PROSPECT OF GLOBAL CANON: A STUDY ON CANON FORMATION, AESTHETICS AND GLOBALISATION

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───────────────(*Abstract*)───────────────

In the past, the idea of a literary canon made it possible to evaluate and assess works using particular aesthetic criteria. In the wake of globalization, canon formation of literature faces a "de-aestheticizing regime" i.e. aesthetic merits no longer qualify a literary work's inclusion in canon (Apter 1). A new aesthetics, which takes a far broader view of literature's appeals and evaluations than its aesthetic qualities, has superseded the criteria of evaluating a literary work based on its beauty and pleasure. My research intends to discuss how the idea of canon formation is evolving in a globalized society, the risks that literature faces from the de-aestheticizing grip of globalization, and the possibility of creating a global canon in light of these shifting notions of aesthetics.

Key-words: Aesthetics, canon, globalization, literature.

Introduction

In literary circles and literature-related culture studies, concerns about established literary canons and their creation have become crucial issues. It's clear that some people hold opposing views to established literary canons. On the one hand, there are some who, like Harold Bloom, defend standard canons and contend that literary works in established canons must withstand the test of time since they are set by aesthetic standards. Their emphasis lies on the "canonicity" of literary works, which highlights their artistic merit and distinctiveness. However, the opponents claim that standard canons have been de-

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termined less by artistic excellence than by the politics of power, that is, the canon "has been formed in accordance with the ideology, political interests, and values of an elite and privileged class that was white, male, and European" (Abrams 21). The opponents' calls to end elitism and open the canon are becoming more and more pressing these days. As the two sides have differing perspectives on how canon creation occurs, no satisfactory conclusions have been drawn about the matter thus far. However, the opposing views make clear the internal and external factors that influence canon formation. There is a noticeable difference between the previous and current dispensations of canon formation. Under its new epoch, canon construction has given rise to a wide range of scholarly fields, including anthropology, linguistics, politics, psychoanalysis, gender, and colonialism. Thus, certain new areas have taken the place of traditional aesthetics, which was the only consideration in the previous dispensation of canon formation. The study of aesthetics, or the study of artistically valuable art forms, has changed dramatically over time as the idea of establishing "standards" based solely on pleasure and beauty has come to include social and cultural issues as significant determinants. We discover aesthetics in a chaotic and intricate interaction with the canon that results from numerous readers' varied points of view. Diverse viewpoints can also be found in the link between the canon and culture. Diverse cultural groups produce a multitude of perspectives, resulting in dissipative systems that continuously lose equilibrium before finding it again in an alternative way.

Globalization has certainly created some challenges for the establishment of canons of literature. The "de-aestheticizing" consequences that came along with globalization have been debated by Emily Apter (1). The assertion that "an autonomous aesthetic realm exists" has also been made by Edward Said (64). Globalization presents difficulties in this area. Said contends that in light of globalization, these frameworks for analyzing literature need to be revised. The fundamental definition of literature is being reconsidered as the borders of the text, the author, the nation, and the frameworks of aesthetics are being undermined. Globalization has given rise to new paradigms for studying ethnic cultures, identity, postcolonial theory, and other topics in literature; yet, the large number of fragments and inadequate regulation put the approaches at risk. Concerns over the standardization of methodologies used in the domains of global literature, comparative studies, subaltern studies, and gender studies have been expressed by numerous academics. Literary study has lost its individuality and uniqueness due to standardization and homogenization brought about by globalization in fields like translation studies, world literature, and comparative methodologies, among others. In spite of these risks, globalization has given scholars from other literary traditions the opportunity to choose the best of their works to create a canon of world literature. Even while writing keeps blurring the boundaries and exploring previously uncharted territory, does current literary scholarship do literature justice as a form? Can we situate the study of literature within the

more traditional definition of aesthetics? Is there a developing new aesthetic in the context of international literature? Does the study of literature fit into any current global paradigms? In order to determine where literature fits into global paradigms and whether a global canon is possible, my research will look at the intricate structure of canon creation, particularly in the context of globalization. Alongside this, it will explain how the concept of aesthetics has changed, opening the door to the possibility of creating new aesthetics. The latest studies on Jacques Ranciere's critiques of politics and aesthetics should be helpful in this regard.

