

CREATION OF TRADITIONAL CHUMBA EMBROIDERY USING COMPUTERIZED EMBROIDERY MACHINE

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Abstract

Traditional motifs are being used in Indian textiles since prehistoric times and are handed over from one generation to the other. Traditional motifs are highly influenced by religious belief, culture, environment, act of day-to-day life, architecture, history, rulers etc. The skilled workers have modified motifs based on the urges and whims of the kings who invaded and ruled India for several years. Weavers and designers had also taken inspiration from their environment to create the variety of motifs and designs. Indian skilled workers have created various motifs and patterns which are unique in their styles and color combinations like creeping vines and floral patterns, which remind us of Mughal history and the Islamic portrayals. Motifs like elephant, lotus, fish, conch shells and horse etc. which represent the philosophy of Hinduism and the concept of bring good-luck, health and wealth are typically found in the textiles worn in the occasional functions which represent poetic expressions and imaginations towards life, and devotional characters. Traditional Chumba embroidery motifs were developed using CAD software. Samples of hand embroidery as well as computerized machine embroidery were created.

Keywords: Motif, Computer aided designing, Digitization, Computerized embroidery.

Introduction

Chamba embroidery is Popular for its art and embroidery, a little town called Chamba, is located in the hills of Himachal Pradesh. The small yet graceful settlement of mountain dwellers gave birth to an intricate form of needlework known as the Chamba Rumal. It is presumed that the subjects were drawn in outline by the women on the court. Chamba embroidery designs were based on nature, mythology, articles of everyday use and happenings of everyday life, animals, birds and trees etc and geometrical designs are also very popular.

Chamba, situated on the river Ravi, was one of the most important centres of miniature painting. The dreamlike quality of the background coupled with women of porcelain like beauty developed its own characteristics in Chamba. It is said that the King and his nobles employed the painter to record important happenings in the court including musical modes, seasons, mythological subjects, agony and love. The ladies of the court created the same motifs with their needles with an equal amount of skill of the painters.

Literally, the word 'chamba rumal' refers to an unconventional form of visual art achieved by beautiful embroidery created on a hand spun cloth using an untwisted silken thread which seeks its roots in pahari (mountain) paintings. Practiced in regions of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu, this intricate yet traditional form of pictorial embroidery remained the essence of pahari culture and the epitome of their tradition. The term derived from the Persian word Rumal which means a handkerchief.

Khaddar or unbleached muslin is usually the cloth employed for chamba rumal embroidery. The intricate design was achieved by incorporating it onto the cloth using a fine brush to draw outlines. This was accomplished by female pahari painters and embroiders themselves. The embroidery is done in soft shades in small double darning stitches which appear the same on both sides. Outlines and details are worked in double running stitch and sometimes small patterns on costumes and other details are shown in colored darning stitch.

Chamba embroidery mainly revolved around deities, such as Shiva, Ganesha, Durga, Vishnu, Parvati, and Lakshmi. One of the favorite themes of a painter was the cheerful antics of Lord Krishna with Radha. He is shown in various poses with Radha while the gopis (devotees) dance around them. Some scenes of battle

and hunting are depicted with great finesse. Various attacks which show guns, swords, spears, etc are shown.

The embroiderer creates Chaupar, a game of dice played on two long bands of cloth joined together to form a cross, on the rumal with four sets of players seated on the four sides. Embroidery also showed elements of nature comprising banana, lotus flower, peacock, parrots, shrubs, monkeys, deer, fish, clouds, cranes etc. The canvas teems with life giving a tremendous sense of movement to the composition.

Khaddar, which is basically a rough, and hand-woven cotton, and malmal, also known as fine muslin, were the fabrics used in creating Chamba rumal. The reason being that the off-white fabric creates a clear base for the embroidery while highlighting the vivid hues of the silken threads used for filling up the line art. Khaddar was used for Chamba rumal due to its availability, viable cost, and durability. The figures and floral patterns drawn on the Chamba rumals are filled with pat, a type of untwisted silken floss.

The most popular colors used in Chamba rumal are ultramarine, Persian blue, carmine, parrot green, deep red, pink, brown, black, white, lemon, deep yellow, brilliant pink, and purple.

Methodology

Total 25 motifs were collected and critically analyzed by researcher on the basis of their suitability to traditional work for computerized machine embroidery. Ten motifs of Chumba embroidery were sketched manually as well as scanned from books; magazines etc. were again digitized by CAD to get the required intricacy and fineness. The samples were created through hand embroidery as well as computerized machine embroidery. The created Chumba embroidery samples are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Embroidered samples of Chumba embroidery

HE	CME	HE	CME
			
CE1		CE2	
			
CE3		CE4	
			
CE5		CE6	



(HE-Hand Embroidery, CME- Computerized Machine Embroidery, CE- Chumba Embroidery)

Result and discussion

All the samples of hand embroidery and computerized machine embroidery were analyzed by researcher on the basis of different criteria. The acceptability score of Kashmir embroidery were calculated. CE5 and CE8 of Hand embroidery got highest score of 586 and CE8 of Computerized machine embroidery got highest score of 567 out of 600. In comparison to the other samples of hand embroidery, the scores were high in acceptability of concept, overall appearance, neatness, color effectiveness, suitability of motif, suitability of stitches, texture effectiveness of the samples and in comparison to the other samples of computerized machine embroidery, the scores were high in neatness, quality of workmanship, suitability of motifs, acceptability of concept, overall appearance, texture effectiveness and color effectiveness of the samples. Further it was found that samples of hand embroidery CE8, CE10, CE4, CE9, CE1, CE2, CE6, CE7, CE3 and samples of computerized machine embroidery CE5, CE10, CE4, CE9, CE2, CE6, CE7, CE1, and CE3 were next in ranking. Which was highly appreciated by judges.

Sample of hand embroidery CE1 got the highest score for neatness, CE5 & CE8 got the highest score for quality of workmanship, CE1 & CE5 got the highest score for colour effectiveness, CE5, CE8 & CE10 got the highest score for texture effectiveness, CE8 & CE10 got the highest score for suitability of motif, CE4 & CE5 got the highest score for suitability of stitches, CE5 got the highest score for acceptability of concept, CE8 got the highest score for overall appearance of the sample. Sample of computerized machine embroidery CE8 got the highest score for neatness, CE5 got the highest score for quality of workmanship, CE5 got the highest score for color effectiveness, CE5 & CE10 got the highest score for texture effectiveness, CE8 got the highest score for suitability of motif, CE8 got the highest score for suitability of stitches, CE8 got the highest score for acceptability of concept, CE5 got the highest score for overall appearance of the sample, which was found to be very appealing to the panel.

All the respondent liked and appreciated the samples. Majority of the respondent revealed that the concept of traditional embroidery using computerized machine embroidery was very unique and elegant and it provides immense potential which is still untapped. The greatest challenge is to make it suit contemporary method of embroidery to save the time and give it attractive look and suitable for younger generation.

The traditional motifs used for developing samples of embroidery were highly appreciated by the panel of judges. The respondents highly appreciated the workmanship of the samples and according to them the developed designs would have good buyers in the market as the younger generation prefer traditional thing to wear. The acceptability index throws a light on the fact that human beings always remain in search of something traditional to satisfy their thirst for their choice of garment.

Conclusion

From the study it was concluded that the traditional Chumba embroidery can be created through computerized machine embroidery. The embroidery was successfully adapted for the application of surface enrichment. As a logical extension the chosen and developed motifs may be used for the development of samples of computerized machine embroidery. Thus, traditional Chumba embroidery can be created through computerized machine embroidery to save the time and expenditure as well as maintain heritage of India.

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