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A Synopsis Submitted to The Departmental Research Committee  
(DRC) Department of English, Faculty of Arts  
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda  
(In Accordance with O.Ph.D. 7.1 and 7.3)

For the Fulfilment of  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English

“(Re)-Reading Poetry: The Question of Art and Aesthetic  
Experience in Instapoetry”

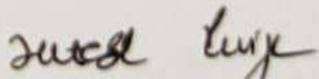
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## I. INTRODUCTION

Alexander Baumgarten, in *Reflections on Poetry* [1954 (1735)], used poetry as his specific instance to propose a distinction between the faculties of reason and sense perception, i.e., *aesthetics* (Baumgarten 1954, 78). He posits that sense perceptions experienced through poetry are an integral component of the cognitive process. In other words, experience of poetry serves as a means of acquiring knowledge. However, even though poetry (as art) is a cognitive piece, the insights it offers are unique since they affect the senses. So, the ideas expressed through poetry are characterised by a combination of clarity and confusion, instead of clarity and precision which is found in reason (Munro and Scruton). From this, one may conclude that poetry must be quintessentially *aesthetic*; and its experience, necessarily, an *aesthetic experience*.

If poetry is defined by its *aesthetic experience*, then what transpires when – and Terry Eagleton expresses angst in this regard – *experience* itself fades away? Does the world of “fleeting perceptions and instantly consumable events, [where] nothing stays still long enough to lay down those deep memory traces on which genuine *experience* [my italics] depends” (Eagleton 17), kill poetry by bringing an end to the *aesthetic experience*? The answer is both, yes and no; and in either case, death of poetry is certain. In the first case, one kills poetry by not experiencing the way it must be experienced, where poetry dies because its “essence” is not realised. In the second case, poetry does not die because of the absence of *experience*, rather it runs out of existence because it is abandoned altogether following the institutionalisation of its aesthetic value or its apotheosis (Brooks 686; Epstein 13). In the first case, the *art* of poetry, and in the second, the *artform* of poetry founders into a state of obsolescence.

Seemingly separate, the decline of poetry’s *art* and *artform* are correlated. Since poetry places a high value on *art*, the former is seen incomplete without the latter. And because *art* is believed to be inaccessible to the masses – however, that may not be true – more and more individuals prefer other genres over poetry. Consequently, it is discernible that easily accessible popular poetry is not furnished with the sincerity of *art*; and so, it does not afford an *aesthetic experience* either. John Dewey’s exposition on the practice of ‘popular art’ better explains the situation:

So extensive and subtly pervasive are the ideas that set art on upon a remote pedestal, that many a person would be repelled rather than pleased if told that he enjoyed his casual recreations, at least in part, because of their aesthetic quality. The arts which today have most vitality for the

average person are the things he does not take to be arts: for instance, the movie, jazzed music, the comic strip trip and, too frequently, newspaper accounts of love-nests, murders, and exploits of bandits (Dewey 6).

Hence, if it is possible to attain *experience* in the absence of the so-called "high art," then it calls for a re-examination of the definition of *aesthetic experience*. By conceiving of art as "consummatory experience" in *Art as Experience* (1934), Dewey is able to bridge the gap between *popular* and *art*. According to him, consummation of experience is the *raison d'être* of any art, therefore, the environment in which art is experienced must be equally considered along with its content. This facilitates a meticulous sketch of contextualised aesthetic experience.

Subsequently, the art of poetry too must be re-read by reconstituting the idea of aesthetic experience in order to mitigate the distance with which it is perceived. The present research aims to study Instapoetry in this light, since Instapoetry suggests the need to contemporise the conception of aesthetic experience. In turn, the theory of aesthetic experience as propounded by John Dewey and Arnold Berleant will help understand art and aesthetic experience in Instapoetry.

