

'CROSS-DRESSING': A STUDY OF PERFORMANCE AND QUEER POLITICS IN SELECT BENGALI MOVIES

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Introduction

According to social and traditional history, transvestism or crossdressing refers to the practice of wearing clothes or accessories of the opposite gender, especially when a man fashionably associates with the woman's attire. Progress in the cultural behaviours and empowerment of women have permitted women to wear trousers. Thereby replacing the Victorian gowns and Indian 'ghagras', trousers and shirts have entered the female wardrobe without making it part of 'transvestite' phenomena. Portrayal of the popular actress Deepika Padukone in a Jeans does not make a promising gossip as much as actor Ranveer Singh wearing a lehenga even in the present decade. To understand the concept of 'crossdressing' in the Indian context and its significance, the socio-cultural ideoscape is to be elucidated.

Crossdressing in Indian Mythology

Cross-dressing can be traced back to the representation of epic characters like Arjun, Shikhandini, Shambali in The Mahabharata and Ardhanariswara in the Puranas and Upanishads. Female impersonation and male cross-dressing is a part of Shakti worship, and Tantrism. According to Hindu mythology, 'Sakhibhava', a popular cult believes that only Krishna is the only male entity against all other creatures in the world and all are subject to the pleasure of Krishna. Historical icon of the Bhakti movement, Chaitanya from Bengal, is represented in the folklores as one of the reformers of modern Hinduism who not only imagined himself but also dressed as Radha to reunite with Krishna. (Karekatti) Cross-dressing has remained a strategy of protection with disguise in the folklores and popular narratives. To protect the purpose of disguise or expression. Lord Vishnu turning into Mohini to save the 'Devtas' from Bhasmasur or turning into 'Krishnakali' have sociopolitical implications of saving the community from conflicts. In mediaeval Bengal, the devotional songs and the story of the queer divine deities united the 'Shaiva-shakta' and 'Vaishnava' sects. The story of 'Chitrangada' and 'Chudala', transforming themselves from male to female and vice-versa also manifests the practice of crossdressing to express gender identity as per convenience. The transgression or transformation remains a vital cultural

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practice within the mythological narration of ancient India, often contextualising the scientific discovery of the metamorphic and evolutionary pattern of various species. Anthropological study of human evolution has connected clothes or dresses as elements of protection from harsh environment and climate rather than as a medium of categorisation of gender or any other species. Socially constructed practice of cross-dressing has been part of ancient Greek, Chinese and Norse culture too.

Crossdressing as performance

Historical representation of crossdressing is associated with the performative arts within the scope of dance, theatre and cinema. Not only in the Indian stage, but episodes of male cross-dressing in Restoration and Elizabethan theatre have been recognized as an important phenomenon which tests modern definitions of transvestism and gender distinctions in the western world. Cross-dressing becoming a mode for exploring erotic androgyny, enticing and evading audience desires, eventually had drawn out voyeuristic pleasures or attracted 'male gaze'. On the Indian stage, cross-dressing has represented diversified forms of socio-cultural traditions. It might be challenging to draw the line between theatrical performances and performances at religious festivals. India has a practice of male transvestism, or men dressing up as women for specific roles, as a result of the social constraints on women participating in theatre. Yakshagana theatre would be one illustrative example. The fact that Parsee theatre troupes would frequently travel the entire nation, giving them a wider audience than, say, theatre companies stationed in Madras or Calcutta, increases the potency of cross-dressing on the Parsee stage during the colonial era. Yatra in Bengal has seen men performing female roles on stage even after the arrival of 'noti' on stage. Chapal Bhaduri being one such instance of having successful stage presence and acceptance amongst the audience as an 'actress'. The career of chapal bhaduri exemplifies the intimate relationship between theatre, spectacle, and crossdressing as well as the special place reserved for those with non-normative sexual tendencies.

