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Comparative study based on traditional hand embroidery and machine embroidery in present trends

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Abstract

This paper highlights the art of traditional hand embroidery and its comparison to machine embroideries in present trends. Hand embroidery is the heritage of our culture which seems to be diminishing now days due to its higher cost and slow procedure. People in our country belongs to different income groups due to this there are variant customers which demands for products from low to high quality. So, machine embroidery acts as a solution to these problems in our fast-changing fashion world. Beside this, hand embroidery is still in boom when it comes to designer studios and couture wear outfits, due to its beauty and excessive modification possibilities which is rigid in machine embroidery. Thus, both the techniques of surface embellishment are special in different areas of apparel production.

Keywords: Apparel, fashion, craft, motifs, couture, trend, embellishment, smocking etc.

Introduction

In order to decorate the surface of a fabric number of methods are applicable which includes textured weaving (called self-embellished fabric), hand paintings, fabric manipulation techniques like smocking, shirring, tucks etc. and embroidery. Embroidery method is applicable in two ways with help of hand and machine. In this method various designs are created on fabric while keeping in mind about present trends by using threads and some fancy stuff like pearls, sequins, beads, stones, buttons etc.

What is embroidery?

Embroidery is the traditional art for decorating the surface of fabric by hand or machine with the help of needle, thread and frame/loop. There are variety of threads based on their aesthetic and functional qualities like cotton, silken, twisted and untwisted etc. available in different shades.

Embroidery is applicable on number of apparels such as tops, shirts, pants, jackets, caps, belts, skirts, shoes etc. There are number of stitches through which different patterns are created like, chain stitch, running stitch, back stitch, stem stitch, cross stitch, herringbone stitches, buttonhole stitch etc.

Embroidery historic perspective

Embroidery is originated for the purpose of reconstruction of garments in terms of patching, mending, tailoring and reinforcing cloth by hand. It is originated from the 5th-3rd century BC, some examples of work are found in China. In 300-700 AD, the edges of bands were finished with stitches like back stitch, running stitch, whipped stitch, stem and buttonhole stitch. Slowly and gradually the purpose of embroidery changed from reinforcement to decorative purpose. Later clothing was seen as a sign of wealth and status in society.

The 17th-century Turkish traveler Evliya Celebi called it the craft of the two hand ^[7]. The Medieval was a sign of high social stat.

us, hence it had become the important art. Gold and silver threads were used for decorating the surface through embroidery. There were various things like tunics, robes, uniforms, flags, shoes, horse tapping etc. were decorated with embroidery.

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What is traditional hand embroidery?

The traditional embroideries refer to the art of decorating the fabric surface from different states of India based on their cultural and traditional values. These are done on a particular fabric and specific stitches are being used with traditional motifs. Some of them are done for a particular occasion by the household women with lots of emotions and love while some are done to depict stories and nature.

In India almost every state has a particular type of traditional embroideries with specific names and purpose such as Phulkari from Punjab, Kutch from Gujarat, Chamba Rumal (handkerchief) from Himachal, Kantha from Bengal, Kasuti from Karnataka, Chikankari from Utter Pradesh, Gota Patti from Rajasthan, Kashida from Kashmir.

The various traditional embroideries are as follow

• Phulkari

The Phulkari means “floral craft”. It originated in the late 7th century in Punjab. It is done by mother, grandmother and aunts since the birth of daughter in their family for the purpose of gifting in her wedding as part of their cultural values. Stitches like sateen is most popular with silken threads on khaddar fabric (hand woven) is used for this special craft. There are geometrical motifs and sometimes natural motifs like flower and leaves are also done all over the fabric. Scarf, shawl or dupattas for daily use are called as “Phulkaris” which are done in simpler way, whereas for special occasion a dress which covers the whole body and fully intricated with jaal (all over) motifs are called “Bhags”.

• Kutch

The Kutch embroidery is originated in 16th and 17th century in Kutch district of Gujarat by tribal people who had migrated from Greece, Germany, Iran, Iraq. Stitches used in Kutch embroidery are chain, buttonhole, running and satin stitch done on cotton fabric, whereas motif of birds, flowers, and human figures are used. Specialty of Kutch work is the use of mirrors called “abhla” which are semi covered with thread using buttonhole or chain stitches. There are six types of kutch embroidery based on the working styles of sub tribal groups such as khareek, pako, raabari, suf, garabia jat, mutava. The various product of Kutch embroidery other than ghagra, choli are pagri (head gear for men), cushion covers, bed covers, wall hangings etc.

• Chamba Rumal

Chamba Rumal is originated in Chamba kingdom of Himachal Pradesh in 17th century. It is done for the purpose of gifting their daughters in wedding as a dowry. This embroidery is done over mulmul or fine cotton with untwisted fine quality of handmade silk threads. Motif Saree inspired from various scene from epic Mahabharata, Ramayana, Krishna raas-leela, scene of war, marriage and hunting. The technique of “dohara tanka” called double satin stitch is used without any knots on fabric in geometrical pattern like square and rectangle. It appear sso fine that it looks like a painting, as it is originally inspired by the pahari (hill) paintings. In chamba rumal outlines are drawn with a charcoal and brush which is than filled by double satin stitches in such a way that both the faces of fabric are completely same.