- **Instapoetry**

Instapoetry, a portmanteau created from the words "Instagram" and "poetry", is poetry in verse form encountered on Instagram. Instagram is an online photo/video-sharing social networking application that can be accessed for free using digital devices such as PCs, mobile phones, and tablets. The Instagram website itself defines the workings of the app, as it states, "People can upload *photos or videos* to our service and share them with their followers or with a *select group of friends*. They can also *view, comment and like* [my italics] posts shared by their friends on Instagram" ("Help Center"). From this, it is apparent how Instagram turns the textual art of poetry into a visual art (even though it retains text in an image form), as it is posted in the form of either a picture, a video, or a picture caption. Again, the way poetry is read and received on Instagram (through *view, comment and like*), indicates a shift in the manner of reading on digital platforms. Lastly, since poetry is instantly shareable (with friends and followers), the context of community also informs its circulation. Thus, the simple definition of Instapoetry as "poetry shared on Instagram" needs to be questioned and relocated in the context of contemporary art cultures in new media platforms.

Instapoetry can also be simplified in another way – perhaps with a wider acceptance than the first – as “Instant Poetry.” In that, it becomes poetry shared on various social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr, presuming that the nature of reading experience on these social media is inherently “instant.” In fact, the initial instances of Instapoetry can be traced back to Tumblr posts by Rupi Kaur and Lang Leav, and poetry collection (in print) called *salt* (2013) by Nayyirah Waheed. Apart from these, short poems are also quoted by users on platforms other than this, such as Pinterest and Reddit. However, the production, reception, and distribution of poetry are more so in character with the platform aesthetics of Instagram, which is why Instapoetry has become more popularly associated with Instagram.

Instapoetry first made its appearance on the platform approximately in 2012, when Robert Macias (aka r.m. drake) started sharing his work on Instagram (Hannah and Cailin Loesch 2017), finding no other suitable platform to express his artistic voice. This was followed by Rupi Kaur (in 2012) and Atticus (one of the most popular Instagram poets today), who have been sharing their work online since 2014. Soon, such poetry began to trend with an increasing readership. More and more poets, such as R. H. Sin, Lang Leav, Arch Hades, Nikita Gill, Hollie McNish, and others, came up staging their poetry on the social media platform. With each artist, using poetry as a medium of expression on the platform, the features of Instapoetry have widened in range and evolved with time.

Instapoetry, with its unique form, has now been considered one of the styles of contemporary poetry. It is brief, concrete, and visually engaging. Poetry is usually found in the form of an image with: 1. Text Image (typewritten); 2. Text with Aesthetic Setting, 3. Text with Artwork/Photograph, 4. Text with Graphics and Doodles, and 5. Simple Text with Concrete Poetry, 6. Artwork/Photograph Image with Poetry Caption, and 7. Video Poetry with Text, Music and Narration (developed after the introduction of Instagram Reels in 2020). These are mostly created keeping in mind the visual aesthetics and engagement dynamics of Instagram. And so, it can be agreed that the features mentioned above are the result of its location on Instagram as it is a social media platform whose tools carry a particular meaning and purpose for its audience different from other platforms in online and offline environments. For instance, @stvksn plays with the loop feature on the reels and creates short film poetry that plays in a continuous cycle. Moreover, the common themes of love, self-love, heartbreak, motivation, everyday life activities dominate Instapoetry, and serve as an indirect testimony of how poetry shapes itself around the medium of Instagram (as a social platform). Apart from the fact that the corpus of Instapoetry has been on a constant rise, these factors also contribute towards the

assumption that Instapoetry is a new subgenre of poetry that has a unique style in continuity with the platform.

Kathi Berens's observation about Instapoetry that it is the only E-literature that could fill a stadium in her article "E-Lit's #1 Hit" marks Instapoetry's popularity as being "well-liked by many people" (Williams 1983, 236). It is crucial to note this success for another reason, however. Not only did Instapoetry top the charts of U.S. poetry sales, it also opened up the masses to the activity of poetry reading in general, where an annual growth of 21 percent in sales of poetry books was witnessed (Rogers 2019). Of course, this included the sales of Instapoetry books, but poetry books other than that also underwent a hike in sales. This has brought about a common opinion among bloggers and netizens that Instapoetry has resulted in the rebirth of poetry as an art form.

