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Jay Prajapati
Student, Department of Textile
Engg. The MS University of
Baroda, Gujarat, India

Dr. Aadhar Mandot
Asst. Professor, Department of
Textile Engg, the MS University
of Baroda, Gujarat, India

Review on making of patola (a traditional Indian art)

Jay Prajapati and Dr. Aadhar Mandot

Abstract

Patola are most popular silk sarees made in Patan. Patola's are manufactured on handloom by using Double Ikat process. Patola is wearing from both sides. Geometric patterns and bright colours are used on it. Thus Patola take about 5-6 month to manufacturing. It is very expensive saree. Patola is famous for it's royalty and aristocracy.

Keywords: Single Ikat, double Ikat, Katar

1. Introduction

The word Patola came from Sanskrit word "Patt-kalam", where "Patt" is used to describe silk cloth. Patola have been made by Salvi caste since last 800 years. It is also famously described in "Kuarbai's Mameru" a famous novel written by Premanand in 17th century.

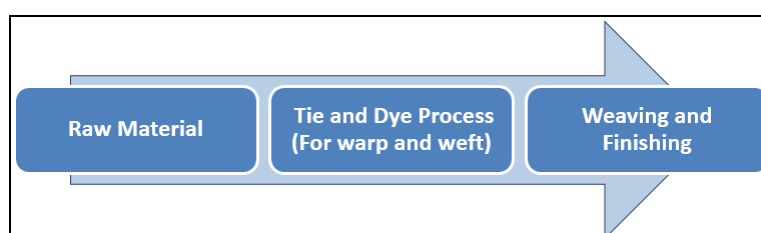
According to history, 800 year ago king Kumarpal was ruling the kingdom of Patan. During that period, jain families living in his kingdom used to devote their god with new patola every day. This patola which are made from silk they consider them poise and used for worship. During that time, these patola's were imported from "Jalna" (a place in Aurangabad). King of Jalna had a wicked habit of using these patola's once and then, they were exported to other places. Once this fact was known king Kumarpal, which made him very furious so he defeated king of Jalna and permanently brought 700 Salvi families to Patan.

Usually patola made from silk by using "Double Ikat" technique. In this technique pattern is prepared on warp and weft separately, further they are dyed with equal intensity of colour using tie-dye method and finally woven in to beautiful fabric. The whole process is done manually involving about three to four person per patola. One patola gets completed within 5 to 6 month depending upon width of saree and complication of design. Colour of patola saree remains as it is, up to 300 years. If anyone wants to sell patola after 80-100 years, they can get more selling price then purchase price.

1.1 Proverbs & Folk Song on Patola

In Patola, Colors are developed on warp and weft. These colors are very fast and are never washed out. Due to these qualities of patola a proverb has been framed in Gujarati, "Padi patola Bhat, Fate Pan Fite Nahi". Means the design once laid down in PATOLA will never be washed till the fabric torn out. One folk song is also very famous in Gujarat for patola, "Chhela Ji Re Mare Hatu Patan Thi Patola Mongha Lavjo". The song has remained very famous for the last so many years, and so there is The Fame, Charm and Popularity of Patola even today.

2. Material and Method



Correspondence
Jay Prajapati
Student, Department of Textile
Engg. The MS University of
Baroda, Gujarat, India

2.1 Raw Materials

Basically silk threads are use as raw material. They are dyed with natural colour. For decorative purpose, zari threads are also used. (Normally Zari threads are used for work on Pallu.)

2.2 Tie and Dye Process

Tie and Dye is a traditional hand method of producing patterns in textiles by tying certain portions of the fabric or yarn so that they will not absorb the dye in that tied portion. In The Process sequence of tie & dye for preparing the patola, full length of warp threads are fixed between two beam (as shown in fig 2.1).



Fig 2.1: Fixed Warp between beam

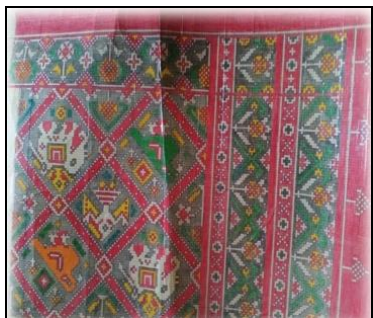


Fig 2.2: Design Paper

The pattern is to be prepared on design paper as shown in fig 2.2. Once warp threads are fixed, the same pattern is prepared on these threads with the help of charcoal. (Fig. 2.3 and 2.4).



