

THE STAGE PERFORMANCE OF *PEER GYNT* IN MYSORE: IS 'GLOBAL IBSEN' AGAINST GLOBALIZATION?

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Paradoxically, however, it is also the case that globalization is often answered with re-nationalization.

~Ulrich Beck (2009, 3)

Peer Gynt, essentially the most local but ironically the most global of Ibsen's plays, has produced new and conflicting interpretations in different contexts. This article focuses on a performance text of *Peer Gynt* that was staged in Mysore in the state of Karnataka in South India in 1995. Among some other national political issues the performance focused on globalization with a belief that globalization, or more specifically, neoliberal market economy might prove to be a boomerang for the Indian people, as Rupal Oza writes, "in the context of India's intensified encounter with global capital, the concomitant loss of sovereignty has resulted in the displacement of control onto national culture and identity" (Oza, 2012, 2).

Waqar Ahmed, Amitabh Kundu, and Richard Peet write in the Introduction to *India's New Economic Policy: A Critical Analysis*:

In 1991 India launched a New Economic Policy. The new policy framework mirrored standard structural adjustment measures, advocated universally by The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, following a basically neoliberal approach to economic policy. [...] neoliberal growth has come at the expense of high levels of smallholder indebtedness, mounting unemployment, and a declining natural resource base. These have contributed to large-scale agrarian distress, reflected in high and persistent levels of malnutrition, illiteracy, and preventable illness. [...]. Neoliberalism's main socioeconomic product is inequality (because it is intended to produce it). In turn the main outcome of inequality is poverty because inequality is exploitative, emanating from the strengthening of the power and capability of some to *benefit at the expense of others*. In a phrase, neoliberalism cannot solve social problems because it causes them. (Ahmed, Kundu and Peet, 2001, 2-3)

In India's case the new economic policies adopted in the 1990s created poverty, inequality, and political unrest, and caused the rise of religious fundamentalism that the whole world witnessed on December 6, 1992 when the Babri mosque in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, was demolished by the Hindu fundamentalists. That event, being the central inspiration of the *Peer Gynt* production in Mysore, has an emphasis on the negative influences of capitalism and specially of the neoliberal economic policies on Indians' social and cultural life.

In the Kannada (the language of Karnataka) text that is consulted in this article in the English translation, it is evident that the world and the individual interact in a

way prescribed by capitalism, or more specifically, by the new economic policies in India. The policies finally turn out to be wrong and consequently cause the individual to suffer the loss of identity. The loss is metaphysically drawn when Peer's private life is considered, but when he is considered a social being, the loss is more communal or national. As Thomas Mohnike writes, "The story of the development and coming to self-consciousness of the individual Peer Gynt could be and was thus read as a representation of the Norwegian as a collective subject in singular" (2008,153). According to his reading, the loss of Peer is a national loss. In the Kannada version Peer represents his society which is an agrarian Mysore society that has lost its true identity. Thus his loss of identity symbolically stands for the loss of identity of his community.

Ibsen criticized one type of romantic nationalist idealism that dominated the 19th century Norway in the original play. However, his critique promoted another kind of nationalism. Similarly, a nationalist idealism has worked behind the Kannada adaptation while it critiques the nationalist discourse in India along the line of religious fundamentalism; the political exuberance of the adaptation is stronger as it touches upon Indian secularism and globalization, two burning issues in the real life Indian scenario. The terms are defined within the artistic parameter of *Peer Gynt*, maintaining the action line and the essential humour of the original through comments, on the global economic and cultural changes, that are quite pointed.

