Anvaya

'The Dialogue'

EDUCATION | CULTURE | ARTS | RESEARCH | COMMUNITY

International Conference

Popular Culture in South East Asia

Identities, Media and Everyday Life

30th October 2026

Anvaya: The Dialogue

“It began simply with a few people sitting together.”

Talking about music, art, culture, education, research, people, memory, society and the changing world around us. There was no grand plan. Just curiosity. One thought led to another. A question opened another question. Someone spoke about something they knew deeply. Someone else saw it differently. A story connected two people who may otherwise never have met. And slowly, something became clear. Perhaps what we were looking for was not another institution, another conference or another platform. Perhaps we were looking for a place where we could simply belong to a larger conversation about the world we share. That became Anvaya: The Dialogue. The word Anvaya speaks of connection, continuity and relationship — the idea that things are rarely separate; that one thought leads to another, one experience connects to another, and something carried by one generation can find new meaning in the next. That idea sits at the heart of who we are.

Anvaya: The Dialogue brings together people who may not ordinarily find themselves in the same room. A researcher can meet an artist. An educator can meet a musician. A student can meet a scholar. A cultural practitioner can meet a technologist. A community can meet an institution. A young voice can meet an older memory. And someone who comes simply because they are curious can sit beside all of them. We come from different places. We work in different disciplines. We carry different experiences. But we share something simple: the desire to understand, to discover, to create, and to connect. Anvaya: The Dialogue does not ask us to leave our disciplines behind. It invites us to step beyond their boundaries for a while. Because some of the most interesting ideas happen in the space between things. We often think of knowledge as something that lives in books, universities and institutions. Knowledge lives in many more places. It lives in a song. In a story. In a photograph. In a performance. In a ritual. In a craft. In a classroom. In a laboratory. In a grandmother's memory. In a child's question. In a community's experience. In an artist's intuition. In a researcher's observation. In something we have lived but never quite found the words to explain. Anvaya: The Dialogue brings these different ways of knowing into the same space. Not to decide which one is more important. But to discover what happens when they meet.

Anvaya: The Dialogue grows through five interconnected streams:

Education — How we learn, teach, imagine and prepare for what comes next.

Culture — The memories, identities, traditions and everyday practices that shape who we are — and how they continue to evolve.

Arts — The ways human beings express, create, perform, imagine and make sense of the world.

Research — The questions we ask, the knowledge we create and the assumptions we are willing to examine.

Community — The people, relationships and shared experiences that turn an idea into something living.

These are not separate rooms. They are different doors into the same house. A cultural question may become a research question. A research idea may inspire an artist. A performance may change the way a student sees the world. A community experience may challenge something we thought we knew. An educational conversation may become the beginning of a new collaboration.

That is the Anvaya way.

Anvaya: The Dialogue is not only about what happens on a stage. It is not only a conference. It is not only research. It is not only education, culture or the arts. And it is not only a collection of programmes.

“It is a community”

A community of people who are curious enough to cross boundaries. People who are willing to listen. People who are comfortable asking questions. People who can disagree without closing the conversation. People who bring something of their own and remain open to discovering something from someone else.

You may come to Anvaya because of research. You may stay because of a conversation.

You may discover an artist. Find a collaborator. Hear a story. Meet someone from another generation. Question something you have always believed. Or simply find a group of people with whom you feel you can think out loud.

There is no single way to belong here.

Anvaya creates spaces for people to meet, ideas to travel and possibilities to grow.
Sometimes that may be a conversation.
Sometimes a performance.
Sometimes a workshop.
Sometimes research.
Sometimes a publication.
Sometimes a cultural programme.
Sometimes a community gathering.
Sometimes a story.
And sometimes something that does not yet have a name.

Because we do not want to build everything in advance.
We want the community to help shape what Anvaya becomes.

Our role is to create the space. To bring people together. To make room for different voices. To encourage curiosity. To make connections possible. And then to see what grows.

We Believe

- People are more interesting than their designations.
- Knowledge is bigger than disciplines.
- Culture is not something we simply inherit; it is something we continue to create.
- Young voices and old memories both have something to teach us.
- Disagreement can deepen understanding when there is enough respect to listen.
- The most meaningful ideas often emerge between fields rather than inside them.
- Sometimes the most valuable thing a community can offer is not an answer. It is a better question.

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Our Vision

We imagine Anvaya as a living community where different disciplines, cultures, generations and forms of knowledge can meet without losing their distinctiveness. A place where knowledge can travel between the academy and society. Where art can meet research. Where culture can meet contemporary ideas. Where experience can meet scholarship. Where younger and older generations can learn from one another. And where people can come not only to share what they know, but also to discover what they do not yet know. And where every encounter has the possibility of becoming something more. A new idea. A new question. A new collaboration. A new friendship. A new way of seeing.

Our Mission

To create a living common ground where people meet, ideas travel, cultures connect and new possibilities emerge.

