

## UNIT 5 – FASHION AND TRADITIONAL TEXTILES OF RAJASTHAN

### 1. Introduction to Traditional Textiles

Traditional textile hand crafts and techniques flow through many different cultures, all with unique aesthetics and end uses. The fact that these textiles are bespoke and handmade by highly skilled artisans, aligns them with the luxury industry's values.

#### Relationship between Fashion and Traditional Textiles

Today there is a renewed interest in traditional techniques and productions, which return to the contemporary world with a new aspect and new functions.

From the etymological point of view, tradition is “the transmission of past generations’ cultural heritage (i.e., laws, habits, memories, historical facts, etc.) by means of written documents or verbal communication”. It can also be defined as “cultural content transmitted by past generations that can contribute to the preservation of identity”<sup>1</sup>.

The cluster of traditions intended as material culture is identifiable with crafts production. This kind of production, therefore, becomes a founding element of the identity of a community. As it changes throughout time, it can be defined as variable heritage that must be preserved.

traditional processes remain strongly tied to their original territory, therefore become an innovation tool for local communities. This is an *integrative/generative* action because, on the one hand, it *integrates* different processes which, in turn, generate a new process, with renovated projects and products. On the other hand, it *generates* a new language that adds value to the final product. It is crucial to define a specific strategy that can combine memory and innovation according to

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new codes of expression. At the same time, it is important to activate processes and cultural changes that can produce innovation and development, and that have positive consequences for the local territory. Indeed, the greatest advantage of this action is precisely the involvement of local communities with shared identity. This action is highly process-oriented; that is, the process is the starting point to obtain an innovative product, both in its material aspect, improved by a specific planning, and in its immaterial aspect by adding new languages and meaning.

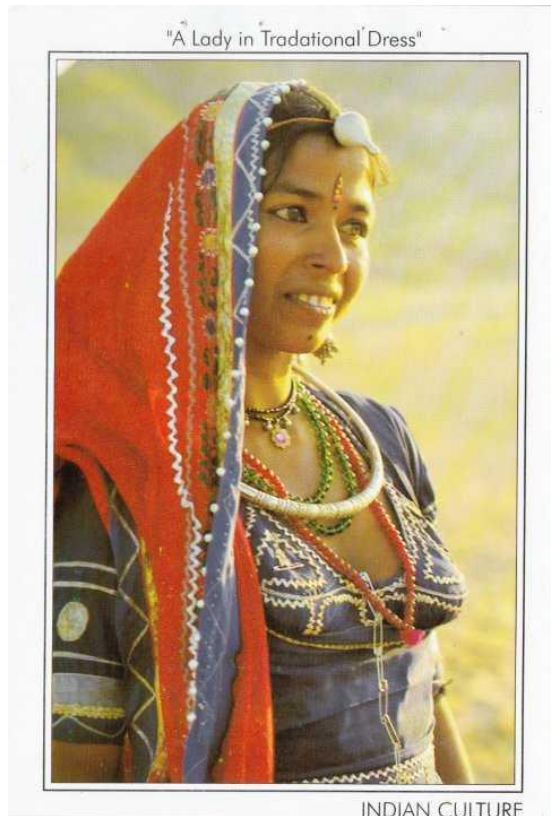
### **Effect of Traditional Textiles on current fashion Trends**

Around the world, the beauty and cultural wisdom of age-old craftsmanship is on the verge of extinction. Highly-skilled craftsmen and women have become an endangered species as more young people have chosen other career options. This, and the proliferation of mechanised, globalised production has brought many traditional, craft-based businesses to their knees. Those that remain are often small, family-run enterprises, without the financial resources to attract and develop new talent and without the skills to create sustainable business models. Around the world, the beauty and cultural wisdom of age-old craftsmanship is on the verge of extinction. Highly-skilled craftsmen and women have become an endangered species as more young people have chosen other career options. This, and the proliferation of mechanised, globalised production has brought many traditional, craft-based businesses to their knees. Those that remain are often small, family-run enterprises, without the financial resources to attract and develop new talent and without the skills to create sustainable business models.

