

Everyday Echoes in 90s' Bengali Society: Re investigating Everyday Present Through Popular Media Texts

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ARTICLE INFO ABSTRACT

Encompassing the routines, habits, interactions and rituals that shape a culture's unique identity, the theme of everyday life reflects how people live and navigate their daily existence, expressing values, beliefs, and social norms. 'Everyday' as a theme allows to understand various aspects of culture, including art, literature, cuisine, language, and social customs creating an influence on how individuals perceive and interact with their environment. The research paper aims to understand and reflect how media texts chiefly *Desh*, one of the prime Bengali literary magazines have documented a generation's cultural evolution, its changing aspects, popular and emerging trends offering readers a window into the diverse tapestry of Bengali society, highlighting both the mundane and the extraordinary aspects of daily existence. Content and discourse analysis for both literary and non literary texts shall be employed as textual strategies. Methodological tools of ethnography, cultural anthropology shall be applied in the study. Conceptual framework of representations and popular culture will be particularly instrumental in capturing the changing dynamics of the selected decade. The time frame selected is the decade of early 90s. The study thus aims to analyze the contents-essays, articles, advertisements and short stories published in the magazine in order to attempt an epistemological approach to establish the validity of the media texts as representative tools in gaining a deeper understanding of how Bengali *Desh* magazines of the 1990s captured the vibrancy, complexity, and resilience of everyday life in Bengal, leaving an indelible mark on the cultural landscape of the region.

Keywords: Everyday; Media Texts; Popular Culture; Literary; Non Literary

1. Introduction

The notion of 'everyday' generally refers to the daily routine, activities and experiences that people engage in on a daily basis and exploring the theme of everyday in literary magazines offers a unique opportunity to go deeper and delve into the ordinary moments that constitute our lives and the profound meanings embedded within them. Several authors, writers or poets have documented the beauty, complexity, rich variety and significance of everyday experience through their mediums-fiction, poetry, essays, and several such creative expressions. Having its focus on 'everyday', literary magazines can truly highlight the universal aspects of human existence, popular culture, its changing trends, subtle nuances of human interactions while celebrating the uniqueness of individual perspectives and cultures.

Behind the parallel line of mainstream literature, the role of literary magazines and periodicals have remained immensely significant. If the proverbial 'literature is the mirror of society' proves true across all cultures and nations, then probably the place of literary magazines can no less be considered as trivial or less significant. With the introduction of the first printing presses across Europe, 17th Century for the first time had seen the earliest rise of the concept known today as 'magazines' and these were not published in the format, known today as the common standard of a literary magazine. Rather, these were printed and published as the form of brochures, political pamphlets or almanacs etc.

Since mid 18th Century, and particularly during the 19th Century Bengal Renaissance, books and magazines have remained a medium of mass entertainment. With the gradual advent of modern printing press and printing technology, publishing houses flourished rapidly in Kolkata. And one by one new literary magazines

took place, offering a multi dimensional 'reading material' for the common mass. Literary magazines like 'Desh', 'Anandalok', 'Shuktara', 'Sanada', 'Safar', 'Saptahik Bartaman', 'Ananda Mela' or 'Naba Kallol' etc. have become immensely popular with the reading public of Kolkata. Decade after decade these literary magazines have enthralled the readers of various sections of Bengali society by offering an enriching experience of poems, articles, essays, travelogues, periodic novels and many more.

Considered still to be the best literary magazine of the Bengali-speaking intelligentsia, and published since 1933, *Desh* magazine has remained a prime source of mass entertainment to readers of Bengal. Rich with an abundance of resources, *Desh* offered since decades, a rich variety of poems, essays, novellas, travelogues, short stories, film criticisms, contemporary art and culture and many more. Great Bengali literary figures and stalwarts like Sunil Gangopadhyay, Narendranath Chakraborty, Sagarmoy Ghosh were associated with the rich heritage of this prime literary magazine. As a literary bi monthly magazine, *Desh* performed its glorious tasks to represent the literary, socioeconomic changes and rich heritage of popular culture to its readers.