Nevertheless, a feeling of ambivalence surrounds the status of Instapoetry as "poetry". On the one hand, Instapoetry's vogue is lauded for bringing poetry back to popularity. On the other hand, it is accused of being banal and shallow, corrupting forms of contemporary poetry (Hodgkinson 2019). In attracting more readers, it invites its harshest critics, who target it on the grounds that it lacks the revered *art* essential to poetry. Instapoetry's world is debated as being alienated from the world of traditional poetry, which discerns the former as quasi-poetic because it does not offer *aesthetic experience*.

Traditionalist criticism and aesthetic categories create two worlds in opposition to one another: one with a limited group of niche readers and artists, and the other with a popular following of untutored readers and unqualified poets. The first exists in a minority yet is superior, while the majority of the latter is considered inferior. Critiquing the "taste theories" of modern aesthetics, Pierre Bourdieu (1984), a French sociologist, argues that "taste is a deeply ideological category: it functions as a marker of 'class' (using the term in a double sense to mean both a social economic category and the suggestion of a particular level of quality). For Bourdieu, the consumption of culture is 'predisposed, consciously and deliberately or not, to fulfil a social function of legitimating social difference'" (Storey 6). Thus, the existing outlook towards popular Instapoetry must be reworked by contextualising it in the art tradition and its cultural context.

In this regard, Mike Chasar's timely research on popular poetry, which explains why Instapoetry must not be discerned based on its popularity, deserves a mention. Chasar points

out that poetry, as a literary form, was never out of the compass of popular culture. He notes how various media used to popularise some works of poetry for functions other than aesthetic and literary, such as, product marketing and political propaganda (Chasar 2020, 4). Because the aesthetics of poetry change with its specific location in media and function, contextualising poetry in the medium of its dissemination aids in reading poetry as marked not only by its aesthetics but also by its economic and institutional context (Yu 2019). For instance, by bringing up the accessibility and resources provided by the platform, it becomes easier to understand the various types and themes of poetry posts on Instagram discussed above. Witnessing the number of followers of this subgenre of poetry, Instapoetry's aesthetic experience cannot be denied. This calls for a redefinition of aesthetic experience as embedded in its environment.

Therefore, to approach Instapoetry, one must account for both the paradigms converging in its definition, i.e., Instagram and poetry. The present research insists that poetry as an artform can best be assessed by a theory that derives from surveying contemporary art. Accordingly, the researcher finds Arnold Berleant's theory of Aesthetics of Engagement, influenced by John Dewey's theory of Aesthetic Experience to be apt for studying the aesthetic experience of Instapoetry. Further, suggested within these theories, the environment (or the aesthetic field) of Instapoetry – Instagram – will be analysed for a fuller picture through the lens of new media theories.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature comprises works on Instapoetry and digital poetry. Academic research as well as non-academic work found in books, theses, research papers, articles, and blogs that fall under the broad but limited literature available on the subject have been referred to. Thus far, commentaries, criticism, and research have focused on the popular as well as digital aspects of Instapoetry, of which the most significant work can be found in the following books: *Instapoetry: Digital Image Texts* (2023) by Niels Penke, *Digital Poetry* (2021) by Jeneen Naji, *Poetry Unbound* (2020) by Mike Chasar, and *Poetry's Afterlife* (2010) by Kevin Stein.

Theses such as *Instapoetry: The Influence of Instagram and the Online Community on the Shaping of a New Literary Subgenre* (2020) by Frederique Smit, *The Future of Poetry in the Digital Era: Instapoetry and Remediation* (2019) by James Morgan Rue, *The Queen and the aureate: Social Media Poets and the Creation of Minor Literatures* (2018) by Hannah Taylor, and *The Importance of The Poetry Book in The Digital Age: How Far Digital Technology Has*

*Influenced Contemporary Poetry And The Status Of The Poetry Book* (2017) by Philip Monks majorly draw on the effects of social media on the poetry reading cultures.