## **2.Traditional Female Costumes of Rajasthan**

**Ghaghara & Choli** - This long skirt has a narrow waist and broad base, reaching just above the ankles covering the lower portion of the body. It is short to provide visibility to the foot ornaments. They come in many prints and colours. There are many pleats and studded ornaments in the Ghaghara itself. Like Pagaris, they are also found in cotton and printed in laharia. Mothra and chunari. The blouses or short kurtis which Rajasthani women wear are known as cholis. Also made with cotton or silk depending on the occasion, the reach to the waist depends on the caste, religion and age of women.

**Odhni** - Odhni is worn over the blouse, with one end tucked into the skirt and the other end on the head or the shoulders. It is made by a 2.5 to 3 meter long and 1.5 to 2-meter wide cloth, printed in different colours and designs. It varies in different religion and castes. At some places, it is mandatory for women to wear Odhni as a veil, especially in front of the elders as a token of respect.



### Women's Traditional Jewellery

Rajasthanis have a very peculiar taste when it comes to ornaments and jewellery. Semi-precious stone-studded trinkets are very popular. Even the men wear ear-studs and neckpieces. Gold or pearl chains are common among the rich, and silver hansli (big round bracelet around the neck) is worn by the commoners. Women wear 'jhumkas' in ears; multicoloured bangles, long and short beautiful neckpieces, large anklets, rings, nose rings, etc. These unique designs take inspiration from the sun, moon, leaves and flowers. Every design signifies something sacred and enroots deep meaning.



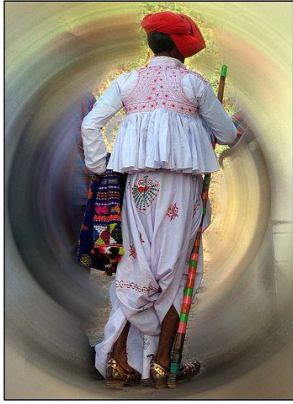
## Footwear

The shoes are called as Mojari or Jootis which are made of animal's skin and embellished with embroidery on velvet or brocade. Both men and women wear these. The footwear from cities like Jaipur, Jodhpur and [Jaisalmer](#) are worn all over the country.



## 3.Traditional Male costume Of Rajasthan

### 1. Dhoti and Angrakha



The traditional dress in Rajasthani for men is dhoti and angrakha. While the former is a long piece of cloth that is tied around the waist and wrapped in between the legs, the latter is a type of robe that covers the chest.

The flare of the Angrakha varies for different tribes and societies that are prevailing in Rajasthan. For example, the royal Rajput clan of Rajasthan wears flared angarkha, while other communities and tribal groups wear knee-length angarkhas with a shorter length and less flair.

**Pyjama-Kurta:**



This traditional dress of Rajasthan for men consists of basic pants that are known as pajamas. Made from cotton, pajamas are usually worn by men on a daily basis.

The kurtas are loose fitting shirts that go up to knee in length. The overall attire is very comfortable and that is why it is one of the most-worn dresses by men in Rajasthan.

**Accessories To Pair With The Dress:**

The traditional dress in Rajasthan for men is paired with the accessories to give it a royal look. Here is the complete list of accessories worn by men in Rajasthan.

### **1. Pagari:**



The pagari is the turban worn by men in Rajasthan. It is generally 2 meters long and comes in a variety of colors and patterns as well as shapes and sizes.

Pagari is, in fact, considered the pride and honor of men in Rajasthan.

### **Different Ways To Wear A Pagari:**

There are literally so many ways to wear the turban Rajasthani style. Each style represents a different tradition and culture altogether.

### **Types of Rajasthani Pagari :**

- Jallori from Jalore
- Bhatti from Jaisalmer
- Shahi Jodhpur Turban
- Jaipuri Turban from Jaipur
- Alwar Turban
- Sirohi Turban

## 2. Jewellery:



In Rajasthan, men wear round-shaped balis or studs accompanied with crystal beaded or semi-precious stone neckpieces.

