

**Tribhuvan University**  
**The Gendered Body on the Screen:**  
**Popular Erotic Songs in Nepali Films**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English**

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## ABSTRACT

Film songs and dance mobilize the entire apparatus of the movie by bringing the stars dancing body to generate a unique filmic spectacle. So, a new dimension has come forth to provide critical lens to study the body exposure in Nepali movies. Revealing the nude body in line with the verbal expression of song in Nepali cinemas has fascinated many of the young audiences as we find youngsters considering the stars role as models and following them with. Modern songs have been considered a musical performance with dance sequences. They contain some powerful storylines of the movies with a primary purpose to entertain the audience. Over the years, the structure of presenting songs is guided by the male's pleasure principle as it primarily oriented to the male satisfaction to look at female body on the stage and screen. The framing of the female body in cinema reinforces engendering sexual and erotic fantasies. Representing the sexy body in Nepal cinema gratifies the male gaze that often impacts on the audiences with the visual spectacle. It is a dance sequence performed by a female that immediately renders to the voyeuristic, heterosexual male gaze. In movies, audiences are often presented with fascinating body parts, such as hip, thigh breast, eyes, bellies, lips, navel with extreme close up of the female with the sense of sexual longing or lust. All the represented bodies bring down the male gaze so the image of a woman takes the central place of visual pleasure in films. In the film world, the film producers are motivated to produce attractive female bodies, considering the male audiences' gaze upon the beautiful female body in a patriarchal social structure. It is difficult to find empowering female representation as their performances have cast their essentiality to offer up their body as a passive, sexual object of lust to attract viewers in the modern sense. Their performances become the carrier of the male dominated cultural motif of the capitalist society.

The analyses of the selected songs analyze that media is heterogeneous and representing body seems common in media culture where men seem superior to females and it is their right to the gaze and consume them .The gaze is a technical term that describes the way audiences perceive others' bodies with the sense of sexual longing or lust. Mulvey explains how female in movies serve as passive erotic objects for the male to forecast erotic fantasies on their physical appearance. Male gaze is represented through camera. Acknowledging this, the research aims at studying the selected movie songs of 2016 with the key application of Laura Mulvey's male gaze concept from the feminist perspectives, a predominant twentieth-century cultural study in order to explain the gendered body representation focusing mainly on the physical figures and camera work.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### REPRESENTING THE BODY IN VISUAL CULTURE

Most of the people's life is mediated through television, film and the internet. At the same time, other forms of visual medium are impressive to illustrate anything or anyone as their phenomenon. Visual culture is everything that is seen, produced to be seen. The way in which it is seen and understood expresses our culture all the time engaging us in visual images to focus on how they work and what they do. It is a part that communicates meaningful cultural codes where images bridge up the gap between viewers and performer analyzing gendered identities. In *An Introduction to Visual Culture* Nicholas Mirzoeff asserts that, “Visual culture directs our attention away from structured, formal viewing settings like the cinema and art gallery to the centrality of visual experience in everyday life” (7). On the similar concept he puts, “Visual culture is concerned with visual events in which information, meaning or pleasure is sought by visual technology” (3). So, visual culture is not just a part of our everyday life, it is our everyday life. The body represented before us with visual technology enclose us with everyday societal expectation for consumption to support consumerist capital culture where female’s erotized body works as a supplement object to raise the attraction towards the production.

Cinema songs are more than just a reflection of social relation; it is a field of visual culture and cultural studies. It works as an entertainment industry and belongs to the genre of audio visual medium. The representation of body image on screen matters a lot because the images of women on screen have been a site for gendered debates and become an area of academic concern. Related to the representation of female Annette Kuhn raises many questions and puts forward a line of thinking “Film viewing, in this model is a collective and semipublic undertaking, it is also an activity

which is as a rule, paid for by spectators. An exchange takes place of money in return for representations" (21). Viewers take such representations on the screen for granted. They internalize those images for their pleasure purpose. Then, those spectators start constructing meanings out of those pleasing visual images. Eventually, they make sense of the body representation on the screen which shapes their ideology in a real sense.

The visual impact of the image presented before us conveys feelings and builds societal and cultural ways of seeing how both male and female artists are constantly exposed to the widespread cinema industry that attracts people's gaze. Relation of looking describes the way spectators catch up in a film narration. When relating to the gaze it is always concerned within the favor of movement of erotic bodies on the screen. On the image act and the gaze Gunther Kress and Van Leeuwen state, "The producer uses the image to do something to the viewer" (118). The performer's acts on the screen do something to the viewer's imagination. The facial expression, gesture, body movement invites gaze in which viewers stare to desire them.

The movement of body posture during dance is the most powerful form of communication on which gender/sex identities are constructed and viewers perceive. Both male and female practice or gesture one's body to meet the society's expectation. Nepali cinema songs nowadays are more centralized on female leads though male actors also involve in provocative and seductive behavior, the songs focus on female bodies. Female actresses represent sexy whereas men look aggressive in nature. As Cara Wallis analyzes the gender display she points out, ". . . gender displays primarily reinforced stereotypical notions of women as sexual objects, and to a lesser degree, females as subordinate and males as aggressive" (160). The images presented

a highly sexualized image of female and male. The men almost represent superior and active roles with confident looks whereas females represent inferior as their images are pictured touching self, lowering head, bending knees to convey a sense of the female body as precious and delicate. Physical appearance with gestures, erotic body movements in song and dance sequence bring to mind the visualization of the gendered body that notably correlates masculinity and femininity concept produced within a cultural context. Gendering has been associated with music to sexuality and identity to the dominant gender norms. The image of female stars tends to be sexually objectified to a high degree, as an object of sexual desire limited to vision of femininity highlighting sexuality. At the same time the image of men stars tend to be objectified, as a body on which to model an equally limited vision of masculinity and controlled male sexual identity. Suzanne Cusick indicates, "If music isn't sexuality, for most of us it is psychically right next door" (71). Both gender and sexuality mark the bodies and the lived experiences of groups and individuals.

Our gender perceptions and ideals are produced through the media. Gender identity is the extent to which one identifies as being either masculine or feminine. The songs produced in various periods mark a diversion from earlier Nepali movie songs to the present one. To some extent gendered bodies are leading stretched views. The songs have the role of females to make provocative body parts visibly attractive to the viewers. The character's intention or position of power in the scene receives sexual relations to male gaze. How can women attract audiences towards them? Nepali cinema songs are no different than that as Sharon Smith puts it, "The role of a woman in the film always revolves around her physical attraction and the matting games she plays with the male characters" (14). The film industry has made particular use of the symbolic properties of female bodies in compelling its audiences to consume.

Similarly, in Nepalese commercial film industry women are shown as persuasive objects to the consumers. Thus the representative image of female bodies seems controlled and regulated by capitalist male gaze. The repeated controlling of male creates hegemonic effects upon the female behavior; the female takes male gaze as natural and allows them to represent their body in the media as per the need of capitalists' society to promote individualism and push forward the equalization of their status as men in the public sphere with legal rights to money. Hence, representation of the gendered body includes the male gaze where female artists are victims of popular culture hanging on to feminine qualities structured in cultural markers, such as beauty, sex appeal, fashion, make up and role of representative traditional gender. This notion of femininity based on sexual objectification continues females to be the subject of display under the male gaze.

Visually processing images of men and women are more likely to believe that looks are more important things. The female body matters a lot rather than male in outer appearance in present society. Different beauty ideals like hair, facial features, slim body and skin convey messages and attitudes about attractive and desirable bodies to others. Exposure to frequently sexed bodies on the screen reinforces the idea of perfect body image. The ideal of a perfect image targets the viewer's in their different body parts, legs, arms, nose, face, belly, navel and buttocks. It further conveys feelings, emotions building cultural and societal codes of seeing through appearances presented before which people interpret and understand the real world.

Susmita Sarkar scrutinizes the media representation of the female:

The women which we see in mass media or fashion shows portray not real but an image of a woman based on male libidinal expectations.

The media repeatedly typecast women around their gender and exhibits

their body to promote commercial products and services to sustain the gap between ideal body image and real image. (55)

Astonishingly, in the Nepali cinema female artists with wider exposure of body parts function as marketing tools, where they are object to promote sale of that particular movie serving as a commodity to men, the source of profitable industry. The performance of the star in front of the camera exposes themselves as products to be consumed. A sexually objectified body image imposes projection of objectifying gaze upon viewers in the visual culture of the modern age.

### **Exposure of Erotic Body in Media**

Media is changing the way people live their lives. In today's world of media technology, watching and listening to movie songs can help us shed a new light on the aspects of how we experience and represent ourselves as viewers. One of the most effective visual media is cinema. Movie songs and dances performed are an inseparable part that has been both influential and entertaining as it contains visual and audio to represent the particular culture. The songs have a significant role in creating a mood of the people, when the spotlight is often on the female body performing an erotic dance. Erotic word means sexual feeling or arousing feeling of sexual desire. The figure of female in art, statue or media image cast an erotic gaze on women when their body presented on the screen simply used as a sign to promote business. Octavio Paz calls eroticism, "a simple commodity, or a department of advertising and a branch of business" (196). That's the reason the body presented before us predictably refers to male gaze. Sex and beauty in movies songs represent gendered view through the body performance and vulgar lyrical phrase especially targeting female as an object and commodity them both visually and verbally to arouse sexual fantasies to its viewers. Martine Beugnet talks about cinema and its

concern in relation to physical appearance, “the film unravels to draw attention to the constant mutation that affects the physical appearance of audio- visual matter” (27).

People have expressed sexual desire through medium of art, literature in human history. In recent, illustration of sex and beauty in visual medium has been a prominent and accessible even in the latest movie songs.

Eroticism is anything that depicts sex, sexual desires, beauty and body in a creative and artistic manner. More often songs as a means of communication and expression illustrate or emphasize human desire and sexuality, something that deals with passionate love, and sentiments. The way female body presented before viewers triggers erotic response as we see their image overtly glamorized and sexualized in fashionable dresses. The jewelry, beauty, clothing suggest to the viewers that the character in a movie indirectly appeals to pleasure for male. Bodies become the medium of male fantasies. Acts like biting lips, touching self-body parts, tilting chest lines framed in an erotic way allow the male desire to consume female body. L.B. Kovetz writes, "Erotic deals with desire as the tendency to give aesthetic form to sexual experience. Erotica and aesthetic, then depend on each other: as desire gives shape to man's life so does language enact or amplify the semantics of his sensual gesture"(qtd in LeF22). The starts in movie give artistic view to love, sex, fashion, bodily posture in elevating the viewer's gaze. So watching and to be watched in a sense means to excite viewers. Movie songs enrich our soul and sometimes it carries us to the dimension that can't be imagined or described in life as it drives our actions, emotions creating an influence on our brains through the images presented before us. John Izod addresses:

However, most spectators want to give them buzz through the arousal of intense emotion. Particularly in the case of movies, with their

creation of a world that appears entire unto itself, many viewers want the screen's fantasy to lift them in imagination out of their own daily lives. Stars therefore give image to their performance in nude form, love, sex, sexuality in relation to their beauty. (1)

In that case, songs are meant to entertain spectators. Songs not only delight audiences but also instruct them. Such narratives in different forms expose the society they come; so for this reason film stars dance and sing in front of the camera whose performances appeal to audiences of diverse cultural backgrounds. The way the body exposure of cinema actors and actresses varies, depending upon the society they represent. Even in the same society, these stars present themselves to audiences in different ways.

Erotic performances depend entirely on their body movement, gesture and behavior codes. Cathy Schwichtenberg clarifies, "An erotic description can tease or hint at a veiled which we can, or are supposed to be able to, read correctly... A sexual code which carries with it signs of sexual ..." (27). Ronald Barthes too adds, "codes and signs which propel our desire" (26). In that case, one can realize that there is a fast changing trend of the body exposure on the screen. The body movements of the lead characters in the songs direct the focus on women's bodies in certain ways that attract the male and emphasize erotic fantasies and aid the sense of visual aesthetic when watching dance or songs sequence in a movie. Stephanie Colleen Yocum in her article states, "Popular songs have a big impact on the way gender is constructed in our culture. If a song is played over and over and everybody likes it, then it is cool. So therefore, doing what is represented in that song must be cool too" (5). Everyone who listens to the songs and watches the dance movements assume the way women are represented in the song with the set scenes, emotions including their body.

