REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature forms an important chapter in a thesis where its purpose is to provide the background and justification for the research undertaken. The literature review documented here is a critical look, at the existing research that is significant to the work being undertaken. An attempt has been made to summarize relevant research, as well as to evaluate the collated work. The relationships between different researchers work, and how they relate to this study has also been documented.

The review of literature focusing on the semiotic theory, the tacit meanings of the Indian sari, the fashion system and non-western fashion has been collected mostly from books , journals and online databases.

2.1 Theoretical review

    2.1.1. Background, relevance and history of the Indian sari.

    2.1.2. Fashion as communication.

    2.1.3. Semiotic theory

    2.1.4. The fashion system.

    2.1.5. Summary of current knowledge, research methods in fashion and dress

    2.1.6. National Identities

    2.1.7. Non- western fashion.

2.2. Related Research Review

2.1 Theoretical review

2.1.1. Background, relevance and history of the Indian sari.

The deep involvement and complete sense of the identity of the Indian woman with the sari, has made her resist the pressure to change her style of dress, inadvertently providing continuity in weaving traditions of every part of the country, the sari represents a culture in which the woven and textured-with-pattern garments; unpierced or intruded upon by the stitching needle; was considered not only more appropriate in terms of aesthetics and climate, but was also an act of greater purity and simplicity. It is difficult to historically ascertain the sari's evolution as a single piece of drape, though in many parts of India (Kerala, the seven northeast states, Rajasthan and Gujarat), it is possible preceding versions of two or three piece drapes, continue to be worn. The sari allows us to go back at least a thousand years in terms of design. It is conceived on the loom as a three-dimensional garment with variables in pattern, weave, and structure between its inner and outer end-pieces and its two borders, which provide drape, strength and weight, while the body enhances its drape. All these elements help to maintain the form of the sari when it is worn. (Chisti, 2010)

Over the last two decades, several new 'culture classes' have emerged and older ones have morphed to define themselves through new customs, values, or new degrees of tolerances. The modern young upper class women are a distinct new culture class - at home in miniskirts and in sari and blouse ensembles that sizzle. She dresses like she could be anywhere in the world, in business suits or in jeans, living in homes that look like they could be anywhere in the world, serving food that embraces all cuisines; she shops at supermarkets and malls for her regular stuff, patronizes international and Indian brands, but will go to local markets for entertainment shopping — the opposite of what some other culture classes would do; she has domestic staff like her mother did, only these are more professional; she thinks of herself and her children as global citizens, English is the only family language and her family unit is built to live life king size — free from uniquely Indian traditions and social restraints that she grew up with. Market watchers would like to believe that this is the new Indian mainstream but that is naïve and wishful thinking (Bijapurkar, 2013).

Another large culture class is the rapidly prospering small business woman — shop owner, beauty parlor owner, tailoring establishment owner. She continues to transact in the vernacular with her family, vendors and staff but manages reasonable English with her customers who she needs to SMS; she eschews 'costly' big shops and big brands, and is a big fan of the 'imported' label. This label stands for 'cheaper', more exciting novelty available through her usual shops, sourced by people like her. Her children are her biggest teachers and modernizers."

India's ethnic wear market share (%), women 88%, mens 3% and kids 9 %. India 's women's ethnic wear market share (%), saris 53%, salwar kameez 38% and petticoat & blouse 9 %. Sari remains the biggest category: Indian women and the sari form the core of history and legacy that's what the numbers suggest. Saris dominate the women's ethnic wear segment by 53 per cent market share, while salwar kameez constitutes 38 per cent of women's ethnic wear market. The remaining 9 percent is contributed by petticoat and blouse.

There are a few designers and brands that have experimented and taken this category to a newer level. Indian fashion designers have become popular across the world for their ethnic wear lines, their Indian bridal wear and Bollywood collections. Satya Paul was one of the first designers to come out with prints on saris, which were abstract, geometrical and completely in sync with regard to color and fabrics. Brands like Anokhi and Fabindia have greatly helped in popularizing the ethnic wear, which has been sourced from handloom clusters following the traditional methods of vegetable dyeing, block printing, etcetera.

The preference for salwar-kameez and saris is a regional choice. In the northern regions of India, it is the preferred apparel for both regular and festive occasions as it has been a traditional garment across generations. Even other regions prefer saris for special occasions. While Tier-I cities tend to be strongly governed by a traditional usage of the sari, the ethic wear category is increasingly becoming the most sought-after category, as it offers both convenience and conformity. Thus, the focus tends to be on comfort fabrics, such as cotton, with the mid-fashion quotient (Kumar, 2013).

Shilpa Sharma, co-founder and head, sourcing and design at Jaypore states that Jaypore, the e-commerce company that revolutionized the sale of handlooms, says the

West is emerging as an eager market for sari. Almost 17% of their sari revenue now comes from international orders and this has only been growing. The US is their biggest market followed by the UK, Singapore and the UAE. While the numbers have gone up, they've noticed that the type of sari ordered has remained fairly consistent, ie. traditional weaves and festive wear. Most western buyers are in the 35-44 age group, followed very closely by those between 25 and 34 years. This shows that a lot of younger Indian women in the West are looking to wear the sari - both traditionally, and in a contemporary fashion, draped over pants or with a button-down shirt rather than a regular blouse (Nair, 2016).

The new age influencer like e-commerce, social media , celebrity bloggers etc. have accelerated the fashion change and brought about eclectic mix in everyday wear fashions. Facebook, closed group pages by 2 Indian Women Anju Maudgal Kadam and Ally Matthan #100SareePact To Revive Six Yards Of Memories and another initiative #RegistryofSaree. Facebook closed group page "Do100 Saree pact"# "Building narratives with the memory attached to each saree in everyday life. What is your saree story?" - 11,339 members till 7/01/16. Age group : 22- 65 years onwards .6 Yard tradition -Infy100 saree pact started in Bangalore has crossed the international borders.

Plate 2.1. Anju Mudgal Kadam and Ally Matthan #100SareePact

Editor and writer Shefali Vasudev shared her views on building an enviable sari collection. At overwhelming stores like Nalli, where outstanding pieces get drowned in a wave of variety, walks up to a salesperson requesting his time to show her many saris, clarifying that she may buy only a couple, if at all. Salespeople usually love engaged customers; they soon begin to guess your thoughts and guide you to the treasures buried beneath the heaps. She also follows two shopping diktats. One: Never buy anything, however lovely or affordable, unless it is exceptional. Two: Search for an authentic handwoven piece, which brings with it the story of a family or a

craftsperson, a skill group, a region or a weave. Whatever the price, it would be worth it (Mint, January 2014).

Interview excerpts with Himanshu Verma; a founder of Red Earth, he is a multifaceted Delhiwala who is an art curator; celebrator of Indian culture and a die-hard lover of the city who is redefining the rules of the world through his work and style. He organizes the Saree Festival and 1100 sari walks pan India; all pervasive love affairs with the drape, in bringing together the vast richness of styles, materials, traditions, techniques, experiments, vocabularies, sensibilities, that can all achieve fruition under the never ending swirl of the Saree. The saree festival showcases some exciting new work; in the realm of the saree and encourage the next rung of Saree makers to enter the fray. He has coined catch phrases like "Jai Saree" to promote the sari with an objective to create the Saree sans frontiers! He states that when he started wearing sarees he wore what he calls the *chamiya* sarees... the bling ones, the slinky ones... but as he grows older with more grey hair, he wears the softer ones, handloom ones. He is most drawn to dhoti-like handlooms. Dhoti-saris have the semblance of a male sari for him. The Saree Man was actually a self-proclaimed title that caught currency and now everyone calls him the saree man, but he admits that was a megalomaniacal gesture on his part to do that. (Verma, 2016)

His views on sarees were gender-fluid and not necessarily feminine, he opines that the saree as we know today is actually just 150 years old, and it is what is called the *Thakurbari* drape or the drape pioneered by the Tagore ladies. It is also associated with the Parsi Bombay ladies. Before that, the saree was worn in so many ways and the men would also wear dhotis and sarees, and in many parts of India the two terms are interchangeable. So he thinks saree is a generic term and it is not a garment for women specifically. He has been well-known for wearing beautiful sarees all his life, like this gorgeous drape. He has always enjoyed the way a saree falls on his body. It has been widely considered a feminine garment, but he never puts it like that. He wore it because he felt great wearing it. He has never worn them to make a statement, but it certainly would help to change the mindset that it is only for women. It is for everyone! Verma states that besides its unwavering presence in the villages as a woman's closest companion and a weaver's livelihood, it is now also a potential tool

for liberal experiments in urban India. When he started exploring issues of urban masculinity, the sari was his device. He is one of the very few men in Delhi society who wears handloom saris with traditional blouses and jewelry. He is inspired by the sari's depiction in painter Raja Ravi Varma's work. His work is a visual standard to understand jewelry, customs, costumes and other cultural traditions of 19th century India.

Personal sari branding is more than the sum total of a vast collection of saris, radical accessorizing or its 108 traditional drapes. It requires deeper thought and a trial-and-error process. Design Guru, Rajeev Sethi of the Asian Heritage Foundation, provides the big picture: the narrative of the sari, its structure as an unstitched garment, with the flare of the bottom that skims the ground, the pallu that accentuates the shoulder and the borders that lend it weight, is the creation of the weaver. While reinventing it, let's pay a tribute to that anonymous genius. (Sethi, 2014)

 The name 'sari' came from the Sanskrit word meaning strip of cloth, but could also be derived from the Prakrit word '*sattika*' in Buddhist literature, meaning women's attire. Around 2800-1800 BC women in the Indus Valley civilization used to cover themselves with a long piece of cloth, found mainly around the western part of the Indian subcontinent. The word sari is derived from Sanskrit शाटी *śāṭī* which means 'strip of cloth' and शाडी *śāḍī* or साडी *sāḍī* in Prakrit, and which was corrupted to sāṛī in Hindi. The word '*Sattika*' is mentioned as describing women's attire in ancient India in Buddhist literature called *Jatakas*. This could be equivalent to modern day 'Sari'. The term for female bodice, the *choli* is derived from another ruling clan from south, the Cholas. Rajatarangini, a tenth century literary work by Kalhana, states that the *Choli* from the Deccan was introduced under the royal order in Kashmir. The concept of *Pallava*, the end piece in the sari, originated during the Pallavas period and named after the Pallavas, another ruling clan of Ancient Tamilakam. It is popular in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Burma, Malaysia, and Singapore. The most common style is for the sari to be wrapped around the waist, with one end then draped over the shoulder, baring the midriff (Strand of silk blogpost, 2013).