We do this by bringing together researchers, artists, musicians, educators, students, cultural practitioners, communities and curious minds through conversations, performances, workshops, research, publications, cultural programmes and community initiatives.

And through all of this, we seek to:

LISTEN — To voices, memories, experiences and forms of knowledge that often remain unheard.

CONNECT — People, disciplines, cultures and generations.

QUESTION — Ideas and assumptions with openness, curiosity and thoughtfulness.

CREATE — Spaces where different forms of knowledge and expression can meet.

SHARE — Knowledge, creativity and culture beyond conventional boundaries.

NURTURE — Curiosity, participation and the confidence to explore.

CARRY FORWARD — Traditions, memories and ideas — not by keeping them unchanged, but by allowing them to find meaning in new contexts and new voices.

Anvaya: The Dialogue does not need everyone to think alike.

It does not need everyone to belong to the same discipline. It does not even need everyone to agree. What it needs is a willingness to meet. To bring what we know. To share what we have lived. To listen to what someone else sees. To remain curious about what lies beyond our own boundaries. Because perhaps community is not about finding people who are the same as us. Perhaps it is about finding a place where our differences have somewhere to meet. That is the kind of community we hope Anvaya: The Dialogue can become.

About the Conference

Popular Culture in South Asia: Identities, Media and Everyday Life

Popular culture constitutes a significant domain through which contemporary societies produce, circulate and negotiate meanings. Beyond its association with entertainment and mass consumption, popular culture encompasses a diverse range of cultural forms and practices—including music, cinema, television, literature, fashion, food, festivals, performance, sport, advertising and digital media. These forms are embedded within everyday social life and participate in the articulation of identities, memories, aspirations and relationships. In the context of South Asia, where cultural practices are shaped by complex histories, linguistic and ethnic diversity, migration, colonial encounters, regional affiliations and processes of globalisation, popular culture offers a particularly productive field for examining contemporary cultural transformations.

Against this background, **Anvaya: The Dialogue** presents the conference **"Popular Culture in South Asia: Identities, Media and Everyday Life."** The conference seeks to foreground popular culture as a dynamic site of cultural production and social negotiation, bringing together interdisciplinary perspectives on the ways in which cultural meanings are created, mediated, experienced and transformed across South Asian contexts.

The first thematic axis, **Identities**, focuses on the relationship between popular culture and the formation and negotiation of individual and collective identities. Questions of gender, caste, class, ethnicity, language, religion, region, nationality and generation are frequently articulated through popular cultural forms. Cinema, music, literature, fashion and digital cultures can reinforce dominant representations, while also providing spaces for self-expression, contestation and alternative forms of representation.

The second axis, **Media**, examines the changing infrastructures through which popular culture is produced and circulated. The expansion of television, cinema, streaming platforms, social media, podcasts and short-form digital content has transformed relationships between cultural producers, audiences and cultural texts.

The third axis, **Everyday Life**, directs attention towards the ordinary practices through which popular culture becomes lived experience. The music people listen to, films they watch, food they prepare, clothes they wear, festivals they participate in, stories they share and digital content they circulate constitute important sites of cultural meaning-making. Such practices may preserve memories and affiliations while simultaneously generating new forms of cultural expression. Approaching popular culture through everyday life thus enables an understanding of culture as an ongoing process rather than a fixed collection of cultural products.

The conference also encourages perspectives that challenge conventional binaries such as traditional/contemporary, local/global, popular/elite and producer/consumer. South Asian cultural practices frequently move across these categories, producing hybrid and evolving forms. Migration, diaspora and digital connectivity further facilitate the movement of cultural practices across geographical and political boundaries, generating new configurations of belonging and cultural identity. In keeping with the interdisciplinary ethos of **Anvaya: The Dialogue**, the conference brings together scholarship from cultural studies, anthropology, sociology, media and communication studies, musicology and ethnomusicology, literature, history, film and performance studies, visual culture, gender studies, digital humanities and related fields. Contributions from artists, musicians, filmmakers, writers and cultural practitioners are equally valued as forms of critical and creative engagement with popular culture. The conference seeks to examine how popular culture participates in the making of contemporary South Asian identities, media environments and everyday experiences. It invites scholars and practitioners to critically engage with the cultural forms that surround us, the media through which they travel, and the everyday contexts in which they acquire meaning. By bringing these perspectives into dialogue, the conference aims to understand popular culture not merely as something consumed, but as a process through which people construct identities, negotiate belonging, remember the past, encounter the present and imagine possible futures.

From Hoardings to Reels: The Migration of Social Advertising into India's Digital Public Sphere

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Aishwarya Jaiswal is a doctoral scholar in the Department of Applied Art, College of Art, University of Delhi, researching under Dr. Kumar Jigeeshu. A trained artist and designer, she studies public communication with a practitioner's eye. Her doctoral work, "An Analytical Study: Impact of Social Advertising on Indian Society," traces how social advertising shapes awareness, attitudes and behaviour across the country. She earned her Bachelor's and Master's in Applied Art from Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, and has published three research papers. Her interests span social advertising, visual communication and graphic design.

