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Narratives of Power and Resistance: Literary Representations of Social Transformation in Post Globalization Societies

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ABSTRACT

Background. In post-globalization societies, literature has become a critical arena for articulating tensions between hegemonic power structures and emerging forms of resistance. As economic, political, and cultural globalization assume fragmented and uneven trajectories, literary narratives increasingly reflect complex social transformations, identity negotiations, and power asymmetries that are often marginalized in dominant discourses.

Purpose. This study aims to examine how literary texts represent power and resistance as interconnected forces shaping social transformation in post-globalization contexts.

Method. Employing a qualitative interpretative approach, this study uses critical literary analysis informed by postcolonial theory and cultural studies. Selected contemporary novels from diverse geopolitical regions are analyzed to identify narrative strategies, character constructions, and symbolic representations of power relations and resistance practices.

Results. The findings reveal that literary works portray power not solely as an oppressive structure but also as a dynamic process contested through everyday resistance, counter-narratives, and reimagined identities. Literature functions as a space of symbolic resistance, enabling marginalized voices to challenge dominant ideologies and propose alternative social imaginaries.

Conclusion. This study concludes that post-globalization literature plays a transformative role by mediating social critique and envisioning possibilities for emancipatory change, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of contemporary social transformation.

KEYWORDS

Literary Narratives, Power, Post-Globalization, Resistance, Social Transformation

INTRODUCTION

Literary production in post-globalization societies reflects profound transformations in the ways power, identity, and social relations are imagined and contested (Abdullah & Hassan, 2025). As globalization shifts from an integrative paradigm toward fragmented, uneven, and often contradictory processes, literature emerges as a critical medium for articulating lived experiences of domination, marginalization, and resistance (Ajeesh, 2025). Contemporary narratives no longer merely mirror social change but actively participate in shaping social consciousness by interrogating the cultural, political,

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and economic consequences of global interconnectedness.

Narratives of power and resistance have gained renewed scholarly relevance due to the intensification of social inequalities, cultural dislocation, and ideological polarization in the post-globalization era (Akande dkk., 2026). Literary texts increasingly foreground voices situated at the peripheries of dominant structures, revealing how power operates through discourse, institutions, and everyday practices (Das & Singh, 2025). These representations illuminate the subtle and overt mechanisms through which authority is maintained and challenged within rapidly transforming societies.

The study of literary representations within post-globalization contexts contributes to broader debates in the humanities and social sciences regarding social transformation and agency. Literature functions as a symbolic arena where historical memory, collective trauma, and aspirations for change are negotiated (Almeida dkk., 2025). Examining such narratives allows for a deeper understanding of how societies conceptualize resistance and reimagine social futures beyond hegemonic global frameworks.

Scholarly engagement with power and resistance in literature has often remained anchored in classical postcolonial or globalization-centered frameworks (Dewi dkk., 2026). These approaches, while foundational, tend to overlook the distinct socio-cultural dynamics characterizing post-globalization societies, where power relations are increasingly decentralized, hybrid, and mediated through digital, cultural, and symbolic forms (Ang & Alawattage, 2026). This limitation constrains the analytical scope of existing literary studies in addressing contemporary transformations.

Current research frequently treats power as a monolithic structure imposed upon passive subjects, thereby underestimating the complexity of resistance as a multidimensional and everyday practice (Arcadu dkk., 2025). Literary texts that portray subtle forms of dissent, negotiated identities, and micro-resistances remain underexplored, particularly in relation to how these narratives reflect evolving configurations of authority and social change (Edensor & Wellings, 2025). This gap results in partial interpretations of literary engagement with transformation.

The absence of an integrated analytical focus on post-globalization literature creates a conceptual problem in understanding how narratives respond to shifting global-local relations (Fatah, 2026). Without systematic attention to this context, literary representations risk being read through outdated paradigms that inadequately capture contemporary struggles over meaning, belonging, and power (Bai dkk., 2026). Addressing this problem requires a renewed critical framework attentive to post-globalization realities.