Around 2500-1900 BC women in the Indus Valley civilization used to cover themselves with a long piece of cloth, found mainly around the western part of the Indian subcontinent. The first portrayal of the draped shawl resembling the Indian sari was from a male Indus Valley priest who wore a piece of cloth draped like a sari, which was confirmed with a statue discovered from the period. Women have also been described wearing drapery like a sari in Ancient Tamil poetry, and other sculptures from the first to sixth century AD have also been discovered depicting goddesses wearing saris.

The sari used to be worn in a way that divided the legs in a trouser-like form to enable the temple dancers to be free in their movements while covering their modesty. However, the early statues of goddesses show that the sari was draped in a sensual manner, like a fishtail, where the material was tied at the waist and covered the front of the legs. The top half of the body would have been left bare or been partially covered, as it was common to do so in this era. Indian tradition and the **Natya Shastra** (an Indian treatise describing ancient costume and dance) describe the navel of the Supreme Being as being the source of creativity and life. Therefore, the midriff is to be left bare by the sari. In the south of India, especially in the state of Kerala, the traditional sari is still often worn. This comprises two parts; the lungi (sarong) and shawl. However, with the coming together of Muslims the petticoat was discovered and clothes were stitched, as previously Hindus had believed that piercing clothes with a needle was impure.

Wearing a blouse with the sari, called a *choli*, came into existence because Muslims and the British wanted to create a more modest appearance. It evolved in the tenth century AD and the first *choli*s were only front covering. The *choli* is of matching or contrasting colours to the sari and usually has a low neck and is cropped at the midriff. They can be backless or a halter neck in style. Furthermore, the sari itself has been developed and new styles are frequently experimented with, such as designer saris, Bollywood saris and navel saris. Now women have an array of options in colours, fabrics (such as chiffon, silk and brocade), prints and embroideries to choose from when purchasing a sari. The petticoat, called a lehenga, is made from a combination of satin and cotton and the colour is usually similar to the blouse. The

way to wear a sari differs greatly from region to region, and there are more than eighty recorded ways of wearing it.

Some of the most common ways of wearing the sari are the *Nivi*, Gujarati/Rajasthani, Madisar, Kodagu, Gond, Malayali and the Kunbi style. The *Nivi* style is the most common way to wear the sari and involves tucking one end of the cloth into the waistband of the lehenga and then wrapping it around the lower body once before gathering pleats. The pleats are either tucked into the waistband of the lehenga or passed through the legs and then tucked into the waist at the back to cover the legs (Strand of silk blogpost, 2013).
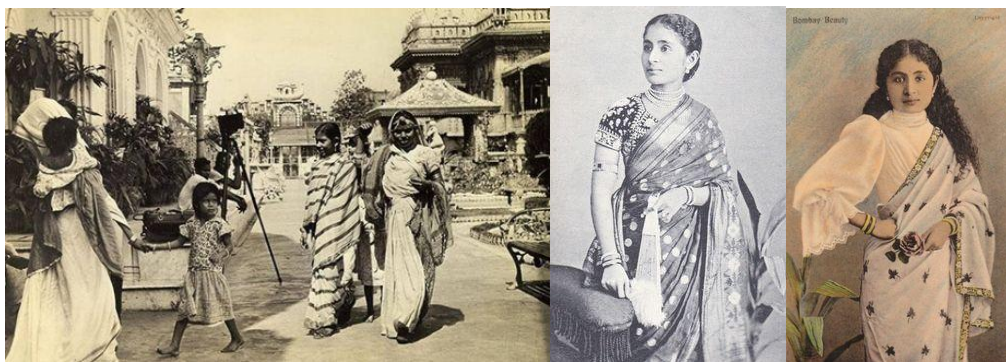

Plate 2. 2. Black and white photo street photo 19th century

Plate 2. 3. Elite lady in *choli* and handloom sari 19th century, traditional costume

Plate 2. 4. Elite lady in Blouse and mill made sari 19th century, colonial influence.

Apart from their European extravaganzas, the royals also got together in the Calcutta season (racing season) organized by the British. This was the melting post of fashion and culture in India. All these multicultural exposures transformed their attires back home. The royal women retained their saris in India, however included more modest blouses and decent petticoats with them. The saris worn in the 20th century were of chiffon exported from Europe. This trend caught on with the entire royal clan. The flip side of this however was that it caused a crisis that decreased their patronage to the high-skilled weavers. The Rajputs continued to wear the *choli*s but added a kurti over it. The *choli* got transformed into the blouse of today in a step by step transformation. The *choli* that ended at the bust line lengthened to cover more area, the backless *choli*s got their backs, the *kasanis* or tie-cords were replaced by hooks or

buttons in the front, the ethnic fabric of blouses became more sophisticated and either complemented or supplemented the sari (Kumar , 2000).

Even without any big Bollywood weddings to open 2013, a whole lot of celebrities choose the sari over a gown for their red carpet appearances that year (Chande,2013). From handloom fabrics, luxe embroidered sheers and electric neon prints, these were the most inspirational styles with Vidya Balan, Kajol and Sridevi leading the way. Tweet it with #VogueLovesSari **#Traditional threads #Sexy sheer sari #Quirky Printed parade #Modern touches**

In the days before India was divided in the name of religion, wearing a sari or *shalwar kameez* was not a function of which God you worshipped. What you wore pretty much depended on where you lived. In Punjab, women wore the *shalwar kameez* irrespective of whether they were Hindu or Muslim. And in Uttar Pradesh, Bengal and Bihar, they wore the sari, whatever their religious persuasion"……"A woman wears a sari she not only looks different, she feels different as well. Her walk becomes more sinuous as she sways her hips gently to negotiate walking within its loosely draped fold. She holds herself a bit straighter, emphasizing the curves of her bosom and her bottom. She definitely feels more feminine, more alluring and more pulled together. This is evident through literary findings, paintings, sculptures, films about the land of Kamasutra, the Khajuraho temples, and the miniature paintings to its transition today. The sari is the most versatile garment because the wearer can show as much or as little as she likes! (Goswami, 2010)

The anthropologists Banerjee and Miller (2003) comment, 'The contemporary sari is as much a product of new developments in fashion and publicity as it is of power looms and companies. The *Nivi* style of draping the sari was invented in the nineteenth century and in the following decades became fashionable among the growing number of women beginning to appear in public life, including those active on the platforms and demonstrations of the anti-colonial movement. Their images became widely known through the press coverage of their political activities. The *Nivi* style also featured in iconic nationalist propaganda images, such as the sari unfurled as the map of Mother India, by Raja Ravi Verma.

Following independence, the sari's popularity was further boosted by government information posters, film stars, politicians and ambassadors. It was adopted as an official uniform in the army, police and national airline, and as an unofficial one for teachers and bureaucrats. The ultimate self-consciousness; that what one was wearing was not simply the traditional local draped garment of a region but rather '**the Sari**', the emblem of the nation as a whole.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi was elected as the first woman prime minister of India. Indian women took great inspiration from the way she carried herself in a minimal, prim handloom sari & short hairstyle, an example of power dressing. According to Bannerjee & Miller this provided the foundation for the adoption of the sari as a symbol of India itself. This association was cemented when, under the guidance of that consummate politician, Mrs. Gandhi, the sari for a while became central to the construction of a visual image of India both internally and abroad. This nationalist appropriation of the sari was confirmed in the popular mind by Mrs. Gandhi's triumphant visits to the USA in 1970s, which many women still recall (Banerjee and Miller, 2003).

For women, as ever matters ran differently. Colonial society had been heavily segregated by sex. For virtually all Indian women there was no incentive to put on European dress, and only the danger that by doing so they would cause aspersions to be cast on their virtue. Equally, there were relatively few who took sufficient part in the national struggle for it to be incumbent upon them to wear *khadi,* were women whose prominence within the nationalist movement gave them, as it were, the license to continue to wear silk saris dyed into rich colours. After independence, most Indian women have continued to wear saris as a matter of course, although the young and unmarried, certainly in towns, will increasingly wear European - style tops and often jeans. What is most significant is this regard has been the spread of the *Salwaar Kameez,* a top and trouser originally from the Punjab which is the national (female dress of Pakistan). This has the advantage that it does not suggest marriage and fertility in the way the sari does, thus more appropriate in a society where the age at marriage for women is increasing significantly. Remarkably, the Islamic connotations which this outfit once had are dissipating, and it has become perhaps a prime symbol for the new India in the process of creation, modern but not forgetful of

its roots- but of course like all such nations forgetful of some of its roots, and of the sectarian conflicts which still rend the country (Ross, 2008).

Religious fundamentalist groups such as RSS (the Rashtriya Swayamsevak sangh, the Hindu right-wing party), which in the struggle of political power use the example of multinationals as the 'American' threat to national sovereignty. Other kinds of resistance appear in the obsession with ethnic chic, for instance or the repercussions of 'tradition' by the various entities. Their analysis of the marketing of Barbie in India suggests both the subversions and the repercussions that occur in the formation of new consumer subjects. In a context of localization through transnational formations, it is important to note that a Barbie in a sari being sold in India is not an Indian or a South Asian Barbie. She is what Mattel calls the traditional Barbie, a white , American Barbie, but one who travels; she has, in one version, blond hair, standard face, the ideal Euro-American body, a shiny red sari, a red *bindi* on her forehead. The side panel on the box reads, 'Dressing in an all-season classic saree with exotic borders, Barbie is totally at home in India.' This reconfiguration of Euro-American fashion discourses uses the term all-season to differentiate the sari from the fashion Industry in the West, which is organized around seasonal clothes. The term exotic resonates in reference of colonialism, tourism, and the eroticization of the female Asian body that depends on the misrecognition of the socioeconomic realities and changes. Barbie in a sari is material evidence of the movements of transnational capital to India. The doll suggests that difference, as homogenized national stereotype, could be covered by multinational corporations; that the national could exist in the global economy (Cruz and Guins, 2005).