The translation of *Peer Gynt* into Kannada, entitled *Gundegowdana Charitre* (the title means 'the history of Gundegowda', and henceforth will be called *GC*), was done by renowned theatre professional Raghunandana Sathamarshana (S. Raghunandana) and it was directed for Rangayana Theatre in Mysore by Rustom Bharucha. In his writings on theatre and culture, Bharucha has always expressed a critical view about globalization in India. For example, in the preface to *Theatre and the World* he writes:

'Globalization' has become a major force in India today, particularly in the context of the new economic policies instituted by the Indian government on the 'recommendations' of the World Bank and the IMF. The widespread intervention of the cable networks is merely part of this 'globalization', affirming an increasingly homogenized image of 'the world' that has yet to receive an adequate critical discourse in India. (Bharucha, 1993, ix)

GC is a contribution to the stream of critical discourses on globalisation. Bharucha inspired the translator to be critical of globalisation and the new text has several arguments against it. The departures from the original in the fourth and fifth acts of the adaptation are exemplary in this context. In the fourth act of Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* these lines are uttered by Herr Von Eberkopf to praise Peer's vision of life:

De har et Blik paa Livets Gang,
der hæver Dem till Tænker-Rang.
Imens en slett og rett Formener
ser hver for sig de spredte Scener,
og aldrig ender med at famle,

forstaar De alt till *et* at samle.
 Med samme Norm De alting maaler.
 De spidser till hver løs Eragtning,
 saa hver og en gaar ud som Straaler
 fra Lyset af en Livsbetragtning. – (PG,1867, 2012, 4,1)

John Northam translated the excerpt like this:

You have a view of life's great stage
 That lifts you to the rank of sage.
 Whereas we all, in our delusion
 regard life as disjointed scenes,
 and end up groping in confusion,
 you've formulated what it means.
 You've shown the underlying norm,
 you've focused random speculation,
 so that it casts illumination
 irradiating life's true form – (PG,2007, 4,1)

In the Kannada adaptation of the play, Mr. Rudolf Bottler (the counterpart of Eberkopf) praises Gundegowda in the following manner:

...Ordinary people see the things
 Of the world as being separate
 From each other, and stumble
 And fall endlessly. They are
 Unable to see The Big Picture.
 But your vision! It captures
 It all, as a whole, methodically.
 Everything in the world, Sir,
 You measure and weigh carefully
 With one globalised scale, and use
 And throw away things at will. (GC, 2010, 4,1)¹

This shows that *life* has been replaced by *world* in the Kannada text, and the world is not an ordinary world in its segmented form or a world divided by geographical, national or cultural borders. It is a globalized one world. My query starts from here. If we delve further into the text, the use of *world* is repeatedly found in the fourth act. Indeed, Ibsen's original text touched upon Peer's desire to become the world's emperor or a world citizen, and the English texts translated that quite obediently. The Kannada adaptation contemporizes the text focusing on the world's globalization phenomenon. Peer's business endeavours and his will to control the world with money and power are working here as a backdrop; and the text equates globalization

¹The Kannada text was retranslated into English by Bageshree Subanna and S. Raghunandana in 2010, and all quotations used in this article are cited from the English text.

with colonization and reveals the suspicion the translator and the director nurture about globalization.

Globalization in its literal sense is the process of a transformation of a local phenomenon into a global one. The Encyclopaedia Britannica calls globalization a process by which the experience of everyday life is becoming standardized around the world. It is a process of unification of the people of the world socio-culturally, economically, politically and obviously and most importantly, technologically. Globalization burgeoned in the field of economics through the idea of integrating the national economies into an international one through trade, foreign investment and the spread of technology that resulted in global capital flows, migration and all other possible by-products.

Gundegowdana Charitre touches upon one kind of understanding of globalization when it talks about an individual visiting “Hollywood, Bollywood, Parissu, Thailand” and “going everywhere to buy every girl” (4,1). It talks about having breakfast in Bali, lunch in London, high tea in Tokyo and dinner in Delhi. It simultaneously talks about armoured tanks, atom bombs, fighter planes, hand grenades, machine guns and poison gas, touching upon another issue related with globalization. The weapons remind us of a world divided by region and religion where terrorism has spread globally along with other commodities. The luxuries reminds one of John Maynard Keynes’ comments; Keynes was one of the most important delegates at the Bretton Woods meeting that resulted in the birth of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and whose ideas concerning economic policy were adopted by leading Western economies during the 1950s and 1960s. Keynes wrote in *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*:

