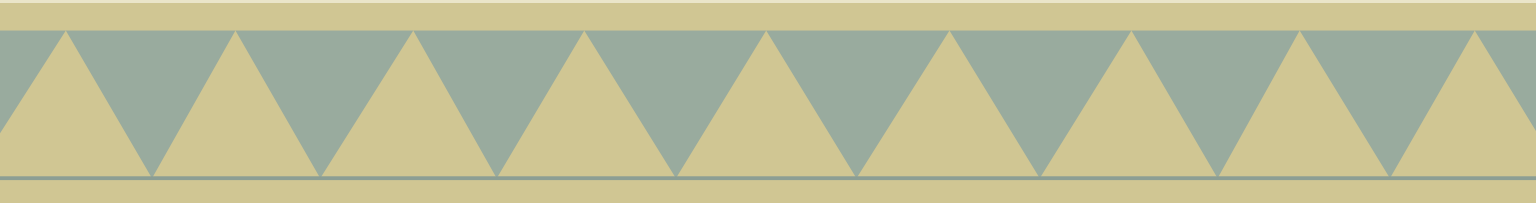
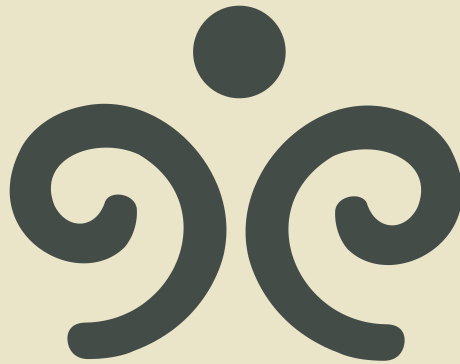




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TRADITIONS IN TRANSITION: HYBRIDISATION AND RESISTANCE IN A GLOBALISED WORLD

*Priyanka Priyadarshini Ratha**

ABSTRACT

Research in cultural studies has progressively shifted from viewing tradition as a static and immutable concept to understanding it as a dynamic, living practice that is continuously shaped by social transformation and historical processes. Tradition is now recognized as being actively produced, transformed, and contested through interactions between local and global forces within the context of globalization. Central to this discourse are the concepts of hybridisation and resistance. Hybridisation emphasizes how traditions are not fixed entities but adapt and evolve through cultural interactions, blending local and global elements creatively. Resistance, on the other hand, encapsulates the ways in which communities preserve, reaffirm, and reinterpret traditions as forms of cultural autonomy and identity assertion against homogenizing global pressures. These two processes are dialectically intertwined, with traditions often simultaneously embodying hybrid influences and forms of resistance to cultural imposition. By exploring traditions through the lenses of hybridisation and resistance, cultural studies reveal how communities negotiate continuity and change in a globalized world. This approach foregrounds the agency of local actors in shaping cultural meanings and highlights the complex interplay between historical legacies, power asymmetries, and transnational influences. It redefines tradition as a dynamic and contested force essential for understanding contemporary cultural identity, knowledge systems, and social resilience.

Keywords: Hybridisation, Cultural Resistance, Globalisation, Cultural Sustainability, Tradition in Transition, Agency.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization stands as one of the most transformative forces shaping contemporary culture worldwide. It facilitates the rapid and extensive movement of capital, people, information, and commodities across borders, thereby fostering unprecedented cultural interactions and exchanges. This dynamic interplay between the local and the global gives rise to novel cultural forms that challenge traditional boundaries and definitions (Appadurai, 1996). Globalization engenders a complex process where local cultures encounter global influences, resulting in hybrid cultural expressions that are neither entirely local nor wholly global. This interaction is not simply a one-way imposition of global culture over local traditions but a multifaceted negotiation where diverse cultural actors engage with, adapt, resist, or appropriate global currents in ways that reflect their unique contexts and aspirations.

