

Design Resource

Ajarakh

The Crafts of Traditional Motifs and Colors

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral and Mr. Antony William

NID, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/ajarakh>



1. Introduction
2. Tools and Materials
3. Process
4. Place
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Introduction

Ajarakh came to Kutchh from the “Sindh” Region in the 16th century. Invited by the King of Kutchh Raav Bhaarmalji, their ancestor Jinda Jiva came to Kutchh. Since then the craft of Ajarakh was carried out in a village called ‘Dhamadka’ chosen by Jiva after scrutinizing the mineral content of the water. Traditionally Ajarakh was worn by the Sindhis, the Jats and the Halepurtra communities as a turban, a shoulder gear and a Lungi. It was also worn in marriages. The combination of traditional motifs and colors (Indigo and Red) is called Ajarakh. Traditionally there were only 10-15 motifs, new colors and motifs have been developed since then. Today Ajarakh is a well known craft of Kutchh and has become very popular in other parts of the world. During this study works and practices of Master craftsmen Abdul Bhai and his son Sufianbhai were thoroughly covered.

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/ajarakh/introduction>

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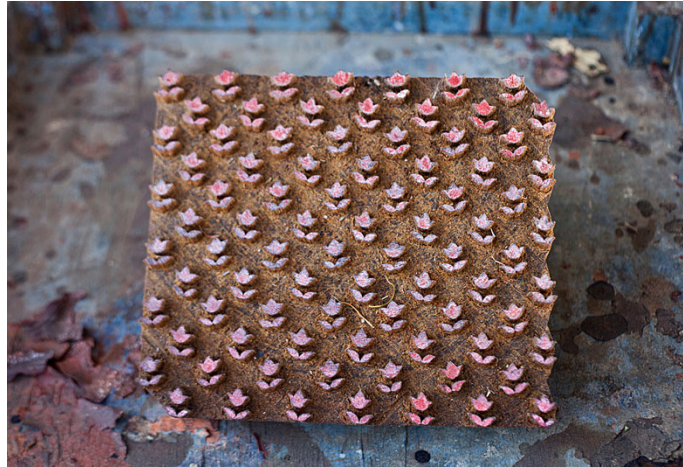
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Tools and Raw Materials

Harda, Tamarind seed powder, Alizarin, Medder Root, Henna Powder, Extracts from an insect, Dhavadi Flowers, Clay, Alam, Indigo, Scrap Iron, Gum Arabic, Lime, Washing Tanks, Design Blocks



Harda



Henna Powder



Tamarind seed powder

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Alizarin



Henna Powder



Medder Root

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Extracts from an insect



Dhavadi Flowers

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Clay



Alam



Alam



Indigo

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Scrap Iron



Washing Tanks

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Gum Arabic



Lime



Design Blocks



Design Blocks

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Process

1. The fabric is washed in Harda and dried for a day in an open place with good sunlight. Once the cloth is dried it is mounted on the block-printing table. The wooden block with design motifs carved on it are dipped in the solution of Gum Arabic and Lime and placed on the fabric to make desired pattern. This process is repeated on the other side of the fabric making it a two-sided print. There are also fabrics which are printed only on one side like stoles, scarves etc. The purpose or the use aspect of the fabric is decided before hand and cut and designed accordingly.
2. Printing involves 3-4 blocks per motif. For example if a flower motif has to be printed one would require 3 blocks. The first one containing the outline of the flower. (Usually using alum or resist solution), the 2nd the inner parts of petals. And 3rd the center of the flower. Depending on the complexity of the pattern the number of blocks are decided. Usually the number of blocks is four. The printing starts with the outline block followed by the other blocks dipped in various dyes that fill in various parts of the motif. The printed fabric is kept overnight and dyed in the desired color the next day and dried.
3. The printed fabric is kept for drying overnight. It is then dyed in the desired colors and sun dried.
4. To get richer or new colors the process repeats starting from the application of Alum and clay.
5. During the dyeing process the fabric is dyed in the boiling water along with either Rhubarb root (crimson red), Medder Root (red), Henna Powder (sap green), Dhavadi Flowers (orange) or Alizarin (yellow) to get the desired color in the inner parts of motif. The areas on which alum is applied does not react with these coloring agents and remains the same (The color of the petals in the above example). The temperature of the boiling water is decided on the basis of the nature of the fabric. Cotton requires lower temperature where as silk requires higher temperatures.
6. The washed fabric is dried in open space.

