



REVIEW PAPER: PRINTING TECHNIQUES OF MADHYA PRADESH

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ABSTRACT This review was performed involving studies and documentation on the topic of Block Printing of Madhya Pradesh. The study is based on secondary data which was taken from books, journals, e-journals, e-resources, articles and Ph.D. thesis work available. Some keywords were identified to select the documentation. The next was to screen the abstract of the selected papers and exclude the rest which did not meet the selection criteria. Additionally, 9 full-text articles, 10 research papers, 3 Ph. D. and 10 books were assessed for eligibility.

The SLR approach was adopted to select the related text from all available literature. Few criteria's were identified for the same and implemented using keywords. After reading and reviewing these research Papers, analysis of data was done to achieve conclusion.

The objective of the literature review of block printing techniques of Madhya Pradesh, is to identify printing techniques and clusters which are more renowned and well documented, and further to identify the gap of research. There is no review paper available on this area which makes it necessary to analyse the documentation status of block printing clusters in Madhya Pradesh. This review also identify the changing focus and current status of research of this area.

KEYWORDS : Madhya Pradesh Handicraft, Block Printing, Ujjain, Bagh Print, Nandana Print, Bhairongarh print, Handicraft research, Block printing of Madhya Pradesh

INTRODUCTION

Madhya Pradesh located in the heart of India, is rich in cultural, religion, art and craft heritage. Printed textiles of Madhya Pradesh are one of this heritage. Natural dyes and block printing were used extensively by Madhya Pradesh artisans to developing vivid apparel and home furnishing products intended for both local and export buyers. Clusters like Bagh, Neemuch, Ujjain, Indore, Sarangpur, and Sironj were popular printing centers in history. During 19th century the block printing craft saw its downfall in Madhya Pradesh. Simultaneously it was ignored from the written language as well. The objective of this review paper is to systematically study the literature available on Madhya Pradesh Block printing craft. There are few books which patronage this craft along with the research papers and articles from different academic professionals.

The paper is to study the content written on block printing craft of Madhya Pradesh. It includes books, articles and research papers written by academicians, research fellows, and historians. The objective is to find out the focus of the writers on the particular segment of craft.

Review of Literature- Books-

Keshavrao Balwant Dongray, 1935 in his book "In touch with Ujjain" mentions Historical importance of Ujjain for religion, trade, and politics with brief mention of textiles. It explains Ujjain as a chief market and the distributing centre for articles including fine muslins imported from and exported to other places during the rule of King Ashoka.

Census of India, 1961, provides a detailed description of Block printing and dyeing craft of Ujjain cluster in 1961. It refers the dyers and printers of Madhya Pradesh as professionals with being in this craft from generations. It gives detailed description of political, religious, social status, economy, wages, market and every other aspect of Jawad, Tarapur and Umedpura in Mandsaur district and Bhairongarh in Ujjain district of Madhya Pradesh.

Mrinal Kanti Pal describes in his P.Hd. with the topic, "Crafts and Craftsmen in traditional India"(1978) mentions rise of textile printing in 2nd century BC in various clusters including Ujjain at Madhya Pradesh. It also mentions Ujjain among the popular producers of Calico prints. It also mentions about The comprehensive survey done by Census organization, New Delhi, on Textile dyeing and hand-printing in Jawad, Tarapur and Umedpura in Mandsaur district and Bhairongarh in Ujjain district of Madhya Pradesh. It says good number

of artisans have given up their traditional craft and taken to other occupations. It also shows that the heredity of occupation is no longer strictly adhered to by many artisan castes due to reduced demand from locals for household crafts resulting in nonsufficient return.

Mohanty BC. Et al (1987), in his book **Natural Dyeing Process of India**, mentions **Bhairongarh** as cluster printing and dyeing with indigo, alizarin and iron acetate. Natural alizarin is replaced with syntheticone while, acetate black by sulphate of iron popularly known as Hirkash. The book describes the process in detail and also mentions that the indigo vats are now neither in use nor any artisan knows the process anymore.