Canon formation- an overview

According to its etymology, the word "canon" refers to a "standard" or "measuring rod" (Greek "kanon"). It designates a corpus of writing that is regarded as authentic as well as a set of guidelines. The term "canon" in English literature originally referred to biblical texts that were recognized as authentic by church authorities, but it eventually came to include the writings of certain authors that critics had chosen to legitimize (Kumar 148). Classics and the word "literary canon" are sometimes used interchangeably. It includes authors whose works have been deemed "classics" and whose status as "major" has been established by a body of critics, academicians, and researchers. The reasons why these literary works are deemed "major" are that most of them are still in print, they are frequently discussed by literary critics, and they are taught in literary courses and anthologies. John Guillory views "canon" as a replacement for the term "classic," as opposed to viewing the two terms as interchangeable (Kumar 149).

The biblical canon is a restrictive construction that forbids both addition and deletion and is endowed with the authoritative authority to authorize restriction. Conversely, the canon of literature is ill-defined, suggestive rather than explicit, and always accessible to additions; as a result, it can be altered as circumstances dictate (Abrams 20). As Frank Kermode notes, there was a time when the debate over canons was acrimonious but simple, like that of Dr. Leavis: should Shelley be spared from the apocrypha or Milton ousted? Although these debates were intensely, even fiercely, conducted, there was an underlying consensus that determining the proper canon was a social matter, even though it was decided by aesthetic considerations (Kermode 43). Indeed, by revealing the criteria used for inclusion and exclusion, the literary canon exposes the politics involved in canon construction.

In the past, beauty was the only factor in the construction of canons. The aesthetic strength, which is constituted primarily of mastery of figurative language, originality, cognitive power, knowledge, and exuberance of diction, is what allows literature to "break into the canon" (Bloom 29). Since aesthetics had the most influence on the creation of historical canons, a thorough discussion of the term "aesthetics" is necessary.

The term 'Aesthetics' – its origin and multiple meanings

The Greek term "aisthetikos," from which the English word "aesthetic" is derived, means "sensitive, sentient, pertaining to

sense perception". In his 1735 dissertation "Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus" ("Philosophical considerations of some matters pertaining the poem"), German philosopher Alexander Baumgarten gave new meaning to the term "aesthetics." Baumgarten chose "aesthetics" because he wanted to emphasise the experience of art as a means of knowing.

The philosophy of art and aesthetics are closely related. Aesthetics is commonly defined as "the study of beauty." However, that definition is inadequate because certain things that many find aesthetically pleasing, notable, or useful are not beautiful in the conventional or logical sense of the word. Kant argues that our perception of something as beautiful is what gives us aesthetic pleasure, not the fact that we find pleasure in it. According to Kant, our emotions for beauty are different from our emotions for moral goodness because, while we strive to uphold moral excellence, we rarely give its usefulness a second thought when we find something beautiful.

Some distinguish between philosophy of art and aesthetics, saying that the latter is the study of artistic creations and the former is the study of beauty. But most of the time, aesthetics includes both questions about art and questions about beauty. Some believe that aesthetics and the philosophy of art since Hegel are synonymous, whereas others maintain that these two closely connected disciplines differ significantly. It is defined as the study of subjective and sensory-emotional values, or sometimes judgements of sentiment and taste, from a more technical epistemological point of view. The study of aesthetics includes how artists envision, make, and present their works, as well as how viewers use, appreciate, and evaluate art, as well as what goes through their thoughts when they read poems, see paintings, or listen to music and comprehend what they see and hear. It also looks at how they feel about art, including why they appreciate certain pieces more than others and how art influences their attitudes towards life, beliefs, and moods. Thus, one definition of "aesthetics" is critical judgement about nature, art, and culture.

Canon formation and its Complex Fractal Structure

The primary component of the structure of literary canon is aesthetic judgment. Aestheticizing literature fundamentally denotes evaluating literature from the point of view of its artistic excellence. Aesthetic judgment– a judgment based on the artistic excellence of a literary work– is the most frequent point of discussion in evaluating the quality of a literary work and whether it is deserving of placement within the literary canon. The defenders of a traditional canon typically contend that a work's "art" possesses a beauty that transcends other works, making aesthetic value the essential component of a literary work that gives it its originality. For instance, Andrew Delbanco favours critics who celebrate books as sources of aesthetic delight as opposed to those who explore the political implications of a literary work (ix). This difference in word choice between celebrators and explorers of literature implies that although some critics explore a book's rela-

tionship with the outer world, celebrators help bring out all the joy and wonder found in literature. Due to its immense influence, aesthetics, thus, is the primary factor considered when deciding the place of a literary work in the canon of literature.

