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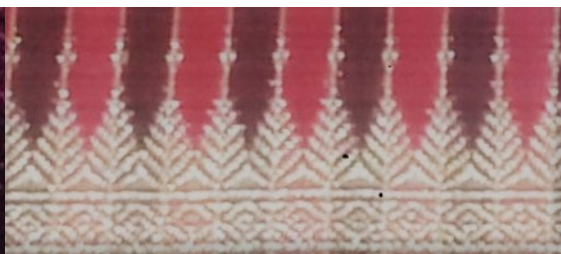
The Thai Textile Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the study and appreciation of textiles, with particular emphasis on the textiles of Thailand and Southeast Asia. Based in Bangkok, the Thai Textile Society was founded in 2004 when Kathleen Florence Johnson, wife of U.S. Ambassador to Thailand Darryl Johnson, invited scholars, collectors, and other textile enthusiasts to establish a society dedicated to the study, appreciation, and preservation of the textile arts in the kingdom and the region. An avid weaver and textile collector, Mrs. Johnson envisioned the Society as a forum for textile lovers to exchange ideas and share information and resources. Since its inaugural meeting in May, 2004, the Society has organized regular lectures, trips, and other programs such as its popular Collector's Corner series. The TTS enjoys and appreciates support from the Siam Society and the James H.W. Thompson Foundation

MAKING TAI YUAN SHOULDERBAGS WORKSHOP

**By Denise Del Barto and Carol Curran
Photos by Ruth Gerson**



I have always admired the textiles of Thailand. The colors vibrant. The patterns complex. The textures anywhere from luxuriant and sensual to coarse and practical. My knowledge has increased over the years,



especially for weaving techniques as evidenced by my ever-increasing collection-yet I have also come to realize that there are other complicated textiles that need to be learned about.

Such is the case of Thai Textile Society's workshop on 27 April 2019 for Tai Yuan shoulder bags, led by Khun Anurak Karnchan from Mahidol University's Research Institute for Language. As I watched the team from Mahidol University prepare, helping each other wrap the tube skirt, rolling and tucking the waist band securely, little did I know that I soon would be learning how to hand stitch the several different levels represented in the multiple layer Tai Yuan skirt.

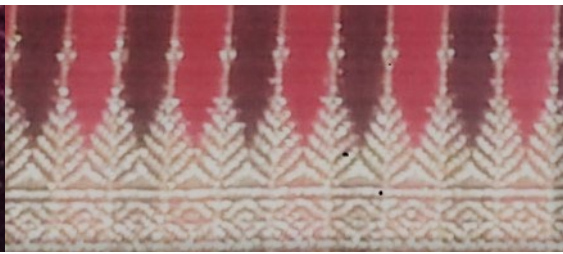


Within the small cotton bag received by each workshop participant were thread, scissors and three pieces of cotton cloth: -white, red and black. Lapping the edges of the white and red cloth together, we were instructed to sew a basting stitch. Red and white now secured together, the edge was folded once (1/4 inch) then again with the selvage edge secured inside. This folded edge

was then 'whipped' to each side of the joined fabric piece. While secure and strong, my seam showed none of the elegance and expertise of the actual Tai Yuan skirts. My awkward, uneven stitches doing the job but not looking very attractive as evidenced by the different examples readily available. How long would it take to become proficient and produce the elegant, even stitches?



To attach the black piece (which would be the skirt



body), the red and black cloth were each folded and basted. Then came the elaborate stitching of the waistband to the skirt body. With the folded edges laying next to each other, the stitching began. Hold the thread-up and over-over and down-keep the thread here-needle there. The process reminded me of a mixture of macramé, weaving and crocheting all rolled into one. The resulting seam was strong, and extremely decorative.

The patience of Khun Anurak and his staff from the Art and Culture Preservation Unit of the Research Institute for Language and Cultures of Asia (RILCA) was admirable. Each stitch was demonstrated with expertise no matter the different cultures, languages or word. The entire workshop gave me an appreciation of the Tai Yuan textiles-the time, expertise and history reinforcing the value of these pieces of Thai culture. **(Denise Del Barto)**

Making tassels Tai Yuan style



Hanging tassels adorn the Tai Yuan shoulder bag, and it is something I have long wanted to learn how to make.

The following are the steps:

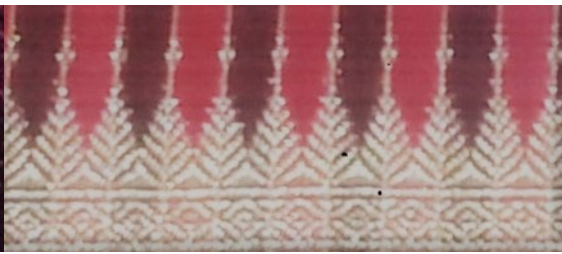
Wrap the thread around the hand (four fingers width) for at least 40 wraps. Remove the hand and tie the folded threads with a piece of thread around the middle of both sections and tie, leaving a length of 6-inch thread at the

top. Wrap another piece of thread 5 times around the top (1/2 inch away from top) and then tie. This creates a head and collar.

To decorate the head - insert the needle into collar, and using a buttonhole stitch going in rounds that join the rows to each other, working up to the top, resulting in a mesh covering the head. The threads used for the mesh can be of a different color to the tassel itself.