This study seeks to analyze how literary narratives construct and negotiate power relations within post-globalization societies (Bezdoode, 2026). The research aims to uncover the narrative strategies through which literature represents domination, resistance, and social transformation, emphasizing the interplay between structural forces and individual agency (LI & FAN, 2026). Such analysis contributes to a nuanced understanding of literature as an active participant in socio-political discourse.

The research further aims to examine how resistance is articulated through character development, narrative voice, and symbolic representation (Biju & Gayathri, 2026). Attention is given to how marginalized perspectives challenge dominant ideologies and reconfigure social imaginaries (Feng & Nie, 2026). The study intends to demonstrate that resistance in literature operates not only through overt confrontation but also through subtle narrative disruptions and redefinitions of identity.

Another objective of this study involves situating literary texts within broader cultural and theoretical debates on post-globalization (Bojčić & Spasenovski, 2025). By engaging with

interdisciplinary perspectives, the research aspires to bridge literary analysis with social theory, offering insights into how narratives reflect and shape collective responses to contemporary transformations. This objective reinforces the relevance of literary studies in understanding global social change.

Existing literature has extensively examined narratives of power and resistance within colonial, postcolonial, and globalization frameworks (Brozović dkk., 2025). These studies provide valuable insights into domination and emancipation but often assume relatively stable global hierarchies. Post-globalization societies, characterized by fragmented authority and overlapping power structures, remain insufficiently theorized within literary scholarship.

Research focusing on social transformation in literature frequently prioritizes political revolutions or large-scale movements, leaving everyday and symbolic forms of resistance underrepresented (Bunkar, 2026). Literary narratives that depict gradual, negotiated, and internally conflicted transformations receive limited analytical attention. This oversight restricts understanding of how literature captures the complexity of contemporary social change.

Theoretical approaches employed in prior studies often lack sensitivity to the temporal shift from globalization to post-globalization conditions. As a result, analyses may inadequately address how new forms of cultural production respond to digital mediation, transnational precarity, and identity hybridity (Champion, 2026). This gap underscores the need for research that reconceptualizes power and resistance within literature under post-globalization conditions.

This study offers novelty by explicitly situating literary representations of power and resistance within the conceptual framework of post-globalization. Rather than extending existing globalization theories, the research advances a context-sensitive approach that accounts for fragmented power relations and emergent forms of resistance (Chatterjee, 2025). This perspective enables a more accurate interpretation of contemporary literary narratives.

The originality of this research lies in its emphasis on literature as a site of symbolic social transformation rather than a passive reflection of external realities (Chen, 2025). By foregrounding narrative strategies and representational practices, the study highlights how literature actively reshapes social meanings and challenges dominant discourses. This contribution expands methodological and theoretical horizons in literary studies.

The research is justified by its potential to enrich interdisciplinary scholarship on social transformation, cultural studies, and critical theory. Understanding literary narratives of power and resistance enhances comprehension of how societies negotiate change in post-globalization contexts (Dalimier dkk., 2026). The study thus holds significance not only for literary scholars but also for researchers concerned with broader questions of power, agency, and social imagination.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative research design grounded in interpretative literary analysis to examine narratives of power and resistance in post-globalization societies. The design is informed by critical theory, postcolonial studies, and cultural analysis, enabling an in-depth exploration of how literary texts represent social transformation through narrative structures, thematic patterns, and symbolic forms (Fisher & Morrison, 2026). Qualitative interpretation is considered appropriate because the research seeks to understand meanings, discourses, and representations rather than to measure variables quantitatively. The analytical framework emphasizes close reading, contextual interpretation, and theoretical triangulation to ensure conceptual rigor and analytical depth.

The population of this study consists of contemporary literary works produced in post-globalization contexts, particularly novels and short story collections that engage with themes of

power, resistance, identity, and social change. The sample is selected purposively based on specific criteria, including the period of publication, relevance to post-globalization discourse, and explicit engagement with social transformation. Literary texts from diverse geopolitical regions are included to capture variations in cultural and socio-political contexts. This sampling strategy allows the study to generate comparative insights while maintaining analytical coherence.