**Doctoral Scholar, Berhampur University, India.*

The process of globalization, therefore, destabilizes static and monolithic conceptions of tradition. Traditionally, many societies have viewed their customs, rituals, and beliefs as fixed, timeless phenomena that define their cultural identity and continuity. However, this perspective is increasingly challenged by the realities of a globalized world, where cultural practices are subject to continuous reinterpretation and transformation. Hobsbawm and Ranger argue for understanding tradition as a dynamic, contested, and negotiated process rather than a fixed inheritance. Traditions are actively constructed and reconstructed by cultural actors who seek to maintain a sense of identity and continuity amid changing circumstances. This conceptual shift recognizes that tradition is not immune to change; rather, it evolves in response to internal dynamics and external influences, including those brought about by globalization. (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 2012).

The present article seeks to explore the theoretical perspectives on tradition and modernity, particularly focusing on how traditions operate as sites of hybridization and resistance within a globalized context. It examines how cultural actors respond to global influences by either appropriating or contesting them to preserve their cultural agency. This dual process reflects the tension between continuity and change, where traditions are simultaneously transformed and defended. The analysis also considers the broader implications of these processes for cultural sustainability, emphasizing the need to understand how cultures can adapt and thrive without losing their distinctive identities.

Hybridization, as a concept, captures the blending and merging of cultural elements from different origins, resulting in new, syncretic forms. However, the meaning of hybridization is subject to debate, particularly among groups concerned with preserving cultural authenticity and autonomy. Such groups often perceive globalization as a threat to their cultural heritage, fearing that global cultural flows may dilute or commodify their traditions. This concern fuels various forms of resistance aimed at safeguarding cultural distinctiveness. Resistance can manifest in diverse ways, including the revitalization of indigenous languages, the reaffirmation of traditional rituals, and political movements advocating for cultural sovereignty. These efforts reflect a conscious attempt to assert control over cultural representation and practice in the face of homogenizing global forces.

The resistance to globalization, while rooted in a desire to preserve cultural authenticity, paradoxically contributes to the emergence of local claims that challenge the homogenizing tendencies of global culture. Communities engaged in such resistance zealously protect their traditions from being 'watered down' or commercialized because these traditions constitute vital sites of meaning, memory, and belonging. They serve as anchors for collective identity, providing a sense of continuity and rootedness in an increasingly interconnected and often disorienting world. This protective stance underscores the significance of tradition not merely as a set of inherited practices but as a living, meaningful resource that sustains social cohesion and cultural vitality.

The interplay between globalization and tradition thus involves complex processes of negotiation, adaptation, and contestation. On one hand, globalization introduces new cultural elements and opportunities for exchange, fostering innovation and cross-cultural understanding. On the other hand, it poses challenges to cultural diversity by promoting dominant cultural forms that may overshadow or marginalize local traditions. The resulting cultural landscape is characterized by hybridity, where elements of different cultural origins coexist, interact, and transform each other. This hybridity is not uniform or unidirectional; it varies across contexts and is shaped by power relations, historical legacies, and the agency of cultural actors.

Theoretical perspectives on modernity and tradition provide important frameworks for understanding these dynamics. Modernity is often associated with processes of rationalization,

secularization, and individualization, which can disrupt traditional social structures and cultural practices. However, rather than leading to the wholesale disappearance of tradition, modernity frequently involves the reconfiguration of traditions in new forms. This reconfiguration reflects the ongoing negotiation between the forces of change and the desire for continuity. In a globalized world, traditions are no longer confined to local or national boundaries but are influenced by and contribute to global cultural flows. This expanded cultural field creates both opportunities and tensions for cultural sustainability.

Cultural sustainability refers to the capacity of cultures to maintain their distinctiveness and vitality over time while adapting to changing conditions. It involves preserving cultural diversity, fostering cultural creativity, and ensuring that cultural practices remain meaningful and relevant to their communities. In the context of globalization, cultural sustainability requires balancing openness to new influences with the protection of cultural heritage. This balance is achieved through processes of hybridization and resistance, where cultural actors actively engage with global currents to create new cultural forms while defending core elements of their traditions.

The revitalization of indigenous languages exemplifies one form of resistance to globalization that contributes to cultural sustainability. Language is a fundamental carrier of cultural knowledge, identity, and worldview. The loss of indigenous languages due to globalization and dominant language pressures threatens cultural diversity and the transmission of traditional knowledge. Efforts to revive and promote indigenous languages involve educational programs, community initiatives, and policy advocacy aimed at reversing language decline. These efforts not only preserve linguistic heritage but also empower communities to assert their cultural autonomy and resist cultural homogenization.