Abstract

For many years, social messages in India reached people through hoardings, newspapers and television. Today the same messages about health, cleanliness, girls' education and road safety reach people mostly through their phones, as short videos, Reels and Shorts on Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp — the same formats, sounds and creators that carry everyday popular culture. This paper treats social advertising as part of popular culture, not apart from it, and studies its move from the hoarding to the Reel. It has three objectives: to describe how the visual grammar of Indian social advertising — the way a message is designed, framed, timed and heard — changed as it moved from print and television into the social-media feed; to explain why the change happened, using the ideas of social marketing, Stuart Hall's encoding and decoding, and Herbert Simon's point that attention becomes scarce when information is everywhere; and to weigh what India gains and losses in this new, phone-first public sphere. The scope is cause-based advertising in India, mainly government campaigns, across the shift from the print–broadcast era to the era of Instagram and YouTube, set against India's fast growth online from about 806 million internet users in early 2025 to more than a billion by the end of that year. Drawing on Indian studies of social advertising and on well-known campaigns such as Swachh Bharat and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, the paper shows how public messages moved from wide, still and formal too tall, moving, personal and made to be shared, and argues that the platform itself has become a co-author of the message's meaning.

Keywords: *social advertising, visual grammar, digital public sphere, Reels, social marketing.*

From Tradition to Transnationality: Migration, Diaspora and the Cultural Flow of Indian Classical Music in the Modern Period.

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Abstract

The recent history of Indian classical music is not something that could be studied in isolation of its development outside of the territory of India itself. Over the course of the twentieth century, the migration of performers, students, recordings, educational institutions, and musical concepts opened up new ways of circulation of Indian classical music beyond its geographical and cultural borders. Consequently, migration and diaspora have become significant factors in the process of transformation of Indian classical music from a culturally Indian tradition into a transnational musical practice. In this paper, I examine the relationships between migration, diaspora and cultural flow in the context of the development of Indian classical music in the modern era. I argue that migration was not merely a means of the geographic spread of Hindustani classical music but an agent of transformation of the context for its teaching, performance and comprehension. The careers of Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan are examined as two different but complementing models of transnational transmission of Indian classical music in the form of international performance career on one hand and cross-cultural musical exchange on the other hand, and in the form of formation of stable institutional environment for teaching on the other. The paper further considers the role of diaspora communities, media technologies and educational institutions in the creation of transnational musical networks. It suggests that cultural flow should be conceptualized not as one-directional process from India to the West but rather as a complex negotiation process that involved both preservation and adaptation, reinterpretation and hybridization of musical culture. Thus, the global circulation of Indian classical music resulted not in cultural preservation or transformation but in the creation of trans-national cultural space in which tradition and modernity are permanently engaged in interaction.

Keywords: *Indian Classical Music, Migration, Diaspora, Transnationalism, Cultural Flow.*

Popular Literature in South Asia : Satirical works of Moni Mohsin

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Dr. Asha Susan Jacob, a retired Professor of English and currently serves as the Principal of Bishop Speechley College. She previously served as a Professor at St. Thomas College, Kozhencherry, where she was actively involved in teaching and academic pursuits in English literature. Her academic and research interests include Indian Feminism, with a particular focus on feminist perspectives in Indian literature and culture. With her extensive experience in higher education, she has contributed significantly to teaching, research, and academic leadership in the field of English studies.

Mariam John is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at St. Cyril's College, Adoor, with 11 years of teaching experience at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. She is currently pursuing research in South Asian Pakistani Feminism. Her academic interests include Linguistics, Popular Literature, Cultural Studies, and South Asian Studies. She has participated in several national and international seminars and conferences, presenting research papers on diverse areas of literary and cultural studies.



Abstract

Moni Mohsin is a Pakistani writer whose reputation rests on blending comic satire with serious political commentary, most notably through her Diary of a Social Butterfly series, including The Diary of a Social Butterfly (2008), Tender Hooks (2011), and The Return of the Butterfly (2019). Narrated by a wealthy, malapropism-prone Lahori socialite, the trilogy registers Pakistan's shifting political and social currents, from the war on terror to class anxieties. Her earlier novel The End of Innocence (2006), set in rural Punjab during the 1971 war, takes a more sober register and deals with feudal power and a girl's loss of innocence. Mohsin is also valued for her fractured, Punjabi-inflected English as a marker of linguistic hybridity and her class-conscious humour.

This study aims to examine how satire functions as a mode of political and class critique in Mohsin's Butterfly trilogy while analyzing the linguistic strategies of malapropism and code-switching through which her narrator's voice is constructed, and what these reveal about class and linguistic hybridity in Pakistani anglophone fiction. It further seeks to investigate the self-satirizing complicity of Mohsin's elite narrator, situate her work within the broader tradition of Pakistani women's writing in English by contrasting her comic register with the testimonial modes of Bapsi Sidhwa and Kamila Shamsie, and explore the feminist irony embedded in her use of humour to critique patriarchal and elite social structures. The study is situated within postcolonial literary studies, South Asian anglophone fiction, and feminist literary criticism.

