

LYRICS, ICONS, AND SILENCE: A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF IMTIAZ ALI'S CHAMKILA

Dimple*; Dr. Ravinder Dhillon**

*PhD, Research Scholar,
Department of Journalism & Mass Communication,
Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa,
Haryana, INDIA
Email id: dimplesaini121@gmail.com

**Associate Professor,
Department of Journalism & Mass Communication,
Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa,
Haryana, INDIA
Email id: ravinderdhillon@cdlu.ac.in

DOI: 10.5958/2249-7137.2025.00035.8

ABSTRACT

This research paper conducts a semiotic analysis of Imtiaz Ali's 2024 film Amar Singh Chamkila, exploring how lyrics, iconic representations, and silence function as sign systems to convey meaning, critique societal norms, and reflect the complexities of cultural identity in 1980s Punjab. Drawing on Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic framework, the paper examines the interplay of signs—lyrics as symbols, Chamkila as an icon, and silence as an index—to unpack the film's commentary on art, caste, and social resistance. Through qualitative content analysis and close readings of key scenes, the study reveals how Ali uses these elements to navigate the dichotomy between vulgarity and authenticity, ultimately portraying Chamkila as a poet of the subaltern.

KEYWORDS: *Commentary, Portraying, Narratives, Adoration And Condemnation, Semiotics.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Banerjee, A., et al. (2023). An acoustical and psychological study on contribution of lyrics in raga-based happy and sad Indian music. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1896, 012017.
 2. Kalyani, K., & Kabir, M. (2024). Imtiaz Ali obsesses over vulgarity, misses Chamkila's cultural resistance against purity. *The Print*.
 3. Manuel, P. (1993). *Cassette Culture: Popular Music and Technology in North India*. University of Chicago Press.
 4. Metz, C. (1974). *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema*. Oxford University Press.
 5. Peirce, C. S. (1998). *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*. Indiana University Press.
-

6. Srivastav, S. (2022). Mirroring the Perceptions: Escapism in Imtiaz Ali's Cinema. ResearchGate.
7. The Hindu. (2024). Imtiaz Ali has reinvented himself with 'Amar Singh Chamkila': AR Rahman.
8. The Indian Express. (2024). Imtiaz Ali on collaborating with Diljit Dosanjh for Chamkila.
9. The Wire. (2024). 'Amar Singh Chamkila' Probes a Society That Births, Feeds Off and Kills Icons.
10. Turino, T. (1999). Signs of Imagination, Identity, and Experience: A Peircean Semiotic Theory for Music. *Ethnomusicology*, 43(2), 221–255.