

Homogenising the Heterogenous Gastronomy: A Case of McDonald's in India

Dr Vishal Chauhan¹, Dr Perveen²

¹Department of History, PGDAV College, University of Delhi, India

²Department of Commerce, PGDAV College, University of Delhi, India

*Corresponding author

Abstract: - McDonald's success in the global market is phenomenal, and India is no exception. The golden arches stretch across the globe despite invariably different gastronomical preferences. We are intrigued by the success of McDonald's around the world, especially in India, which has a large vegetarian population. McDonald's, famous for its meat products, is swiftly adopting the Indian-vegetarian ethos and has been successful in India too. This paper explores the 'politics of taste' by studying the cultural designs of McDonald's and asks two pertinent questions: Does McDonald's 'homogenise' the global gastronomies or adapting to a heterogenous global platter? How are commoners responding to the fast-food giant in India? The paper uses Arjun Appadurai's and MD Certeau's insights along with semi-structured-open-ended questionnaire, and non-participatory observation to study the cultural design of McDonald's in India. Department of History, PGDAV College, University of Delhi.

Keywords: Homozinisation, heterogenization, micro-protest, cultural politics, and gastronomy.

I. INTRODUCTION

A young lady cried at a McDonald's store (Birmingham, UK). She was with three kids. Other customers tried to calm her and asked the reason. She told them she did not have enough money to buy three 'happy meals', and they all shared in one. Then some of the customers suggested she go home and cook herself. But she replied, "I don't know cooking"¹. Another story belongs to India, where in a mall, a mother was trying her level best to dissuade her daughter from eating something other than a burger, and she was yelling at the top of her voice *Muje McVeggie hi khana na hai* (I will eat McVeggie only).

There is no apparent connection between these two stories except the overarching 'golden arches' of McDonald's. In the first story, a young lady suffers because she does not know cooking and depends on 'Mc Happy Meal'. In the other story, a little girl insists her mother buy her a McVeggie burger. The first story narrates the plight of a developed society where 'cooking' is becoming old-fashioned, infra-normal and mundane. And the second story replicates the rapid intrusion of fast-food culture in a developing society. Globalization is shrinking the notion of 'time and space'. This essay explores the connection between globalization and fast-food culture on the one hand, and their socio-cultural nuances, on the other.

¹ This story is narrated by one of the friends during a seminar on 'Kitchenaid' in Nov 2018 at the University of Birmingham.

II. A BRIEF NOTE ON PRE-MODERN INDIAN GASTRONOMY

'As a general principle, in the world of food, too, the Indian genius has been in the management of chaos, the celebration of diversity and orthogenetic transformation of the exogenous' (Nandy 2004, p.12). In India, infinite culinary diversity has made it difficult to comment on the culinary discourses without addressing the regional variations, even though it bears a 'common thread'.

Like all other traditional gastronomies of the world, Indian gastronomy, in general, is very elaborate, time-consuming and emotional. It is elaborative in the sense of expanse, not only in the number of cuisines but also in their ingredients and techniques. In the same vein, the 'processing time' of Indian traditional meals is relatively more, irrespective of the cultural diversities, compared to the modern/postmodern technologized 'cooking' and food practices. Traditional cooking methods include pre-modern food processing techniques and are generally labour-intensive.

The emotional bond with the 'process' of cooking is integral to Indian gastronomy. It has been said that the difference between food and good food is just the difference in emotional investment. Cooking as a process always bears signage of emotional investment of the producer, and at home, it has always been some woman (or women) who used to enrich the taste. It was never a mechanized act in spite of its repetitive and routine rhythms. Cooking used to involve all the sensory faculties (smell, taste, texture etc.) in the pre-modern times till the recent 'technological onslaught' on the kitchen. As Appadurai (1981) observes, 'Eating together, whether as a family, a caste, or a village, is a carefully conducted exercise in the reproduction of intimacy'. In the similar vein, the concept of intra-community kitchen (*sanjha chulah*) and intra-community cooking was the source of uninterrupted flow of emotions in everyday life and food which the ultra-nuclear modern society has been deprived of. The community living used to enrich the pool of culinary knowledge; women of a locale shared their recipes and food (but not the trade secrets she reserved for her loved ones, especially daughters). This exchange of culinary knowledge was oral and is still thriving,