Similarly, the reassertion of traditional rituals serves as a means of cultural resistance and continuity. Rituals embody collective memory, social values, and spiritual beliefs, providing a sense of belonging and identity. In a globalized context, traditional rituals may be adapted or reinterpreted to address contemporary challenges while maintaining their symbolic significance. Political movements for cultural sovereignty further illustrate how communities mobilize to protect their cultural rights and assert control over cultural resources. Such movements often seek legal recognition, cultural autonomy, and protection from external exploitation or misrepresentation.

These diverse forms of resistance highlight the active role of cultural actors in shaping the outcomes of globalization. Rather than passive recipients of global influences, communities engage in strategic negotiations to preserve their cultural agency. This agency is crucial for cultural sustainability, as it enables cultures to navigate the complexities of globalization without losing their distinctive identities. The tension between hybridization and resistance reflects the ongoing struggle to balance openness and protection, innovation and tradition.

Globalisation, while a worldwide phenomenon, manifests unevenly across regions, particularly in the Global South where histories of colonialism, uneven development, and cultural plurality shape distinct trajectories of cultural transformation (Srnicek, 2017; Couldry & Mejias, 2019). In contexts such as India and other postcolonial societies, traditions are not merely inherited practices but are deeply embedded in ongoing struggles over identity, autonomy, and cultural representation (Arora, 2019). The interaction between global flows of capital, media, and technology with local socio-cultural systems produces complex negotiations that are both enabling and disruptive (Bucher, 2018). In India, where linguistic diversity, indigenous knowledge systems, and plural religious practices coexist, traditions encounter global modernity not as passive remnants of the past but as active, evolving processes. These processes reflect what Appadurai (1996) conceptualises

as disjunctive global cultural flows, where local actors reinterpret global influences in culturally specific ways. This makes the Global South a critical analytical site for examining how traditions are reconstituted through both adaptation and resistance (Milan & Trere, 2019). Research in cultural studies has progressively shifted from viewing tradition as static and immutable to understanding it as dynamic and continually negotiated. This paper builds on this shift by examining the dialectical relationship between hybridisation and resistance. Hybridisation reflects the blending of local and global cultural elements, while resistance captures efforts by communities to preserve, reinterpret, and assert cultural autonomy in the face of homogenising pressures. Drawing on key theorists such as Bhabha (1994), Hobsbawm (1983), and Spivak (1988), this study argues that traditions are neither purely preserved nor entirely transformed; rather, they are continuously reworked through complex interactions shaped by power, history, and agency. By situating the analysis within India and the broader Global South, the study foregrounds how cultural sustainability depends on the capacity of traditions to adapt creatively while maintaining meaningful continuity.

Globalization profoundly reshapes cultural landscapes by facilitating unprecedented interactions between local and global cultural forms. This process destabilizes fixed notions of tradition, revealing tradition as a dynamic, contested, and negotiated phenomenon. Theoretical perspectives on tradition and modernity illuminate how cultural actors respond to globalization through hybridization and resistance, striving to maintain cultural agency and sustainability. Resistance efforts, including language revitalization, ritual reassertion, and political movements, underscore the importance of tradition as a vital resource for meaning, memory, and belonging. These dynamics illustrate that cultural sustainability in a globalized world depends on the capacity of cultures to adapt creatively while safeguarding their core identities against homogenizing pressures. The ongoing negotiation between global influences and local traditions thus shapes the future of cultural diversity and vitality in an interconnected world.

RESEARCH QUESTION

How do traditions function as sites of both hybridisation and resistance in a globalised world, and what implications do these processes have for cultural sustainability and cultural agency?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The present study is guided by the following research objectives:

- To critically examine the reconceptualization of tradition from a static, inherited entity to a dynamic, negotiated, and contested cultural practice within the context of globalisation.
- To analyse the processes of cultural hybridisation through which local traditions adapt, transform, and incorporate global influences while retaining cultural specificity.
- To explore forms of cultural resistance employed by communities to preserve, reaffirm, and reinterpret traditions in response to homogenising global forces.
- To investigate the role of power, inequality, and cultural politics in shaping whose traditions are legitimised, marginalised, or appropriated in global–local interactions.
- To assess the implications of hybridisation and resistance for cultural sustainability, particularly in relation to identity, knowledge systems, and intergenerational transmission.