Cross-dressing is a component of folk culture, which is manifested in both theatre and religion, as seen in the extravagant and flamboyant performances that frequently accompany what are basically religious events like the 'Ram Leela' or 'Kirtan'. Similar to female cross-dressing, male cross-dressing is prevalent in Mathura and Brindaban, where heterosexual men dress feminine to act as Lord Krishna's consorts and dance as such. Madari Pirer Gaan, following the cult of Sufism, is a folklore of Bangladesh, engages crossdressing as part of performance. These displays combine religious zeal with theatrical performances thanks to the pageantry component. The third-sex minorities in India are catered to by a number of religious festivals, many of which are presided over by deities

whose gender identities are also fluid. As a result, cross-dressing here becomes not only an expressive gesture but also a part of social interaction and community networking. Cross-dressing here is inextricably tied with concerns of transgender, homosexual, or inter-sex and bisexual identity because these events are primarily intended for third sex minority populations like the Hijra, Jogappa, Sakhi Bekhi, and others. For instance, because the goddess adored is also the patron deity of the hijra community, the Bahuchara Mata celebration invites participation by male cross dressers.

Indian dances have traditionally included cross-dressing as well. Visually enchanting dance form of Kathakali, from the state of Kerala is one notable example that manages to blur distinctions between theatre and dance, religion and performance. Just like Yakshagana, Chhau dance, is a semi classical Indian dance with martial and folk traditions from Purulia district of West Bengal refutes the fraught issue of gender roles. The 'Seraikella' Chhau is the form that effectively portrays the androgynous connotations of the performer's identity because it primarily uses the mask to disguise the dancer's identity. An Odisha-based traditional folk dance style 'gotipua' skillfully weaves the concepts of devotion and transvestism together. Gotipua means 'boy' and young boys perform till they are in their adolescent years. The androgynous appearance required for Gotipua performance is challenging because of the hormonal changes that take place during adolescence and puberty. This folk dance from Odisha depicts lovely images and moments from Radha-life, Krishna's and the intricate costumes and make-up are other things to watch out for.

Whether it is theatre or dance, their identity as performers precedes their respective sexual identities. Manifestation of this concept is witnessed in the movie Chitrangada directed by Rituparno Ghosh, which brings the discussion to the representation of crossdressing and its association with the gender binaries in the Bengali films. Unlike the mainstream movies of Bollywood or Hindi cinemas produced in Mumbai, crossdressing and its association with queer representation has been different in Bengali movies. Rather than portraying crossdressing as a mechanism for hiding gender identity or ridiculing the queer mannerism, Bengali movies have primarily dealt with it empathetically. Though in few cases, the contour of mimicry lies on the female impersonation in various scenes to bring out laughter and add comic relief to the plot like in movies like Jio Pagla. Another movie with veteran comic actor Bhanu and Bandopadhyay and impersonating a female character in Miss Priyangbada (released in 1967) shows the cultural difference between female impersonator and 'drag'. In both the movies, the male protagonists namely Soham and Bhanu impersonate to hide their identity and exaggeratedly enact the female role to access space and connection with the 'lady love'. The availability of the information to the

audience is part of the plot structure and therefore avoids any queer relationship or connotation. The purpose of crossdressing involves 'performance' and 'self-expression' and therefore indication of queer representation through crossdressing is partially debatable. The phrase "cross-dressing" was first cited in 1911 by Edward Carpenter, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, who stated, "Cross-dressing must be taken as a general indication of, and a cognate phenomenon to, homosexuality". In 1928, Havelock Ellis used the two terms "cross-dressing" and "transvestism" interchangeably. In order to reevaluate and enforce normal sexual standards, popular media like movies reflect both cultural acceptance and apprehensions about blurred lines between genders, masculinity and femininity, heterosexuality and homosexuality, and their consequences on social hierarchy. The paradigm of transvestism as an expression of sexuality or identity is portrayed in movies like *Arekti Premer Golpo*, *Chitrangada*, *Jenana*, *Maya Mridanga*, *Samantaral* and *Nagarkirtan*.