## Nepali Cinema Songs

Movie songs play a significant role as it is often used to express the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of the characters. Furthermore, songs add variety to the movies while using the female body as a medium to persuade the audiences with pleasing images to engage the viewer's emotions. Kath Woodward affirms, "Our bodies are also the site of the expression of feelings and emotions"(98). The technique of close up develops a close relationship between the audiences and artists allowing the viewers to feel connected to the song sequence. Nepali cinema songs in recent years offer a number of possible pleasures, such as scopophilia a part of the male gaze. With the adaptation of new techniques; the camera work, light, costumes and glamorous make ups which seem to have been the styles of songs from Bollywood. Nicola Dibben claims that camera angles serves to invite male gaze to its maximum and that exactly is practiced in Nepali filmy songs. Society has developed liberal view on portrayal of both male and female body performances in songs. Their performances, efforts to draw a larger audience's attention, are designed to emphasize the physical appearance and try to capture the viewer's attraction. The body has highly become a constructed product of society for it creates thoughts, perception and ideologies about the image presented before us. Elizabeth Grosz elucidates, "Bodies have all the explanatory power of minds therefore, the representation of women's bodies in film can assist in the societies in which they are depicted" (9). With the increase in globalization and technology the representation of the gendered body questions the way it is used and it's the songs that can contribute to the change in view of women's bodies. Physical display of the body matters a lot as it hinders the mind of viewers. Nepali cinema does not have a long history regarding representation of female and male body exposure on the screen. In recent the films have started to

balance the delicate line between traditionalism and westernization presenting erotic bodies of the female actresses in song and dance sequences adopting digital technology. Cinema and songs have been a natural combination. There is no difference whether the songs are tragic, romantic, item, comedy or folk; its scenes always uplift the impact on the viewers. Shamita Das Gupta sees songs as a necessary counter for the viewers, "As time changes the movie songs begin to thirst for new and modern. Unlike traditional ways of presenting actresses the film makers begin to display exotic and eclectic ways and styles in songs" (59). So, the representation of gender has become a visible phenomenon in Nepali cinema songs with vast changes in the economic, social and cultural context.

The spectacular feats of gendered body representation in movie songs often capture modern young audiences' attention because of the film industry's commercial motivation and growing effect of new techniques and Bollywood style for the fame. Songs strongly suggest a sexual tone in its dance, lyrics and visual theatrics so the study aims to examine the gendered body representation in Nepali cinema songs of 2016. It tries to explore the reason how and why bodies of male and female are gendered visually through the songs and dance they perform expose erotic style. The representation of the gendered body is concerned with the present research attempts to analyze the audio (lyrics) and visual of selected top ten songs of Nepali movies produced in the year 2016. The rationale behind the selection of these songs is to view how women's bodies create a sense of visual pleasure? Next to find out whether women are challenging stereotypes or adopting traditional representation? Maximum success of these movies in the market boom very well on their songs and dance sequence that easily grabbed viewer's attention. The songs are from the movies *ChakkaPanja* ("ek dui teen"), *Loot 2* "(thamel bazar)", *Bindass 2* ("chopiyena"),

PremGeet ("jabapugchu riverside"), *Classic* ("ke ho maya"), *Chapali Height 2* ("Galtigaryouna") *ReshamFilli* ("parityo dada ma"), *Fanko* ("local beauty"), *Jism* ("dubideutimi"), *Dreams* ("ma kebhanu"). The representation of male and female bodies within the gendering process could be associated with modernity, commodification and objectification. Numbers of movie songs represent the scenes that render the issue of the gendered body representation, which has a kind of impact on the viewers. Why is this so? What exactly gendered bodies represent? Why do we find odd in watching them? How actresses are brave enough to plunge into cinematic projects that are marketed as being the object of a male's pleasure? Watching the songs in instance represent actor/actresses bodies in such a way that represent as if it is constructed mainly for the male gaze and to gain popularity.

Most songs represent a particular image of the female, usually as an object, submissive, powerless whereas man has a strong, protective, confident supporting patriarchal ideology to create an alluring image. Women having more power than a man are rare to see. My special interest in cinema comes from both pleasure of listening and viewing Nepali cinema music prompts me to investigate the representation of the gendered body in Nepali cinema songs. Reviewing the literature addressing body representation scholars have studied representation of females in music videos with the terms 'commodification', 'objectification' in relation to gender issues but none of them has made a comprehensive study of gendered body representation in Nepali movie songs. Research, especially in Nepali cinema songs applying Laura Mulvey's male gaze concept, does not exist. Unlike literature, film incorporates audio visual elements so the study of this nature would be significant and helpful for academics. It can be a reference for those studying body representations. I believe it would help to understand the gendered body representation in Nepali

cinema. It can be a pointer when we can work out to minimize the way viewers misrepresent the gendered body in songs produced in present Nepali cinema. Further, it can open space in the study of visual representation and set an agenda for research about the body.

This thesis deals with ten selected movie songs released in 2016. In fact, these songs are very popular and have acquired its goer's publicity and marketing of the movie as well. Even the lead characters of the movies are renowned as a 'glamorous star' after the release of the song sequence even if the film didn't get commercial success. The nature of this study falls under the qualitative method. The selected audio-visual contents will be viewed from youtube as a primary text whereas books, journals, articles with scholarly opinion regarding the perception of gendered body will be used as a secondary data to defend the hypothesis. Gillian Dyer's useful checklists like camera angle, costumes, setting, make-up, facial expression, will be preferred as codes including mise-en-scene tool in analyzing the gendered representation of the both male and female lead characters in song sequences and find how male gaze is applied to the body that provides a detail how images produced certain signified role.

I have further restricted my sample of ten Nepali movie songs of 2016, applying qualitative research methods. The study concerns especially how gendered bodies are represented within the realm of Nepali movies in context to our country Nepal. The study is organized in four chapters. The first chapter presents a short introduction with the general background of the study, including research area and statement of the problem. The second chapter exposes Laura Mulvey's concept of the male gaze with the help of the theoretical base of feminist and cultural studies as methodology. The third chapter describes the analytical part of the representation of the gendered body. Finally, the fourth chapter summarizes the entire research work.

## CHAPTER TWO

### FEMINIST READING AND MALE GAZE

This chapter builds another crucial aspect of feminist film studies exploring the notion of gaze to understand how masculine hegemony works within the mainstream cinema regarding body representation. Representation of gendered bodies can be seen at a superficial level as extremely misogynistic and offensive where the process of gendering is attached with the notion of masculine dominance. General trend in cinematic medium is to fuse the gaze with look that mostly connects feminist film theory and cultural industries. Understanding gaze becomes productive to gain knowledge in gender relations.

Today the notion of gaze is widely used in visual culture and it has become a familiar cultural perspective even for film and other visual media. It is an important part of feminism as it refers how we look at visual representation and understand it. Reema Dutta remarks about the female involvement, "Women are increasingly used as visual accessories"(5). In examining so Nepali cinema industry widely supports the male gaze notion. It is applicable to the contemporary Nepali cinema industry. So, what exactly male gaze refers to? As Vickie Rutledge Shields and Dawn Heinecken explain, "The male gaze connotes significantly more than mere voyeurism. It's a controlling gaze" (74). It mainly deals with the relationship of watching and being watched by characters and the spectators how they engage with visual media. Laura Mulvey clarifies the concept of the male gaze upon the female character on the screen:

In the world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly.

In the traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness.

(714)

This actually means male gaze is the point where audiences are forced to view women on the screen as sexual objects from heterosexual hegemony. Furthermore, she addresses the presentation of women in film using Freud's psychoanalysis. She discusses Freud's idea of scopophilia that involves, "taking other people as objects, subjecting them to a controlling and curious gaze" (713). Songs highlight voyeuristic tendencies of men projecting pretty, glamorous female bodies on screen. Female leads are shot from the perspective of what Mulvey describes as, "an illusion of looking in on a private world" (714). 'Male gaze' is effectively applicable that sheds light on the cinema songs as we notice camera angles panning up in the bodies of lead characters. Celebrities are well known for the projection of their beautiful, pretty, glamorous, muscular images on a film screen. In this regard she mentions, "moving picture as the most advanced form of visual entertainments" (742). It represents and constructs the ideal vision role of male dominance over male. Nepali cinema songs too offer the images produced simply for the gratification of male viewers.

Mari Ruti highlights Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" known as the most legendary pronouncement of feminist theory," on its true representation of the female character's body on the screen for commercial purpose (37). In that sense, Mulvey argues the visual images within media encourage viewers to look pleasurably at female images through male gaze. She examines the role of the patriarchal society on the cultured body of the film viewers empowering men and objectifying women in film is to provide a source of pleasure for men and nothing

else and such representation of them is known as the gaze. Basically she develops the concept of the male gaze where women on the screen become a tool in the hand of patriarchal societal set-up. She has discussed two fold of looking voyeuristic and fetishistic pleasure to provide men with visual pleasure and have erotic impact. Voyeuristic is related to the process of objectification of female characters that involves controlling gaze looking then as image to be looked whereas fetishistic builds up the physical beauty of the object into something satisfying creating idealized image into the mind. On this similar line John Ellis in relation to notion of looking adds, "The voyeuristic look is curious, inquiring, and demanding to know. The fetishistic gaze is captive by what it sees, does not wish to inquire further to see more, to find out . . . The fetishistic look has much to do with display and spectacular" (47). Female images are objectified to fetish and voyeuristic male gaze. Therefore they are visually presented beautifully. Physical appearance is emphasized using close ups to stare at their body and create a mood of looking that is sexual.

Male gaze applies to the whole life of females in the society because every aspect of their acts is connected to male concepts and ideas. Male gaze bound the viewers to follow the gender inequality convention interpreting and experiencing about the female body consciously or unconsciously. Gaze is often connected with fantasy and desire; especially the subjects desire to control the objects it sees. Mulvey discusses three fold of gaze. The look of camera, the look of character and the audiences that draw voyeurism and narcissisms pleasure into the world of cinematic gaze. Nowadays it is seen extensively in the film industry as a medium of entertainment. It upholds a patriarchal ideology and renders the women as passive and men as active representing stereotypical images. Songs ultimately sustain the traditional gender beliefs as it always presents women inferior, weak, dominated and

more importantly pleasing objects. In contrast men are rather independent, physically strong, and muscular. Susan Bordo one of the distinguished feminist focuses on how patriarchal capitalistic undertaking works on women's body linking modern consumer to the formation of gendered body. On behalf Caglar Demir in understating Bordo's work quotes, "According to her, a female is regarded as "alien, submissive, instinctual, passive and false self in which the true -self-the active and mainly mind/soul is confined"(23). Further he heeds, "Bodies are seen as objects for visual enjoyment"(168). Therefore, a sexed body is valued and expected by society. The female body is culturally constructed since we are habituated to see glamorous, powerful and perfect characters on the screen. The scenes show partially clothed or undressed female or male bodies with cameras lingering over their muscular body, strong arms, breast, navel, thighs, lips legs, chest line. Seeing that through the close up medium of lead characters body parts purposely invites gaze. As a matter of fact, female bodies in particular serve as objects to be consumed from the masculine point of view for male pleasure. On this Claire Johnston agrees, "A sexist ideology and a male- dominated cinema, a woman is presented as what she represents for man" (33). Johnston tries to explain how the woman's ideological image is settled. Recognition of women as the means of production, sexist, male-dominated and capitalist culture produce look a female image as a myth.

Thus, to gaze is to look steadily and intensely with a great curiosity, interest and pleasure to the characters projected on screen as they become a turning point in popular culture reinforcing the ideal image of masculine and feminine identities. Carey Jewitt writes, "An image can engage the viewer in a fetishistic and compulsive urge to look and look again, encountering the sense that the viewer 'owns' the image or that it is part of his or her identity" (27). Mainstream cinema generally places a

male character at the center of the narrative which the audience makes up to relate at the same time when woman are positioned for visual impact and erotic pleasure.

Filmy songs have not only screened but it is a space where women's bodies are exploited and used as a commodity in a form of entertainment. The body has lingered the attention of the feminist since it has been the central importance for understanding the representation in various contexts like cultural, historical and social life within popular culture and academic research. The concept of gaze is worthy for further research regarding feminist perspective. Amy Clark refers to the study, "Phenomenologist who work from a feminist perspective acknowledge and analyze the structurally, culturally and historically locate nature of gendered embodiment"(3). Body is relatively a new area of research concerning an idea that gender identity is formed by the way they are represented on the screen and should be. Feminist film theorists study women's image and male gaze within the field of visual culture as one of the most relevant topic. Similarly their study moved to the structure of gendered representation relating it to the female body as a cultural product. So, it's a new wave of academic study that focuses on gender representation in modern society and culture.