Singh R., (1993) wrote in his book, "**Malwa in transition or a century of Anarchy-1698-1765**", Tavernier, that Malwa was famous for its Block Printed fabric named "Chint" now known as (Chintz), which used to be exported to many countries like Turkey and Persia and was very popular with middle class women over there for the end use of Home furnishing in majority. The prints were usually customized for the Persian buyers. For this fabric it was a rumour that the brightness of colours increases with every wash. Sironj region was the prominent block printing cluster of the era.

Kamla Devi Chatopadhyay, (1995) in her book "**Handicrafts of India**", mentioned in detail about important printing clusters of Madhya Pradesh including Jawad, Bhairongarh, Tarapur, Umedpura, and Sheopur. It mentions about delicate quality of printing on fine cotton and silk by particular communities of Chipas. It elaborately explains about Handblock printed *Lugdās* and *jazams* printed at Bhairongarh, Jawad, Tarapur Umedpur, and Sheopur. The writer mentions about history of export of printed *jazams* from Jawad while different products like skirts, sarees, *angochas* (stoles), *Abotiya* (large scarf like *odni*), *Dushala*, were developed for tribals. Other prominent products discussed are Quilts/*razaīs*, bedspreads from Bhairongarh and Jawad, and Nandana prints named *Champakali*, *hadi*, *kari*, *imli* and *mirchi*.

The book provides very rare and detailed word pictures of all the motifs and layouts of printing along with tie dye of Madhya Pradesh.

Lalit Surjan et al, 1996 mentions in "**Reference Desabandhu Madhya Pradesh**" about Alizarine printing practiced in Bhairongarh district of Madhya Pradesh.

Manohar A.. et al (1996) mentioned in **Tribal Arts and Crafts of Madhya Pradesh** about various print clusters of Madhya Pradesh. It

claims Bagh is the only surviving producer of the age-old traditional prints once done in many villages of Dhar and Jhabua. The advantage being the water of river Baghini which helps to produce incomparable deep and vibrant colours. It shares similarity with regions from Bhairongarh in M.P. to Pethapur in Gujrat. The book mentions Bhairongarh as the great rival to Bagh in skill and technique which was locally known as *Thanda Katav* or TC, usually done in dark backgrounds of black blue and red with fine wood blocks. The printed textiles from Bhairongarh were earlier catered to both the tribal market and to the urban fine market but later it dealt into bigger national market and even export ones. This trade boom of sixties ended in seventies due to market saturation and eventually deterioration of quality leading to the death of the craft.

The book also mentions about wax resist block printing once done in Jawad Madhya Pradesh.

Mishr C., in his book "**Ankan**" (2007), mentions M.P. as centre for documentation and research of traditional textile printing. The book elaborately describes different printing centers, methods, motifs and importance of Sironj, Burhanpur, Kukshi, Bagh, Bhairongarh, Neemuch, and Indore printing clusters of Madhya Pradesh. It emphasises the tribal connection of printing clusters of Madhya Pradesh. These prints and products had local names like, *neela lugda*, *Bhairongarhi lugda*, *Dhoti Toda* etc.

Though it also mentions that Madhya Pradesh never got its due credit for its contribution towards its printing tradition.

Singh. M. Chisti R. K. , Sanyal A. 1989. , Saris of India: Madhya Pradesh, mentions, about wide array of block prints produced in areas of Dhar and Jhabua of M.P. for local tribe population and neighbouring Gujrat. It mentions Bagh as the finest from them with *Pomia Lugda* sari, along with *angochas* from Ujjain and Neemuch District and wax resist block printed *Nandana Lugda*. It also mentions about tinsel printing called Rogan for *khari chadar* at western Madhya Pradesh mainly Indore. Mandsour, Indore and Ujjain are mentioned for resist prints, while Bhairongarh, Ujjain for *Neela Lugda*. Other identified printing clusters are Burhanpur Sausar, Sarangpur, Gaoan (west Nimar), Khandwa, Jabot, Alirajpur, Jhabua, Ummadpur, Ratangarh, Bistan, Susner, Ashta, ,Sehore, Pandora, Narsimhapur, and Kasdol. Thus it proves Madhya Pradesh rich in block printing clusters.

The book mentions origin of printers of Madhya Pradesh from Rajasthan and Gujarat. who migrated to border areas of Madhya Pradesh approx. 400 years ago. Hindu printers of Rajasthan got converted to Islam. This can be confirmed by the fact that printers and dyers of Bagh and other places still has their surname as "*Khatiri*" and "*Cheepas*" which are Hindu community in Rajasthan who belongs to Namdev sect.