The inhabitant of London could order by telephone, sipping his morning tea in bed, the various products of the whole earth, in such quantity as he might see fit, [...] he could at the same moment and by the same means adventure his wealth in the natural resources and new enterprises of any quarter of the world, and share, without exertion or even trouble, in their prospective fruits and advantages; [...] He could secure forthwith, if he wished it, cheap and comfortable means of transit to any country or climate without passport or other formality, ...The projects and politics of militarism and imperialism, of racial and cultural rivalries, of monopolies, restrictions, and exclusion, which were to play the serpent to this paradise, were little more than the amusements of his daily newspaper, and appeared to exercise almost no influence at all on the ordinary course of social and economic life, the internationalization of which was nearly complete in practice. (Keynes, 1920, 16-17)

Those were ironically uttered by Keynes about the liberal economic policies on which he and some others like him wanted to bring some state control, and his statement mimicked a particular way of looking at globalization that was supposed to generate wealth from around the world for the West. For instance, in a 1711 essay

Joseph Addison wrote similar comments without the touch of irony and with sincere passion:

Our Ships are laden with the Harvest of every Climate: Our Tables are stored with Spices, and Oils, and Wines: Our Rooms are filled with Pyramids of China, and adorned with the Workmanship of Japan: Our Morning's-Draught comes to us from the remotest Corners of the Earth: We repair our Bodies by the Drugs of America, and repose our selves under Indian Canopies. (Addison, 1711, 295)

Keynes' comments emphasised several issues which showed how the opposite was true for the other end of the enterprise. No one from the other corners of the world could order products from the West, nor could one enter or take up business endeavours without permission from the West. Western Militarism and imperialism was part of one's existence. We all know how this one-way traffic has changed since September 11, 2001. Raghunandana and Bharucha did not intend to criticise Keynesian economic policies, but as pro-communists they might have had Keynes as a model while remodelling Peer whose capitalist plans would fail. They actually targeted the neoliberals that emerged after the decline of Keynesian economic policies. The neoliberal economic system promotes individualism, and thus it adheres to selfishness and exploitation; and all on earth become commodities for the rich, which is criticized in the text:

Hollywood, Bollywood
 Parissu, Thailand
 To go, go evverywhere
 To buy every girl!
 ...
 Mercedes, Lexus, Cadillac
 To sitt in those cars
 Toing and froing (Bottler's remark)
 ...
 To have have have
Breakfast in Bali
Lunch in London
High tea in Tokyo
Dinner in Delhi (L.A. Burnas' remark)
 ...
 To deck oneself up
 In diamonds and diamonds -
 Legs, and hands, and ears,
 And waist, and on strap
 Of *brassiere* too - diamonds
 And diamonds and diamonds (Pokariyani's remark)
 ...
 To buy, and sell

*Armoured tanks, atom bombs,
 Fighter planes, hand grenades,
 Machine guns and poison gas
 Everyday, everyday, everyday (Gijibiji's remark)*
 (GC, IV, i)

In the fourth act, these significant departures from Ibsen's original text emphasizes the fact that the Indians have entered a consumer culture, the sure sign of which is the reference to the car brands. This is substantiated by the consumer behaviour research, for example, Jennifer L. Aaker refers to Belk (1988), Malhotra (1988) and Kleine, Kleine and Kenan (1993) all of whom focus on "how the personality of a brand enables a consumer to express his or her own self, an ideal self, or specific dimensions of the self through the use of a brand" (Aaker, 1997, 347). An Indian has acquired that kind of brand personality because of India's global promotion. Hollywood inspiring the Bollywood film industry is also a good example of cultural globalization in which India is an active participant. On the other hand, globalization has necessitated armoured tanks, atom bombs or other weapons mentioned here. It is an established fact that corporate globalization has promoted worldwide war and the manufacturing of weapons. Arundhati Roy's *An Ordinary Person's guide to Empire*, for instance, shows how the neoliberal project has helped new imperialism of the USA that waged wars in the name of fighting terrorism and how corporate media has functioned as its spokesman. Arjun Appadurai's deliberation in *Fear of Small Numbers* is also an in-depth study of the globalization process and the spread of worldwide violence of which India is a part. He writes, "Leaky financial frontiers, mobile identities and fast-moving technologies of communication and transaction together produce debates, both within and across national boundaries, that hold new potentials for violence" (Appadurai, 2006, 36). He further argues, "The minorities in a globalizing world are a constant reminder of the incompleteness of national purity. And when the conditions – notably those surrounding social uncertainty – within any particular national polity are ripe for this incompleteness to be mobilized as a volatile deficit, the rage of genocide can be produced, especially in those liberal polities where the idea of minority has, in some way, come to be a shared political value affecting all numbers, large and small. Hindu-Muslim conflicts and the wave of 'genocidal riots' (ibid, 67) against Muslim minorities, as such, are connected with globalization. So, globalization has affected India's 'unity in diversity' myth and has caused severe communal clashes within the state. It has had similar influences on India's international relationships in terms of military power and national security.