The study of gendered representation in cinema began in early 1970's with Claire Johnston's theory of cinematic representation based on understanding film narrative as a mythic system that naturalizes conventional gender relations within an object of male desire. Thus Johnston comments that, " it is probably true to say that despite the enormous emphasis placed on women as spectacle in the cinema, woman as woman is largely absent"(33). The issue of male gaze has been subject of much debate among feminist film theorist in visual culture. The gaze is being directed at the female body, commonly by a male. Jonathan Schroeder while talking about the

concept of male gaze voiced his opinion as "to gaze implies more than to look at it signifies a psychological relationship of power, in which gazer is superior to the object of gaze"(88). The famous notion of the male gaze was introduced in Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975). She argues that women take passive part in film and men take active part that brings women into the eye of viewers as objects. She talks about 'scopophilia'(713) and 'narcissism' (714) and how both kind of pleasure are gendered where female actresses play the role of submissive, passive, emotional whereas male actors play role to be powerful, aggressive, strong well build shaping their performances into masculine and feminine role. Media constructs the gendered role regarding the men and female body. They inform us how femininity and masculinity are to be understood. It is well defined and shaped through mass media. Cinema songs become prominent audio visual mediums where eyes of viewers build the pleasure of looking.

The concept of the male gaze is one that deals with how an audience perceives someone presented in a visual medium. The representation of gendered bodies can be studied in a way how female actresses become erotically constructed by the gaze in the cinema songs. John Berger suggests that, "Presence for a woman is so intrinsic to her person that men tend to think of it as an almost physical emanation, a kind of heat or smell or aura" (37). Women are born within a narrow space containing the male gaze that allows them to appear imperfect. Further he contends:

One might simplify this by saying: *men act and women appear*. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only most relations between men and women but also the relation of women to themselves. The surveyor of women in

herself is male: the surveyed female. Thus she turns herself into an object-and most particularly an object of vision: a sight. (38)

Feminist film theorists greatly emphasize on the aspects of women's life in the cinema world. Representation and understanding are commonplace in media culture nowadays. Movie songs provide the most dominant examples of it. The growth of films as an audio visual medium raised the practice of gendered issues.

Cinema is one of the cultural industries related to business where film screens the women's body as a commodity. The body in existing situation is presented as sex symbol to please men for visual pleasure. Their bodies construct a specific feeling and earn profit selling the movies. Richard Dyer in *Heavily Bodies: Film Star and Society* expresses what body of star means for, "Stars are made for profit" (5).

Especially songs with more female body exposure and sexual alluring scenes become a part of their commercial success. Actresses experience the gaze in order to reveal their bodies to entertain the viewers and promote the films to gain maximum goers.

Ephraim Katz defines, "the films made with little or no attention to quality or artistic merit, but with an eye to a quick profit, usually via high pressure of sales and promotion techniques emphasizing some sensational aspects of the products"(qtd. in Chaudhary and Shezad 64). More often the audiences are introduced to lead female characters that offer male gaze using close-up shots through camera to stare at their body. Women are exposed more than men in entertainment in songs and dance sequences physically that confirms the notion of gaze. It creates a mode of looking that is sexual, voyeuristic and associated with the male lead character's point of view assuming the male gaze. As Budd Boetticher puts:

What counts is what the heroine provokes, rather what she represents. She is the one, or rather the love or fear she inspires the hero, or else the concern he feels for her, who makes him act the way he does. In herself the woman has not the slightest importance. (qtd. in Mulvey 715 )

The body image has determined that compared to men women are more concerned about their appearance. More often female bodies are arranged in the position of sexual submission like lying down, kneeling and reclining with exposure of their buttocks, breasts including facial expression of coyness, seduction or sexual ecstasy.

Certain gender ideology in body representation has become a center of commercial popular and artistic interest. Film industry continues to perpetrate the voyeuristic gaze of consumer culture. In songs, women's body is expressed as a sex object and phrases are full of unusual terminology for their body parts which is important to mention the viewers' attraction or gratification for male gaze. The words like *jawani*, (youth), *rasilo wotha* (watery lips) and *garmi kaakha* (hot lap) represent body parts of female especially that denotes something related to desire. The idea to represent them has become a great source of sexual entertainment for the viewers. No single stars have even complained against the depiction of their body exposure. They view it as the necessary part of film in the present scenario, is what the society demands. Therefore, concerns in cinematic representation brought the concept of the male gaze, a dominant perspective to see women as a passive subject or a source of visual pleasure. Visual pleasure is a strong element which spotlight on the body movements as glamour, sexualized objects on display, and appealing appearances for strong visual impact in perceiving message visually. The female body is trapped with male ways of looking. They are being watched and invite the gaze and emphasis

female sexuality. Their legs, hips, waist, arms, lips, face are over emphasized through camera angle, costumes to facilitate the male gaze. Film Songs use the female body for a variety of purposes. One of the main purposes behind depiction is to serve capitalistic ideology. An idea of 'male gaze' is a conceptual lens in cinematic representation so definition of male gaze is essential to be noted. Bordo describes:

. . . the receptive pleasures traditionally reserved for women", such as the " pleasures, not of staring someone down but of feeling one's body caressed by another's eyes . . . Some people describe these receptive pleasures as ' passive' . . . Passive hardly describes what's going on when one person offers himself or herself to another. Inviting receiving, responding- these are active behaviors too, and rather thrilling ones. (120)

Mainstream cinema serves as a modern media that represents prevalent culture as it's an important art form, a source of popular entertainment through which cultural norms can be learnt. Products of the culture industries provide the models of what it means to be male or female. Culture shapes gender identity. Feminist film theorists view cinema as a cultural practice creating gendered view. Keller Douglas remarks as:

Media stories and images provide the symbols, myths, and resources which help constitute a common culture for the majority of individuals in many parts of the world today. Media culture provides the materials to create identities whereby individuals insert themselves into contemporary techno capitalistic societies and which is producing a new form of global culture. (1)

So, cultural norms demand women to adopt themselves to be sexually attractive to men. They allow us to read about the cinema and its production about representation of gendered subjectivity as socially accepted norms. Culturally invented expectations as one assumes, learns, and performs, more or less consciously is expected in the portrayal of lead characters in film songs.

Filmy songs are constructed to serve the interest of the market where female's bodies are shown to create an alluring image of an object for male pleasure that projects its imagination of beauty perfection onto the female body. As it's a form of entertainment it holds the attention and concentration of onlookers or gives pleasure and delight. Talking about songs in movies Ravneet Kaur remarks, "Songs, too, form an important part of reader's curiosity as a popular commercial form" (102). Today more than ever before film companies use beautiful actresses with sexual appeal in the movie songs. Even beauty is presented by what eyes feel about an object or image presented. Film songs create sensation and most of them are expressions of feelings of love, lust and emotions. Almost in the selected songs female chest lines, breast, face, back, legs, lips, thighs and men muscular bodies are exposed with camera angles for the attraction of cinema viewers. The camera repeatedly positions to look at female bodies from different angles framing their bodies. This sort of experience through sound and visual aesthetics exposure is only business oriented, a way towards male gaze. The male gaze creates power and supports a patriarchal status. Songs show erotic scenes, music, and visual aesthetics to express of feminine point of view in countering the gaze depicting women as subjects rather than objects. On this concept Sheila Irvin asserts, "To be sexy, in this ordinary sense is to satisfy a set of standards for appearance and behavior that are the outgrowth of a specific, societal shaped,

heterosexual male gaze"(299). Female body serves as an object for aesthetic something behind playful acts to please the men.

Gendered bodies occur when subversive stereotypes are created between men and women. Women's status traditionally depends on beauty and sexuality rather on their performance. Today mass media bodies are social entities. The body is seen, evaluated represented and perceived as objects of beauty and sex object. Chrisler and Robledo mention in *Women Embodied Self*, "Women's bodies are perceived by many as sex objects or as objects of beauty and are considered normative and need not be hidden or kept private"(9). Hence, social media like television, magazines, film, music videos have major focus on gendered construction. Social media plays a vital role because men's abs are viewed as strong, dominant and desirable but female abs as sexualized, objectified and shameful. Therefore, visuals generate male gaze upon women in objectified and submissive roles to men counterparts. Men's physical behaviors are shown over the women. Male leads twist, drag, assault them for sex that demeans women are nothing more than a submissive sex toy or passive object for pleasure of men. Even both male and female bodies are exposed to media. Social media is a platform for the stars to become socially constructed ideals or their own gendered identity within the cultural codes of femininity and masculinity. "Women's bodies are shown as gifts to be given, received and exchanged by men" (Davis 4). In other words, a woman's body has become an entity that carries off social and cultural meanings. As Bordo claims that:

All the cultural paraphernalia of femininity, of learning to please visually and sexually through the practices of the body- media imagery, beauty pageants, high heels, girdles, make-up, and simulated orgasm were seen as crucial in maintaining gender domination. (182)

The song uses erotic scenes and visual aesthetics to express a feminine point of view valuing their physical appearances and in doing so it counters the gaze, depicting women as objects to be looked at rather than subject.

In everyday life looking at film; the audiences find pleasure in viewing the fictional character's body displayed on the screen. Film industry serves as media culture. It offers entertainment with the body image of the existing system prevailing in society. Film songs act as a powerful entertainment tool of the modern society which has progressively becoming commercialized and market- oriented. The body image has initially caught the attention practices of controlled, passive, subordination, object, and oppression issues in relation to females. The growth of consumerism as a culture focuses the body image of females that needs to be projected superficially. Viewers internalize the view that the body is "a vehicle for conspicuously demonstrating social class differences"(Calasanti and Slevin 64). Performing on the screen as an actor is transforming to consumption where they are viewed as mere consumers. In the related culture industry, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer view forms of entertainment like the cinema industry, music videos, and advertisements are designed to satisfy the growing needs of the mass capitalistic society. They note that cultural products "no longer need to present themselves as art"(95). Further, they put, "[cultural industries] influence over the consumers is established by entertainment" (136). Filmy songs shift in a system with popular culture imagery as a form of entertaining perception. So, part of songs in movies shape the idea of ideal female beauty upon the ways of looking at female bodies for male pleasure.

The way we look and see the visual work of art in advanced industrial society has a bit changed. The film songs we watch earlier are different from what

is presented now. It is organized and produced on a technological basis. In "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" Walter Benjamin argues that art has been industrialized by means of technology. The originality has been lost. The cultural industries are promoting illusion misrepresenting reality. The actors' performance is centered on the camera. Performances of stars give a reflexive medium as the camera and techniques of editing spot viewers to explore and reflect on the world through them. Regarding this he illustrates art is mediated by technology, "Hence the performance of the actor is subjected to a series optical tests. This is the first consequence of the fact that the actor's performance is presented by means of a camera" (228). The viewer's lack to see the world beyond the screen. They look through the screen to an imaginary world. He calls "aura" (221). The actual space and performance without any editing that is similar to the stage act. He defines artists 'performance as 'illusion promoting' (232). In addition, cultural practices grow up around film and star representation. Viewers assume that stars expect to live in the physical world that reflects the characters they portray. Benjamin notes it as western capitalist industry characteristics:

The film responds to the shriveling of the aura with an artificial buildup of the 'personality 'outside studio. The cult of the movie star fostered by the money of the film industry preserves not the unique aura of the person but "spell of personality", the phony spell of a commodity. So long as the movie - maker's capital sets the fashion, as a rule no other revolutionary merit can be accredited to today's film than the promotion of a revolutionary criticism of traditional concept of art. (231)

On the similar line, Siegfried Kracauer agrees the concept that film works as a medium of illusion. The images presented before viewers become the most fascinating elements beyond reality. Viewers read the image and star to be captive. For the film, "delivers us from technology by technology" (142). Women's image functions as a sign not a real reflection of the real star.

