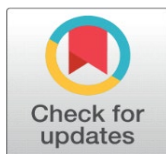


# AESTHETICS AND HYBRIDITIES IN SONGS "YADA YADA" AND "I AM VIRUS" INSIDIOUSLY CLAIMING INCLUSIVITY IN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' MUSIC

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this research paper is to study the revival of divine music on screen to become part of inclusivity in Indigenous Peoples' Music and Dance music. For this analysis, I have taken into consideration my own two different songs belonging to the mix genre of world and pop music: "Yada Yada" produced in Mumbai and London, and "I am Virus" produced in Brisbane. An encrypted secret of divinity belonging to indigenous Indians is shown, indicating the potential end of civilization through the present scenario of war and crisis if not understood. This may be relegated by orientalist to make it a part of inclusivity in indigenous music. The music video of "Yada Yada" persuasively is crucial for making visual aids relics for the awareness of the audience or consumers. Lyrics of the song are mostly written in English, with one verse in Sanskrit borrowed from the Indian indigenous epic Mahabharata. In this music video, sound effects and video are incorporated to add dimension to dramatize the video's plot, improving the viewer's experience. In contrast, the record "I am Virus" and its music video, being anthropomorphic in nature, present an unadulterated object of hybridity opposing ideas of purity and authenticity of origins. This approach opposes authoritarianism and racialism, contributing to a pluralistic culture. This adds weight to Indigenous Peoples' Music.

**Keywords:** Divinity, Indigenous, Unadulterated, Pluralistic



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Music has always served as a powerful medium for expressing complex human emotions and cultural narratives. This paper delves into the analysis of two significant songs by Shib—"Yada Yada" and "I Am Virus"—both of which offer profound insights into spiritual and socio-political themes. "Yada Yada" stands out due to its innovative blend of English and Sanskrit, merging traditional Indian spiritual themes with modern musical elements. In contrast, "I Am Virus" personifies the coronavirus to critique human behavior and highlight socio-political issues exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. This combined analysis explores the thematic depth, cultural implications, and broader contexts of these two works, emphasizing their relevance in contemporary discourse.

### 1.1. THEME AND OBJECTIVES

The primary theme of this research is the integration of traditional spiritual elements with modern music to create a narrative that addresses both ancient wisdom and contemporary issues. The objective is to analyze how these songs contribute to inclusivity in Indigenous Peoples' Music by blending different genres and cultural elements. This exploration will help in understanding the role of music as a medium for conveying critical socio-political messages and spiritual themes in a globalized context.

## 1.2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The research problem addressed in this paper is the challenge of maintaining cultural authenticity while embracing modernity and inclusivity in music. It explores how traditional spiritual themes can be effectively incorporated into contemporary music to create a meaningful and impactful narrative. The problem is further compounded by the need to balance artistic innovation with respect for cultural heritage, making it crucial to investigate how these songs navigate these complexities.

## 1.3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this research is based on the concepts of hybridity, autoethnography, and cross-cultural collaboration. Hybridity explores the fusion of different cultural elements, while autoethnography uses personal experiences to connect with broader cultural and social meanings. Cross-cultural collaboration emphasizes the potential for diverse artistic traditions to create a unified human experience. This framework allows for an in-depth analysis of the songs' thematic and cultural significance, situating them within the broader context of global music trends and cultural exchange.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology involves a detailed analysis of the lyrics, music composition, and visual elements of the music videos for "Yada Yada" and "I Am Virus." This includes examining the thematic content, cultural implications, and socio-political commentary of each song. Personal interviews and research conducted by the author also inform the analysis. Additionally, a review of relevant literature on Indigenous Peoples' Music, hybridity, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on artistic expression provides a comprehensive backdrop for the study.

## 3. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. BACKGROUND AND PRODUCTION OF "YADA YADA"

"Yada Yada" is a product of extensive research and creative collaboration of independent singer, songwriter Shib with music industries. The song features production and arrangement by Abhinava Mukherjee from Mumbai, mixing by Goetz Botzenhardt at Air Studios in London, and mastering by Barry Grint, also at Air Studios. Published by Integrity Publishing Ltd. in the United Kingdom, the song is a testament to cross-cultural collaboration and the fusion of diverse musical influences.

The music video for "Yada Yada" was directed by Lorra White and filmed by cinematographer Pattrik Hughes in London. This international collaboration further emphasizes the song's global appeal and the merging of different artistic traditions. The production quality of the song and the music video reflects a high level of professionalism and attention to detail, contributing to its overall impact.

"Yada Yada" blends Sanskrit verses from the Bhagavad Gita with contemporary English lyrics, creating a meditative and reflective experience. The song's title is derived from the Bhagavad Gita, discussing moral and philosophical dilemmas. This fusion not only bridges the gap between ancient and modern but also aims to create a meditative and reflective experience for the listener.