Robert L. Hardgrave and Stanley A. Kochanek's study shows how the distrust in Indo-American relationships during the 1990s and India's wish to become equal to China and the United States forced India to "go nuclear" (Hardgrave and Kochanek, 2008, 523). Since the first nuclear test in Pokhran, Rajasthan in 1974, India joined the US, the former Soviet Union, Great Britain, France and China with nuclear weapons, and gained superiority over the other South Asian states. India even refused to sign NPT (Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons), and according to Hardgrave and Kochanek, it was a matter of prestige for the country: India's position reflected security concerns, particularly vis-à-vis China, but there

was a prestige factor as well: In a world in which “great-power” status seems dependant on having nuclear capability –as reflected in the deference accorded China by the United States – India was unwilling to relegate itself to an inferior international position (ibid, 522).

According to Anthony Giddens, four institutions of modernity have globalizing effects – capitalism, the nation-state, world military order and the global information system (Giddens 1990, 1991), which include television, telephone, internet and more. *GC* covers all these: Gundegowda is a representative of neoliberal capitalists and he is connected to the different corners of the world through information technology. He is an influential figure in the world’s power policy through his international network of weapon trading. In the fourth act, he receives a telephone call from one of his alliances in New York and appears to be happy because the war will accelerate his trading in weapons while his other western friends bemoan the loss in business. He seems to claim that he cannot be bound by a geographical border nor can his activities be termed dishonest and inhuman.

It is to be noted that Bharucha is against the idea that has been expounded by many in the West that “globalization” means the erasure of national boundaries for economic purposes. For example, a senior fellow from the Cato institute, in a quarterly published from the institute, defines globalization as “the elimination of state-enforced restrictions on exchanges across borders and the increasingly integrated and complex global system of production and exchange that has emerged as a result” (Palmer, 2002)². He informs that it is true to some extent that globalization has created a homogeneous American culture around the world, as the US is a “cultural attractor” that the elites may refute, although he also mentions Japanese Pokemon or Indian Bollywood films that have also had globalizing effects. He finalizes the argument by saying- “If cultures are kept hermetically sealed and unchanging, these cease to be human cultures; they become museum exhibits. Globalization is culturally enriching” (ibid). Palmer’s remark on globalization, if compared with Bharucha’s idea of the intercultural or ‘cultural globalization’: “the older category of internationalism, interculturism is opening up new possibilities of relationships between cultures that seem to transcend the specificities of history, race, language and time (Bharucha, 2005, Introduction 1)” it is difficult to detect whether Bharucha criticises globalization at all and opposes an enthusiastic like Palmer. Bharucha is more explicit in the following remark:

I think it should be acknowledged that the implications of interculturalism are very different for people in impoverished, ‘developing’ countries like India, and for their counterparts in technologically advanced, capitalist societies like America, where interculturalism has been more strongly promoted both as a philosophy and a business. (2005, Introduction 1)

²Tom G. Palmer published the comments in a speech titled ‘Globalization is Grrreat!’ which was part of several of his speeches given to college students around USA. This was published in the Fall 2002 issue (Vol 1, no. 2) of Cato’s Letter.

As such, globalization may not be as great as Palmer thinks, because, as Bharucha believes, a Euro-American perspective on interculturalism is not applicable and acceptable to everyone. The rest of the world must define their relationship to the cultures in the world (and also the implications of globalization) for themselves.

