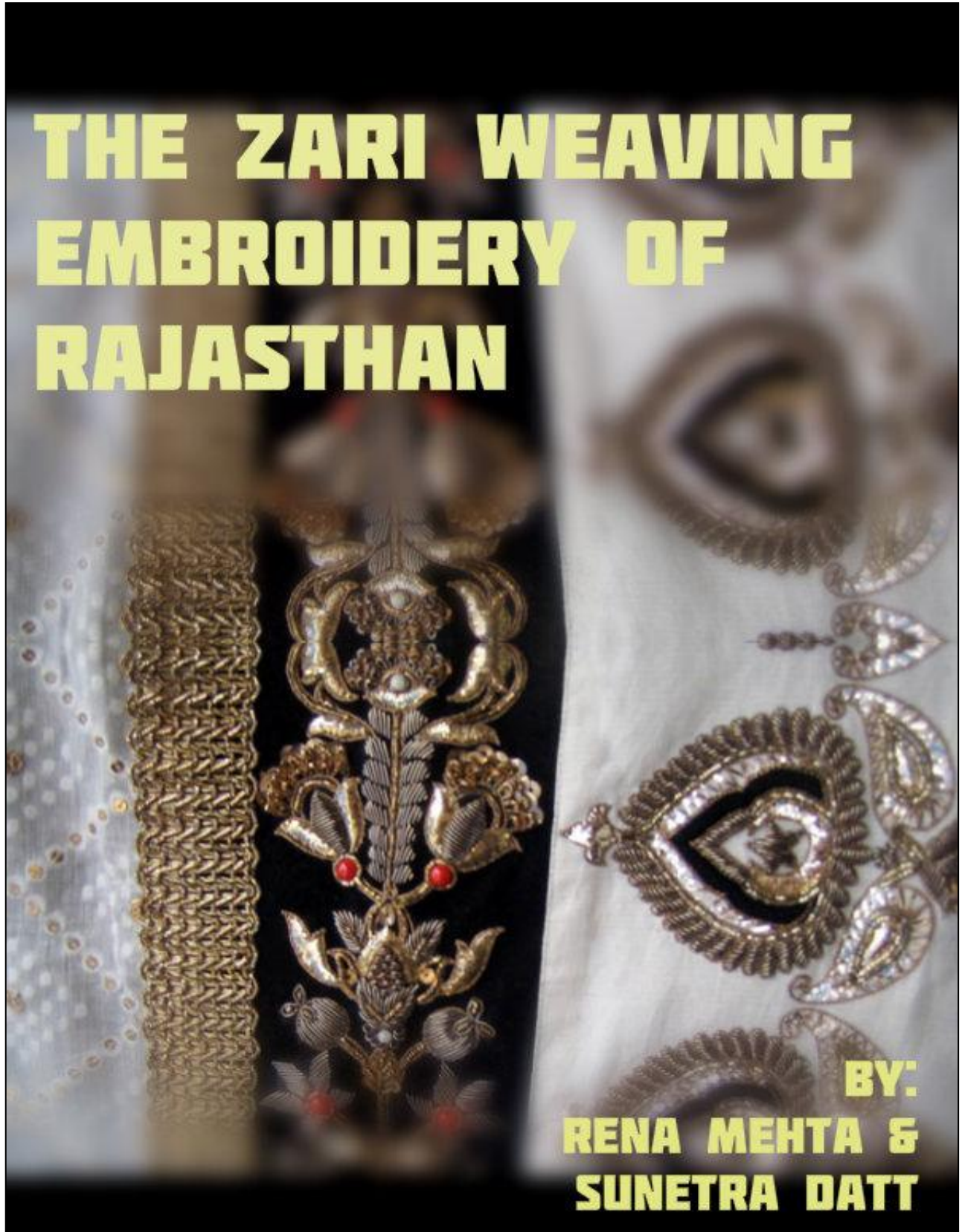


THE ZARI WEAVING EMBROIDERY OF RAJASTHAN



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Art is the type of communication in all the societies. Indian designs and motifs are a synthesis of myths of various cultures, beauty of various folk arts, motifs and designs have unfolded possibilities poring the way to discover the wide range of symbols and patterns India, the country has fine heritage of culture, tradition, art, music, literature and does exhibit "Unity in Diversity" - through variegated charms of festivals, rituals, art, music, costume and languages. Indians are world famous for their magnificent workmanship and produce the most beautiful hand spun and hand woven textiles, yet preserved and exhibited in many of the known Indian as well as western museums. The origin of Indian textiles can be traced to the Indus valley civilization. The art of embroidery is clearly of the Eastern origin and is of such ancient lineage that our knowledge of it stretches into pre-historic ages. The needlework tradition dates back to 2300 BC to 1500 BC and has been richly inherited by various regions, each having a special style and an individual inspiration. With the discovery of bronze needles at the site of Mohenjo-Daro (2500 BC to 1700 BC), it is evident that there was knowledge of needlecraft even so long ago. The Indian folk art and embroidery play an important role in creating many new designs. Moving to north India, embroidery is most prominently practiced by women. Emotions are expressed through various media and their expressions are termed as art and the Gotta work is beyond the description. Indian frolic and traditional embroideries play an important role in fashion world but itself has reached the threshold of extinction of its pure form. Fragile and innovative changes in fashion trends have led to its extinction of the craft.

Traditional craft has been and shall be a reflection of cultural, socio-economic, climatic and historic state of society at all times. So saying that it has to be preserved has two connotations, the first being the preservation from exploitation and commercialization, the other being from the change that the craft is going through with the influences of the current market environment. The latter is inevitable and the former is where we can exercise some degree of control. A craft is bound to absorb and reflect what it breathe, we can only filter some of what it breathes, which is motive enough for pondering, looking out and taking action. Gotta is a flourishing craft of Northwestern India. Jaipur, Bikaner, Ajmer, Udaipur and Kota are renowned for their uniquely styled gota work. A Dash of red, green and yellow with glitter of gold brings some brightness and cheer in the life of the people of these regions that is by most part a dry and barren desert. Term Gotta has been derived from the Bengali word Gotu which means fullness. History behind the craft traveling a long way goes as Mughal emperor Humayun brought some Persian craftsmen with him on his return to India Between 1539-1554. These craftsmen introduced most of the art of that time. Rajputs of Rajasthan maintained a diplomatic relation with the Mughals. This resulted in a coalition of these two cultures and the effect of that association became remarkably visible on the art and craft of that period. The Rajputs patronized this new craft and invited artisans from all over the country to settle down in Jaipur.