Keywords: *South Asian Feminism, Satire, Pakistan Politics, Linguistic Hybridity, Feminist Literary Criticism.*

Noh Theatre Performance and Its Role in Shaping Identities, Communities, and Everyday Experiences

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Abhinav Kumar Verma is an accomplished theatre practitioner, educator, and research scholar specializing in contemporary and traditional performance techniques. He is currently serving as an Assistant Professor at School of Drama, MIT-ADT University, Pune, and pursuing a Ph.D. in Theatre Studies at Savitribai Phule Pune University. With over a decade of diverse experience, he has performed in more than fifty stage productions, directed community-driven projects, and conducted acting workshops nationally and internationally. His research interests include the Natyashastra, Japanese theatre, digital theatre, and cross-cultural performance. He is dedicated to bridging traditional heritage with modern pedagogy.

Abstract

Noh theatre, one of Japan's oldest surviving performing arts, is more than a stage tradition, it is a living practice that continues to shape how people see themselves and their communities. This paper examines the role of Noh performance in constructing personal and collective identities, strengthening community bonds, and influencing everyday experiences among performers, audiences, and local communities associated with it. Rather than treating Noh only as a historical art form, the study looks at how its rituals, masks, movement, and storytelling carry meanings that connect people to their cultural roots, family traditions, and regional identity even today.

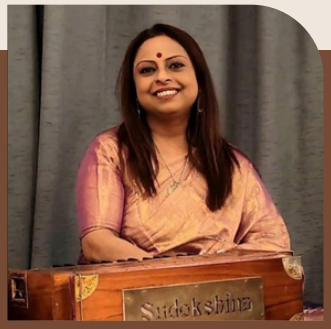
Using a qualitative approach involving observation of performances, and analysis of community participation, the paper explores how Noh functions as a space for identity formation across generations. It considers how younger performers negotiate tradition and modern life, how communities use Noh festivals and events to reinforce local belonging, and how audiences experience emotional and spiritual connection through the performance style.

The scope of the paper is limited to select Noh theatre communities and performance events, focusing on the lived, everyday meaning of Noh rather than purely its artistic or historical aspects. It aims to contribute to broader discussions on traditional performing arts, cultural continuity, and identity in contemporary societies.

Keywords: *Noh Theatre, Identity Formation, Community Belonging, Cultural Continuity, Everyday Experience.*

When Folk Songs Meet the Screen: The Adaptation of Bengali Folk Songs in Contemporary Bengali films and Bengali Television Serials

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Sudokshina Manna Chatterjee is an accomplished Hindustani classical vocalist, trained since age six in the Kirana and Qasur-Patiala Gharanas. She holds an Honours degree in English Literature, a Master's in Khayal Vocal Music, and a PhD from Rabindra Bharati University. A National Scholarship recipient and ICCR-empanelled artist, she is a lecturer in Classical Vocal Music and Guest Faculty at Calcutta University. A prize-winner at Dover Lane and Ravi Kichlu Foundation competitions, she was nominated for the Sangeet Natak Akademi Yuva Puraskar (2008). She has performed widely in India, Europe, UK and the Middle East and heads her Government-registered academy, Arohan.

Abstract

Bengali folk songs constitute an integral part of Bengal's cultural and musical heritage, embodying the lived experiences, beliefs, emotions, and social practices of its diverse communities. Despite the rapid transformations brought about by globalization, digital media, and contemporary popular culture, folk music continues to retain a remarkable presence in the cultural imagination of Bengali audiences. This paper explores the adaptation and representation of different forms of Bengali folk songs in contemporary Bengali films and Bengali television serials, examining how traditional musical expressions are recontextualized within modern audiovisual narratives.

The primary objective of the paper is to investigate the ways in which folk songs such as Baul, Bhatiali, Bhawaiya, Goalpariya, Gambhira, Jhumur, Bhadu, Tusu, Dhamail, Holir gaan,Folk Agomoni and Bijoya songs and other regional Bengali songs are incorporated into contemporary screen media. It seeks to analyse the musical, lyrical, thematic, and narrative transformations that occur when these traditional forms move from their original folk contexts to commercial cinema and television. The paper also examines how such adaptations negotiate the relationship between tradition and modernity, authenticity and popularization, and cultural preservation and creative reinterpretation. The scope of the study extends to selected contemporary Bengali films and television serials, focusing on the continued popularity and cultural resonance of folk-derived music among present-day audiences. It argues that the widespread appeal of these songs demonstrates that Bengali popular music, despite its contemporary forms and technological modes of production and circulation, remains deeply rooted in regional traditions, collective memory, and ethnocultural identities. The adaptation of folk songs for the screen therefore not only introduces traditional musical forms to new generations but also reaffirms the enduring vitality of Bengali folk culture within contemporary popular culture.

