cultural studies, politics, technology, techno-sciences, ecology, art, etcetera, such that each of these disciplines have contributed in defining globalisation through different aspects of relevance, be it the causal factors, the processes of transitions or the actuality of it as a lived experience. On the other hand, the colloquial usage usually restricts itself to deal or address the processes or situations which deal with building a context of crossing the national borders and catering to references of a foreign entity. Such usages usually address the context of the international and the global in a randomly interchangeable manner. At the same time, it is necessary to understand these individual interpretations and at times the manifestations of globalisation in a factual manner. This facilitates a multi-perspective understanding of the phenomenon, and provides different points of entry for related studies.

The aim of the current study is to trace the impact of globalisation on Contemporary Indian Art. This is done by first stating and justifying the relevance of the economic form of globalisation as a primary causal factor. Then tracing the resultant socio-cultural condition. The third section deals with analysing the manner in which these two factors collectively brought about a change in the Indian art market. Given the same the reading and analysis of the field of contemporary Indian art is provided. The structure of the thesis is provided in the following table.

OVERVIEW

ECONOMICS	SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGES
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Chapter 1</u></p> <p>Globalisation: Economic Phenomenon</p> <p><i>Analysis of the Global Economy and corresponding transitions – since 1980's</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on events- global and Indian - Historic and Political Perspectives - Economic Policies - ICT and interconnectedness - Towards <i>globality</i> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Chapter 2</u></p> <p>Globalisation: Socio-Cultural Impact</p> <p><i>Analysis of the changing social structure, as an outcome of the economic transitions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diaspora and Transnationalism - Notion of international experience - Consumer culture and sites of power - Globalism and postmodernism
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Chapter 3</u></p> <p>The Indian Art Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Development of the Indian art market</i> - Defining a new market structure - ICT and resultant changes - Important players - Role of financial bodies - Tools of market analysis 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Chapter 4</u></p> <p>Contemporary Indian Art</p> <p><i>Impact of global trends and tracing attempts towards inculcation of the global idiom</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding the nodes and processes of power - Largescale shows, role of curators, - Indian perspective - Reading and analysis of works of art

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- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Chapter 1 - Globalisation: Economic Phenomenon**
- 3. Chapter 2 - Globalisation: Socio-Cultural Impact**
- 4. Chapter 3 - The Indian Art Market**
- 5. Chapter 4 - Contemporary Indian Art**
- 6. Conclusion**

Since we are looking at contemporary Indian art in the global scenario, the study, at each level traces the happenings at a global level, and then at the national level, that is with respect to India. As globalisation has been characterised by a wide spread presence in various fields, we have first justified and chosen its economic form, as a point of entry. Therefore, the study begins with the understanding of the same, and then moves towards the resultant socio-cultural scenario. The third and the fourth chapter then analyse as to how their combined influence brought about a transition in the global and Indian art market, and most importantly with respect to contemporary Indian art.

At this juncture, it is necessary to understand that the study shall use the works of art or the pertinent practices as examples to explain the way globalisation has had an impact on contemporary Indian art; by no means is it an attempt to enlist the changes. It is not an exhaustive list of happenings or artists, but is a study addressing the characteristics and issues of globalisation which are either reacted upon by artists, or the which brought about in the reading of these works at a global level. Therefore, the study is an analysis of the same, and the works of art stated, are prominent and pertinent examples explaining or representing them.

Chapter 1

Globalisation: Economic Phenomenon

As mentioned earlier, while studying the notion or the phenomenon of globalisation the first step is to draw a premise of relevance. Since globalisation spans across various disciplines it is extremely necessary to draw a referential context as a foundation to build upon. Given which it requires a reading that would undertake not an insular approach, claiming allegiance of globalisation to one particular field, but needs to take into consideration its peripheral, at times interconnected areas. Since the current study aims at tracing the developments and analysing impacts of globalisation on the field of Contemporary Indian Art, the need is to look at the notion of temporal progression. There have been numerous theories with drastically different views tracing the very beginning of globalisation. Some of these range from that of planetary history to, establishment of trade routes to colonisation to that of the most recent one of contemporary uniqueness. Each of these views propose a different form of globalisation, beginning from different time periods.

