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A Tale of the Evolution and Stylized Modification of *Paisley* in Different Eras of the Sub-Continent

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Abstract

The land of Kashmir is celebrated for the nature that abides within it, a place of immeasurable beauty, fabrics, color, scenic artistry and illustrative ways. Numerous fabrics of this land are unsheathed by their alluring, intricate, and delicate designs. Presumably, the well-known fabric patterns and designs among them are originated from the sub-Continent- namely, the “Paisley of Kashmir”. The art we shall be highlighting in this article shall be the Paisley motif from the land of Kashmir. Up to this day it is still used rigorously in variety of couture including wide range of casual domestic fabrics and gift particulars. The purpose of this article is to explore the literal background, origin, fashion, colorful patterns; and development in the motif, the present script and its use in the contemporary art world. Furthermore, my aim is to gain an in- depth knowledge on the content for which a series of interview schedule was held from the vast dealers of textile, needlewomen, embroiders of cloth, carpet manufacturers; and export dealers who had dealt with this Kashmir motif. This extensive exploration will not only enable us to dissect the use of Kashmiri motif but also contributes in knowing as how proactively it can be used to put extra touch of glamour for decorating home textiles such as bedcovers and dresses [1].

Index Terms: home textiles, Mango motif, *Paisley* of Kashmir, tadpole type pattern, teardrop.

I. Introduction

The world as we know is full of beautiful designs and motifs that boggle the mind and derive the element of awe & intrigue, but the most common or infamous one is the “*Paisley* Motif” whose shape is an artwork that resembles a “teardrop” like a pattern or like a “tadpole”, originally it acquired its fame from the Indian textile industry; and to put it, in a nutshell, the most well-known textiles in Sub-continent is the “Textiles of Kashmir”. As the work is derived straight out of a fictitious suburban legend the

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“Kashmir *Paisley*” is a very commonly used design. Hence, it is also called the “*Ambi*” or “Mango Motif” due to its shape resemblance and design. It's a renowned motif and is presumably called a “teardrop” or a “tadpole type pattern” around the globe. The Motif of Paisley is a veritably ancient motif form from its origin land, i.e.: Kashmir. In their native language it is known as “*kalga*” or “*kalanga*”. Having a Persian scent, it took the spotlight during the period of Mughal rule nearly in-between the 15th-16th centuries

A. Historical Background

Paisley is a well-known town of Renfrewshire (Scotland), and since the middle ages it has been flourishing under the rule of many Kings, Queens, Princes, alongside many Wars, religious poems and stories. Let us come to the place of birth that is Jammu and Kashmir, also known as the origin site of life in Indian Civilization and its rich culture demonstrated itself upon the Jammu and Kashmir due to its surroundings of *Shivalik* Ranges, the *Kargil* range. The nature concerning this art is purely prescribed in the hands of the people native to Jammu & Kashmir. It is also noteworthy that the first *Paisley* was woven and designed in Kashmir.

As *Paisley* motif is an old heritage of Kashmir and locally abundant. All dynasties were poetic and have an art history of their own, the earliest ones to adopt this art of Motif were the Persians, and later by the Mughal Emperors who did not leave anything behind, when it came to raving this art design and gave its status in the world as one of the most used Motifs out there, since the 15th or 16th century. *Paisley* motif has been used in so many places that you might find a few things in your home having the exact or similar design on any *haute* couture, décor, or pattern on any piece of crockery or someplace else that befits it. Therefore, it has been used in many places from everyday items to domestic goods, to gifts and presents.

The evolution of *Paisley* motif has seen profound developments and changes to the contemporary market demand, to stay up to date for its use in the modern-day world of fashion [2]. Normally the *Paisley* is made in woven or embroidered patterned design portrayed around the nation, but what separates the *Paisley* of Kashmir is the fact that the motif is unique and very intricate in depth and precision. The general symbol is a palm like fruit which is elongated on one end and round from the bottom giving it a tear drop shape. The palm tree fruit shape is very meaningful as the locals used that tree centuries ago to make clothing, woven fabrics, food, drinks

and shelter. Hence, the usage became such a dire need that it became the symbol of life and they would casually call it the “Tree of life”. Many shapes come into existence once you look into the shape symbolically or as a sign and lineage of fertility towards the local people [3].