2. Research objectives

- The objective of the paper is to show how the representation of the emerging trends and social changes during 90s have been captured by the magazine which had an impact on the everyday life of people. Revolutionary changes and trans formative stages of development of the era of 90s got reflected in the published material. Tracks of the social changes, newly developed trends are to be located in the selected texts and their analysis.
- Documenting Bengali popular culture through print media is another relevant objective of the paper. Both the literary and non literary contents of *Desh* have reflected the state and condition of the prevalent popular culture. Keeping a chronological sequence of year wise issues, the objective is to showcase the popular culture during the decade of 90s. They serve as testimony in documenting the popular culture and its perceived impact on the daily life of the then people.
- Various non literary subjects such as advertisements, editorials have captured the essence of Indian popular culture. Apart from this, literary material such as short stories have represented the changing scenarios perceived in Indian popular culture. The objective is to have a comparative analysis between the literary and non literary thereby to show how popular culture got reflected in both the material in *Desh* creating a significant changes on the everyday life of Bengal.

3. Methodology and framework of analysis

The research paper shall have a technical selection between literary and non literary material. Through content analysis the purpose is to show how the revolutionary changes and trans formative stages of development of the earliest era of 1990-91 got reflected in the published material. Tracks of the social changes, newly developed trends are to be located in the selected texts and their analysis. Both the literary and non literary contents of *Desh* have reflected the state and condition of the prevalent popular everyday living culture. Keeping a chronological sequence of year wise issues, the objective is to showcase the popular culture during the decade of 90s. They serve as testimony in documenting the impact perceived in everyday living. Various non literary subjects such as advertisements, editorials have captured the essence of changing Bengali popular culture. Apart from this, literary material such as short stories have represented the changing scenarios perceived in 90s' popular culture. The objective is to have a comparative analysis between the literary and non literary thereby to show how through their pages, the magazine offered readers a window into the diverse tapestry of Bengali society, highlighting both the mundane and the extraordinary aspects of daily existence.

3.1 Popular culture

Popular culture, often referred to as pop culture, encompasses the broad range of ideas, practices, images, objects, and phenomena that are prevalent and mainstream within a society at a given point in time. It reflects the tastes, preferences, and interests of the general public and is often associated with mass media, entertainment, and consumerism. Popular culture is highly dynamic and evolves over time. It responds to shifts in societal values, technological advancements, and global trends. What is popular today may not be tomorrow, making it a constantly changing and adaptive phenomenon. Mass media, including television, film, music, literature, and now digital platforms, plays a significant role in shaping and disseminating popular culture. Celebrities, and media personalities have the power to influence trends and public opinion. With the increasing interconnections of the world, popular culture has become more global. Ideas, styles, and trends can quickly transcend geographical boundaries, leading to a shared global popular culture that often blends local and international elements. Popular culture is closely tied to consumer culture. The production and consumption of popular culture often involve commercial transactions, as seen in the entertainment industry, fashion, and the sale of merchandise associated with popular trends.

3.1.2 Raymond Williams: 'dominant', 'residual' and 'emergent' culture

One of the key figures on cultural theory is the renowned Mr. Raymond Williams¹, the Welsh Scholar, critic and a well known Marxist. His most influential book 'Marxism and Literature' (1977) had a global impact on the cultural studies across the world. To construct the theoretical framework the second chapter of the thesis shall include the concept of 'dominant', 'residual' and 'emergent' culture theorized by Mr. Williams. By 'dominant' Mr. Williams specifies that at any given point of time inside a particular social structure, there operates a central dominant trend of culture, which creates values, contemporary people recognize it as a 'living force' and in turn get effected or influenced by it. It is accepted as a dominant mechanism or system of meanings by which people try to understand the world and its cultural trends. 'Residual culture' is a cultural trend which was created in the past but because of its high relevance to the society it is revived, retained and found actively involved in the cultural process and become an effective element in present. The notion 'emergent' in cultural study signifies the constant creation of new meanings, new ideas, belief systems, new relationships and much more. As human beings constantly create new meanings and identities with a dominant trend of culture, therefore the notion of 'residual' and 'emergent' are to be explained or analyzed always in relation to the 'dominant'.