METHODOLOGY

The present study employs comparative illustrative cases as a methodological strategy to bridge theoretical abstraction with grounded empirical analysis. Rather than presenting isolated examples,

the paper selects three distinct yet interconnected cases—tribal ecological practices, indigenous language revival, and digital rituals—to comparatively examine how hybridisation and resistance operate across different cultural domains. These cases are not intended as exhaustive ethnographic studies but as analytically chosen illustrations that reveal patterns, variations, and continuities in cultural transformation within the Global South.

First, an example from tribal practices in India can illustrate the dialectical relationship between hybridisation and resistance. Among the Dongria Kondh community in Odisha, traditional ecological knowledge systems—especially those related to sacred groves and shifting cultivation—have increasingly interacted with state-led development and environmental discourses. While external interventions have introduced new agricultural techniques and conservation frameworks, the community has selectively adopted certain practices while resisting others, particularly mining projects that threaten their sacred landscapes (Padel & Das, 2010; Survival International, 2013). This reflects hybridisation in adaptive practices, alongside resistance as cultural and ecological assertion (Bhabha, 1994).

Second, language revival movements offer a powerful case of resistance intertwined with hybridisation. The revitalisation of indigenous languages such as Santhali demonstrates how communities mobilise both traditional and modern tools. While rooted in oral traditions, the movement has embraced digital platforms, Unicode scripts, and social media to expand linguistic visibility. This creates a hybrid cultural space where tradition is preserved through modern technological mediation, aligning with the theoretical insights on cultural agency and subaltern voice (Spivak, 1988; Arora, 2019).

Third, the emergence of digital rituals, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, provides a contemporary example of hybridisation. In many parts of India, religious practices such as online (puja), virtual festivals, and livestreamed ceremonies became normalized. These practices did not replace traditional rituals but reconfigured them, allowing diasporic and urban populations to participate remotely (Couldry & Mejias, 2019). Here, digital mediation becomes a site of cultural innovation, while also raising questions about authenticity and commodification—thus linking to both hybridisation and subtle forms of resistance against cultural erosion (Bucher, 2018).

Comparatively, these cases differ in scale (local, community, trans-local), domain (ecology, language, religion), and form of agency (collective, cultural, networked), yet they converge in demonstrating that hybridisation and resistance are not mutually exclusive but co-constitutive processes. This comparative approach allows the study to move beyond descriptive accounts and identify how power, technology, and identity shape cultural negotiation differently across contexts. In doing so, it operationalizes the theoretical insights of Arjun Appadurai, Homi K. Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, demonstrating that traditions are actively reworked through context-specific yet comparable processes of adaptation and resistance. These examples concretize the “dialectical relationship” by showing that hybridisation is not merely cultural blending, but a negotiated process shaped by power, identity, and agency, while resistance is not purely oppositional but often creative and adaptive (Appadurai, 1996). This nuanced approach facilitates a deeper understanding of cultural transformation, avoiding simplistic views of traditions as either victims of globalisation or static relics of the past.

The study has specified that it draws on a purposive selection of texts and cases rather than a broad, unspecified corpus. For instance, the sample includes: (i) key theoretical texts such as those by Appadurai (1996), Bhabha (1994), Hobsbawm (1983), and Spivak (1988) to establish the conceptual foundation; (ii) selected policy documents and cultural reports (e.g., UNESCO

frameworks on intangible heritage) to understand institutional narratives; and (iii) 2–3 illustrative case studies (such as indigenous language revival, tribal ecological practices, and digital rituals in India and the Global South). The rationale for the selection of these sources is chosen because they represent both dominant and subaltern perspectives, and allow for comparative analysis across different cultural contexts.