along with the abundance of cookery books and TV shows, away, on the margins of the modern metros, in the suburbs and rural areas (Appadurai:1998). Ironically, modern technology has enriched the repository of culinary information but has stolen the *jouissance* of cooking. Indian society was never a uniform social whole, but even within these divided units, there was an inner equilibrium, at least at the community level, which had preserved the emotional coefficient of the traditional gastronomy and the flow of gastro-epistemology (Appadurai:1988).

III. MODERNIZATION, GLOBALIZATION AND THE RISE OF FAST FOOD IN INDIA

Industrialization, migration, dilution of community structure, and the rise of cities and later metros in the cyber age have changed the idea of food and cooking. The advent and the dissemination of fast food are embedded in these socio-economic dynamics, which has proffered a new food-escape to the new city dwellers. (Nandy, 2004). The modern and globalized metro life posed a new postmodern puzzle in front of the young dwellers: how to strike a balance between the extraordinary pressures of performance-based professional life and the infra-ordinary, mundane cooking chores of everyday life?

Fast food provides an easy option to 'fill the gut' in almost no time. It has a whole range, from a variety of burgers to fries to pizzas to noodles to salads etc.; the list is endless and so do the effects. 'Bender and Bender (1995) have defined fast food as a "general term used for a limited menu of foods that lend themselves to production-line techniques; suppliers tend to specialize in products such as hamburgers, pizzas, chicken, or sandwiches".

The definition suggests a post-Fordian mechanized and specialized chain of humans and machines to produce food. Food has been thoroughly commoditized with the rise of such food-producing mechanisms and consumption patterns in the post-industrialized capitalist era. The fast-food industry has overgrown the hype of media and the aggressive marketing of the multinational food giant. The whole new genre of fast food has been projected as an antithesis of traditional gastronomy globally because it consumes almost 'no processing time', is devoid of emotional obligations (to the family, cook and others), relieved from the hassles of disposing the waste and cleaning the mess (Certeau *et al.*,1998).

Indian Experience

The fast-food industry has an intrinsic linkage with capitalism and globalization. In India, multinational fast-food giants arrived with the advent of the New Economic Policy in 1991. This policy has opened the floodgates of the Indian economy to the forces of liberalization and globalization. The Indian market was inundated with multinational companies (MNCs)

who wished to explore the newer possibilities of expansion in the newly globalized economy. New economic possibilities and newer schemata of development have influenced the socio-cultural fabric and economy alike. Globalization has broadened the employment mesh for all, including women².

Globalization has provided opportunities for Indians to work in tendon with developed economies of the West. But irrespective of MNCs and their professional profiles (BPO, KPO, Consultancy firms etc.), they all have conditionally encouraged Indians to work in tendon with Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) or in accordance with 'their' (American or European) working hours.

This development was new in comparison to the older set of work schedules. It has changed the notion of everyday in India, where people usually work in the daytime only. The youth were new 'cogs' in the big machine of globalization. Their professional life has moved to different coordinates locally (migration to metros) as well as globally (working with GMT). New 'routine' and 'migration' have transformed their everyday and forced them to accept 'new alien everyday'. Dislocation, performance pressure, emotional void, and disappearance of homely comfort (especially home-cooked food) have posed newer challenges to the then generation 'X'. The young new recruits of MNC found it challenging to get along with a 'foreign rhythm' and struggled to strike a balance between professional and personal life.