II. Evolution Through the Subcontinent Eras

The history as we know it is pediment and consists of evolution since its inception, like know by the tales and history of the Sub-continent, gods and primitive people used to wear leaves and animal hide. As time evolves, we can see luxurious outfits and finest quality linen was worn by kings and noblemen. Today, elites, politicians, celebrities of this age gave more meaning to the piece of cloth today as it was back then due to civilization advancements. Hence, a complete niche has been generated by the textile industries of today, rising to a level where it has become a part of many cultures and heritage, in the past. It has been knowing that the art of hand weaving and spinning dates back to Harappa the 5000-year-old civilization, similarly, the history of other countries depict that textile was originated around 2nd century B.C. [4].

Historians have found evident proof in the Egyptian tombs that were carrying block print fabrics, garments that were embroidered in artistic designs, which leads to the fact that Indian civilization was producing the same in the medieval ages. The Sub-continent art and craft have been a pinnacle of exquisite designs and elegant finishing, all these efforts from the early man and his imagination led to the flourishing of the Indian textile export and have given the country a reputable place in the international market, major support to the art supply of Sub-continent is from no other than the Valley of Jammu & Kashmir. A land that is infamous for its woven and handmade textiles, in-depth artistry in fabrics like shawls of various patterns, rugs, carpets, fabrics of wool, and embroidery with the well-known elaborative *Paisley* motifs.

The Motif of *Paisley* is mixed into so many style-bound motifs that it has been given various forms and shapes, most of them resemble lotus-like shapes or lilies, iris, cherries, chinar leaf, or Almonds. Nowadays you can see famous Kashmir or *Pashmina* shawls having popular patterns and designs to showcase in many countries of the world, going back with the oldest found fragments in the bay of a Greek trading post in southern Egypt. the trade that has been taking place since the old ages of human civilization

where art and design took their birth first of their kind. The designs showcase extravagant floral motifs that were intertwined besides curated and elongated with *Paisley* motifs.

Since the boom of trade in the middle of the 17th century, there have been found millions of embroidered Kashmiri clothes, shawls, and carpets which were being traded in bazar's as far as the land of Persia, Europe, and the middle eastern world, etc. A mark of the age that proves that there is no mechanism in the world that can tie a complex knot or place an interlaced design the way human hands can [5].

The variety of traditions, crafts, and cultures show the attestations of notorious adjective agile art history that elaborates designed patterns: including, sorrowfully drafted obelisk, tabernacles, and puppets are all spectacular masterpieces of the artificer. All of the Indian Crafts and their patterns were substantially furnished everyday way of life, socio-political or conceptual conditions, vast palaces, and court sceneries.

The craft of intrigue designs has been known to mankind since ages and the foremost form of art is can be traced back to before the birth of Christ. The morning of the historical delicacy of design in Sub-continent is a little undetermined. But in accordance with the documentations, we can rest them with the era of Muhammadan.

Irruption in 712 A.D Announcement. Indeed, if people of the Sub-continent were formerly aware of the use of cloth for the bottom and to cover themselves, it has been constricted that they learned the art of spinning & weaving from the Persian Empire, and under the shadow of some of the aristocrat in the course of time. As time passed by the art was sifted by them, eye catching in through all the angels. Their other cultural acquirements according to Kashmiri chroniclers, geophysical and experimenters, the Sultan Zain-Al- Abedin (ad. 1468) has gotten the ornamental designs from the land of Iran to Sub-continent. As far as its potent history is inquired about, Sub-continent has always remained peculiar since its invaluable treasures that incorporates all the trades, oils, puppets, fabrics of cloths, etc. are open to us only for the mind of the reading viewer accounts [6].

The very essence can be served for the fabulous fabrics seen to have embellish the palaces of queen chambers. Many of them may still be living intimately in some aristocrat's families. They link directly to the elderliness

of Indian artifices, that's to say in the era of the Mughals dynasty, which began with the defeat of Babur. In 1526 by the Indian army. Kashmir's history of design, capstone of cultural nobility dates way back to the era of Hazrat Mir Syed Ali Hamdani (1341-1385AD). The notorious Saint and elder of Persia came to advise Kashmir with his religious teachings and had initiate along largely professed crafters via the silk route of trade which made laid the first brick of base for the cabin assiduity in the Vale of Kashmir. In the duration of the Mughals, this form of art came to light and had taken its place in the investiture of world-notorious fabrics whilst Babur mastered the entirety of army in Sub-continent in 1526.