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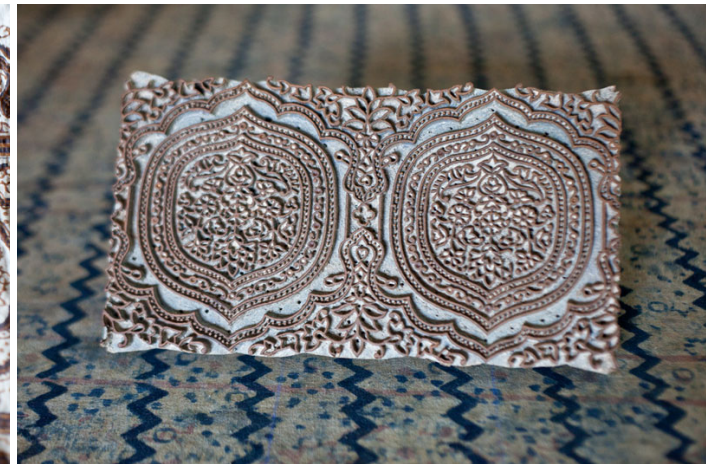
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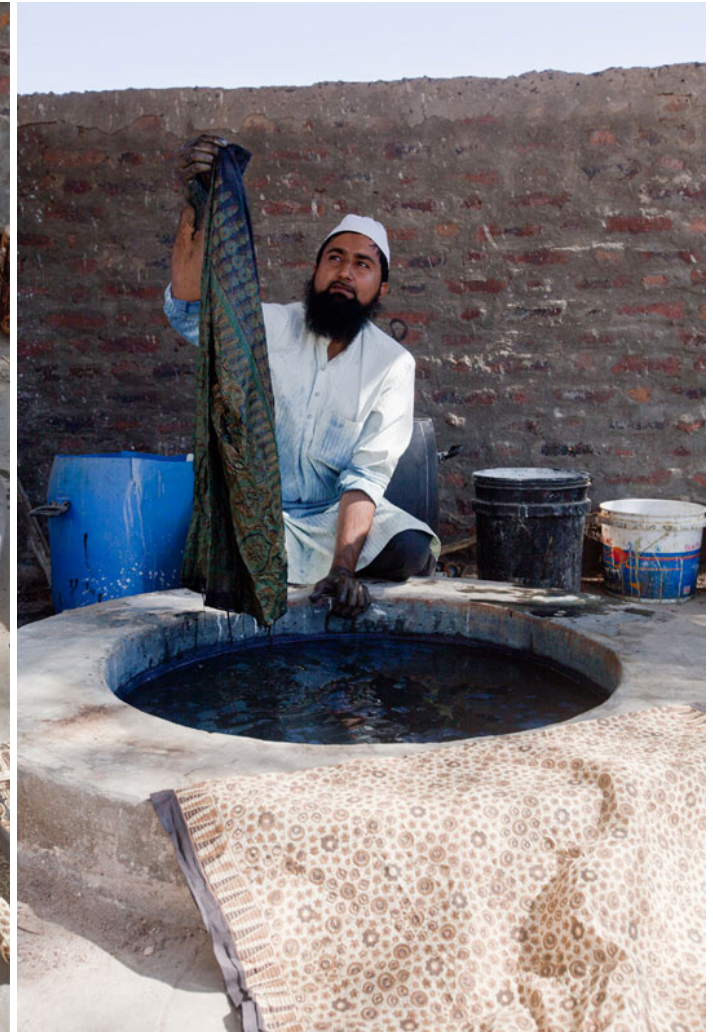
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Place



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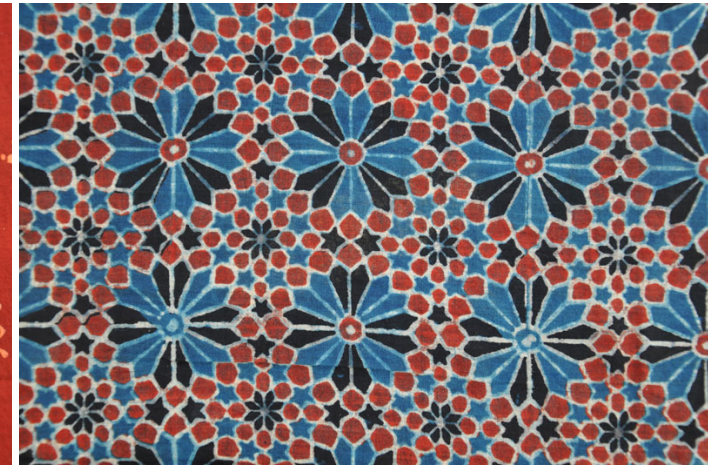
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Final Products



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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/ajarakh/contact-details>

Contact Details

This documentation was done by **Professor Bibhudutta Baral** and Mr. Antony William at **NID, Bengaluru**.

You can get in touch with Professor Bibhudutta Baral at **[bibhudutta\[at\]nid.edu](mailto:bibhudutta[at]nid.edu)**.

You could write to the following address regarding suggestions and clarifications:

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