Fast food giants entered the Indian market at a crucial juncture when Indian society transitioned from a protected economy to a global economy. Their aggressive marketing, round-the-clock service, and cost-effective readymade food have influenced Indian society. McDonalds, Pizza hut, KFC, Dominos, and many other multinational food giants have come to explore further possibilities in a newly globalized economy. As Tomlinson says, 'the globalization of the food industry . . . shifts the locus of control from the local to the global,' so 'new areas of anxiety and uncertainty' are introduced for the consumer (Tomlinson, 1999, cited in Ashley, Bob et al., 2004, p.97) globalization has started a new discourse of problems which Indian society is still struggling with, in socio-cultural realms, in general, and everyday food practices, in particular.

IV. MCDONALD'S THE BURGER OR BURGER THE MCDONALDS

McDonald's started as a small enterprise in 1940, and in 1955 opened its first store in Illinois, USA. Since then, it has been spreading like the sky all over the globe. Innovative ideas and aggressive marketing have made it the most popular food chain worldwide. It has revolutionized the idea of food and food practices globally by employing 'Fordism in the food' (Ritzer, 2013; Schlosser, 2001). At present, it has around 33000

² Since the independence of India in 1947 literacy rate has improved drastically, in 1951 it was 7.9 which have improved to 32.2 in 1991 and 45.5 in 2001(www.censusindia.net). The growth of woman literacy during this period

was phenomenal. The state policies in the realm of woman education have changed the mindset of society to a great extent. And in 1991 India has larger potential woman working force, roaring to go.

restaurants in 119 countries. It serves approximately 68 million people every day³.

McDonalds is one of the pioneers of fast food in India. It opened its first outlet in Delhi in October 1996, with around 270 outlets in India and more than 30 outlets in the capital Delhi alone (Kulkarni *et al.*, 2009; Peggs, 2018).

V. ONE OBVIOUS QUESTION AND METHODOLOGY

McDonald's spreads its tentacles faster than expected in a culturally diverse country like India. Many people, including myself, tend to think at most visits: How could an American food store grow in leap and bounds in a gastronomically diverse and rich country like India by just selling burgers and fries? This question must have haunted many people globally (with respect to their local cultures), and we were never satisfied with the apparent answers embedded only in 'marketing strategies'. I would always wonder about its 'socio-cultural strategies' employed in exploiting Indian society in general and youth in particular.

To explore the probable answers, we have employed qualitative research methods of semi-structured-open-ended questionnaire and non-participatory-observation to observe and analyze the customers' behaviour patterns, signage, and interiors of the McDonald's stores in Delhi. We have interviewed a small set of college students. This study conducted open-ended-semi-structured interviews with the University of Delhi's undergraduate students. There were 22 respondents-13 girls, and 9 boys, aged between 18-20 years. They were interviewed after seeking informed consent and respondents' identities were concealed as per the university's standard research guidelines.

VI. STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT OF MCDONALD'S

Of Heterogeneity: From Hula Burger to McAloo Tiki 'in India behave like Indians'

Globalization is perceived as a big homogenizing force which imposes similar designs globally, irrespective of cultural and geographical diversity. It is an extension of the mass-produced, cost-effective, profit oriented 'Fordist' service line globally in all possible domains. McDonaldization, as a process, could also be considered a synonym of globalization because it employs similar designs (Ritzer, 2013; Bell, David and Valentine, Gill, 1997).

McDonald's claims to serve a similar 'experience' globally. It reflects in the food menus, taste and staff operations. Its stores are the epitome of standardization. Unfortunately, it has been

projected as this food chain's great quality to standardise the food experience, in general, and culinary diversities, in particular (Ritzer, 2013). This culinary cloning is taking a heavy toll on the local food cultures because food giants like McDonald's, also employ propaganda tactics to claim a higher position by inventing new standards of hygiene, customer service, nutritional values and social status.