Economic exchanges around the world resulted into cultural diffusion that gave birth to new categories of consciousness and identities. Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* as a Western text travels because of the technological developments and cross-cultural contacts. Issues in the play such as participating in a 'world culture' or becoming 'a world citizen' seem to be related with the desire to increase one's standard of living through experiencing foreign lands and enjoying their products and ideas, as was naively expressed in 'The Royal Exchange' (1711). The experience of new technology and practices that may result in the loss of identity, in terms of language and local culture, is consciously marked in *Gundegowdana Charitre*. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, India, as one of those countries that had followed the Soviet economic model, opened up its economy to the world. It is not evident that it caused horizontal collaboration or a balanced exchange between India and the other parts of the globe, but it is unlikely that globalization produced any form of homogenized culture in any context. Bharucha's *GC* reflects upon a different kind of opening up to the world and it comments on both the neoliberal form of economic globalization, the next phase of which is corporate globalization. This adaptation of *Peer Gynt* contains several aspects that touch upon globalization. For example, it talks about the rise of fundamentalism which, according to Bharucha, is an aftermath of uneven globalization. Meera Nanda in her book *The God Market* writes:

Far from eroding the public presence and political power of religion, globalization and neoliberalism in India are bringing the state and the business world closer to Hinduism, the religion of the majority. The state-temple-corporate complex is enabling a resurgence of popular religiosity that is brimming with majoritarian and nationalistic sentiments. (Nanda, 2011, viii)

Sunil Kumar's delineation in *Communalism and Secularism in Indian Politics* clearly shows how a rising Hindu fundamentalist group like BJP exploited the poverty of the minority groups, including the Muslims during the 1990s. Initially representing the cause of the middle-class Hindus, especially of the Hindi speaking Hindus from North India, the party failed to gain support and votes, and had a scope to exploit the failure of the Dunkel draft³. The ruling Congress supported the draft but BJP

³On 20th September, 1986 the Trade ministers of the GATT member countries launched the eight GATT Rounds at Punta del Este, Uruguay, but they could not reach to solid conclusions after the eight rounds of negotiations. On 20th December, 1991, the Director General of GATT and the Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee, Arthur Dunkel, gave draft proposals for solving the problems to break the deadlock in GATT negotiations. This is called the Dunkel draft. India was one of the founding members of GATT and signed the Final Act Agreement in 1994 that concluded the Uruguay round among the 117 countries.

opposed it with an apprehension that there would be adverse consequences on the economy of a developing country like India. As a weaker nation it would face difficulty as free trade would cause strong competition and the economy of the country would be sure to face exploitation. The fall of the ruling Congress party in the forthcoming years show how the new market economy failed it. BJP exploited the newly aroused situation, and concentrating on the *dalits*' or the backward and minority groups' interests, popularly known as 'triple Ts' – *taleem* (education), *tanzeem* (organization), and *tizarat* (business), achieved a remarkable victory of 255 seats among the declared 534 seats in the 1998 elections (Kumar, 2001,69). However, the rise of religious fundamentalism in India during the 1990s is a big issue, and the topic is not manageable in the given space of this article. The paper mainly focuses on the loss of identity on Peer's or Gundegowda's personal level, which may serve as a collective loss. To focus on that issue, we have to consider a stage prop used in the adaptation, which is a television.

In Act 5 the television is presented at a funeral of an elderly man. In a village hut when the body of the dead man has been laid in one corner, there is a television in another corner with a group of masked men around it. They are busy making a bier for the dead person. Friends and relatives of the dead man have gathered in the hut. Everyone is absorbed in watching television. An elderly narrator tells the story of the dead man. No one, except Gundegowda, listens to it. The use of masks adds to the whole scene. It means that technology in the form of television has engulfed the human vision and mind. Man has lost sympathy and fellow feeling. That has been presented symbolically with the use of masks as neither Gundegowda recognises the masked men nor is he recognised by them. The human face has lost appeal, and the community has lost its earlier bond. Rustom Bharucha commented on the use of mask:

The one major rewrite I wanted was when Peer Gynt (who had not yet been transformed into Gundegowda) returns home. Instead of the Nordic gloom which pervades this part of the play, I inscribed one of the central images of my 'vision' of Peer's home-coming as he peels an onion while a faceless 'community' watches television. (Bharucha, 1996, 124)

Bharucha, in showing resistance against cultural imperialism, has tried to comment on TV as an agent of globalization that has reduced the community feeling.