Keywords: *Bengali Folk Music, Bengali Cinema, Bengali Television Serials, Popular Culture, Ethnocultural Identity.*

Micro-Audios and Macro-Trends: A Netnographic Case Study of Gen Z Music Consumption and Digital Identity on Instagram Reels

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Independent Researcher



Dr. Subham Peter Gazmer is a musician, ethnomusicologist, and researcher of the Eastern Himalayas and Sikkim. He holds a PhD in Music (2025) and was awarded the Gold Medal for his Master of Performing Arts in Music from Sikkim University. His doctoral thesis, "Melodic Structure and Patterns in Hindustani Classical Music: An Analytical Study of Sitar Compositions," reflects his academic focus on the structural, aesthetic, and theoretical frameworks of Indian classical music. Trained in sitar under Pt. Sanjay Bandyopadhyay and Dr. Samidha Vedabala, his research bridges formal musicological analysis with field-based ethnomusicology, documenting regional musical heritage and cultural identity in Northeast India.

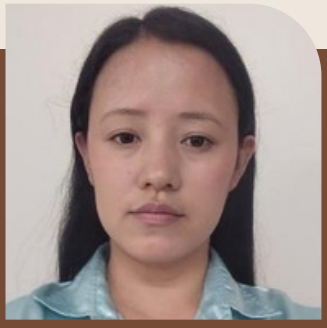
Abstract

The rise of short-form video has changed how young people discover, use, and share music online. This pilot study explores how Generation Z uses short-form audio on Instagram Reels to express digital identities, communicate moods and interests, and participate in online communities. It examines how popular audio trends become meaningful forms of cultural expression among young users. The study adopts a netnographic approach to examine publicly available Instagram Reels without direct interaction with users. A purposive sample of Reels was selected using Instagram's trending audio indicators and grouped into three categories: (1) sped-up and pitch-shifted songs, (2) nostalgic or revived music genres, and (3) ambient or aesthetic soundscapes. The selected content was analyzed through qualitative content analysis, focusing on the relationship between audio, visuals, text overlays, captions, hashtags, youth slang, and comment interactions. The analysis suggests that short-form audio is not simply consumed as a shortened form of music. Instead, Gen Z users actively reuse and reinterpret trending sounds to express personality, mood, interests, and a sense of belonging. Recurring combinations of audio, visual styles, language, and interaction patterns show how particular sounds become recognizable markers of online identity and community participation. The study highlights Instagram Reels as more than a platform for short videos; it functions as a digital cultural space where music, technology, identity, and youth culture intersect. The findings demonstrate how short-form audio trends can shape contemporary music consumption while also serving as tools for identity construction and social connection.

Keywords: *Instagram Reels, Generation Z, Short-Form Audio, Netnography, Digital Identity.*

Curated Romanticism of Solitude

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Divya Subba is an Assistant Professor at Sikkim Government College, Mangshila, North Sikkim. She is the author of Saving Grace, a collection of poems, and First Fruits, a miscellany of Short stories, essays, and poems.

Abstract

The contemporary digital landscape has witnessed a growing fascination with “slow life” content, which presents an imagined return to simplicity, nature, rurality, and a life seemingly detached from the pressures of technology. Paradoxically, this rejection of digital modernity is itself circulated and consumed through digital platforms. For a generation increasingly associated with burnout, overstimulation, and digital fatigue, slow-life content offers a form of virtual escape, creating an illusion of withdrawal from the very technological environment through which the escape is experienced. This paper examines the cultural and literary implications of this paradox, questioning whether slow-life content functions merely as a form of mediated escapism or whether it translates into tangible changes in individual lifestyle choices and perceptions of rural life. The paper further explores the representation of the rural as an imagined space of authenticity, tranquillity, and cultural continuity, and interrogates whether such representations contribute to the preservation of rural traditions or merely aestheticise and commodify them for an urban digital audience. Through a close reading of selected slow-life narratives, images, videos, captions, and online discourses, the study examines the tension between representation and lived reality. It also considers whether the popularity of slow-life content is producing a desire to return to an imagined pre-digital existence, or whether it is simply reflecting transformations that have already occurred within the social fabric. Ultimately, the paper argues that slow-life culture reveals a significant contradiction of contemporary digital life: the desire to escape modernity is increasingly expressed through the very technological structures from which individuals seek relief.