Indian case presents the antithesis of the homogenization model of McDonald's where McDonald's is changing its skin according to the local taste buds. India has more than 50% vegetarian items on the menu. It has come up with a whole new range of vegetarian items, from McAlooTiki burgers (potato patty burgers with tomato, onion and lettuce fillings) to Mc. Veggie (vegetable patty with cheese mayonnaise, tomato and lettuce) to Paneer wrap (cottage cheese wrap) to Spice Veg (cottage cheese battered in gram floor) etc. (Kulkarni *et al.*, 2009; Srivastava *et al.*, 2021). In 2001, after the 'beef' controversy,⁴ McDonald did also brandish a signboard stating: "BEEF AND BEEF PRODUCTS NOT SOLD HERE"

The idea of the holy cow⁵ and the dirty pig⁶ is deeply entrenched in Hindu and Muslim cultures. Both pig and cow signify the process of structuring meaning in a society by two different processes; by pronouncing or denouncing animality, in coherence with the utility, at one hand and in contrast civilization, on the other (Ashley, Bob *et al.*, 2004; Douglas, 1966). It seems a paradigm shift in the claim of the 'global experience' of McDonald's. It has changed its menu drastically and dropped certain 'trademark' meat items. The 'ham' and 'beef' is out of the 'burger' in India. Serving vegetarian items appeases the majority, and serving chicken also accommodates the non-majority non-vegetarians. We think McDonald's has purposefully left the contentious terrains of cultural nuances and cultivated a middle path. The strategies have been reinvented to accommodate the local taste buds, on the one hand and to appease the political patrons,⁷ on the other.

On the 4th of September 2012, McDonald's announced that it would go all veggie and open 'NO MEAT' outlets in India. But with all the hiccups, McDonalds have not lost its heart in this country and is inventing and re-inventing itself in accordance with the 'locale taste buds'. It has plans to open 'exclusive' vegetarian joints at two religious places, at Golden Temple, Amritsar and the temple of *Vaishno Devi*, Katra, Jammu. The golden temple is the most important pilgrim centre for Sikhs around the world, and the shrine of *Vaishno Devi* is equally essential for Hindus.

³ Mukherjee, Writankar and Bailay, Rasul (2012, September 4). 'McDonald's India ready to open first vegetarian-only outlet in Vaishno Devi' [online] *The Economic Times*, Available: <http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com> [Accessed 20th January 2013]

⁴ In 2001 McDonalds faced wrath of the protesters against the alleged use of beef flavoring in their fries. In Mumbai, the financial capital of India, protesters had smeared cow dung on the faces of McDonalds's mascot. Also see. Anon (2001, May 6). 'Quit India, Sena tells McDonald's' [online] *The Hindu*, Available: <http://hindu.com/2001/05/06/stories/01060003.htm> [Accessed 20th January 2021]

⁵ In India cow is revered as holy animal among the majority Hindus and cow killing is considered to be the biggest sin. In the similar vein, the antithetical act of 'saving' cow is considered to be the noblest and socially uplifting. In Medieval times, kings use to adorn themselves with the title of *Gau Pratiपालक* 'the protector of the cow'. (Chandra: 2005)

⁶ In Islam, eating pork is prohibitory; the Muslim (second majority) deems pig the epitome of filth.

⁷ Hindus are in majority (83%) in India and most of them are lacto vegetarians. Even the meat eater Hindus usually abstain from eating beef and pork. In the similar vein the Muslims abstain from eating pork.

The recent advert for McDonald's in India reads that: there is no veg burger in Canada, but in Germany, there is one and the 'veg deluxe' sandwich is available only in some stores in the UK. Then the bottom line in a bold black font is that **McDonald's going veggie**. First McDonald's has flushed out its trademark beef/ham burger and is now turning 'all veg' in India. We are unable to comprehend what is going on. Why has developing economies in general and India in particular become so important? What is the driving force behind this transformation or mutation (because change is a smaller word to address this complete 'U-turn')?