The body has been a carrier of cultural signs and symbols of beauty, sexuality. Prior to Mulvey, film theorists such as Jean -Louis Baudry and Christian Metz put forward an idea of psychoanalysis possible through scopophilia. To understand the notion of gaze one has to depend on psychoanalysis that develops the issue of sexual subjectivity and individual identity. Metz points out whatever presented before us as an image serves as a signifier. As viewers individual perception stars are read. "We identify artists with the camera, rather than the protagonists of a given movies "(65). Artists are only a performer. The star's performance in the viewer's sphere is their social performance. They mediate their personas to reconstruct them as stardom. Stephen Prince describes, "Films have meaning and significance but they do not carry messages- anymore than other works of art" (83). Songs and dance are art and performing art reflects society. Notions of masculine and feminine have emerged that are socially constructed. Beauty and sexuality are exposed with striking images of stars. Steven Pile mentions, "the body reflects society and society reflects and society reflects the body; each is mirrored in the other" (185). Songs act largely as social mirrors. It is believed to be a true reflection of society. Feminist believes that sexuality is directly tied how we communicate in society. To show off their various body parts in songs proudly, shyly, or seductively it's the business. Female bodies are the medium of expression. Helen Cixous instigates women to write about their bodily experiment

which stands for a supplier of sexual urge and drive for creativity. "Writing is for you, you are for you; your body is yours, take it" (577). She insists women to speak up and start a new identity regarding the patriarchal system. On this she articulates, "It is time for women to start scoring their feats in written and oral language"(880). The bodies are the medium of expression so in this sense. She stresses that women should not internalize images assumed by men. Women should be the signifiers of their own body. The subordination of women that are socially and culturally constructed will open new platforms for the women. Therefore the women's body and sexuality is the medium to put them into a new world empowering their sexuality.

Exposing bodies in the film songs trace a feminine language. Women's image is consumed by the men luring at their body. They express themselves freely that carries identical meanings of the real position of women in society. Society begins with sexed bodies and fabricates gender. Judith Butler, in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, explores a new way of looking at sex and gender identity which is achieved through performance. Her emphasis, "genders are true and real only to the extent that they are performed" (9). She views the idea that our sexed bodies are also performative. She focuses, "Performativity is based on expectation of what is considered gendered behavior"(225). Artists performing on the screen mean their bodies become gendered. The way stars follow the repeated social conventions like dressing, walking, behaving make the gender real. For this she names, 'gender performativity'(33). Sex and gender are socially and culturally constructed. So, stars repeatedly perform acts to construct their identity and play ideal self out to meet social expectations. Susmita Karki frequently gives bold roles with bikini so her

gender identity for society is as sexy heroine or assumes her to see in bikini. In fact gender identity is repeated performance.

Gender is one of the main terms which the feminist's ideology revolves around. Gender as opposed to sex refers to the social construction of being female or male. Gender is something that is achieved by socializing one into the role of a man or a woman. Society begins with sexed bodies and produces gender. According to Butler it is fact that, "human society begins with gender and impose it on human bodies as sex" (452). Therefore, the actors are made to act according to expectation as society implements them to do so. With the publication of *The Second Sex*, Simon De Beauvoir talks about the relationship between body and self-took center stage. She recognizes that, "to be present in the world implies strictly that there exists a body which is at once a material thing in the world and a point of view towards the world" (39). Body is encountered by others who respond to it and meditate how sense of being is different for men and women. She says, "One is not born a woman, one becomes one" (281). Even costumes, title of the movie, coding behavior, gesture, and nude images value the attraction of the female body. This causes a cultural view that women's bodies are different to men's bodies.

Film songs shift in a system of representation with popular culture imagery that shapes the idea of ideal female bodies and male bodies. Bordo explains, "What we are all exposed to, rather, are homogenizing and normalizing images and ideologies concerning "femininity" and female beauty" Those image and ideology press for conformity to dominant cultural norms"(62).The images presented before the audiences conceive meaning what actually it means. Body plays an active role whether verbal or nonverbal it reveals some peculiar meaning behind its representation. The man holds visual power over the women. Looking at body reveals

information about gender, sex, class, religion based on physical appearance. The body is entirely associated with women whereas the mind with men. Bordo elaborates such binaries as male activity and female passivity. Women in our society are more identified and associated with their bodies than are men and to a greater extent they are valued for how they look. Even Waheed Chaudhary and Zara Shezad mentions, "There pair are marked as sex bodies of men and women, where mind and reason are associated with men and masculinity and body and passion are associated with women and feminists"(65). Foucault too writes about female and male as:

There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints, just a gaze. An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorizing to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against himself. (155)

The body is centralized in movie songs to a certain degree for commercial success. Enthralling performance with sexual appearance is presented through the characters in movie songs. Sexualizing women in particular is heavily centralized for marketing purposes. If women are portrayed as sexy in looks, viewers will pay more attention to them rather than to male.

Male gaze is found to be an effective tool for marketing. Viewers view the artists in certain outfits and look as they appear to them in the media. It can influence the viewers in regards to their sexuality and bodies. We are surrounded with images of perfect women and perfect men in everyday life. Fredrickson and Roberts explain, "Women are treated as bodies- and in particular, as bodies that exist for the use and pleasure of others"(175). More specifically, there has been an increase of sexually

suggestive lyrics in songs, as well as sexual images in movie songs. This sends the message that women exist as sexual objects that depend on their physical appearance.

Viewers expect to start performance as a sign. They are a key that can turn into a commercial product; a vehicle for attracting audiences and assuring strong box office taking. They consider their personas to reconstruct them as stardom.

Voyeurism is one of the aspects applied in order to get certain appeal for the viewers.

Star image refers to the representation of the characters in song sequences in a way that spotlight their body parts, fashion, glamour, lightening, costume to get their face and popularity into the public as a star. Mulvey indicates that glamorous stars happen

to be looked at. Women in the media industry are always expected to be glamorous.

Therefore, songs are viewed as a visual feast of glamour. According to Gerald Mast,

"One of the basic goals of the motion picture industry is to make the screen look alive

in the eyes of the audience" (320). Susmita Karki is a renowned glamour model and

film actress in Nepali film industry. In her role of a bold girl in *Bindaas 2*, she

received a lot of coverage on her tattoo and bikini picture pose in song sequences (see fig.36).

The film industry continues to perpetrate the voyeuristic gaze of consumer

culture. Glamour aspects of the actress display hairstyle, jewelry, clothes, bodily

pose, gesture etc. For male actors muscular body, good outlook, sensual poses,

hairstyles etc. Bodies of actors/actresses are objectified in idealized only for the

purpose of giving entertainment. Similarly, objectification is too related to the gaze.

The lead characters in the song sequence perform the dance moves with glamorous

poses with the motif of gaze. They represent sexy bodies. This can be best

exemplified in the song "dalna deu dalna deu" from movie *Chapali Height 2* where

viewers eyesight get indulged with the provocative appearances of the lead character.

To hold the attention of viewers Ayushman Desraj Shrestha and Paranita R. L. Rana performs sexually suggestive action including explicit bodily touch scenes that invites gaze at their sexual passion (see fig. 33, 34). Sexually suggestive actions establish them as a new image in the eyes of viewers. Representing themselves in such a way significantly tied its knob to their success to a certain height. In *Star* Dyer develops his notion of star as consumption and production. "Looking at the stars from the point of view of production puts the emphasis on the film-makers (including the economic structures within which they work and the medium they use) who make stars, or cause them to exist"(17). Moreover often the body has been regarded as a female concern; however men have also become important within consumer culture.

Artists explore gender through representation of the body using body as a means of their creative process or form of art. Ayushman and Dayahang Rai came in rise as male lead actors regarding their performance. Dayahang received considerable recognition for his smaller role but notable role. Likewise, ayushman Joshi has been highly appreciated for his vigorous acting skills in *Chapali Height 2*. His acts made downright goofier than vulnerable in his emotional scenes (see fig. 34). Gossip is a factor that constructed their images as a star image. Much of their gossip reason was their sexualized images and stunning look. Film stars are considered a vehicle for attracting audiences and guaranteeing strong box office takings.

Dyer develops the concept which mainly concerns, "star image which is a complex configuration of visual, verbal and aural sign of a particular star" (38). Making of an icon of the star body depends upon viewers' responses. Such an icon is quickly accepted by individuals in society. He became recognizable for his star body in the song sequence that widely assumed acceptable as social norms. Physical body is one of the elements of ideal for this camera plays the role of indicator. Bodies are

framed, fragmented, zoomed and styled. Radha Subramnyam references, "... in the Mulvian term, through the fragmentation and stylization of the body in close-ups and through the occasional playing down of screen depth to create a one- dimensionality that suggest objectification "(96). Voyeurism tends to sexualize women for men viewers using close-ups creating mode of looking in dance and song sequence in movies. Camera forces viewers to stare at female characters more often and associate with the male protagonist's point of view.

The illusion of mainstream film industry lies in the fact that film songs are extremely visual pleasing for the viewers. Even in the twenty first century women are viewed as sexual objects. Females are objectified by their beautiful physical appearance posing sexual poses and emotional expression with provocative dresses alluring exposure of the female body. The notion of female objectification in idealized ways is only for the purpose of giving entertainment to the viewers. Cynthia M. Frisby and Jennifer Steven Aubrey argue that, "much of the sexual objectification of women comes from female artists objectifying their own bodies" (67). Objectification is notable throughout the songs. Compared to the men artist female artists' body exposure in miniskirts, short pants, bikini, designer clothes are more often exaggerated with camera panning on stomach, chest line with close up of her body. Men artist seems to be in full dress who erotize her, flatten her, icon her, character her as sex object. They are using the signifiers like alcohol glass, cigarette, muscular body, money, gun etc. It highlights fetishistic and scopophilia pleasure for male viewers as well. Their glasses, swinging hair, curved bend body, glasses, bikini works as signifiers.

Songs are now a globally accepted component as these are cultural and commercial feast. As Sue Thornham puts it, "I do not think anyone will deny that

when a female's body is the focus of attention the action is aimed at male viewers" (17). Hence portrayal of popular images is one of its businesses. This representation is common in Nepali movies even today. Even if a woman is the lead character, she is often portrayed as helpless, passive, confused or in danger and she is often rescued by a male character. The notion of active-male and passive-female is prevalent in all of the movies. Sexualized gaze both happens in everyday life, where women are found to be gazed at more than men. The sexually objectifying gaze also occurs in visual media Nepali film songs carry some attributing factors that help to understand present culture. When we observe old Nepali film songs we find less body exposure of the lead characters but now with the growing effect of technology, westernization and film industries it started adopting the westernize look to their cinema star to gain the attention of the viewers. Film songs seem heavily affected by the influence of western culture even in body language, lyrics of the songs as well while expressing phrases that refer to women's body parts as an object of desire. The current study will be supplementary to the literature by exploring how coverage to gendered messages in Nepali cinema songs still have the same issue decades later? Why are women in the twenty-first century still in the same roles as in the past although they are empowered? Mulvey's gaze seems prevalent in Nepali cinema too that works under the hegemony of capitalistic and patriarchal ideology. Characters objectify themselves to fetish and voyeuristic male gaze.

## CHAPTER THREE

### VISUALIZING THE GENDERED BODY

Cinema Songs are powerful tools that give the audiences an emotional guide. It creates mood and makes scenes more memorable. Some images in the scenes become so exemplary that they permanently etch or hint on the minds of the viewer's so specific scenes of the songs become more popular than movies. The images portrayed in the song sequence concern women and men's ideal figure. It reveals the gendered ideology drawing upon the issue of objectification, sexuality, patriarchy, stereotypical and gender inequality through body representation because our bodies are important in construction of gender as it is expressed throughout the way we move, dress, act etc. Songs and dance sequences are instruments on understanding its significant function in conveying meaning or message behind performance. It is an important form of art that has utilized every culture for entertainment purposes. It works as marketing mechanisms as it promotes mass capitalistic consumers for entertainment. Adorno including Horkheimer mention in their critique the truth behind the cultural industry is the notion of just a business, "Nevertheless the culture industry remains the entertainment business. Business is their ideology"(9).The spectacular feats of glamorous, sexual body representation in song often capture the young audiences' attention in doing so the film industry has translated into cultural consumption with commercial motif and capitalistic ideology.

Songs performed on the screen focus more and more love scenes, nude scenes, sex appealing scenes that easily attract viewers into cinematic gaze. Here the stars become products through their dress, act, and behaviors. They appear in the eyes of viewers in relation to male that increase fan and film sales. Specific attention is given to the representation of gendered body image as songs of Nepali movies these days

primarily focus on female characters and their bodies with strong male gaze. Dance moves, song lyrics, body parts are presented imperfectly that makes it grosser. Leading characters in these songs get featured in their career forming gender identity. In *Gendering Bodies*, Sala Crawley remarks, "Every meaning and interpretation is experienced through the body"(5). Female stars bodies are showcased as erotic and sexual fantasies promoting male gaze. Songs often determine the failure or success of the movies so far the songs added in the movies deliver the performing body on the screen that becomes desired norms and product commodity to make the movies commercially successful. Kaur adds, "Songs, too, form an important part of reader's curiosity as a popular commercial form" (120). For these reason songs in cinema displays the status of a woman and her body on the basis of performance or beauty.