### 3.2. SANSKRIT-ENGLISH FUSION

The use of Sanskrit in "Yada Yada" is particularly significant as it brings the spiritual and philosophical depth of the Bhagavad Gita into a modern context. The Sanskrit verses in the song translate to a promise from Lord Krishna to reappear in every age to restore righteousness and protect the virtuous. By integrating these verses with contemporary English lyrics, Shib creates a dialogue between the ancient and the modern, offering a new perspective on timeless spiritual truths.

### 3.3. ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH LYRICS

The English lyrics of "Yada Yada" complement the Sanskrit verses by providing a modern narrative that resonates with contemporary listeners. The lyrics explore themes of human struggle, search for truth, and the desire for spiritual enlightenment. Lines such as:

Millions of holy human hearts search  
Try to recognize your truest love  
With blackened face and burnt up heart  
So, let us free from the sorrow and shame

reflect the universal quest for love, truth, and freedom from suffering. The juxtaposition of these themes with the ancient Sanskrit verses creates a powerful contrast that enhances the song's emotional and philosophical depth.

### 3.4. MUSICAL COMPOSITION AND INNOVATION IN "YADA YADA"

Musically, "Yada Yada" is an innovative blend of electronic sounds and traditional artistic disciplines. The arrangement combines elements of Indian classical music with modern electronic production techniques, creating a unique sonic identity. The song's structure reflects the thematic duality, with the Sanskrit verses providing a meditative counterpoint to the more dynamic and emotionally expressive English lyrics.

### 3.5. INSTRUMENTATION AND ARRANGEMENT

The instrumentation in "Yada Yada" is a critical component of its innovative sound. Traditional Indian instruments such as the sitar and tabla are blended with electronic beats and synthesizers, creating a rich and layered soundscape. This fusion of traditional and modern elements not only enhances the song's appeal but also reflects its thematic exploration of the intersection between ancient wisdom and contemporary life.

### 3.6. METAPHORICAL REPRESENTATION OF CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

The song also addresses contemporary issues metaphorically through its music and lyrics. The themes of war, political crisis, and the search for peace are depicted through the narrative of the Kurukshetra war, drawing parallels with modern conflicts like the war between Ukraine and Russia. This metaphorical representation highlights the timeless nature of these issues and the continuous human quest for peace and understanding.

### 3.7. AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC ELEMENTS IN "YADA YADA"

"Yada Yada" can be viewed as an autoethnographic work, where Shib's personal exploration of Indian spiritualism and its relevance in the modern world is reflected in the song. Autoethnography involves using personal experience to connect with broader cultural, political, and social meanings and understandings. In this case, Shib's personal journey and research into the Bhagavad Gita and Indian spirituality are manifested in the song's lyrics and composition, making it a deeply personal yet universally relatable piece of art.

### 3.8. CULTURAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF "YADA YADA"

The cultural and philosophical implications of "Yada Yada" are profound. The song serves as a bridge between Eastern and Western musical traditions, highlighting the universality of spiritual themes and human emotions. It emphasizes the concept of "One Earth One Family," promoting a message of unity and collective human consciousness. This message is particularly relevant in today's globalized world, where cultural exchange and understanding are essential for fostering peace and harmony.

### **3.9. SPIRITUAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL THEMES**

The spiritual themes in "Yada Yada" are rooted in the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, which emphasize the importance of duty, righteousness, and the pursuit of spiritual enlightenment. By presenting these themes in a modern musical format, Shib makes them accessible to a wider audience, encouraging listeners to reflect on their own lives and spiritual journeys. The philosophical implications of the song extend beyond its religious context, offering insights into the nature of human existence, the search for meaning, and the pursuit of inner peace.

### **3.10. CROSS-CULTURAL COLLABORATION**

The production and publication of "Yada Yada" by an international team, including professionals from India, the UK, and Ireland, highlight the potential for cross-cultural collaboration in the arts. This collaboration not only enriches the artistic process but also promotes a deeper understanding and appreciation of diverse cultural traditions. The success of "Yada Yada" demonstrates the power of music to transcend cultural boundaries and create a shared human experience.

### **3.11. IMPACT AND RECEPTION OF "YADA YADA"**

The impact of "Yada Yada" extends beyond its artistic and cultural significance. The song has been well-received by audiences around the world, praised for its innovative approach and deep thematic content. The music video, which has garnered significant attention on platforms like YouTube, further amplifies the song's message and reach.

### **3.12. AUDIENCE RECEPTION**

Audience reception of "Yada Yada" has been overwhelmingly positive, with listeners appreciating the song's unique blend of languages and musical styles. Many have praised Shib's ability to convey complex spiritual and philosophical themes in an accessible and engaging format. The song's meditative qualities and its focus on themes of love, truth, and enlightenment have resonated with listeners, making it a popular choice for those seeking music that offers more than just entertainment.