Arekti Premer Golpo

Arekti Premer Golpo (Just Another Love Story) is a 2010 Bengali film directed by Bengali filmmaker Kaushik Ganguly starring Rituparno Ghosh, Indraneil Sengupta, Churni Ganguli, Raima Sen and others, with Ghosh playing a transgender filmmaker. The movie depicts the love story of a filmmaker and a cinematographer (Indraneil Sengupta) complicated mostly by the social construction of 'heteronormative family space' and marriage. The story also features a metanarrative through the journey of making a documentary about the life of legendary 'Jatra' actor Chapal Bhaduri, also known as "Chapal Rani" in his prime and renowned for playing female characters on stage at a period when women were not allowed to act. The scope of the narration focuses on the comparative portrayal of Abhiroop Sen (Rituparno Ghosh) and Chapal Bhaduri in the contemporary situation and the past in a periodical format. Besides playing the role of Abhiroop Sen, Rituparno Ghosh plays the young Chapal Bhaduri and Indraneil Sengupta does the same by playing the role of his bisexual boyfriend, the movie's cinematographer and Kumar in Chapal Bhaduri's life. Using the same actors, the movie follows a parallel and contrasting flow of periodical drama. The film focuses on the psychological anguish that transgender persons experience and how society rejects them. The continuous flow of thoughts and feelings, as experienced by Bhaduri in his young age is manifested through the conversation and expression of Abhiroop's conflict with his identity and acceptance in the relationship. These methods of description and conversation attach the subjective thoughts to the level of 'stream of consciousness' where Abhiroop's understanding of theoretical politics gives him an upper hand over the actor. In certain ways the movie relates not only Bhaduri's self-confessed queer identity within the movie but also Ghosh's queer self beyond the narrative scope of the movie.

Crossdressing has played an important role to bring out psychological anguish and to portray the journey of the character in accepting the 'self'. Bhaduri's crossdressing on stage is the extended expression of his 'desire' and remains limited whereas it provides freedom and gender fluidity to Abhiroop to express beyond the usual scepticism and prejudices. Abhiroop's class and education puts him in a privileged position to access power and be part of the queer consumer lifestyle following the liberalisation of the Indian economy. The social and economic positioning of the two characters within the movie is also represented through the attires and accessories used by both of them. Even the reaction to the 'crossdressed' characters manifest the social construct and mindset of heteronormative society and its stereotypical association to 'homophobia'. Reflection of Abhiroop Sen's queer identity encountering several challenges when launching the documentary within the film, can be parallelly associated with the events of Ghosh's becoming a victim of controlling and moral policing on the occasion of the film release. The line of metanarrative keeps on blurring on so many levels. Besides the self-explanatory words of the actor, 'cross-dressing' remains one of the political statements and elements of expression to the world. From mere judgemental and stereotypical association of queer visuals, Ghosh's cross-dressing became a statement in itself and his expression of power reestablishing the iconoclastic identity. The ridiculing stereotypical notion of 'crossdressing' brought a chance of conversation in the hegemonic society only to allow it as a cultural habit over the years.

Chitrangada

"Chitrangada and ekta and ichher and galpo, that you can choose your gender. "

Chitrangada: The Crowning Wish(2012) directed by Rituparno Ghosh is a modern adaptation of Tagore's dance drama Chitrangada. It is a retelling of the story of the warrior princess of Manipur and the only heir of king Chitravahana within The Mahabharata. Arjun's love enhanced the desire in Chitrangada to transform from Kurup to Surupa and embrace herself and her sexuality against her father's command to be a masculine heir to the throne. Her crossdressing to hide her own self and remain in disguise acts as a counter narrative to Rituparno Ghosh's character, Rudra Chatterjee in the film. He has dedicated his life to defying social norms through his dance, dress and desire. He disobeyed his father's desires as a young man and chose to become a choreographer rather than an engineer. His decision to be a dancer, wearing the jewellery and kohl, and embracing his sexuality openly marks a bold statement not only in the movie but also brings a revolutionary step as it was 'queering' the language of pan Indian cinema when practising homosexuality was still a criminal offence. Power, according to Foucault, is a matter of intricate relationships

rather than as a quality that is inherent to a specific person or class. Being "out" or "in the closet" became a key indicator of the sexual politics of lesbians and gay men. (Spargo) Moving from imprisonment and concealment to the open, coming out connoted a transition from secrecy to public assertion. Ghosh allowed that space to his audience through his cinematic language and alternative reading of native resources. Using mythological interpretation and scientific rationality together in his creation of 'Madan', iconize not only the character but also the relationship of body and psyche. Concept of 'crossdressing' is negated and the resistance, to accept it as 'signifier' of the 'other', renegotiates it as a cultural norm; rather establishes it as a marker of independent identity and choice.