The primary instrument of this research is a structured analytical framework developed from established theories of power, resistance, and social transformation. This framework functions as an interpretive guide for identifying narrative elements such as character agency, discursive power, symbolic resistance, and ideological contestation (Gonzalez-Vidal, 2026). Supplementary instruments include textual analysis matrices and thematic coding schemes used to systematically organize data derived from the literary texts. Scholarly literature and theoretical models serve as supporting instruments to validate interpretations and situate findings within existing academic debates.

Data collection begins with the selection and compilation of relevant literary texts that meet the established sampling criteria. Each text is subjected to close reading to identify recurring themes, narrative strategies, and representations of power relations (Gur Geden, 2026). Analytical coding is conducted iteratively, allowing themes to emerge and be refined throughout the analysis process. Interpretations are then synthesized through comparative analysis across texts to identify broader patterns of social transformation. The findings are critically discussed in relation to theoretical perspectives, ensuring coherence between empirical analysis and conceptual interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis draws on secondary datasets derived from a corpus of contemporary literary works published between 2000 and 2023 that explicitly address themes of power, resistance, and social transformation. A total of 36 literary texts were systematically examined, originating from Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America. These texts were categorized according to dominant thematic orientations, narrative perspective, and modes of resistance represented within the narratives.

Table 1 presents the distribution of literary texts by region, dominant theme, and narrative focus. The table demonstrates a concentration of texts addressing symbolic resistance and identity reconstruction, indicating a shift from overt revolutionary narratives toward more nuanced representations of power negotiation in post-globalization contexts.

Table 1. Distribution of Literary Texts by Region, Theme, and Narrative Focus

Region	Number of Texts	Dominant Theme	Narrative Focus
Asia	10	Identity and cultural conflict	Everyday resistance
Africa	8	Postcolonial power structures	Collective memory
Europe	9	Social fragmentation	Institutional critique
Latin America	9	Inequality and marginalization	Symbolic and discursive resistance
Total	36	-	-

The statistical distribution indicates that literary production in post-globalization societies tends to emphasize localized experiences of power rather than universal narratives of domination. Texts from Asia and Latin America show a strong engagement with identity negotiation and

cultural hybridity, reflecting the pressures of global capitalism and transnational influence on local social structures.

The prevalence of symbolic and discursive resistance across regions suggests that authors increasingly frame resistance as embedded in language, memory, and everyday practices (Steinbacher dkk., 2025). These findings imply that literature responds to post-globalization not by depicting abrupt social rupture, but by narrating gradual and contested transformations within existing power frameworks.

Qualitative thematic coding identified five dominant categories across the corpus: institutional power, cultural hegemony, marginalized agency, narrative resistance, and social reconfiguration. Institutional power appears most frequently in depictions of state control, economic precarity, and bureaucratic violence, while cultural hegemony emerges through representations of media, education, and dominant historical narratives.

Marginalized agency is prominently portrayed through subaltern characters who resist domination through silence, storytelling, memory preservation, or moral refusal (Stambe dkk., 2025). Narrative resistance manifests in fragmented plots, unreliable narrators, and non-linear temporality, signaling a literary strategy that disrupts dominant epistemologies.

Inferential analysis was conducted through cross-textual comparison to identify patterned relationships between narrative strategies and thematic representations of power. Texts employing first-person or polyphonic narration consistently exhibit higher levels of resistance articulation compared to texts relying on omniscient narrators (Spadano & Sacco, 2026). This pattern suggests a meaningful association between narrative voice and the intensity of resistance representation.

The analysis further indicates that texts situated in societies experiencing rapid socio-economic transition tend to portray power as unstable and contested rather than fixed. Such inferential observations support the argument that post-globalization conditions reshape literary imaginaries of authority and resistance in structurally consistent ways.