The study has adopted a qualitative, interpretive approach combining critical discourse analysis, narrative analysis and thematic analysis. Critical discourse analysis (CDA), informed by scholars like Fairclough (1995), is used to examine how “tradition,” “modernity,” and “globalisation” are constructed within academic and policy texts, revealing underlying power relations and ideological assumptions. Alongside this, thematic coding is applied to the selected case studies to identify recurring patterns related to hybridisation (e.g., adaptation, syncretism, digital mediation) and resistance (e.g., preservation, identity assertion, cultural sovereignty) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This dual approach ensures both macro-level (discursive) and micro-level (case-based) analysis. Narrative Analysis is applied to interpret how communities construct meaning around tradition in changing contexts.

A qualitative and interpretive methodology is appropriate because the study seeks to understand meaning-making processes, cultural negotiations, and symbolic practices rather than measure quantifiable variables. The combination of discourse analysis and thematic coding allows the research to bridge theory and empirical illustration, aligning with the paper’s objective of demonstrating the “dialectical relationship” between hybridisation and resistance. Moreover, this approach is consistent with postcolonial and subaltern perspectives, particularly those of Spivak (1988), which emphasize the importance of interpreting marginalized voices and contested narratives.

A CONCEPTUAL & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social theory has traditionally been anchored in the binary opposition between tradition and modernity, where tradition is often characterized as static, backward-looking, and resistant to change, while modernity is framed as dynamic, progressive, and oriented towards innovation and development (Giddens, 1991). This dichotomous framework has long influenced scholarly understandings of cultural and social transformations, positioning tradition and modernity as mutually exclusive categories locked in conflict. However, contemporary theoretical developments challenge this rigid opposition by emphasizing the fluidity and interpenetration of these categories. It is now increasingly recognized that tradition and modernity do not function as simple oppositional forces; rather, they coexist and interact in complex ways, allowing for the emergence of hybrid cultural forms and spaces that accommodate multiple identities and practices simultaneously (Bhabha, 1994).

The process of globalization further complicates this relationship by introducing dynamics of simultaneous homogenization and heterogenization. On one hand, global media networks, transnational consumer cultures, and international flows of capital and information promote a homogenizing effect, disseminating dominant cultural norms and practices across diverse localities. This global convergence often leads to the standardization of lifestyles, values, and consumption patterns, which can be perceived as a form of cultural imperialism or dominance. On the other hand, local cultures do not passively absorb these global influences; instead, they actively respond, reinterpret, and resist, thereby generating new forms of cultural heterogeneity (Tomlinson, 2007). This tension between global homogenizing pressures and local heterogenizing responses produces a dynamic cultural landscape marked by diversity, negotiation, and contestation.

Theories of cultural hybridization, including concepts such as glocalization and creolization, offer valuable frameworks for understanding how global and local elements converge to create new, syncretic cultural forms. Glocalization, as articulated by Robertson refers to the simultaneous occurrence of universalizing and particularizing tendencies, where global processes are localized and adapted to fit specific cultural contexts. (Robertson, 1995) This concept underscores the agency of local actors in shaping global influences to produce culturally meaningful practices. Similarly, creolization, discussed by Hannerz highlights the mixing and blending of different cultural traditions to form novel, hybrid identities and expressions. These frameworks move beyond the binary of tradition versus modernity by emphasizing the fluidity and creativity inherent in cultural interactions, where boundaries are porous and identities are continually reshaped. (Hannerz, 1992)

Resistance to cultural imperialism and globalization can take multiple forms, ranging from overt political action to subtle everyday practices. Cultural defence involves efforts to preserve and revitalize traditional cultural practices and values in the face of external pressures. Identity politics mobilizes marginalized groups to assert their cultural distinctiveness and demand recognition and rights within broader social and political structures. Everyday forms of resistance, as theorized by Scott encompass the subtle, often hidden acts by which individuals and communities negotiate power relations and contest dominant narratives. (Scott, 1985) These modes of resistance highlight the active role of subordinated groups in shaping cultural dynamics and challenging hegemonic forces.