The majority of movies include songs that are categorized as item songs, romantic love songs, folk songs etc. These songs have placed the women figure in the center even if it has nothing to do with plot. Women are shown wearing minimal clothes with camera angles focusing on specific body parts, thus objectifying them continuously to develop the male gaze and cultural practices of gendered body images as a socially constructed process. Images in movie songs shape the gender how masculinity and femininity are understood. Ideas about the gender and its reflection inspire viewers who are largely young through these images. Jill Nelmes describes, "What our culture portrays as being representative of masculinity and femininity and understanding of gender, sexuality and society"(124). Gender is produced through the bodily performances and performances are based on the concept of masculinity and feminine traits constructed through the society. Gender is not separable from the performance. As Butler relates, gender is performance; it is a body act with linguistic

consequences and it thus contains both linguist and theatrical dimensions" (preface).

On the similar lines she writes:

Gender ought not to be constructed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts. The effect of gender is produced through the stylization of the body and hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, styles of various kinds constitutes the illusion of an abiding gendered self. (140)

According to Butler, gender is a repetitive performance. The way star perform their role as mother, daughter, using gestures, dress codes and behavior signifies a cultural practice of looking women in the category of gender and sex. It's clear that stars' bodily performances are constantly being gendered so one should look beyond the appearance of the body. If society views the body through gendered appearance then objectifying and sexualizing of body construct cultural codes that produce gender identity as feminine or masculine.

Femininity and masculinity is heavily promoted as a central part of consumer culture through body performance. Female body has less control during dance steps as men twist, pull, and touch their body parts frequently to develop submissive roles for them. The way of looking is important as the camera constantly positions at the body parts of the stars to make viewers feel pleasure. Recently, actors and actresses have a highly polished body representing a model frame onscreen. The songs emphasize their beauty as the camera moves in and out of their face to create a carved appearance. Through close-up technique viewers see the stars eyes, flat abs, torso, lips, navel and buttock that help to construct mood, feeling and desire among viewers. "Film creates

personified symbols for most mundane situations that are relevant for both daydreamer fantasies of the world and everyday life. The power of film, visual and emotional impact can be measured by it and its followers"(quoted in Chaudhary 4). Viewers see graphically which bodies are beautiful, shapes hot, looks best in bikini, males muscular shaped body, thin skinned female etc. The present day culture in movies has made a jest on the standards with the lyrics of songs including bodily representation as well. The songs are well known for their male and female character sizzling performance and provocative dance with filthy and rough lyrics.

Objectification is enacted through gaze or visual inspection of the body as we see female bodies are treated as objects whose value is to be enjoyed. They are frequently objectified. Regarding this we are familiar to see the characters skin exposure, sexy clothing, gestures of touching body parts, seductive behaviors etc. These representations of the body encourage male gaze. Women's bodies are tagged for sexual objectification more often than men indeed their body becomes a fantastic element in the minds of the viewers. In the songs listed below the body language, an expression of female leads reflects the dominance of the male gaze. Female lead characters give intense admiring looks for their leading men and spectators. It's unusual to see men sexualized in this way as women. Both characters have shared their facial expressions and body language on the screen strongly supports Mulvey's contentions about the gaze being male. Movie songs filmed in ways that satisfy masculine scopophilia where women are the root cause of the castration and thus, "[women stands in patriarchal culture as signifier for male other, bound by a symbolic order in which man can live out his fantasies and obsessions through ...]" (834). In this sense songs ultimately sustain the traditional gender belief as it presents men as physically strong women as weak. It has been noted that most female actresses' bodies

are thin, perpetuating the notion of attractiveness whereas male bodies have strong muscular arms with confident looks.

Stars are all about their bodies. They sell their bodies. The more they expose the more they earn. Movie songs promote a certain physical image of male and female particularly for pleasure. In *Heavily Bodies: Film Stars and Society* Dyer explains, "The stars wear gaudy and skimpy clothes exposing their body parts only to fit in the society and to thrive for success and an immediate star identity. On a related line she remarks, "However, one of the most common functions of song in cinema is indeed linked to character"(11). Western outfits, tattooing, sexualized bodies incessantly creates the star identity. On this we can take examples of stars in selected songs. They are familiar with their looks, wearing poses, and body exposure and item song dancers. Movie songs have become a platform for them to get a star image. It is after all film stars that we are considering- their celebrity is defined by the fact of their appearing in films (Dyer 61).The act of gazing in cinema songs creates pleasure. The features like colorful dresses, cinematography, props, gesture, western outfits with seductive dance moves create a mode of fantasies. The men gaze at women; the spectators look at the women and the camera. A close analysis of the songs listed below aims to find out what gendered content and nature with the dominating power of the male gaze incorporated into the body image of the lead characters in the song sequences.



Figure 1. Indira Joshi's entry exposing her body parts, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Fanko*)



Figure 2. Indira focusing on herself- body touch, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Fanko*)

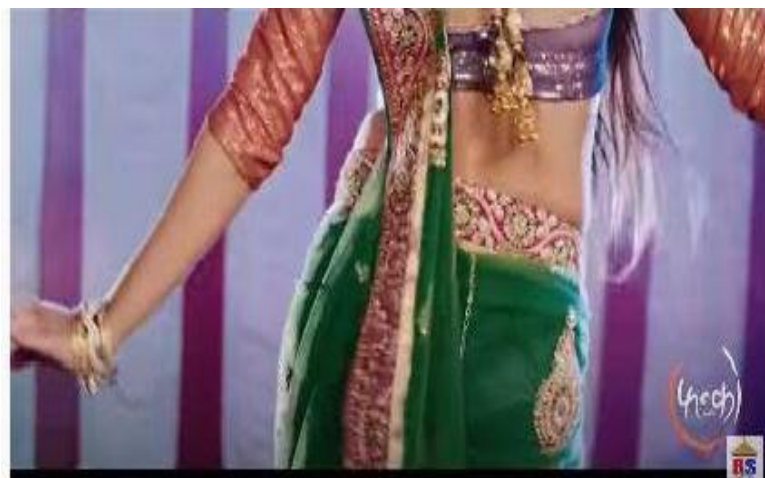


Figure 3. Priyanka's perfect body exposed, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Fanko*)

Body exposure has nothing to do with the song lyric and dance sequence but only for the promotion of the movie and the investors' motive of profit is positioned in song sequences. The revealing of women extremely sexual in somewhat unnecessary manner gives sexual gratification and targeted towards the heterosexual male. It can be best explained with the item no songs. The song is entitled "local beauty "where Indira Joshi gives her peppy numbers and energetic performance (see fig. 35). The movie is able to keep the audience on the edge of their seats only because the song is highly liked and appreciated by the audience.

*Fanko*, a movie related to road and social drama genre is directed by Subarna Thapa and produced by Narendra Maharjan. These screenshots stimulate its audiences to enter into the movie through characters in vivid detail. The performances of the characters play a powerful backbone to the movie that warm up the hearts of the audiences. Indira Joshi and Priyanka Karki give performance with a great tempt towards their spectators. Indira Joshi herself as a playback singer has lively and energetically performed these alert numbers. Her trending performance gives much appreciation to the audiences. This popular number entitled ' local beauty' performance raises her career as a rocking and gorgeous image ultimately winning millions of her fans and audiences. The song starts with the entry exaggerating Indira Joshi's close up face and hip movements in a dance bar. Camera focuses on hip level shots, eye level shots including frequent zoom in and out movements that give a look directed towards the audience and camera directly. As we watch she appears to be attractive and desirable to men via her charming face, swapping hair left open and hip with a perfect figure. She pouts her lips very little looking straight towards the viewers. Even though she appears in a sari outfit she enjoys her bodily figure touching her hair and placing her hands in hips showing hand gestures for being perfect. Tom Reichert and Jacqueline Lambiase examine these representations as a sexual ideology,

"Models behave sexually in ads by making eye contact with viewers, flirting and moving provocatively"(18). In this point it's clear as Mulvey's concept that females here are communicating sexual interest with viewers which connotes an idea that the female looks presentable and attractive to a male's eye. Next, Priyanka Karki appears with the same colorful outfit sari with the camera panning up her hip motion while she walks in a sexy manner making her attractive in the eyes of viewers into her curved body shape. The images show curves back with buttocks, slim hands with red nail polish. All these combinations of small waist, rounded hips and bottom, and slim figure usually considers being an important part of women's attractiveness. Viewers are constantly busy with the image of both female lead characters wiggling hips, navel, and clavicles as reflective markers. They become a fetishistic object of desire through their physical appearance and personality. Their body is in close contact of male side dancers where both enjoy the company .The visual reminds virtue of being a perfect woman with perfect figure and meets masculine desire of getting a fetishized body in a bar. The concept about the female body as Bordo argues, "Women are closely linked to their body and their lives are centered on the body. Love for others' bodies and care for beautification of their body"(150). We clearly see the lead characters concerning the beautification of their body.

The first lines "koi farki herchan malai model samjhera, figure mero sisako bottle samjhera" ("Some look back at me as a model, considering my figure as a glass of bottle") describes intensified craze of female lead among public particularly men. Being compared with bottles and models symbolize them as an intoxicating commodity. Next line, "I'm local beauty, I'm local cutie" describes their popularity as public beautiful figures holding characteristics of attractive women. 'Local beauty' generally means attractive youthful girl. Camera forces viewers' mode of looking that

suggests the worth of women lies in her bodily figure. Mulvey's concept about not being sexed without the characters here give emphasis to male gaze with their beauty look. Their image mainly focuses on the women as an image as it's all about care and look. They are objectifying themselves inviting the gaze of male viewers. It makes a clear sexed up version of sari allowing gazing upon the female figure highlighting the dancing female figure as primary nerve of spectacular pleasure. They seem physically recognized in visual as a model in their identity but per formative acts of the female leads here undermine the male gaze.



Figure 4. Characters looking at each other in passionate mood, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Chapali Height2*)



Figure 5. Male actor twisting his female partner in a mood of desire, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Chapali Height 2*)



Figure 6. Characters erotic body exposure, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Chapali Height 2*)

Visual impact of an image is very crucial. It uses a number of ways to manipulate the audience, with camera angles, frames, the lighting of the scene, characters movements, body gesture, behavior, appearance everything that is meant to convey meaning that remains grounded in our cultural and societal expectations. Different manners like touching self-body, bending body, lying, and twisting, sexualizing behavior is rather for eye pleasure of male viewers. Shields and Heineken pinpoint it is the result of a "male gaze" (74). Considering this we see the main lead character of the movie *Chapali Height 2* (see fig. 2). Main lead Pranita Rana spots her body in an objectified way wearing a bikini revealing her body parts frequently. Intentionally she engages in numerous sexual suggestive actions with explicitly bodily touch scenes. Sexually suggestive actions establish a new image for her to be looked only for the purpose of attracting large viewers with her provocative image. Her dance moves showing bodily gestures and movements appear with the motif of gaze. Even the male lead character Ayushman Joshi got his fame with a debut in *Chapali Height 2* that led the way as a Hollywood look actor. He astonished everyone with his performance and constructed his fame as a stylish actor (see fig.34).

As a construction of society's ideal representation the lead characters in song significantly raised their success with their image representing themselves physically.

These screenshots of a movie *Chapali Height 2* have all the ingredients of a romantic scene. It is based on the genre of psychological romantic thriller sequel to the film *Chapali Height*. The lyric of the song entitled "galtigarauna" ("make a mistake") is penned by Suresh Rai. Ever since the song was released, it has been grabbing the attention of viewers all over the social media. Well known singer has lent his voice as playback singer. The first image of couple appears in close up shots in softy shimmering drops of water on the glass pan. Close up look evokes sensation and song narrates the most sensual mood where both stars perform the expression of deep love passion, sexuality that refers to sensual pleasure arousing erotic gaze.

