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Globalization or Indigenization: Emphasis on the Role of News Agencies

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ABSTRACT

In hindsight 2020, this globalized world, overtaken by a coronavirus, stands at the crossroads of indigenous trends and globalization. Globalization has an impact on the world's indigenous communities and sustainable ways of life. A mild form of regionalization is arising wherein production is restricted to neighbouring countries. On the other hand, the world could split into competing blocs (one led by the U.S. and another by China) amid the trade wars where no one's win is probable.

Denying the assumption that humanity will benefit from consumerism culture while knowing that the consumer societies grow and prosper at the expense of other people and the environment, we are inclining towards indigenization.

But, "we may be at a point where globalization is ending and where provincialism and nationalism are taking hold", Ray Dalio, founder of the investment company Bridgewater Associates.

News agencies and media cultures are one such agent of globalization which justify its sustenance and henceforth explored herewith. This paper aims to trace the parallel paths of globalization and indigenization.

Keywords: Globalization, Indigenisation

I. INTRODUCTION

President Donald Trump hinted in a press conference that we will see more protectionism, perhaps the reversal of the trend in the '90s of trade agreement and globalization. It is however true that economic globalization has created new problems but it is no justification to write off economic globalization altogether. ***"We should rather adapt to and guide globalization, heal the negative impact and deliver its benefits to all the nations."***

We need a process of free and fair trade in a world of 3.6 billion people aspiring for better income, to have food on the table twice a day. To turn our back on globalization and to turn our back on helping development is exactly the wrong approach. It needs to be analyzed and understood only to realize that if you take the whole globe, the net effect is extremely positive.

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The trend that is rising is that of a new stage of international global relations where national policies are shaping how globalization eventually develops.

The circulation of news has made every commodity and every entity accessible from one end of the world to another and this is perhaps making the world afraid of the ramifications which are then causing the nations to block their borders to provide cushion to their economies and their people. It is debatable whether, in the post-pandemic world, the countries need to be shell-bound or rather more open to not just to their neighbours, but also to the ends of the world.

II. BACKGROUND

In this globalized world, the commodification² of news has led to the rise of tensions between the national and global levels of action to which these organizations contribute continuously and also between commercialization and public service regulation, typified in the history of broadcasting media throughout the 20th century. The news agencies demonstrate models of business practice, professional ethics, and clientelism, further defining the commodification of communications media.

The irony of globalization is that the very approach to sustain economies makes indigenous territories and knowledge valuable commodities in a targeted global economy. And due to the historical position of Western/European economic powers, indigenous people around the globe rarely benefit.

***Research question:** This paper is seeking to provide an insight into the needful choice of globalization or indigenisation for the upcoming years and generations through the vital agents - news agency.*

III. BODY

(A) 1991

With the **collapse of the Soviet Union (1989)** and the **end of the Cold War (1991)**, the communist bloc countries which had been isolated from the capitalist West and had now started to integrate into the global market economy. Furthermore, technological advances, the internet, and the World Wide Web linked billions of people and devices for the exchange of goods, services, culture, language, knowledge, and ideas.

By facilitating cross-border insurance services by the EU³, the competition and mergers

² Oliver Boyd-Barrett & Terhi Rantanen, *The Globalization of News*, SAGE Books, available at: <http://sk.sagepub.com/books/the-globalization-of-news/n1.xml>

³ 1990s: globalisation and liberalisation, Swiss Re Institute, available at: <https://www.swissre.com/institute/research/sigma-research/50years/90s-globalisation-and-liberalisation.html>

increased in the 1990s. Free trade gained momentum with the release of the trade flow by the signing of the **North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)⁴ (1992)**. Global terrorists have found a walkthrough through these globalization advents; for example, *the Al-Qaeda* members who perpetrated the *September 11 attacks* used the internet and mobile phones to coordinate their plan with the sleeper cells across the countries.

Unfortunately, “*hyper globalization*”⁵ since the 1980s has however benefitted economically, it has led to exclusivity and discrimination of the other half of the world.