Chatterji, (2011) in the four chapters focus on the different media worlds such as cinema *(Filming Change, Securing a Tradition: A Hobson's choice of a Dynamic Duality)*, television (*Television: Images and the Imaginary*), advertising (*Advertising: Encoding Seduction*) and print (*Print Media and Popular Culture: Agents with a Difference*). The cinema chapter maps the rapid evolution in Indian cinema in the way it has transcended its „Indian" identity in terms of geography, history, language, subject and technology especially between 2004 and 2009. The stress in the beginning is on how globalization has pushed the borders of Indian mainstream cinema. At the

same time, she also mentions how biographical films have also been produced during the same period (page 55). The *Gender and Popular Cinema* section in this chapter traces how "overt architectural differences" in narrative cinema inspired by Hollywood or "its inspirational semantic surrogates…share similar responses to gender representations and the female body." (p.57.) It would however, be pertinent to point out at this juncture that there have been exceptions in recent times of films where "the female body" has been rendered secondary and subservient to the principal female *character* in some recent films that can go to form a genre unto themselves. Examples are *Astitva*, *Dev*, *Black, Paa*, *Hum Aur Tum*, *Parineeta*, *Aja Nachle*, *Cheeni Kum* and more recently, after this book was written, films like *No One Killed Jessica, Kahani, New York* etc. The trend for the sexually aggressive heroine was set some time earlier in *Jism* (2003) followed by *Aitraaz* (2004). *Jism* lays claim to a new beginning in its representation of female sexuality. It functions not merely beyond the framework of socially sanctioned ties like marriage but is radically liberated from all taboos that control the female body and female desire. In choosing the out-of-work, alcoholic lawyer Kabir as her lover, Sonia acts like a panther pouncing on its prey. Even her husband, in one of their intimate encounters, acknowledges her superior powers. She is compared to a vampire, eager to drain her husband of all vitality. This is new in Hindi cinema but not in world cinema. Women as voracious predators, driven by an insatiable hunger have been witnessed earlier in cultural representations, placed in juxtaposition with women devoted to their maternal and domestic duties. In *Aitraaz* the character portrayed by Priyanka Chopra is fleshed out as a go-getting seducer who has no moral compunctions about using her body both for professional reasons and for personal passions – the choice is for her to make. She has to pay heavily for these choices perhaps in order to appease the patriarchal mindset of the Indian audience that can accept the characterizations but not ideology or the choice.

However, the ideology of the sexually aggressive woman driven to the use and wanton display of her body for financial pressures and/or out of choice has been widely accepted in Milan Luthria's *The Dirty Picture* (2012) that fetched the Best Actress Award for Vidya Balan in the title role. The choice of a woman to be or not to be a sex object is left to the woman alone in this film which perhaps, might pave a new path in female representations in Indian cinema. Maybe these are mere drops in

the vast ocean of patriarchal perspectives that harp on the cinematic and cinematographic exploitation of the female body, but the fact remains that a beginning has been made and the commercial success of some of these films reflect an acceptance of female assertion by the audience in a mainly patriarchal world (Chatterji, 2011).

The sari, superbly elegant when you get it right, but prone to horrendous wardrobe malfunctions if you get it wrong, has been making something of a comeback. And where better to spot the emerging trend than at weddings: everybody's looking for help wearing their sari. Not to worry help is at hand. One of those who spotted this niche early on is Dolly Jain, 37, who's been a professional sari draper in Kolkata for 10 years now. Her experimentation with the six yards of fabric has proven popular with clients. Jain is almost constantly travelling thanks to the glamour for her expertise she knows up to 125 different styles of wearing the sari. She has draped as many as three saris on a bride, capturing the beauty of the garment and helping it regain its old glory. Each client has a different requirement and comes with very specific ideas and she tries to work with that and give them a style they can carry off with ease and comfort. Everyone wants to look her best and everyone wants to look different. The advent of the new-age sari has seen the professional sari draper coming into her own. She said this increase in business is because designers are creating "young" sari. While the traditional Banaras or Kanchipuram silks are venerated as classics, the new sari attracts a younger clientele. Designers these days are making sari more available to youngsters. They design sari with intricate yet trendy borders, two pallus or a mix of traditional embroidery on fabrics that are easy to wear. The women who usually sign up for Jain's courses in sari draping are between 25 and 35 years old. Some are about to get married; others come to brush up their skills and learn newer ways of wearing saris. Jain even offers them the option of wearing saris with trousers or skirts to make the prospect more appealing. Jain said working with the garment allows her to give full expression to her imagination (Mint, 2011).

One of her closest competitors is Kalpana Shah, age 55years, who dominates the Mumbai market, the country's fashion hub. Though Shah started off as a beautician, what appealed most to her clients was her style of draping saris. She said her greatest inspiration is her clients, who constantly push her to innovate. Shah said the market

for professional drapers is more active than ever. She feels the current generation has started appreciating India's traditional and cultural roots. They have sensed that only wearing a sari, which is indeed the cultural symbol of India, portrays the elegance and grace of a woman (Mint, 2011).

Professional drapers are becoming popular even in smaller cities like Kanpur where Anita Avasthi, 34, has been helping people wear sari for more than five years. She used to teach daughters of friends who came to her in search of styles that were both trendy and elegant. She started with demonstration classes and today is one of the s most-sought-after drapers in the city. In a three-day crash course, Avasthi starts from scratch and works with students on styles that suit them best. With six-seven students in each batch, Avasthi is able to individualize her styles. Avasthi keeps a look out for what designers are doing and how the students can use that (Mint, 2011).

2.1.2. Fashion as communication.

What do I wear today? The way we answer this question says much about how we manage and express our identities. This detailed study examines sartorial style in India from the late nineteenth century to the present, showing how trends in clothing are related to caste, level of education, urbanization, and a larger cultural debate about the nature of Indian identity. Clothes have been used to assert power, challenge authority, and instigate social change throughout Indian society. During the struggle for independence, members of the Indian elite incorporated elements of Western style into their clothes, while Gandhi's adoption of the loincloth symbolized the rejection of European power and the contrast between Indian poverty and British wealth. Similar tensions are played out today, with urban Indians adopting "ethnic" dress as villagers seek modern fashions. Illustrated with photographs, satirical drawings, and magazine advertisements, his book shows how individuals and groups play with history and culture as they decide what to wear (Tarlo,1996).

Semiotics is about the tools, processes, structures and contexts that human beings have for creating, interpreting and understanding meaning in a variety of ways. **"Anthroposemiotics":** the study of meanings as they relate to human beings. Hall reasons as semiotics does not have the doctrinal quality of other intellectual disciplines, semiotics can be actively done rather than just passively learnt and

digested. For in Semiotics we don't simply decipher a coded meaning & leave it at that, instead, we are asked continually to reinterpret, reformat, rework, rethink and reinvigorate the meanings that we find around us and this is what makes it such a rewarding subject to investigate (Hall, 2012).

Banerjee and Miller (2003) as anthropologists observe: 'Growing number of urban women are also working outside the home (rural women have, of course, long been working in the fields), and this can require a different approach to dress and appearance. Here, profession and career are often more important influences than age, religion or caste. This other 'look' may in turn upset mother-in-law or husbands, and so part of dilemma of being a working woman in India is juggling the expectations of the workplace with sensibilities of those at home.

The sheer level of disdain experienced by many women may paradoxically become a positive contribution to women developing a nuanced sensibility about socially appropriate dress. Precisely because everyone knows the difficulties and problems, a person who shows accomplished skill in making the sari serve her will and express their purpose is much appreciated. This is especially the case where this authority appears to be effortless, with the garment worn with complete confidence and lack of anxiety. This is what one woman described to the authors as the '**carefully casual**' look.

Most women felt that with western clothes or the *shalwar kameez*, the garments largely take their shape from the tailoring. As a result, they do not communicate anxiety or inability as easily, even if youare not fully comfortable in them. Wearing the sari was far more demanding, risky and vulnerable, a high-wire act where nervousness was transparent. But for the same reason, a successful performance could give one an aura and authority that tailored garments could not. A confident sari wearer noted that her colleagues try to disparage her, suggesting her sari is archaic. But she responded that this is testimony to its power.

The best evidence in support of the '**power sari**' was the number of men who complained that in the politics of the office they were at a distinct disadvantage, because they could not compete with the power the women conveyed through their saris'.

Banerjee and Miller (2003) surveyed some of the major arbiters of taste, from politics, film and television soap opera. These compliment the development of branding and the impact of major companies. The big players in the commercial sector seek to influence what we wear through manufacturing, advertising and sponsoring powerful and seductive images that people want to emulate. The eccentric sari shopper is never likely to encounter the kind of fashion hegemony which means that in Western markets flares or long jackets may disappear entirely if they are not part of that season's styles. While 'fashions' in saris do happen, they are likely to guide only a small proportion of new sari buying each year. Women may buy one sari which is 'trendy', but will usually ensure it is inexpensive in case it is no longer wearable the following year. More expensive saris are rarely bought according to such short-lived trends, for as they have seen, the influences on taste go far beyond the latest soap operas to include fondly remembered national leaders and the timeless classics of a vast legacy of films, as well as regional, family and personal traditions'.

2.1.3. Semiotic theory - fashion as communication.

SEMIOTICS OF FASHION APPAREL AND WHY SEMIOTICS

(Hall, 2012)   Hall writes on Matters of interpretation.

1. **CONCEPTS AND CONCEPTIONS:** Different kinds of information as well as different amounts of information, can inform our concepts. If people can have different information coded into the concepts that they use, then their conceptions (or thoughts) about these concepts will tend to differ.

2. **CONNOTATIONS AND DENOTATION:** When we speak it is important for the purposes of interpretation to know not just **"what is said" (Denotation)** but **"how it is said "(Connotation).** When we wear clothes, it is important not just **"What we wear" (Denotation- e.g.   A Sari)** but **"how we wear" (Connotation.e.g. formal, casual, flamboyant, sensual look sari.)**

3. **LANGUE AND PAROLE:** "langue" and "parole" are technical terms in semiotics, **"Langue"** denotes **the code (or structure, system, plan, construction or set of rules)** for the object, image or text that is being used, whereas **"parole"** is about the particular instance of use that has been produced. **Langue then provides the organizational means for each individual example of parole.**

4. **COMBINATION AND SUBSTITUTION:** Different societies use different cultural codes to regulate how clothes are combined. These codes may reflect pre-existing canons of taste (e,g." Ought I to wear red trousers with green shoes?"), social demands (e.g. "which group will I identify myself with by wearing a bandana?") or ritual episodes (e.g. " How should I dress if I am going to a job interview as opposed to a sporty event?) .