Sex in popular culture is traditionally hetero normative display of male fantasy. In the above song sequence there are countless examples of passive, scantily clad, lure eyed women gyrating for her male partner. The song starts with the melodious tune with the appearance of male lead looking at the female lead in a passionate mood reflecting desiring for sex. Their intimacy has been separated by a glass slide. If you (see fig.10) above the drops of water in the glass panel creates a desirous mood and invites viewers to indulge into their close up ardent faces in the midst of sparkle light. The scene highlights black lightened color to create the mood of the viewers'. Next, the scene shifts to the togetherness of the characters enjoying warmth of each other with the camera roll movement. Male lead touches the female partner's body pulling towards him with great intensity and kisses her. Camera pans up with close shot showing the male partner touching her legs up to her thigh and desire for kiss saying "dalna deu dalna deu timro nyano badan ma chumna deu chumna deu timro komalwohtha ma" ("let me fall in your warm embrace and kiss your

soft lips"). Further he expresses, "esparsa ko mitho galti garauna" ("sweet mistake of touch"). In this shot, the female lead remains passive and fully devoted to her male partner. The female lead is pictured in a long distant camera shot showing her naked legs, navel, waist; a deep eye with glossy makeup posing her body lying down in a straight position in an edge of pool with the partner showing her passionate mood of desiring sex. Male lead drags her when she puts her legs in his strong muscular body. Female body is not in her control. As the moves of camera gaze follows the hand of a young man the exposure female thighs finds spectators to look in her body posture. Simply audience's instinct to get urge to look at their attractive body and the sexual behavior. A sexual stimuli derives high in degree from their sensual performance. Hirschfeld mentions, "... a certain amount of pleasure from uncovering body, but to the exhibitionist, uncovering is the end itself". (535) Erotic dance performed through the body represent the agency of their sexuality.

Frequently male partner connotes her body part with adjectives as soft lips, warm embrace, and energetic face, hot lap and desires to touch each other's hand making their two heart one appealing to have sex without fear saying let's do a mistake. She is positioned by her male partner frequently that resembles Mulvey's patriarchal society in which female is dominated and male lead is evoking gaze on her body. Audre Lorde affirms, " On one hand erotic has been encouraged as a sign of female inferiority; on the other hand, women have been made to suffer and to feel both contemptible and suspect by virtues of its existence,"(339). Here, mistake indicates the social restriction of male and female to have sex before marriage but they dares to do so going behind the traditional taboos indicating female's progressive view at liberating from stereotypes too. Background music in slow and melodious tunes keeps a kind of toxin sense. Both lead props are revealing their muscular body

and slim waxed body in bikini, open shirt, one piece, and even in sari. The attention of audiences invites a gaze at their sexual passion with the waxed body, muscular body of the star's performance. Female sexuality is highly sanctioned by male desire.

Artists' performance relies heavily on narcissism and sexuality that triggers the mind of viewers to get hold and arouse sexual drive to produce something that normalizes sexuality with love, romance and honesty. George Bataille refers this sort of representation as, "only men appear to have turned their sexual activity into erotic activity"(11). The body of female lead here in a sexual way is to attract or appeal to her male partner.



Figure 7. Female characters objectifying their body in provocative way, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Prem Geet*)



Figure 8. Male gazing at female body as an object, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *PremGeet*)



Figure 9. Objectification of female body exposing their thigh, hip and belly, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *PremGeet*)

*Prem Geet* is a 2016 romantic movie featuring Pooja Sharma and Pradeep Khadka in lead roles. The film is directed by SudarshanThapa and produced by Santosh Sen including Hari K.C. The film got commercial success for its melodious song sequence. Both lead characters marked turning points in their careers as a good star. On this account Dyer puts, "A star can only be a star if he/she recognized and known as star" (177). The song starts with the main lead character Pooja is standing on the top of the bus in a short one piece with colorful outer raising her hand in a

excitement with camera zooming at her chest line with loose hair waving in an air. She gives a smile with self bodily touch. Smith Goffman classifies the female touch and conveys a sense of the female body as precious and fragile. "Genderism" (qtd. in Wallis 163). At her side there are six other boys fully dressed but in their hook without their face revealed. Suddenly, the scene shifts to a swimming pool with a group of girls hovered by a group of boys emphasizing their hip movements, tattoo exposure skin of men in colorful swimming suits. Now a group of boys give a look at their pleasure seeking body removing the sunglasses. The camera focuses on the group of the girl's delightful body movement in long shots whereas close shots towards the lead character zooming at her lips and face coverage. The way the body is represented as sensuous helps tempting the male for the object. Fair skinned girls define the beauty and charm of the feminine traits. Their body parts are exaggerated with camera angle frequently zooming in and out towards their fragmented legs, hip movement, tilled up breasts, lips and open hair. The longshots, low shots including overhead short, frequently focus on female body parts that give intimate relation between viewers and character. To ensure the attention of male the females are wearing swimming suits displaying their buttock, thigh and navel. Here, these shots accentuate the women's figure and cast voyeurism pleasing to the male. The female uses sunglasses as their accessories when removed they transform them into a desirable object and a sexualized image. Ann Doan discusses, "Glasses worn by women in the cinema do not generally signify a deficiency in seeing but an active looking, or even simply the fact of seeing as opposed to being seen" (qtd. in Buckle 21). Here characters in glasses are a means to reflect that gaze is interpreted upon the women as a barrier that possesses the active male gaze and the attractiveness of the women for male.

The song line starts "jabapugchu riverside sab tension huncha high garnachaanchu fun jaba happy hunchamaan" ("When I reach riverside my tension rise high and I love to have fun the moment heart fills with joy") where lead female shakes her waist and body to tickle male drive. Her body has no control as she involves in enjoying the actions she is performing as she says, "Fresh grana mood au nachi kulera kesh kamar bhachi ma linchu ek selfi ("let's make mood fresh dancing with open hair and waist bending and take a selfie") turns her up into a woman as spectacle. Women especially constitute the role of a spectacle as the subject of the look; the male gaze is invited to the female body. The performance is directly calling men and saying the body is only a means to please men and look at them as a commodity. The shots appear as flashes really distract the viewers watching the images of the females. As Mulvey mentions, "Thus the woman as icon, displayed for the gaze and enjoyment of men, the active controllers of the look, always threatens to evoke the anxiety it originally signified"(64).

In the final scene the camera movements shifts to adjustments as we see the scenes again moves back to the starting scene of bus where main lead express the line "duniya lai gardidai bye, bye ma aakash lai gardinchu touch malai sabale garos watch cahanah yeteta honi bas"("I Want to touch sky and I wish to be watched that's the only the wish of mine saying goodbye to all").Song lyric frequently present an idea of women being suppressed and want a freedom where she can fully enjoy her life dancing and being watched that too implies female liberation in modern era. The place she enjoys is riverside symbolically nature. The words take me, let me, and watch me indirectly connected to the shape of a desired woman. The viewer's create the scopophilia pleasure in watching her body parts. Not surprisingly women like being pretty and fancy in front of men as Mulvey states 'to- be -looked- at-ness' (715).

These images feature objectification of female characters as the shots for audiences and male characters in song sequence is being mainly used for entertainment with the clothing limited showing them seductive. Here female are unaware of being watched as we see men's controlling gaze towards women as sexually objectified with fragmented body shots.



Figure 10. Male lead Raja flirting female lead, 2016

(Source: Screen from *Chhaka Panja*)



Figure 11. Female lead showing her feminine trait feeling shy when male lead flirts

(Source: Screenshot from *Chhaka Panja*)



Figure 12. Female traditional outfits showing traditional stereotypes

(Source: Screenshot from Chakka Panja)

These screenshots link to the male gaze as it shows the representation of stereotypical role of female as fantasy. Here the women are to be looked and men are doing act of looking. *Chakka Panja* a Nepali comedy drama directed and produced by Deepa ShreeNiraula. It's the highest grossing movie. The story and its songs are based on the male practices of looking for women. The featuring characters Kedar Ghimire, Priyanka Karki, Barsha Raut, Deepak Raj, Jitu Nepal including many more have performed in the song entitled "purba paschimrel" ("east-west train"). The song gives plus point to the movie for its commercial blockbuster. The song features the melodious tune and lyrics identical to from a folk tune. In the song sequence more men than women performing remind that women are less creative.

They seem devoted towards the men's partner. However, the song helped to gain sort of celebrity status. The song sequence contains lots of acts that mark the sign of male gaze. The acts like flirting, blinking eyes indulge the audience in every frame making it cheesy love. Female lead characters are in the traditional outfits including other attributing characteristics of beautiful women with physical attractiveness, emotional expressions, gestures, eye contact and posture, shyly behaviors. All these

trends display the gender ideology of feminine and masculine characteristics with their perfect bodily movement and gesture of the performers. Female and male performers demonstrate stereotypical gender roles. The stereotypical role of women in the song shows female bodies as objects for men. It seems objectifying them to attract an audience in the global economy is the motif of the song in the movie. Without a camera focusing on specific body parts of females, gaze occurs in the song sequence with thoughtful camera work and scenes featuring a sexualizing male gaze. The camera shot from a high angle in the adjustment frame engages viewers with the characters. The shots are static. To the extent male and female artists perform a song in a video, they do perform a gender. Masculinity and femininity is through society. Gendered identity is not separated from the performance. Body is not only historical but bodily discourse. In this sense Butler expresses, "Gender is not the matter of biology rather it is a matter of performance"(42). As a matter of fact women's value is determined by the attractiveness of her body and men with their muscular body. This causes cultural views on how male and female need to perform the role in society.

The line of the song male says, "sapana dekhe mayalu timi sanga new road gumeko, maile timro siudobharako" ("I dreamed of you walking around New road filling you head with vermilion") and in reply the females say "timi pari maidan ma pare ful bhirama" ("you are the open ground and I'm the flower that blossom in slope"). Songs features alternative male and female voices one to another, often cheekily. This stress the desire of male to get married with the beautiful lady and female desires to get male partner expressing the love desire with melodious tune. Long shot camera angle pan up the group dancers and main lead characters frequently exposing their perfect ideal figure of male and female. The focus on facial expressions clearly shows the male fantasy over female more i.e. male gaze. The song was shot in

Fun Park / fair or in Nepali 'mele' a space where male expect to see beautiful women to flirt. Here as Mulvey states the gaze of female as erotic object for characters within the narrative and audiences seem prominent, “Traditionally the woman displayed has two functioned on two levels: as erotic object for the characters within the screen story, and as erotic object for the spectator within the auditorium, with a shifting tension between the look on either side screen” (62). Characters enjoy dance giving messages of love and romance between male and female. Entertaining song results in women's subversion and men as dominant power within the frame of the camera. The female body in the quotes, acts creates an erotic visual zone for male scopophilia pleasure. The song forms a source of social perception, a means for women and men to express their desire and feeling of love and attraction.



Figure 13. Female lead back body exposed focused through camera angle, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Bindass 2*)



Figure 14. Female lead exaggerating body inviting gaze to male, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Bindass 2*)



Figure 15. Female lead bears fantasies touching her lips, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Bindass 2*)

There are elements of a visual styling and iconography that appear clearly in movie *Bindass2* the second sequence of Nepali movie *Bindaas* that carries theme on sex. One element for iconography is seen through the overall appearance of female lead's tattoos through these shots. Sushma Karki along with Jeevan Luitel are featured in their leading roles. Raju Giri directed the movie who makes glamorous movies. The movie gained success because of its sex content. Karki has received a lot

of coverage as a bold and glamorous heroine in Nepali movie industry. Her tattoo and bikini picture is the main gossip in the media. Her career labeled her performance as an item girl, the song entitled “pachure choto bho choto” (“shawl short”) is a crucial example of item song. The word item itself being synonyms with the object the performer is positioned in an object to satisfy male urge. The body parts are featured in a way as if they are meant for male consumption. Here, the female lead with her short fanciful skirt, dramatic eye, and glamorous look highly pulls the crowd of the audience. The song lyric and dance movement with scantily dressed female performers wooed by a group of men carefully drags spectators into her body. Camera often moves into the lead dancer's body and the male characters enjoy her dance on the stage.