(Carol Curran)





EGYPTIAN TEXTILE MUSEUM

**Text and photos by
 Dr. Navamitr (Tom) Vitayakul**

Egyptian Textile Museum is the only textile museum in the Middle East and celebrated its 9th anniversary in February this year. This museum, located on El-Muezz Street, the main street of Islamic Cairo, exhibits fine collections of textiles from the Pharaonic, the Roman, Coptic, and Islamic eras. Its building was originally a grand Ottoman-era *sabil*, a building housing a public water fountain, donated by Mohamed Ali. It then became a school and currently houses this museum.

Egypt's lengthy history is not only documented on stones or papyrus, but also knitted in garments. The collection of the Ancient Egyptian textiles contains clothes, bed sheets, mummy covers, cushions and even diapers. Beside the pieces of cloth, the museum also displays small statues of men, women, servants, and gods with their outfits carved on their bodies to show the variation in their dress codes.

Fragments of Cloth with Inscriptions



Two tapestry-woven fragments of cloth (mostly dovetailed) were found in the tomb of King Thutmose IV, and bear part of the name of his grandfather Thutmose III. (Linen, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, reign

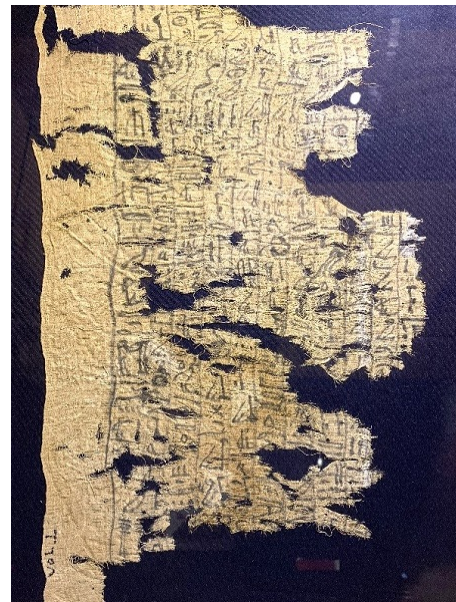
of Thutmose IV, c. 1,400-1,390 BC, Tomb of Thutmose IV, Luxor)

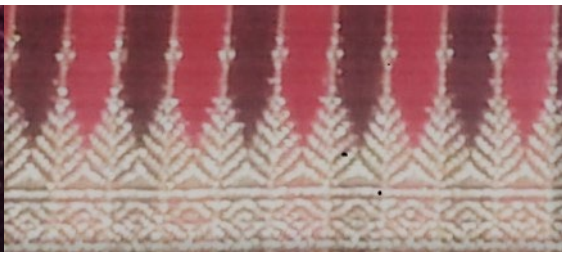
Piece of Linen



A piece of painted linen with a human face drawn in blue, brown, and outlined in black. The face shown wearing a blue headdress could be a king's face. (Painted linen, Late Period, Luxor, Al-Qurna)

Shroud Fragment





A shroud fragment of Sennerfer (a noble who was a “Mayor of the City” or an “Overseer of the Granaries and Fields, Gardens and Cattle of Amun” during the reign of Amenhotep II of the 18th dynasty) containing spells from the Book of the Dead written in hieratic inscription in black ink. (Linen, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty)

Funerary Shroud from the Soter Group of Tombs



(Linen, Roman Period, first half of the 2nd century AD)

Two Human Legs



Two legs of human mummy wrapped in partially painted linen bandages. The stripes of the bandages are decorated with prisoners in colours: one of the prisoners

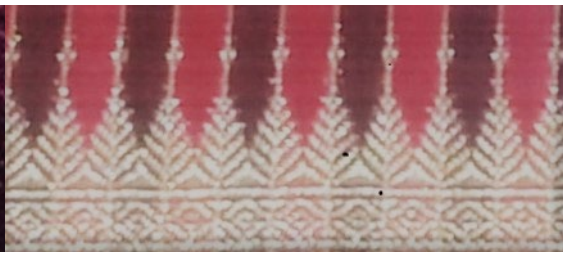
a Nubian, the other’s origin is Asia. (Bone with plain and painted linen, Ancient Egyptian Period, Luxor)

Votive Statuettes



These votive statuettes were wrapped in decorated linen. Votive statuettes were found in the sanctuary of the temple of the goddess Hathor, “Lady of the galena mine,” at the galena mine at Gebel el-Zeit on the Red Sea. As Hathor is the goddess of fertility, the votive statuettes embody this attribute. (Linen and terracotta, Second Intermediate Period, c. 1630-1520 BC, Gebel el-Zeit, Red Sea)

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www.thaitextilesociety.org
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 Membership Chair
mabr135@yahoo.com*



Linen Amulet



A linen amulet with the image of Anubis, the god of mummification, in black ink. (Linen, Early Ptolemaic Period, 3rd century BC)

This symbolically united the deceased with Osiris, the god of death and resurrection, ensuring rebirth in the afterlife.