From 1556-1605 the reign of Akbar's Announcement. Babur's grandchild was the topmost Mughal ruler, giving similar motivation to all forms of art throughout his land that he is frequently contrasted with Shah Abbas_ the great emperor of Persia. During his reign, Sub-continent pulled off sensations unlike any other emperor. Akbar was emulated by all tycoons who were subordinated to him, crafted a great fabric making attentiveness and invited to his cabinet the Persian artists and workmen from all over the region. The gradational evolution of the Motif of *Kalanga*, which played immensely an important part of the ornament is worth agitating. Then harmonious with the later ages in which it evolved on a number of fabrics [7].

In the Era of Mughals which stuck to a social hierarchy ruled substantially by the Islamic laws, and its art, correlated to a larger part on Persian tradesmen generally demonstrated Islamic worldview. Mughal era is largely devoted to *Kani* shawls and the sophistication in waved patterns, an elegant natural image of the flowers in *boteh*, and a precisely established *Hashia* that resembled as honey around the designed *boteh*. Mughals put a lot of emphasis on nature's representation alongside an elaborative yet harmonized style of designs. This accentuation was participated by many other emotional mediums of art of the era of Mughals similar to weaving of carpet and armature [8].

As the Afghans emerged in Kashmir around the year 1753, a prosperous and blessed period came to a sudden end. Afghans had a twisted taste in shawl fabrics and they showed keen interest, but the grievous rigors. Afghans foisted in Kashmir's embroiderer the quality of the shawls took a rough hit under the Afghans, the *boteh* became more conventionalized and symbolic. The cornerstone theme of Afghans era was an elaboration of the

cone shape *boteh* such mundane like shape. Bouquets were formed from the flowers design such as nearly noncommittal leafage. Flowers weren't always fully unidentifiable most cases where the rose, crocus, and marigold obtained a half realistic and half naturalistic presence. Nevertheless, they intended the *boteh* to reshape down via verismo, onto a more ballistic form. The first appearance of the closed design of the curvilinear shape of the *boteh* started appearing within its walls to showcase the newly found freedom and the hyper creative political power towards the locals of the Kashmir [9].

The Sikhs twisted the dystopian shawl pattern & design rules, they marked the muscle of an aboriginal race, putting more focus on their eligibility of having true heritage of the Land of the sub-continent. The denotation of “ultramodern” form of art propelled to the stylish shawls crafted a design with the appearance of the Sikh people in Kashmir around 1819. During these times the shawls that are found reflect of “Ultramodern art” and the military prowess which moldered Sikhism. A vaguely definite design that we see during their reign is the hooked wine on the motif. This conjured from Elaboration in natural growth within the Sikhs, design formed on the *boteh* concentrated on the cockscomb or foolscap, the saw-toothed splint, the water lotus-suchlike rose, the” inclined “and “stocky” *boteh*, the hook shaped vine, the shaft or tree of cypress piled medals. Centered cones. The highest ranked shawl in that time was also called the shade shawl. Concave *boteh* tethered away from the decreasingly overwhelming grounded design to dematerialize via displaced directional shape across a roaring ocean of newly formed images, fantastic and mystifying [10].

After the demise of the maharaja Ranjit Singh, Kashmir was swooped by Raja Gulab Singh during 1846; and in that as many times, Agents of the French people arrived there, in numbers of amount brining the rearmost Shawl patterns from Persia. The Era of Dogra is really immingled as a sweeping of each pattern resulting in the jacquard impend. An assiduity of *Kani* weaving was immensely applauded by the French and was appreciated in all its forms and was an aftermath for its reformation [11].

III. Narrative on the Modification in Fabrics

It took a mere 300 years for the shawls of Kashmir to develop, forged in many periods of foreign democratic rule. The Mughals reigned in a

