

Costumes and Ornaments of Rajasthan

The costumes of any region are influenced by the climate, available resources and culture of that place. If we talk about Rajasthan, even after all modernity, there is an indelible mark of culture on the costumes here. The most special thing about Rajasthani costumes is the vibrant colours.

Although all the colours are used in Rajasthan, but the varieties of colour red used here are amazing. That is why it has been said that “Maaru thare desh me upje teen ratan, ik dhola, dooji marwan teejo kasmool rang”, (Kasmool meaning red).

Men's Clothing

Clothes of cotton have been in use in Rajasthan since the time of Kalibangan and Ahar civilization. The spinning jenny and spindles found during excavations from these places is an evidence that the people of that period used cotton clothes. Common people required limited clothing. This pattern is still visible to us today. In the villages of Rajasthan, men wear dhoti and “pachewade” (clothing used to cover the upper part of body). The use of angarakhi in winters has been prevalent since ancient times.

We know from various sources that among the Rajasthani men there was a practice of wearing printed and embroidered clothes. The people of different professions wore differently styled costumes.

Many Kalpasutras illustrated in Rajasthan, throw ample light on the dress of the common man and the Maharajas. These included the crown and turban of kings, dupattas, embroidered dhotis and thick angarakhis.

The contact with the Mughals brought diversity and changes in these costumes. Various styles of turban such as Atapati Amarshahi, Udayshahi, Khanjarshahi, Shivashahi, Vijayshahi and Shahjahani. People of different professions wore turbans

of different styles. There was a difference of length and the pech (twists) in the turbans of the people of different professions. Goldsmiths wore antewali and the banjaras thick striped turban. The colour of the turbans changed with seasons. They wore Mothda turban in marriages, Lahariya in Shravan, Madeel on Dussehra and floral prints on Holi. To make the turban shiny, turre, sarpech, baalabandi, dhugadhugi, gospech, pachewari, latkan, fatepech etc. were used. The upper-class people used to tie cheera and phenta.

The turban had an important place in costume. To protect one's pride, the saying is still prevalent in Rajasthan, "pagdi ki laaj rakhna". Wearing the turban used to protect the head from strong sunlight and it also reflected the social status and religious feelings of the person. In Rajasthan, the practice of giving honour by presenting turban in marriages and other celebrations is still prevalent.

Angarakhis which were worn by the common people changed with time and it came to be called by different names. Angarakhis were made in various types and sizes, which were called Tansukh, Duttai, Gaaba, Gadar, Mirzai, Dhodi, Kano, Dagla etc. The angrakhis for winters were stuffed with cotton. Khes, shawl and pamdi were thrown on the shoulders during winters.

Now, almost all of India has adopted western costumes. Pants and shirts have become the most accepted garment. Nevertheless, Rajasthan's Jodhpuri coat still holds its place.

Women's Clothing

We know about women's apparel from various sources. In the early medieval period women wore a special type of lower garment which is now popular in Rajasthan by the name Ghaghra. By the early medieval period, women clothes began to be printed, and embroidered. This tradition can be seen even today in the apparel of the nomadic and the tribal women of Rajasthan. Initially ghaghra, the lower garment that was wrapped around the waist became 'gherdaar kaliyon waala ghaghra'. It is also called lehenga. Kurti is particularly notable among the garments worn above the waist. It is still prevalent in Marwar today. 'Kaanchali' was worn under kurti.

The sarees of various types are in fashion, e.g., chol, nichol, pat, dukool, ansuk, vasan, cheer-patori, chorso, odhani, chundari, dhorawali saree etc. Chundari and lahariya are the special sarees of Rajasthan.

Many types of clothes for women's costumes were in vogue, some of which were— jaamadaani, kimkhaab, tasar, cheent, malmal, makhmal, paarcha, masru, chik, elaichi, mahmudi chik, mir-i-baadla, naurangshahi, bahadurshaahi, farookhshahi cheent, baafta, momjama, gangajali etc.

Salient features of Rajasthan's textile industry

Some of the 36 karkhanas (factories) established by Sawai Jaisingh were associated with textiles, such as simvankhana, rangkhana, chhapakhana, where the clothes were stitched, coloured and printed respectively.

Generally, dyeing work is done by the dyer (Rangrez or Neelagar). Among the fabrics to be dyed are – turban, saafe, odhani, ghaghra and angarakhi. The major types of dyeing are pomcha, lahariya and chunri. Apart from these, chaukadi, chaukadi ka jaal, patanga and dhanak etc. are some other kinds of dyeing.

Pomcha means an odhani with a lotus flower motif on it. It is customary for the mother of a new-born to receive yellow pomcha on the birth of a son and pink pomcha on the birth of a daughter from the maternal side.

Especially on the occasion of Teej in Shraavan, women of Rajasthan wear Lahariya bhaant ki Odhni and men wear Lahariya turban. The lahariyas are made in one, two, three, five and seven colours. The number five is considered auspicious. Hence, panchrang lahariya is worn on religious occasions.