When we put clothes together to form an ensemble we call this a "**syntagm" (Look). A Syntagm is any combination of things that conform to a specified set of social rules.**
That is why, when we notice the inappropriateness of the combination of clothes that a friend has assembled for the purpose of going to a funeral, we may say, 'your somber shirt goes with this dark pair of trousers, but not with this jolly pair of yellow socks, which will undermine the serious mood of the event.'
In addition to the rules of combination that form a **syntagm**, there are rules of **substitution** created by the social rules that dictate when one thing can be substituted, added or removed in a certain system without that system being undermined overall. Take clothes as our example. If we wish to dress casually then we can substitute different kinds of T-shirts with the one we are wearing without it necessarily affecting the overall casual **Syntagm (look),** that we are trying to create. What we cannot do is substitute a formal dress-shirt for this T-shirt; this will undermine the casual effect that is intended.

5. **TOKEN AND TYPES** distinction can be applied to objects and images just as much as to text. A particular bronze sculpture can exist as a token object in

a specific museum. But if we know that more than one bronze sculptures have been cast from the original mold then we might expect to encounter bronze sculpture of exactly the same type in other places. Similarly a print (e.g. An Etching can exist as a series of tokens if there is a printed edition of it. Each token print (given that it is printed from the same plate) is an example of the same type. The same distinction between **tokens & types** holds true for replicas (e.g. Decorative moldings), duplicates (e.g. wills), facsimiles e.g. Manuscripts, carbon copies (e.g. Letters), reproductions, reprinting (e.g. Book) and models (e.g. cars), production styles(e.g. fashion apparel and Sari)

6. **RULE FOLLOWING:** We should learn how much we rely on interpreting certain rules correctly, and just how much our success in doing so depends on hidden assumptions, social customs, cultural norms, kinds of conformity, forms of training, traditions of use and educated propensities. The rules that we use are important to reflect upon directly because we often fail to see just how much our behavior and our actions depend upon them. Indeed everyday we are faced with objects that have **tacit instructions** for their use, images that have masked codes for their interpretation and texts that obey the often hidden, regulations that are set by the institution of language. **In failing to notice these rules we also fail to see the opportunities for questioning them and thereby creating new codes & forms of meaning.**

7. **CONVENTIONS** are agreed systems of understanding that allows us to interpret what is happening. Conventions are so much a part of a culture that we fail to realize that the codes they use are not always transparent to cultures other than our own.

8. **CLASSIFICATIONS:** The way we classify things is important. The need for classification is clearly evident from many human fields. Progress itself seems to depend on it. However, while certain things seem to be amenable to classification, others do not.

9. UNDERSTANDING AND MISUNDERSTANDING:

Gestures are rich in meaning as condensed non-verbal source of communication; they appear to be a trouble-free way to express approval or disapproval, affection and disaffection and assent or dissent. Some gestures have more or less universal meanings some seem to have different meanings in different contexts. Some simple gestures can produce grave misunderstandings in a wrong way.

Build a framework that will allow us understand communication in terms of the wider context of society and culture:

SEMANTIC UNIT
GENRE
STYLE
INSTITUTION
STEREOTYPE
IDEOLOGY
DISCOURSE
MYTH
PARADIGM

SEMANTIC UNITs are discrete items of communication that have actual and potential meaning. A semantic unit is an aspect or part of a thing, a thing itself or a collection of things that can be identified as distinct elements of communication. Text based semantic units are the easiest to identify:- They consist of words, sentences, paragraphs, pages, chapters or books. We know this because when we are unable to understand a particular textual element we can ask: "What does this particular word/ sentence/paragraph/ page/chapter/book mean?"

With images, the issue is more difficult, a painting can have brush-marks, lines, tones, textures, colors and different parts, all of which can be identified as meaningful:- of course the picture as a whole has a meaning too. Once again, we can identify the semantic unit in question by picking out that which not understood by asking, "What

does this particular mark/line/tone/texture/color/part of the image/whole image mean?"

Parts of objects, objects themselves and collection of objects can be thought as semantic units too. In this instance, when we are mystified we might ask "what does the part of the object, this whole object or the collection of object mean?"

GENRES are categories that conform to a certain division or sub division of a particular medium. Design has the genres of graphics, multi-media, furniture, product, industrial, domestic ware, textiles and fashion. Each semantic unit: whether objects-, image-, text- based, will be communicated through a well-established genre. The genre chosen will tend to setup a series of codes that allow the communicative act to take place successfully these communicative acts will often only be truly protective when they conform to the rules of the genre in question (i.e. when there is some shared understanding of what the genre requires). A single semantic unit can contain melded genre. But not genre that are sequential; e.g. Indo- Western fusion, not Indian and then sequentially western.

A STYLE is a manner of doing something. The style in which something is done can influence how a message is received. When it comes to message-making we should not forget that the **form of the message matters as much as the content.**

Different styles can be exemplified in writing, painting, designing, acting, walking, talking and even thinking. If we undertake any of these activities then we will be sure to do so in a way that is distinctive and personal. It is always within our power to develop our own particular or individual style of writing, painting, designing, dressing etc. At the same time, however our own way of doing these things will tend to make reference to a more general way of doing them. In other words, **while there are individual styles, these usually partake of styles that are social & cultural in origin .e.g. The way we drape a sari will not be independent of a community of people who drape their sari in a similar way,** for example in terms of (Ascent). The *(Garment)* will always be a cultural and stylistic variation of particular costume language.

STEREOTYPE is a generalized idea of something. There can be stereotypes of different kind of objects, images, texts, animals, plants, people or groups of people.

These stereotypes often derive from certain observations, thoughts or prejudices that may or may not be grounded in fact. Stereotypes are sometimes helpful to us; they can give us shortcut to understanding a certain thing or situation. At the same time they tend to be rather inflexible and simplistic. We might think for example. TV soap actresses.

As INSTITUTIONS, Museum are characterized by the fact that they remove objects, images and texts from the typical arenas of production, consumption, ownership, use and exchange that they tend to inhabit. By making the museum into a sanctified zone for display, objects, images and texts (i.e. various semantic units) are thereby abstracted from concreteness of the social and historical practices in which they normally participate. The objects, images and texts that are displayed in the museum are usually enhanced through the presentational codes of staging. Just like museums, other institutions act to regulate cultural meanings and the social behavior that goes with them.

IDEOLOGIES are about ideas: what they are and how they are formed. Ideas are not natural. On the contrary they arise and can be explained in terms of particular forms of society and culture. The key question for those interested in ideology in relation to semiotic is just how our ideas fit into larger systems and structures of meaning that particular societies and cultures create & enforce. Ideology might be understood as:-

As systems of beliefs and desires that are characteristics of the value system of a particular class, group or culture. Political beliefs tend to be like this.

A system of illusionary beliefs or desires that can be contrasted with beliefs or desires that can be contrasted with beliefs or desires that are true.

The general process through which our systems of beliefs and desire; are produced and consumed. On this view, various parts of a society or culture act to produce (and to make available to consume) certain styles of thought or ways of thinking.

DISCOURSE analysis tends to focus on language and the contexts of its meanings, but objects (& images) set up and sustain discourses of their own. In general discourse help to form our ideas about the world through regulated forms of use. Discourses consist of different areas of knowledge norms of 'lived' experience, structures of

35

organization, systems of regulations and kinds of identity. Discourses set the boundaries of these things through established forms that create or reflect particular aspects of society & culture. **The aim of all dominant discourses is; to make what is a cultural and societal product seems to be natural and self-evident.**

MYTHS help us to understand the world; we tend to think of myths as being ancient stories that are probably not true. But in the more general sense a myth may be considered true, partly true or else simply false. It all depends on myth in question & the function it serves.

Hall concludes that, "in general our readings of objects, images & texts and framed by what we call paradigms, **a paradigm** is a way of seeing the world through a highly structures framework of concepts, procedures and results. A radical alteration in our perception is called **a paradigm-shift.** A paradigm –shift happens when an alternative way of thinking is proved by a new set of concepts, results & procedures. The change in perception takes place due to the new framework or theory that you now use to interpret your experience"

Fashion theories (theorized by social scientists and culture analysts) that see fashion as self-referential systems or regimes of meaning making through the use of specific codes and combinations of the elements and connotations of items of apparel the disciplines of semiotics , structuralism and post modernism treat fashion as a domain of symbols that can be likened to visual language of communication that structures how dress & decoration function as a body technique and cultural practice. Fashion enables the body to perform identities appropriate to specific roles, statuses and contexts. The effectiveness of these symbolic regimes depends on how definitively communicative codes are shared (Craik, 2009).

Fashion is not just a covering for the body but a means of communicating about the body & can thus be considered a symbolic system where clothes & the rules that govern how they can be worm can be seen as a language or set of signs. Some theories posit (put forward) fashion as a system in relation to **external factors** such as class differentiation, economic development, psychological needs or the civilizing process.

We now turn to theories that attempt to explain fashion theories as an **internal system of signs & symbols** that create a (quasi) language. To understand this, we need to apply semiotic and linguistic model to the elements of apparel adornment & the codes & rules concerning them. To do this we analyze:

Not only the clothes themselves

But how clothes relate to the body

And how clothes enable or equip the body to **perform as a social body** through gestures & performance.

Craik (2009) says to develop this Barthes drew on the discipline of semiotics. **Semiology is the science of forms or signs**, and in case of fashion, the forms relate to the garments, details, accessories, and modes of clothes. If we conceive of **elements as signs,** we can see how they compose a **language** of clothes (**Langue) and the clothed body** of an individual constitutes a specific statement by way of the **choice and arrangement of clothing (Parole).** To understand this, we need to break down the idea of a sign into two components:

> **The signifier - Physical referent**
> **The Signified – Mental concept implied by signifier**

We apparently instinctively read a contextual grammar into our clothing encounters. This contextual reading is a code or set of shared rules that enables us to connect the signifier with the signified contextual codes might include primness, authority, formality, practicality, relaxation & hostility. Some codes may be localized, embedded in a subculture, adopted as national dress or worn across the globe. Thus we need to think of another level of signification: **Denotation and Connotation.**

Denotation – Refers to the straightforward meaning that we attach to clothing.

Connotation- The symbolic embedded meanings of an item of apparel or how it is worn.

A semiotic theory of fashion explains fashion as a system of signs, symbols and communicative meaning-making that sees items of apparel as a language with a

grammar that is composed of symbolic codes. Understanding of internal and external fashion flows is central to the understanding of fashion cycles and systems.

