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EVOLUTION OF INDIAN TEXTILE DESIGN : A STUDY OVER TIMESPAN

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ABSTRACT – Indian Textile Designs has a rich vocabulary and are well known all over the world for their rich variety, grace, beauty, elegance and skilled craftsmanship. These designs are used by the craftsmen's in weaving, embroidery, wall paintings, printing, etc. Indian designs are the references of rich culture, traditions and heritage. Over the millennium beautiful designs has not only blossomed into an intricate art but has also been consumed in recent times by overwhelming phenomenon of modernization in the form of mass production and mechanization in textile world. The rich and intricate designs have rightly called 'Exquisite poetry in colorful fabrics'. The natural forms are woven in a highly embellished and stylized manner. A unit of a pattern or the smallest unit of a design is a motif. Often inspired by nature, architecture, culture, or religion, etc. The motifs on traditional Indian textiles are all distinct and mostly very colorful, intricate, bold and symmetrical. After assimilating the essence of a pattern, a weaver, an embroiderer or an artist implements his own interpretation of it. Since ancient time many kings ruled our country, these designs are often representation of the different styles from an era gone. Thus a stem can evolve into a flower or an animal/bird form. Decorative motifs like a leaf, fruit, flower, branch, bud, creeper, animal, bird or a tree never break the symmetry of the pattern or designs. Indian craftsmen's always gave serious consideration to the proper utilization of the space between the motifs in a pattern. To maintain correlation and harmony between the patterns, certain geometrical patterns, textures and effects were used. The most common being checks, strips, dots, etc.

Key words: Designs, Motifs, Patterns, Traditional Craftsmen

I. INTRODUCTION

Designs or patterns that are integral part of Indian textiles, arts, interiors, crafts, paintings, and architecture are called traditional designs or traditional patterns. Traditional designs are derived from , birds, flowers, stems, leaves, branches, objects, movement, insects, shells, webs, animals and human figures. No evidence is found when exactly these were developed but these have their references since Indus valley Civilization, Vedic period, Buddhist sculptures, artifacts from the Gupta period and Mughal era. Following are the traditional designs of Indian textile vocabulary. All the motifs had their local names and a story to tell behind by its craftsman's. Craftsmen's are the kings of their own Kingdom who develop magnificent, breathtaking, wonderful designs.

II. Different types evolved in textile designs

- Buttis and Buttas (Rosettes and Floral Designs)
- Bels (Floral Scrolls)
- Paisleys (Mango Motif)

- Jals and junglas (Mesh or Net)
- Tree of life (Flowering Tree)
- Central Line Design
- Geometrical designs
- Konias (Corner Designs)
- Jhalar (Festoon Designs)

A. Buttis and Buttas

The small or large floral forms are called Buttis or Buttas, according to their size and form. The small sized floral, paisley or geometrical forms are called Buttis and large sized floral form is called Buttas. Butta means simply flower plant i.e a small plant with leaves and some flowers and used in borders, pallus, and in all overs in order to fill the space and to suit the pattern according to the requirement. Some commonly used Buttis and Buttas are Paan (Betel), Fardi (the effect that is produced by the Dots), Carrie (Mango), Tara (Star), Ashrafi (Circular Gold or Silver coin), Rudraksha (Round Rudraksh seed), Chiriyaa (Sparrow), Chand (Moon), various flowers like

Chemeli (Jasmine), Kamal(Lotus), Genda (Marigold), Gulab (Rose) etc. Popular Buttas used are PaanButta (Betel plant), Carrie Butta (Mango plant), Teen PattianButta (Three petalled plant), SaatPattianButta (Seven petalled plant), KalgaButta (Top pointed end of a carrie is turned round and very decorative). Buttas are larger than Buttis and comprised of many elements.



Figure 1: Buttis and Buttas

B. Bels (Floral Scrolls)

When small motifs are beautifully assembled in a creeper form or pattern it is called Bel. Bels are curving vines with flowers, leaves and other elements. These are arranged in horizontal, transvers, diagonal, vertical or zigzag for the purpose of separation of one portion to another or to cover a portion. Different bells are used at different places in the world of textile according to their requirement and usage. Some commonly used bells are Patta Bel (A scroll of leaves), Phul Bel (A scroll of flowers and leaves), Angoor Bel (Grape Vine) etc. In this way variety of elements are join together in order to form of Bel.

C. Paisleys (Mango Motif)

Paisleys is a mango shaped motif use in borders Buttas, Buttasetc by the craftsmen's. This is one of the favorite motif of Indian craftsmen's. Various parts of the country had different shapes of paisley depending upon their culture, tradition and heritage. For example Kashmiri paisleys were elongated with various floral designs inside whereas Banarasi paisleys were small and round with stylized variety motifs inside. In this way variety of shapes, forms and sizes are intermingled in order to create a beautiful design.



Figure 2: Paisleys (Mango Motif)

D. Jals and Junglas (Mesh or Net)

A network of geometrical and figurative patterns are called Jals or Trellis. The Jangla is a very ancient and popular motif characterized by tiny animals and peoples. Jangla means Jungle or wild and is devolped by incorporating wild animals like elephants, tigers, deers, peacocks, camels etc. Variety of Jals and Junglas are Zari Jals, Lehria Patti Jals, HathiJangla, Angoorki bel ka Jal, Sher ki bel kaJangla (heavy ornamented pattern of leaves and with the animal tiger or lion) etc.