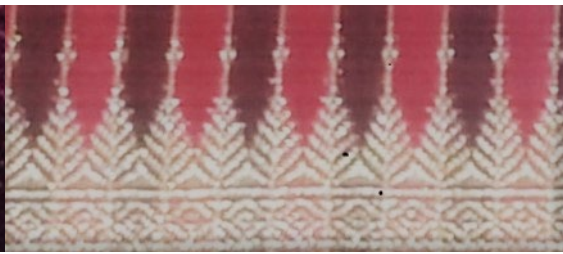
Shroud



Osiris Shroud

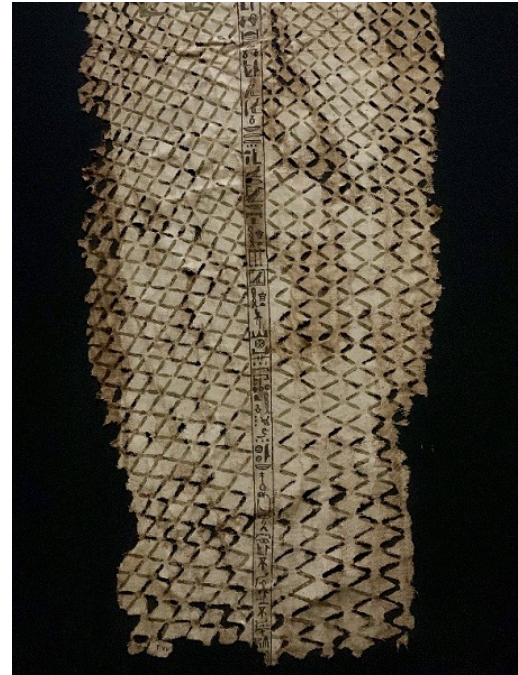
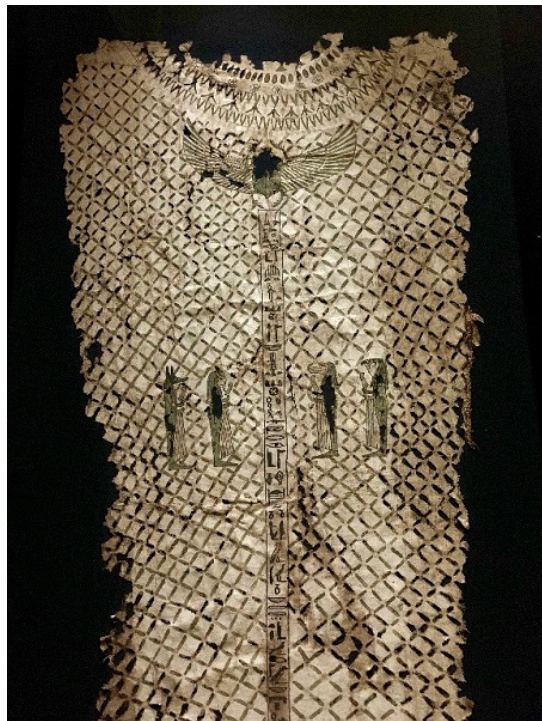


A linen shroud decorated with hieroglyphic inscription and a life-size image of the god Osiris who is depicted on a small platform outlined in black. These shrouds were placed over the bandages of the mummy and then tied.



A shroud painted with a portrait of the deceased in the form of Osiris, god of death and resurrection, surrounded by two columns with lotus flowers capitals and Anubis, the jackal-headed god of mummification, below his legs. (Painted linen, Roman period, 30 BC-AD 395)

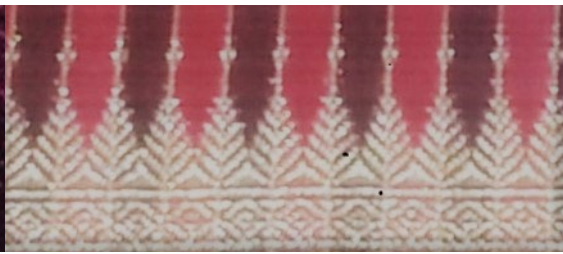
Mummy Cover



A mummy cover painted like a network of beads that belonged to Djedhor, an Egyptian pharaoh, was used for ritual and protective purposes. At the top of the vertical inscription, the scarab god Khepri, representing the rising or morning sun, spreads his wings over the deceased. Below, a line of hieroglyphics gives the name of the owner as a follower of Osiris, god of death and resurrection. The four figures on either side of the inscription are the four sons of Horus who protected the canopic jars containing the organs of the deceased. Mummy covers of this type were used by those who could not afford expensive beadwork nets. (Painted linen, Late Period, 26th Dynasty, 664-525 BC)

Votive Cloth





A fragment of painted linen depicting Suro and his wife Nezam worshipping Taweret, the goddess of childbirth and fertility, with the head of a hippopotamus. (Painted linen, New Kingdom, 19th Dynasty, c. 1292-1190 BC, Deir el-Madina, Luxor)

A Child's Head Cover



A child's head cover decorated with an "Ankh," symbol of life, in blue and red wool. The Ankh is the sign from ancient Egypt, the most closely resembles to the cross. (Fourth century AD, El- Bagawat Cemetery, Kharga Oasis)



NOH THEATER COSTUMES

Text and photos by John Toomey

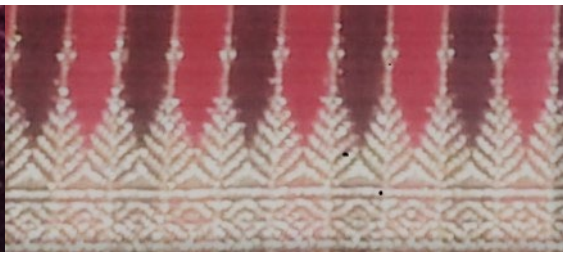


Noh performer (Source: Internet)

The most refined of Japan's theater arts, Noh is a distillation of all that dramatic art attempts to portray. Its stylized ritualistic form is often based on Buddhist morality tales, frequently featuring vengeful or repentant ghosts interacting with the living. Freed from the need for scenery and props and rejecting realism, it offers a remarkable psychological and emotional experience. Yet many of its attractions are exquisitely crafted material objects, such as gorgeously woven robes, carved polychrome wooden masks and painted fans, all enhancing the stately dancing, exotic music and chanting, though the essence of Noh is in its magical creation of an otherworldly state.