3.2 Media text as a form of representation

The paper shall explore the 'representative' power of the media text *Desh* in reflecting the emerging trends and changes occurred in the literature, society and culture in due course of time, creating a significant impact on the daily living and lifestyle. The research shall be conducted on the magazines published during the era of the early 90s (1990-91 in particular). The issues and volumes selected for the research begin from the year 1990. During 90s, the lifestyle and living of the Indians was heavily influenced by the newly developed technologies, such as color TVs, BPL tape recorders, black and white/coloured camera films, computers, washing machines, domestic refrigerators and more. Many new health drinks, wine, cigarettes, chocolates had an easy access into the urban areas of India as well as Bengal. Sensitive issues like growing consciousness on 'sex' and 'use of condoms' took its part into the sociocultural life of the Indians. One Bengali magazine thus was serving as cultural touchstone capturing the trends and essence of everyday life in Bengal. The decade of 90s was a period of significant social, economic and political change. *Desh* as a literary magazine well represented newly arrived trends and their changing aspects among masses. Through an analysis of several 'non literary' material, the research can show the changes perceived in the everyday life and living during the era of 90s. The magazine has also been publishing innumerable number of poems, essays, short stories, travel narratives, novels and novellas, science fiction articles, art and culture narratives, interviews and much more. There are many short stories, novels, short fictions or novellas by authors written on different subjects. Analyzed carefully, those literary materials can show the tracks of changes in produced a significant impact on everyday life.

4. Literary and Non literary content analysis in the volumes of *Desh* (1990-91)

Table: 1-Non literary and literary contents

SL. No	Volume & Issue	Non literary (Advertisements-1990-91)	Volume & Issue	Literary (Short stories-1990-91)
1	20 th January, 1990	An advertisement on HMT wrist watches	20 th January, 1990	A humorous short story 'Onoshon'
2	27 th January, 1990	A colored advertisement on the cigarette brand 'Chancellor'	3 rd February, 1990	A short story named 'Macher Kata'
3	3 rd February, 1990	An advertisement on 'Kohinoor' condoms	19 th January, 1991	A short story named 'Rip Van Winkle'
4	10 th February, 1990	An advertisement on Black & White camera films	2 nd March, 1991	A short story entitled 'Smriti Stombho'
5	28 th April, 1990	A page on the popular Rasna juice brand		
6	27 th September, 1990	An advertisement on the then popular jeans wear Avis		
7	20 th October, 1990	A coloured advertisement on 'Onida' television brand		
8	22 nd December, 1990	An advertisement on newly developed domestic tools		
9	9 th March, 1991	An advertisement which shows a cluster of cars promoting J.K. Steel in manufacturing cars		
10	15 th June, 1991	An advertisement on Cerelac health drink		
		Non literary (Articles, editorials, essays-1990-91)		

¹Celebrated Welsh socialist writer, a well known academician, also a Marxist critic and theorist.

11	17 th February, 1990	Two articles on University students residing in hostels		
12	10 th March, 1990	An article named 'Boro Sohor er Shomoshsha		
13	25 th August, 1990	Two articles on the emergence of video cassettes and DVD players		
14	8 th September, 1990	An article named 'Foot Path er Poshari'		
15	23 rd March, 1991	An article on the changes occurred in the sociocultural life of the Bengalis		
16	13 th July, 1991	A critical essay entitled 'Computer: Nirob Biplob'		

4.1 Non literary contents

As a literary literary magazine, *Desh* throughout the decade of 90s had published countless number of articles, essays, short features, science news and both black and white and coloured advertisements promoting new products, their market values and popular appeal among the masses. These are termed as non literary in the sense that they didn't portray any imaginary, artificially constructed narratives. Rather, they act as mirrors in depicting the popular trends and contemporary fascinations for the dominant traits exploring the theme of 'everyday' as depicted in the pages of the magazines of the 1990s, examining how they reflected the rhythms, aspirations, and challenges of everyday life during this tumultuous decade. The content analysis for the non literary shall study the advertisements exploring the changes arrived in popular culture, usage of new products in everyday life and their popular acceptance. Also the study shall aim to assess the selected articles, editorials and essays, analyzing the emerging trends, social change and transformation in daily life.