• Kantha

Kantha is a traditional embroidery of West Bengal, Tripura

and Odisha. Household women reuse their old saree by arranging them into layers and hold them together with running stich embroidery techniques. Beside this various saris, kurta, blouse, shawls, pillow and cushion covers were also available in kantha embroidery. Motifs in kantha are inspired from flowers, birds, geometrical shapes and from daily life activities. Fabric is covered with running stitch which create wrinkles over the surface of fabric.

• Kasuti

The term Kasuti indicates an activity that is done using cotton fabric and hands. It is derived from the words Kai (meaning hand) and Suti (meaning cotton). Kasuti embroidery is originated in Karnataka during the Chalukya period (6th to 12th century). Motifs used in kasuti are traditional and based on Rangoli pattern of Karnataka. Gold and silver threads were used for decorating bridal saree on special occasion like wedding. Motifs like chariots, shells, gopura (gateways) palanquin (palaki) were used in geometrical pattern and marked with charcoal pencil later embroidered with double running stitch called Ganti, zig zag stitch called Murgi, cross stitch and running stitches called Neyge and Menthe. It is done in such a fine way that both the sides of fabric are same.

• Chikankari

Chikankari is the traditional embroidery of Utter Pradesh primarily from Lucknow. It is originated in the Mughal period. The word chikan is a Persian word Chakeen which means making of delicate patterns on the fabric. It is called white embroidery as it is done over white fabric with a white thread. Cotton, fine mulmul or delicate fabric like georgette, organza, fine silk were used. In order to follow trends, chikankari is now done in pastel shades of yellow, pink, blue etc. using white or matching threads along with some additional crafts like mukaish work, mirror work which makes it more attractive. Motifs are inspired from nature like flowers and leaves, and delicately intricated with stitches like herringbone, cross, and running which is done at the wrong side or back side of the fabric and its shadow appears in the front which is the actual beauty of Chikankari, this art of intricating from back side of fabric is called shadow work.

• Kashida

Kashida embroidery is famous from Kashmir. It is originated during the Mughal period. Traditionally done over woolen and silk fabric with one or two stitches at a time like chain stitch, herringbone stitch, stem stitch and knot stitch. These are majorly done in pastels shades with similar color thread in such a way that it gets merged with base fabric. Motifs are influence by nature like flowers, leaves, birds, trees, fruits etc. Phirans, namdah (kurta, rugs) and stole are famous apparel in kashida embroidery.

• Gota patti

Gota patti is traditional art famous from Rajasthan. A piece of zari fabric is cut in patti (patel shape) then applied over main fabric and edges are finished with various stitches like chain stitch, running stitch etc. Which gives the impact of gold zari work. Gotta is now available in a form of ribbon as well as ready shapes are also available in different forms and sizes influenced by nature. This is done most commonly on female attires like saree. Now done in various occasional wear outfits for men and women.



Kutch work



Phulkari



Kashida



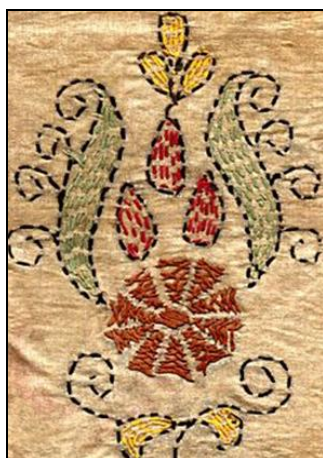
Chamba Rumal



Kasuti



Gota Patti



Kantha



Chikankari



Machine embroidery

The impact of machine embroidery over hand embroidery

Machine embroidery is considered as a fastest mode of fabric embellishment majorly done for the commercial purpose. There are two techniques through which machine embroidery can be done that is “free-motion machine embroidery” and “computerized machine embroidery”. Machine embroidery takes lesser time as compared to hand embroidery but there are less possibilities for creative stitches and accessories to be used unlike hand embroideries.

Thus, following are the impact of machine embroideries-

- Machine embroideries are done on large scale majorly in export houses for bulk production. Thus, it reduces the cost and garments are easily available at cheaper rates.
- Computerized machine embroidery allows various stitches in order to copy hand embroidered motifs, which result in duplication of traditional craft.
- In machinery embroidery threads are made up of rayon, polyester or metallic which gives artificial and smooth texture and makes a sense of attraction for customer.
- Hand embroidery takes lots of time and efforts, which increases the cost but that is worthwhile due to its excellent beauty and natural look. Thus, it is afforded by few customers.
- In computerized machine embroidery motifs are designed through software in a very short period of time. These are uniform and same motif can be easily applicable on various apparels without any differences, unlike hand embroidery.
- Beside this, in present time most of the famous designers are working on hand embroidery not only because of its beauty but also for modification and exploration based on their inspirations, which is very rigid through machines.

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