Robe with bamboo pattern and undulating lines, used for aristocratic roles



Pine-bark lozenges,
peonies and phoenix roundels.
Chinese phoenixes were auspicious



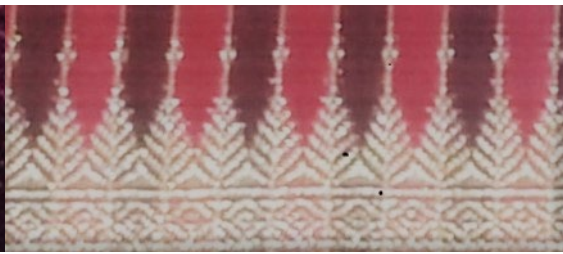
17th century bamboo patterned blinds
to shield nobles while writing poems

The Noh actors traditionally wear silk costumes. These robes or costumes may look like embroidery, but they are not – they are rather created by a weaving technique called brocade. In this technique, the weaver adds horizontal supplementary threads to the weft using a porcupine quill or a thin, flat stick to raise a few threads and slide the shuttle under all at the same time, for which it looks like embroidery. However, brocade is more complicated and stronger than embroidery. Japanese refer to supplementary warp by the term *kasuri* for the raising of either weft or warp, and double *kasuri* for the raising of both. Like ikat in other countries, the Japanese before weaving pre-dye the threads and tie them with string on the tiny dots or dashes on the threads for the areas that are not meant to be dyed. Today plastic string is used for this purpose, to keep the dye off those parts.



18th century Noh Fan decorated
with longevity motifs of knotted pines,
cranes and tortoises

The TTS can be accessed
on the internet at:
www.thaitextilesociety.org



Karaori Design of pines and European sails on gold ground. 18 Century

These Noh robes and their accessories were on exhibit last February (2019) at the Tokyo National Museum, treasures from the collection of the Uesugi Clan. All were woven with a technique called *Karaori*, indicating the use of materials and motifs that came originally from China.

Designs and colors were traditional, such as pine-bark lozenges, peonies and phoenix roundels on red and light-blue checkered ground. Some motifs have a symbolic meaning such as Chinese phoenixes, which were thought to be auspicious omens when a wise and just ruler held the throne. Bouquets and broken fans discarded in stylized waves represented prosperity; these, fences, and autumn flowers were woven on red, brown and light blue-checkered ground and undulating stripes, bamboo grass and bush clovers (symbol of the Imperial Palace) on a dark blue and brown-checkered ground.



An inner garment featuring gold-foil motifs of sparrows and bamboo found in the Uesugi family crest. 18 Century



Design of bamboo and sparrow roundels (crest of the Uesugi clan), and auspicious tortoise-shell-back hexagons, 16-17 Century



Karaori stylized waves, peonies and eulalia grass on a brown ground, suitable for middle-aged and older female roles. 18th Century.

The design of bamboo-and-sparrow roundels are in the crest of the Uesugi clan and appear together with auspicious tortoise-shell-back hexagons on dark green ground. Design of pines and European sails were woven on a gold ground. Stylized waves, peonies and eulalia grass (*miscanthus sinensis* or more simply miscanthus, a bit like pampas grass but shorter and thinner) cover a brown ground. Its subdued tones suit middle- aged or older female roles and the eulalia/miscanthus is pliable so that women can use it to tie up their hair as with a hairpin. There is a popular song about a young woman using a miscanthus hairpin. Miscanthus is in the set of motifs named “Seven Grasses of Autumn” and is a symbol of late summer turning into early autumn. *Nuikahu* is the outer robe of which one style uses a white ground with designs of broom grass and sickles, appropriate for male roles, and rose balsam suitable for female roles. In Noh, as with Kabuki, all roles are played by men or adolescent boys as it was considered unseemly for a woman to show her beauty on a public stage.

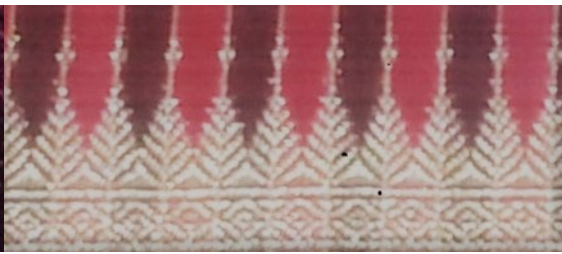


Undulating stripes, bamboo grass and bush clovers, 18th Century



Dragon design vest implying strength, worn by warriors and gods, 18-19 Century

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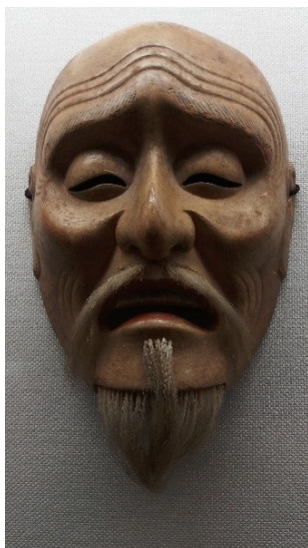


The weave of these robes often purposely simulates rich embroidery. Rich in courtly taste, the pattern of bamboo blinds shields nobles from prying eyes as the nobles wrote poems on papers fluttering in the breeze. The design of dragons among clouds on a dark blue ground implies vigor and strength. Gold-foil motifs of sparrows and bamboo are often found in the Uesugi family crest.