successful era over Kashmir, after which Afghans, the Sikh people, and the Dogra's came along the way. A family skill from father to son carried down in the weaving line as it erected upon those chops and in turn given the skill down to their seed fortifying a nearly guarded succession secret. After the affair of fabrics from Sub-continent, keen interest started in the Persian Empire, maybe known as the widest or elaborative around the globe. Indians also called out for the monumental designs or art works that were woven and stitched by a needle/ thread. Typically found in the land of Kashmir, the ground also formerly called the "theater of immortal seasons" as of 17th-century AD, fabrics of the finest quality; and premium art work were made during the 18th century Advertisement. Europe had great taste and admiration for the fabrics and designs made in the Sub-continent. The first ever global appearance was set out to be in the exhibition of 1851 in London City as it marked the prominence of its finesse. It only doesn't attract the eyes of all, but dealers headed to the place of its birth. With time, numerous manufacturing enterprises opened their Indian based industries. Largest known was the East Indian fabric company alongside many other factory developers by the continental manufacturing firms are still run under the tag of east India Co. As a result, a large-scale area was covered by these industrial giants which covered a large part of Srinagar, Amritsar, Jaipur & Jammu, etc. In current times, the product and its import of materials had extensively skyrocketed due to the utmost upgrade in fabric quality. As of an early report the largest or almost 90% of the fabrics that were being made came only from the part of Jammu and Kashmir's Srinagar region [10].

IV. Descriptive Analysis

Curated into a short paraphrase to extract the essence of all that is art, the *Paisley* Motif represents a heritage that generated from ancient times, a history that is so rich that it involves religious leaders, priests, acolytes, Kings, Queens, and many people across multi-cultural domains in the spectrum. The Generation of people that have maintained this art and given it the form of a well-known motif are non-other than those who are considered the true artisans of their field, with skills that were matchless and incomparable.

The craftsmen and skilled artisans have done a great job in keeping this art and its style breathing to this date that was bestowed upon them by their lineage and is an asset for eternity. An in-depth study of the Motif of Kashmir indicated that the craftsmen are people of patience and virtue. This

weaving craft and embroidered art of the *Paisley* motif is getting less attention and perhaps over a certain period of time maybe it'll be diminished under the burden of evolving modernism [11]. So, the federals should help the tradesmen with educative, monetary gifts, furnishing the tech side of this outfit, etc. Making them coherently powerful with the preservation of this weaving art and by conserving the riches of this heritage. Only by making this trend of art a viral thing that represents Kashmir, if the world recognizes and takes way to flourish this art at the transnational position by showcasing art in conglomeratic exhibits, world trade expositions, or through the internet. An exercise should be done to promote this mesmerizing critique in the design history of art, and fabrics.

V. Conclusion

The Blooming pattern of *Paisley* is nothing less than a timeless piece of art that has been embedded into the very core of Asian and South east Asian heritage. At the very least it has been evolving with the time as man modernizes the industry, *Paisley* motif has been seen and used for many design corrugation and patterns that sometimes it is easier to forget that it all generated from deep past concepts of life, strength and longevity. The most common places to find this pattern is in the home and textile industry, printed on apparel for the looks and pleasure of it; embroidered or sometimes printed on bed covers. It is majorly used in textile designing as a motif that is being studied to this date.

A large part of Kashmir's culture, art and crafts are its Motifs. In terms of trade, all kinds of motifs and designs are used by the locals that may include, abstract, Floral Flowers, Geometrical sunflower tips, *chinar* tree splits, tulips and roses as a representation, marigold and almonds are also formed in triangle or circular shapes, placed in multidirectional sketches of different fine lines, creepers, apples, backwoods, and *jaalas* are used in representations, the most fan favorite design is the elongated *Paisley* motif, which is drawn towards a flower shape of a creeper, and woven accordingly to each fabrics illustrative texture. The Motif of *Paisley* consists naturally in rudiments of leaves, fruited vines, flowery bosoms and in largely ornamental announcements manner of style and finish. The astray of rudiments in leaves, catcalls, and creepers are mixed in a manner that doesn't ruin or sacrifices the harmony of its external forms [12]. The stretched Babylon marks in the *Paisley* motif of Kashmir that are in common usage in many ϕ -forms in a weaving and Paper Mache molds

and oils. A single motif known to be called a *Buti* or *Buta* are to be instilled with the *Paisley*, normally distinguished by sizes as for a bigger one “*Buta*” is used and the smaller one is represented by “*Buti*” [13].

Unfortunately, with the rise in Industrialization and modernization, paisley motif is subdued and limited in its usage not only in Western regions but also in Eastern regions. This is probably because, Asian countries are adopting western style more and more with the passage of time; thus, ignoring their own heritage, art and culture. It is high time where not only government should play a vital role in promoting Kashmiri art and paisley design; but also, artists and craftsmen skilled in paisley motif should make a conscious effort to promote it locally. With a little touch of glamour, this motif can be retained in frocks, maxi, kurta’s, sarees and home textiles. The list of ideas can be endless if one truly endeavors to incorporate this design.

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