Many types of lahariya were popular. We find 'Pratapsahi' lahariya mentioned in literature. Rangrez and Neelgar of Jaipur dyed 'Rajashahi' lahariya which had bright pink coloured stripes. If the stripes were oblique on one side only, then it was called lahariya, and if they were on both sides crossing each other, then it was called mothara. The lahariya of 'samudra lahar' is dyed by the dyers of Jaipur. The stripes are a little broader in this kind of lahariya. The 'samudra lahar' is also made in two, three, five and seven colors.

The baddh (tied) technique of Bandhej of chunri is most popular. Any religious work is incomplete without chunri. 'Jodhana' chunri made in Jodhpur is bright and durable. The bandhej of Sikar (Shekhawati) is also popular.

Earlier in Rajasthan, garments coloured in Malagiri (Malayagiri), brown colour remained fragrant for years. The angarakhis of Maharaja Sawai Ramsingh II kept in the City Palace, Jaipur still retain their fragrance. 'Amowa' was used by hunters that resembled khaki colour.

Today printing work is being done all over Rajasthan. Large and bold designs and patterns are printed in Pipad, Jodhpur and Pali, in which red, black, blue and green colours predominate. Barmer is famous for its ajrakh method of printing the garments. Printing on both sides of the cloth in red and blue is the speciality of the ajrakh print. Its designs are geometric and resemble the Turkish tiles. Chunri is printed mainly in red and black in Ahar and Bhilwara. But to make the odhani attractive, parrots, peacocks, flowers and leaves in yellow, pink and green are printed. Due to the large-scale printing in Akola, this town is called 'Chhepon ka

Akola'. Bagru (Jaipur) is famous for its black - red prints in which flowers, leaves, animals and birds are made in red and black on the base in matia (earthen) colour.

Sanganer (Jaipur) has very different types of elegant printed embellishments, a style which is totally different from that of other places. The major contribution of chhipas here lies in the use of beautiful, gentle and attractive colours. Twirled petals, bent leaves and intricate beauty of the flowers reflect how deft and accomplished these workmen are.

Do you know?

Sanganeri hand block print, Bagru hand block print and Kota Doria have received geographical indication in handicraft related category. Geographical indication is an aspect of industrial property that refers to a product's country or place of origin that assures quality and uniqueness that necessarily correlates with that defined geographic location, area or country.

The weavers used to make costly apparels from masuriya of Kaithoon, Mangrol (Baran), tansukh, malmal of Mathaniyan (Jodhpur) and wool of Bikaner-Jaisalmer. Tukari was considered the best amongst the indigenous clothes of Marwar. It was best made in Jalore and Maroth towns.

To decorate the garments, a figure is cut out of a cloth and hung on another cloth. It is used to decorate the curtains, tents and animal clothings. This is called chatapati.

Gota (gold and silver lace) is used to make clothes attractive. On cotton warp (tana) a lace is woven with the woof (bana) of silver thread which is called Gota. Gota, lappa, lappi, bamkri etc. are its various types. According to its width, gota can be chaumasya or aathmasya. Gota with a larger width is called lappa and that with a smaller width is called lappi. Khandela town of Sikar district in Rajasthan is a famous centre of the gota industry.

The women of Sikar and Jhunjhunu embroider odhanis of red gota. They mostly embroider camels, peacocks, bulls, elephants and horses. In Shekhawati, different coloured clothes are cut in different designs and stitched onto the other cloth, which is called patchwork.

To adorn the garments, they are embroidered upon with silk, kalaboot and silver thread. In eastern and southern Rajasthan, very intricate embroidery is done by employing reverse back stitch, chain and long small stitches. Men's clothing jama, chuga and angarakhi are embroidered.

In north-west Rajasthan, red and black coloured clothes are adorned by filling it with thick stiches of silk and fixing glass fragments here and there, which makes the

garments shinier. This kind of embroidery is prevalent even today in Jaisalmer and Barmer.

Ornaments

To look beautiful is the desire of every human being and the residents of Rajasthan are no exception to this. This desire is probably slightly stronger in women than in men. There is evidence of use of ornaments in Rajasthan since ancient times. Women in Kalibangan and Ahar used to wear ornaments made of clay and stones. During the Shunga period women wore bangles in their hands, khadwas (anklets) in the feet and hangings necklaces, made of gold, silver, pearls and gems. Women who were not rich, decorated themselves with ornaments made of bronze, brass and copper. Ornaments made of ivory were also in vogue.

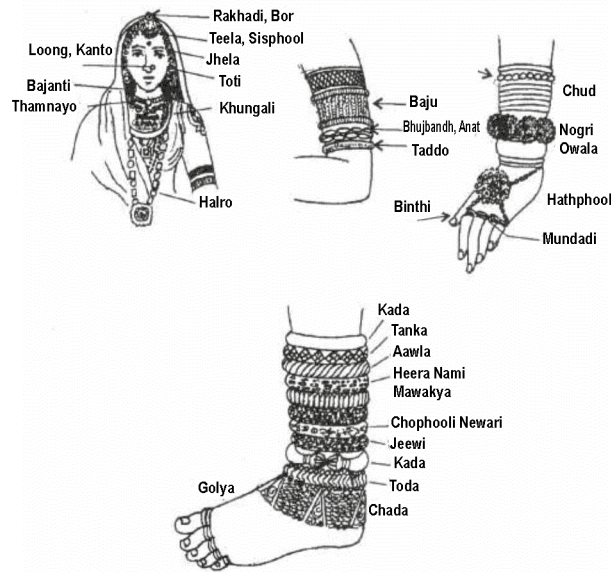
During the medieval period a lot of changes occurred in the making of the ornaments, much of which can be known from the literature and craft of that time. From the sculptures of Osian, Nagda, Dilwara, Kumbhalgarh etc. we know various forms and shapes of kundal, necklace, armllet, bangles, ankle bells (nupur) and, rings (mudrika).