Everything in a Noh play springs from the mask. The actor is not said to put on the mask, but rather the spirit of the mask is said to draw in the actor and control the actor's interpretation of his role, and the actor surrenders to the mask. Once the mask has been chosen, the costume to fit the mask and the play are selected with some leeway for color, pattern and interpretation.



**The young woman of Mt. Meru
(center of Buddhist and Hindu universe)
16th-17th Century**

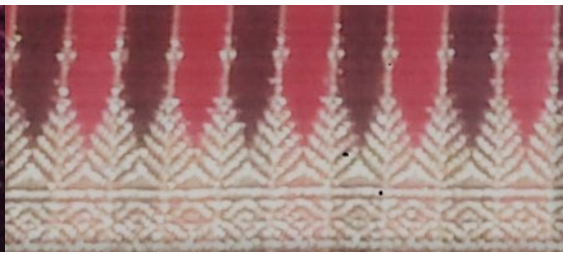


**Mask of exiled General Kagekio
wearing sorrowful expression, 18th Century**



**Padding the body to add girth to performer
(Source: Internet)**

First the *shite*, the protagonist who is the only character to wear a mask, dons a special close-fitting underwear which covers his whole body, and wears over that a padded white undergarment to give him the impression of solidity. He then slips his feet into white silk *tabi* socks. After fellow acting assistants have placed the wig and wig band and a tall, forward leaning lacquered ceremonial hat on the actor's head, they dress him in the robes consisting of, starting with a gold or silver-patterned undergarment of white silk called the *surihaku*, of which only the collar band is visible. The color and number of collar bands shows the social sanding of the role to be played. Then the assistants put over the *surihaku* the elaborate and heavy *nuihaku*, the outer brocade robe, which is secured with a sash at the waist. The arms are not inserted into the sleeves, so that the upper part of the garment hangs down around the waist like a hip wrapper



Loose fitting upper garment (Source: Internet)

The upper body is then dressed in a loose, stiff gauze jacket called *choken* decorated with gold embroidery and fastened in the front with a long thick red cord tied in large hanging loops. The same type of cord hangs from both sleeves, almost to the floor. The sleeves are designed especially broad to show off the movement of the arms, and to hide a man's fingers if he is playing a female role. Then the fan is given to the shite, which may fulfill the duty of a knife, dagger, writing brush or the like. In the case of deranged roles, a *sasa* bamboo twig is held by the actor. The costumes reflected the clothing of the time; consequently, older costumes are less impressive than those of today are. Over the years, costumes began to take on almost as much importance as the masks; and so the rules of pattern and color to match acting roles began to grow. With further advances in weaving and dyeing techniques and patronage from the government in the Edo period, the unique beauty and refinement we see in Noh costumes today was developed and formalized. Noh has been listed as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO.

TEXTILES OF THE MALAY WORLD Investigating the Different Uses of Malay Tie-Dye

By John Ang

Tie-dye or *pelangi*, rainbow in Malay, is a quintessential Malay textile that exists in many areas of the Malay World, which in this article includes parts of the former Kingdom of Champa in what is today South Vietnam and West Cambodia, Southern Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia (encompassing Sumatra, coastal Kalimantan, South Sulawesi and parts of Sumbawa) and South Philippines.

The most commonly encountered traditional Malay tie-dye is the shoulder cloth called *selendang* or headcover called *kudhung* or *tudong* from Palembang, Jambi and Riau in Southeast Sumatra. (Photo 1)



Photo 1-

1940s traditional Malay woman's dress showing how a *selendang* or *kudhung* was used and matched.

These come in several formats but the type that is seen most commonly is rectangular with a centre field of the same or different colour, filled with small tie-dye squares and floral patterns. The borders on the long sides contain zigzag or scalloped stitched-dye patterns and on the short ends contain each, a row of paisley leaves, obviously inspired by boteh leaves so often found on the end panels of Indian saris. (Photo2)



There are many types of *selendang*. In the port cities of Pontianak and Mempawah, West Kalimantan, *selendangs* with large lozenge patterns or with dramatic large scalloped borders are found. (Photos 3 and 4)