(Lurie (2000 [1981]) is well known for her study that makes a direct analogy between language and clothes (2000 [1981]) and rejects the idea of its arbitrary relationship. She argues that language is just like clothes, and clothes just like language. We use language to communicate verbally, and we also use clothes to communicate nonverbally. The more vocabulary you know, the more sophisticate and stylish you will look . She explains clothing as assign system as follows:

> "If clothing is a language, it must have a vocabulary and grammar like other languages….as with human speech, there is not a single language of dress, but many (like Dutch and German) closely related and others (like Basque) almost unique. And within every language of clothes there are many different dialects and accents, some almost unintelligible to members of the mainstream culture. Moreover, as with speech, each individual has his own stock of words and employ personal variations of tone and meaning."

The vocabulary of dress includes not only items of clothing, but also hairstyles, accessories, jewelry, make-up, and body decoration. Lurie makes an analogy with a sharecropper, and argues that the language of a sharecropper , for instance may be limited to five or ten "words" from which it is possible to create only a few 'sentences" almost bare of decoration and expressing only the most basic concepts. A so-called fashion leader, on the other hand, may have several hundred 'words' at his or her disposal, and thus be able to form thousands of different "sentences" that can express a wide range of meanings. Unlike Saussure or Barthes, for Lurie, the signs are not arbitrary. There is no skepticism between language and clothes both of which are used as texts. As Saussure and Barthes insist, they are arbitrary.

(Barnard, 1996) Further explains, communication makes an individual into a member of a community; communication as 'social interaction through messages' constitutes an individual as a member of a group (1996:29). Barnard further explores the sender and the received of the sign and says that: "Semiotic model also seems more plausible on the matter of how meanings are generated…. It is no longer the case that either the designer or the wearer or the spectator of the garment is the source of the intentions

that provide the meanings; on the semiotic model, meanings are the result of negotiation between the roles.(Barnard 1996:30-1)

Meanings are constantly produces, exchanged, negotiated, renegotiated, and reproduced, and the meanings of the original garment are given numerous interpretations by numerous cultural producers and the garment ends up with a set of meanings different from those with which it began (Barnard 1996:31).Thus Barnard's semiotic interpretation of clothes is polar opposite to Lurie's.

2.1.4. The fashion system.

(Barthes, 1990) His book and theory of Semiology of fashion have had a profound impact on the field. Fashion he argues is the product of the social relations and activities that are involved in putting an outfit together. Fashion is actualized through the way the garments are worn. Barthes makes a distinction between three kinds of garments:

1. The Real garment
2. The Represented garment
3. And the Used garment, corresponding to the process of production, distribution and consumption.

Carter, (2003) states that cccording to Barthes, "clothing seems to resemble a language in that it displays a synchronic density, but at the same time also has a diachronic dimension, so that it (clothing) exhibits the dual aspects of system & process, structure and becoming.

Breward writes in his book "Fashion", inflects discussion concerning the relative status of fashion as a cultural form-giving rise to an inevitable questioning in his book, as to whether the focus should be **fashion as art, social process, or commercial product**. Is fashion the sketch of a designer, informed by reference to historical precedent or contemporary cultural influences and translated into surfaces and seams of a refined sculptural beauty? Is it the ritualistic adorning of the body by a subject whose sartorial actions relate to predominant aesthetic and sociological contexts? Or is it the limp textile construction, replicated according to body size and spending power, which hangs on the rail of a boutique, given the relevance for the

potential consumer by its reproduction in the promotional images of a magazine? The most productive way forward must be to consider all three interpretations as a valid and interdependent set of interpretative models. **Fashion as a system of meaning** and historical phenomenon incorporates all of these categories- their importance waxing and waning at different moments of the fashion cycle and according to the specific interests of the interpreter. What links them together as a common referent is the defining concept of modish clothing, material items whose usefulness, in fashion terms, relies on the prioritization of temporal notions of style over functional considerations of wear & tear. The Haptic properties and physical manufacture of garments have often escaped interrogation in the critical literature of fashion history, overshadowed by the need to identify this elusive quality of fashionablity (Breward, 2003).

2.1.5. Summary of current knowledge, research methods in fashion and dress

Kawamura (2011) first explains how the discipline of Semiology started, developed, and spread and introduces some contemporary studies on fashion/dress that use a semiotic analysis in their empirical research. Semiotics, or Semiology, is the science of signs and is any sign system of signification. Semiotics derives from the linguistic theory of Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), a Swiss linguist, who stresses that signs are arbitrary and derive their meanings only from oppositions to other arbitrary signs used in a system. His approach was extended by the French literary theorist Roland Barthes, who argues that any item of culture, including clothing and fashion, can become signs and communicate meanings. Semiotics is used in fashion/dress studies as an analytical tool in treating fashion/dress as a text and in decoding the meaning of every clothing item. It does not have to be tangible clothes but written text.

There are scholars who apply a semiotic analysis to fashion and dress. In order for us to understand it, we need to trace the development of the discipline and refer to Saussure who is the father of Semiology. Barthes's work on fashion/dress, which emerged primarily out of Saussure's work, is explore is explored so that we understand aspects and activities are detailed but not simply to elaborate the case per se. Instead the intention is to assist the researcher to better understand some external theoretical question or problem. They may or may not be viewed as typical of other

cases. Using case studies, researchers explore in-depth a program, an event, an activity, a process, or one or more individuals. The cases are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data-collection procedures over a sustained period of time.

Furthermore, case studies of organizations may be defined as the systematic gathering of enough information about a particular organization to allow the researcher insight of enough information about a particular organization to allow the researcher insight into the life of that organization. This type of study might be fairly general in its cope, offering approximately equal weight to every aspect of the organization.

There are a number of reasons that a particular organization may be selected for a case study. For example a researcher may undertake a case study of an organization to illustrate the way certain administrative systems operate in certain types of organizations. Or the researcher may be interested in accessing how decisions are made in certain types of organizations or even how communication networks operate. The case method is an extremely useful technique for researching relationships, behaviors, attitudes, motivations, and stressors in organizational settings.

A community can be defined as some geographically delineated unit within a large society. Such a community is small enough to permit considerable cultural or sub cultural homogeneity, diffuse interactions and relationships between members, and to produce a social identification by its members. Case studies of communities can be defined as the systematic gathering of enough information about a particular social group to provide the researcher with an understanding and awareness of what things go on in that community; why and how these things occur; who among the community members take part in these activities and behavior; and what social forces may bind together members of this community. You could focus on a community in general, or you may want to focus on some particular aspect or phenomenon of the community. Within the world of fashion that I call the fashion system, there are different communities, that is, different occupational groups and roles that individuals play. By studying the fashion community, I see how the fashion institutions and industries are connected to the trade organization and also investigate individuals within each community and how those individuals are linked to one another.

Barthes' contribution of fashion/dress studies

Barthes maintains that what is interesting about language is how the structure works, and he applies Saussure's Semiology to mundane objects of everyday life, such a wrestling, wine, or films and argues that these objects could become signs and communicate meanings. Fashion can convey a message about the social status or the occupation of its owner or about their worldviews and beliefs, among other things. So can any item of culture, ranging from styles of dress or food to popular entertainment. Like Saussure, he also explains the arbitrary nature of the signs.

Beginning with myth as delusion, Barthes emphasizes that myth is a form of communication, a "language", a system of second-order meaning. Myth is a product of the interplay between direct and indirect meanings. *Mythologies* were a study of how meaning and value occurs and are created in everyday life. The signs of everyday life were the mark of ideology and cultural formation, according to Barthes (1972). Language is not a natural phenomenon but is a set of conventional signs.

(Barthes conducted a large semiological study on fashion/dress was conducted. Instead of giving an account of clothes advertised in the French publications *Le Jardin des Modes, Elle, l'Exho de la Mode, and Vogue* during a six month period in the late 1950s, he concentrated exclusively on the language used by the editors and fashion writers. Language is a system of signs, and a sign unites an image that may be the sound of a spoken word or the way it is written. Fashion is a system that creates meaning by having different shapes and silhouettes of garments with various details and by connecting different pieces of garments together. But he is not looking at the actual clothes but at the descriptions about the clothes. Barthes write; "[I]t's the meaning that sells clothes." To describe this system, Barthes reads captions on the assumption that the captions represent the aspects of the clothes that make them fashionable and thus enable him to identify the distinctions at work in their sign systems. Barthes insisted that it is not the objects that are the subjects of analysis but rather the discourse or text that are about objects. He explains that clothes are not themselves immediately signs but rather, they become subject to the signs of the world of fashion; that is to say that the cultural worlds of talking and writing about the clothes gives the clothes themselves a social meaning (Barthes 1990). How the

clothes are described/written in words determines whether they are going to be treated as fashion or not.

Williamson was one of the pioneers who conducted a semiotic analysis of advertisements in magazines. Advertisements give added values to commercial products by making them meaningful to potential consumers. The fashion industry where visual materials are crucial can make a good use of this methodological strategy (Williamson, 1978).

Structuralism that appeared in the latter half of the twentieth century is one of the most popular approaches to investigating culture, society, and language. Both Saussure and Barthes are known as structuralists who study a specific area of a complex system of interrelated parts.

Barthes, who was an advocate of Saussure and structuralism, moves on from Saussure's views, and this is why often referred to as a poststructuralist since he went beyond Saussure's theory of signs. While Saussure explained that the relationship between the Signified and signified is arbitrary. Barthes now says that it is better to describe this relationship as not arbitrary but "motivated," which implies that the relationship is not a natural one but is still inseparable from "arbitrary." Placing linguistic or nonlinguistic signs in their social contexts how and why they work Barthes1972).

In this way Barthes's thinking links him with other poststructuralists, especially Jacques Derrids (1930-2004), a French philosopher known as the father of post-modernism and deconstruction. Barthes also suggests "the death of the author," which creates the freedom of the reader. In this respect, he recognizes that there is no final authority for deciding the meaning to a text, just as there is no final meaning attached to a sign because it constantly changing according to the context. Therefore, post structuralism is known as the theoretical formulation of postmodern conditions that reject boundaries between different categories.

The Saussurean model is founded on a premise of the linguistic sign's arbitrary nature that bears directly on the development of Barthes's own Semiology. Contemporary scholars in fashion/dress studies also adopt the method to investigate the second-order

or the signified of an object, such as clothes, or to understand how clothes become fashion through written texts.

2.1.6. National Identities

Kawamura (2004) comments cultures have become brands and cities have become logos , national identities are rather ideologies; conscious or unconscious beliefs, attitudes, habits, feelings and assumptions."