The royal clan wears kambarbandh (known as waistbands) as well as the patka (a piece of cloth worn over the shoulder).

## 3. Footwear:



# 4. Traditional Work of Rajasthan

## Bagruprints from Rajasthan

**Region:** Bagru is a small village in Rajasthan, which is known for its mud-resist block prints.

**Technique:** In Bagru, the printer first processes the raw material which is mainly cotton. Other natural fabrics are silk, cotton and silk blends etc. The



fabric is then printed with mordants in paste form. The printing is done by using outline and filling blocks. The prints are then covered with a resisting paste 'dabu' made of clay and gum. It is then dried and dyed in vegetable dye. The mud resist paste is used to resist the penetration of dyes, mainly vegetable dyes on cotton fabric as per the design. After dyeing the fabric is thoroughly washed at the river. The mud resist paste is washed off exposing printed motifs on white backgrounds surrounded by the base colour. Hence, the resulting effect of dark and deep background with light coloured prints is achieved by resisting and mordanting.

**Motifs:** The motifs are inspired by the 17th century Persian motifs and are classified into the following five categories:

- Single motifs like flowers, leaves and buds. Some examples are *suraj kaphool*, *chakri*, *anguthi*, *gende kaphool*.
- Entwined tendrils that include all over *jaal* of leaves, flowers and buds.
- Trellis patterns include *jaali* from the Mughul period.
- Figurative designs that include an animal and human figures such as elephant, deer, lion, peacock, dancing women, warrior men etc.
- Geometric designs include waves (*lehariya*), chess (*chaupad*), Fortress wall projections (*kangura* lines (*dhariya*), dots (*bindi*) etc

**End Use:** The brightly coloured block printed fabrics from Bagru are used for apparel as well as home furnishings such as quilts, bedspreads, cushions and curtains.

### **Sanganer prints from Rajasthan**

**Region:** Sanganer on the outskirts of Jaipur is a large centre for printing on fabrics. Many block printing and screen printing units are located here. a separate block is required.

**Technique:** The technique used by the printers in Sanganer is much simpler than



Bagru.

The bright vibrant colours are printed on white, off white or light colour background. Firstly the outlines are printed with fine blocks and then varied colours are filled in with a set of blocks. For each colour,

**Motifs:** The motifs seen in Sanganer prints are same as the ones used in Bagru.

**End Use:** The block printing is done mainly for products such as saris, *dupattas*, *salwar kameez* sets, bed cover, curtains, scarves, and yardage for apparel and home.

## Daboo Print



*Dabu* or *daboo* is an ancient mud resist hand block printing technique from Rajasthan. The practice almost died out in the last century but was revived and is today a flourishing business in many villages of Rajasthan. Dabu printing is very labor intensive and involves several stages of printing and dyeing; the end result is therefore very unique and beautiful. **Dabu** printed fabrics display a subtle and extraordinary beauty and depth which is appreciated around the world. It has captured the imagination of modern day designers. Daboo is today frequently used to decorate many Indian and **Indo-western** clothes and home décor items.

### **Origin & History**

The art of hand block printing is an ancient one which is said to have originated in China. Over the years it traveled to India, with the state of Rajasthan becoming the most prolific producer of hand **block printed** fabrics. Mud resist printing is a special variation, the origins of which can be traced to about 675 A.D. Today it is commonly acknowledged that the village of Akola, in the Chittorgarh district of Rajasthan, is the originator of the unique Daboo printing style which uses mud resists.

Daboo printing is often grouped together with other Rajasthani hand block prints like Sanganeri and Bagru, but is in fact quite distinct in terms of its look and method. The designs are said to be very similar to '[Batik](#)' though the techniques used to produce the two are quite different.

## **Sources of Inspiration**

Traditional Daboo designs and motifs are very similar to the motifs used in all traditional Rajasthani textiles, since the 'blocks' used for printing are common to most of these techniques. They tend to be nature inspired designs of plants, birds, flowers, fruits as well as artistic ethnic motifs.