We think the answer lies in the very base of capitalism. It is inherently a profit-oriented economic system, and in this peculiar case of India they have reinvented their policy frames to exploit the socio-cultural nuances better. In an interview regarding the opening of 'all veg joints' at pilgrimages, Mr. Vikram Bakshi, Manager, McDonald's for North and East India, says, 'We see a huge potential (for veg outlets) as, by nature, Indians are religious'⁸. Mr. Bakshi, who has undertaken several pilgrimages to Vaishno Devi, says 'there is no organized restaurant to serve the 1 million pilgrims visiting the shrine every year. "Every time I go there, my resolve (to open a restaurant there) becomes stronger,"⁹. This vision of Mr. Bakshi speaks volumes about the 'ever-changing' nature and high adaptability of capitalism. It has no definite shape and strategy. The 'adaptability coefficient' is too high for capitalism and globalization; it can change its 'forms' in accordance with the socio-cultural nuances of the subjected societies. But in all the 'forms' their motive is still 'profit'. Means are ever-transforming but the end is not (Marx and Engels, 1888; Peggs, 2018).

The 'plight of pilgrims' and absence of an 'organized restaurant' at *Vaishno Devi* shrine are not the concerns of McDonald's in India but the number of pilgrims (1 million) who visit this aforesaid shrine every year.

VII. HOMOGENIZATION OF HETEROGENEITY: CULINARY INTEGRATION OF INDIA

Of Homogenization:

Shrinking the 'time and space' synopsis is supposed to be the core of the globalization thesis. And it is efficiently applied too. As John Allen explains, globalization 'refers to the fact that people in various parts of the world, which hitherto may have been largely unaffected by what happened elsewhere, now find themselves drawn into the same *social space* and effectively governed by the same *historical time*' (1995, cited in, Ashley, Bob et al., 2004, p.92)

McDonald's thrives on 'homogenization' around the globe. The standardization of food items, menus, aesthetics and the similar robotized staff made the stores' familiar' irrespective of

geographical or cultural differences (Ritzer, 2013). The similar settings provide a familiar atmosphere to customers globally and make their feet at home, away from home. But still the big question looms large- does actually McDonald's signifies 'home'? If yes, then whose home is it anyway? The cuisines served in these stores are definitely American, which only signifies the 'Americanization' of food cultures globally. It is a kind of culinary imperialism which is broadening her empire. It is hegemonic in design and approach and challenges local food joints' viability.

India is a diverse culinary country; one can find thousands of cuisines across its geographical expanse. There are 28 states and seven union territories, and even these political units do not share uniform culture. In this land of diversity, McDonald's is homogenizing the taste in the wake of a 'similar experience' (Nandy, 2004).

Many interview respondents have praised the same taste, aquainted setups, and the staff's friendly (predictive) behaviour. They find it good because once you are accustomed to the McDonald's 'norms' you will feel 'home' on every visit.

During the interview, one of the respondents said, 'the burger tastes the same (good) the staff all over is very polite, the stores are crowded but always clean and the service is very efficient' (Female, student, 19 years). Another respondent narrates a similar experience:

'When I have gone on a college trip to South (south India) I found it difficult to adjust to the local taste. It is tough to find a North Indian restaurant (which serves North Indian cuisine) but McDonald's made my day. I had a *McAloo Tikki* (potato patty) burger with coke, and it was just the same. Oh! (sigh of relief) at least McD (McDonald's) was there'. (Male, student, 19years)

Definitely, 'taste' has to be the same because it is 'mechanized' by McDonald's. Even the humans involved in the production process have been 'intellectually castrated' in the name of standardization and training. The 'individual difference' has been reduced to just 'apparent differences' to achieve this 'standardization'. They all have lost all their identities to the 'Big Mac' and McDonaldization.

In the similar vein, during an interaction with a family at McDonald's, the old grandparents (when their grandchildren have gone to place the order) complained in 'Hindi' (one of the official Indian languages) "*ye counter wale bacche Hindi kyon nahi bolte hain? Kya kisine inhe mana kiya hai*"? (Why these kids at the serving counter do not speak Hindi? Have somebody instructed them not to do so?).

