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Asia and Globalization

# Introduction

The world we are living in is highly intertwined by a mystifying collection of intricate trade and economic ties coupled with social and environmental complications. International political relations and the conflicts between the states can explicitly be experienced in the world we live in. Technological advancement following the World War II has diminished the boundaries which existed between the states for centuries. Technological advancement has shaped the world in a different dimension. The new dimension given by such a technological advancement is termed as globalization, which is assimilation of world on economic, political, social and cultural lines. The word globalization, in the contemporary world, has become a buzz word. This concept has now become a moot point among the scholars. It has shaped not only the relations between the people but also between the states. It has now become a subject matter of International Relations. Scholars and especially the people at the helm of affairs are now concerned about globalization and its impact. The policies of the governments are being driven by this word.

The deafening voices of the proponents of this concept echo around. The advocates of this word assert that globalization has infinite potential for the growth and prosperity of the inhabitants of this planet. They support their argument by putting forward the claim that globalization is an inexorable course and one must strive to take advantage of globalization in a best possible way. On the contrary, people who oppose globalization brand it as real evil.(Sheffield) They assert that globalization is pushing poor countries back to their colonial period. Both, proponents and opponents have put forward rational arguments to support their claims concerning globalization.

**Core Features of Globalization**

The word globalization spins around free economic operations across the boundaries of the state boundaries. Globalization offers the invisible hand to drive the international political economy.( 1) It resonates the concept of free market economy and demands free economic operations without any barriers by governments of countries. Such economic operations mainly include movement of manufactured goods and services across the borders and movement of capital from one country to another. Afore-mentioned two types of economic operations would yield another type of economic operation, if commingled. The production of good and services is actually the amalgamation of ‘flow of capital and flow of goods’. Imports and Exports account for flow of goods whereas flow of services chiefly means provision of any service from one country to another, and movement of capital crop up by cross border investments.

So what does globalization offer and what one might assume by looking at the core features of globalization? Globalization offers competition in the free market economy. By looking at the core features of the globalization, one might assume that any intervention by the government would the efficiency of the economic operators. Interventions by the people at the helm of the affairs will reduce competition which in turn will reduce the efficiency of the economic operations. Governments’ intervention in free market economy is frowned upon, for governments are driven by political motives, and interference by governments will try to stanch the economic wheel driven by free market.(Kimura) According to the concept of free market, market forces set the preferences for economic operations in a best suitable manner. Such kind of force is probably in the best interest of private entrepreneurs or enterprises, but the efficacy of such force is dubious so far as poor and weak sections of society are concerned.

**Asia vis-à-vis Globalization**

The influential rise of Asia appears to be in tension with the acceleration of globalization. Asia can be singled out as a region most impacted by the globalization. Asia can be treated as a subject promoting globalization. Asia can be seen as a potential alternative to globalization. The anticipated epitomes mentioned above are neither comprehensive nor wholly divergent. In lieu, fluctuating progressions of globalization, if examined by wearing regional lens, can be underlined by aforementioned ideals. Globalization vis-à-vis Asia provides different views to examine it. The externalist view delineates that globalization is pushed by world powers i.e. United States and Europe. The externalist view propagates that globalization transformed the Asia, particularly Asia pacific and South Asia. This transformation further suggests two perspectives; darker perspective and flourishing perspective. From darker perspective, globalization has played its role in the Asia’s economic underdevelopment and withdrawal of regional culture. From flourishing perspective, globalization can be seen as a potential player for Asia’s economic prosperity, political development and cultural assortment.

The most primitive exhibition of this externalist approach materializes from the chronicles of Western influx to the Asia pacific and South Asia. The existence of raw material attracted the Westerners to settle down in Asia, which then led them to political and economic dominance over Asians. The political and economic dominance of Westerners compelled them to colonize Asian in order to fuel their industries. This colonialism ended by 19th and 20th century as sentiments of nationalism grew strong into the colonies. Nationalism is considered as a severe blow to colonialism because colonial people began to realize that they are being exploited by the Westerners. The impact of colonialism in Asian regions was deep and profound. Following the independence, colonial people inherited a colonial legacy to reckon with. What impact colonialism had? Colonialism left its marks on culture and so did the globalization, as suggest by many critiques. The most reflective argument put forward by many critiques is that the globalization is responsible for cultural westernization.(Suarez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard) The evidence which reflects the aforementioned argument is that diets in Asia have been progressively more westernized. The sum total of this relationship between globalization and Asia is that external forces have carried basic and sweeping variations to the region. These variations could be dubbed as better and worse.