## **Faces behind the Fabric**

Daboo printing is essentially a village handicraft, which is now practiced in many rural areas of Rajasthan. For many, it has become a family business, with the older generation passing on the secrets of the craft to the next. These artisans tend to produce the more traditional and classic varieties of prints which are obviously considered the most authentic.

On the other hand, many new-age designers and craftsmen are also making a business out of producing unique Daboo printed fabrics. They learn the technique from the regional artisans and then add their own unique twist. The fact is, Daboo printing has become a source of inspiration for many artists and fashion lovers across the world, which is why many people have taken to producing fabrics with this ancient mud resist technique of printing.

## **The Making**

The process of Daboo printing is quite complicated, involving many workers and multiple stages of printing, washing and dyeing. First, the plain fabric received from the mills is carefully washed to remove any impurities which may interfere with the dyeing process. Then, designs are meticulously and painstakingly hand printed on to the fabric using blocks which are dipped into fast dyes. The next and crucial step involves the use of the mud resist which makes this print so unique. Ingredients like mud, gum, lime and waste wheat chaff are combined to make the 'dhabu' or mud resist paste which is then patted over certain parts of the design. The paste is dried with sprinkled sawdust. This covering essentially protects these parts of the fabric from the dye used later on, creating a unique and colorful effect.

After this process of printing, the fabric is spread out in the sun where it completely dries out. It is then dipped into a vat of dye, dried again and finally given a thorough washing to remove the paste and any excess dye. The dyes used are typically natural vegetable dyes and pastes. Thus the

unprotected parts of the fabric catch the color while the dhabu covered bits remain plain. The fabric may be dyed more than once in different colors to give each part of the design a different hue.

**Colors and dyes:** Traditional daboo prints are made with natural dyes like kashish (grey-brown) and indigo (blue), as well as yellows and reds derived from fruits like pomegranate. Today a lot more color options are available to artisans since they are no longer restricted to vegetable dyes and can use synthetic dyes as well. Fabrics can also be dyed more than once, creating the double dabu and triple dabu effect with a richer, more colorful look.

**Motifs and designs:** The typical motifs used are nature-inspired ones of peacocks, mangoes, leaves, cornstalks (called boota), sunflower (surajmukhi) and animal figures. Geometric shapes, dots and wavy lines may also be used. The designs thus created are repeated over and over again all over the fabric. Sometimes, the mud paste cracks and leaks, creating a distinctive vein like effect similar to Batik.

Daboo printing is used to create all types of Indian garments, from sarees and salwar kameez to shirts, tunics and kurtas. Scarves, stoles and shawls printed with daboo designs are also very common, as well as accessories like totes and jhola bags. Daboo printing is also used to decorate linens, bedsheets, bed covers, cushions and curtains.

Dabu Printed Cotton Dress in Off White and Indigo Blue

This technique has slowly and steadily gained a loyal and admiring customer base across the world, and this has encouraged the craftsmen to produce new types of designs and patterns to appeal to their more modern, westernized consumers. Thus, in addition to the ethnic motifs, modern designs of geometric waves, pop culture graphics and artistic shapes are often used. The color base has also expanded to unconventional combinations of red, black and green.

## DYEING - BANDHEJ

### Introduction

'Bandhani' is a Sanskrit word which means 'to tie'. Bandhani means ready material and the process. It is a traditional art of tying the fabric first and then dyeing the fabric with blocks, weaving and printing are the ways of decorating an Odhna<sup>1</sup>. Tie-dye is a process of resist dyeing textiles or clothing which is made from knit or woven fabric, usually cotton; typically using bright colors (Anonymous, 2009). This art is used to make simple and complicated design in different colours on odhanas. Various patterns are made like round, square, wave, triangular, dotted etc. Some of the popular patterns used in Rajasthan are *suwabi tribundi*, *lines angam*, *peela laddu Chundari*, *Dabbi*

*Kashmir ki kali, ohonider mota-ba, jalbar, Khat Sammandar, Panchrangi, Pattipallu, Janzeer, Denedar, Bedder etc.* Rajasthan is known as the “Land of Kings” is India's largest state by area or 10.4% of India's total area. It is located on the north western side of the India, where it comprises most of the wide and inhospitable. In India Bandhani technique began around 5000 years ago. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century Jain Lord Mahavira was seen in a Bandhej fabric draped around the waist. Well known centers for producing Bandhani fabric are in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. The art was practiced by a Muslim (Khatri) Community. Fabric was worn by the tribes of Gujarat and Rajasthan mainly Bhils, Rathwa and Rabaris, Bharwads respectively as their traditional clothing. On the contrary the Bandhani clothing was also used by the Royal Clan of Rajasthan.