Rudra's relationship with a drug-addicted percussionist, Partho and his desire to have a child reassures his limitation to be a biological mother. Legal complications in the adoption policy forces Rudra to take the decision to undergo a gender transition procedure in order to embrace the womanhood he longs to be. This procedure altered his body and life only to realise all of his deeply held aspirations. The character of Subho, the counsellor is nothing but the alter ego of his psyche holding a mirror to his desires. Ghosh experiments with Foucault's idea of psychoanalysis that enables one to explore the sexual secrets that might hold the key to their mental and emotional health. Moreover psychoanalysis produces knowledge about sexuality which is itself cultural rather than natural and which contributes to the maintenance of specific power relations. The open ending reaffirms the concept of gender fluidity and his non-conforming self availing the doctrine of choice, making Chitragada a true story of choice of embracing the transitional self.

Jenana

Jenana(2016) is a story about the thriving "business" that operates at traffic lights, a community of men who alter their socio-sexual identities to support their livelihoods, but only in public. When they get home, they take off their female makeup, hair, and disguise and revert to being men. Dubantant director Barshali Chatterjee chose the gender-bender subject for her film. She mentions,

"Jenana studies the hidden corners of Kolkata where a man joins the transgender community for his livelihood and that community is called Jenanas. My film begins with Somu aka Sumona, a jenana, narrating his story to an aspiring young director Riya, The film revolves around the transgender community resulting from extensive research." (Chatterji)

The movie focuses on the socio-economic factors related to the alternative history of queer politics. The livelihood of the transgendered people and the insight of their professional world is revealed with details of different categories of the gender divide. According to

Chatterjee,

"The gender divide contains some people 'in the middle' who do not fall strictly within either sex - male or female. "These 'beggars' are divided into four groups - the Akua who is a man but has emphatic effeminate qualities in manner and behaviour, the Jenana who is a complete male in every sense but dresses up like a woman for purely financial reasons, the Chimni which is the female of the community and the Chibdi who is genetically a eunuch." (Chatterji)

Jenana tells the tale of a family man's life and explains the motivations for his manner of living and means of support. His compulsion to adopt crossdressing is just like acting with his body. It is a symbol of economic investment loaning against social establishment to achieve freedom from hunger. The patriarchal masculinity as 'provider' of the family is moulded with femininity to create a gender fluid entity complete in 'self'. But the reconceptualization of his sexuality happens through his acceptance to change his mannerism and deliberately reconstruct to the needs of the stereotypical ' queer visual'. The scenes of sexual violence and violation of human rights of the marginal community revitalizes the question of freedom of expression, practice and right to live. Jenana not only problematizes the queer visual but also questions the commercialization and encashment of it. By providing a voice to the exploited marginal section , it has taken a courageous step to stride and challenge the binaries.

Maya Mridanga

"There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; ...(gender) identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results."

- Judith Butler

Maya Mridanga(2016) directed by Raja Sen is based on the Bengali novel, *Maya Mridanga*(1972) written by Syed Mustafa Siraj. The plot revolves around the folk artists of 'palagaan' that includes a female impersonator 'chhokra' of an itinerant theatre group called Alkaap which travelled through rural Bengal. The form of the 'palagaan' locates sexuality and sexual desire in the enigmatic realm of Maya. Crossdressing is the core of this process of creating 'maya' around the mesmerising appearance of 'chhokra'. Chhokra's enticing attitude is rooted in his mannerism and process of 'becoming' a woman. Therefore 'taalim' and practice remains the main focus in the process of 'becoming' a woman rather than being born with gender identity. Butler's statement, "One is not born, but becomes a woman" is reestablished through the portrayal of the characters like 'Shanti charan' and 'Subarna'. Their conflicted identity is the result of tension between desire and acceptance of reality. The

erotic version is intellectualised with the reference of the mythology and cultural contexts. The novel was published at a time when there was little to no awareness of non-binary approaches to interpreting sexuality. It is set in rural Bengal in the 1950s. There were no biological or political discourses on gender-queerness as such, despite the fact that the concept of a 'tritiya and prakriti', or third gender, was known and primarily understood in reference to the presence of the Hijra community in India. Through the female impersonator, understanding of gender-queerness in the light of Maya is accomplished. Blending of body and soul in becoming the 'self' through 'performance' or practice of gender resemblances with the deep philosophy of Bhaktism and Sufism. Contextual queer-positivity and affective embracement of queerness enriches theoretical discourses of gender, sex, sexuality and the body today. It gives the current generation of queer people in Bengal a sense of rootedness in history and indigenous philosophy, free from the recent emergence of the epistemology of sexuality.