**Asia as a catalyst for globalization**

Asia can be seen as an engine for globalization. The regions is also shaping and manipulating the very nature of globalization. This narrative gives scholar another dimension to think over the concept the globalization. The archaic perception which termed globalization as westernization of Asia is now being redefined. Going down the aisle of history, it is revealed that modern world economy was led by Asians by 18th century. Colonialism is also, now being viewed in new dimension and with different lens. It is argued that colonies in Asia influenced west as much as colonies in West influenced Asia. More often than not colonies were considered as laboratories where ideas were experimented and the innovations of these experiments were not western but Asian. Following the colonial epoch, the claim that Asia is a victim of globalization is less plausible. Following the World War II, the tussle between communism and capitalism actually helped Japan to enter the global economy. The Japanese progress following the World War II till 1970s actually designed main parts of world economy. The development of Japan not only transformed the world economy but also devised some new patterns of other economic areas, like shipping and procurement.

China, now, follows the footsteps of Japan. It has now become the biggest importer of raw material surpassing, USA, Japan and Europe. China’s development is taking globalization in a new dimension. World Bank now lags behind China as far as lending money to poorer countries is concerned. The implications of such development can be analyzed in political coupled with economic view point. As there is no such thing as free lunch, same is the case with grants and loans. They come with political as well economic constraints.International migrant labor has also redefined globalization. Another tendency in Asia is the upsurge of regional free trade agreements. This regional integration can be considered as a rampart to the globalization or a catalyst to the globalization. It can be viewed in both perspectives. Globalization is not a closed end street, neither is it a one-way street. The view which propagated in the past that, Asian regions are not at the receiving end of the globalization can be downplayed in contemporary times. Asia has redefined the word ‘globalization’ across political, cultural and economic lines.

**Winners and Losers in Globalization**

Globalization results in winners or losers, or haves or have not’s. China has had significant influence on Asian economies through the last decade. It is now widely dubbed that Asia could be the leader of upcoming phase of globalization. Mostly people would agree, for only Asia has the potential to house the next phase of globalization. The demographic reason and the innovations in Asian industrial units are the reason to compel the scholars to label Asia as a natural nest for globalization. It seems that the center of gravity has been moved to Asian regions, potentially China, Japan, Korea and Singapore, as far as innovation is concerned. Many scholars argue that in the upcoming phase of globalization Asia could be a potential winner leaving behind Europe.

The phase of globalization everyone is talking about is possibly the third wave of globalization. First and second wave of globalization had something to offer to the people. So far as first wave is concerned, it was more or less concerned about making everything economical. And, that’s what people loved about the first phase/wave of globalization. First phase of globalization can also be termed as open phase. Following the first wave, second wave was experienced and this wave spun around the financial sectors.(Baylis et al.) Unlike first wave, second wave had something for someone but did not offer everything for everyone as the first wave did. But, the upcoming phase, which is dubbed as the third wave of globalization will be diverse. Asia could be a potential player in the upcoming wave of globalization, for its industries are competitive in nature vis-à-vis technological innovation.

Benefits for small, medium entrepreneurs could be gigantic following the third wave of globalization. They could be the potential winners concerning the scale of opportunity provided to them by third wave of globalization. So far as the losers are concerned, which could be the companies from Europe, they will have to use diplomatic channels in a best possible manner. Let suppose, if they don’t handle the diplomatic facet of third wave globalization elegantly, they will be pushed against the wall. Everything mentioned above is just a forecast based on the arguments of scholars and facts. So far as reality is concerned, there’s many a slip ‘twixt the cup and the lip.

**Formation of civilizations vis-à-vis contemporary globalization**

The impact of contemporary globalization can be witnessed in terms of emerging interconnectedness amid economic, cultural and political course of globalization. Each sector requires incessant relations amid different societies and their corresponding players. The full impact of this contemporary globalization can best be explained in the context of history. The changes we beheld concerning international arenas are meticulously associated with the contemporary globalization and the results being yielded by this contemporary globalization. There is a shift in supremacies in the international order coupled with the progression of new power driven relations, rise of new international thespians and institutions, on the international scene. Everyone seems to box the compass in its own interest. Westphalian concept of democracy seems to fall apart in the contemporary times.

The competition between the international hegemonies is what best reflected in this contemporary globalization. West, now feel threatened at the hands of Asian powers, like China. Had the USA and European power anticipated the threats of contemporary globalization, they would never have unleashed this monster. The contemporary globalization has subdued Uni-polarity and the dominance of big powers. The growing competition between East vs. West has raised many eyebrows in the West. The growth of China is what everyone is worried about. China, in the form of BRI has given new dimension to the concept of globalization and offered developing states to make the best out of it. Following the Afghan-Soviet war, New World Order was introduced but the contemporary processes of globalization are dragging the world towards ‘New World Disorder’. If I put it in a way that the world started to move towards chaos following the demise of communism then I might be right. For, it is the demise of communism which dragged the world towards relative instability.

