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Traditional handicrafts of Patan, Gujarat

("Handmade Traditions, Timeless Beauty")

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ABSTRACT

For more than 600 years, from the eighth to the thirteenth century, Patan was the capital of Gujarat. Since ancient times, it has been famous for its spirituality, arts, crafts, and architecture. Patola is a double ikat hand-woven silk saree that is elaborate in traditional motifs, motifs, and colors. Patan was also famous for wood carving. The handicraft of mushroom cloth has been going on here for years. Patan is also famous for terracotta clay toys. Rani Ki Vav is a wonderful eleventh-century architectural marvel and a World Heritage Site. Here are the remains of the Sahastralinga Sarovar of the 11th century. In the city, the sacred texts written by the 11th-century Jainacharya scholar Hemchandracharya are kept in the Hemchandra Gyan Mandir Library where valuable Jain manuscripts are preserved in the library.

Keywords: Art, Craft, Design, Architecture, Patola, Handicraft, Mashroo, District Patan

PREFACE

The land of Gujarat is full of culture, art, spirituality, and religious ideas. it is home to sacred places and historical buildings, sacred temples, scriptures, and intellectual development. North Gujarat region is known as Aanart Pradesh.

Patan is situated on the banks of the Sacred River Saraswati on the lowlands of Aravali hills. A fortified city in the northern Gujarat state of India. It was founded in 745 AD by Vanraj Chavda, the king of the Chavda Kingdom. The city was named "Anhilpur Patan" or "Anhilwad Patan" after his close friend.

Patan was the capital of the Chavada and Solanki dynasties from 720–1242. It was a major trading city and regional capital of northern Gujarat during the rule of several Hindu and Muslim dynasties. The city is home to many Hindu and Jain temples, as well as mosques, dargahs, and rauzas.

During the reign of Siddharaj and Kumarpal, the culture and splendor of this town was amazing. The Solanki era is the golden era of Gujarat's history. At the same time as Patan was founded, the word Gujarat was first coined for this region, so it can be said that Gujarat got its name here, for about 780 years continuously, that is, for a long time in history, Patan remained the capital of Gujarat, but not only the capital, but it was ruled by kings and In the hands of skilled ministers, it became not only a thriving commercial center but also a center of art, craft, and literature in Western India.

Patan is famous for Patola Sari. The name Patola is derived from the Sanskrit word Pattakulla. Manufactured by the

resist-dyeing process using the warp & weft technique. The patola fabric was initially reserved for royal clothing, but it later became popular in saris, ranging from five to nine yards in length and forty-five to fifty-four inches in width. When worn during important events, it was believed that patola could keep evil spirits at bay and bring prosperity to the wearer. As a result, it is often kept in homes as a protective talisman, usually framed. Apart from its customary use, patola fabric is also employed in modern clothing and for creating items such as bed covers and scarves.

PATOLA

Patola, a traditional Gujarati textile, is made by tie and dyeing yarn before weaving, requiring high creativity, concentration, and skill. It is considered auspicious among certain communities and is traditionally worn during weddings. Patola is a cloth used in weddings as a symbol of wealth, religious devotion, and customary living. It is often given as a bridal gift and is believed to be a fortunate charm. Gujarati literature and culture, from 17th-century poetry to modern songs, highly praise patola, with the proverb "Padi Patole bhaat, phate pan fitey nahin" indicating its durability.

The Patola fabric's designs are driven by the surrounding architecture and the natural world. The intricate fabric has been inspired by the designs seen on the carved stone panels of Patan's Rani ki Vav, or Queen's Stepped Well, which dates to the 11th century.

Patola patterns are distinctly geometric and pixel-like. Gujarati women's Patola saris frequently have the elephant (kunjar), tiger (phul), girl (nari), and parrot (popat) (2) themes; the elephant and tiger motifs are especially auspicious. Among the most common patterns is the Pan Bhaat (Leaf Design). It is an indigenous theme from India that dates to the Indus Valley culture's pottery. The most well-liked and frequently utilized designs are Narikunjar, Ratanchawk, Navaratna, Voragaji, Chhabdi, Chokhta, Chanda, Pan, Phul, Laheriya, Tarliya, Zumar, Sankal, Diamond, Star, Butta, and Sarvariya, among others.

In many communities, the meanings associated with Patola's various patterns and motifs vary. For instance, the Vohra community, who are Ismaeli Shi'ite Muslims, love the Vohra Gaji Bhaat pattern, but the Jains like abstract and geometric designs.

Patola Making

Patola weaving uses a hand-operated harness loom made of bamboo and rosewood strips. The left side is slanted, and two weavers work simultaneously. The shuttle navigates warps, while the 'Vi', a rosewood sword-shaped staff, regulates threads. This unique loom is used for weaving. Patola's defining characteristic is the "Double Ikat" weave, which involves tie-dying warp and weft threads before weaving them into intricate designs with precision.

Patola involves finalizing designs by knotting cotton threads to yarn threads to prevent dye penetration. The resist tie-dying process is repeated based on desired colors and dye penetration levels. Warp and weft are tied, working with dimensions as small as 1/100th of an inch, ensuring precise weaving and achieving desired patterns.

Patola, the exquisite silk sarees handwoven in Patan, Gujarat, stand as an emblem of the state's rich cultural heritage and artistic legacy. Renowned for their intricate patterns, vibrant colors, and unparalleled craftsmanship, Patola sarees hold a unique position in the realm of Indian textiles and are revered as Gujarat's identity.

