

## Introduction

Globalisation as a phenomenon and a term has gained rising currency over the past few decades. The importance of the same, can be understood by its constant reference in various and varied fields. From serious discourses at academic levels, policy making at the government institutions, private businesses and financial policy making, environmental concerns, human resources, to that of a mere colloquial usage in our daily lives, the term and its multiple implications have had a wide range circulation and impact. One can say, that the ubiquity and at times its random usage has created a sense of ambiguity as to what actually the phenomenon is. My involvement with globalisation began as a student of Economics at the University of Mumbai from 2002-04. This was a time when the talks on economic globalisation, were already taking a debatable form. It is during the same period when the Nobel Prize winning economist, Joseph Stiglitz had published his book titled, *Globalization and its Discontents*. As the very title suggests, it looked at the notion of globalisation not in a propagandist way, but provided a critical analysis of the same. As a student, his work seemed extremely bold; even as Stiglitz was the Chairman of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers, and a once proponent of economic liberalisation, he strongly voiced the concerns of those who were not benefitted, rather exploited with the advent of globalisation.

This was the time, when on one hand, in India we were rejoicing the success of the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and Stiglitz highlighted the extreme disparity within the metropolises which enjoyed these benefits. As increasing number of young educated Indians were getting employment opportunities across the globe, and a similar number of small-scale local industries were being consumed by various giant-size international brands. It seemed like an ambiguous see-saw game; on one hand, we in India were rejoicing the success, of the mark made by many fellow Indians in the global arena, marking prosperity, and the deserved international

attention, and at the same time were becoming increasingly aware of the way globalisation had in disguise of prosperity exploited many. There seemed to be no conclusive statement which could be condensed down upon. As a student, both the sides held relevance, meaning and seemed justified. We ourselves were enjoying the benefits of technological advancements, with the availability of Personal Computers, internet services, mobile phones, of availability of branded products, and the prospects of good job opportunities in the increasing number of Transnational and Multinational Companies. These perks convinced one, of the benefits of globalisation, and that India as a country with a large strength of intellectual capital deserved it. At the same time, an uneasy feeling gripped one's mind, on understanding the way the rural, semi-urban areas and at times many underdeveloped countries were being exploited by the dominating First World players; Sub-Saharan Africa being the most prominent example. Further the degrading of the environment, loss of local businesses, imposition of tariffs of exports and the consequent strain on the export revenue, the constant interference of the hegemonic bodies in the policy making of the countries under the guise of 'help', made the threats of globalisation palpable. The same was aggravated, on learning about the protests against globalisation, be it at WTO Ministerial Conference in Seattle in 1999, or in Indian Economic Summit organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry and the World Economic Forum in New Delhi, 2003. Given the same, globalisation seemed an undefined and ambiguous phenomenon, such that stepping on any one side seemed impossible.

The second round of involvement with globalisation began as I worked as a correspondent with a business publication named, Business India. Having insisted on writing on contemporary art, I was allowed to do so, only on bringing in a business or financial perspective in place. It is during this period that I had to churn stories on the art market and its various elements. It is here that I realised, that globalisation had played an equally important hand with not just the art market but also the very field of Visual Arts. My interest in the same increased to an extent, that I decided to venture the field of Visual Arts, in the capacity of writing on it. Then the course at the Department of Art History and Aesthetics, Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S.U., Baroda, opened a window to a

different world altogether, allowing me to make use of the background of my studies in Economics with that of Art History. The current thesis can then be considered as a merging ground for the two fields of study, which helped me develop a composite way of understanding globalisation.