While critical articles and research papers such as "Courage to be Dislike": Strategies and Approach of Insta-Poetry in Digital Era" (2019) by Muhammad Adek and Dadi Satria and "The Cult of the Noble Amateur" (2018) by Rebecca Watts pitch "for" and "against" Instapoetry respectively, papers like Kathi Berens's "E-Literature's #1 Hit: Is Instagram Poetry E-literature?" (2019) and Jeneen Naji's "The Posthuman Poetics of Instagram Poetry" (2018) celebrate the newness of the subgenre. "Selfie-Help: The Multimodal Appeal of Instagram Poetry" (2019) by Lili Pâquet, "Poetry's Beyoncé: On Rupi Kaur and the Commodifying Effects of Instapoetics" (2019) by Alyson Miller, and "Amateur Creativity: Contemporary Literature and the Digital Publishing Scene" (2017) by Aarthi Vadde discuss the impact of distributive channels of Instagram as a medium of poetry.

### • Research Gap

When the discussions on Instapoetry originate by comparing either its formalistic features or its content, the verdict of its quality pans out by labelling it as either "good" or "bad", "fit" or "unfit" as poetry. Some of these arguments also centre around the popular status of Instapoetry, which leads to assessing its value for the sake of culture. This results in an impasse where one must decide what kind of change such poetry is bringing to the culture, ultimately directing the opinions into binary categories of "high" and "low". Such an approach bypasses the consideration of the audience's agency and role in choosing to read a particular piece of art or literature on an online platform like Instagram. These commentaries also overlook the relationship between audience's aesthetic experience and their agentic participation. Here, since reading is governed by the engagement logic of the platform, the grounds of experience are radically diverse from the traditional mode of experience. This makes a direct comparison between the two inaccurate. So, a broader outlook has to be adopted based on the purpose of poetry on the platform – an outlook that allows for not one but many possibilities to appreciate Instapoetry.

Research on the impact of media platforms on poetry hints at the cultural change brought about by social media. Here, Instapoetry receives attention only because it is considered a significant artefact for registering the evolution of technology and, by extension, culture. Although it appreciates the presence of Instapoetry, such an approach is primarily concerned with exploring culture through poetry. Kathi Berens, for example, views the algorithm affecting Instapoetry's

reach as something that helps one read the reader (2019). James Rue embarks on a journey to read Instapoetry as "a social phenomenon rather than a cultural one" (Rue 1). He correctly argues that analysing Instapoetry requires both media and cultural context. But, in the process, he also attempts to find "worth" in Instapoetry. This results into the creation of hierarchies within Instapoetry. Rue concludes by asserting cultural significance without examining aesthetics, thereby separating aesthetics from cultural discourse.

Hence, to arrive at a balanced position on the aesthetics of Instapoetry (since exact and all-determining position cannot be achieved), the hierarchies built on this binary understanding of aesthetics and culture must be problematised. For this, poetry has to be appropriated for the overall (yet not complete) experience it affords, not leaning towards either 'pop culture utopia' or 'overinterpretation'.

### III. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The following aims have been set down, keeping in mind the research gap identified in the previous section:

- i. To contextualise the practice of reading Instapoetry amidst the debates around value judgments on the art of poetry.
- ii. To assess the available aesthetic frameworks for studying contemporary artforms in new media and adopt an appropriate framework to study Instapoetry.
- iii. To understand the ways in which social media platforms, especially Instagram, work and to discern the affordances of the platform.
- iv. To acknowledge the ingredients introduced by the participatory culture of Instagram and study their effect on the overall experience of poetry on the new media platform.
- v. To understand the roles of reader, poet, and poem in an online social media environment.
- vi. To derive from aesthetic theories, the various stages of aesthetic experience and demonstrate that Instapoetry may not yield an experience that is descriptively elaborate, but the experience cannot be misconceived as being nonreflective, shallow, and insignificant.