According to traditional aesthetics, a literary work has an objective value that can be determined and measured by applying linguistic and structural analysis to the text. This makes it possible to analyze and appraise all of the work in a sequential fashion, and the conventional critic tries to figure out where a certain work of literature fits in relation to its forebears. According to traditional critics, the text's aesthetic worth exists independently of the reader and the passage of time. The concept of aesthetics as such assumes the form of a singularity, an objective reality that exists independently of the reader and that only a select few readers are skilled enough to recognize. When it is, the experience is consistently the same and repeatable. Traditional critics believe that a literary work that is considered canonical awes the reader with the beauty of its language; readers rely on critics to help them develop their responses to the works' dynamics, and critics' analyses help them grasp the beauty of literary works. According to this viewpoint, critics play a critical part in the comprehension and appreciation of literature, and they have the power to choose whether a piece of writing is worthy to be preserved or not.

Traditional aesthetics is merely one facet of aesthetics; it is a strategy that can be considered reductive since it concentrates solely on textual elements without taking into account human emotion or the outer world. This process produces a linear and hierarchical world and simplifies the concept of aesthetics to only one aspect: aesthetic value. Aesthetics is rather a disorganized system of interrelated and interdependent elements. Aesthetics is multidimensional because it can identify a relationship between readers and the text. A cyclic engagement is created by aesthetics of value and experience as opposed to a linear one, where the reader influences the value contained in the literature while also being impacted by the aesthetic value of the work.

According to traditional critics, aesthetics is a quality that is exclusive to the text itself. Aesthetics, however, needs to be a part of the reader-text interaction; it cannot exist in a vacuum. A wide variety of variables interact in the process of recent literary studies. There are several factors that influence the meaning that emerges from the text depending on the traits of the readers. The variables encompass a range of factors, such as the reader's age and gender, as well as their comprehension and application of reading techniques. These elements impact the reader's perception of what is artistic and attractive.

Culture and history are two other crucial components of canon development in addition to aesthetics. In essence, the term "culture" is ambiguous and has several connotations. Though it is frequently used to describe the values, beliefs, practices, and interests of the aforementioned groups, culture generally relates to ethnic, racial, and gender groups. For those who maintain it, the traditional canon serves

as a curriculum for teaching the culture's youth since it articulates its core beliefs in an ideological manner. "Pre-selected by culture, laid down like fossils in the sedimented layers of institutional tradition" is how Robert Scholes describes this canon (58). Guillory views it as a "fictional cultural entity" (42). It is pertinent to argue that as cultural shifts occur in the population, it is reasonable to expect changes occurring not only in the culture's identity but also in the literary canon. Guillory notes that "social identities are themselves historically constructed; they mean different things at different historical moments" (18). Guillory suggests that canon formation can be a process of "revaluation of particular authors [which] alters the set of terms by which literature as a whole, or what we like to now call the canon, is represented to its constituency, to literary culture, at a particular historical moment" (135). This portrays a culture that evaluates literature today rather than the culture that produced it initially. As a result, the canon always represents earlier cultures rather than the society we live in now.

The literary canon can reasonably be described as a shifting shape; the "changes in the canon obviously reflect change in ourselves and our culture. It is a register of how our historical self-understandings are formed and modified" (Kermode 36). The nature of these changes is reciprocal. Though literary works influence our self-perception, cultural changes also impact our conception of the canon of literature. The canon cannot embody cultural ideals in a static manner since literary works are subject to reader and critic analysis and interpretation. In addition, cultural values evolve with time.

Within the cultural sphere, literary canon refers to both the acknowledgement of the artistic merit of specific literary works and the process by which particular authors and genres gain widespread acceptance, legal status, and mainstream cultural acceptance through institutionalization and socialization. According to Pierre Bourdieu, the process of socialization and institutionalization is necessary for the construction of canons—that is, for cultural familiarization (Ping 62).

Since there is no single, definitive list of great works and authors, neither now nor in the past, and because the canon is not a set shape or produced from an unchanging standard, the history of canon construction has never included a linear process. Instead, it is always changing and evolving in an attempt to reach a balance. Both chance and deliberate effects alter the canon. Instead of representing a single objective, the canon represents multiple aims throughout history. Moreover, although the canon is applied for a specific purpose, like literature courses at colleges and universities, it is still susceptible to change throughout time (Meadows 53).