David Held and Anthony McGrew assert in *The Global Transformations Reader* that technological advances helped the West to expand secular philosophies that emerged in the West in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Television, though not on as large a scale as transport or telegraph systems at that time, or as the internet at the present day, has its role in this huge advancement. This view is strongly exaggerated by Canadian communications theorist Marshall McLuhan:

Postliterate man's electronic media contract the world to a village or tribe where everything happens to everyone at the same time: everyone knows about, and therefore participates in, everything that is happening the minute it

happens. Television gives this quality of simultaneity to events in the global village. (Mcluhan, 1960, Introduction)

GC does not demonstrate a positive attitude towards this kind of naivety. Television acting as a flattening agent of the world transmitting the same message everywhere has its unique place in the Kannada *Peer Gynt* text that may help to clarify the conceptual framework of the production. Television connects the individual to the world in Mcluhanian sense, but *Gundegowdana Charitre* shows it as a destructive force working against a sense of community and social interaction, and it leaves the human beings as masked men that cannot recognize each other. This adds to the failure of Gundegowda's cosmopolitanism. The image of a world citizen through which he wanted to live had already been destroyed when he returned to his native place.

Television was introduced in India in the 1950s as part of its development plans. Television was a space for national imaginings as television was controlled by the state and was targeted to promote nation-building agendas. Cable TV came to India in the mid-1980s and India became one of the three (with China and Taiwan, Kumar in French and Richards 2000, 111) most responsive markets for satellite TV. Keval J. Kumar presents statistics that show that in 1990 there were 34.28 million TV homes in India with the national broadcasting channel and no home with cable and satellite. In just a few years in 1995 the number increased up to 48.3 million TV homes and 11.4 million cable and satellite television users. Daya Kissan Thussu informs that when in 1959 the national television network Doordarshan was introduced, it functioned as a means of disseminating state policies and its aim was to create a feeling of national identity (French and Richards 2000: 294). Education and information were the most important concerns in broadcasting. Alongside, there were programmes on classical dance and music to raise the audiences' cultural tastes and values. During the 1975-77 period of national emergency imposed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and through the 1970s, the broadcasting sector was strictly controlled by the government. In the 1990s when India opened up its economy, global media conglomerates entered into India with a great deal of ambition, as India was a huge emerging market because of its large population. The live coverage of the 1990-91 Gulf crisis by CNN and later Hong Kong based Star TV entered the TV broadcasting sector that was protected until then. Star TV's policy of "act locally and think globally" (i.e., producing programmes in local languages in India) increased the number of consumers in millions. The policy was adopted not because of any respect to Indian cultures or languages, but for market pressure – to reach wider consumer base, to increase advertise revenues, and it was cheaper to produce programmes locally. Manjunath Pendakur and Jyotsna Kapur write:

Instead of positioning itself as covert imposition of Western culture, characteristic of the 19th - and 20th -century imperialism, globalization appears to undercut Western authority through the cosmopolitan culture it promises for the Indian upper middle class and a stress on the local. (French and Richards, 2000, 297)

Class becomes important at this point. When the upper middle class finds affinity with the international television, the middle and lower classes in a village in South India under the spell of TV have a different sensibility. The TV audience in Bharucha's *Gundegowda* must either be dumb viewers or they are possessed by aspiration to a higher status. Television seems to attract them while a corpse is lying insignificantly; human feelings are missing in their expression and that is why the use of mask is interesting. The scene also comments on the status of the men; it is most likely that they don't have televisions at home, as is the case in many villages in the Subcontinent even today; a big house in a village may have a television and a large group of people would gather there to watch it, mostly in the afternoons. Whatever the case is, they seem to have lost feeling and understanding. They are a bunch of "straw men" in an Eliotian Waste Land who do not see and do not understand. Thus *Gundegowda* shows how globalization had its effect on the common people. It goes with and against Arjun Appadurai who appreciates the role of imagination in social life (Appadurai 1996). He writes in the introduction to *Globalization* –

If globalization is characterized by disjunctive flows that generate acute problems of social well-being, one positive force that encourages an emancipatory politics of globalization is the role of the imagination in social life [...]