Given the same, the current topic of ‘Globalisation and its Impact on Contemporary Indian Art’, has been divided in a manner based on the two subjects which on which it is based, that is, of Economics and Art History. Therefore, the study has been divided in four major parts. First of understanding the economic phenomenon of globalisation, second of its socio-cultural impact, third of the rise and expansion of the art market and finally of contemporary Indian art. Since the phenomenon of globalization, over the period having been associated to various fields it is difficult to define it in a crisp and precise way. Therefore, we begin the first chapter by choosing an aspect of globalisation which has held relevance to the field of Visual Arts; which is of Economic globalisation. In this section, on justifying this form of globalisation as the base, we shall trace the way in which it rose from its inception to the current form. This shall be done by providing a backdrop of the post-World War era, where the need for peaceful and mutual co-existence amongst countries, brought about attempts to fortify the same through economic co-dependence and support. Given the same, we shall look at how economic liberalisation embodied the characteristics which paved a way towards globalisation. Along with the same another aspect which held an inseparable association with globalisation was that of the revolution of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), which shall be studied as one of the important factors leading to the establishment of the intricately and deeply connected world. The same shall be understood at a global level and with respect to India.

Given the foundation of economic globalisation, the second chapter analyses the way it has affected various socio-cultural aspects. The transition of social structure, based on the earlier agricultural to industrial and towards the contemporary form where the intellectual capital is valued, we shall trace the beginning of a ‘new social order’ based on the global changes; and also explain the movement from the modern to a postmodern global society. Given the same,

the availability of opportunities of employment across the world, changed the notions of migration, movements and the diaspora. A comparative analysis shall be done, as to how the earlier methodologies of reading and understanding the migrants and the diaspora need to be revised given the globalised phenomenon. Along with the same, a contrasting understanding of the concept of the 'global village' has been provided. This shall give a clear picture of the networked play of globalisation based on the nodes of power, notions of progress, junctions of interactions and meaning creation and their projections. These range from the rising importance of the metro- and megapolises, the changing topographies of these spaces, of the notion of power associated with the maintenance and management of information, of the rise and change of migratory patterns, and the consequent multicultural understanding of the society. One important aspect of enlisting these changes and analysing them, is of understanding how the Indian diaspora became a powerful entity and contributed to the development of the art market in India.

The third chapter builds on the earlier two. Firstly, understanding how the global economic changes, contributed to the development of the global and the Indian art market. Secondly, of the development of the Indian diaspora which over the years has provided impetus to the Indian art market. Along with the same, the ICT too contributed in providing a different structure to the existing art market tools. The increasing web presence of the market players, like the, galleries, auction houses, dealers, etcetera, drastically changed the conventional notions of visibility. This chapter provides a comparison with the earlier and the latter character of these conventional players, and also explains the birth of a new art market structure, based on the entry of new players, like the art funds, pension trusts, financial management, various tools of market analysis and art investment. Further this chapter provides an understanding as to how these transitions art market marked a movement towards a purely practical one from the earlier sentimental one.

The final chapter forms that part of the study, which related directly to the practice of art making, exhibiting and reading the same. Given the backdrop of globalisation this section aims to look at the factors related to globalisation

which directly influenced the artists to make works of art based on the same. At this juncture, it is necessary to state that the aim is not of providing a list or a directory of artists who have reacted to different aspects of globalisation; as evidently this would be an endless project. The aim to use the works of art as examples to understand the impact of the phenomenon of globalisation. Therefore, we shall begin by understanding the spaces / places where the global forces play, defined as 'nodes' within the 'networked' presence of these forces, which act as interconnecting and interdependent web. The nodes are spaces like the metropolises which have been crucial in inculcating the global tendencies. Artists have reacted to the transitions that came about in these spaces under the global influences. The networked web, could be understood as the reasons and factors which have played a role in establishing these connections. One of the connecting factor has been the increasing tilt towards capitalist businesses and consumerist society. Aiding the same, is the aspect of the technological progress, which has facilitated the ease of connectivity, such that it has connected people not just based on needs of communication, but also by bringing together people of similar ideological stands, and humanitarian concerns. Finally, with respect to the practice of exhibiting art, we shall see the new global taste in the same, with the rise of large-scale exhibitions. With this we shall also see the notion of presentation of works, the acts of meaning making and the growing importance of the exhibition makers. Given the same, the notion of viewership and the transitions in the same based on a growing global audience - all of which contribute to the crafting of what can be called as a global identity. Given the same, at no point is there an attempt to define globalisation, as the phenomenon remains as plural, diverse and multifaceted.