### **Bandhej of Shekhawati Region**

While designing the survey of the Shekhawati region it was observed that artisans were well-versed with the elements & principles of design while planning the layout for any tie & dye. Jat, Chippa, Khatri & Mali were the communities advanced into this craft. Bandhai i.e. tying the fabric was in Shekhawati Region. After Bandhai the fabrics were transported to Jaipur and were dyed by dyers. Neel-gar ka nalla in Jaipur on dot, 3 dot & 7 dots are very popular. Design included: Tie and dye of this region is famous for Bajri band very fine dots spread all over in a motif. The designs made were mainly in ornamental form. Use of earthy colours was more prominent like brown, red, maroon, rust, yellow and black. Design forms differ with the type of products made but in general border design with all over jaal is a significant characteristic of their design.

The fabric is sourced from Jaipur, Bangalore and cities of Bengal State. Colours were procured from Jaipur. Motifs used are dungarshahr depicted geometrical shapes. Majorly used on adhana “pattiphol” boota was a floral design used in border and butta for adhanas “kali bel” includes diagonal lines with flower spread all over. This saree generally this pattern is used in leheria and worn on the festival of Teej on the onset of rainy season. Pink is the dominant color used in leheria (Fig 1).



Pattiphoool      DungarShahi

Phul Jalibi, hazara phool, gorya (bird fly- ing) (oldest motif known bytheartisan “pilla” bandheyisanodhna orthat isgiventolady who has given birth toa amali childthe saraisofferedbythe rides parents.Jaipur on dot, 3 dot & 7 dots are very pop- ular.

Designincluded:Tieand dyeofthis re-gion isfamous for “Bajri band very finedots speeded all over inamotif. The de-signsmadewere mainlyinornamentalfomuseofearthycoloursas moreprominentlike brown,red,Maroon,rust,yellow&black Designforms differ withthetypeofproductsmadebutingeneralborder design with all over jaal isasig- nificantcharacteristicoftheirdesign.

ThefabricissourestfromJaipur, Bangalore&citiesofBengal.ColourswereprocuredfromJaipur.Motifsused are dungarshahr “depictedgeometricalshapes.Majorlyusedonadhana“pattiphoool” bootawas afloral design used inborer and buttafor on odhanas“ kali bel”includes diagonal lines with flower spread- erall over the saree generally this patternisusedinleheriaandwornonthefestivalofteej onthe onset ofvainly season. Ranipink isthe dominant color used inleheria(Fig 1). Phul Jalibi, hazara phool, gorya(bird flying )(oldest motif known bytheartisan“pilla” bandhey isanodhna orthatisgiventoladywhohasgiven birth toa amali child the sara is offered by the ridesparents.

## BandhejofMewarRegion

Fig. 2Region ofMewar isfamous for itsMewari Turbans or Pagdi made of



Bandhej fabric are a major constituent of Rajput costumes worn by the males of Rajput Community. The tear shape motifs is a famous pattern dyed in the region of Mewar. Small and intricate buttespeeded all over along with teat shaped bel in the design found in Mewari Bandhej. Although use of Natural dye is very prominent in the tie & dye effect of the bandhej fabric, But in Bhilwara Synthetic dyes are used and also tie & dye effect is generated with the help of Screen prints. Yellow, Orange, Saffron, Red, Velvet are the colours used in tie & dye on mulmul, Voil and Cambric Fabric. Other motifs of Mewar region are chao sladdu, mor Dibia, heart bel, Kalash, Mothra, Mandana oogl Jaal Sangam Border etc.