Even the very beginning points of globalisation have been defined by different faculties differently. The current chapter gives a clarification as to how the economic phenomenon of globalisation has been one of the primary and dominant influences on Contemporary Indian art; both in terms of the art market and also the Visual Art practices. Though this cannot be considered as a singular factor but it certainly has been the most instrumental one in the current context, therefore instead of considering it as the only form of globalisation, we shall consider it as the ‘globalisation of relevance’ with respect to the current study.

In order to define the premise, the study goes beyond providing a simple description of the current economic scenario. But attempts to define the contemporary form of globalisation by taking a look at the causal factors, beginning from its roots in the post-World War times, when there seemed a need for various countries to come together and to take a protective stance. For the first time the developed, developing and the underdeveloped countries came together for participation. The then existing global and Indian political scenario too is discussed in detail as these political happenings led to the decisions regarding adoption of policies on liberalisation,

consequently experiencing the phenomenon of globalisation. The same is done by considering the decades of late 1980s and early 1990s. The reason to trace these events is that it not only changed the economic scenario of the country but also brought about the first-hand feel of internationalism; giving a feeling that something large was happening. This chapter deals mainly with the economic analysis, as there is a need to clarify the core phenomenon. A lack of such a pure economic analysis shall not give clear picture of the repercussions it would have over the decades to come.

Further the understanding is provided as to how the ICT brought about the functional interdependency which becomes a key feature of the globalised world, over the notion of internationalism, which marked the transcendence of either just a national boundary over those of intricately interconnected ties. Further the ICT marked the empowerment of the common people, towards information and resource access. This opened various employment facilities for individuals across various countries, thereby marking the free movement of individuals across the globe, without any strong sense of rootedness to a country. This brings to the notion of de-territorialised individuals, living in a flat world. The section apart from tracing these changes also aims at providing a critical analysis of globalisation; by understanding concepts of liberalisation of the economy, the neo-liberal capitalist markets, consumption patterns and consumerism. As globalisation has been fraught with contradictions, the need is also to look at the negative aspects which have simultaneously grown along with the boons.

In order to study the same, views of economists of the pre-globalisation era, whose policies paved an away towards globalisation like - John Maynard Keynes Harry Dexter White, shall be stated. Then focusing on the views and policies of Joseph Stiglitz, Thomas Friedman, also mentioning views of Satyendra Nayak and many others are taken into consideration. Further the role of bodies like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, have been discussed, with a focus on India. These scholars and organisations have had strong views and stands on globalisation and provide a different perspective towards reading it.

Chapter 2

Globalisation: Socio-Cultural Impact

As seen earlier globalisation changed not just the economic map of various countries but had a far-reaching impact affecting common people too. Therefore, the analysis of at a socio-cultural level could be considered as a derivative of the economic phenomenon. Such that it gauges the transitions got about by the liberal capitalist economy with a pervasive presence. These can be traced through various social relations and flows of commodities, capital, technology, ideas, forms of culture, and people across national boundaries via a global networked society. As the transmutations of technology and capital worked together to create a new globalized and interconnected world. The notion of being connected found a totally different connotation. Unlike the earlier understanding of crossing boundaries and entering the international arena, globalisation characterised not just the crossing of the boundaries but of forming an extremely and intensely interconnected world, with a strong sense of functional interdependence. This was what distinguished globalisation from the notion of internationalism.

This was further attested with the movement of individuals across the globe. Just as the TNCs with their fluid and temporally short presence in different countries aim at profit maximisation, a similar class of individuals too came into the picture, many of whom were employed in the TNCs or MNCs. These were individuals who though having a single national origin, had their working presence in multiple countries simultaneously, creating the notion of *world citizens*. These individuals, the globe-trotters form the category of the *transnational individuals*. Having a working presence in multiple countries and yet the freedom of returning to the homeland. The homeland is again a matter of ambiguity. This duality of the homeland and the working land brings a direct comparison of the transnational individuals to the notion of the diaspora. Evidently the differences between these two are categorised based on their temporal presence in a place, to the notion of attachment to a land, the notion of the homeland, bringing us to one of the most important aspects that is of the networks of ties. Historically the diaspora is characterised by the notion of the nostalgic homeland, and one's roots. The transnationals on the other hand speak not of the roots but of networks of movements, now drawing a picture of the rhizomatic form of networks; with different nodes and branches.