### **3.13. CRITICAL ACCLAIM**

Critically, "Yada Yada" has been recognized for its artistic innovation and cultural significance. Music critics have highlighted the song's fusion of traditional and modern elements, its thoughtful lyrics, and its high production quality. The song's ability to address contemporary issues through the lens of ancient wisdom has been particularly noted, with many reviewers praising Shib's skillful blending of different musical and lyrical traditions.

### **3.14. INTRODUCTION TO "I AM VIRUS"**

The COVID-19 pandemic, which began in late 2019, has had an unprecedented impact on the world, affecting nearly every aspect of human life. In response to this global crisis, artists have turned to various forms of expression to document and critique the societal and personal ramifications of the pandemic. One such artistic endeavor is the music video "I Am Virus," created by Dr. Shib. This paper provides an in-depth analysis of the music video, exploring its themes, visual style, and socio-political commentary.

### **3.15. CONCEPT AND INNER MEANING OF "I AM VIRUS"**

"I Am Virus" is a song that personifies the coronavirus, using its perspective to critique human behavior and highlight the socio-political issues exacerbated by the pandemic. The song's lyrics delve into the consequences of the pandemic, particularly focusing on the struggles of migrant laborers in India, humanity's disregard for nature, and the inherent contradictions in how society perceives and responds to crises.

First Stanza: The Plight of Migrant Laborers

The opening stanza of "I Am Virus" poignantly describes the plight of approximately 150 million migrant laborers in India who lost their jobs due to the pandemic. These laborers, having migrated to urban areas for work, found themselves stranded with no means of returning to their native villages once the lockdown was imposed. Despite government efforts to provide transportation, the sheer number of laborers made it impossible to accommodate everyone promptly, forcing many to embark on long journeys on foot.

Hey man where are you going  
Holding the hand of your son  
Look at me I am invisible virus  
Oh I hate you I love you I am here just to make you down  
That is why you are under lockdown you are under lockdown

In this stanza, the virus addresses the laborers directly, emphasizing its omnipresence and the futility of trying to escape it. The visual representation of this stanza in the music video can include scenes of migrant families walking along highways, carrying their belongings and holding their children's hands. These images, widely reported in the media, evoke a deep sense of empathy and highlight the human cost of the pandemic.

#### Second Stanza: Humanity's Responsibility

The second stanza shifts focus to a broader critique of humanity's role in creating the conditions for the pandemic. It alludes to theories about the origins of the virus, including the illegal wildlife markets in Wuhan and possible laboratory mishandlings. The stanza suggests that humanity's arrogance and exploitation of nature have led to this humanitarian crisis.

Remember you ain't the centre  
Of all species  
You couldn't tame your power  
You are the reason of this humanitarian crisis  
You are the reason of this humanitarian crisis

Here, the virus holds humans accountable for the pandemic, criticizing their assumption of superiority over other species and their inability to control their own destructive tendencies. The visual narrative could depict scenes of wildlife markets, laboratory settings, and symbolic representations of human hubris, such as towering skyscrapers or deforestation.

#### Third Stanza: Revenge of the Virus

The third stanza portrays the virus as a form of retribution from Mother Nature, unleashed to teach humans a lesson for their cruelty towards animals and environmental destruction. It highlights the hypocrisy in how humans justify their actions but decry the virus as a disaster.

You run slaughter house  
Kill their voice which are loud  
You ignore nature's pain  
When her soul is slain  
For your crime and greed  
That is why I am unleashed  
By our kind mother nature  
For your very cruel feature  
Oh oh don't show me frown  
Put your weapons down  
When you kill innocents you are not virus  
When I kill you it's said pandemic and disastrous pandemic and disastrous pandemic and disastrous

In this stanza, the virus seeks revenge for the daily slaughter of millions of animals and the exploitation of nature. The visual representation could include imagery of slaughterhouses, scenes of environmental degradation, and symbolic depictions of Mother Nature reacting to human transgressions. The stanza's powerful message is reinforced by the juxtaposition of human violence and the virus's impact.

#### Fourth Stanza: A Call for Inner Transformation

The final stanza offers a glimmer of hope, calling on humans to awaken their inner saintly qualities—kindness, mercy, and wisdom—to overcome the virus and rebuild a peaceful world.

Hey man kill your lust and ego

Let the saint be alive again within you

Then I will be destroyed forever

And you will be on the rebound together

Let the saint be alive again within you

Then I will be destroyed forever

And you will be on the rebound together

Oh.Oh.....

This stanza emphasizes the need for a fundamental transformation in human behavior, suggesting that the true antidote to the virus lies in rediscovering the noble aspects of human nature. The visual elements could depict scenes of reconciliation, environmental restoration, and symbolic acts of kindness, underscoring the song's message of redemption and hope.