Keywords: *Slow Life, Digital Escapism, Rurality, Authenticity, Commodification.*

From Ritual to Reel: Digital Recontextualisation of South Palakkad Folk Performance in Contemporary Popular Culture

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of digital media has altered the ways in which traditional performance practices are represented, circulated, and experienced within contemporary popular culture. South Palakkad possesses a diverse landscape of folk and ritual performance traditions rooted in local communities, religious practices, oral transmission, and collective memory. This paper examines the digital recontextualisation of selected South Palakkad folk performance traditions as they move from community and ritual spaces into contemporary digital popular culture. The study adopts a qualitative and interdisciplinary approach combining performance studies, cultural analysis, and digital media perspectives. Selected digital representations are examined alongside their traditional performative contexts to identify changes in presentation, duration, visual emphasis, music, narrative framing, and audience engagement. Particular attention is given to the ways in which short-form digital formats may detach performative elements from their original ritual and cultural settings while creating opportunities for wider visibility, documentation, and cultural transmission. The paper further explores the relationship between authenticity, adaptation, and popularisation in the digital circulation of embodied heritage. It considers how performers, audiences, and digital creators participate in constructing new meanings around traditional practices and how platform-oriented presentation may influence public perceptions of regional cultural identity. Rather than positioning digital mediation solely as cultural loss or preservation, the study approaches it as a process of cultural negotiation. By examining the movement from ritual space to digital screen, the paper contributes to broader discussions on folk traditions, cultural heritage, digital culture, and the changing place of regional performance practices within South Asian popular culture.

Keywords: *South Palakkad, Folk Performance, Digital Recontextualisation, Popular Culture, Embodied Heritage.*

From Green Messages to Green Lifestyles: The Role of Advertising in Shaping Environmental Consciousness in India

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Divya Tripathi is a PhD Researcher in Fine Arts at the College of Art, University of Delhi. Her research focuses on eco-friendly advertising in India, with particular interest in visual communication, sustainability, advertising, and consumer awareness. Her academic work examines the role of social media in promoting eco-friendly advertising, the growth of recycled plastic products in India, the evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and green advertising in shaping corporate sustainable narratives. Through interdisciplinary research, she explores how visual and digital communication can encourage sustainable practices, influence consumer perceptions, and strengthen environmental consciousness among individuals, organisations, and wider Indian society.

Abstract

Environmental issues have become increasingly visible in mainstream culture and people's everyday lives through advertising in India. Eco-advertising has become a medium not just for product promotion but also for promoting conscious consumption, responsible living, and sustainable lifestyles. In this context, the paper explores the importance of eco-advertising in the creation of environmental consciousness among Indian consumers.

The paper analyses the influence of environmental messages used in green advertising on consumers' environmental awareness and attitudes towards sustainable consumption. It examines how advertising creates environmentally conscious identities of consumers and whether exposure to green messages makes consumers adopt a sustainable lifestyle. It also analyses factors influencing the effectiveness of green advertising, especially consumer trust, environmental claims authenticity, and greenwashing.

The focus is on sustainability-oriented advertising in India, with particular attention to its representation across contemporary media and its relationship with consumer culture, identity, and everyday lifestyle practices. Green advertisements are analysed within South Asian popular culture, where media messages shape people's perception of responsible consumption and environmental identity. The analysis is based on existing literature on green advertisements, environmental communication, consumer behaviour, sustainability, and popular culture. It argues that environmental issues may become part of the daily routine of people rather than abstract media messages, while the success of the communication strategy depends on the credibility and authenticity of the message.

Keywords: *Green Advertising, Environmental Consciousness, Sustainable Consumption, Consumer Identity, Greenwashing.*

Domesticating the Sacred: Mah Prasad as Everyday Food in Assamese Households

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Abstract

Across religious traditions, food often functions as a sacred medium connecting devotees with the divine through rituals, offerings and communal sharing. In the Neo-Vaishnava tradition of Assam, Mah-Prasad represents more than ritual consumption; it symbolizes devotion and social bonding within the religious community. According to Durkheim (1912), religion is fundamentally a social phenomenon that strengthens collective consciousness and reinforces social solidarity through shared beliefs and ritual practices. In this context, the consumption of Mah-Prasad can be understood not merely as a religious act but also as a collective practice that helps for cultural continuity within the Assamese society.

Over time, Mah-Prasad moved beyond the strict ritual sphere and became embedded within the everyday food culture of Assamese households. While being associated with sacred offerings in the Namghar and Satras, Mah-Prasad slowly entered the domestic sphere, where it began to influence the everyday food practices of Assamese households. As primary custodians of household food traditions, Assamese women played a significant role and adapted Mah-Prasad into everyday food preparation for family and gatherings.Through their creativity, women turned the ritual food ingredients into a symbol of Assamese identity. Drawing on the Phenomenological approach of Alfred Schutz, the study focuses on how Assamese women within households, experience, preserve and reinterpret ingredients of Mah-Prasad as a part of daily life. Further, the study relies on qualitative research methods, including participant observation and interviews with Assamese women in selected areas of Jorhat District of Assam, India.