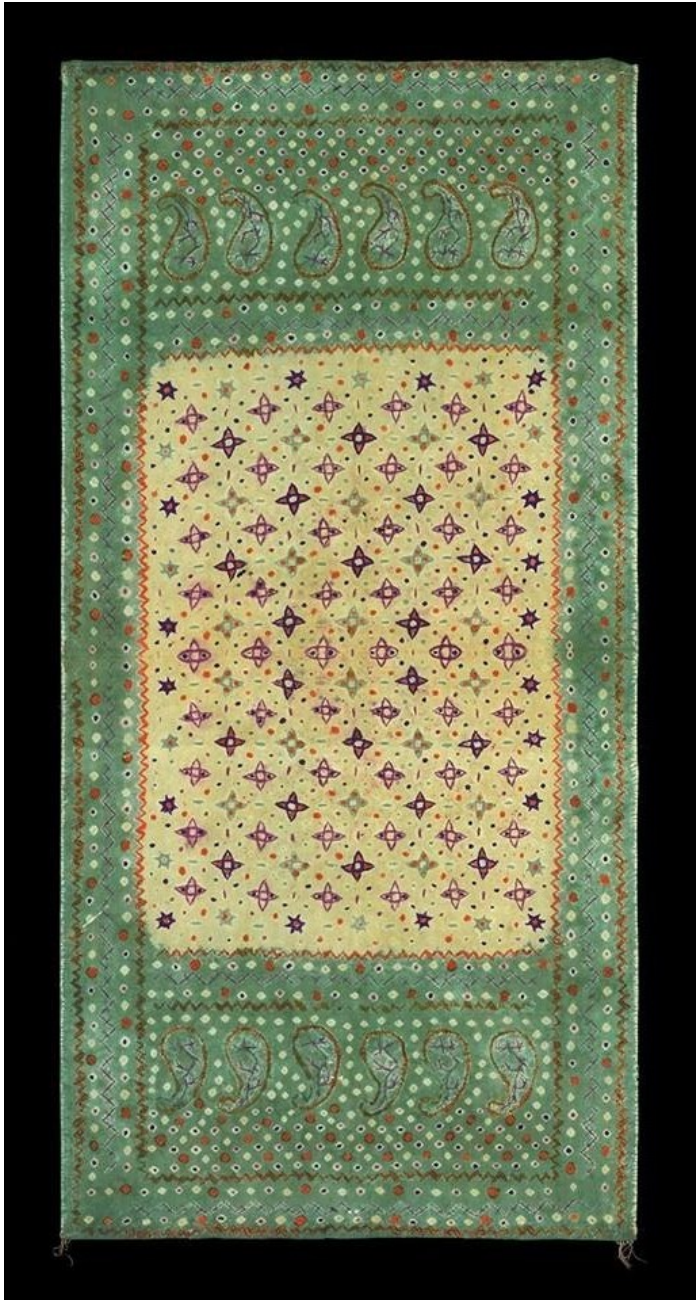
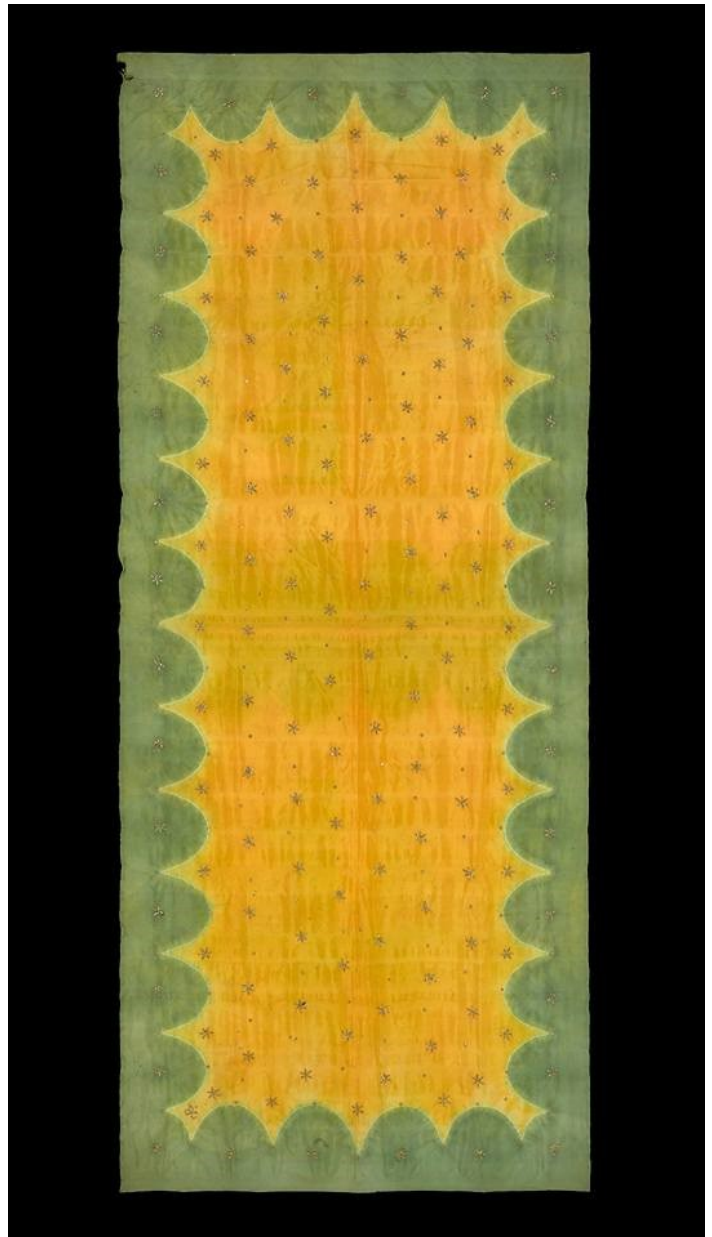


Photo 2-

1930s selendang pelangi,
tie-dye silk shoulder cloth,
Palembang 83 x 215 cm



Photos 3-

1930-40s selendang pelangi, tie-dye
silk shoulder cloth with scalloped border,
Pontianak. 198 x 91 cm