(B) The Globalization of News Agencies

Discussions about the effects of globalization on consciousness and on the micro-level of social behaviour have been prevalent. There is the probability of danger as we chart the consequences of globalization; **we marginalize the role of agents of globalization**. Moreover, with this focus on globalization, we might be calling in possibilities of homogenization which rise with competition and fragmentation.

Within the discourse of the **New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO)⁶**, news agencies are identified as agents as they were among the first of the world’s transnational or multinational corporations.

The format of the “**West to the rest**” was ended by Al-Jazeera which focused on reporting news stories originating from underrepresented countries i.e. from the **global south** to the **global north**.

In the *September 11 attacks*⁷, “*the infamous videotape bears no date, yet the expert estimate that the recording was made less than two weeks before it was broadcast*”. The smooth planning had used advanced forms of technology with immediate access to sophisticated information and telecommunication. Highlighting the complex chain of interdependencies, Laden’s message was heard and seen by billions of TV viewers around the world. It was dropped off via courier outside the local office of Al-Jazeera. A few months later, Al-Jazeera had become a global player, renting equipment to Reuters and ABC, selling satellite time to

⁴ KIMBERLY AMADEO, What Is the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)?, available at: [https://www.thebalance.com/nafta-definition-north-american-free-trade-agreement-3306147#:~:text=The%20North%20American%20Free%20Trade%20Agreement%20\(NAFTA\)%20was%20a%20treaty,and%20its%20impact%20on%20trade_](https://www.thebalance.com/nafta-definition-north-american-free-trade-agreement-3306147#:~:text=The%20North%20American%20Free%20Trade%20Agreement%20(NAFTA)%20was%20a%20treaty,and%20its%20impact%20on%20trade_)

⁵ Dani Rodrik and Branko Milanović, The fuel of discontent: hyper globalization causing a growing income inequality, available at: <https://www.pwc.nl/en/topics/economic-office/conversations-with-top-economists/the-fuel-of-discontent-hyper-globalization-causing-a-growing-income-inequality.html>

⁶ <https://www.thegrenadarevolutiononline.com/nwico.html>

⁷ Steger, Manfred. (2003). Globalization: A very short introduction Rosana Pinotti, available at: [Steger_Manfred._2003_.Globalization_A_v.pdf](https://www.thegrenadarevolutiononline.com/nwico.html)

the Associated Press and BBC, and designing Arabic business news channels together with CNBC (American). Unhampered by national borders and geographical obstacles, cooperation among these was so efficient that it actually caused damage as it got viral. His AK-47 Kalashnikov was probably made in Russia too. All of this was an indication of **global economies and cultural exchanges**.

The **Al-Jazeera effect**⁸ instigates the *accelerant effect, impediment effect, and the agenda-setting effect* whereby the international events can force otherwise uninvolved governments to take action.

The news media strengthen the identity and give voice to marginalized groups which lacked their own media outlet. The Middle East realized in the early 2010s that with new media provoking widespread debate and unrest within the region, the CNN effect and the Al-Jazeera effects can both have a tremendous impact on policies and the government, as seen in the case of them influencing the U.S. policies and the propagation of democracy with global communications.

Consequently, many in the global south have learned about Western democracy and politics also through the voting system in which viewers can vote online via a satellite system.

On the contrary, the on-air talk shows, discussions, and phone-in programs have made critics realize that Al-Jazeera steered the role in aiding reforms during the 2005 Arab Spring in regards to coverage of Iraqi elections and Lebanese protests.

Oliver Boyd-Barrett and Tehri Rantanen, in their journal, *'Globalization of News'*, regarded the development of the concept of 'news' as a process lying in the heart of modern capitalism. News represented the reformulation of 'information' as a commodity gathered and disseminated for political communication, trade and pleasure, and is directed by technology, scientism (facts), and the development of mass media markets.