The central objective of the present study is to communicate the significance of Instapoetry, not for the sake of culture but to determine a major shift in the way we experience art (online

as well as offline). Consequently, it is directed towards examining newer ways in which the aesthetic outlook can be attuned to the existing state of art.

#### **IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The main research questions that the study concerns itself with to reach a tenable stance on Instapoetry are:

- i. What can “(re)-reading poetry” mean in the particular case of Instapoetry?
- ii. Can Instapoetry experience be enhanced by aptly working with its aesthetic parameters, without implicating a stipulated formal structure to it?
- iii. What happens to Instapoetry when it is read in print; and all the same, what happens to originally printed poetry when it is shared on Instagram?
- iv. What effect does Instapoetry have on conventional poetry that exists in print form?

#### **V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

To be able to answer these question, the current study employs a mixed methods approach, using multiple methods to produce reliable results. In order to provide a more thorough grasp of the issue, both qualitative and quantitative methods have been applied. Under the mixed methods approach, a “convergent mixed method” design as suggested by John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell (2018) has been used. Thus, quantitative data and qualitative data have been collected independent of each other. Their analysis is carried out separately, results of which then converge in the overall analysis of the experience. Again, these are embedded within theoretical frameworks that guide the study – Aesthetics and New Media Studies. On the one hand, the discipline of Aesthetics is necessitated as a lens to look at Instapoetry and inquire about its status as an artform. On the other hand, New Media Studies as a framework is also indispensable, as art on social media undergoes some fundamental shifts that can only be recorded accurately if the platform specificities are taken into consideration. Quantitative data analysis is undertaken following Donal J. Treiman (2018), while qualitative data is analysed based on the various approaches to analysis suggested by Alan Bryman and Robert Burgess’s (2002).

The thesis proposes to depart from the traditional criticism applied in analysing Instapoetry, and it does so by suggesting that the aesthetic lens on which this criticism relies have been

wanting in contemporising art. The primary aim of this research, therefore, is to identify a theoretical approach that can minutely study the subject matter under discussion. For this, the thesis turns to John Dewey's foundational work in the field of aesthetics that was influenced by his pragmatism. Pragmatism is a school of Philosophy that is "based on the principle that the usefulness, workability, and practicality of ideas, policies, and proposals are the criteria of their merit. It stresses the priority of action over doctrine, of experience over fixed principles, and it holds that ideas borrow their meanings from their consequences and their truths from their verification" (Rosenthal and Thayer 2017). Thus, Dewey's pragmatist approach towards aesthetics in *Art as Experience* (1934) makes discrimination and hierarchy underpinning the consumption of traditional poetry and Instapoetry questionable. He argues that "the actual work of art is what the product does with and in experience" (Dewey 1), and aesthetic experience must be examined in its contextual environment – the aesthetic field.

The composition of this aesthetic field is discussed in further detail by Arnold Berleant (1994), as he understands aesthetic experience as an "engagement" with art which necessitates the consideration of the components of the aesthetic field – material resources, technology, socio-cultural factors, psychological factors, artist, audience, performer, and art. The digital aspect of the concerned aesthetic field of Instagram, is explored using some new media theories like remediation, convergence culture, participatory culture. These theories suggest that, the shift from print to digital not only changes the work of art but also the entities involved in creating and experiencing the work. However, to closely examine these shifting roles of artist, audience, and art, this research is also supported by the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, before making any final conclusions based on the said theories.