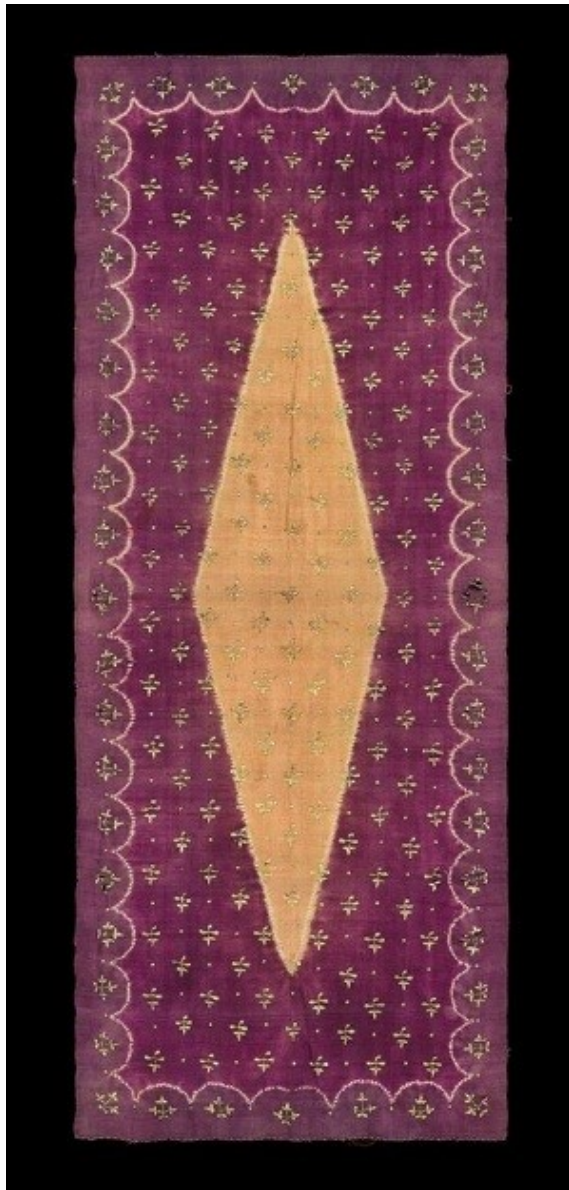
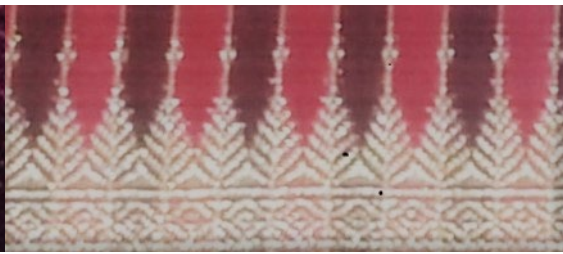


Photo 4-

1930-40s selendang pelangi, tie-dye silk shoulder cloth with large lozenge pattern, Pontianak. 192 x 88 cm

Another type of rectangular Malay tie-dye shawl is with a single colour rectangular centre field with no decoration. This type of shawl comes in a combination of different colours such as with orange centres and red borders or green centres with purple borders. Perhaps these, like the Indian saris with plain centre fields, were

used for celebrations such as weddings. In Sumatra, the *limars* or weft ikat shawls with plain green centre fields and coloured ikat patterns on a red ground of the borders were called *janda beraes*, a format used specifically for widows who are ready to remarry. (See Achjadi, Judi, "Floating Threads," p. 72). Whether similar meanings extend to *pelangis* of the same format and colour scheme, known as *lawons* in Palembang where they were produced, has to be further researched. (Photos 5 and 6)

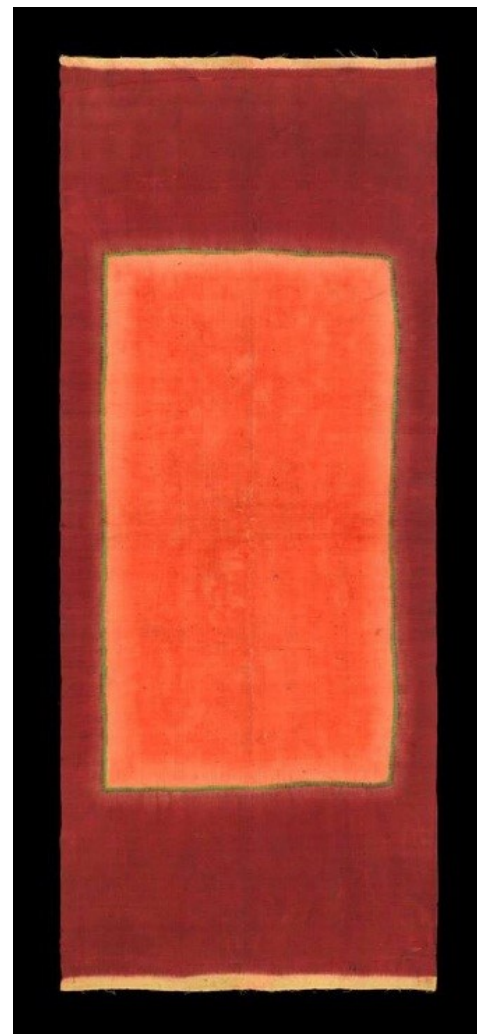


Photo 5-

1900-1920s selendang lawon, tie-dye silk shoulder cloth, with plain orange center field and red border Pontianak. 188 x 78 cm