MASHROO

Mashroo is a kind of woven textile craft whose inspiration comes from religion. The Arabic word "mashroo," which means "permitted," gives the textile legitimacy because it was forbidden to wear pure silk. It was rendered a cloth "permitted by the sacred law of Islam" via the Mashroo technique. Mashroo fabric is made of silk with a cotton covering on one side to prevent the silk from coming into contact with the skin. Bold stripes in a variety of contrasting hues are woven throughout this fabric, which is enhanced by the satin weave.

Traditionally, shirts and pants have been made from this cloth. Later on, the uses extended to pillows and blankets. In addition to yardage (2), shawls, stoles, quilts, pillowcases, purses, and clothing are among the products made from mashroo material. The Kutchi nomads' clothing frequently reflects it.

The Kutchi nomads wear this type of clothing due to the intense summer heat in the Kutch region. The cotton layer beneath the fabric absorbs sweat, keeping the wearer cool. For the yoke of their Ghagras, women in Palanpur choose striped

Mashroo, whereas people in Anjar prefer dotted patterns. In India, stripes are popular.

Hadith 8.253A from Sahih Al-Bukhari states: "He prohibited us from using silver cutlery, donning gold jewelry, riding on silken saddles, and dressing in silk, including Dibaj (thick silk fabric) and Qassiy and Istabraq (two types of silk)."

This creative woven cloth was created by addressing religious concerns. The use of silk made from insect cocoons was prohibited by Islam. Mashroo was spun such that the silk floated on top, and the cotton thread contacted the skin. This made it possible for the governing Islamic nobles to show off their regal attire. Because of this particular trait, mashroo became a popular export to the Ottoman Empire and the Gulf.

The mashroo is a versatile and durable fabric that is popular in many Hindu cultures, particularly in the desert. Its vivid colors and glossy arrangements, made from cotton yarns in the back and silk on the exterior, help absorb perspiration and keep the wearer cool. The name "Mishroo" comes from the Gujarati word "Mishru," meaning "mixture," and was adopted by wealthy Hindu traders in Patan. The mashroo remains a significant part of wedding trousseau in many Hindu cultures.

Silk and cotton are combined to create mashroo. Bold hues and Ikat motifs are woven throughout. Though throughout time, different designs like tiny dots and motifs have been produced, stripes of contrasting hues are still the traditional pattern.

Mashroo cloth is dyed in contrasting hues to create a variety of patterns: Khajuria: Throughout the length of the cloth, a sequence of conical lines forms a chevron design similar to this one.

Hatched lines provide the impression that a succession of dots have been sewn into the cloth in the Kankani design.

DANEDAR

The fabric is given an exquisite touch by this design, which features cotton weft floats with carefully selected warp and weft colors. Straight stripes and hatching lines spaced periodically make up the Mamul design.

Mashroo is being designed with new methods in mind. For the designs, the artisans now combine other age-old techniques like "Bandhani" and"Batik." The designs layered on the many types of Mashroo cloth serve as a point of differentiation. In Anjar, Kutch, people like the little dotted design, while the striped ones are popular throughout the nation.

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Material and Tools

Fibre

The fibers used in Mashroo weaving include cotton and silk. But in Mashroo, the more affordable alternative known as Filament Rayon is gradually replacing the customary use of silk. Additionally, low-cost materials utilised in the warp include staple rayon, mercerized cotton, and staple cotton. Cotton yarn is sourced from Ahmedabad and Surat, and rayon yarn comes from Surat.

Color

Mashroo weaving has historically employed natural hues. Due to their affordability and accessibility, artificial colors are favored.

Glaze

Since ancient times, rice flour paste has been used as a glazing agent since it is simple to make and produces excellent results. On the folds, it is applied.

Shaal

This kind of pit loom has been around since antiquity. The whole thing is set up in a pit, and the craftsman uses his feet to control the treadles while perched on the pit's wall.

Puchado

These are tiny brushes used to avoid entanglement and maintain the warp threads in place. The shuttle is a pointed, streamlined wooden device used to send the wet weft over the warp and across the width of the loom. Throughout the procedure, the shuttle moves in a reciprocating manner. Yarn

winder: An automated device that prepares fiber from yarn is the yarn winder.

Mashroo's distinctive satin finish is produced by the interaction of cotton and silk, where cotton makes up the weft (bana) and silk makes up the warp (tana). In mashroo weaving, one cotton weft thread is woven across seven or eight silk warp threads using the skip-and-pick method.

Process

The Taniawalla's role is to begin warp preparation. Its typical length is sixty-three yards. Numerous spools of silk thread are spread out on the ground. The threads are then individually led through the rings attached to the rods hanging from the ceilings, through fixed iron heddle shafts, and onto a reel with a diameter of roughly two meters.

Rangrez's role: Rangrez receives the warp and weft.

Rajbharra plays a crucial role in the dyeing process by installing white threads into the loom's heddle, which are then connected to the warp threads. The weaver brings the dyed warp into the loom arrangement by attaching each warp thread to a white thread. The weft is made of plain cotton thread, transferred on bobbins for the shuttle. The treadles are located in pits, and the warp is stretched horizontally. When the weft arrangement is pulled, the moistened weft runs out of the wood shuttle, whizzing through the warp.

The process of weaving a shawl involves sprinkling water on the warp and weft to prevent thread slacking and ensure precise fiber arrangement. If threads are broken or tangled, they are sent to the Sandhniwalas for rectification. Once woven, the fabric is washed in cold water and folded. The Kundiwalas then beat the cotton side of the moistened fabric for ten minutes, known as 'calendaring', to ensure a uniform thread appearance. A paste of wheat flour or glazing is applied to the folds, and the fabric is then beaten and compressed in a hand press. The shawl is then passed on to a master weaver or a wholesaler.

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