On the one hand, it is in and through the imagination that modern citizens are disciplined and controlled – by states, markets and other powerful interests. But it is also the faculty through which collective patterns of dissents and new designs for collective life emerge. (Appadurai, 2001, 6)

It is interesting to notice that *GC* imagines the community as a united entity (the group of men participating in the same act in the TV scene), the vision and recognition of the community is lost (hence masked). The television in *GC* shows the control but not the dissenting imagination. Bharucha is against 'uneven' globalization. Though not a nationalist he is a supporter of the "liberating force of the 'national', particularly in relation to those people's movements against globalization in Third World countries" (Bharucha, 2001,6). The question he probably wanted his audience to ask themselves after watching the performance is whether their salvation existed in Gandhian nationalism. Gandhian nationalism, on the other hand, is identical with Gandhi's idea of secularism. This explains the import of the spinning wheel at the end of Act 5. Gandhi's *Swadeshi* movement, which is symbolized by the spinning wheel, has been described as '*Swaraj*' or 'self-rule', which means to use the products 'of one's own country'. It stands against the use of products that are '*videshi*' or 'of a foreign country'. Supporting Pheng Cheah Bharucha strongly criticises Appadurai in *The Politics of Cultural Practice*–

It seems to me this perspective [the standpoint that popular nationalist movements are necessary 'to save the state from capitulation to the demands of transnationalization. They alone can renationalize the state and allow it to gain control over accumulation as expressed in Cheah 1998: pp 34-35] is

more valid – and certainly, more realistic – than the post-national pitch offered engagingly by Arjun Appadurai who in his scathing dismissal of the moribund nation-state, is none the less blank when it comes to providing a whole alternative. (Bharucha, 2001, 6)

Unable to find an alternative and unable to accept the surrogates like IMF or the World Bank, Bharucha turns to Gandhi and finds refuge in his *Swaraj*. He further extends his vision and takes a postcolonial stand that has been presented through another stage prop, i.e., a tiny wooden hut that calls attention to one's own self and own land that has a strong connection with Peer's romantic journey back to his own self and home.

Globalization is an enabling factor, as it enables Ibsen, i.e., the *Global Ibsen* to express the fact that the process is not welcome in many parts of the world. *Gundegowdana Charitre* is a good example of using Ibsen to resist uneven globalization. It may be argued that *GC* is not global, as it does not cross the geographical space of Mysore. Despite the fact that the first condition for a stage production to be termed intercultural – namely an interaction between different theatre people or traditions (i.e., intercultural exchanges within theatre or a synthesis of heterogeneous theatre traditions as defined by Pavis in the Introduction of *The Intercultural Performance Reader*), which is absent in *Gundegowdana Charitre*, *Peer Gynt* crossed the national boundary of Norway and was transported to India, and the local production thus becomes a part of global Ibsen and it portrays the response and resistance of the receiving end.

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Summary

This article discusses an adaptation of *Peer Gynt* in the Kannada language, which was staged in the state of Karnataka, India in 1995. The director of the play asserted his concern of Western notion of interculturalism that is inevitably affected by the process of economic globalization, and according to him India has a different situation as there is 'tremendous resistance' to the homogenizing, commoditizing, and anti-democratic tendencies of globalization. Popular terms like 'technology transfers', 'free trade', 'democracy' etc., that are connected with globalization are criticized in the production and it is strongly rooted in serious issues like communal conflict and economic exploitation in contemporary India, providing a notion that globalization is a red herring to divert people from local realities. The analysis of the performance text and the images from the stage performance show how the creative forces behind this production were deeply preoccupied with the notion of the global vs. the national.

Keywords

globalization, market economy, Gandhian nationalism.