The song starts with a line "kina chhopyana mero joban" (“why my youth not covered”) with the extreme focus of the camera towards her fragmented legs, navel, belly, hips swaying. She describes self-obsession of an item girl who says her youth is not covered as her blouse string becomes tight. By this line a strong drive of pre-scopophilia is created and triggers a challenge in the mind of viewers and the males in front of stage with a glass of wine in their hand. All her body parts and her lip biting evoke sexual acts glorify her body that is fashionable and for fun. The effect is exaggerated by camera work. Hip level shots and shoulder level shots directly focus on the prime scene in the dance sequence; i.e. a dance bar girl giving a dance item to please their customers. The men sitting in front of the dance bar enjoy her as an object to watch for pleasure. She frequently eroticizes herself to invite male partners dancing very provocatively. Meanwhile, the hero of the movie Jeevan Luitel frequently watches her and gives intense stares at her dance moves. The crowds of men openly

leer and try to touch her body parts representing herself as a commodity. The music of the song is peppy, raunchy and loud that goes with lyrics.

Representation of body seem frequently shot from low angle and high angle to emphasize unnatural break in order to accentuate the women's body which best exemplifies voyeurism. These types of shots are emphasizing the women's lower half. And high angle shot give emphasis to their chest area. Her body becomes site that bears fantasies and expectations. The song too describes parts of the female body. Overall, Sushma Karki is the center of attraction who tries to allure the male audience with her gesture, facial expression making her body as commodity. In another line, item girl describes her body comparing with eating items. "I have an orange cheeks, rosy lips, well arranged teeth like pomegranates, almond shaped eyes with perfect figure" that defines the beauty and charm of item girl. The line " raayal chuuhin cha sabako wotha ma" ("watery mouth ") directly connects the idea she is a girl with all qualities juicy, lovely, rosy, sexy that when men look at her they cannot control their desire and their saliva drops from their mouth. On this regard Kaur quotes, "The item number- girl has no other function that to appease the male desire to be voyeur while a woman dances" (107). Similar to what when we see tempting delicious food in front of us our mouth waters. The line is degrading the standard of women as she look uncontrolled and irresistible. The female body becomes the site that bears fantasies and expectations. The song is men centric where a woman is ready to present herself as an object of desire that can accomplish the lust of men and can ignite fire in water. Here, a deniable way of objectification is enacted and is through gaze or visual inspection of the body being tilting , crawling, clambering forward and backward. The heroine's body is closely portrayed as glamorous that interlinks matter of gaze that ultimately translate into economic gain. Thus, it's clear from above figure illustration

that the physical appearance of item girl in dance sequence in item dance song denies character role and storyline of the movie. Their body is presented before the audience's work as a nuanced performance created for the dominant cultural iconography of contemporary capitalistic society in order to keep audiences entertained.



Figure 16. Female legs exhibited with the fashionable cloth that invites gaze, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Dreams*)



Figure 17. Male lead looking at female lead whose legs and arms are displayed through long shot, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *dreams*)



Figure 18. Male lead touching his female partner with intense look and female appears smiling, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Dreams*)

Mulvey believes that women perceive male gaze through camera uses focusing on the area of the body of the female character. These screenshots from *Dream* carries the romantic- comedy genre. It is directed by Diwakar Bhattarai and produced by Bhuvan KC. Samragyee R.L. Shah and Anmol K.C. are in lead roles. As the film deals with teenage romance the music and emotion including romantic scenes adds flavor to give viewers entertainment. The song excites soul and spice through beautiful teen actress and young guy Anmol. Both stars were highly appreciated amongst the viewers as the Kallywood 'King' and 'Queen' regarding their outlook. The selected song entitled "ma ke bhanu" is a good example where the female lead is less sexualized but we can still see long distance camera angle shots panning her perfect bodily structure playing the role of male gaze. Both characters' faces are highlighted through the use of colorful costumes, sunglasses and decent looks. Male lead is fully dressed whereas a female lead's legs are somewhat visible due to the slits on either side of her skirts. Exposure of legs connotes the meaning that her body is to lure the man towards and get men's attention. In the song sequence a fair skinned girl with

attractive look and handsome guy present masculine and feminine traits. Female character is being gazed at by the men within the narrative of the song. Camera pays close attention to the main leads faces which draws audience attention to their facial expression and physical attractiveness rather than to their body poses. The scene in the background is calm, quiet and bright, relating the fact about characters feeling in expressing their loving mood. Audiences create a mood of fetishistic pleasure with the display of their loving mood. There is a good relationship between music and visuals as much of the visuals relate to the song lyrics on the emotional lovers. This supports a mirror image of women simply used as an object to fulfill fantasies for the spectators. The emphasis on the emotion of two lovers allows the audience to relate the content with their imaginative fantasies. The male gaze can be noticed with the active and passive roles of the character to satisfy the spectators as we see in the song male plays an active role whereas female plays a passive role. Male does the act of looking and female as to be looked at.

Throughout the song Samragyee is in control of her lead character Anmol. He looks at her shyly face and drags her towards him in his muscular, good looking bodily posture expressing his desire of having her in his remembrance for his love. She is too excited to have him in his life and expresses she has no words to say. The characters look at each other and feel happy to be together. The line "mero saamu timi auda bhaye din dil bekabhu" ("My heart becomes unstable when you are near") and girl says, "sunna, bhanna" ("listen, tell") in low voice. Finally the boy says I am yours and the girl says dreams come true. Almost all scenes are shot from a long angle to have the entire body of male and female figures on the screen. The slow motion shots whilst the attractive girl dancing around a handsome boy to please her partner with a submissive role accepting his love. Attractive look and camera zoom on the face part

invites gaze creating a realm of fantasy and desire of love and romance between the couple. Their performance is socially relating their gender identity as a perfect female and men. The way Butler relates that sex not only acts as a norm in society, but "is part of a regulatory process that produced the bodies that it governs"(1). Here, emphasis is much on costumes that function as cultural and social identities. Masculinization and feminization impose a strong code of clothing and appearances within the industry.



Figure 19. Female lead's tattoo on her back shown through camera Zoom, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from Loot 2)



Figure 20. Female lead pouring a drink, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from Loot 2)



Figure 21. Female lead chest line revealed, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Loot 2*)



Figure 22. Male lead pulling her towards him for his enjoyment, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Loot 2*)

The first screenshot at the beginning of the song stimulates a girl trying to lure men towards her that supports Mulvey's view about females to consumers as nothing more than a sexual fantasy. The representation of women characters as a sexual fantasy from male point of view is best exemplified in *Loot 2* movie song titled "thamel bazar". It's an item song from the movie *Loot 2*, featuring Alisa Rai (Sundari). The lyric of the song is written by (Ekatare), Kali Prasad Baskota and music is

composed by Kali Prasad Rijal. Nisschal Basnet directed the movie with producer MadhavWagle. It was one of the Nepali blockbuster films that kept the audience curious and amused throughout. The song with a raunchy item came up with model Alisha Rai as a promotional song with extra marketing bits. It is the song and dance sequence performed by female catering to voyeuristic, heterosexual male gaze. The character was nicknamed 'Sundari' a feminine name, generally means beautiful, youthful, sexy girl. In song she is too sexy and shakes her ample bosom and waist to stimulate male desire. Almost all the elements of these performance costumes, music, lyrics, lightning, camera shots, sexual image of body parts function to represent the female body as an object for sexual consumption .Maximum sexualization and objectification of the performer with catchy upbeat serves the audience to gaze towards her body parts. The song starts with melodious music with a back view shot capturing a place where a girl with a blue printed skirt performs her dance. Hip angle shot of camera focuses on the lower back part with a tattoo on her back and the movement of legs and waist. Similarly, (see fig 1) over head shot of camera directly connects the viewer's towards her body. These shots illustrates the spectator's gaze, the audiences and character in the video too look at her body figure what attracts them frequently, making male audience feel superior. The first line of the song is "lai deuna chokho piyar". The item girl is saying that she wants pure love and the same lyric is repeated by the men sitting off the stage with their bottle swaying. We will give you pure love. The song depicts a fair skinned girl performing in a short skirt and golden blouse with young men on the stage appealing to everyone present there. The song got highly praised for its catchy tune and enthralling performance of female lead. This song basically becomes a medium to titillate the audience to the film effectively. She is surrounded by a crowd of men who are watching her every activity and

dancing movement. Looking at her performance men feel uncontrollable and get swayed by her beauty and bodily movement.

In another scene the girl invites the male gaze towards her body by pouring the bottle of beer into her body saying, "tirkha malagyo , pasina chutyo tan ke le bhujane" ("how to fulfill the thirst of body") and male lead replies, "kalilo joban mukhairasayo khaukhau le marnubho"("feels like eating your youth"). The way camera positioned on to the performer it reflects her exhibitionist role to the spectators. Then the actress sits on the lap of the male partner with a bit of her lips too that strongly suggests the desire of sex. She is even rolled up back to the stage. The lightning further plays the role in illuminating the body parts of the girl on the stage. Moreover, the men around her slap the body, twist the wrist, pull her closer, attempt to group it in a violent and authoritative way but the female performer seems to enjoy these actions . In the moment they become a puppet in the hand of dancers and the audience. Although item songs are not part of narrative they have been put in a film for the only purpose of titillation. In the newspaper *The Indian Express* Shabana Azmi puts her view regarding surrender of women to male gaze as, "But under the presence of 'celebrating your sexuality' what you are actually doing surrendering to the male gaze and objectifying yourselves because the business of cinema is of images". The song is a pathetic commoditization of a woman who is not less than a commodity to satisfy men; more often women are represented predominantly to grab the attention of viewers for commercial success of the movie. Media represents celebrities in such a way that helps to construct their image through social media, advertisement, official websites, music videos, movie songs etc. The artists don't have control over how the media represents their image and actions nor how the public receive them. The above song plays the same role. Alisha Rai built up a strong brand image through which she

started to get public personas and earned a large fan for this the entertainment industry helps them to get fame in their professional career. To give spotlight as celebrities and publicly identity the artist starts to represent them in a way the audience gets attracted towards them. At any cost they wanted to be looked at. As Dyer suggests in *Star*, the famous stars we see are not real people, but represent what society constructs. They build up to be someone acting in a certain way that makes their image and holds out their quality. "A star image is made out of media texts that can be grouped together as pro-motion, publicity, films and criticism and commentaries" (60). Further she asserts, "A star can only be a star if she is recognized and known as star" (177). Stars act in a certain way and hold to make their image to the viewers. Alisha Rai a model rose to fame from her dance performance in movie song *Thamel Bazaar* (see fig. 32).She had not gained popularity although she played other movies like *Binayoas* a leading role of a typical Rai girl. Her popularity skyrocketed when she gave a sizzling performance as an item dancer 'Sundari' in movie *Loot 2*. Viewers gaze upon her body as an object of male desire. The song went viral in film official youtube with 200,000 viewers and prominently became a hit. Overnight she attracted the attention of many filmmakers and mass people in social media.



Figure 23. Archana displaying her breast in a provocative manner inviting gaze, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Jism*)



Figure 24. Characters in a mood of pleasure that invites audiences fetishistic, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Jism*)



Figure 25. Main lead characters in demeaning exposure kissing with his hand on female lead, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from Jism)

These screenshots are showcasing the female lead in a demeaning manner and sexual object. This can be props and costumes she is wearing for showing majority of her body parts straight attracting heterosexual male. *Jism* movie directed by Raju Giri carries the romantic genre. Archana Paneru and Surendra Budhathoki are in lead roles. The moment music of the song starts; viewers establish an unconscious identification of the ego with the object on screen. The way Archana Paneru's body is objectified triggers subconscious scopophilia (an expression of sexuality) looking at her. Camera angles shot from high angle and low angle work so well to show the dancing moves and full bodily posture. Clothing is minimal. She is twerking and posing in a provocative manner lying sexually aggressive that shows emotions relatable to the audience. The use of red lipstick connotes that she is trying to be seductive, which is reinforced by the visibility of her alluring lip bite. The first shot of the female lead appears with the maximum exposure of her body lying through a bikini with visible outfit. This straightaway shows audience point of view of a heterosexual male as it gains sexual pleasure from the seductive and minimal clothes

she is wearing. In the particular scene the male character can be seen clearly staring at her breasts and other body parts which show how she is viewed as a sexual object. In addition, Archana is known for her provocative dancing moves crafted to emphasize her assets. Intimate scenes involving the male partner appeal to the male character and viewers. An establishing shot used, therefore her full body is in view, and therefore audiences see her as a sexual object.