Quantitative data consists of information related to themes and types of poetry posts from 115 poetry profiles (all "Public") on Instagram; engagement received on these posts in terms of *likes* and *comments* are also taken into account, where "type of poetry profile", "post type", and "themes" are independent variables and nature of engagement is the dependent variable. These variables are partly derived from researcher's personal experience of poetry on the platform and partly from the available literature (mentioned in ROL) on the subject. The data is collected on the basis of naturalistic observation method, relying on Instantaneous sampling within a targeted timespan of two years (June 2021 to June 2023). The selection of 115 samples is done on the basis of cluster sampling method, where the samples are randomly selected through probability sampling and are repicked according to the number of followers on the profile (so that only popular profiles do not crowd up the sample, making the analysis

erroneous). This data is analysed using MS Excel tools and SPSS to comprehend the experience of poetry on Instagram. The analysis also provides a larger picture of poetry-reading behaviour. The result of this analysis is supported by the interview data, which also provides a closer view of the experience on an individual reader/poet level.

Qualitative data is collected through semi-structured interviews conducted through email. Since the researcher required a detailed and introspective response from the interviewees, asynchronous mode of interview has been chosen for the task. As mentioned above, the interviews are not influenced or embedded within the results of quantitative data. The questions formed for the interview are independent and are based on the researcher's experience as a reader of Instapoetry. A total of thirty-six participants are selected, among which twenty nine are readers of Instapoetry and digital literature and seven are poets on Instagram. Sample selection of readers is done on the criteria of availability; while the decision on the selection of poets is based on the types of profiles and number of followers, where seven poets represent each type of profile (personal, strictly artistic, curative, and so on) and have a wide range of following (from 500 followers to 50k). The age range of the interviewees is between 18 to 30, as statistical data suggests that persons between this age range form the highest number of Instagram users. Further, the data is processed through different types of coding (open, thematic, and analytic). The results that closely capture (on individual level) the manner in which Instapoetry is engaged with are then merged with quantitative data results and comprehensively presented to attain a coherent picture of aesthetic experience of Instapoetry.

These are the main methods that are employed in the study. However, besides this, close reading is also used for a formalistic analysis of selected Instapoetry and traditional poetry to compare and investigate the similarities and differences between the two.

## **VI. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS**

The current study solely considers poetry profiles that were browsed and curated throughout a two-year period, from June 2021 to June 2023, using the Instagram hashtags #instagrampoetry, #instapoem, #instapoetry, #poetry, and #poem. Most of these profiles are popular and have over 10,000 followers. This is so because the metadata search results work in accordance with the Instagram algorithm, which favours posts with maximum engagement at the moment of the searching exercise. However, effort has been made to curate those profiles with fewer followers if they add to the variety of types of Instapoetry. Again, different profile types have been chosen

for the study, so the overall analysis is not biased towards a small majority of poetry profile types.

The only limitation of the quantitative data analysis is that the Engagement ratio (which counts the number of "likes" and "comments" to the number of followers) only calculates an average of engagement received on each post on the profile. It is so problematic for two reasons: 1. Not all posts receive equal attention from the audience, and 2. since the number of followers and likes on Instagram is not stable and can be manipulated, the engagement ratio may be highly skewed or different on some profiles. Comments, too, nowadays can be generated by fake profiles using bot software. Furthermore, the reading and engagement behaviour of an online audience cannot always be predicted in one direction. It can be recorded only up to a certain extent, to realise which, interviews have been conducted.

The scope of this research is limited to studying the poets and readers based out of the Indian subcontinent. More or less, it is assumed that since the online audience is already globalised, their online behaviours share a common logic that informs the platform. The interview samples, for this reason, are selected on convenience basis. The selected samples for interviews may be helpful in gauging the situation on a larger scale as they provide a preliminary understanding; however, quantifying aesthetic experience in poetry is a challenging task, especially considering that the researcher has only employed a limited number of aesthetic frameworks to evaluate Instapoetry. Therefore, the exercise may possess inherent constraints.