With reference to **Padma Shastri's article**, "**Pipaji, a saint devoted to social awakening**", (2004) Malwa region used to have Printing and dying as common professions as *Pipaji* who was a King turned saint contributed to the social, cultural and religious awakening of Malwa Raj during 14th century had followers included Dyers and Printers and he taught people to prepare dyes from tree Bark.

Encyclopedia.com mentions under the chapter, Textiles: Block printed, Encyclopaedia of India (2006), mentions Madhya Pradesh along with Gujrat and Rajasthan as printing centres in western India. It refers Bagh and Bhairongarh as two variants in Madhya Pradesh, where mud and wax resist work was done.

M.N. Ramesha et al describes technique and beauty of Indigo printing at Nandana in a research article "Nandana - The earthy designs in blue" in 2007.

The Hindu, Editor (2009) wrote an article: Bagh Print: A Friend but Foe for Nature , discusses about Bagh, tribal town in Dhar district of M.P. with the Khatri community printers, who came here about 400 years ago from Larkana in Sind which is famous for its Ajrak prints. Bagh's proximity to the river was an important reason for its choice as flowing river water is vital to the process of printing. They invented new vegetable dye colours., new colour combinations and experimented with printing on crepe and silk. They invented mustard colour from pomegranate rinds.

Writer **Tinoo Joshi (2010)** has compiled the information of Textile

Dyeing and Block printing Hubs in Madhya Pradesh in his book, "**Timeless Traditions, Contemporary Forms: Arts and Crafts of Madhya Pradesh**" The book refers Madhya Pradesh as equally important textile cluster as Gujrat and Rajasthan with coarse dyed and printed textiles by various techniques in Ujjain and nearby regions.

Rajput, Amrita, (2010), in her **Ph.D.**, on "Marketing and merchandising problems of fabrics printers in Malwa and Nimar region", mentions about transition of Madhya Pradesh printing with dark colours and thick cloth to the fine fabric and chemical. It mentions hand printing centres of Jawad, Bhairongarh, Neemuch (Umedhpur & Tarapur) Goutampura, Bagh, and Indore. The survey reports marketing and merchandising problems of fabric printers in Malwa & Nimar region like lack of adequate power and water, labour supply, pollution, and marketing problems like lack of awareness and knowledge of current trends and profitable merchandizing, selling through middleman, being a small scale industry, lack of Textile information centre, increasing competition, absence of textile advisors, inaccessibility of forecast for new creations, promotion, etc.

Pushpa Chari, mentioned in an article (2011) published in The Hindu, about the importance of Bagh prints. It mentioned about change in products from *lehengas* and *ghagras*, to *saris*, dress materials and bed covers.

Parvez Bari, (2012): wrote an article: **Bagh prints of Madhya Pradesh hog limelight in Argentina too** on unmid.com The article reported about Mohammad Yusuf Khatri Bagh Master craftsman, invited by Indian Ambassador at Argentina had a craft demonstration at "Bharat Mahotsav" festival held in Argentina. The platform was used for sale of Bagh printed sarees, silk scarves and other products.

The post "**Thappa Chappai**" on Gathahome, posted on may 18 2016, about journey of Bagh printer, Khatri community from Larkana in Sindh to Bagh in Madhya Pradesh. It also elaborately documented the traditional process of Bagh printing with natural resources.

Ganguly D. et al (2013) mentioned Madhya Pradesh as Block printing clusters. Also the paper covers the natural dyeing and printing process prevalent in India for Hand block printing.

Malik Bhawana, et al (2014) discussed Effects of Textile, Dyeing and printing industrial effluents on river Kshipra at Bhairongarh Ujjain, M.P., India. It emphasize the use of many chemicals, dyes, detergents, waxes, starch, and cellulose, which is directly thrown in the river without prior treatment causing water unfit for drinking, bathing and even washing purpose.

The **GI** was applied and granted in 2015, for Bagh Printing of Madhya Pradesh, under category, class 24, textile and textile goods not included in other classes by Development commissioner (Handicrafts) Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. The journal mentions detailed description of Bagh printing origin, detailed step by step making, products, and special features.