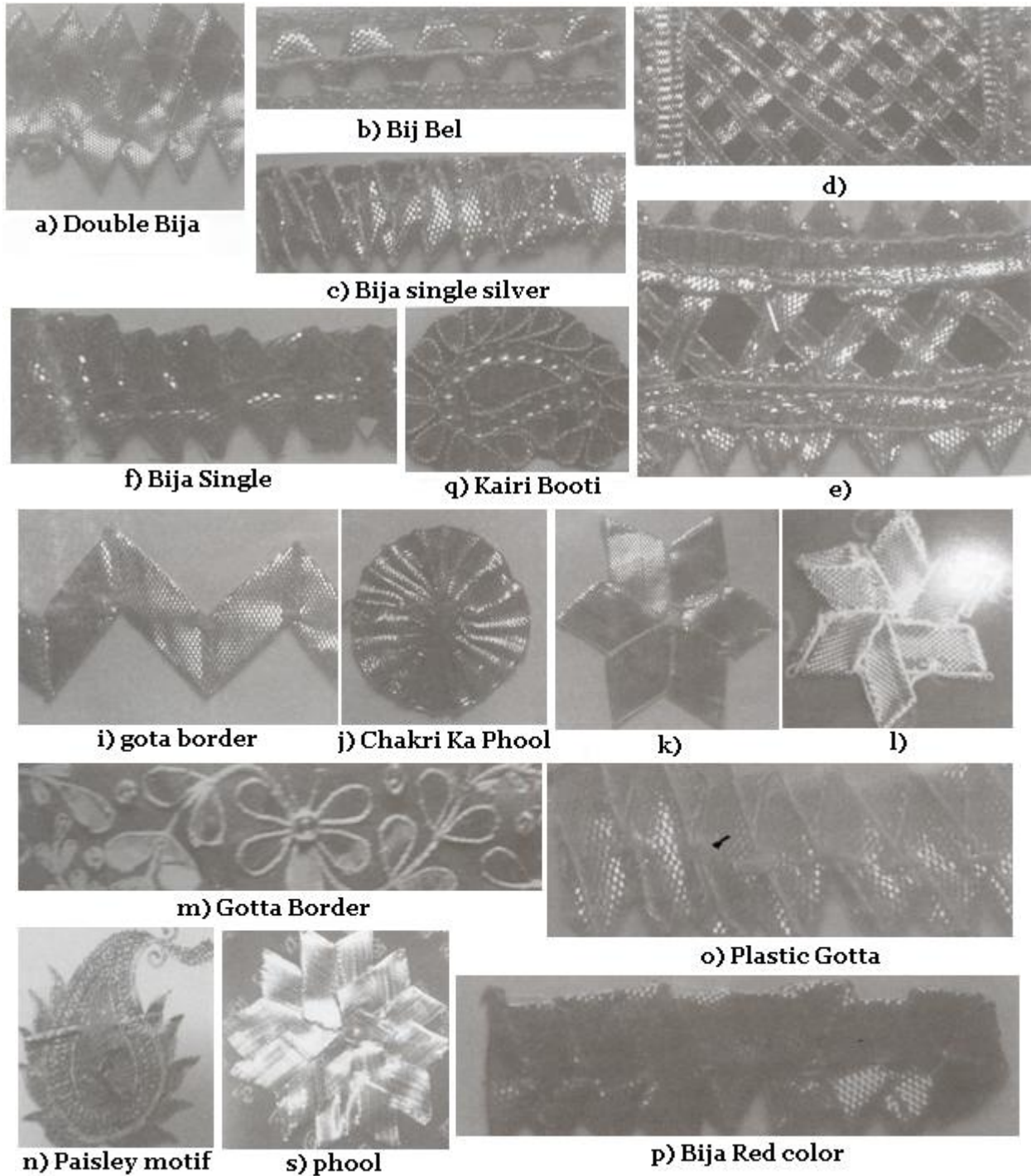


Plate 1: Variety of Gota used in Lappe ka kaam

Gota work might have originated as a result of competition between the royal households. Another school of thought believes that Gotta might also have originated as a low cost version of the Danka work. Dankas are the gold and silver sheets cut into the desired shapes and attached using couching stitch on to the fabric. Gota was much liked by the artisans as this golden ribbon was flexible and it allowed much wider scope of manipulation.

Traditionally Gota was a narrow ribbon with Badia sheets forming the warp and silk or cotton as the weft. The colors used in gota craft have its own significance and connotation. Gold is associated with sun and goddess Laxmi and Silver denotes moon and its light.

In Rajasthan there are two types of Vansh or Clan in Rajputs. Surya Vansh and Chandra Vansh. Reasons for the popularity of the gold Gota work of Amber region can be traced along its history. For them Gota was a metaphor for the divine descent that never lost its values or went out of fashion.

Gota work or Lappe ka kaam is also a form of fabric ornamentation that was perhaps developed in Rajasthan. It is also known as gota-kinari work and lappe-ka-kaam. On religious, social and festive occasions, men, women and children dress in their finest clothes that are often ornamented with Gota work or Lappe ka kaam. Gota lacing is extremely popular and odhni and turban edges of Rajasthan are often worked with it. Many printed or embroidered ghaghras are also trimmed with gota work.