## **VII. CHAPTER DIVISION AND SUMMARY**

The thesis is divided into four core chapters excluding an introduction and a conclusion. Following is a short summary of each section:

- **Introduction**

The introductory section of the thesis introduces the term Instapoetry. It then traces the origins of Instapoetry and its history on Instagram. It discusses the various standpoints and views on the subject, which also structures the review of literature, wherein Instapoetry is seen as a style, a subgenre, and popular poetry. Identifying the research gap follows the review of the literature, which is then followed by a discussion on the research methodology to be adopted for the research.

- **Chapter 1**

The first chapter focuses on tracing the evolution of Instapoetry as a subgenre, for which it also uses the history of the platform. It also disclaims the opinion that all Instapoetry is the same by demonstrating the different types of Instapoetry that have come up corresponding with the upgrades of the platform. In the second section of the first chapter, a formalistic analysis and comparison is made between the different forms of traditional poetry and various forms of Instapoetry to see if there are any major differences between the two. It attempts to answer the question of semantic complexity and intensity that predominates most criticism of Instapoetry and calls for a reassessment of the aesthetics of Instapoetry.

- **Chapter 2**

The second chapter of the thesis engages with a discussion on Aesthetics to reach the most appropriate aesthetic framework for studying art on Instagram. The discourse meanders across the theories of modern aesthetics and postmodern aesthetic philosophy. The theory of aesthetic experience by John Dewey, principally appearing in his book *Art as Experience* (1934), and the theory of aesthetic engagement by Arnold Berleant in his book *Art and Engagement* (1991) are determined to be the best suitable for the investigation of Instapoetry as an artform.

- **Chapter 3**

The third chapter is divided into three sections, where the first section introduces the reader to the concepts of artistic medium and aesthetic medium and the difference between them. In the same section, the researcher establishes a connection between aesthetic medium and aesthetic field as discussed by John Dewey and Arnold Berleant mentioned in the previous chapter. The second and the third section use the framework of new media studies to establish the prerequisites of platform attributes to understand new media platforms (with a special focus on social media) and eventually the aesthetic field of Instagram. The broad theories that inform the analysis of art in new media are: Marshal McLuhan's "Medium as Message" in *Understanding Media* (1964), Henry Jenkins's "Participatory Cultures" in *Participatory Culture in a Networked Era* (2015), "Remediation" as explained by Bolter and Grusin in *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (2000). Further assistance in understanding Instagram as a medium has been taken from the following works: *Instagram: Visual Social Media Cultures* (2020) by Tama Leaver, Tim Highfield and Crystal Abidin; *Digital Life on Instagram* (2018) by Elisa Serafinelli; and *Art After Instagram: Art Spaces, Audiences, Aesthetic* (2021) by Kylie Budge and Lachlan MacDowall

## • Chapter 4

This chapter is a culmination of the theories discussed in the third chapter. Combined with an understanding of media specificities on Instagram, this chapter attempts to track the shifts in the roles of three components of poetry: poet, reader, and poetry. By intersecting the results of qualitative data (from 115 Instagram poetry profiles) and quantitative data (comprising interview response of twenty-nine readers and seven poets) with the theoretical frames, the researcher has attempted to present the factors governing poetry reading experience on Instagram and how that changes the definition of poetry itself. Thus, the main objective of this research is achieved through the fourth chapter, which is also the final submission towards the central thesis: any poetry on Instagram, may it be that which is specifically composed and designed for the platform or that which is originally printed but posted on the platform, is Instapoetry.

## • Conclusion

In the conclusion, it becomes clear how Instapoetry is experienced the way it is because it appears so on the platform and that there are no radical differences between the experience of traditional poetry that appears on the platform and Instapoetry posted by the popular poets. The concluding section suggests the ways in which the experience of art on Instagram, especially poetry, can be improved and how artforms can be worked with the affordances of the platform to evince as much enhanced engagement as possible for refined experiences. Finally, it also takes up some critical questions on the nature of participatory culture and democratic involvement of Instapoetry readers vis-à-vis the accusations on the consequences of declining reading culture.

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