A study of advertisements

1990

- ❖ The 20th January issue of the magazine published an advertisement on the then trending HMT wrist watches arrived in Indian markets. Wearing wrist watches was nothing new in India. Decades of 1950, 60s, or even 80s had also that popular trend. But during the era of 90s, this popular trend became a dominant sociocultural trait associated with Indians. In their research² on Indian wrist watch market and its developing trends through consumers' behaviour, Dr. Kunal Bhattacharjee, Dr. Sikha Jain and Prof. Avadhoot Pol from the University of Pune had shown how over the decades popular choices got transformed on buying and wearing wrist watches in India. They have sketched the factual presentation of Indian watch industry from its first setting in 1961 up to 1997, the era when watch brands like Titan and Timex were entering into Indian markets and becoming part of the popular culture. The research shows the complete watch market map in India with fashion or sporty, classic or formal brands getting attention from the masses and an increase of purchasing watches took place in the early decade of 90s. During the era of 90s, wearing watches became a 'status symbol' for many common Indians. *Desh* as a literary magazine nicely portrays that popular cultural trend.
- ❖ The 27th January volume of the magazine printed an advertisement on the cigarette brand 'Chancellor'. As smoking cigarettes became a dominant trait, a habit among the elite upper middle class Bengali society, this advertisement and its repeat throughout several issues of the magazine thus reflects the growing trend of addiction for smoking.
- ❖ *Desh* magazine published on 3rd February printed an advertisement on 'Kohinoor' condoms. It shows a married couple with rose in their hands. Portraying significant changes in consciousness for sexlife, it also promotes an 'opentalk' on sex. The scientific notion of 'birth control' came into its full swing during the era of 90s. Condoms in the market, especially its usage as a commercial medical product became a popular trend. This advertisement portrays that.
- ❖ Similarly, the 10th February issue of the magazine had an advertisement on black and white camera films from Hindustan photo films and manufacturing company limited. At the beginning of the decade of 1990, neither there was rapid use of cell phone technology nor internet available for daily use. In markets, camera was just entering and making itself familiar with the cultural life of the Indians. The advertisement thus portrays the newly developed consciousness among people about video and photo capturing technology.
- ❖ The 28th April edition of *Desh* published an advertisement on the famous juice brand 'Rasna'. Because of the high rise of capitalism in the Western countries, Indian markets got tremendously influenced. Soft drinks and foreign brands like 'Pepsi', 'Thums Up', or 'Cola' arrived, getting their mass acceptance. 'Rasna' as juice brand became highly popular among the young kinds of the early 90s. Almost every Television serials or other programs started receiving the sponsorship of this most popular brand. This edition of the

²The Changing Demographic Profile of the Middle Class Indian Consumer in a Developing Market and its Manifestations on Buying Behaviour for Wrist Watches-An Analytical Study.

magazine, published two colored photos containing happy family life, deeply grounded into the very root of Indian culture. The description with written words typically represents the contemporary living culture of the middle class Indians.

- ❖ An advertisement published in the 27th September volume of *Desh* promoting 90s' popular Jeans wear brand 'Avis'. That trend became dominant in popular fashion during the decade of 90s. Among children and young adults, Jeans gained its popular acceptance and became a part of social culture. This advertisement thus becomes a representation of the changing popular trends on Indian dress and fashion.
- ❖ The issue of 20th October of *Desh* published a coloured advertisement on 'Onida' television brand. The decade of 90s saw the gradual rise of television inside the households of middle class Indians. But not every family could afford to purchase that. It was considered a pleasure and privilege to have a television set in the house. Giving television and radio sets as gift items on marriage ceremonies also became a popular trend. The tag line written in Bengali '*Porshir Irsha, Apnar Gorbo*³' shows that popular trend when purchasing a TV became almost a matter of pride, the object of jealousy for the neighbors too.
- ❖ The edition of *Desh* published in 22nd December printed an advertisement on newly developed domestic tools. During the first half of the decade of 90s, few Indian families were familiar with technologies like micro wave, electronic iron, roti maker, auto toaster or snack and sandwich maker. But the scene was changing rapidly. That changing popular trend, got represented by that advertisement. The brand Recold was promoting domestic equipment like micro oven or sandwich maker, the use of which was gradually becoming a popular trait among the Indians.