That was a meek observation, and the researchers had no answer. The researchers observed this more closely in recent visits. To their surprise, the McDonald's staff stresses communicating in English. If you try to converse with them in

⁸ Mukherjee, Writankar and Bailay, Rasul (2012, September 4). 'McDonald's India ready to open first vegetarian-only outlet in Vaishno Devi'[online] *The Economic Times*, Available: <http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com>[Accessed 20th January 2021]

⁹ *ibid*

the local lingua, they will reply in English. McDonald's is creating a divide between English and non-English-speaking people. In an independent nation, it reinforces the 'colonial' mindset. In principle, it is nothing to do with the use of language but imposing lingual hegemony is authoritarian (Gramsci, 1982; Foucault, 1993). In the name of homogenization, McDonald's employs dictatorial structures, and local non-English speaking people find it offensive. But their resistances usually end either in submission or embarrassment in front of the hegemonic 'golden arches' and globalization.

McDonald's replicates the American attitude, in general, and culinary fascism, in particular. For a long, the disciplinarian agencies have been robbing humanity of her ingenuity and creativity and imposing hegemonic designs in the name of norms, culture and customs. Similarly, McDonald's is also culling culinary diversities in the name of quality and standardization. It has a sedating effect not only on its employees but also on the consumers because it imposes certain blinds that tend to deprive humans of thinking beyond the given. McDonald's employees more often display programmed/taught behaviours, scripted questions and answers, and plastic smiles that look mechanical. The celebrated uniformity of McDonald's only presents a 'bottled experience'. It strategically deprives people of exploring and discovering the local and global in their true senses with their 'smells' and 'textures' intact.

VIII. THE MICRO RESISTANCES : OF 'SPACE' AND 'SCOPE'

Of Space

The site of golden arches is enticing. The 'interior' of McDonald's is very thought-provoking, great colour scheme, vibrant colours, glass doors, instructive and illuminated sign boards etc.. They use yellow, orange and red colours prominently because, scientifically, these colours have maximum wavelengths, making them relatively more visible. Furniture is carefully selected; chairs and benches are there, but neither is cushioned. Chairs, at times, are comparatively high from the ground; one can only place their feet on the rim of that chair. Their tables are so small that one can hardly sit and eat. McDonald's uses the store's 'space' so optimally (fits in as many as many chairs as they can) that it looks congested. In the same vein, the TV is placed at such uncomfortable angles.

This unique but normal 'interiors' is not an ill job of some novice designer but is a master stroke of some genius. The congestion in stores is created for two reasons: to fit in more and more customers and to dissuade them from sitting long. All the discomfort in seating is there to encourage consumers to take their meal away or finish it fast (and leave so that other customers can get in). The acute angles of TV have been employed for the same reasons.

Of Scope

During the interviews and non-participatory- group-observations, it has been found that many teenagers and young students just go to McDonald's to 'hang out' with friends. 'We usually go to McDonald's for a chit chat with friends especially in harsh summers when the temperature sores to 40-45 degrees; McDonald's good A C (air conditioner) provides a "cool hideout"' (Male, student, 20 years). Similarly, it has been revealed that youth also find it a 'cozy' place to spend some quality time with their 'dates' The reason cited for the choice of McDonald's was quite logical and equally inventive.

'I also come along with my girlfriends because it is "cheap" (cost-effective), their staff does not ask us to leave even if we sit for hours with just one burger and coke. I could afford frequent visits. It is secure because usually, our parents do not visit McDonald's; they do not like burger *shurger* but traditional Indian food. So, it provides me with a safe haven for my meetings' (Male, student, 19 years).

Respondents have also cited cricket matches as a reason to visit McDonald's and enjoy it together with friends. 'We used to order for some burgers and hang out for hours to watch the IPL (Indian premier league) or India-Pakistan (cricket) match on a big screen in AC (air conditioner)' (Male, student, 20 years).

