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“SIGNIFICANCE THE STUDY OF BAGH PRINT”

Sunita Patil ¹, Dr. Sadhana Chouhan ²

¹ PHD Scholar

² HOD (Drawing & Painting)

ABSTRACT

Bagh printing in its current form started in traditionally and old method when a group of Muslim Khatri weavers migrated from the nearby Manavar to Bagh. They were originally from Sindh [now in Pakistan], and had since migrated to Marwad in Rajasthan and then to Manavar. With them they brought the block printing technique, which is now the unique Bagh printing style

Keyword: Bagh print, Natural colour.

I. INTRODUCTION

Natural dyes are known for their use in colouring of food substrate, leather, wood as well as natural fibers like wool, silk, cotton and flax as major areas of application since ancient times. Natural dyes may have a wide range of shades, and can be obtained from various parts of plants including roots, bark, leaves, flowers, and fruit [1]. Since the advent of widely available and cheaper synthetic dyes in 1856 having moderate to excellent colour fastness properties, the use of natural dyes having poor to moderate wash and light fastness has declined to a great extent. However, recently there has been revival of the growing interest on the application of natural dyes on natural fibers due to worldwide environmental consciousness [2]. Although this ancient art of dyeing with natural dyeing with natural dyes withstood the ravages of time, a rapid decline in natural dyeing continued due to the wide available of synthetic dyes at an economical price. However, even after a century, the use of natural dyes never erodes completely and they are still being used. Thus, natural dyeing of different textiles and leathers has been continued mainly in the decentralized sector for specialty products along with the use of synthetic dyes in the large scale sector for general textiles owing to the specific advantages and limitations of both natural dyes and synthetic dyes.

The use of non-toxic and eco-friendly natural dyes on textiles has become a matter of significant importance because of the increased environmental awareness in order to avoid some hazardous synthetic dyes. However, worldwide the use of natural dyes for the colouration of textiles has mainly been confined to craftsman, small scale dyers and printers as well as small scale exporters and producers dealing with high valued eco-friendly textile production and sales [2-4]. Recently, a number of commercial dyers and small textile export houses have started looking at the possibilities of using natural dyes for regular basis dyeing and printing of textiles to overcome environmental pollution caused by the synthetic dyes [5]. Natural dyes produce very uncommon, soothing and soft shades as compared to synthetic dyes.

II. LACATION OF BAGH PRINTING

Bagh, which lends its name to the Bagh prints, is a small tribal village/ town in the Kukshi tehsil of Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh. Legend has it that the village of Bagh, the Bagh River, and the nearby Bagh caves (3rd & 5th century AD, with rich carvings and paintings dedicated to both Hindu as well as Buddhist deities) got their name from the baghs or tigers that inhabited the region. The village, located on the Dhar-Kukshi road, has a population of about 12,000. The Bagh River flows at a distance of about a kilometer from the Dhar-Kukshi road. From a near forgotten tribal art in a small village in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh, today Bagh prints have left an imprint in the textile and art world. Originally used only on lehengas and ghagras, today the prints adorn saris, dress materials and bed covers. Umar Farukh speaks about the unique block print, its history, the processes involved and its soaring popularity. Ismail Suleiman moved to Bagh village in the 1950s and began practising and giving new dimensions to the block printing. The art was already being practised by 80 per cent of the Adivasi population. In the 1960s, due to the lure of synthetics, many artisans left the craft but stuck to vocation and began to redefine its concept, process and look. He got 200 and 300-year-old blocks based on traditional motifs inspired by the 1,500-year-old paintings found in caves in the region. These motifs include chameli or jasmine, maithir or mushroom, leheriya and jurvaria or small dots on the field. Also got blocks made which were based on the jaali work found in the Taj Mahal and local forts. He streamlined the processing of the two important colours -- red from Alzarin and black from iron filings. He also discovered new vegetable dyes such as yellow and green. But his single biggest contribution was imprinting the Bagh print on on bed sheets, saris and fabrics. In 1982 he won the National Award for a bed cover in which he used 1,400 different blocks, many of them depicting his own reinvented designs. Also, his saris were being appreciated all over India. The unique Bagh print had arrived.

III. PREVIOUS WORK

Sudhakar and Gowda (2005): revealed from the study —Ecofriendly dyeing of silk with copper pod bark extractl that natural bark of copper pod tree, available abundantly as by product, can successfully be applied on silk with better colour values and fastness properties using low concentrations of mordant. The use of low percentage of mordants not only resulted in better dye up take and colour fastness also beneficial from environmental point of view in better dye up take and colour fastness.