Satbundi V

Kerodamirchimothra

Laddobundiphool

**Bandhej of Marwar Region** Tie and dye in region has experienced a drastic change in the design, fabric, colour, dye clean used in bandhavi. Geometric and figurative designs are used in the Bandhej of Marwar region.

The Craft is practiced by Khatri, Jaat and Muslim Community. India dyeing is a characteristic feature of Barmer dyeing, where Pali Balotra are using vat, reactive and direct dyes. Bandhej in the region of Marwar are primarily done for Marwari Communities, products like odhna, sarees (saafa) turbans have attained a world fame. Tools used for tie & dye include, wood sticks, rings, needles, Rolling pen etc. The dyeing is carried out on cotton, silk, cotton silk and synthetic fabric. Ranking for best proffered design range from a maximum score of 60 to a minimum score of 6 for specific motifs.



Mewari Phool



Pomcha



Dungri border





Sangam



BandhejMothra



leheriya

## **EMBROIDERY OF RAJASTHAN**

Metal embroidery, a popular embroidery style in [Rajasthan](#), primarily found its patrons in the royalty and the well-to-do merchant classes who wore ornately adorned apparels. They preferred gorgeous garments abundantly embroidered in [gold](#) and silver because embroidery was thought to be auspicious and also because it represented wealth, power and importance. The royalty were so impressed by this style of ornamentation that they often employed it on a wide range of fabrics other than apparel, like footwear, belts, caps, cushions and even on [elephant](#) caparisons and canopies. The [embroidery](#) on these garments is, sometimes, so extravagant that the surface of the ground fabric cannot be differentiated.

### Types of Metal Embroidery

Metal embroidery can be classified into three kinds, [zardozi](#), [gota work](#), [danke-ka-kaam](#). and aari tari work

**Zardozi Embroidery:** Zardozi embroidery is in existence since the time of the [Rig Veda](#). Later, it was used to adorn the attires of Kings and the royals in India. It was also used for various decoration purposes. This embroidery work involves making elaborate designs, using gold and silver threads. Gold and silver are strained through a series of dies to obtain a fine thread. This can either be hammered flat or used as they are found. It could also be enveloped around a silken or [cotton](#) filament core to manufacture the thread. Nowadays, electroplating with other metals also achieves a similar effect; this process is also widely used in Rajasthan.





**Gota Work:** This embroidery originated in Rajasthan. Gota is a gold or silver lace from [Lucknow](#). Various coloured ribbons of varying width, woven in a satin or twill weave may also be referred to as gota. Gota embroidery is crafted using appliqué technique. It is used along with kinari work. In the earlier days, real gold and silver metals were used in Gota embroidery. Later, the embroidery workers started using copper coated with silver as the genuine way of making it was very expensive.

**Gota Work** (also known as [Gota Patti Work](#), **Gota-Kinari work** or **Lappe ka Kaam**) is a type of metal embroidery originated in Rajasthan, India. The cities of Jaipur, Bikaner, Ajmer, Udaipur and Kota are the epicenter of uniquely styled Gota work. Elaborate patterns are created using **applique** technique with metals like gold, silver, copper etc.



## Gota Work

It is applied on to the edges of a fabric to create fancy patterns and is popularly used in edging bridal Sarees and Lehengas. In Rajasthan, Gota work is extensively done on Dupattas and Ghagras. Outfits adorned with Gota Work are popularly worn at auspicious functions.

## Origin & History

Gota embroidery found its origin in Rajasthan, and lent its glorious and surreal designs to colourful [lehenga cholis](#), kurtas, sarees, and dupattas as well since time immemorial. Gota work was quite prevalent during the Mughal period and was used to adorn almost everything. From clothes to bed spreads, to bags, and house related upholstery, gota work was used as a common form of

embellishment. Craftsman who reside in places like Bikaner, Ajmer, Jaipur and Udaipur are known for their dextrous skill in gota embroidery.

