

# PATAN'S PATOLA INSPIRED KERALA'S TEMPLE ART

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Perceived to be different ideologically, Gujarat and Kerala are connected by a 'common thread' when it comes to idolatry. The patola – the pride of Gujarat's Patan – thrives hundreds of kilometres away in the temples of Kerala's Malabar coast as 'veeralipattu'.

This cultural link was explored in the paper 'Transformation of textile motifs and its cross-cultural relations – A study on Patola, Veeralipattu on motifs of Kerala temple art forms' by NIFT faculty members RS Jayadeep and Dr Vandana Bhandari from Kannur and New Delhi respectively. The duo had presented the paper at an international conference on 'Tracing 75 Years of Indian Fashion Post-Independence' hosted by NIFT Gandhinagar recently.

Both patola (singular for patola) and pattu mean silk and are derived from the San-



**LINKING STATES THROUGH ART:** Patola motif outside Sundareshwara Temple in Kannur, (bottom) traditional Patola motifs on modern sari

skrit word pattakulla. The researchers said that in medieval times, the patola fabric was not confined to just the saree. It was brought to Kerala by land route through Tamil Nadu and by sea route through Gujarat and other ports.

'Pattu means silk in Malayalam. Red, considered to be an auspicious colour, patola that reached Kerala were mostly red with lots of geometric and floral forms...

Since patola fabrics were special in making and expensive in material, rulers of Kerala used to donate it to the temples to use it for special worship activities. It thus got the name Veeralipattu,' mentioned the

paper, adding that the fabric was used along with money to perform puja, and pattum valayam (veeralipattu and gold bangle) were given away to honour people participating in rituals, priests and martial arts teachers.

The researchers said that the veeralipattu was used till 60 years ago in religious ceremonies, but now it has been replaced by red silk or velvet.

Earlier, scholars had pointed at motifs of Gujarat's patola dating back to the 16th century in Kochi's Mattancherry palace and the presence of the recurring motifs in Kerala's murals. Some of the designs were also used in the theyyam (a dance ritual) face painting.

As the fabric was earlier used to cover the deity, it also adorned the exterior walls of some temples. One such example is Sundareshwara Temple in Kannur, said researchers.



**FROM TRADITIONAL TO MODERN:** (Top) Traditional Tarpa dance by Warli artist Chintu Rajad; (Bottom) contemporary Warli painting by artist Kiran Gorwala (images from paper)

## Warli paintings get contemporary hue

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

The Warli art is synonymous with the monochrome colours, stick figures and recurring motifs chronicling the life and times of the tribal community, primarily in Maharashtra and Gujarat.

As the community members are getting educated and exposed to various art forms, several artists are also using the same style for diverse subjects, argued Namrata Singh, an assistant professor with a Madhya Pradesh-based university, in her paper. The paper 'A study of evolving themes in visual narratives of Warli art: Traditional to Contemporary' was presented at an international conference hosted by NIFT, Gandhinagar.

The paper mentioned that for long, the Warli art is associated with themes such as traditions and rituals of the Warli tribe along with mythology, stories and fables.



'The increasing demand for Warli paintings in urban centres has led to the art form evolving into newer, more diverse styles and varieties... offering huge opportunities for artisans where they are called upon on a domestic and global level to conduct workshops and exhibitions,' mentioned the paper.

She added that now many new-generation artists from the community are experimenting with colour, form and subjects while keeping the ethos of the art intact.

## 'Weaving timeless textile traditions'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

The National Institute of Fashion Technology, Gandhinagar (NIFT-G), recently hosted a virtual international conference on the theme of 'Tracing 75 Years of Indian Fashion Post-Independence' to celebrate 75 years of India's independence.

Prof A K Khare, director of NIFT-G, said that the conference was based on the tenets of India's culture that have universal resonance with contemporary significance.

"Development for all embodied in sarvodaya, circularity, and sustainability of the dharma chakra and world as one global community enshrined in 'vasudhaiva kutumbakam' provided the fertile grounds for the original academic research presented during the conference," he said.

**75 years**  
of Indian fashion industry was seen in the context of the three tenets of sarvodaya, dharma chakra, and vasudhaiva kutumbakam

Amisha Mehta, associate professor at NIFT-G, and one of the organizers of the event, said that the event attracted academic researchers from India and abroad. "It was an attempt to provide a perspective to India's legacy of 75 years and the way forward. Some of the major

themes included circular fashion, resurgence of Indian crafts, sustainability in textile processes, and emerging technologies," she said.

The researchers presented works on themes such as Awadhi crafts, Farrukhabad hand block printing, Banjara embroidery of Telangana, Channapatna sensory toys, apparel thrift stores, minimizing textile waste, branding of traditional handicraft, smart fabric, and the textile of Indian diaspora of New York among others.