Having a presence in multiple spaces, at some point, the TNCs and the transnational individuals support the idea of standardisation. This can be seen through what could be called as a uniform internationalised experience of life. This can be exemplified through the concept of the mall culture and the need of consuming branded and standard products. Now the notion of an individual identity gets defined on the basis of what one consumes; thereby bringing forward the notion that one is known and identified for their consumption patterns. Given which the lived experience of the globalised culture attests the notion of a consumerist society. The critics of globalisation have considered this as a steamrolling effect which eventually shall erase the local culture. This is often placed parallel to what is called as Americanisation or McDonaldisation. Even as the critics lash globalisation for the homogenisation, another school of thought suggests that it is not homogenisation but heterogeneity that characterises globalisation. This is proven with the availability of various products and services from different countries.

At one point globalisation aims at providing a single pedestal for participation for all; and contradictorily also leads to the erasure of the weaker, or widens the gap between the dominant and the weaker, usually the stronger economies versus the developing or the under-developed ones. Suddenly the local, regional and the historic roots start taking different connotations. They become a part of a necessary experience, over that of the normal presence rather coexistence. This brings us to the postmodern condition, of notion of the identity formation in the capitalist consumer society. This at a socio-cultural level is marked by the intensification of cultural contacts through what was explained earlier as the rhizomatic networks and its spread.

Further the chapter also looks at the transitions that have come about in the city-scapes due to the TNC culture; the emergence of the glass façade buildings in midst of old structures, a result of the need for uniform working spaces across the globe. It also looks at the gentrification of the old spaces, and the near overwriting of them with the new structures. Therefore, the chapter moves from defining the notion of individual identity, the homeland, working networks, consumption and of the contradictions in defining culture in contemporary times. For the same, works of scholars namely, Jean Baudrillard, J.-F. Lyotard, Anthony Giddens, Max Weber, Ronald Robertson, Arjuna Appadurai, etcetera shall be discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 3

The Indian Art Market

Moving from the socio-cultural impact of globalisation, the third chapter draws from the first one, i.e., of the economic phenomenon of globalisation and aims at tracing and analysing the growth and the structure of the Indian art market from the 1990s. It looks at parameters like the liberalisation of the trade, devaluation of the Indian rupee, the rise of India as an emerging market and, the escalating international interest and confidence in the Indian economy, to build an understanding of its developments. As an attempt to trace its transition it is also interesting to note, that the very term, an 'art market' found usage only recently. Before the 1990s it was looked upon with a level of unease. Well not as deterioration in any possible way but one of the major outcomes of globalisation has been on nearly legitimising the concept of investment and profit making with respect to art works. Though the same attitude has not yet been accepted convincingly.

The factors drawn from the economic and the socio-cultural phenomenon were largely responsible for increasing the interest of foreign entities in India. For example, the devaluing rupee made it easy to procure works of Indian masters, liberalisation allowed art related businesses to establish with relative ease, the transnational individuals with an Indian background or the Indian diaspora thought it would be easier to possess works of Indian masters over their foreign equivalents at the same time a way of exhibiting nostalgic connections with one's homeland. These are just a few examples of foreign influences which contributed to the growth of the art market in India. At the same time at the domestic front the art market scene was also altering with the rise of the new High Net-worth Individuals (HNI) class. These comprised of individuals with superior skillsets and high paying jobs, implying a higher spill-over income. Majority of these individuals were not interested in the works itself, be it its aesthetic delight or that of the sheer visual appeal. The only concern of these buyers was the return on their investments. This gave rise to a new category of market players, called as investors.

Earlier the deals of buying and selling works of art would take place in close circuits of collectors and either art galleries or artists themselves. These hinted at the longstanding or close relations between these entities. Whereas the by the 1990s the scene changed drastically. This period was marked by a large number of new entrants in the art market. The international auction

houses established a foot in India. Further this period witnessed the establishment of Indian auction houses too. This brought in a colossal transition. The soaring prices at these houses were of particular interest to all. Though they provided an extremely skewed picture of the profitability, it succeeded attracting potential buyers. This was mainly because of the extensive coverage given by the media. Transactions in white money, rising international interest, transparency of deals all fuelled fire towards a speedy growth of the market. The chapter therefore looks at various market elements and the role played by them to catalyse the growth of primary players and also of the ancillary entities. Even as the market grew speedily, it lacked the infrastructure to adapt to this growth and therefore exhibited haphazard changes. The chapter critically analyses this too.