The Hindu, Editor (2009) wrote an article: Bagh Print: A Friend but Foe for Nature^l, it shows Bagh, which lends its name to the Bagh prints. It is a small tribal town in Dhar district of M.P. The Khatri community, who comprise the printer came here about 400 years ago from Larkana in Sind which is famous for its Ajrak prints. Bagh’s proximity to the river was an important reason for its choice as flowing river water is vital to the process of printing. He invented new vegetable dye colours. Also created new colour combinations. He started experimenting this printing on crepe and silk. He invented mustard colour which he got of pomegranate rinds. He is having 200 years old blocks in his collection. He uses to make colours out of flowers, barks, leaves, fruit skin and natural minerals.

M. P. Midday Editor (2011): wrote an article: Bagh print artists in Argentina for fourth Bharat Mahotsavl. At the festival, national awardee in Bagh prints Mohammad Yusuf Khatri of Madhya Pradesh gave a demonstration on Bagh prints. Through the demonstration of Bagh Kala Thappa Chhapapai, he informed Argentineans about minute details of this art. Indian ambassador in Argentina also called on Bagh print artistes during Bharat Mahotsav and encouraged them. The Bagh print artistes had also carried saree as an emblem of Indian traditional attire to the festival. Describing it as astonishing, an art lover grabbed the saree with both hands. It may be mentioned that silk scarves and other clothes were also liked very much of Argentineans at the festival. The Union Ministry of Textiles has also lauded demonstration of art by Bagh artistes. Bagh prints‘are trendy, cool and comfortable cloth material. An array of products are now available made from Bagh printed fabric be it ladies suits, sarees, dress material, dupatta, bed- covers, pillow covers etc, one can find all. Bagh prints have unique hand block printing, printed using vegetable dyes. The fabric used

originally was cotton, but now saw tassar, crepe, and silk are being used with excellent results. Bagh layouts are dramatic with use of black and red alternately on a white background. Production process is painstaking and manual.

Pushpa Chari, Oct. 20 (2011) published an article: The Hindu in which he wrote about the importance of Bagh prints. Bagh prints have left an imprint in the textile and art world. Originally used only on lehengas and ghagras, today the prints adorn saris, dress materials and bed covers. Umar Farukh speaks about the unique block print, its history, the processes involved and its soaring popularity.

IV. SIGNIFICANCE STUDY PARAMETES

Raw Materials

Block printing has become popular because the simple process can create intricate designs in rich and vibrant colors. Originally natural dyes were used but today they have been replaced by chemical and artificial colors.



Fig. 3.1 Natural colors.

Tools The main tools of the printer are wooden blocks in different shapes - square, rectangle, oval, round and semi-circular or crescent - and sizes called bunta. Blocks are hand-carved of seasoned teak wood by trained craftsmen. On the bottom face the motif are engraved with steel chisels of different widths and cutting surface by the carver. Each block has a wooden handle and two to three cylindrical holes drilled into the block for free air passage and also to allow release of excess printing paste. The new blocks are soaked in oil for 10-15 days to soften the grains in the timber. These blocks sometimes have metal over the wood.



Fig. 3.2 Wooden blocks 1, wooden blocks 2

Metal sheets are beaten by hand and made wafer thin and malleable. The thin sheets are then cut into strips of even length. The design of the block is drawn on the wooden block and the thin metal strips are pressed onto the design and gently hammered in. The designs are filled in from the center to the outside to allow maneuverings of the hand. After

the design is completed the design is checked to see if all the brass strips are of the same height from the wooden base. This is to ensure good high level of printing.

Brass blocks are used in case of very fine designs and for a high level of clarity in print. They also last much longer and are more expensive and time consuming to make.



Fig. 3.3: Wooden block making process 1, 2.

Printing Process Block printing is undertaken on both cotton and silk fabrics of varying counts. The fabric requires a pre-printing treatment where the fabric to be printed is washed free of starch and soft bleached if the natural grey of the fabric is not desired. If dyeing is required as in the case of saris, where borders or the body is tied and dyed, it is done before printing. The fabric is stretched over the printing table and fastened with small pins (in the case of saris the pallu is printed first then the border).



Fig. 3.4: Fabric to be printed is washed.

Historically, the fabric was stretched across a low table, usually about 2 feet wide and 5 feet long, and the craft worker sat on the floor while imprinting the fabric. However, since 1950, this has gradually changed with the tables now being waist high and measuring approximately 3 feet wide and 9 feet long. [L 9 X W 3 X H 3 feet] Each table now may have multiple block printers working simultaneously on imprinting the fabric depending upon the intricacies of the design. The block printer pushes along small wooden trolleys with racks that have castor wheels fastened to their legs to facilitate free movement as he works. On the upper most shelf trays of dye are placed. On the lower shelves printing blocks are kept ready. These blocks are then dipped in dye and imprinted on to the fabric by a skilled block printer. The printing starts from left to right. The color is evened out in the tray with a wedge of wood and the block dipped into the outline color (usually black or a dark color). When the block is applied to the fabric, it is slammed hard with the fist on the back of the handle so that a good impression may register. A point on the block serves as a guide for the repeat impression, so that the whole effect is continuous and not disjointed. The outline printer usually is more experienced because he is the one who leads the process.



