IJRAR.ORG

E-ISSN: 2348-1269, P-ISSN: 2349-5138



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH AND ANALYTICAL REVIEWS (IJRAR) | IJRAR.ORG

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

A Study on Significance and Symbolism of Motifs in Indian Embroideries

Ms.Ambily.I.P, Asst.Prof, B.Sc-FAD, Ms.Bharathi.P.S,

Ms. Shilpa.R,

Ms. Sowmya.R

HOD, B.Sc-FAD, Asst.Prof, B.Sc-FAD, Asst.Prof, B.Sc-FAD

Department of B. Sc-FAD Vet First Grade College, Bangalore, India

ABSTRACT

Embroidery is an ancient Indian art involving fabric decoration with threads. It can be righty called as "needle Painting". Each state in the Country is unique as far as embroidery and motifs are concerned. They are not a duplication of each other because of the differences in the use of ground material, customs, festival deity, skills, stitchery, threads etc. Traditional embroideries of some of the states of India are Kantha of Bengal, Chikankari of Lucknow, Kasuti of Karnataka, Phulkari of Punjab, Chamba Rumal of Himachal Pradesh etc. The people of each state have developed the motif of their own surroundings and chose the ones that depict their religious, cultural, domestic and artistic instinct. The motifs on Indian traditional embroideries are all distinct and are the representation of the different styles, inspired by nature, socio economic, cultural and religious factors. The motifs are the symbolism and reflection of belief, culture, religion of various clans and communities practicing the art. This paper aims to study the symbolism and significance of the most commonly used motifs in the Indian embroideries.

Index Terms: Cultural, Motifs, Religious, Significance, Symbolism.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Traditionally Indian embroideries have a rich tradition of motifs and most of them have a symbolism, idea or belief that they signify. Indian Embroidery take inspiration from nature and religion. Designs and motifs have remained the same for centuries. The patterns have always been floral, animals, geometric and religious like the raths or chariot, palanquins, gopurams commonly seen in kasuti of Karnataka. The floral motifs, animal, geometric, religious motifs have always been an inspiration for embroidery patterns since ancient times in India.

The motifs in Indian traditional embroidery is all distinct, derived from architecture, religious philosophy, flowers, fruits and animals, which symbolizes or shares the beliefs associated with these motifs.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Many researchers have worked on traditional motifs of India and have put forward their views on motifs and their significance in textile as well as embroideries. Indian region, embroideries have always used motifs of religious, cultural and artistic instincts.

Dr. Shristi Purwar (2021) says that symbolic motifs, which are used in decoration of textiles ideas and beliefs of the culture, region.

Every form and design has a greater significance according to their indigenous thoughts says Mr. Rajesh Bhowrik (Jan 2012) in his project "Art, Design and motifs in tribal textiles".

The motifs and designs generally seen on the Indian textiles are symbols of birds, floral designs, animals, ornamental designs and several other intricate figures. Motifs like conch, elephant, peacock, parrot, fish, etc are quite common in Indian Textiles" as said by Neeti Kishore (2013).

Veenu says "Motif is undoubtedly the result of religion, customs, natural surroundings and social beliefs of that particular area to which its creator belongs. Motifs are symbolism and reflection of belief which may vary from one region to another but they are all inter connected with the same essence. Signs and symbols endure the intrinsic beauty of motifs" says Pallavi Prajapati (2021).

3. METHODOLOGY

This paper is based on symbolism and significance of motifs in Indian embroideries. Qualitative research methodology was used for this study. For data collection, researchers visited various art exhibitions, fairs, crafts emporiums in chitrakala Parishath related to embroideries and textiles of India. Data was also collected from various embroidery books, articles, magazines and internet.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

India is a land of diverse culture each and every state of India is unique when it comes to its art forms. The motifs are used in its own cultural, religious and artistic framework. The motifs in Kashida are inspired by nature including the flora and fauna of Kashmir. The most common motifs are birds like kingfisher, butterflies, fruits and vegetables like mango, almonds, cherry, grapes and flowers like lotus, blossoms, creepers, maple leaves.

The motifs in chikankari stimulate from natural flora including jasmine, rose, peacock, parrot, etc. Motifs used in Kantha embroidery include lotus, solar, moon, wheel, swastika, Kalka, tree of life.

Motifs used in kasuti embroidery varied between mythological and architecture to flora and fauna. The motifs used in kasuti are temple architecture like gopurams, raths and palanquins, bird motifs like peacock, swan, squirrel, parrot, animal motifs like Nandi, elephant and deer, etc.

Chamba Rumal motifs are leaping tiger, prancing horses, running boars, birds like swan, duck, peacock, musical instruments like flute, veena, sitar, etc.

Significance and symbolism is attached to motifs. They are not merely used to decorate a fabric or a surface, but have a design symbolic meaning. Here are the commonly used motifs used with in Indian embroidery with their significance and symbolism.

Motifs commonly used in Indian Embroideries:

Lotus (Padma): Lotus is said to be a blessed flower associated with wealth and prosperity and hence a commonly seen motif in Indian embroideries. A symbol of the eternal order of the union of earth, water and sky, it represents the power of life. There are various forms of lotus motifs like Astadal Padma - eight petal motif to Satadal Padma- hundred petal motifs notably with Kantha embroidery. It is supposed to be the resting place of brahma, the creator of the world. It is considered a very auspicious flower by hindus.





Lotus in Kantha

Lotus in Kasuthi

Peacock (Mor): Peacock is the national bird of India and the embodiment of gracefulness. It symbolizes royalty, honor and beauty. It is a symbol for power, strength, confidence, royalty, beauty and even divinity. Its features symbolize immortality and immunity to evil. The peacock motif is widely adopted as a motif in various embroideries. In kasuti embroidery of Karnataka, a geometric peacock is often used, as it is strongly associated with beauty and passion. It is also seen in Rabari embroidery of Kutch, Kantha of Bengal. It is embodiment of grace-fullness.