The location in which characters stand is quite significant as the riverside symbolically relates to the idea of expression sexuality seeks expression as flowing of river. In connection to this Krzysztof Fordonski reveals a good statement, "Water is, first of all, often interpreted as a sexual symbol. In a more defined form it is used as a symbol of feminine sexuality"(3). In the scene she is seen sexualized because of her powerful posture and stance .She actually embraces her sex appeal and is enjoying her male partner lying on top of her body and kissing her. The shape of her body is carefully shot with the high angle and long distance angle to create audience attention. The title of the movie symbolize body and a lyric in the song "dubideu timi ma bhitra yesari, sagar ma bilau cha moti jasari"("you get indulge with in deep like pearl gets with ocean") where main focus is body rather than her performing. This common representation within the film industry follows the trait of focusing women needs to be sexy and appeal to men a kind of pornography as George P Elliot defines, " the representation of directly and indirectly erotic acts with an intrusive vividness which offends decency without aesthetic justification" (175). The male lead's upper part is revealed and in the lower part he is in pants whereas the female lead is exposed with two pieces and desire to be in bond of her beloved arms. The men lead frequently kisses, touches her chest line and holds her tight in mood of having sex saying " timro nai pyasi maya ma au aggalo ma bechan yo mann timro aabab cha"("I am in passion

of getting your love come embrace me") During the song sequence tongue kiss is exaggerated highly with the characters sexual passion facial expression. Both characters seem to be enjoying their company. Bodily touch highlight sexual acts that signifies their dating relationships interested in sexual activity. Simon During writes, "Every kiss in the revue film has to contribute considerations to the career of a boxer, or some hit song expert or other whose rise to fame is being glorified" (12). This song sequence integrates imagery for the audiences. Gloria Steinem describes imaginary as:

Look at any photo or film of people making love, really making love there is usually sensuality and touch and warmth, an acceptance of bodies and nerve ending... Now look at any depiction of sex in which there is clear force, or an unequal power that spells coercion. The first is erotic. (31)

Kissing, intimate touching, sexually suggestive movements, sexual posing, ambiguous facial expression depictions are intended to promote the sale of movies. Sexualizing females more often in the media gives the message to learn that sexy appearance is a central element of femininity and men are there to enjoy having a sexy partner. Archana Paneru constructed her image as a porn star since her gestures in the movie dramatically exposes her fashion, dance moves, sexual alluring poses as a commodity asserting her femininity.



Figure 26. Priyanka's legs displayed, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Classic*)



Figure 27. Couple in love making mood, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Classic*)



Figure 28. Both characters body displayed through bird eye angle shot, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Classic*)

Throughout the screenshots from the movie *Classic* masterfully conveys a story of pure love, creating a lasting impact in the viewer's heart and soul. It's a musical love story with the characters Aaryan Sigdel and Namrata including Priyanka Karki. The lead characters added different flavor in the cinema with their exceptional acting. For this reason they bagged awards for best actor and actress. The movie was directed by Dinesh Raut and produced by Subash Giri under the collaboration of Aaryan Sigdel and Subash Entertainment. It was one of the most successful movies of 2016 that features a love story of visually impaired leads. The song "yoke ho maya ho" ("is it love?") is full of sweet praise for women as it concerns women's ideal figure that links ideas of beauty myth. The Woman's body in the scene is merely a symbol of female behaviors and man wants to possess her body. Using beauty myth, the objectification of womanhood can be seen in the visual as controlled similar to the male gaze. Beauty myth also sees women as the passive one and exists only to please men as the active one. To this point Mulvey argues that gazing has been defined by patriarchal society as a male activity while being looked at is the domain of females. "In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between

active/male and passive/female"(62). Through the image of Prinkya Karki and Aryan Sigdel hinges the idea that women is presented as the object of the male gaze and thereby her presence render passive in the frames of the narration. The song starts with female lead's body closely portraying with the camera angle panning from her legs towards her face and male lead enters in a very happy mood with smiley face saying, "kina maan bhaha kincha kin maan thami daina"("why my heart gets distracted"). The slow shots from her feet the way up to her face accentuate her costume and appearance. The female lead becomes hot, reckless and very often open with her body as she throws her upper part dress towards her male partner to make him look at her. Her outfit a crop top and miniskirt objectifies whereas male is seen covered up. He only enjoys her look and her bodily moves. In the song sequence female lead remains silent only male lead keep on singing. Female body acts show what she wants or feels. The idea about the image needs no verbal it speaks through bodily act as Bordo illustrates in *Unbearable Weight*

We are no longer given verbal description or examples of what a lady is or of what femininity consists of. Rather, we learn the rules directly through bodily discourse: through images that tell us what clothes, body shape, facial expression, movements and behaviour are required.  
(170)

The actions on the screen greatly excite spectators and the character in the narrative. We see female lead's nonverbal behaviors like touching her hair, a warm smile face, throwing her clothes and enjoying different poses signals the emotional climates relationship ongoing between her partner and the viewers. Her body language is making meaning and turns her into a gazing object who is much interested in her partner when she makes eye contact with him. The scenes were female with her

partner in second shot is in intimate contact with male partner, this becomes a contribution theme in relation to male gaze. Men like women to be perceived as we see male character sitting down intensely watching her.



Figure 29. Male lead trying to interest his female partner, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Resham Filli*)



Figure 30. Female lead's legs exposed, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Resham Filli*)



Figure 31. Female lead is inviting her male partner, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Resham Filili*)

Through these screenshots female and male leads have very attractive dancing moves. Despite having more skin covered this link to male gaze. *Resham Filili* movie song titled "jaalma" ("in trap") has been a part of a movie that dragged people into the theater. It is the amazing hit title track composed by Kali Prasad Devkota. The movie director is Pranav Joshi. The song features Vinaya Shrestha and Menuka Pradhan. They hold the focus during the performance with dance steps quite well running around quirky facial expressions, comic acts and costumes. Although the song belongs to comics it offers a good example of male gaze to amuse their audience. As time changes we see more and more change in the things we are used to seeing. In this song the gaze is implemented in a new angle. As Mulvey mentions we see two types of women in the media, 'Virginal Character' and the other 'Sexy Whore'. In this song major focus is on the first one 'Virginal Character' it is so because a woman here is projected innocence. Her figure is presented as a potential love and interest for her male partner. Her female character is not overtly sexualized through her body parts exposure and costumes, but she is still treated as an object to be looked at. The images

of her link the beauty myth hegemony including stereotypical role of gender. Naomi Wolf states:

The qualities that a given period calls beautiful in women are merely symbols of the female behavior that period considers desirable: The beauty myth is always actually prescribing behavior and not appearance. (14)

Further, she proclaims, “Women must want to embody it and men must want to possess women who embody it” (12). The women need to know how to catch men with pleasing beauty and this reality maintains men's power. In the song sequence a beautiful gaze is projected through the characters looking at each other lovingly.

The song starts with the line “parityo dada ma gham lagyo ghamailo timi ra ma gham jaunaa” (look the sun is shining bright in a faraway hill lets both of them visit") where the male lead is trying to woo his female lead. He further says “pakhurima kam chaina sunchadi le timilai bharaula” (My arms are strong enough to earn and fill you with gold") refers that he is strong enough to earn and fulfill her desire. Actually he is proposing to her with convincing clues and funny acts. Then to this she replies "sindoor lauichau ki bana"("will you put vermilion") this indirectly connects the meaning she is interested in him and wishes to get married. Although the female lead is represented as a modern girl driving a bike, wearing black rubber bangles, boots, jeans with ruff she still holds the characteristics of a female being shy and devoted to her partner. She needs the company of the man. Her thin sari reveals a conventionally beautiful figure which is a perfect example of gaze. She too shows the sign of femininity pointing her finger inviting her partner towards her. These shots imply patriarchal ideology to reproduce the standard of men and female demonstrating enforcing stereotypes as our society imposes. Here female dancing

round her male partner almost advocates the notion that men have control over women act towards them. The spectator in this culture is a man according to the patriarchal order we live in, and this makes the spectacle a woman. The male gaze subordinates women as objects for pleasure and learns to see women in their fashion. The above song sequence binds people to gender perception as we see emotionally that a female depends on her male partner's love. Female in the above shots inspires her male partner to allow her actions to be looked. Hence, female beauty becomes feminine feature portraying women in an erotic way.

Nowadays, the hotness, popularity and glamour of heroines simply depend on her clothing. Audiences get much more impressed with dress-up and passion. The sex content of the movie song becomes so popular on the screen that drags the young audiences to movie hall. Hot poses and sexual behavior, bed scenes, tattoos on the body of female lead characters in song sequences become something to look at or an object of desire. Although male leads are shirtless revealing muscular bodies, gaze is less common. Men are mostly presented in detailed facial view; women are mainly shown as body parts alone that actually provoke objectification and consumerist ideas in our culture today. Particularly female leads are brought into the cinema industry in exhibitionist manner with a growing number of cultural industries. The myth about females being able to attract an audience exists. Beauty myth becomes social control as it uses the image of beautiful, slim model women in the media frequently. The film industry continues to perpetuate the gaze giving centrality to sexuality, objectification and gender terms. Songs have infested a new way of constructing gendered bodies and how male and female bodies should look like connecting people across the globe promoting film songs and dance sequences.

To sum up, the film industry continues to perpetuate the voyeuristic gaze of consumer culture and a center of commercial popularity and artistic interest. Actors do their best "to be sexy" and give the impression that "being sexy" is empowering. Songs have infested a new way of constructing gendered bodies and how male and female bodies should look like connecting people across the globe promoting film using songs and dance sequences.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE FEMALE BODY IN MARKET

Male gaze concept is one of the offshoots of feminist ideology, where patriarchy, dominance, stereotypes are norms. It translates into economic gains for the capitalistic investing in Nepali entertainment industry. The female body is trapped within male ways of looking. The female stars either are depicted to look at spectators or male characters within the narrative or camera look at them but still they are being watched. They invite the gaze; they work out to be watched and being watched. For this women's legs, hips, waist, lips, thighs and chest line are overemphasized. Clothes are thin, visible and revealing in facilitating the male gaze. The natural phenomenon of women need to appear young, sexy, charming is manipulated by technology and men for consumer culture and film industry controlled by male and heterosexual ideology.

Nepali cinema is a medium of entertainment that carries some attributing factors that help to understand present culture where men are obsessed with performance and women by appearance. A great mechanistic demand of woman's body exposure is essential for making a successful business in the growing effect of technology and westernized culture so that cinema stars gain the attention of the viewers. Film songs are heavily affected by the influence of western culture and even shameless lyrics or phrases of the songs refer to women's body parts as an object of desire. Their body parts are used as marketing devices to sell movies because audiences prefer to select movies based on their favorite stars that satisfy certain pleasures and expectations of the audiences.

It is clear from the above selected movie songs that Nepali cinema industry named as (Kallywood) is committed to profit maximization through body spectacle

and commodification of female stars to attract an audience in a global market. Nepali cinema applies Indian culture and norms where the gaze is male and image is female. Thus, erotic dance performing songs included in the movies merely through body represented importantly works as an agency to generate cash and only to satiate male desire and their sexuality and eroticizing bodies displayed for male gaze.

It is the body that can contact with the viewer's world who view the women as their subject of speaking. An image of their body empowers them at time challenging the patriarchal view but in other looking imposed them as an object and connects them to their physical features. On one hand their performances mitigate objectification and commodification. On other hand somewhat their involvement in capitalistic industry to boost economic gain, means of women empowerment and liberating them from patriarchal stereotypes. Furthermore, as movie industry is becoming innovative and wider in global market the gaze too gradually becoming extraneous in visual where use of camera, male as dominant power yet represent female as an idealistic through the eyes of men. Erotic representation assist to shape how we see and involve ourselves with the body and challenge the perspective of looking female body to please men and clearly includes them as consumption. So, Erotic representation seems mostly named by men against female as sexually an internal sense of satisfaction to receive money. Cinema uses women as aesthetic object relating notions like ideas, desires or wishes to satisfy the primal wishes of audiences to the camera from their eyes and body into her seductive beauty.

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## APPENDIX



Figure 33. Female lead Alisha Rai's navel revealed and males enjoying lifting her,  
2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Loot 2*)



Figure 34. Both characters in a sexual mood with much body exposure, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Chapali Height 2*)



Figure 35. Ayushman in a bold character, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Chapali Height 2*)



Figure 36. Indra Joshi and Priyanka as item dancer, 2016

(ScreenShot from *Fanko*)



Figure 37. Susmita Karki in her bikini, 2016

(Source: Screenshot from *Bindaas 2*)



Figure 38. Dayahang Rai his smiling pose as a gentle role, 2020

(Source: Screenshot: from [filmyjoy.com](http://filmyjoy.com))