1991

- ❖ The 9th March volume printed an advertisement which shows a cluster of cars promoting J.K. Steel in manufacturing cars. This advertisement depicts the 90s' changing life and living culture. Purchasing new cars was becoming a symbol of aristocracy and status. Socio economic scenario was changing, a section from the upper class Indians became rich, so the need felt in purchasing new cars.
- ❖ 15th June edition had an advertisement on Cerelac health drink. It was a popular trend during 90s. Almost every Indian families had this tradition of providing Cerelac to their babies. This particular brand became a living symbol for the growing kids and new born babies of 90s. Along with other medicines and nutritious foods, it became customary to prescribe Cerelac by the doctors for the new born babies. That dominant daily living cultural trend is nicely represented here.

Articles, editorials, essays etc.

1990

- ❖ The volume of *Desh* published in 17th February presented two articles on University students residing in hostels. The first article named 'Srinkholito Ujjol Pakhira' has the depiction of the entire scenario of the life and activities of girls staying in various hostels in Kolkata. Coloured images depict the dress and saree, worn by them in hostel, their pastime with books and friends, organizing Saraswati puja inside the campus. The article also portrays busy schedules, growing pressure of studies, competitions, rushing for better career options and much more. The second article named 'Kolkatar Chatrabash' captures the life and living of the the boys in hostels. There was a passage which talks about a boy being asked why he was reading inside the closed doors and windows all shut? As the student came from a rural area so he couldn't tolerate the immense noise in Kolkata. The comment reflected the contemporary trend of leaving homelands for elite cities with the hope of gaining a better opportunity.
- ❖ The 10th March issue of the magazine printed an article named 'Boro Sohor er Shomoshsha' by Mr. Samarjit Kar. It focused on the changing aspects of Indian transportation system, its rapidly developed technologies. The article began first with the conversation between two daily passengers on train and their conversation revealed the first setting of television sets on Indian railway platforms. And because of its attraction, humorously it is told that passengers sometimes missed their trains. That was something new a phenomenon at the beginning of the era of 90s when Television sets were placed inside various railway platforms across the country.
- ❖ The volume of *Desh* published in 25th August presented two articles on the emergence of video cassettes and DVD players among the Indians. The first article named 'Video Bhoot na Vobishshot?' by Mr. Mriganko Sekhar Roy critically presents with realistic images the contemporary trend of watching video films. There is an image which shows the long line of children eagerly waiting to enter a video parlour. Another coloured photo with written inscription talks about the rapid increase of sale of VCR, DVD or PVC players. Due to the rise of video culture, cinema halls or multiplexes faced the challenge of gaining profit. Another article entitled 'Video Grash e Gram Bangla' by Mr. Manas Roy presents more vividly the negative scenario on how video culture was turning into watching blue films, creating troubles for many. Prior to the arrival of internet, face book, twitter, Instagram or you tube, those video cassettes became the most popular means of entertainment, turning into dominant cultural traits.

³It means, 'the jealousy of neighbours, but yours is a pride'.

- ❖ The 8th September volume of the magazine printed an article named 'Foot Path er Poshari' by Mr. Swapan Sinha. It depicts the very realistic scenario of the rising road side stalls and markets, highlighting the condition of buyers and sellers on the foot paths of Kolkata. The coloured photographs present the living trends of the poor middle class Indians. Decade of 90s, saw the gradual rise of noisy street corners, fast food courts, sellers and buyers interacting with each other, office staffs taking their lunch from foot path food stalls and etc. This article vividly sketches those trends.