Peacock in Kasuti Embroidery

Peacock in Kantha Embroidery

Paisley (Mango Motif): Paisley is considered very auspicious representing fertility as well as immortality. It is often seen design in Kashida of Kashmir and chickankari embroidery from Lucknow and Kantha embroidery from Bengal. The paisley motifs have floral or abstract swirls and intricate details incorporated into it making each paisley motif distinct. Celebrated as a Zoroastrian symbol of life and eternity, they also depict fertility in Hinduism. It also signifies royal sovereignty and nobility. The motif has the shape of an elongated tear drop with the curved upper end. It is considered auspicious and hence this design is seen in Kantha, Kashida and chikankari embroideries. Kalka, keri, and Ambi are other names.





Mango motif in Kashida Embroidery

Mango Motif in Chikankari Embroidery

Goose (Hamsa Motif): A representation of spiritual purity is mostly found in the form of Kasuti embroidery. Hamsa is the Sanskrit term for a swan or goose and is best known and loved as vahana of Lord Brahma and the Goddess Saraswati.





Swan Motif in Kasuti embroidery

Swan Motif in Chikankari embroidery

Conch Shell (Shank): A motif in the shape of a conch sea shell. It is supposed to be a traditional, religious motif. It symbolizes the sounds of the cosmic space, is also a popular motif. The sacred conch shell is an integral part of Hindu symbolic and religious tradition and god Vishnu. The conch shell is believed to depict the five element of nature, earth, fire, wind, water and space. It occupies a significance place as a motif in Kasuti of Karnataka and Kantha of West Bengal. Shank is counted as sign of fame, longevity and prosperity.





Conch Motif in Kantha Embroidery

Conch Motif in Kasuti Embroidery

Fish Motif (Matsya): It is a favourite motif in the Kantha of Bengal and usually shown in water. The water is universally accepted as a source of life and is symbol of purification and regeneration. It is also a symbol of prosperity, fertility and purity. It is also a sign of good fortune. In Nakshi Kantha, fish is one of the most popular motif and an auspicious motif representing the first reincarnation of lord Vishnu.





Fish Motif in KasutiEmbroidery

Fish motif in Kantha Embroidery

Parrot Motif (Tota): Symbolizes passion and courtship, parrot motif is commonly found in Gujarat and Rajasthan embroideries. They are depicted as a symbol of passion and fertility. They are usually used as motifs on bridal, trousseau, to symbolize these.







Parrot motif in Kathiawar Embroidery

ELEPHANT:

Widely used in Indian embroideries, elephant is a symbol of wisdom, fertility, prosperity, strength and royalty. They are symbols of luck that use their mighty strength to remove obstacles and negative forces. They also represent long life, memory and vitality.



Elephant Motif in Kantha Embroidery

Elephant Motif in Kasuti Embroidery

SWASTIKA:

It is an auspicious, religious symbol for good beginning and well being. It represents the sun.





Swastik Motif in Kutch Embroidery

Elephant Motif in Kasuti Embroidery

TREE OF LIFE:

It represents "Kalpa Vriksha" in Hindu mythology which means a wish fulfilling tree. The tree symbolizes immortality. The tree is a symbol of life, fertility and protection, and thus is often depicted with branches full of flowers and fruits, and harboring insect, bird and animal life in its branches and shade. The tree of life motif may not be bound by a botanical species but be a composite motif drawn from different plant species.



Tree of Life Motif in Kantha



Tree of Life Motif in Chamba Rumal

CONCLUSION:

Indian motifs are unique and have a distinct identity of its own. Indian motifs have its own heritage values and are closely linked to natural, cultural, religious, artistic factors prevailing in the Indian society. The motifs surfaced on Indian Textiles are many with each motif representation of a meaning. Each motif is symbolic in its own way, be it the peacock, paisley, lotus, parrot, conch shell, etc. They are a reflection of our day-to-day life and symbolize values, ideas, beliefs and have remained the same since the ancient times.

Our traditional motifs are deeply influenced by religious belief, culture, environment, architecture, history and domestic chores which are carried out in life and thus motif represent an integral part of all the traditional embroideries of India, each symbolizing the beliefs, emotions, myths, facts and stories associated with our Indian culture and tradition.

REFERENCES:

https://fashionous.in/blogs/knowledge-corner/motifs-used-in-indian-textiles

https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/sanskriti-museum-of-indian-textiles-sanskritimuseums/zQKibEMEq4p9LQ?hl=en

http://hubpages.com/style/Embroidery-of-India-The-Symbols-Motifs-and Colors History

https://www.sarangithestore.com/blogs/sarangi-journal/the-elephant-motif-on-indian-textiles

https://wishseed.com/home/symbolism/

https://www.historified.in/traditional-motifs-and-symbols/

http://www.sarangithestore.com/blogs/sari-designs?page=1

http://www.thehindu.com/features/friday-review/art/when-india-clothed theworld/article3559292.ece

https://www.indiwear.com/blog/tag/indian-motifs

https://mediaindia.eu/culture/motifs-on-indian-textiles/

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331944269_Expressions_of_Traditional_Textiles_of_India_-_A_Cultural_Probe_-

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/6893805.cmsontextiles.wordpress.com

www.academia.edu/4034805/The_Use_of_Flora_and_Fauna_Imagery_in_Mughal_Decorative_Arts

www.designdiary.nic.in/c

https://www.tilfi.com/blogs/art-culture/the-vocabulary-of-floral-motifs-in-indian-textiles