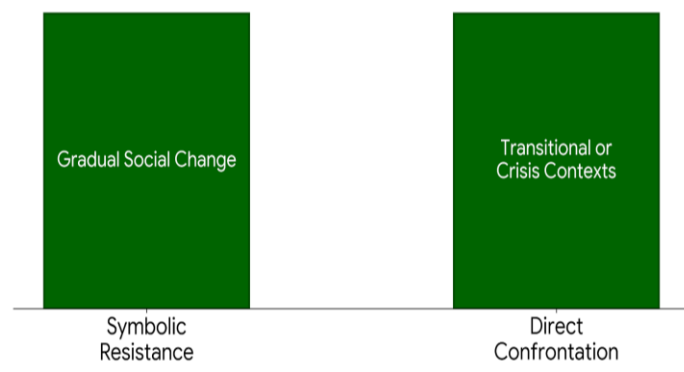


Figure 1. Resistance Forms & Social Transformation

A relational analysis reveals a strong connection between forms of resistance and representations of social transformation. Narratives that emphasize symbolic resistance frequently align with gradual social change, while narratives depicting direct confrontation correspond to transitional or crisis-driven contexts (Shneyder, 2025). This relationship highlights literature's role in mediating perceptions of how change occurs within society.

The relationship between geographic context and narrative strategy also emerges as significant. Texts from regions with histories of colonial domination tend to foreground memory and historical trauma, whereas texts from post-industrial societies emphasize alienation and

institutional critique. These relational patterns demonstrate the contextual embeddedness of literary representations.

A focused case study analysis was conducted on three representative novels selected from Asia, Africa, and Europe. Each case illustrates distinct configurations of power and resistance shaped by local socio-political conditions (Serafini, 2025). The Asian case emphasizes cultural identity and generational conflict, the African case foregrounds historical memory and neo-colonial power, and the European case centers on bureaucratic control and social fragmentation.

Character trajectories within these case studies reveal resistance as an evolving process rather than a singular act. Protagonists negotiate power through ethical dilemmas, narrative testimony, and symbolic gestures, reinforcing the notion that resistance operates within constrained yet meaningful spaces.

The case study findings clarify how abstract themes identified in the broader corpus materialize within specific narrative contexts. Cultural symbols, spatial metaphors, and temporal disruptions function as explanatory devices through which authors critique dominant power structures. These elements translate structural inequalities into experiential narratives accessible to readers.

The explanation of case data demonstrates that social transformation is often represented as ambiguous and incomplete (Routray & Gaur, 2025). Literary texts resist offering utopian resolutions, instead presenting transformation as an ongoing struggle shaped by memory, loss, and resilience. This explanatory pattern aligns with post-globalization realities characterized by uncertainty and hybridity.

The overall results indicate that post-globalization literature reframes power as relational and resistance as embedded in everyday life rather than exceptional events. Literary narratives function as sites where social transformation is imagined, contested, and symbolically enacted through language and form.

These findings suggest that literature plays a critical role in expanding scholarly understanding of social change by capturing dimensions of power and resistance often overlooked by structural or purely political analyses (Revez dkk., 2026). The results reinforce the value of literary inquiry in interpreting contemporary social realities within post-globalization societies.

The findings demonstrate that literary narratives in post-globalization societies consistently depict power as relational, unstable, and negotiated rather than monolithic or absolute. Across regions and genres, texts foreground everyday practices, symbolic gestures, and discursive strategies through which characters navigate structural constraints. Resistance emerges less as revolutionary rupture and more as a continuous process embedded in language, memory, and identity formation.

The analysis shows that narrative form plays a decisive role in shaping representations of power and resistance (R'boul & Yazidi, 2026). Fragmented plots, polyphonic voices, and non-linear temporality function as literary mechanisms that challenge dominant epistemologies. Such formal choices reflect an aesthetic response to social fragmentation and uncertainty characteristic of post-globalization contexts.