1991

- ❖ A wonderful treatment of the changes occurred in the sociocultural life of the Bengalis have been nicely brought into the essay 'Bangalir Shong Bodol' by Mr. Harsha Dutta. Published in the 23rd March issue, the article depicts radical changes perceived in the prevalent culture of the Bengalis. It talks about playing Holi not from the sense of devotion, but as vulgar games using harmful cheap colors from local markets, arrival of ice creams replacing age old tradition of curd in a marriage banquet, gradual loss of ethnic foods (pitha, pooli or payesh) from the social life being replaced by cake, fast food and other junk food items.
- ❖ The magazine published in 13th July includes a critical essay entitled 'Computer: Nirob Biplob' by Mr. Utpol Bannerjee. The article sketched the increased use of computers on all spheres of socioeconomic life in India during 90s. It was a growing new trend. Several coloured images portray the rapid use of computers in Indian hospitals and railways. It also shows robotic technology manipulated by computers, playing chess by computers, impact on journalism and printing technology, office workers eagerly sitting in a computer coaching institute, typing words in computer screens etc.

4.2 Literary contents

Apart from all such non literary material, *Desh* since its beginning, was publishing well written short stories, poems, serialized novels, travel narratives, novellas and many such contents which are considered as pure literary. These literary contents, chiefly the short stories reveal their intrinsic values in reflecting the spirit of 'everyday' upon the backdrop contemporary socioeconomic changes. The analysis aims to focus on how several short stories reflect upon the markers of change in everyday living during the decade of 90s.

A study of select short stories

1990

- ❖ The 20th January issue of *Desh* published a humorous short story 'Onoshon' by the celebrated Bengali author Mr. Sanjiv Chatterjee. Centering the imaginary characters from a Bengali middle class family and prior to 6th December 1992, when in India the breaking of Babri Masjid took place, the story captures the phase of conflict and sociopolitical turmoils. The characters and their conversation at one point of time brought into readers' notice those tensed contemporary issues. The short story remains ethnographic too, because of its portrayal of typical Indian life, its domestic aspects, sensibilities, emotions, sociocultural cultural ties etc. At the beginning, the narration talks about newly installed TV, radio and record player being played inside the house and the excitement they generated. The various non literary advertisements on electronic gadgets published chronologically from 1990-94 in different volumes of *Desh* strengthened the fact that during 90s, middle class Indian families were encouraged to purchase such electronic gadgets. Prior to the advent of mobile and internet technology, the story depicts the pastime of the middle class housewives during hot noon days. Sewing a sweater for months till its completion or reading books shows the typical domesticity during 90s. At one point, the younger son of the aged protagonist loudly speaks about his desire for a visit to a Chinese restaurant, which throws light on the rising fast food industry. The lifestyle of a typical middle class government employee, his habits-daily rush, busy schedule, drinking tea during office hours have been vividly sketched. Towards the closing of the story, comments came through the characters, on contemporary issues of tensed political conditions of the country, such as the rising threat from Khalistani terrorists, turmoil in Jammu and Kashmir and immense clash occurred due to Babri masjid and Ram mandir issues.
- ❖ The 3rd February issue of the magazine had a short story named 'Macher Kata' by Mr. Bhagirath Misra which represents 90s' sociocultural and political trends and their influence on the lives of middle class Indians. Centering the fictional characters Badol and Komollesh, this story reflects on contemporary crises occurred due to the complexities in sociocultural texture. At one point, the character Badol admitted his inability to cope up with the changing atmosphere of society and decided to divert himself from the path of honesty. Further, there are issues of less income, joblessness, housewives rushing with LIC policies from door to door which reflect on 90s' restless life and changing atmosphere of living. The short story at the very beginning presents Komollesh's visit into a local fish market. Fish has always remained one of the most favoured food items for the Bengalis. Integrally associated, 'fish' becomes a part of living culture and marker of ethnic identity. The scene shows on how Komollesh, roams from corner to corner and tries to get a fish item for his family. Ethnic names of various fishes are given like 'Jiol', 'Pabda', 'Parshe', 'Chitol' etc. Komollesh tries to buy an entire chitol fish for just sixty rupees thus provides an information on the prevalent pricing system of fishes during the first half of the decade of 90s. Another character Badol leads a dishonest life using unfair means. His wife works on a clothing house. His elder son opened a shop at the backdoor of a cinema hall which mostly contained 'paan masala' and cigarette. He had a business of

supplying black tickets, when crowds thronged to watch a superhit film. As the decade of 90s, saw the rise of multiplexes or cinema halls in its full swing, it brought too unfair professions like selling black tickets. Those contemporary trends got reflected in the first part of the story. Popular domestic trends too have their depiction. For example, Badol received one pair of Bata pump shoes as gift items in his marriage. Another character of the short story is the middle aged Porimol da, about whom it is told that he devoted his times in creating political unions working as the vice president of the federation of government employees. This character typically throws light on contemporary political associations and clashes occurred among employees and political leaders. Other issues reflected in the story are contemporary office work culture, local elections, party politics etc.