Jansen (2006) in her research aims to contest a prevailing dichotomy in current fashion scholarship between so-called static traditional dress associated with the non-West and dynamic modern fashionable dress associated with the West. The most important value of clothing change is represented by respective clothing style, while fashion promises change through modernity, traditional dress promises continuity through its association with a specific cultural heritage.

Slade (2009) in his case study on Japan, argues that modernity actually stimulates tradition, for in modernity progress is constantly sought, yet constantly questioned, undermined and remodeled. Modernity, he says everywhere repeatedly clothes itself in reconstructions of the past, recreating a national costume and inventing national traditions to authenticate the very idea of the nation itself. Simultaneously, the significance of place increases with globalization because it represents a threat due to the speed and flexibility with which ideologies and goods flow across national boundaries.

Economic Times article in 2012 before Diwali stated much like the new-age remakes of fairytales and Hollywood classics, the story of festive Indian wear is undergoing a rewrite. For the young and daring, the sky is the limit when it comes to expressing their individuality. Take inspiration from our desi designers who offer an array of choices in prints, silhouettes, embellishment. The economic liberalization of India in the '90s had a curious by-product in Indian fashion. Come festival time, you couldn't get away from heavily-embellished ensembles. Even veteran designers like Tarun Tahiliani and Ritu Kumar had to give in to clients' demands of outrageous clothes that flaunted the affluence of crystals, diamonds and gemstones. "But the well-travelled, globally aware woman of today understands that less is more," says actress and

socialite Suchitra Pillai. So, bling is giving way to minimal embellishments, metallic applique (Shantanu& Nikhil), and delicate vintage embroidery (Pallavi Jaikishan). Parsi embroidery is making a comeback, largely due to its use of animal and nature-inspired motifs. At the 2012 Delhi Couture Week, Anamika Khanna fused the dhoti pant with a sari drape to create a slimming shape. (Postmodern sari) "People are bored with chiffons and georgettes. They want fabrics that have more essence and Indianness," says Hyderabad-based designer Gaurang Shah. Young and old revivalists like him are going back to the roots with traditional textiles indigenous to our heritage.

The first edition of India Day @ Oxford, organized by Network 18, centered on India's growing significance in the global stage and how it can be 'the' power of the 21st century. Chancellor of Oxford University Lord Patten pointed out that," India's focus should be on soft power. Part of it comes from its secular and democratic traditions which hold together a very diverse country. But it also comes from its art and culture. By design or by default, India seems to be going in that direction. The increasing complexity of the world: India's economic rise is happening at a time when the world is getting increasingly complex. The technological development has accelerated like never before. The interconnections have strengthened. And the world has become truly multi-polar in many ways. That has changed the way countries look at each other". In some ways, India Day @ Oxford is also an example of India's growing soft power (Ramnath, 2013).

Times of India article in 2012, the debate over whether there is any reason for treating the sari as a sacrosanct piece of clothing versus mutilation of elegant apparel like the sari is an assault on Indian sartorial aesthetics. Saris that can be worn over trousers or jeans and pleated knee length "**sarinis**" are picking up in popularity, citing the demands of contemporary lifestyle, which have made the six yards garment cumbersome for many women. Yet there are many women who believe that turning a sari into a "cool" sarini will diminish its appeal . The Sari has certainly undergone many makeovers since ancient times; it indeed is worth determining how the sari shall reinvent itself for the post modern Indian woman.

Tanya Rawal, professor of gender and sexuality studies at the University of California Riverside, strides onto the campus in a sari. It could be a cotton weave worn with a denim crop, a cheery chiffon with a knotted pallu resting on the shoulders, or a bright bandhni. The experiment was part of her research on how brown people were assigned the role of terrorist and how clothes trigger such cliches. The academic started instagramming herself in everyday sari sourced from the closets of her mother and her friends who called themselves the Saree Ladies of Baton Rouge. Two months later, Rawal launched the hashtag #sareenotsorry with the view to reclaiming the space for the sari in the West. It went on to become a hugely popular campaign, going beyond style and fashion to talk of racism, Asian stereotypes and terrorism (Nair, 2016). Picture: #sareenotsorry

https://www.instagram.com/p/9HgJOJjuhI/

Plate 2.5. Instagram screen shot for sari #sareenotsorry

It is hardly surprising then that the sari is weaving itself into this newfound Asian identity. New York-based writer Piyali Bhattacharya, who runs the popular blog Sari-torialist, is a fan of the drape and the magic of its weaves and colours. One of her style inspirations is educationist Priya Loomba, her husband's grandmother, who in the late 1960s, taught in the US at the start of desegregation in schools. In a historical moment, *Nani* became the first (and possibly only) female Indian teacher in the US

who, while wearing a sari, held the hands of black children and escorted them into previously white-only classroom (Nair, 2016).

Bhattacharya traces the buzz around the sari in the West to social media. When she tags a picture of herself self in a sari on Instagram with the hashtag #100SareePact, or even the hashtags *#kantha* or *#khadi*, it makes her a part of a larger group of people. This makes a big difference, because when she wears sari in my daily life in the States, she often the only one in her circle who is dressed this way. Having a connection to other sari -wearers on the internet makes her feel as though she's not the only one with this aesthetic sense. It isn't the easiest thing wearing a sari in the West, there are mornings when the thought of wearing a sari and then being asked questions about it by nearly everyone she would see that day is exhausting. But she is too in love with sari to relegate them to the world of formal-wear. Besides the questions, there are weather conditions, maintenance issues, starching, ironing, but she's still determined to be a sari evangelist. She states it needs to done, she teaches English literature, and sometimes, she wears a sari to class to underscore two facts. She feels it is important for her students to know that a brown woman who is wearing a sari is the same person who is guiding them through classic English texts. She wants them to get the message that sari wearers are American in the same ways that they are, sari wearers are not 'the other,' and sometimes, sari wearers hold certain kinds of knowledge and power that they might not expect. She hopes that this recognition might lead to a greater sense of inclusivity in their minds (Nair, 2016).

California-based business analyst Anita Mokashi decided to run the annual Bay Area costume marathon in flamboyant pre-stitched *nauvaris*, the traditional nine-yard Maharashtrian sari that's worn pant-style. Pairing it with coordinated running shoes, *gajra, nath*, outsized sunglasses and elaborate *bindis*, she and 15 other Indian women strode through the city grabbing attention all along the 20km.The response was phenomenal and full of half-baked ideas about India. People were yelling out 'Bollywood!' taking selfies with them, asking all sorts of questions. The Bay Area, packed with Indians, she says, now has a vibrant sari scene with a large number of shops, boutiques and trunk shows especially for Paithani, Chanderi and Kanjeevaram. Though it is limited to special occasions as the average tech company is uncomfortable having staffers from across the world dress too ethnically (Nair, 2016).

In India, saris are adult attire. After Narayan turned 18, she occasionally wore a sari for weddings and holidays and to the temple. But wearing a sequined silk sari to an Indian party was one thing. Deciding to wear a sari every day while living in New York; especially after 10 years in Western clothes; sounded outrageous even to her. The sari is six yards of fabric folded into a graceful yet cumbersome garment. Like a *souffle*, it is fragile and can fall apart at any moment. When worn right, it is supremely elegant and unabashedly feminine. However, it requires sacrifices. No longer could she sprint across the street just before the light changed. The sari forced her to shorten my strides. She couldn't squeeze into a crowded subway car for fear that someone would accidentally pull and unravel my sari. She couldn't balance four grocery bags in one hand and pull out her house keys from a convenient pocket with the other. By the end of the first week, she was lumbering around her apartment, feeling clumsy and angry with herself, questioning what she was trying to prove.

Then she moved to New York and became a mother. She wanted to teach her 3-year-old daughter Indian values and traditions because she knew she would be profoundly different from her preschool classmates in religion (we are Hindus), eating habits (we are vegetarians) and the festivals we celebrated. Wearing a sari every day was my way of showing her that she could melt into the pot while retaining her individual flavor. It wasn't just for her daughter's sake that he decided to wear a sari. She was tired of trying to fit in. Much as she enjoyed American cuisine, she couldn't last four days without Indian food. It was time to flaunt her ethnicity with a sari and a bright red bindi on her forehead. She was going to be an immigrant, but on her own terms. It was America's turn to adjust to her! (Narayan, 2000)

2.1.7. Non- western fashion.

A sari is synonymous to India and is woven into its identity; it is eternal to its culture and traditions. A sari has been a connotation and a reflection of India's cultural productions in the past and till the present day. With every changing regional boundary, the drape, aesthetics, fabric, motif, pattern of the sari changes, each style being distinct and unique from the rest at the same time reflecting the cultural asset of the region/ culture. The powerful drape that the sari has been is evident through its personification of the Indian identity, as it reflects and adorns each and every change

whether social, economic or political. A sari could be noted as a symbolic indicator of the progressive nature of India. With the Western fashions and dynamic silhouettes that are more prevalent and popular with the Indian youth, the sari seemed to be pushed back and was considered as old school or only for occasional wear. Hence the powerful drape was restricted by the limitations of it not being as fashionable when compared to blue denim or a tunic. Off-lately it has been observed that the Indian designers are making efforts to reintroduce and reinvent the sartorial sari to make it into a more meaningful in the current context and dynamic garment for the modern Indian youth. Young Indian designers are making efforts of producing unique modern day reflections of the Indian sari while retaining the heritage and cultural values through its traditional textiles, motifs and crafts. The reinvention of the sari is definitely the reflection of the modern, more culturally rooted youth. Not only have Indian designers realized the impact of the powerful drape, the Western interpretation of the drape has also led to creation of newer variants which again lead to understanding the fluid nature of fashion identities in the modern globalized world. The study draws from the changing visual imagery of the sari and unique terminologies that designers use to market the new image of the sari such as: "Divided trouser sari", "Sarmi" (bikini sari), "Sarong sari", and "Gown sari" to name a few. The study draws from the fashion archives and reportage to map the changing imagery of sari and charts the fashion elements that are responsible for this dynamic change. The paper also brings forth the socio cultural change in perspectives and understanding of fashion by young designers and India as a whole with sari being the medium of investigation of Indian fashion identity (Rao and Sud, 2013).

Quirky saris have emerged as a strong local trend for 2013 and the latest variation on that theme is UK-based designer and cultural thinker Keith Khan's neo sporty saris, created in association with Mumbai concept store Bungalow 8 for India Design Forum (March 8-13).The sari is actually one meter shorter than the usual.