Samantaral

Samantaral(2017), the Hitchcockian psychological drama, directed by Partha Chakraborty, starring Parambrata Chatterjee and Riddhi Sen, is set in the cosmopolitan Kolkata of the contemporary period. The plot revolves around Arko (Riddhi Sen) and his visit to meet his extended family or 'mamarbari'. He meets his 'mejomama' Sujan (Parambrata Chatterjee) there, who is constantly imprisoned in a room due to his mental instability or apparent 'insanity'. Arko's interest and interaction with Sujan reveals a new world of understanding human relations and psyche to him. The dreamer and mystic 'Mejo mama' represents the tragic reality of the problematized socialisation and ostracization of alternative sexuality. Traditional sex role socialisation and the results of such socialisation are rendered problematic by cross-dressing behaviour which is often automatically related to transgender identity or sexual, fetishist, and homosexual behaviour, simply because it transgresses hegemonic, hetero-normative rules. Arko's understanding and empathy reassures the acceptance of the coming generation but the movie remains limited in its approach to deal with the larger politics of alternative sexuality. Even though it narrates the tragic reality as an eye opening instance but the suicide of Sujan at the end, fails to change the 'visual'. Titli's attempt to find the root of Sujan's disbalance and connection to some biomedical reasons try to answer the behavioural pattern. This deliberate attempt to connect physical and mental health or geneology with sexuality is to involve the scientific base. At the same time, the discomfoting truth from family history consciously reduces the socio-cultural evolution of the immediate society to the level of ignorance and establishes governance of 'compulsory heterosexuality'. The movie becomes the visual imagery of Sujan's being 'subject

to the disciplining, marginalising and subordinating effects of social control. The structure of the family set up reminds the nineteenth century European psychiatry and theory establishes Sujana's 'reverse discourse' as emphasised by Foucault.

"There is no question that the appearance in nineteenth-century psychiatry, jurisprudence, and literature of a whole series of discourses on the species and subspecies of homosexuality, inversion, pederasty, and 'psychic hermaphroditism' made possible a strong advance of social controls into (the) area of 'perversity'; but it also made possible the formation of a 'reverse' discourse: homosexuality began to speak in its own behalf, to demand that its legitimacy or 'naturalness' be acknowledged, often in the same vocabulary, using the same categories by which it was medically disqualified." (Foucault)

Coming of age movies like *Samantara* are opening new paths for the future to address the questions and decide the boundaries of behaviour and sexual conformity.

Nagarkirtan

Nagarkirtan(2017), the award winning Bengali film written and directed by Kaushik Ganguly, features the story of Parimal(Riddhi Sen), a trans woman from rural Bengal, and Madhu(Ritwick Chakraborty), a flute player from the Kirtaniya town of Nabadwip. The film opens with Puti, a transgender intersex lady from the eunuchs ghetto, eloping with Madhu, a Chinese restaurant delivery guy who also performs in kirtans as a flautist. The flashbacks provide us a glimpse into Puti's early years, during which her father firmly opposes her attire. She develops a bond with Subhash, her private tutor, who is aware of her gender identity. In an effort to live truthfully without hiding, Puti suggests eloping to America with him. Puti subsequently learns that Subhash is going to marry his older sister. Unable to handle the shock, she flees his house and goes to the eunuchs' ghetto in Kolkata, where she becomes a disciple of their Guru and ma and Arati. On developing a relationship with Madhu, Puti struggles with gender dysmorphia and desires sex reassignment surgery to change her physique. Her desire to be a 'complete woman' makes her abandon her community and leave the ghetto without telling her Guru Ma. Meeting well-known transgender woman Manabi and Bandopadhyay, Principal of Krishnanagar college (playing cameo) reveals a new world of transformation to her. The possibility of 'being herself' depends not only on medical advancement but also monetary affordability. Puti's devastation is countered by Madhu's plan to sell his ancestral property in Nabadwip. Reminiscence of Sri Chaitanya in Nabadwip creates a parallel tone of understanding devotion and transformation in love. Chaitanya's imagination and unification with Krishna as his 'Radha' renegotiates the gender fluidity and establishes his androgynous self. Puti, relating herself in the same position, breaks down emotionally during a performance of Madhu playing the flute during a kirtan.

The confrontation in front of the family reveals the whole scenario and represents the heteronormative stricture prevailing in the sociocultural arena of rural Bengal. The transphobia and sexual subalternity brought Puti to defy everything and isolate herself only to meet a disastrous end. The exploitation and violence brought upon hir openly questions the resilience of the society and acceptability of 'queer' bodies.