1991

- ❖ The 19th January edition of *Desh* had a a short story named 'Rip Van Winkle' by Mr. Onkar Gupta which has the subject concerned with middle class metropolitan life and living inside newly constructed large flats. When the story opens, we see the character Prodosh Sanyal had purchased a new flat. Inside the rooms, he wanted to have for him a TV, fridge, radio and a record player-a reflection of the popular trend during 90s, when electronic gadgets were becoming an integral part of social living. Mr. Prodosh Sanyal then goes to the local market. The author provides here a rich description of contemporary scenes of buyers and sellers, their exchange of words, usage of local slang, increase in prices of essential commodities etc. When Prodosh boarded on a mini bus, an incident happened which utterly made him awe stricken. Inside the bus, one young boy was smoking inside a 'no smoking zone'. Prodosh strongly protested, but that boy did not listen and other passengers mocked and made fun of Prodosh. Then Prodosh suddenly remembered his thirty years old past experience of a similar bus journey. During that ride, a boy was found smoking, and instantly all the other passengers strongly protested against him. One person came forward and forcefully threw out the cigarette through the open window. The incident compelled him to think on the drastic changes that came over social life and living during the time span of just thirty years. Through this fictional incident, the readers get the scope of comparison between two time frames of the changes that came over social manners and human behaviours. Other part of the narrative talks about crises occurred in daily office goings. non availability of vehicles, too much crowd and noise, uncivilized manners of the common people etc. The author mentioned that twenty years ago the scene was peaceful. One scene in the story shows a middle aged woman's searching for an audio cassette of Michael Jackson, a global celebrity reaching towards the peak of popularity during the early era of 90s. The short story in a nutshell thus talks on the shifting stages of sociocultural development, changes and transformations.
- ❖ The 2nd March edition of the Magazine published a short story entitled 'Smriti Stombho' by Mr. Baidya Nath Mukherjee. The story becomes representative of the then political trends of Communism and Marxism prevalent in Bengal. It talks on the growing powers enjoyed by various political trade unions and their controlling of the state affairs. The character Shymol Lahiri in the short story was the leader of leftist trade union in Bengal and the opening of the informs that Mr. Lahiri sacrificed his life for the empowerment of the trade union movements. Addressing one another as 'comrade' in the leftist politics was the dominant political traits prevalent in Bengal during the leftist rule. Shymol and his widowed wife Topu are addressed as 'comrades' too. Beside that, there are satirical strokes in the story. Shymol's wife Topu got a job in a local government office and the readers came to know that because of the influence of leftist political union, if she didn't care for punctuality and office decorum, it would not be a problem at all. The short story thus throws light on the prevalent sociocultural and political traits, union culture, labour movement, political brigade and their influence on the then office workers and employees.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the representation of everyday life in the 90s' Bengali *Desh* magazine provided a wonderful glimpse into multilayered experiences of Bengali society during that era. From the noisy and bustling streets of Kolkata to the serene countryside *Desh* provided a rich tapestry of ordinary life, celebrating the joys and sorrows, resilience, and creativity, diversity and culture of its people. The research paper thus attempted to show how several non literary and literary contents published in *Desh* magazine portray the change and transformation arrived in the popular culture in Bengal as well as India within the decade of early 90. Establishing a logical connection between literary and non literary contents in *Desh* and their representative power to reflect on the changing dynamics of popular culture the paper also tried to show whether it was through its coverage of cultural events, advertisements, stories of human interest, or sociopolitical commentary, the magazine truly served as a mirror reflecting the aspirations of everyday life of Bengali society.

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