Postcolonial and subaltern perspectives provide critical tools for analysing the power asymmetries inherent in cultural negotiations, particularly at the margins of global and national systems. The work of Spivak (1988) and Chakrabarty (2009) draws attention to the voices and experiences of marginalized populations who have historically been silenced or marginalized in dominant discourses. These perspectives emphasize the importance of recognizing and engaging with subaltern agency, strategies of survival, and forms of knowledge production that contest and complicate dominant global narratives. By foregrounding marginal voices, postcolonial and subaltern theories enrich our understanding of cultural hybridization and resistance as processes deeply embedded in unequal power relations.

The conceptual framework for analysing traditions in transition through the lenses of hybridization and resistance is inherently interdisciplinary, drawing insights from cultural studies, anthropology, sociology, and globalization theory. This integrative approach allows for a nuanced understanding of tradition not as a fixed, static entity but as a contested and evolving category. Tradition is continuously reinterpreted and renegotiated through ongoing processes of cultural exchange, adaptation, and contestation. It is shaped by historical legacies, contemporary power dynamics, and the agency of individuals and communities navigating changing social realities.

By conceptualizing tradition as a dynamic and contested category, this framework challenges essentialist and reductionist views that portray tradition as inherently opposed to modernity or progress. Instead, it recognizes that traditions are actively constructed and reconstructed in response to internal and external influences, including globalization, migration, and political struggles. This perspective acknowledges the multiplicity of traditions that coexist within societies and the ways in which they intersect with modern forms and practices. It also highlights the role of cultural hybridity and resistance in shaping contemporary identities and social formations.

In essence, the evolving relationship between tradition and modernity, complicated by globalization, is best understood through the interplay of homogenizing and heterogenizing forces, the creation of syncretic cultural forms through hybridization, and the active resistance

of local cultures to dominant global influences. Postcolonial and subaltern perspectives provide critical insights into the power relations that underlie these processes, emphasizing the agency of marginalized groups in cultural negotiations. The interdisciplinary framework for analysing traditions in transition offers a comprehensive and dynamic approach to understanding processes of cultural change, contestation, and continuity in contemporary societies. Tradition has historically been conceptualised as a set of inherited customs, beliefs, values, and practices transmitted across generations, often perceived as static or resistant to change. However, such a view inadequately captures the fluid and negotiated nature of traditions in a globalised and rapidly transforming world. Rather than remaining fixed, traditions are continually reinterpreted, selectively adapted, and contested in response to shifting social, economic, political, and cultural contexts. This conventional understanding positions tradition as a static repository of cultural elements, serving as a link between past and present communities. It is often perceived as an unalterable body of knowledge and behaviour that defines group identity and continuity. However, this view has been problematized by scholars who argue that tradition is not merely a passive inheritance but an active, ongoing process.

Hobsbawm and Ranger (2012) introduced a critical perspective by describing tradition as a kind of “ticket” or “pass” that grants access to social legitimacy and participation within a community. Their work emphasizes that traditions are not necessarily ancient or authentic but can be deliberately invented or modified to serve contemporary purposes. This insight challenges the assumption that traditions are fixed and instead frames them as strategic tools used by individuals or groups to negotiate power and identity in changing social contexts.

Smith offers a complementary perspective by emphasizing the production and reproduction of traditions as processes that respond to evolving circumstances. According to Smith, traditions are negotiable sites where meaning is contested, adapted, and reinterpreted over time. This view acknowledges that traditions are not static but fluid, capable of incorporating innovations and changes without losing their symbolic significance. It allows for a more nuanced understanding of tradition as a living, adaptive system that evolves in dialogue with social, political, and cultural transformations. (Smith, 2012).

Together, these perspectives redefine tradition as a dynamic and flexible concept rather than a fixed inheritance. It becomes a site for negotiation and creativity, where communities leverage their past to form their present and future identities. Recognizing that traditions can serve dual roles—maintaining cultural heritage and adapting to contemporary challenges—this view emphasizes the variability of what is deemed traditional based on context and purpose. Tradition emerges not as a static entity but a dynamic, negotiable process shaped by human agency and social interaction, underscoring its importance in cultural continuity and change.