Crossdressing, in this movie, acts as a tool of disguise, protecting shields, and a pathway of embracing 'self' beyond the limitation of body politics. Puti's desire to possess the body of a woman comes into realisation from an early age through the practice of crossdressing in 'go as you like' competition where ze dresses up as a female character. The struggle to demarcate between performance and being continues even when ze is trained by hir 'guru ma' to be accepted within 'hijra' community. The body of a woman becomes a fantasy and distant dream, manifested in the dress-changing scene of Madhu's sister-in-law. Madhu's constant urge to grow her hair fails him to accept Puti as a soul. He says, "Always come to me dressed...I don't like patchwork." Crossdressing, the visual marker of identity, that is wearing a saree and a wig, becomes a compulsion for hir. Ganguly's characters resonates Butler idea that:

"Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeals over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being." (Butler)

Outrageous activity of the local eunuchs in the form of undressing hir in the street symbolically recalls the problematic affair as expressed by Donna Haraway, as she describes transgender body as 'akin to the 'inappropriate/d other'. She says,

"To be inappropriate/d is...not to be originally fixed by difference." (Haraway)

'Fixing' the body with external validation remains questionable and unjustified. Puti's naked body and tired soul resigns to the heteronormative notions of gender. Hir conforming identity as

Madhu's girlfriend reaffirmed the existence of gender binary and establishes the transgendered identity only represented through attire. Depending on crossdressing even in the 21st century remains their only way to exist in hegemonic society depriving themselves from self-definition. In this regard Sedgwick's queer theory suggests,

"the open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonance, and resources, lapses and excesses of meaning when the constituent elements of anyone's gender, of anyone's sexuality aren't made (or can't be made) to signify monolithically". (Sedgwick)

The movie shows how the trans body is used as a weapon and a location for systemic

and epistemic violence, confirming their place as sexual subalterns. This experience of an invisible community, which is rarely depicted in Indian mainstream cinema, is documented in the movie. The structure of Ganguly's film transcends the limitations of a chronological and intricate story to instead reveal a magnificent harshness that reflects the horrors and hidden lives of the transgender, Hijra, intersex, and gender nonconforming populations. The movie captures the raw emotion of these people as they struggle against centuries of stigma and prejudice. The community's lived experiences of being torn between problems of vice and virtue, desire and rejection support the body narrative of the film, which avoids taking a moral stance while looking at the details that make such attitudes difficult to adopt. The movie suggests a vocabulary of change that may be utilised to develop a narrative of resistance in a culture that generally views trans bodies as trash cans to dispose of its traumas and injustices.

Crossdressing and Gender politics

From the 18th century onwards, Foucault argued, 'sexuality was regarded as something to be regulated and administered rather than judged. It must be viewed as a constructed category of knowledge rather than as a discovered identity.' But the social construction has depended on several elements of senses that regulates the hegemonic power structure of inclusivity. The visual parameters mostly depend on the attire, mannerism, consumer consumption and determines acceptability. Because of our quick presumptions that there must be a necessary and likely connection between cross-dressing in performative arenas and non-normative sexuality, this relationship is frequently erroneously understood. Cross-dressing as a political act is significantly less accepted than cross-dressing in a religious and implicitly theatrical context. It remains the greatest testimony to this fluidity of sex and gender identities.

Employment of poststructuralist theory, including Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic models of decentred, unstable identity and Derrida's deconstruction of linguistic structure, has been done. Naming the characters like 'Puti' as very small or marginalised, 'Rudra', another name of 'ardhnarishwar', 'Abhiroop' signifying refined and appealing, 'Sujan' a nice human being, has been one such instance. Other than that all the movies have used cross-dressing to convey the required motif and meaning. Queer theory coming from structuralism carrying the linguistic affinity and affiliation of their identity coincides with conceptual and visual connotation of the cinematography. Role of the media in attributing this discourse remains vital. Subjugation of the queer identity through mimicry or humiliation has been a form of representation in certain visual media. At the same time, a certain powerful and provocative counter-narrative has been offered to strive for a present a progressive outlook

of liberation and enlightenment against the established repressive model. Establishment of new cultural outlook can begin by considering the words of Marjorie Garber, the American author, who said, while exploring the significance of cross-dressing,

"There can be no culture without the transvestite." (Garber)

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