Fig 2.3: Design marked on threads using charcoal



Fig 2.4: Charcoal and cotton thread.

Now as per design the yarns are partially tied by cotton threads or any other materials which prevent unwanted dye penetration. After that, they are dyed with first colour. After drying the dyed portion is once again tied and another portion of warp is let open for dyeing with the next colour. The same process is repeated number of times depending upon number of colours required to complete design. The same process is also repeated for the weft yarn. It is noteworthy that these threads i.e. warp and wefts are soaked in water for about 2 days so that they will absorb dyes evenly. The whole process sequence is shown in figure given below.



The Process of applying colour on yarn in a specific pattern prior to weaving by tie and dye method, which will fetch beautiful motifs on fabric is called ikat technique. If only Warp threads are dyed that it is known as “WARP IKAT” or “SINGLE IKAT”. Where as if only Weft threads are dyed is known as “WEFT IKAT” or “SINGLE IKAT”. When Warp and Weft both are dyed using this technique, it is known as “DOUBLE IKAT”. Normally patola are made using Double Ikat technique.

The Double Ikat method is most complicated way of making fabric. Which is been used by salvis of Patan, from Gujarat. Most complicated design, small motif and pictorial patterns with no repeat across its length are also prepared by this technique. It is an extra ordinary achievement in the area of textile art.

2.3 Weaving and Finishing

Design of patola loom is very simple & straight forward. This loom is made of rosewood and bamboo sticks but like handloom it does not have any fix frame work, as for every new patola saree, the whole frame work is to be set again.



Fig 2.6: loom for making patola

The loom is tilted from one side and the fabric is woven keeping whole warp sheet in straightened condition. As shown on fig.-2.6, two people are required for patola weaving. Where, one person is at left side and second at right side. Left side person control beat-up mechanism and right side person control shedding mechanism, where as picking is done by both. A schematic diagram of loom is shown below (fig.-2.7), where weaving of patola (whole saree of 5m) is done in this open and straightens condition.

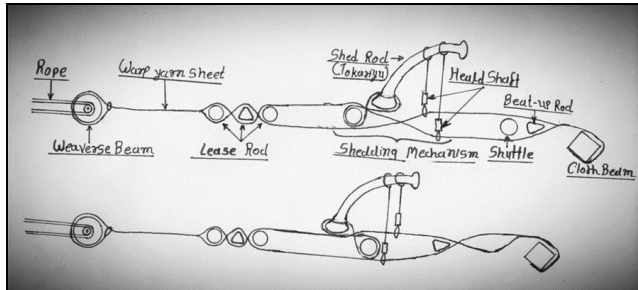


Fig 2.7: Schematic diagram of Patola loom

As seen there is back roll on to which the warp is fixed uniformly. From that the warp sheet passes through lease rod. Further through shedding mechanism and finally made into fabric. Traditional shedding mechanism is used over here. One Bamboo pipe (known as Tokariya) is used for shed changing and this bamboo pipe is operated with help of lever which change the shade. Unique V shape rod is use for beat-up. Which is removed after beating process is over. Finally fabric is formed.



Fig 2.8 Finishing done by means of KATAR

For finishing an additional device known as KATAR which resemble a ball point pen is use for setting the design on patola. When the weft is brought near fell of the cloth, with the help of the katar, this weft is set according to pattern, which is unique feature of patola weaving.

3. Traditional Designs

The Traditional designs of Patola are strictly adhered to when making the fabric. These traditional designs are nearly 900 years old. There are primarily four colors used in Patolas (Red, Yellow, Green, White), and the combination of these four colors brings to life the magical weaves of Patolas. The traditional names of some of the designs are given below with some samples pictures.

1	Manek chowk	8	Navratna
2	Nari Kunjar	9	Panchanda
3	Chanda bhat	10	Chab or Chabdi
4	Lion kunjar	11	Chadan chowk
5	Pan bhat	12	Butter Ful
6	Three Ful	13	Pankho
7	Lehar		



Fig 2.9: Different traditional patterns

4. Conclusion

Potola making is a traditional Indian art, which is performed by only few salvi families in patan today. We should find ways and means to promote it and make efforts that more and more people learn this traditional art and perform it.

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