Keywords: *Domestic Culture, Mah-Prasad, Neo-Vaishnavism, Phenomenology, Women and Food Practices.*

Literature and Popular Culture in The Digital World

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Abstract

Twenty first century is marked by rapid technological advancement. The enormous expansion of digital world has transformed the relationship between literature and popular culture. Literature is the testimony of different time period as it embodies changing social patterns, cultural practices, values and beliefs. For centuries literary narratives have travelled through different mediums like theatre, folklores and oral performances. In the contemporary period writers often incorporate elements of popular culture, including cinema, television, and consumerism etc. into their narratives. This incorporation has further accelerated due to social media, electronic publishing and other digital platforms. This paper aims to explore the relationship between literature and popular culture in the digital era where there is adequate accessibility to information, changing nature of reading as books are rapidly being digitized thus blurring the boundaries between the text and the reader as he/she is becoming an active participant by providing different interpretations. This paper highlights that literature and popular culture cannot be viewed differently as they are interconnected forms of cultural expression and must be seen as a whole. While literature provides narrative through which societies examine complex human emotions and experiences, social conflicts, historical memories, diverse cultural identities, and complex ethical and moral dilemmas. On the other hand popular culture provides adequate medium through which these narratives can be circulated among the masses thus providing new opportunities for adaptation, interpretation and cultural participation. This paper concludes that literature and popular culture share an evolving relationship rather than existing as conflicting spheres.

Keywords: *Literature, Popular Culture, Digital Era, Digital Platforms, Cultural Participation.*

Cinema, Music, and the Performance of Identity: Popular Culture and Cultural Belonging in Jhumpa Lahiri's The Namesake and Shyam Selvadurai's Funny Boy

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Abstract

Popular culture plays a significant role in shaping how individuals understand, express, and negotiate their identities within changing social and cultural environments. In contemporary South Asian literature,Cinema and music often serve as cultural practices in modern South Asian literature, going beyond their traditional functions as entertainment mediums to help characters deal with issues of race, gender, sexuality, memory, and social expectations.This study comparison investigates the portrayal of cinema, music, and performance in Jhumpa Lahiri's The Namesake and Shyam Selvadurai's Funny Boy to investigate how popular culture contributes to the formation and negotiation of individual and community identities.Utilizing Stuart Hall's notion of cultural identity and representation, Homi K. Bhabha's theories on cultural hybridity and the "Third Space," along with Judith Butler's idea of gender performativity, the research examines how Gogol Ganguli and Arjie Chelvar maneuver throughout conflicting cultural demands and cultivate intricate identities.In The Namesake, music, cinema, literature, food, and family rituals become important markers through which the Bengali-American characters negotiate generational and diasporic identities. In Funny Boy, cinema, performance, and popular cultural practices provide spaces through which Arjie explores gender and sexuality while confronting rigid familial, ethnic, and social expectations.The research posits that popular culture serves as an evolving arena of both adherence and defiance, allowing characters to contest rigid identity constructs whilenavigating their connections with family, community, and cultural legacy. Ultimately, this paper will arguethat cinema and music function as more than forms of entertainment in The Namesake and Funny Boy, they become cultural spaces through which characters negotiate inherited traditions, individuals desires, gender, and belonging.

Keywords: *Cultural Belonging,Gender,Identity,Social expectations, Popular Culture.*

Cheering the Nation: Digital Cricket Fandom and the Construction of Everyday Nationalism among Indian Youth

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Moksadur Rahman is a student and emerging researcher at Darul Huda Islamic University, Assam Centre, with academic interests spanning Islamic studies, jurisprudence, popular culture, media, and contemporary social issues. His research interests particularly focus on the intersections of religion, society, identity, and digital culture. He has participated in academic conferences and research-oriented initiatives, exploring interdisciplinary themes through both textual and contemporary approaches. His current research interests include digital media, youth culture, nationalism, and the cultural dimensions of everyday life. He is also interested in academic writing, public discourse, and developing research that connects classical intellectual traditions with contemporary social realities.

Abstract

The proliferation of digital media has reconfigured the ways in which nationalism is imagined, expressed and experienced in everyday life. In contemporary India, cricket has evolved beyond a sporting spectacle into a pervasive form of popular culture through which national identity is continuously performed across digital platforms. While existing scholarship has extensively explored cricket as a site of nationalism during international tournaments, media spectacles and Indo–Pakistan sporting rivalries, comparatively little attention has been paid to the routine digital practices through which ordinary users reproduce, negotiate and normalize nationalist sentiments in their everyday online interactions. This overlooked dimension calls for a rethinking of cricket fandom as an everyday cultural practice rather than an episodic sporting phenomenon.

Drawing upon Michael Billig's concept of banal nationalism and Henry Jenkins' theory of participatory culture, this paper examines how Indian youth construct and circulate everyday nationalism through digital cricket fandom. Employing a qualitative digital ethnographic approach, supported by critical discourse analysis of user-generated content—including memes, reels, fan edits, hashtags and online discussions—the study investigates how social media platforms transform spectators into active participants in the production of national narratives. It argues that digital fandom functions as a participatory cultural arena where nationalism is not merely represented but routinely enacted, shared and reinforced through everyday digital engagement.

By conceptualizing cricket fandom as a form of digital popular culture rather than simply sports spectatorship, the paper contributes to emerging debates on media, youth culture and everyday nationalism in South Asia. It demonstrates how digital fan communities have become influential cultural spaces where national belonging is continuously imagined, performed and reproduced beyond the temporal boundaries of the cricket field.