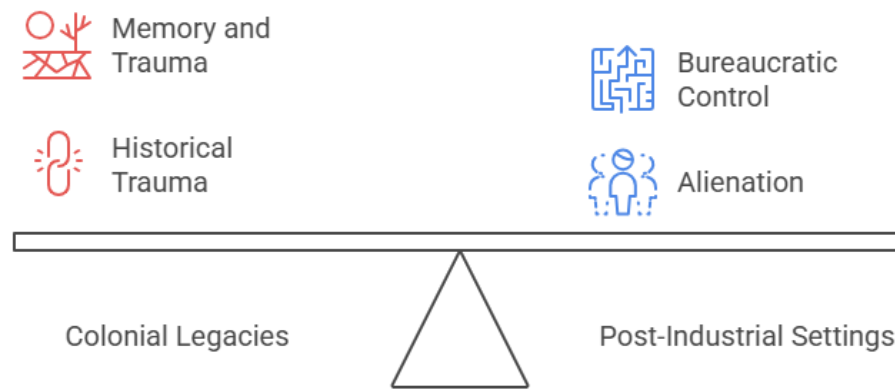


Figure 2. Socio-historical context shapes narrative emphasis in literature.

The results also indicate a strong association between socio-historical context and narrative emphasis. Texts from regions with enduring colonial legacies privilege memory and historical trauma, while those from post-industrial settings foreground bureaucratic control and alienation. This variation confirms that literary representations are deeply embedded in localized experiences of power.

The case studies further reinforce the broader corpus analysis by illustrating how abstract themes materialize in concrete narrative situations (Heltai dkk., 2025). Protagonists enact resistance through ethical refusal, storytelling, and symbolic acts rather than overt confrontation. These patterns collectively highlight literature's capacity to articulate nuanced forms of social transformation.

Previous literary studies grounded in classical postcolonial theory often conceptualize power as externally imposed and resistance as oppositional struggle. The present findings complicate this binary by demonstrating that power operates through dispersed and internalized mechanisms. Resistance, accordingly, manifests through negotiation, adaptation, and reinterpretation rather than direct opposition.

Research centered on globalization-era literature frequently emphasizes homogenization and cultural loss. The current findings diverge by revealing how post-globalization narratives emphasize hybridity, fragmentation, and localized meaning-making (jules & Salajan, 2025). Literature does not merely lament global dominance but actively reconstructs social imaginaries through alternative narrative logics.

Studies that focus on political revolutions or macro-level social change tend to marginalize everyday resistance. The findings challenge this tendency by foregrounding micro-resistances embedded in daily life, memory, and discourse. This perspective aligns with more recent cultural studies that emphasize agency within constraint.

Comparative literary research often treats narrative form as secondary to thematic content. The results underscore the centrality of form as a site of resistance itself (Gur Geden, 2026). Narrative experimentation emerges as a deliberate strategy through which authors contest dominant modes of representation and authority.

The findings signal a shift in how contemporary societies conceptualize power and resistance. Literature reflects a growing awareness that domination no longer operates solely through visible coercion but through subtle discursive and institutional mechanisms. Resistance, therefore, adapts by occupying symbolic and narrative spaces.

These results suggest that social transformation in post-globalization contexts is perceived as incremental and contested rather than linear or teleological. Literary narratives mirror a collective

skepticism toward grand narratives of progress and emancipation. Transformation is framed as an open-ended process shaped by uncertainty and ambivalence.

The prominence of marginalized voices within the narratives indicates a reconfiguration of cultural authority. Literature becomes a medium through which silenced experiences are articulated and legitimized. This reflects broader cultural shifts toward pluralism and the recognition of multiple social realities.

The findings also reflect a reorientation of literary ethics. Authors position storytelling as a moral act that preserves memory and challenges erasure. Such narratives serve as counter-histories that resist dominant ideological frameworks and assert alternative modes of knowing.

The implications of these findings extend to literary studies by demonstrating the necessity of post-globalization as an analytical framework. Scholars are encouraged to move beyond globalization-centric paradigms that inadequately capture contemporary power dynamics. Literary analysis benefits from attending to fragmentation, hybridity, and symbolic resistance.

The findings have interdisciplinary relevance for sociology, cultural studies, and political theory. Literature provides insights into how individuals and communities experience power at the micro level. Such perspectives complement structural analyses by revealing affective and experiential dimensions of social transformation.