Gota work or Lappe ka kaam is worked on fabric with the appliqué technique. With a slight hemming or simple running stitch, stylish designs flow from the artisan's fingers on to the garment. Depending on its width, Gota work or Lappe ka kaam can be found under different names like chaumasiya and athmasiya. Essentially, gota is a band of gold or silver ribbon of that varies with width, woven in a satin weave. Badia or a metal yarn that is made of beaten gold or silver forms the weft and silk or cotton that is used in the warp. Vibrant colors like Red, green, yellow, orange complemented with gold and silver are most preferred. The designs are organized into buta, buties, border and jal (Plate 1). The craft is passed from one generation to another. The main source of income for the women comes from this craft. Gota is a strip of gold or silver or various other colored ribbons of varying width, woven in a satin or twill weave. There are two styles folk and classic. It is worked with the appliqué technique using running, back, hem, or couching stitch on fabrics like georgette, chiffon, tussar silk, crepe, bandhani, cotton, viole, etc.

RAW MATERIALS USED

The raw material comprises of a yarn of silver polished with gold and passed under 10 Calendars to make into fine strand called "Kasab" and further drawn under a calendar to give it a flattened effect known as "Badia", Dabka, Salma, Sitara and Safeda. In recent years pure yarns are replaced by synthetic yarns. Threads used to attach on the fabric are cotton and polyester and the color ranged between creme to yellow. Hand sewing needles are used of 9-10 number, in order to give neat effect to appliqué work "Ari" needle is used.

COLOURS USED

The colors commonly used are Red, Orange, Pink, magenta, Maroon & Yellow which are nowadays available in all possible shades, as per the customer demand.

TYPES OF GOTTA PRODUCED

Various types of gotta are Sikhiya gotta, Chaumasa, Panchmasa, Athmasa, Lappa, Thappa, Gokhru, Leher Gotta, Nakshi, Bijbel, Bijiya, Chiru, Kiran, Chatai and Chip gotta. (Plate 2)



Plate 2 : Borders used in Gotta work

MOTIFS USED

The various types of motifs used are Floral & Animal. Floral comprised of gamla, pan ke phool, jaali waala phool, kali ka phool and star phool. Animal and Bird motifs comprised of peacock, sparrow, elephants and horse and others comprised of kairi butti, human figures and palanquin. In the recent trends it comprised of motifs stylized with salma, sitara & sequence. The placement of these motives was in overall pattern, spot pattern, borders, bands & jaal work. The products made out of the crafted textile are Articles made Kurti, kaanchli, Sari, Lehanga, poshaak, Dress for idols. Contemporary articles included Kurtis, Salwar suits and saris. (Plate 3)

PRODUCTION PROCESS

The Production of Gotta embroidered fabric involves the following steps

1. **Framing the Fabric:** Fabric is attached to wooden frame known as Khaat on all the four sides so that pricking of needle in the fabric is easy and without any creases while embroidering.
2. **Tracing Design:** The design to be traced was taken on the tracing paper and Pricked tracing paper placed on the Fabric for design.
3. **Transferring the design:** The design was transferred through the pricked paper using white paste made of safeda spread over it. The design is now taken over the fabric.
4. **Design Obtained on the fabric**
5. **Preparation of Gotta:** Based on the various types of motifs the gotta is cut and stitched in the desired form by introducing cuts and folds into different shapes.
6. **Attaching the Gotta:** Gotta cut and folded is attached with Hemming and Back stitch on the fabric
7. **Manufacturing of the article** - Kurti, kaanchli, Sari, Lehanga, poshaak, Dress for idols.



Plate 3: Motifs used on fabric

TRANSITION OF THE CRAFT

With the change in colors of threads from golden, silver to copper and antique also a drastic change is observed in the motifs used for production from traditional to geometric. The work was previously done on pure Georgette, Chiffon, and Velvet & Silk whereas as in recent years synthetic fabrics are used for the production. The various

products made are salwar kurta, lenhga, short kurtis, topper, skirts, cholis, ghagras, odhini's, saris, rakhi, turbans, torans, cushion cover, mobile cover and jhooties.

CONCLUSION

Gotta work is an embellishment that needs to be preserved. The preservation requires a detailed documentation of craft, its history, process, motifs, colors and products. Hence it can be concluded that the art needs to be preserved in the manner as it originated. Newer developments have resulted in the innovation and newness in this craft by modification of designs, motives and embellishment techniques.

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