Keywords: *Digital Cricket Fandom, Everyday Nationalism, Participatory Culture, Indian Youth, Social Media.*

From Folk Festival to Digital Performance: Reimagining Bihu through Social Media among Assamese Youth

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of digital platforms has transformed the ways in which folk traditions are performed, experienced and reproduced, blurring the boundaries between cultural heritage and digital popular culture. In Assam, Bihu has long served as a vital expression of collective memory, regional identity and community participation. However, its cultural meanings are being negotiated through social media, where performances circulate beyond their traditional spatial and temporal settings. This paper investigates how social media reconfigures Bihu from a seasonal community festival into a continuous form of digital cultural performance. Drawing upon Henry Jenkins' theory of participatory culture and Richard Schechner's framework of performance, the study employs qualitative digital ethnography alongside multimodal discourse analysis of user-generated content including short-form videos, reels, photographs, captions and audience interactions shared across major social media platforms. The paper examines how young users actively reinterpret, curate and circulate Bihu, simultaneously negotiating questions of identity, authenticity and cultural belonging. The paper argues that social media has not merely extended the visibility of Bihu but has transformed it into an evolving participatory cultural practice through which Assamese youth continuously construct, perform and reimagine regional identity. By positioning Bihu within the broader discourse of digital popular culture, the study contributes to emerging debates on platformed cultural heritage, youth identity and the transformation of folk traditions in contemporary South Asia.

Keywords: *Bihu, Digital Performance, Participatory Culture, Assamese Youth, Social Media.*

Raga Characteristics in Sri Lankan Folk Music: Exploring the Interrelationship between Hindustani Raga, Folk Traditions and Popular Culture

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Abstract

This paper examines the presence and emergence of raga characteristics in Sri Lankan folk music, with particular attention to the relationship between Hindustani raga concepts, folk musical traditions, and popular culture. Although raga is generally understood as a highly developed melodic concept within the Hindustani classical tradition, certain melodic movements, pitch relationships, and expressive patterns that resemble raga characteristics can also be heard in Sri Lankan folk songs. This raises an important question: how do such characteristics appear in folk music, particularly when the performers may not have received formal training in Hindustani raga?

The study explores selected Sri Lankan folk songs through melodic and comparative analysis, while also considering the historical and cultural contexts in which these musical traditions have developed and circulated. Attention is given to oral transmission, musical exposure, performance practice, and the influence of popular forms of music through radio, cinema, stage performance, and other forms of cultural exchange. Rather than assuming that similarities with Hindustani ragas necessarily indicate direct borrowing, the study considers the possibility that some melodic tendencies may emerge through the interaction of cultural transmission, musical experience, and human emotional and aesthetic responses.

The study further discusses how folk musical practices may change when they enter wider popular culture, while retaining elements of their traditional melodic identity. By bringing together musical analysis and an ethnomusicological perspective, the paper seeks to contribute to a broader understanding of how classical and folk musical ideas interact in Sri Lankan musical life. It argues that the emergence of raga-like characteristics should be understood not simply as imitation, but as a process shaped by cultural experience, musical practice, and the ways in which people experience and express music.

Keywords: *Sri Lankan Folk Music, Hindustani Raga, Raga Characteristics, Folk Musical Traditions, Popular Culture.*

Playing, Learning and Staying Healthy: Physical Health Risks among Young Wind Instrumentalists in Sri Lankan School Bands

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Abstract

School bands offer a solid beginning for young instrumentalists and can be a first step in their ongoing involvement in popular music and in contemporary music. Learners' and performers' physical health and continued musical involvement, however, might be affected by the conditions of learning and playing for wind instrumentalists. This study examines the physical health hazards of short-term and long-term for the young wind instrumentalists in Sri Lankan school bands, focusing on the training approach, playing technique, posture, instrument sharing, and quality and suitability of musical instruments used by them.

The study is a mixed method research design, where the data are collected using a structured questionnaire for quantitative data and interview and observation for qualitative data. Initial results suggest a number of factors that may account for the physical and health-related risk factors of young wind instrumentalists. Some students may not have their own instruments and instead use those provided by their school, which could pose a potential risk for cross-contamination and spread of communicable infections, especially those that are directly transmitted through instruments. Other concerns identified were inadequate technical training, incorrect playing technique, poor posture and insufficiently trained instructors.

Sometimes, the students learn the wrong playing techniques and postures from older students, and the problem continues. If instruments are not properly maintained, not of a high standard or not suitable, the use of such instruments can add to physical strain in practice and performance.

The study aims to emphasize the significance of suitable training, the standard of the instrument, hygiene, and health awareness in the early training of musicians, with the specific context of school music education. The results are anticipated to help pave the way to healthier and more sustainable routes for young wind instrumentalists and, in turn, towards a more sustainable contemporary and popular music culture in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Wind Instrumentalists, School Bands, Physical Health, Music Training, Young Musicians.*