Fig. 3.5: Cloth printing by the master block printer.

If it is a multiple color design the second printer dips his block in color again using the point or guide for a perfect registration to fill in the color. The third color if existent follows likewise. Skill is necessary for good printing since the colors need to dovetail into the design to make it a composite whole. A single color design can be executed faster, a double color takes more time and multiple color design would mean additional labor and more color consumption. Different dyes are used for silk and cotton. Rapid fast dyes, indigo sol and pigment dyes are cotton dyes. Printing with rapid dyes is a little more complicated as the dyes once mixed for printing have to be used the same day. Standard colors are black, red, orange, brown and mustard. Color variation is little difficult and while printing it is not possible to gauge the quality or depth of color.

V. THE PRINTING OF BAGH (DESIGN AND COLOURS)

Pigment dyes

Pigment colors are mixed with kerosene and a binder. The consistency should be just right, for if it is too thick it gives a raised effect on the material, which spoils the design. Small plastic buckets with lids are ideal for storing the mixed colors for a few days. The motif is printed directly on white or light-colored ground with a variety of pigment colors. Pigment colors are widely popular today because the process is simple, the mixed colors can be stored for a period of time, subtle nuances of colors are possible, and new shades evolve with the mixing of two or three colors. Also the colors are visible as one prints and do not change after processing. Colors can be tested before printing by merely applying it onto the fabric. The pigment color is made up of tiny particles, which do not dissolve entirely and hence are deposited on the cloth surface while rapid dyes and indigo sols penetrate the cloth.

Rapid

fast Colors In this process, the ground color and the color in the design are printed on white and/or light-colored grounds in one step. The dyes once mixed for printing have to be used the same day. Standard colors are black, red, orange, brown and mustard. Color variation is somewhat difficult and while printing it is not possible to gauge the quality or depth of color.

Discharge Dyes

These dyes are used if you need to print onto a dark background. Medium to dark grounds are dyed on fabric with specially prepared dyestuff. The printing colors then used on the fabric contain a chemical that interacts with the dye. This interaction simultaneously bleaches the color from the dyed ground and prints the desired color on its place. Areas can also be discharged and left white. The primary advantage of this process is that vivid and bright colors along with white can be printed on top of medium and dark grounds.

Naphthol / Reactive

dyes As the name suggests, these are two sets of chemicals, which upon reaction produce a third chemical essentially colorful in nature. Fabric is dyed in one and later printed with the other. The chemical reaction produces a third color. However, the biggest drawback of this process is that there are just a few chemicals available, which produce colors upon reaction.

Vegetable / Natural dyes

Historically of great importance, these dyes have acquired even greater importance now because of their eco-friendly nature.

Bagru Black

This is derived by mixing acidic solution of iron - often rusted nails/horse shoes etc. with jaggery (country sugar) allowed to rot for about 10-15 days. Many other natural substances used for producing dyes are pomegranate skins, bark of mango tree, vinegar, slaked lime etc. Bagru Red This dye is achieved by combining a source material such as alizarin with alum, the results ranging from pink to deep red.

Colors

The traditional craft of ajrakh uses only natural colors (vegetable dyes) for its making. The usual colors of the craft are red, yellow, blue and black. However green and some other secondary colors are also used now-a-days. They are generally made by mixing the usual colors.

The colors being made from all natural materials are harmless to the workers in all ways. Whereas the chemical ajrakh printing which has come up in the recent past uses chemical dyes which are very harmful to the health of the workers.

Yellow

Colors	Materials Used	Cost (Rs./Kg)	Native Places
Yellow	Anar (pomegranate) peel	2	-
	Turmeric	60	-
	Taiyesu flowers	1-2	Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh

Red

Colors	Materials	Charecteristics	Cost Native Places
Red	Alizar	Used in powder form, mineral base.	Arab Country(Africa) 600 Baroda(Gujarat)
	Masak		Himchal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh
	Mazist	This is plant stem	350 Iran, Afghanistan

Black

Colors	Material	Cost
Black	Gurrh	Usual Amount
	Bajri Ka Aata	
	Iron Piece	12 Rs/Kg

V. CONCLUSION

Bagh prints are friendly, cool and comfortable cloth material. Bagh layouts are dramatic with use of black and red alternately on a white background. The production process is painstaking and manual. Bagh prints are part of a tradition which has to be preserved for the future generations to take forward.

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