A complicated interaction between aesthetics, culture, and history can be seen in the construction of canons. Aesthetics, culture, and literary history all have facets that interact dynamically with the canon. Aesthetics and canon development have a complicated relationship because the latter is constructed by many readers, who provide a variety of viewpoints and experiences that are self-similar. Multifaceted

cultural groupings generate a multiplicity of viewpoints, leading to dissipative structures that repeatedly lose equilibrium before regaining it in a different way. Rather than literary history developing sequentially, we discover a complicated and chaotic interaction between the past and the present, as well as recursive processes that produce self-similar fractal pictures as the canon develops. The canon itself is a single system with chaotic and complicated interactions between its literary history, culture, and aesthetics, rather than three separate systems. This explanation enables the interaction between each facet and the canon that it experiences (Meadows 78). According to Monroe C. Beardsley, "even if literary works do have aesthetic value, it is inevitably so mixed with other values as to permit no clear discrimination and identification; therefore, it cannot be sensibly discussed or play any significant role in our systematic study or cultural treatment of those works" (238).

Aesthetics in Canon formation and the Context of Globalisation

There is a noticeable difference in the literature produced before and after globalization. The repercussions of globalization have undermined the aesthetic frameworks that served as the only criteria in the past when forming canons. Within the discipline of literary studies, the past and history are interpreted via a national lens, and up until recently, literature was perceived as a rather stable entity possessing a unique language. However, the idea of literature's singularity—literature as a distinct entity freed from national, authorial, chronological, and textual boundaries—

has been brought about by globalization. Literary studies lose ground to aesthetics as the yardstick for judging what constitutes "art" or "aesthetically beautiful" writing as literature, and the literary canon occupy some previously uncharted territory. The canon of literature was previously established by aesthetic criteria and cultural acquaintance. This paradigm is changing in the globalized era as the borders of the text, the author, and the nation, as well as the frameworks of aesthetics, are being undermined. De-aestheticizing literature suggests the deterioration of aesthetic standards brought about by globalization. As a result, there is less opportunity to study literature as a form, and there are discernible discursive divides in research fields as a result of inadequate review of research and study procedures. Standardized techniques emerge to gain control in an effort to homogenize these discursive divisions in literary disciplines, and margins are neglected more and more. The perception of standardizations in translation studies, world literature, comparative methods, and other areas deprives literary studies of its autonomy and diversity. Standardizing research methodologies has led to a lack of diversity in literary studies, with comparable methodologies serving as benchmarks that literary texts must meet to establish their value. According to Edward Said, "because English is a world language, several regional languages become marginal dialects; this further enables the homogenization of cultural products, which are seen as dominating cultural 'markets'" (67). As a result, writing that was deemed "authentic" and "testimonial" a decade or two ago

is now subjected to fresh scrutiny in the global environment.

The globalized environment has led to the globalization of current social structures, which has had conflicting effects on literary studies. While it is encouraging that globalization has given rise to a wide range of academic disciplines, including postcolonial theory, ethnic cultures, identity, and literary studies, it is concerning that research and literary studies are not adequately regulated in terms of methodology. Numerous academics studying world literature, comparative studies, gender studies, and subaltern studies have expressed apprehensions regarding the standardization of methodologies employed in these domains (Khuraijam and Devi 268).

The development of technology and their growing interactions with enterprises shape the framework of globalization. It requires its residents to possess practical skills. The reading process has undergone a significant transformation, with diverse online discourses taking the role of literary reading and discourses. Due to the global nature of literary studies, literary audience and practice are primarily restricted to academic circles, and public media is being displaced by the internet. The simple access to a vast amount of content on the internet has significantly reduced the indulgence in books. One could argue that globalization diminishes the value of literature. It makes a difference whether it is meant in an artistic or other sense. Art and aesthetics, while dominant, are endangered by rationalization and practical skills as the inflexible demands of globalization fail to find an effective place in the job markets.