One response was the most insightful where a respondent told me that 'Finding toilets in a shopping mall is a big problem (stress added) their signage is confusing. So, whenever we want to 'go (for toilets)', we go to McDonald's and use theirs, none notice. Comparatively, one can find McDonald's more often in shopping complexes and markets than not, and they are hygienic' (Female, student, 19 years)

Many of the responses were revelations to the researchers, and they have been enlightened with the various ways of 'using' a space.

If it is true that the grid of "discipline" is everywhere becoming clearer and more extensive, it is all the more urgent to discover how an entire society resists being reduced to it, what popular procedures (also "miniscule" and quotidian) manipulate the mechanisms of discipline and conform to them only in order to evade them... (Certeau, 1984, p. xiv) (sic).

These 'differential' usages of the 'proscribed' space are interesting and innovative. They together form a niche of differential micro-protests against the overarching policy and design to mechanize the human agency. These everyday negotiations, appropriation, adaptation and resistances of individuals, restore the faith in human capability to think beyond structures. Globalization is hegemonic and imposes certain uniformity in the name of standardization and norms. The above narrated 'usages' are examples of differential individual appropriation of globalization beyond their designs. These individual appropriations are resistances against the overarching disciplinarian agencies in general and globalization, in particular.

In fact, disciplinary procedures gradually perfected in the army and in schools quickly won out over the vast and complex judicial apparatus constructed by the Enlightenment. These techniques are refined and extended without recourse to an ideology. Through a cellular space of the same type for everyone (schoolboys, soldiers, workers, criminals or the ill), the techniques perfected the visibility and the grid work of this space in order to make of it a tool capable of disciplining under control and "treating" any human group whatever (Certeau, 1984, p.46).

The state always wants to control human behavior and thought processes. All the existing 'institutions' (socio-political and cultural) are agencies that make human actions and reactions 'predictable' (Foucault, 1993). In the post-modern world, authorities dissuade human beings from free thinking. The capitalist world prefers good follower to a free thinker. Human faculties have been trained to behave like machines and to carry orders. They have been converted into human robots that live programmed life. It is always easy to rule the machines because, in the course of time, they just erode, wear and depreciate but never revolt. McDonald's is an apt example of a disciplinarian mechanism. In McDonald's stores, staff behaviors and instruction on the signboards are all suggestive in appearance, but at the mental level, they persuade customers to follow the prescribed 'norms'.

These micro-protests are the hope against overarching designs to quantify human 'individuality', on the one hand, and against the golden arches, globalization, authoritarian regimes and all kind of fascistic designs on the other.

IX. CONCLUSION

In the context of globalization, the synopsis of homogenization and heterogenization seems redundant. As John Tomlinson has argued, globalization is a multidimensional phenomenon which needs to be 'understood in terms of simultaneous, complexly related processes in the realms of economy, politics, culture, technology and so forth' (1999, cited in Ashley, Bob et al., 2004, p.94). We need to understand the mechanism of globalization in more comprehensive and broader ways. McDonald's is making deep inroads globally and proffers a homogenized culinary experience. However, it is adapting to the local consumers' cultural preferences and demands only to enhance the profit margins of any capitalist firm. On the contrary, the consumers are not entirely swayed by the global giant's culinary imperialist pursuits. They are protesting the capitalist designs in their ways through micro-protests. The contest between McDonald's overarching design for homogenising culinary experience globally and differential appropriation of McDonald's space is still going on.

The ever evolving and ever-changing nature of capitalism appropriate newer ways to establish itself in accordance with the peculiar situation. It works contrary to the 'rabbit burrow

design'¹⁰. It has multiple entry points but one exit, which is towards capitalism. The 'rabbit burrow design' is a defence strategy, but capitalism is the hunting mechanism.

The amoebic nature of capitalism and globalization enables them to change their forms, but 'the motive' always remains the same. The only ray of hope against these overarching global designs is the human capabilities to defy quantification and structuralization. Their micro protests are the signifier of resistance against exploiting mechanisms and authoritarian regimes.

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¹⁰ Rabbit burrow contains one entry point but multiple exits. It is a kind of defense mechanism against the predators.

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