#### Visual Style and Direction of "I Am Virus"

The music video for "I Am Virus," directed by Adam Barker and visually directed by Oliver Price, employs a blend of emotional performance and evocative imagery to complement the song's themes. Described as an "emotional performance music video of love & loss captured against the backdrop of a polarized chaotic world," the video follows the singer, Shib, through various environments, from gritty urban settings to serene rural landscapes.

## 4. KEY VISUAL ELEMENTS

**Urban to Rural Journey:** The video traces Shib's journey from busy, gritty urban scenes through suburban areas to open green rural spaces. This progression mirrors the song's narrative arc, moving from chaos and crisis to a more hopeful and peaceful resolution.

**Super8 Flashbacks:** Interspersed throughout the video are Super8-style flashbacks of Shib's past love, providing a personal and emotional dimension to the story. These nostalgic scenes contrast with the present-day chaos, highlighting the loss and longing experienced during the pandemic.

**Symbolic Cutaways:** The video features key cutaways on billboards, TVs, and phone screens that depict the global chaos and societal disruptions caused by the pandemic. These cutaways serve as visual metaphors for the song's themes, reinforcing the idea of a world in turmoil.

#### Visual Narrative

The visual narrative of the music video is carefully crafted to complement the song's lyrics and themes. The journey from urban chaos to rural tranquility symbolizes the potential for healing and redemption. Along the way, the flashbacks and cutaways provide context and depth, connecting Shib's personal story to the broader societal issues addressed in the song.

#### Production and Reception of "I Am Virus"

"I Am Virus" is not only a creative response to the pandemic but also a collaborative effort involving artists and professionals from different parts of the world.

Singer, Songwriter, Composer, and Executive Producer: Shib

Producer: Steve Robin, recorded at The Barn Recording Studio, Brisbane, Australia.

Directors: Adam Barker (Director) and Oliver Price (Visual Director) from Video Ink, Manchester, UK.



Main Actor: Shib himself, adding a personal touch to the performance.

The song and music video have received significant recognition, including being presented at the prestigious "Innovation in Music 2022" Conference organized by the Royal College of Music, Stockholm, Sweden. This accolade highlights the project's artistic and cultural relevance, underscoring its impact on the global conversation about the pandemic.

#### **4.1. SOCIO-POLITICAL COMMENTARY IN "I AM VIRUS"**

"I Am Virus" goes beyond a simple reflection on the pandemic, offering a poignant critique of various socio-political issues exacerbated by the crisis.

Migrant Laborers in India

The song's first stanza brings attention to the humanitarian crisis faced by migrant laborers in India. The lockdown left millions stranded, jobless, and with no means of returning home. This situation exposed the vulnerabilities and inequalities within the Indian socio-economic system, highlighting the need for more robust social safety nets and labor protections.

#### **4.2. ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION AND ANIMAL CRUELTY**

The second and third stanzas critique humanity's exploitative relationship with nature and other species. The pandemic is framed as a consequence of human actions, whether through illegal wildlife markets, environmental destruction, or systemic cruelty towards animals. This perspective aligns with environmentalist viewpoints that call for a reevaluation of human practices to prevent future crises.

#### **4.3. HYPOCRISY AND MORAL ACCOUNTABILITY**

The third stanza's portrayal of the virus as a form of retribution from Mother Nature touches on the hypocrisy in how society defines and responds to violence. The song suggests that humans are quick to label the virus as a disaster while ignoring their own violent and exploitative behaviors. This critique calls for greater moral accountability and a shift towards more ethical and compassionate practices.

#### **4.4. CALL FOR INNER TRANSFORMATION**

The final stanza's call for an inner transformation underscores the need for a fundamental change in human values and behavior. It suggests that the true solution to the pandemic—and future crises—lies in rediscovering and nurturing the saintly qualities within each individual. This message resonates with broader calls for social and environmental justice, emphasizing the interconnectedness of personal and collective well-being.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

"Yada Yada" and "I Am Virus" are powerful artistic responses to different yet deeply interconnected aspects of the human experience. Through their poignant lyrics, evocative visuals, and socio-political commentary, these songs encourage listeners to reflect on their actions and consider the broader implications of their behavior.

"Yada Yada" serves as a bridge between ancient spiritual wisdom and modern life, offering insights into the universal themes of love, truth, and the quest for enlightenment. It highlights the potential for cross-cultural collaboration in the arts, promoting a message of unity and collective human consciousness.

"I Am Virus," on the other hand, critiques human behavior and societal issues exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. It emphasizes the need for empathy, accountability, and systemic change, calling for a fundamental transformation in human values and behavior.

Together, these works by Shib underscore the enduring power of music to convey complex human emotions and cultural narratives. They invite listeners to reflect on their own spiritual journeys and societal responsibilities, inspiring a collective effort towards a more just and compassionate world.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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