Of late, religion has also appeared as a critical entity on the international arena. But this crucial entity has been neglected altogether in the amalgamation of world politics. It is because the scholars and the people at the helm of affairs considered religion as apolitical. In the same fashion the scholars of religion rejected out rightly the importance of integration of religion and international relations. It is because of the secularization of the incessant and misplaced concern of international relations with secularization. With the contemporary globalization, new world history is in the making. This new world history is being developed in terms of regional conflicts concerning globalization vis-à-vis religion.

**How Asia transformed by globalization**

The emergence of Asia in the backdrop of globalization is more often than not termed as the “Pacific Century”. The key players in the Pacific Century are China, Japan and India. Most of the analysis is inclined towards the three key players. The main question in this regard is that how globalization brought positive changes to Asia? The processes of globalization have offered political and economic convergence in the region. This political convergence has paved the way for pluralism in the region. But, still some of the countries in Asia are struggling. Philippines is one of those countries, for it is feudalism which is pushing her against the wall. It is because of feudalism, Philippines is struggling to pull herself out of the fiscal crisis. South Korea on the other hand is termed as most leverage economy but South Koreans are just piling up the debt as their economy is still dependent on the debts.

So far as the development witnessed in China and India is concerned, their development hinges mainly upon the planning and administration, coupled with their diplomacy. Moreover the process of globalization has rendered the development of China and India just because they swiftly adapt to the changes uprooting in the international arena. In addition, large human resource and influx of capital has helped both countries a lot to keep pace with globalization. There are still lacking behind in terms of cultural diversity but both have done a remarkable job in their economic sectors. Cheap labor had been a main weapon for both of the countries which they exploited in a best possible way. The race of hegemony in the South Asian region is between these two players coupled with the support of Western powers.(Pang) South Asia, the most volatile region of Asian continent had been the main loser in the previous waves of globalization. But, the contemporary phase and the upcoming phase of globalization would definitely provide South Asia certain opportunities to become a winner.

Globalization was assumed as rich countries’ game and it was confirmed by the financial crisis is Asia in the last years of the millennium. Globalization had been put to test in Asia, that’s why Asia had always been on the losing side. Rich Westerners felt its great benefits while the poor Asians were left to feel its brutal sting. The sentiments against America cropped up pertaining to this globalization. Nonetheless, Asian still admire American and European institutes but the reality is that American dream has now developed into the Asian dream.

**Criticism to globalization**

Most of the criticism to globalization echoes in the West. Globalization, in the West and in some parts of Asia has rendered nationalism and populism. The only reason behind this backlash is the emerging Asian powers in the backdrop of globalization. What is the difference Asians and Westerners? Asian, who appeared late on the international scene, are hungry to nurture themselves out of globalization, whereas West has taken benefits out of the early waves of globalization. Both attitudes have political implications. Asia, as an emerging economy would definitely support free market economy. On the contrary West has been living in advanced economy, any setback to their advanced economy on the backdrop of globalization and free market economy is not acceptable for them.

According to survey conducted on the globalization, only 40% of American and French supported globalization. On the other hand the result of survey was totally opposite of what was experienced in America and France. Almost 83% Vietnamese and 91% Indians voted in favor of globalization. Data borne out by the survey reveals that remunerations offered by contemporary globalization to Asians are far better than those offered to Westerners.

Importance of status quo cannot be downplayed concerning the contemporary globalization. Countries would first resort to market solution and free market economy. But, maturity in their economic systems is followed by status quo. Following maturity, they would tend to become realists and defend what they have and acquire what they have not. At the end it’s not about globalization, but haves and have not’s. it’s about ‘win everything and lose nothing.

**Conclusion**

The resolution of this essay is to carry out the anatomy of relationship between globalization and Asia. The essay provides various lenses to explore the relationship between the two entities. It suggests that regional dynamics cannot be understood sans cause and consequences, and globalization is not as simple as to term to the world global village. It’s a much intricate phenomenon and cannot be examined by putting on single lens. Contemporary wave of globalization has far reaching effects and contributing a lot to shape the world into a new dimension. The essay proposed Asia not only an object of globalization but also the subject as well as alternative of globalization. Undoubtedly, the process of globalization and its impacts have been felt in the last two decades but, the essay clearly delineates that globalization is process cropping up since decades. Albeit, the framework provided by essay to interpret globalization is a piecemeal and incongruous, but it’s a true essence of globalization which is preserved in it whatever the form it may take.

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