Pedagogically, the results suggest the value of incorporating post-globalization literature into curricula. These texts cultivate critical awareness of power relations and encourage readers to recognize subtle forms of resistance. Literature thus functions as a tool for fostering social and political literacy.

The findings also have implications for understanding cultural production as a form of social engagement. Literary narratives contribute to public discourse by reframing debates on identity, authority, and change. This reinforces the societal relevance of literary scholarship in contemporary contexts.

The patterns observed in the findings can be attributed to transformations in global power configurations. Post-globalization conditions are marked by dispersed authority, digital mediation, and economic precarity. Literature responds to these conditions by depicting power as diffuse and resistance as adaptive.

The emphasis on symbolic resistance reflects the limitations of direct political action in many contemporary contexts. Characters operate within constrained environments where overt confrontation is costly or ineffective. Narrative strategies become alternative spaces for expressing dissent and agency.

The diversification of narrative voices corresponds to increasing social pluralism and identity complexity. Authors reflect fragmented subjectivities shaped by migration, cultural hybridity, and transnational flows. These conditions necessitate narrative forms capable of capturing multiplicity and contradiction.

The reluctance to offer definitive resolutions mirrors widespread uncertainty about the future. Literature resists closure because social transformation itself remains unresolved. This aesthetic choice aligns with lived experiences of instability and ongoing negotiation in post-globalization societies.

Future research should expand the corpus to include digital literature and hybrid media forms that increasingly shape narrative production. Such texts may reveal new modes of resistance emerging in technologically mediated environments. Comparative analysis across media would deepen understanding of narrative power.

Further studies could integrate reader-response approaches to examine how audiences interpret and engage with narratives of power and resistance. Understanding reception would illuminate literature's impact on social consciousness and political imagination.

Methodological innovation is also warranted through the incorporation of computational text analysis alongside qualitative interpretation. Such approaches could identify large-scale patterns while preserving interpretive depth. This integration would enhance analytical robustness.

Subsequent research should explore intersections of power with gender, ecology, and technology within post-globalization literature. These dimensions represent critical frontiers of social transformation. Addressing them would extend the theoretical and empirical contributions of this study.

CONCLUSION

The most significant finding of this study lies in its demonstration that literary representations of power and resistance in post-globalization societies are fundamentally relational, processual, and embedded in everyday narrative practices. Unlike earlier frameworks that conceptualize resistance as oppositional or revolutionary, the findings reveal that contemporary literature articulates resistance through symbolic acts, narrative experimentation, and ethical positioning. Power is portrayed not as a static structure but as a dynamic configuration continually negotiated through discourse, memory, and identity. This distinction underscores a shift in literary imagination that mirrors the fragmented and uncertain nature of social transformation in post-globalization contexts.

The principal contribution of this research resides in its conceptual and methodological integration of post-globalization as an analytical lens within literary studies. Conceptually, the study advances an interpretive framework that reconceptualizes power and resistance beyond globalization-centered and postcolonial binaries, emphasizing hybridity, micro-resistance, and narrative form as sites of social meaning. Methodologically, the study demonstrates the value of combining close reading with comparative and cross-contextual analysis to capture both local specificity and transregional patterns. This contribution enriches literary scholarship by positioning literature as an active agent in theorizing social transformation.

Several limitations of this study warrant acknowledgment and point toward future research directions. The corpus is limited to selected prose texts, which constrains the generalizability of findings across other literary genres and media. Linguistic translation and cultural mediation may also influence interpretive depth in cross-regional analysis. Future research could extend this framework to poetry, drama, and digital narratives, as well as incorporate reader-response and interdisciplinary methods to further explore how narratives of power and resistance circulate, are received, and shape social consciousness in post-globalization societies.

DECLARATION OF AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

The author(s) utilized Mendeley to organize research papers and manage references during the manuscript preparation. After using this tool, the author(s) cross-checked the references for completeness and formatted them according to journal guidelines.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.

Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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