As the auction houses played a vital role there was rising interest from the banking sector too, which started considering provisions for loans to buy works of art; further started considering art works as collaterals against loans. This functioning was borrowed from the western banks that had a long-standing history of collecting and providing advice in terms of procuring art. At this juncture, it is necessary to mention that the art market had started gaining momentum. The insurance sector too opened up to provide different types of insurance schemes to the owners and borrowers of works. One of the most important entities of the art markets have been the art galleries. These on understanding the availability of opportunities participate in foreign lands, started remoulding their facilities. The ‘white cube’ became a non-rigid space, redefining itself frequently to accommodate not just conventional works but also New Media and Performances. Further, the notion of ‘global circuits’ shall be discussed in detail, showing how these international bodies were related and functionally interdependent, characterising the functional aspect of economic globalisation.

Apart from procuring works, the art market started provisions for individuals who had no interest in the works of art, but wanted to earn profits from the rising market tide. The Art Funds catered to their interest. This is the time when various investment companies and wealth management houses started claiming that investing in art could be seen as an attempt to diversify one’s investment portfolio. Various reports of investment firms like Deloitte, Deutsche Bank shall be analysed in detail. Their aim was to provide information to the investors, thereby help understand the infrastructure of the art market. The section also looks at how various brands started using signatures of artists to create a category of ‘artists’ signature products’, for example Absolut,

using Anish Kapoor for branding their products. With this we shall explore the importance of the signatures and how they hold a value with respect to the investments. Without excluding the role of the artists, we shall see how the Pension Trusts, aimed at providing a secured future to the artists. This was an attempt to show that the market was not a cold entity but also cared for its core - the artists. Though this might sound heartening, but in actuality the case was very different. We shall also see how the rising investors and sponsors interest for the Kochi-Muziris Biennial, brought about the financial reports by firms like KPMG; to not just understand the logistics of the biennial but also of portraying its international worth.

Along with the listing and analysis of these factors; a detailed comparison shall be done with what came up as the 'art indices' and the growth rates in India. It shall critically analysis the role of the art indices – as to whether they gave a true picture and could be trusted as honest parameters. The comparison to the national indices would help trace the links of economic transitions with those taking place in the art market. It shall also analyse the uncertainties and the lack of clarity which engulfs not just the investors but also the market entities themselves. The same has been done referring to data from government websites for the national indices. The art market data has been collected through online auction house data, and the annual report of investment firms.

The important aspect of this chapter is the analysis of the art market structure, as it existed earlier and the restructuring of the same through the global influences and the consequent new entrants. Here a new market structure is defined and explained diagrammatically.

Chapter 4

Contemporary Indian Art

This forms the core and the also the last chapter of the study. As mentioned earlier this chapter derives from the earlier three to give a holistic idea of the new phase witnessed not just in the field of art but also that of the Indian political and economic field as the roots can be traced there. The early phases of liberalisation, the expansive reaches, penetrating connections, functional

dependencies, partial dissolution for the national connotations and borders, of de-territorialised individuals, creation and re-creation of identities, of the international experience, standardisation of lifestyle and requirements, fuelling of consumer culture all characterised the globalised era. As explained earlier even as there seem to be some characteristics which hold a said and define presence, globalisation has been fraught with ambiguities and contradictions. At one point speaking of a connectedness and on the other of increasing fissures; of an inclusive presence and a single pedestal for participation yet witnessing dominance of the few; of extensive pervasiveness and yet of showing a dominant urban, metropolitan character. Since the very notion of globalisation has been undefinable, the current chapter considers this as a base and aims at explaining how the very contradictions and diverse understand of globalisation have provided cues to artists. This again brings us to the notion of ‘globalisation of relevance’, i.e. the very beginning of the study. The only difference is that here the notion of relevance is reduced from that of the historic past, to focus on the variations within those seen from the late 1980s and early 1990s; thereby creating a context and a temporal framework to keep as a demarcation.