Gota work always includes a ribbon which is either in silver or gold and is used to form several shapes and motifs before being stitched onto the fabric or piece of cloth. The width of the ribbon can vary depending on how thick or thin the design's requirement is. Some of the most common fabrics used in sync with gota work are georgette, chiffon, silk, and Bandhini. Gota work is extremely textured and gives off a glamorous appeal to the outfit, and of course the wearer!

### **The Making of Gota Embroidery**

The making of Gota is a lengthy and time consuming process. The process starts with tying the base fabric to the four thick cords of the wooden frame, known as Khaat. A craftsman then begins with tracing the design on the fabric with the help of tracing paper and chalk powder paste. Based on the required design, the Gota fabric is cut and folded into various shapes. It is then back-stitched and hemmed on the fabric. The motifs used on Gota are inspired from the flora and fauna. Flowers, leaves, birds and animals are some of the popular motifs used in Gota.



In the state of Rajasthan, people wear attires with Gota work during festivals and at auspicious functions. Gota embroidery can be observed mainly on dupattas, [turban](#) edges and [ghagras](#).

**Danke-ka-Kaam:** Danke-ka-Kaam, earlier known as korpatti-ka-kaam, is a speciality of [Udaipur](#), a small [city of Rajasthan](#). The danka is a small square plate, which is variable in size but is not bigger than 1.5 cm. Earlier, danka was made from pure gold but nowadays, it is made using silver plated with gold. This technique is usually worked on fabrics like satin, chiffon or [silk](#) fabric. The most popular motifs used in Danke-ka-kaam are inspired by nature.



### **Aari Embroidery Metal Thread embroidery**

A pen like needle which resembles the shape of a crochet needle, gives rise to an intrinsic form of artwork called the 'Aari work'. In this artwork beads and 'muthia', a sharp edged needle is put to work, which creatively gives rise to chain stitch kind of imprints. This work is popular for its delicate and finest threadwork which enhances the essence of hand embroidery.

Aari Embroidery

### **Origin and History**

Aari work traces out its emergence way back in the 12th century, which marked the rule of the Mughal emperors. Floral motifs, traditional designs and fascinated the Mughal royals during that period. This popularized and brought Aari work into the limelight. With time, places like Kutch, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, [Rajasthan](#), and Delhi started recognizing the specialty of Aari embroidery, which marked the gradual popularity of Aari embroidery.

### **Sources of Inspiration**

Aari work began with a simple procedure of using a lead pencil to sketch the design on the fabric, after which a needle was put to use which pierced holes along the lines of the design. Then the threaded needle was inserted into the fabric, and when it came up, it emerged with a loop. Through this procedure, the fine stitched patterns led to the evolution of Aari work as an individual art form.

### **Making**

The fabric is first stretched over a frame to remove uneven, loose folds in the fabric texture. The frame comprises four wooden spars resting on wooden posts. Next, using thick cotton thread, the fabric is sewn on to the wooden frame. More often than not, Zari, Cotton or Silk threads are used in embroidery. One of the main features of Aari work is the fine embroidered patterns on the fabric. At times, artisans embellish the outfit or cloth with sequins, stone etc in between the embroidered patterns.

### **Varieties**

Aari work involves the implementation of a galore of beads and needles. Salma, Gota, Nakshi, Dabka and Aara are some the varieties linked to this artwork, which plays an equal role in enhancing the beauty of the fabric. Aari work is generally associated to floral motifs as well. Even katori, sitara and tikena are some of the other elements that are used in this embroidery form. All of them help in creating more intrinsic and innovative designs.

### **Occasion Dressing**

As Aari work can now be seen in many types of garments, occasions like parties, religious ceremonies, weddings, and other formal occasions are perfect for donning dresses embellished with fine Aari embroidery. Apart from these occasions, this fabric can even be worn in all seasons, irrespective of any time of the year.