CNN and BBC World Television subscribe to 'wholesale' services, have their own channels, distributed by satellite or by cable or via the internet. The agencies were vital components of the nation-state as they were among the varied institutions that new nation-states believed is required to be seen as credible and in order to project or to control the dissemination of their 'national image' in the global markets.

There have been negative impacts of '**viralisation**' and with the unrelenting spread of '**fake**

⁸Megan E. Zingarelli, The CNN Effect and the AL Jazeera Effect in Global Politics and Society, Georgetown University Washington D.C., available at: <https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/bitstream/handle/10822/553423/zingarelliMeganElizabeth.pdf>

news'. Moreover, the interpretation and opinion-building of misinformed or less informed is the most dangerous prospect of violent fuelling.

In India, during the *Balakot strike*⁹, an IAF officer, *Abhinandan Varthaman* was captured by Pakistani forces as they tried to target Indian military installations a day after Indian Mirage-2000 jets bombed Jaish-e-Mohammed terror camp at Balakot. The United States weighed in on the Pakistani army to release the Wing Commander through high-level military channels and it was reinforced by the United Kingdom to deescalate matters. He was held for 58 hours but did not reveal any information about him or the security data he held. But the Indian media channels rushed to his hometown and broadcasted his personal information and revealed the faces of the terrified family. At a point, where it should have been a cooperative and collaborative process, the media channels were busy bidding in the competition for news broadcasting. This is one such harmful example of 'viralisation'.

(C) Trends in the 21st century

The Australian government passed a new law¹⁰ that required Google and Facebook to negotiate with the rest of the news outlets to pay for the content or face arbitration, amid reasons of news mongering and monopolistic agendas. This was a significant bargaining power imbalance between Australian news media businesses and Google and Facebook. In response to this, Google was pulling its search engine from the country which would have isolated the continent just like China maintains its own national applications and web browsers for reasons of a stable economy.

Google, Facebook and WhatsApp are major news-leading agencies as well which have also been the primary major ventures to globalize the world continuously.

Following the **WhatsApp privacy policy controversy**¹¹, it was also panned out how our data might be being used and violated by the tech giants, although the officials assured the world about end-to-end encryption. It was mainly for businesses and the app could share user details such as their phone numbers and transaction data to anyone to the extent of global players.

⁹ Surjit Singh, IAF pilot Abhinandan Varthaman back home after 58 hours in Pakistan Army custody, Hindustan Times, available at: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/iaf-pilot-abhinandan-varthaman-back-home-after-58-hours-in-pakistan-army-custody/story-mfrnHO5s3oZhb6StncGC0J.html>

¹⁰ Jon Porter, Google lobbies Australian users against plans to make it pay for news, The Verge, available at: <https://www.theverge.com/2020/8/17/21371709/google-australia-paying-for-news-lobbying-media-ads-search-market>

¹¹ Jagmeet Singh, WhatsApp: Everything You Need to Know About the Controversial Privacy Policy Update, Gadgets360 by NDTV, available at: <https://gadgets.ndtv.com/apps/news/whatsapp-privacy-policy-update-changes-what-happens-if-you-dont-agree-details-facebook-data-2376020>

Another trend set in when Britain put forth its demand to leave the European Union- **Brexit**¹². Following the formation of the EU¹³, the merger of economic rules in 1993 was two steps forward towards cultural globalization among the EU nations, yet one step backwards, as they integrated within themselves barring the rest of the world. Later, Britain decided to leave the EU due to the market crashes of 2008 and migration-led unemployment surges. This could have ‘ripple effects’ throughout Europe leading to poor economic performance and unnecessary clashes. A similar trend has gained influence in **India** whereby the PM has been insisting to opt the ideation of going ‘**Vocal for Local**’, mainly to enhance the wages of indigenous workers.