The chapter looks at the way different artists have addressed various issues, which are an outcome of the economic and socio-cultural changes that took place over the mentioned period. These could have been done as a conscious reaction to the globalised world to that of a simple addressing of issues as a contemporary actuality; thereby understanding a reactionary stance taken by these artists. These range from those of the immediate and palpable changes like those in ones lived space and daily encounters, to those of global concerns like terrorism, migration, ecological deterioration, or of consumerism. There certainly seems to be a stepping from the individual close counters to that of larger global social totality. Therefore, the chapter while taking cognisance of the range and the issues it aims at discussing these in detail and exemplifying them through works of art. For example, the issue of changing city-scapes addressed by artists like Sudhir Patwardhan, Gigi Scaria, Prajakta Palav and Anant Joshi; or that of the rise of the consumerist culture through works of Jitish Kallat and Sudarshan Shetty; of terrorism by T. V. Santhosh. Given which it is important to mention that the chapter does not intend to form an exhaustive list of artists working in the contemporary times but of exemplifying issues of the contemporary globalised world through works of artists.

As technological progress has been considered as an inherent aspect of globalisation, the same is addressed by looking at the way it has been employed as a working tool and also as an issue to be addressed. The past few decades have witnessed the need to go beyond the conventional ways of working like – painting, sculpture, printmaking, to the inclusion of video, internet, etc. It could be said with certainty, that there is a move ahead from the notion of ‘visual arts’ towards a ‘multi-sensorial experience’; thereby moving the viewer from the state of pure retinality to that of an immersive experience. It also looks as how the inclusion of the experiencer in the works itself marks the completion of the work, for example the works by Shilpa Gupta functioning on run-time video, or those of Internet Art which require the viewers to be a responding individual to complete it. Another aspect of Internet Art has been that of assimilating unknown individuals with similar opinions and ideological following together. As seen in the works on Tejal Shah, in which the artists have hosted a website requesting queer couples to post their individual struggles and experiences as they maintain a distinct social identity. This could be done through posting of images or write-ups, at the same time maintaining secrecy at their request. Just as globalisation got together individuals to protest against globalisation in Seattle, in 1999, this venture by Shah marks an act of bringing a sense of connectedness of individuals sharing similar views and situations. With this the notions of the Information Age and of ‘digitextuality’ will be explored.

As a continuation of the character of technological progress, as mentioned in the first and second chapter, the movement of individuals across the globe gave rise to need of re-reading of individual identities. These would be done both at the local, regional level and also at the international level. Further this brings us to a position where not just the reading of the migrant individuals, but also that of artworks undergo a transformation when exhibited in different venues; bringing forth the notion of the reader and the politics of projecting the works. This brings forth the role of the curators and the largescale shows, art fairs, biennials and triennials. The section therefore looks at the manner in which the ‘exhibition makers –curators’ have gained a status of importance in the projection and circulation of works of art. This would be done keeping in mind the role of the curator in terms of the selection of artists or artworks, the venue or event of exhibition and the creation of the context of reading works. This shall also include the coming up of the biennial in India; analysing the model adopted, the locational relevance, the thematic building and most importantly the aim of moulding the entire project to befit the global idiom.

Therefore, the section shall explain the dynamics of the ‘global nodes and processes’. The nodes being the spaces and centres of action where global influences are active and palpable. The processes define the channels, the manner and the modes through which global influences function.

The third chapter shall also trace the role of the art critics and writers, further issues related to the distinction as to the categorisation as to what is global, local or regional art. Even as metrocentricism runs parallel with globalisation the need to understand the projection of the regional, local and the glocal through works of art is required. For the same works of art critics, curators, art historians and art writers shall be referred. To name a few – Arjun Appadurai, Noel Carroll, Geeta Kapur, Anna Everett, James Elkins, and other scholars who have contributed to the field.

Conclusively The need is not to define what does global art mean, as the very phenomenon of globalisation is undefinable. Therefore, the need is to understand and identify the processes and relevance to build on, given which the concept of global art itself looks like a fluid entity, with changing connotations. With respect to the art market, we shall trace the changing character and the rise of the new players. The new process of movement and exhibition, shall deal with the notions related to the politics of projections and the subsequent identity creation. With this the notion of viewership, and of reading the works of art shall be dealt with in detail. And, with respect to the artists, the works of art shall be read as entities addressing the lived, contemporary actuality, and also of locating the contemporary Indian practices and works of art within the larger post-liberal, globalised world.