Manik Samwatsar Dange et al (2015) has done a prospective study, on new trends in Bagh Prints suggests traditional designs and patterns which are more or less derived from the tradition and culture of the nearby locality are more preferred. Also the research emphasized the non-chemical, non-hazardous and non-allergic dyes used by artisans.

Manik Samwatsar Dange et al (2015) mentioned under there periodic research about use of Use of Natural Dyes for Nandana printing and *Bandhmi* done at Tarapur. The Nandana is a type of printed fabric produced at Tarapur in Neemuch District of M.P. The town is renowned for its textile dominance from the time of princely rule. The Namdev *Chippas* and *Nilgars* constitute of the printing community of Tarapur. The Nandana print is used for *lehengas and lugdis* for tribals of Madhya Pradesh. Nandana prints are known for their natural colors and distinct motifs.

The research concludes that only 45% of artisans are working with vegetable dyes while rest are using Chemical dyes like Direct, Naphthol, and Vat dyes. The study also reveals that 11% artisans are working with screen printing.

Kaveri Dutta et al (2015) emphasized the need of documenting the Bagh block printing in the light of contemporary fashion. The study

concluded that traditional motifs of Bagh used for contemporary products including surface embellishment can provide a fresh and colourful pattern.

Ritu Sethi, (2015) described in an online article, **Hand block printing of Bagh**, briefly about History and technique of Bagh Printing. It mentions about beginning of Bagh printing after the migration of artisans from Larkana in Sindh.

Dibyendu Bikash Datta et al (2016) mentioned the urgent need of attention to the Bagh Block printing cluster of Madhya Pradesh for export potential in research paper **“An Analysis on Problems and Prospects of Indian Handicraft Sector”**.

Awasthi Apeksha (2017), mentioned the presence of excess amount of azo dyes and wax in river Kshipra, near Bhairongarh region of Ujjain district. The study also proposes the use of coagulation/flocculation process including Alum and Natural Charcoal for the decolonization of dye wastewater.

Pushyamitra J., 2018, in his Ph.D., on topic, **A study of Marketing of rural Hand Block Print Fabrics of India with special reference to Madhya Pradesh, Gujrat and Rajasthan** did a case study on A Bagh Print Artisan Family, which suggests a well-structured, flourishing craft of Bagh Printing practiced by the family. It also describes the traditional process which is still practiced with a little combination of Chemicals by the artisans. It gives a full picture of hierarchy in craft, along with distribution of different roles and responsibilities to family members, Bhil labourers and printers. Along with details of products developed with their pricing.

It concludes that the uniqueness of hand block printed fabric is preferred by customers along with modern designs. Suggesting that rural craftsmen must adopt modern designs patterns in hand block printing to satisfy the need of customers. A model for entrepreneurial marketing has been suggested to improve the marketing mix strategies adopted by rural master craftsmen cum entrepreneurs by the researcher.

Chouhan S. et al, (2018, 2019), in his works described in detail about the natural dyes used in Bagh Printing, the process of dye making and also the names of traditional blocks used in Bagh.

Kalam Chouhan, 2019 described Bagh print as world famous block prints in her study on the topic **“Historical View on Block Printing Technique and its Used in Bagh Print”** It briefs Bagh Print as a traditional hand block print with natural colours which replicated geometric and floral compositions with vegetable colours of red and black over a white background.

The study also mentioned about the achievements gained by artisans of Bagh including UNESCO and World Craft Council awards bagged by Abdul Kadar Khatri in 2018.

CONCLUSION-

Madhya Pradesh has rich heritage of Hand Block Printing craft. Various clusters like Bagh, Jawad, Tarapur, Ujjain Bhairongarh, Sironj, Indore were known for its fine printing techniques and motifs.

Many writers and researchers have written about historical importance of Madhya Pradesh Printing cluster but in last decade most of the writers and researchers have covered only Bagh Prints of Bagh region and Nandana prints of Jawad Tarapur. Very few have covered about present status of printing clusters of other regions. There is a vast scope and requirement of study and documentation of languishing block printing clusters like of Bhairongarh Ujjain, Sironj, Sarangpur, Ashta and many more.

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