



EXPRESSION OF SENSUALITY: BEAUTY OF FABRIC FOLDING METHODS OF DANCE COSTUMES

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Depicting sensuality in costume by draping wads of fabrics in historical times reveals curious, tantalizing cultural phenomena which signify their complex origins. A costume worn in dance has in it the quality of Rhythm. Even each costume has its own rhythm. However these rhythmic characteristics arise from the culture from which they originate. Every costume comes alive when it is worn on the human body. Skillfully choreographed movements of the human body can be enhanced by the delicate folds and draperies of transparent textiles. However textiles that are two dimensional when worn on the bodies as costumes become three dimensional.

The objective of this paper is to explore in what ways the expression of sensuality in feminine beauty depicted by using fabric folding methods in dance costumes shown in many visual and literal historical formats during the 15th – 17th Centuries in Sri Lanka. The Kotte era was selected as the study setting and signifies ample expressions of sensuality of female dancers.

A qualitative research method was adopted for the research and the analysis of data is explored through in -depth observational studies with many temple murals comparing with original literal texts and poetry pertaining to the era. The process of the research is inductive; the researcher builds abstractions, concepts and theories from details. By triangulating visual and literal data the validation was much confirmed.

The study reveals that there was a unique methodology of arranging the long fold to the lower cloth without any single stitching or tucking by emphasizing subtle body curves by expressing sensual beauty of female. Folds depicted in the dance dresses show how it manipulates the fabric to express creative forms within the fabric. Fold constitutes a move from effective to affective spaces; folding is a description of activity, intended to flow smoothly and continually with no evidence of ambiguity of interruption.

Keywords: *Folds, Sensuality, Rhythm, Dance costume, Body curves.*