## **5. FABRIC OF FREEDOM - KHADI THE MAGIC FABRIC**

Indian khadi fabric, also known as khaddar, is made by spinning threads on an instrument called charkha. It is woven and spun by hand, which is a time-consuming process. Before Independence, khadi manufacturing gained momentum under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership as a movement to boycott British clothes. It was then the fabric of freedom fighters and the rural folk. Gandhi developed the concept of khadi as a means to provide employment to the unemployed rural population. The Indian flag is also made from khadi, and therefore, it holds national importance.

### **Properties of Khadi Fabric**

Khadi is not just a fabric it is a way of life it represents the struggle of India for independence. Khadi is all-season fabric and it can be also worn on festive occasions. Below, I have mentioned some properties of khadi that makes it one of a kind fabric.

- Khadi keep warm in winters and cool in summers
- The more you wash khadi, the better and fresh it looks on you.

- No two fabrics of khadi can be identical because of which you get an exclusive feel.
- Khadi fabric is 3.24 times energy efficient than mill clothes.

### **Types of Khadi Fabric Available**

- Khadi Cotton Fabric- this type of khadi is made from pure cotton yarns. Khadi cotton has different variations according to the demand of the fashion industry like Handloom khadi cotton and Textile khadi cotton.
- Woolen Khadi Fabric- this type of khadi fabric is made from fine quality of wool.
- Pandora Khadi- this khadi fabric is rarely available in the market. It is used to make expensive khadi sarees.
- Khadi Silk Fabric- it has two subtypes of fabrics, first is pure silk in which khadi is made from silk yarns and second is a blend of several yarns.

### **Versatility makes it popular**

The versatile khadi fabric has the unique property of keeping the wearer warm in winter and cool in summer. It has a coarse texture and gets easily crumpled, and therefore, is starched to keep it firm and stiff. On washing, it is more enhanced; the more you wash it, the better is the look. Khadi does not easily wear out with a shelf life of at least four to five years. Attractive designer apparel is made by doing handwork on khadi garments.

Khadi spinning is generally done by girls and women and weaving, mostly by men. During spinning, the threads are interwoven in such a manner that they provide passage of air in the fabric. Durable khadi comes in many colours and is not harmful to skin. The cotton absorbs moisture and easily soaks sweat and keeps the wearer cool and dry. Khadi cotton comes in plain as well as printed fabrics. The most common outfit is the kurta. Other apparel are saris, salwar suits, western tops, shirts, trousers, skirts and handkerchiefs.

Initially, khadi was primarily made of cotton with a very coarse texture and feel. However, several varieties of khadi like khadi silk, khadi wool and khadi cotton are available now, which makes it a fashionable fabric popular with the masses. The wearer gets a royal and distinguishable look due to khadi's fall and style. It symbolises luxury and uniqueness as well.

The ratio of cotton and silk fabric is 50:50 in khadi silk, quite an expensive fabric. It requires dry cleaning and shrinks about 3 per cent after the first wash. Khadi silk provides a royal and rich look.

Because of its versatile nature, khadi has found its way onto the wardrobe of fashionistas. Its demand is more than the supply now. It is widely accepted in the Indian fashion circle, with leading designers including it in their collections. There is a huge demand for it in international market as well, especially in the West.

Khadi was earlier dyed in earthy colour tones and was used to make traditional garments, but designers now are experimenting by dyeing it in striking colours like lime green, violet, baby pink and turquoise blue. Stylish garments like miniskirts, halter neck tops, racer tops, tunics, etc. are also being made from khadi.

### **Government initiatives**

The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is the Indian government body that promotes khadi, whose production and sale comes under the small scale industry sector. KVIC was created by a parliament act after which many KVIC outlets were opened across the country. These shops sell khadi fabrics and apparel. Every year between October to January, all Khadi Gramodyog Bhavans offer discounts on their products. KVIC also organises exhibitions and trade fairs in the country and abroad to promote khadi.

The small-scale industries engaged in manufacturing khadi get economic redemption for the raw materials and production costs by the government. The khadi sector employs 14.97 lakh people and the total annual production of khadi is 111.49 million square metres.

Khadi over the decades has moved from a freedom fighter's identity fabric to a fashion garment. There is such a high demand for khadi now that fulfilling it has turned a challenge.