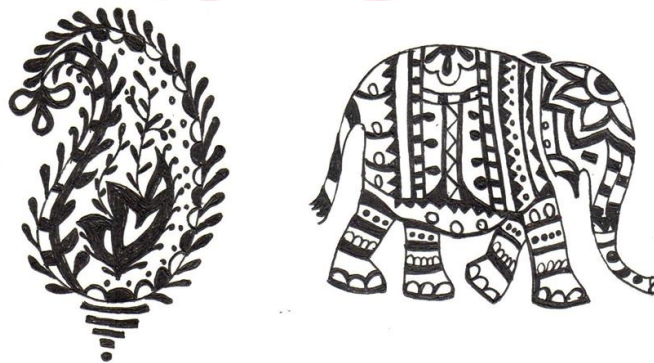


Figure 3: Jals and Junglas

E. Tree of life (Flowering Tree)

Tree of life represents life and its growth. This is one of the most beautiful Indian motif of design vocabulary, symbolizes strength, beauty, wisdom, nourishment, liberation and uniqueness. Various elements like fruits, birds, foliage, flowers are added to enhance its beauty. It is a representation of small world in itself.

F. Central Line Design

When a single portion of a pattern is repeated mirrorly on the central axis and results into a wonderful design is called central line design or mirrored design. These designs are developed by using various flowers, animals, leaves, geometrical shapes and forms etc.



Figure 4: Central Line Design

G. Geometrical Designs

It is a design that is developed using various geometric elements, shapes and forms. These designs are part of Mathematical shapes and various sizes. These are sometimes combined with birds, animals, flowers and foliage. These geometrical designs results by combining various geometrical elements like lines, circles, triangles, squares, zigzags etc. These geometrical designs or motifs blend beautifully on various spaces wherever need as a filler or for the geometrical pattern requirement.

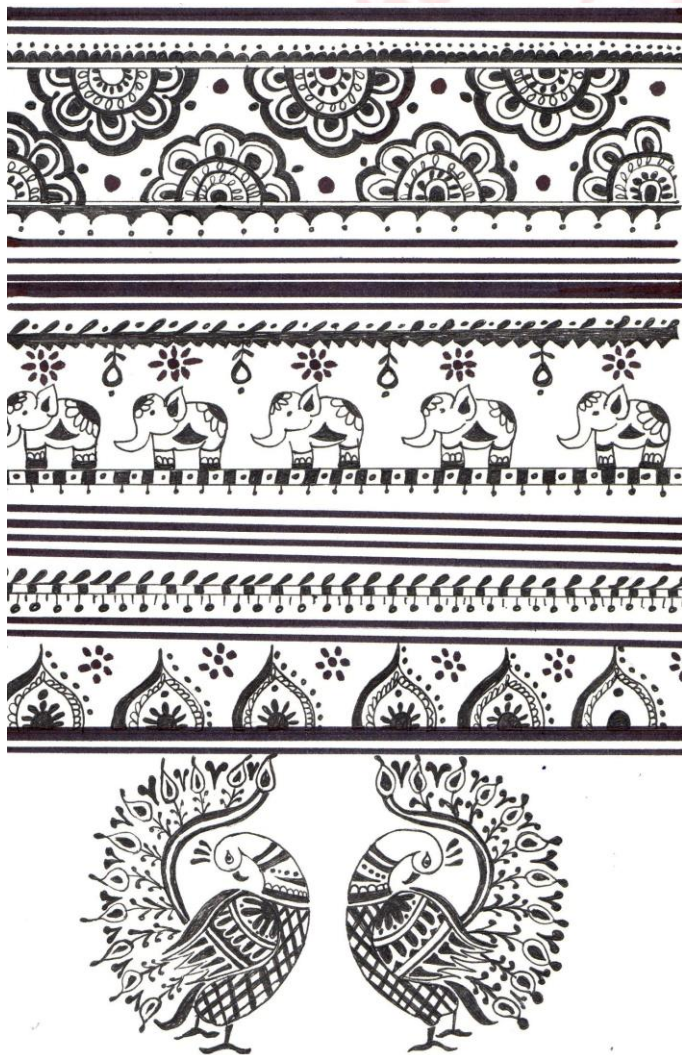


Figure 5: Geometrical Designs

H. Konias (Corner Designs)

The patterns created especially for the corners are known as Konias, in hindi dialect Konias means Kona (Corner). The patterns are given a particular suitable shape according to the size and requirement which fits in a specific corner. Various paisleys, florals, creepers are set by the craftsmen's to develop these designs.



Figure 6: Konias (Corner Designs)

I. Jhalar (Festoon Designs)

It is a creeper of floral and geometrical motifs to divide the main body and the border areas in the textile world. It is used for the ornamentation of the designs and this Jhalar (creeper) run parallel to the border designs. Some famous Jhalar designs are PhulJhalar (small sized floral creeper), Teen PattianJhalar (A pattern developed with three leaves), etc.

J. Solar and Religious Designs

These are the patterns developed with the help of solar and religious symbols or elements. The designs developed with solar elements like sun, stars, moon, etc are solar designs. The designs with religious elements like Swastik, Om, Snakes, Ganesha, etc are religious designs.

III. Conclusion

Indian textile designs are the richest examples of Indian culture, heritage and traditions. These textiles are the references of wide range of patterns and designs crafted by different techniques and styles. The craftsmen's weave, embroider or painters express their own interpretation with great skills and experiences. These designs are accepted by the world around. The motifs and design are main part of Indian textile designs which are commonly used in the various traditional states art and crafts. The textile likes kanjivaram of Tamil Nadu, kullu shawls of Himachal Pradesh, Chanderi sarees of Madhya Pradesh, ilkal saris of Karnataka, Madhubani paintings of Bihar, Phad Paintings of Rajasthan etc are the beautiful examples of the traditional designs of India. The motifs and designs are always created to form a kind of harmony through regular and diffused composite reflection of bright and contrasting colors which may be steeped but not harsh, daring but not unselling.

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