

SESSION 17 (Papers)

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Impact of Cultural Tourism on the Music of the Sri Lankan Aboriginal Community Known as the Veddas

Among all Sri Lankan minorities, the Veddas are widely considered the last indigenous tribal community in the country. Majority of them are living in the forest villages in Eastern and Sabaragamuwa provinces with minimum facilities. Their sense of cultural identity is challenged by the fast growing industrial and other mass cultural influences, and they are struggling to safeguard and maintain their cultural values and lifestyle.

Music of Sri Lankan Vedda people can be classified as a folk music tradition that closely fits their day-to-day life and accompanies them from birth to death. Their practices, including worshipping the demon gods with music and dance, are dramatically and in numerous ways affected by contemporary local and international cultural and musical traditions. Influence of mass media and cultural tourism can be seen as the main cause for this dramatic transition.

The main objective of this study is to analyze the impact of cultural tourism and the mass media on the music of the Veddas, Sri Lankan aboriginal community. The research relies on both primary and secondary sources.

Bio

Manoj Alawathukotuwa received his BA and MPhil degrees from the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, and PhD from the University of New Delhi, India. He is currently a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Fine Arts, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. His research interests are North Indian music, ethnomusicology, and influences on Sri Lankan music.