GLOBALISATION AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF TRADITIONS

Market forces, shaped by neoliberal economic policies, have transformed cultural practices into commodified goods that are subject to global consumption patterns, altering the traditional meanings and functions of these practices (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2009). The rapid diffusion of cultural forms through media and technology accelerates this process but also contributes to cultural homogenisation by privileging dominant languages, aesthetics, and narratives, often marginalizing minority cultures (Couldry, 2012). Nevertheless, these same technologies empower diasporic communities by facilitating transnational cultural flows, enabling them to sustain connections with their heritage while simultaneously adapting traditions to new social and geographic contexts (Clifford, 1994). Migration and diaspora further complicate traditional cultural boundaries by

fostering hybrid practices that both diffuse culture and reassert identity in dynamic ways (Vertovec, 2009). Education and language policies hold ambivalent roles in this transformation; they can support the preservation and transmission of traditional knowledge or, conversely, promote assimilation into dominant cultures, which may undermine the survival and vitality of minority traditions (Fishman, 1991). Together, these factors illustrate the complex interplay between globalisation and tradition, highlighting how traditions are continuously reshaped through negotiation between preservation and adaptation within global-local contexts.

HYBRIDISATION OF TRADITIONS

Hybridisation is prominently visible in the adaptation and transformation of various cultural expressions such as rituals, festivals, and belief systems, which increasingly incorporate global elements while retaining their local meanings and significance (Meyer, 2019). For instance, religious festivals often blend traditional practices with global influences, including the incorporation of international music styles or the use of digital technologies, resulting in innovative performative forms that resonate with diverse audiences (Eade and Mele, 2002). This fusion extends beyond rituals to everyday cultural domains such as cuisine, dress, music, and healing systems, all of which reflect complex negotiations between indigenous traditions and global cultural flows (Hannerz, 1992). Hybrid identities are particularly salient among youth populations and in areas where urban and rural cultures intersect, as individuals in these contexts navigate and reconcile multiple cultural affiliations simultaneously (Hall, 2015). Digital platforms serve as crucial arenas for cultural remixing, where users actively create, share, and disseminate hybrid cultural expressions. These virtual spaces expand opportunities for identity experimentation and foster new forms of community building that transcend geographic and cultural boundaries (Jenkins, 2006). Collectively, these processes illustrate how hybridisation operates as a dynamic and multifaceted phenomenon, reshaping traditions and identities within the ongoing interplay of local and global influences.

First, the discussion on hybridisation can be strengthened by engaging with recent scholarship on digital culture. Scholars such as Dijck (2018) and Couldry & Mejias (2019) highlight how digital platforms are not neutral spaces but actively shape cultural production and circulation. Their work on “platform society” and “data colonialism” demonstrates that cultural hybridisation today occurs within algorithmically curated environments, where visibility, popularity, and even authenticity is influenced by platform logics. Integrating these insights would allow the paper to extend Appadurai’s (1996) notion of global cultural flows into the digital age.

Second, the concept of resistance needs to be updated by incorporating debates on platform capitalism. Zuboff (2019) argues that contemporary capitalism operates through the extraction and commodification of behavioural data, reshaping social and cultural practices. In this context, cultural resistance is no longer limited to preserving traditions but also involves negotiating digital surveillance, data ownership, and algorithmic control. For instance, communities using social media to revive traditions are simultaneously participating in—and resisting—the commodifying structures of digital platforms. This adds a new layer to the dialectical relationship between hybridisation and resistance.

Third, recent work on algorithmic culture further deepens the analysis of power and inequality. Bucher (2018) and Gillespie (2018) examine how algorithms influence cultural visibility, shaping which traditions gain prominence and which remain marginalized. This aligns closely with the paper’s existing concern with cultural politics and subaltern agency, but updates it by showing how power now operates through opaque technological systems rather than solely through state or market actors.