The jewellery that is tied on the head by women is called bor, borla, sheeshphool, rakhri and tikra. Jewellery worn around the neck is called thamanyo, thedyo, aar, munthaya, jhaalra and thussi. Other jewelleries worn around the neck are tulusi, bajatti, haalro, haansli, timaniyan, pot, chandrahaar, kanthmaala, hamel, haankar, mandalya, chapkali, hanshaar, sari, kanthi. Among the jewellery worn in the ears are karnphool, peepalpatra, phool jhumka, angottya, jhela, latkan and toti. Jewellery worn in hands include kada, kankan, mokdi (bangles made of lac), kaatarya (bangles made of glass), nogri, chaant, gajra, gokhru and bangles. Similarly, in fingers, beenti, daamna, hathpaan, chhada are worn. Kada, langar, payal, paayjeb, ghunghroo, nupur, jhanjhar, nevri etc. are worn in the feet. Nath, besar, baari, bogli, kaanta, chooni, chop, bhanwarkadi etc. are worn in the nose. Kandora and kardhani is worn around the waist. The teeth are coated with gold which is called rakhan. Inserting a gold nail in the middle of teeth by a woman is called choonp.

In Rajasthan, men also wear different types of jewellery. The tradition of wearing murkiyaan, laung, jhaale, chhelkadi in the ears, baajuband, kada, narmukh in hands and ring, beethiya, moondriya in fingers has now reduced considerably, but these ornaments are still worn in rural areas.

Children also wear a wide variety of ornaments. Hansuli in the neck, kade in hands and legs and moti or loong in the ears are worn by children. Kadas of hands and legs are known as kaddulya. The thin Sangli worn in the foot with ghunghroos attached is called jhaanjhriya or jhaanjhariya. It is also called painjanni. An ornament

worn around the neck by children to prevent them from bad omen and evil spirit is called najarya. Children's ears are pierced and worn with gold or zinc kudak. Later, they are replaced by moti, loong, gurda, murki or baali. Kudak of solid gold is known as murki.



Rajasthani ornaments of Women

Rajasthan also has a very rich tradition of jewellery making. When the capital of Rajasthan, Jaipur was founded, the value of jewellery was so much in the mind of its founder that he named the main market of Jaipur as Johri Bazaar. The most important Chaupad here is named Manak Chowk, because manak is regarded as the king of jewels. Presently Jaipur is world famous for its business of jewellery and gems. Some cities of Rajasthan are also famous for their distinctive jewellery making style. Nathdwara, the city of Shrinathji is famous for its silver jewellery Taarkashi (made of fine metal wires). Similarly, the Theva art of Pratapgarh in which heavy gold work is done between the glass holds its own distinct identity in the whole country.

Exercise

Multiple choice questions

1. Which colour is Kasumal?
(a) Red (b) Black
(c) White (d) Green
2. Which place of Sikar district is famous for gota industry?
(a) Nechwa (b) Piprali
(c) Khandela (d) Khood
3. Where do women wear jewellery named Borla?
(a) Nose (b) Ear
(c) Hand (d) Head
4. Putting a gold nail between the teeth is known as
(a) Choonp (b) Baari
(c) Borla (d) Daamna
5. To which district does Theva art belong?
(a) Pratapgarh (b) Udaipur
(c) Churu (d) Jhalawar

Very short answer type questions

1. What do you understand by 'murki'?
2. Name four jewellery items worn by women around the neck.
3. What is 'Pomcha'?
4. In which month do the women wear the odhani of lahariya bhaat?
5. What do you understand by 'patchwork'?
6. Tell us about the 'penjani' ornament.
7. Which place is famous for 'taarkashi'?
8. Name two major centres for textile printing in Rajasthan.

9. Match the following-

Ornament	Wearing place
1. Thussi	Ear
2. Pipalpatra	Finger
3. Damna	Head
4. Borla	Neck

Short answer type questions

1. Mention different types of angarakhis.
2. Name various clothes popular for women's apparel.
3. Write a note on different types of lahariya.
4. Mention various ornaments of children.

Essay Type Questions

1. State the main features of Rajasthan's textile industry.
2. Write an article on Rajasthani male costumes.
3. Write an article on the jewellery worn by women and men of Rajasthan.

Project work

1. Find the major centres of India related to textile industry and mark them on the map.
2. Find the methods of printing, dyeing and weaving of Rajasthan textile industry by collecting and preparing samples.

Imagine

1. You are a woman going to your brother-in-law's marriage procession, what jewellery would you wear ?