

CHAPTER 7

EXPLORING SEXUALITY AS A CINEMATIC MEMORY: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF FOUR INDIAN FILMS

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ABSTRACT

Cinema is considered the most popular and powerful tool for leisure, education, entertainment, and propaganda in society. Films are all about storytelling, which comes out of the people and the ideas and thoughts that exist at a specific time. Apart from this, films are the cultural artifacts of society, as the influence and reach of cinema are far greater than any medium, which in turn shapes the culture of society. At the same time, society also reflects the film culture. Building upon this point, one can say that cinema forms and shapes the cultural memory of a larger society. The understanding and perspective of any social phenomenon or social process are constructed and deconstructed by the film culture, which in turn holds the cultural memory as it can steep deep into the conscious or unconscious experience of the public. Sexuality, or homosexuality per se, is a taboo topic not to be discussed openly in Indian society. The cinematic expressions of sexuality do not always highlight deviations in sexual orientations or identities. Although things are changing in contemporary times, heteronormativity continues to be the dominant norm that governs the sexual conduct of people. Therefore, this paper will examine four Indian films selected through the purposive sampling method that deals homosexuality. The films selected here, not only portray the inherent homophobia but also deconstruct it, thus reforming the cultural memory of sexuality among the Indian masses. Further, this study will enrich sexuality studies by incorporating the cultural memory approach.

Keywords: *Sexuality, Films, Cultural Memory, Homosexuality.*

INTRODUCTION

For most of the people cinema is equivalent to entertainment, it is a kind of leisure activity in which people are indulged to break the monotony and boredom of life. However, one cannot deny the fact that, it is one of the most consumed media of the society. The audio- visual effect is also responsible for its increasing popularity and viewership. Cinema brings a large group of audience together which are

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