"The Little Shilpa label never fails to disappoint fans of flamboyant, hand-crafted headwear. Inspired by her native Mumbai, for this season's 'Grey Matter' collection Shilpa Chavan chose the Bombay bazaar as a key reference, along with a reinterpretation of the traditional sari. The simplicity of the draped sari – with its ornate decoration – is contrasted with the towering headpieces that feature a mixture

of Perspex, tulle, silk, lace and even incorporate fabric from brocade saris. Re-imagining a garment that has existed for over 2000 years is an ambitious move, yet Little Shilpa's vision has always been about mixing the traditional with the contemporary. This sees her coupling sari-skirts not with blouses but with men's shirts, bow ties and collars – playing with gender norms as well as the balance between Eastern and Western dress for a collection that is conceptual as well as beautifully ostentatious (Pinto, 2013)."

Plate 2.6. The sari deconstructed by Shilpa Chavan.

Image: Getty Images Read more: http://www.fashion156.com/collections/little-shilpa-london-fashion-week-ss14/#ixzz2of3yuC7i

Plate 2.7. Mini Mathur in a Masaba Sari,

Plate 2.8. For her second Cannes appearance, Vidya Balan wore a simple white sari with a black channel bag.

Tackling the subject of the developing India high fashion scene, Nagrath highlights the over-emphasis of analysis on the ways Indian fashion has affected Western markets compared with the dearth of studies which study the effect of Indian fashion on the country itself, in terms of how fashion is created, understood and retailed. In the light of the Lakme India Fashion Week, at the heart of her essay is the argument

that despite the growing popularity of Indian fashion in the West, Indian fashion is still viewed as "Other" and a foil to the West. Nagrath is interested by the extent to which Indian designers have absorbed this Oriental gaze and the subsequent impact of this upon their creations for the domestic Indian market. However, there are no simple oppositions here - the interplay between Indian high fashion and Orientalism may close off certain forms and expression, but equally it opens up new spaces for assertion and subversion. The Lakme India Fashion Week can be viewed as a platform for Indian designers to question the restrictive frameworks by which Indian fashion has been defined and gain control over representations of the self, expanding our understanding of what constitutes fashion (Nagrath, 2003).

Anavila Sindhu Misra states that the sari is the garment of working women in rural India, and questions why can't it be interpreted for modern women negotiating city life. Numerous sari lobbies are visible today. The sari may be the lowest common denominator, yet the weave chosen and the manner of wearing it creates a divergence. Some are propelled by designer agendas, others by determinist statements in dressing, now an important aspect of self-exploration in city life. Designers don't just brand their sari through patterns or materials any longer; they patent a complete look (Mint, September 2014).

Designer David Abraham refers to his phrase "Sari branding" for what he analyses as "a huge shift", especially in the last two years, in the ownership and investment into the unstitched drape. It shows that a lot of people are thinking along the same lines, exploring stronger links to heritage. The sari is becoming like the classic white shirt-each global brand has its own version. So a Sabyasachi sari is a woven Khadi or a Banarasi (mixed perhaps with net and sheer tissue), with his signature heavily embroidered borders. A Manish Malhotra sari is a delicately embellished sexy piece in a luxurious fabric, paired with a strappy, sensuous blouse. A Raw Mango sari by Sanjay Garg is a vibrant-hued, soft Chanderi with bird or floral motifs. (Mint, September 2014).

A Tarun Tahiliani sari; whether a chiffon or a Maheshwari, is closely contoured to the body and often belted. It comes with a sexy, corseted blouse and is held together by a lycra petticoat. Known as India's first original draper, Tahiliani calls it the primordial

drape, adding that he has never made a collection without saris in the last 25 years. Even his dresses and other garments are draped, inspired by the sari, including the dhoti drapes. Due to the work of fashion designers the attention has returned to the sari . He says it is also the only garment that can be diagonally draped to make even a very large-sized woman look structured. (Mint, September 2014).

A Gaurav Gupta sari is a Grecian drape with three-dimensional embellishments, a net blouse and a satin petticoat. An Abraham & Thakore sari is usually the product of a novel handloom experiment contextualized through current fashion trends. It is also paired with slim leather belts, high-necked or full-sleeved blouses, draped in a matter-of-fact way with chunky footwear, and looks very modern. (Mint, September 2014).

The very first garment in the very first fashion show by Abraham & Thakore in 2010 was a sari. One from that collection, with a cycle-rickshaw motif, is housed in the permanent collection of the Victoria & Albert museum in London, UK. Wendell Rodricks, on the other hand, upheld the banned (during Portuguese rule) Kunbi sari of Goa by reviving the weave in its authentic form. No Indian designer who means business wants to omit the drape entirely from his work, but only handfuls have noticeably branded their saris. As a parallel trend, some fashion stores are trying similar statements. Neel Sutra in Gurgaon's Oberoi hotel, for instance, has a sari room. (Mint, September 2014).

Kaiser (2012) together with Richard Nagasawa and Sandra Hutton, precisely interpret fashion through concepts of ambivalence and ambiguity. They highlight the importance of negotiation as a social process in fashion change, whereby the **symbolic interaction (SI) theory** proposes that fashion change thrives on cultural tensions that contribute to individual articulations of styles that are at least initially ambiguous. These negotiations, they say, enable fashion subjects to grapple with ongoing cultural tensions in subtle but complex ways and because these underlying tensions are never completely resolved, the process of fashion change continues endlessly.

In her classic work *Dress and Ethnicity* argues that it is mainly because western dress has been analyzed from a historical perspective, with little or no concern for the rest

of the world, that dress outside the boundaries of western civilization are believed to have experienced little change(Eicher, 1995).

Riello and McNeil (2010), in their edited volume *Global Perspective*, however, underline that places as different as Ming China, Tokugawa and Meji Japan, Moghul India or Colonial Latin America and Australia engaged and produced their own fashion systems both in conjunction, competition, collaboration and independently from Europe. The fact that these historical traditions of fashion not well known or advertised as the European one, they say should not diminish their value. They add that global perspectives, however, is not synonymous for globalization, which is the integration of cultures, economies and politics that social scientists see as emerging in the Last thirty years. It is an easy trap they warn, to use the global to create participatory narratives in which especially China and India deserve a place in the history of fashion in the light of their recent socio-economic achievements, their convergence with the rich West and they are successful with fashion as consumers and producers. If we wish to understand fashion beyond Europe, they emphasize, we must refrain from thinking that non-western fashion has only recently emerged as the result of globalization and the growth of new middle classes.

Entwistle (2000) rightfully points out in her book *The Fashioned Body* the problematic division in the field between studies of fashion (as a system , idea or aesthetic) and studies of dress (as in the meanings given to particular practices of clothing and adornment). On the other hand, she says, literature on fashion produced by sociology, culture studies, costume history and psychology tends to be theoretical in scope and does not examine the mechanisms by which fashion translates into everyday dress. Fashion, she adds, tends to be studied as an abstract system, and theoretical explanations are sought to explain its mysterious movements, Studies of dress, on the other hand, she adds, produced mainly by anthropologists, tend to be empirical in scope, examining dress in everyday life within particular communities and by particular individuals and since they focus mainly on non-western communities, say little about fashion as it is studied in the West.

Kaiser and Gramsci (2010) in the recent book draws from a wide spectrum of disciplines to overcome the disciplinary dichotomy. Stating Antonio Gramsci's theory, she explains that power not only works through guns and warfare, but also through clever arguments, compelling language and visually embodied imagery. Although European colonization was about travelling and learning about the rest of the world, she explains, it was not necessary about recording faithfully what was precisely learned from that rest of the world. While Europeans 'borrowed' heavily from the cultures they encountered , she adds, ranging from complex mathematical, theoretical and technological knowledge to fabrics, jewels and spices, the colonizers rationalized their action through representations of places outside Europe as unchanging and timeless –as lacking cultural histories of their own. Kaiser also argues that fashion , but has been historically located all around the world, but that it is the Euro modern representations of hegemonic fashion that have generally emphasized European bourgeois and upper class women's attire as the site of newness, while other (non- western) nations/cultures/spaces were depicted as static and exotic - as fixed in past time. Euro modernity, she explains, became a way of envisioning the process of evolving through time while other spaces became constructed as those that are outside of this linear narrative of time; they are fixed or fossilized in the past. Even today, she adds, many western fashion derive from cultures not included in the hegemonic narrative of western modernity through cultural appropriation, which involves taking elements from another culture, but often without giving credit to that culture or worse, at the expense of that culture.

Wu (2009) discusses the "chinoiserie" collections by European designers like Jeanne Lanvin, Yves Saint Laurent and John Galliano. Wu explains how these Chinese – inspired collections were first a more important source of inspiration for Chinese designers than their own so- called authentic vestimentary heritage, precisely because they were European and therefore legitimate as being fashion. Though these collections; clearly contain cognizable Chinese elements. These are rendering them just as exotic and alien to a Chinese audience as they are to a European audience.

Understanding the concept of national Fashion Identity is pertinent, before exploring the meaning of the national fashion identities of the Indian sari. According to Sandra Niessen, western dress went out into the world on the backs of missionaries, traders,

colonial administrators, the military and their wives. The way they clad their 'civilized appearance' was inextricably blended with an associated set of behaviors related to hygiene and demeanor. She further states that in colonized society, success was signaled by the appearance of having adopted European norms. The retention of indigenous dress, particularly if it failed to cover bodily regions that European norms required to have covered, was considered an immediate sign of uncivilized primitiveness…….The classification of dress as fashionable and traditional is not only a tool used by the West to preserve the boundary between the West/Rest and as such, to both protect its position of power and ensures the maintenance of a conceptual other on which to rely for self –definitional purposes, but that the other way around is just as the case. A result of western fashion's need to construct anti- fashion for self-definitional purposes, she argued , was a corresponding need among those in the non-west to have conceptually traditional clothing to differentiate themselves. On the other side of fashion's conventional divide, she argued, those who protect the exclusiveness of western fashion, and those who defend the purity of traditional attire, are speaking high and low dialects of the same global fashion language. Although non- western societies need to appear modern and developed (according to western standards) to participate in the global discourse, they simultaneously feel the need to retain their own cultural identity. Therefore, fashion not only produces modernity, but tradition just as much, whereby the indomitable cycle of invention and discarding is exactly the same (Niessen, 2003).