RESISTANCE AND CULTURAL ASSERTION

Resistance to cultural erasure manifests in a variety of forms, ranging from organized revival movements aiming to reclaim or reinvent traditions to everyday practices that assert and celebrate cultural distinctiveness (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 2012). Indigenous and local communities actively mobilize to safeguard their cultural heritage from the homogenizing effects of globalization and dominant cultural pressures. These efforts are frequently supported by NGOs and grassroots organizations that advocate for cultural rights and promote policies to protect intangible cultural assets (Smith, 2012). Symbolic resistance plays a crucial role in this process, with art, language revitalization, and ritual serving as powerful tools to maintain cultural identity and challenge prevailing dominant narratives (Bourdieu, 1991). These acts are not merely defensive reactions; they are also creative and generative, leading to the emergence of new traditions that resonate with contemporary social realities. By producing culturally meaningful responses, communities assert their agency and negotiate their place within broader socio-political contexts. This ongoing process of cultural assertion highlights the dynamic nature of tradition, emphasizing that resistance to cultural erasure is both a preservation of heritage and an adaptive, innovative engagement with modernity.

POWER, INEQUALITY AND CULTURAL POLITICS

Control over cultural narratives constitutes a pivotal arena for power struggles in the context of globalization, where dominant groups often engage in cultural appropriation, raising significant ethical concerns related to exploitation and misrepresentation of marginalized cultures (Young, 2010). This phenomenon contrasts with cultural exchange, which ideally involves mutual respect, dialogue, and equitable interaction among cultures. The dynamics of hybridisation and resistance are deeply influenced by intersectional factors such as gender, caste, class, and ethnicity, which determine whose voices are amplified and whose traditions gain recognition or are marginalized within these processes (Crenshaw, 2013). State policies play an ambiguous role in cultural politics; while they may seek to protect cultural heritage and support minority traditions, they can also regulate or suppress cultural expressions to conform to dominant national agendas and identities, thereby limiting cultural plurality (Kymlicka, 1995). Consequently, the politics of culture involve ongoing negotiations among a diverse range of actors—including communities, states, and transnational organizations—each with competing interests and differing degrees of power. This complex interplay underscores how cultural power relations shape the production, validation, and contestation of traditions in global-local contexts, highlighting that cultural politics are inseparable from broader structures of inequality and social hierarchy.

Indigenous communities worldwide demonstrate resilience by blending traditional knowledge systems with contemporary challenges, such as climate change and resource extraction (Berkes, 2017). Religious practices adapt to urbanisation and digitalisation, as seen in the virtualisation of rituals and the emergence of online faith communities (Campbell, 2013). Local food systems resist global agribusiness through movements promoting indigenous crops and sustainable practices, linking cultural identity with environmental stewardship. Cultural movements in regions like India, Africa, and Latin America illustrate diverse strategies of hybridisation and resistance, reflecting specific historical and socio-political contexts (Guha, 1989).

IMPLICATIONS FOR CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

Cultural preservation must move beyond museumization, which freezes traditions in time, towards supporting living, evolving cultural practices that respond to contemporary challenges

(Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998). Hybrid traditions serve as resources for resilience and innovation, enabling communities to negotiate modernity without losing cultural rootedness (Bhabha, 1994). Policy implications include the need for education systems that respect cultural diversity, heritage management that involves local communities, and development approaches that integrate cultural sustainability (UNESCO, 2003). Intergenerational transmission remains vital for sustaining traditions, requiring active engagement of youth in cultural practices.

CONCLUSION

To sum up it can be said that this study emphasizes that tradition in a globalized context is a dynamic and contested cultural process, not merely a relic of the past. Globalization disrupts and rejuvenates traditions through the influence of transnational capital, media, and ideas, fostering cultural creativity and resistance. The opposition between tradition and modernity is inadequate, as traditions now thrive in hybrid cultural spaces. Hybridization and resistance are interlinked processes where traditions selectively incorporate global influences to maintain cultural relevance while asserting identity. Acts of resistance, such as language revitalization and cultural sovereignty movements, highlight tradition as a resource for agency and social cohesion. The analysis reveals that cultural politics are influenced by inequalities related to class, caste, gender, and ethnicity, shaping whose traditions are valued or marginalized. Thus, understanding tradition as an evolving practice is crucial for cultural sustainability, which hinges on communities' ability to adapt while preserving core values. This study encourages further ethnographic and comparative research to explore these complex dynamics across various contexts.

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