To summate, it is qualitatively observable that the nations like the **Billiards Balls**¹⁴ are moving away from each other in order to maintain their own sustenance as and when they are being hit with the pool/cue stick of material bounds. Although their own constituents remain intact as the enclosed, solid billiard balls exhibit sovereignty, their relations with the neighbouring balls is deteriorating. **It is a reversing trend.**

IV. CONCLUSION

Major agencies such as Associated Press or Reuters, government-owned or backed national news agencies wherein the association with state-supported propaganda cultivates dullness while also reducing perceptions of professionalism and dependability in order to avoid controversy or to appeal to a certain group of mass. The American agencies had propagated effectively the models of co-operative and private ownership which could guarantee unbiased news as in the open market, contributing to the ‘free flow of information’ doctrine later adopted by the UN. But it was rather supporting only the rights of western media while most countries lacked the means to establish any reciprocal influence.

The UN¹⁵ through UNESCO has consistently endeavoured to encourage the development of national news agencies, and of news-exchange arrangements among them. *Setting up a national news agency became one of the essential things as a part of what it meant to be a ‘nation’.*

Unfortunately, these links have caused more danger and one of the major reasons for nations

¹² Brexit: What you need to know about the UK leaving the EU, BBC News, available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-32810887>

¹³ Britannica, Creation of the European Economic Community, available at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/European-Union/Creation-of-the-European-Economic-Community>

¹⁴ Taku Tamaki, The Levels of Analysis of The International System, Core, available at: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/288376712.pdf>

¹⁵ Awoniyi, Joanna, The effect of globalization on the United Nations, Iowa State University, available at: <https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1632&context=etd>

opting for the reversal path towards integration and indigenisation is the news agencies. Following the events of *Yellow journalism*¹⁶ disrupting the Spanish war and the *fake news* during the *paid news era*, it is to our realization that reporting and journalism ethics need to be revived and consolidated for this world to be intact as it heavily relies on it.

As we had established that we are going in the opposite direction of globalization, it is to be put into question if indigenisation is the best answer in the post-pandemic world of 2021 and onwards.

It is also a distinguishable fact that news agencies have been the *prima facie* agents of the upheaval and the reversal trends in the process of globalization.

The extreme form of ‘journalism of information’ in contrast to a more refined and creative ‘journalism of opinion’ has sometimes led it to be least theoretically inclined, expelling ideologies and empirical statistics.

Specialist correspondents including foreign correspondents are appointed for the task of interpreting a range of diverse sources offering varied biases in varied truths.

Why do we need to sustain globalization now more than ever?

The globalized world is becoming taxing and exclusive towards the **migrating population** or refugees. The rapid growth of population in less developed countries with reduced barriers to migration from formerly authoritarian regimes induces mobility. Globalization is a cause and an outcome of all the major humanitarian crises such as economic inequality, demographic pressures and environmental crisis, ethnic conflict and terrorist threats.

Even so, we need to integrate the world and not integrate within ourselves, away from the world.

Wealthier nations need to stop placing restrictions on the admission of those seeking economic prospects through one of the most globalized jobs of journalism of freelancers or media agencies or others. It has to lead to greater problems of state capacity to comply with human rights obligations, economic, cultural, and social rights such as trade union freedoms, the right to work, and the right to social security having a disproportionate effect on minorities.

During the **pandemic of 2020-21**, the nations while closing their borders to break the chain of infection were apparently becoming more and more reliant and consolidated within each other.

¹⁶ U.S. office of Historian, U.S. Diplomacy and Yellow Journalism, 1895–1898, available at: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/yellow-journalism#:~:text=Yellow%20journalism%20was%20a%20style,territory%20by%20the%20United%20States.>

The rollout of vaccines sets a striking example as to why nations need to work together to help combat such issues.

From information about a retail hand wash to supply of AK-47, from global war news to a regional dispute, from fashion and sports to economical charts, education and business - we owe much to the prospects of globalization, yet it is the need of the hour to tame it.

And, the development of news as positive news with empirical data and fewer misinterpretations in the free-market globalization can stand out to be one of the most powerful vanguards of change.

The answer is an altogether sustainable development approach in a globalized world.

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