The conviction that it is possible to discern a person's development from his or her appearance is a seductive delusion that has shaped conceptions of European fashion. Mahatma Gandhi learned this in the beginning of the twentieth century as he experimented with dress to construct identity. He began by adapting his dress for membership in British society, only to have it impressed upon him in unpleasant ways that such trappings cannot cover up the deeper, inconvertible hierarchical distinctions of race and skin color. He then opted to wear his indigenous clothing, even while visiting England, as a way of insisting upon the legitimacy of his own nation and culture. There are many instances on record of indigenous anti-fashion being used to signify resistance to the superiority and dominance of European colonial power; the power of dress to convey political messages is obvious. (Niessen, 2003)

Whilst the kimonoed woman is an unchanging stereotype of Japanese beauty, this article suggested that due to the interaction of kimono with the processes of globalization (technological and in terms of communication), the kimono continues to metamorphose to meet the needs of its fashionable, urban, contemporary wearers(Cliffe, 2010).

2.2. Related Research Review

Clothes are used all over the world not only for protection and modesty, but also for the purpose of constructing socially meaningful messages about oneself. Clothes may also be worn by certain people to make ideological, political, and other kinds of socially relevant statements. In effect, clothes constitute a nonverbal language system and thus are of obvious relevance to semiotic inquiry, revealing how connotation operates in one specific domain of material culture. This study surveys the main ideas and concepts developed within this subfield of semiotics, generally called 'clothing semiotics' (Danesi, 2006).

Skov and Melchior (2008) in their research stated that dress and fashion are rich and varied fields of study. Some scholars refer to them as 'hybrid subjects' because they bring together different conceptual frameworks and disciplinary approaches, including those from anthropology, art history, cultural studies, design studies, economics, history, literature, semiotics, sociology, visual culture and business studies. Invariably, such a pervasive phenomenon as dress has always been the subject of much commentary. Since the late 19th century, there has been no scarcity of research, but studies have been somewhat sporadic and tended to stay within these bounds of their own disciplines. From the 1960s to the 1990s, the leading educational institutions with words like dress and fashion in their titles, were, firstly, design schools and technical training institutions, servicing the industry, and secondly, institutes devoted to the study of dress history, directed as museums. It was only in the last decades of the 20th century that various approaches were integrated across disciplines and institutions so that it became possible to talk about something like 'fashion studies', reflected by the emergence of research centers, academic journals and graduate programs with such heading. However, both the term, and what it is

perceived to represent, is contested; while some scholars and institutions endorse 'fashion studies', others reject it or distance themselves from it.

1. Object based
2. Culture based
3. Practice based
4. Production based

British anthropologist Daniel Miller has been a key figure in revitalizing material culture studies on the basis of a dialectic understanding of the relationship between the material and the social as co-constitutive of each other. His approach has been a major influence, and he has also been involved in dress studies, notably of the sari and of denim. Another influence on the practice-based approach comes from science, technology and society studies (STS), which analyze the social and the technical or material as hybrid, heterogeneous networks, through a strong commitment to empirical studies. Finally, in design studies the tradition of participatory design, which sees users as active co-creators, rather than passive targets, of the design process, has also been influential on the practice-based approach. This approach is most relevant to this study about the practice of sari draping in everyday life in India.

Singh, J (1966) in her study has followed the quantitative research methodology. This study has been helpful in awakening appreciation of India's cultural continuity, her religions, and the struggle that has taken place for women's education. It has inspired others to study more closely the handicrafts, costumes and garments worn. The study compared three generation' usage of traditional or 'modern" style of draping the sari, garments worn for daily and special activities, use of color and fabrics; to discover what textile motifs and colors symbolized for respondents and their family members, the usage of garment, including color, fabric and motifs used in garments for specially celebrated ceremonies for women from infancy to maturity; respondents' opinions regarding their personal attitudes towards 113 statements about clothing. In addition, the respondent was asked to give a descriptive background regarding herself, and her family members. The most relevant hypothesis that was confirmed from the 1966 study, for the current research were: The modern educated woman is adopting, "Modern" style of draping the sari in place of various traditional costumes and *Salwar*

kurta is second costume. The modern educated Indian woman finds the following functional factors of dress important: Comfort and ease of action also Appropriateness of various occasions and different activities. The modern educated Indian woman will adapt current world fashion to the sari and the *salwar kurta*. Modern education and communication constitute a joint force in breaking down the Indian women's traditional costume usage associated with region, religion and *jati*. The modern Indian woman will have a greater variety of garments in her wardrobe than her Grandmother and mother.

Yang, (2007) studied the development of the *qipao* as a representative, traditional Chinese symbol which involves a series of complicated processes including the process of "being modern" and "being Chinese". The researcher investigated how *qipao* is defined by and has meanings for young women from Chinese and Taiwanese cultures. The purposes of the study were 1) to explore how these women understand and interpret the *qipao* and 2) to investigate how cultural contexts play a role in the interpretation and use of *qipao*. Literature was reviewed to investigate how the *qipao* became representative Chinese dress and what were historical meanings of the *qipao*. A sample of 14 international Chinese (P.R.C.) and Taiwanese female university students was selected (seven from each country with ages ranging from 24 to 30). All had studied in the U.S.A. less than three years. Open-ended, in-depth interviews were conducted, during which varied *qipao* photos were used as auto drivers and stimuli to help respondents talk about cultural meanings and define style criteria for *qipao*. Bourdieu's practice theory served as the framework of analysis, incorporating semiological analysis to gain understanding of the object structure and subjective interpretation to explore the multi-layered meanings of *qipao* practices. Paradigmatic and syntagmatic codes of *qipao* were established. The results also demonstrated the fluidity and instability of traditions. How knowledge of the *qipao* has been disseminated within cultures and how individuals personally learned about the *qipao* affected respondents' definitions of traditional *qipao* and its situational usage. Taiwanese and Chinese responses had similarities in interpretations of cultural and ethnic meanings of *qipao*. Taiwanese were significantly different from Chinese in describing how the *qipao* is used as national dress; political conflicts between the two countries may be reflected in Taiwanese reluctance to wear traditional *qipao*. Western

dress codes were an influential factor in assigning meanings to *qipao*. Analyses revealed that the *qipao* is a highly gendered and sexualized object that reflects global stereotypes about Asian, particularly Chinese, women who, in turn, are self-oriented to this stereotype. The non-western garments studied by the researcher revealed certain common elements like the cultural and ethnic meaning, national dress, "being modern" interpreted with western fashion influences.

This study solidifies the importance of recognizing fashion as a device that can be manipulated and molded as a means to break through gender boundaries. The study draws a comparison between the two designers Chanel and McQueen; methods of liberation of gender norms and argue that by observing the liberation of gender stereotypes from two different eras there has been an evolution. This provides an overview of the evolution of gender stereotypes from one historical context to the other and answers we delve around the question of gender in the current scenario (Marcangeli, 2015).

Fashion theory is grounded in the principle that "fashion" is a cultural construct that embodies consumers identities. The term "fashion theory" was now finally considered an interdisciplinary field that studied fashion as a meaning system within which cultural and aesthetic portrayals of the clothed body are produced. Semiology is a science that uncovers the underlying meaning behind a text, image, object, or garment. It is interested in how the signified came to be and what the signifieds within a certain time period are. Like all sign systems, fashion is interconnected with other elements of culture and can be used as an analytical tool for examining various aspects of cultural significance. Furthermore, clothing can act as a guide to various events, histories and even gender struggles of past eras. Clothing is an effective tool in communicating diverse signs due to its visual cues. Semioticians look at clothing as a sign waiting to be decoded and analyzed.

After decoding some of the signs found within Alexander McQueen and Coco Chanel's designs, it was inferred that they both helped break gender norms through two very different yet similar means. McQueen and Chanel both utilized similar signifiers to construct and deconstruct gender identity but differed in their approach and methodology. This study compared and contrasted the signs utilized by both

designers in order to allow the researcher to uncover whether there was an evolution of gender stereotypes and whether signs are being used to liberate gender norms in a different manner today. This study revealed the procedure for conducting semiotic analysis on fashion garments.

Online sari survey conducted by Border and Fall in 2016to better understand social and cultural perceptions towards the sari in the current scenario. Participants included over 50 men and 50 women based in India, between the ages of 16 and 45 from a cross-section of socioeconomic backgrounds across urban cities (Bangalore, Mumbai, New Delhi).Though a small sample size, insights seem to correlate with many shared notions within this sample group. For example – 'grace' and 'beauty' are words most associated with the sari, though it's worn only occasionally and many don't know how to drape it, neither how many drapes exist. Only 2% respondents were aware that there are more than 15 types of sari drapes. Majority 52% respondents knew how to drape a sari by themselves. Additional 28 % needed assistance to drape the sari. Despite the number of drapes in existence, most wearers adopt the *Nivi* drape, originated from Andhra Pradesh: over the left shoulder and pleated in front. Most women are taught how to drape by their mothers and 20% don't know how to drape at all.94% respondents draped a sari occasionally. 63% of female respondents first wore a sari when they were of school age (10-18), with half of those first wearing a sari to their school graduation. The occasions on which they now wear a sari are weddings (85%) festivals (46%) and corporate events (17%). While 80% of male respondents said they would like to see their significant others in a sari, it was mostly in the context of an Indian wedding (80%) or festival (80%). Only 24% stated that they would like for their significant others to wear saris out in town and only 44% on a dinner date. Though there is an undeniable cultural significance to the sari, most urban women (100%) and men (92%) believe the sari may be worn by anyone, not only women of Indian descent. Sentiments ranged from, "A sari looks great on everyone, irrespective of their heritage", "It should neither be imposed nor prohibited for anyone" and "Same as we Indian women wear western dresses, it is quite OK for others to wear saris" to "I wish in the near future, men are also able to wear a sari without heads constantly turning to stare at them." The study on sari preferences and

practices in recent context was helpful in understanding the awareness levels and attitude towards the Indian sari of men and women respondents.

These studies and few others indicate that there is a common thread, which links to the costume traditions of various cultures which have been very interesting and evolved to complex fashion systems. It binds all types of semiotic studies in the domain of fashion theory especially in the non-western fashion context; which was earlier predominantly restricted to the western fashion. Many details regarding the non-western fashion systems and their semiotic understandings and interpretations need to be understood for being able to understand the inherent changes that take place in draping styles, overall styling, grooming practices, changing role of women in society. This is India's great contribution to the world of semiology and its study is important to understand the tacit meanings conveyed by the heritage drape from India –The Sari.