Many discussions on aesthetics have emerged in the field of literary studies with the emergence of globalization. Aesthetics was once thought to be associated with the kind of beauty that is pleasing to the senses; a reader may recognize the aesthetic elements of a literary work by what makes it enjoyable to read. It is crucial to remember, though, that a text's aesthetic qualities and textual qualities do not always have to match. Thus, in light of globalization, focusing solely on aesthetic beauty is not a wise course of action. Edward Said refers to this more traditional understanding of aesthetics as the "autonomous aesthetic realm" (68). While contemplating the future of literary studies in a globalized context, he writes, "The more extreme the isolation of the aesthetic, the more it negatively reflects the antinomies of the social situation" (68). In the wake of globalization, the frameworks for analyzing the components of literary aesthetics should be updated. The truth should be comprised of aesthetic aspects, and the truth itself should be beautiful. One can no longer separate aesthetics from society. The French philosopher Jacques Ranciere asserted that art can become life; art can be created from life; life and art are able to swap qualities (119). In the modern world, the notion that aesthetics is limited to beauty alone is untenable. To genuinely comprehend the significance of literature as a discipline in a globalized world, the definition of aesthetics itself must be re-evaluated. The evaluations and appeals of aesthetics extend well beyond their beauty and enjoyment.

Jacques Ranciere has attempted to redefine aesthetics in his book *The Politics of*

Aesthetics. According to Ranciere, aesthetics is a particular way of recognizing and understanding the arts, which he refers to as the aesthetic regime of art. It has nothing to do with art theory in general or the field that studies art. Aesthetics, however, in its broadest definition, refers to the distribution of the sensible that establishes a way to articulate different types of action, production, perception, and thought. This broad conception of aesthetics includes the conceptual coordinates and visibility modes used in the political sphere, extending it beyond the boundaries of art (Ranciere 86). Ranciere, therefore, makes an effort to free aesthetics from the constrained frameworks to which it is typically confined.

Rethinking Aesthetics and the Potential for a Global Canon

When considering aesthetics from such novel perspectives as Ranciere's, form, linguistic elements alone, style, structure, or even merely well-written prose are not sufficient criteria for defining aesthetics. An aesthetic environment should be one of involvement and truth. The updated literary aesthetic ideal can effectively convey the social antinomies and serve the literary culture's intended purposes. Because of this updated aesthetic standard for literature, the canonization of literature has fulfilled certain new requirements, particularly in the age of globalization. A canon of great works was originally defined and informed by lines that originated in Europe. These distinctions are no longer discernible or exist at all. Artists from different continents and nations work together, motivating one another. Literature and the arts exist in a borderless world. One could claim that a new aesthetic brought about by globalization has caused literature to defy conventions, limitations, and classifications. This effect can be linked to a unique occurrence made possible by readability: the instant in which literature crosses national, textual, authorial, chronological, and other borders. This uniqueness allows for "re-interpretation and re-contextualization," bringing together disparate paradigms and fields of research (Attridge 63). World literature is the term for literature that has arisen in this particular context.

In the discourse of world literature, one of the most important topics is the building of a global literary canon. To do this, literary studies must explain why a particular work of literature can be enjoyed by readers in contexts that are vastly different from its country of origin in terms of social, political, cultural, and historical aspects. As global literature has grown, academics from various literary traditions should be able to choose the greatest of these works to create a canon of global literature. The globalized literary situation provides scholars of all literary traditions with a great opportunity to share their best works to a global audience and establish their canonical works outside of their own national borders, especially those from non-Western and previously underappreciated "minor" traditions. It would seem appropriate to take this move at this time, as the current resurgence of interest in world literature is based on a truly global vision that transcends the prejudices and biases of Euro-centrism and other ethnocentrisms.

Conclusion

The politics of canon building is based on material, ideological, and socio-cultural factors that shape a relationship with literature and literary texts rather than being restricted to the politics of inclusion and exclusion. The canon formation of literature is an open system that is always interacting with its environment. It functions as a dynamic system inside a context of chaos and complexity. The promotion of a diverse canon and the continuing study of the influences of aesthetics, culture, and history on the canon result from acknowledging the literary canon as a complex and disorganized structure. The rise of new aesthetics that influence literature to transcend authorial, linguistic, and national limits has unsettled the place of aesthetics in literary studies and the canonization of literature. The disintegration of national boundaries unites literature worldwide. Nganthoi Khuraijam and N. Banita Devi assert that there is a necessity to approach literary studies using techniques and approaches for interpreting global literature that resist the blending of capitalism and globalization (274). It is evident that contemporary writing lacks a canonical framework, but it is precisely this absence of a canon that enables comparative and international literature to subvert the Eurocentrism of literary canon. The vastness of the literary field following globalization may provide challenges for literary scholars, but it is precisely this opening up of new paradigms and fields of inquiry that is crucial to the development of literature. Literature and literary studies can flourish while remaining in harmony with globalization, provided approaches are used to counteract the overwhelming standardization effected by globalization and its repercussions.

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