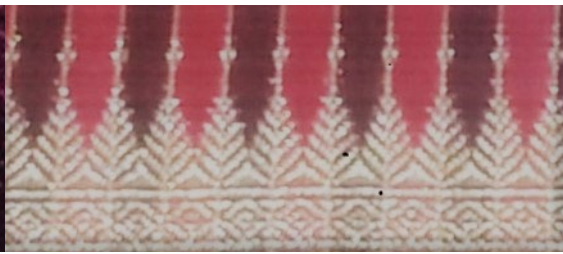


Photo 6-

1940s traditional Malay woman's dress shows how a selendang lawon was used and matched Palembang

This tradition of using plain centre fields in tie- eye cloths is seen not only in Sumatra but also in the Cham Malay districts of Cambodia. An example from a Cham area in the east of Cambodia, possibly Takeo province, shows a beautiful and striking use of Chinese damask silk. It has a plain yellow centre surrounded with a deep purple border with brightly coloured tie- dye patterns of what looks like rows of Christmas trees instead of *boteh* leaves. These Christmas trees also exist in the tie-dyes of Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan. There the Malays refer to this Christmas tree form as *nenas* or pineapple. (Photos 7 and 8)



Photo 8-

Recent sasirangan sampler, tie-dye showing the symbolism of Christmas tree-like motive as Nenas, pineapple. Lambung Mangkurat Museum Banjarbaru

For square pelangis there are generally two main uses, or head scarves called *semutar* or simply *kiet* in the Cham language and handkerchiefs or *saputangans*. (Photos 9 and 10)



Photo 7-

1930s Cham kiet, tie-dye silk should cloth with plain yellow center field, Cambodia



Photo 9-

1940s Cham kiet, tie-dye silk headscarf, Cambodia 78 x 79 cm

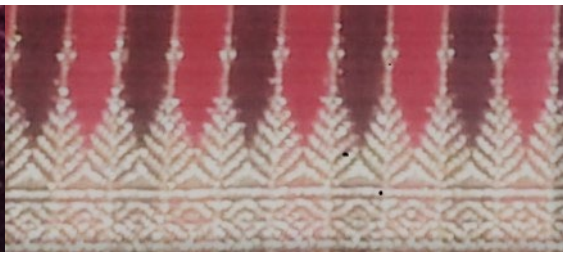


Photo 10-

1920-30s sapatangan pelangi,
tie-dye silk handkerchief,
Patanni. 57 x 57 cm

In the Lambung Mangkurat Museum in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan we see many examples of tie-dye which is known locally as *sasirangan*. One of their most beautiful pieces is a green silk sarong with patterns executed completely in tie-dye. (Photo 11)



Photo 11-

1940s sarong sasirangan, tie-dye silk tube skirt,
Banjarmasin,
Lambung Mangkurat Museum Banjarbaru

Many similar size sarongs can be found in either South Sumatra, Northeast Malaysia, South Thailand and West Kalimantan. Regular size sarongs were matched with *baju kurung* (traditional Malay long blouse) or *kebaya* (short open top blouse) or used as *sampings* (formal short hip wrappers) for the men. (Photos 12 and 13)



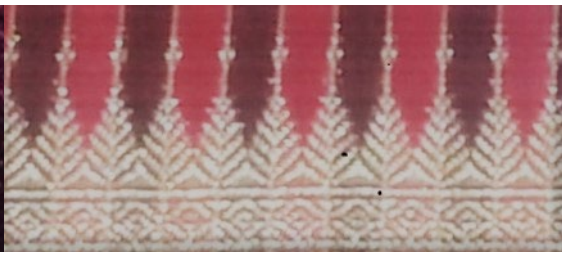
Photo 12-

1950s *kebaya sarong pelangi*.
Set of woman's lace open blouse and tie-dye
silk sarong. Sumatra, South Palembang



Photo 13-

1950s showing young boys dressed in
traditional Malay clothes with *samping pelangi*



Larger sarongs were used more like the Balinese *saput*, to wrap the whole body till the top of the chest. Usually such pieces will be accompanied by a shoulder cloth also in tie-dye. Such combinations were more popularly used in places north of Terengganu, in Kelantan and in the southern states of Thailand such as in Narathiwat, Pattani and Songkhla. (Photo 14)



Photo 14-

1950s *kemben* and *selendang pelangi*, Songkhla

Pelangi means rainbow, since the Malays often use a plethora of bright colours for this particular technique. Other names for tie-dye are *jumbutan* (used in Palembang) and *sasirangan* (used in Banjarmasin). However, in general we know that these cloths, because of their joyous bright colours, were used for celebratory purposes. For example, in Palembang they were used for wedding ceremonies but as subsidiary and not the main textiles, which were reserved for the more expensive gold thread songket.

In the Limas house or traditional Malay wood house for royalty in the Balaputradeva Museum in Palembang, we will notice an interesting use of *pelangi*. Here they are displayed on a unique wedding apparatus that looks like a balance scale. The strings, that attach a tray to each end of the pole of the balance scale, are decorated with *pelangi* cloths. These cloths have been twisted to form a rope that encircle the strings. This set up is for the

Palembang Malay wedding ceremony performed after the wedding vows called *akad nikah* have been completed. In the ceremony, the couple has to place their hands on to the trays and press with equal pressure on each side to show their love and devotion for each other is equal. Another practice is where a Koran is placed on one side of the scale and the bride and groom place their hands on the other side as a promise to be equally devoted to Islam. The bright colours of the *pelangi* celebrates this equality and promise and wishes all at the wedding to be happy and blessed. (Photos 15 & 16)



Photo 15-

Weighing scale for wedding ceremony in Limas house, showing use of *pelangi*, Balaputradeva Museum, Palembang

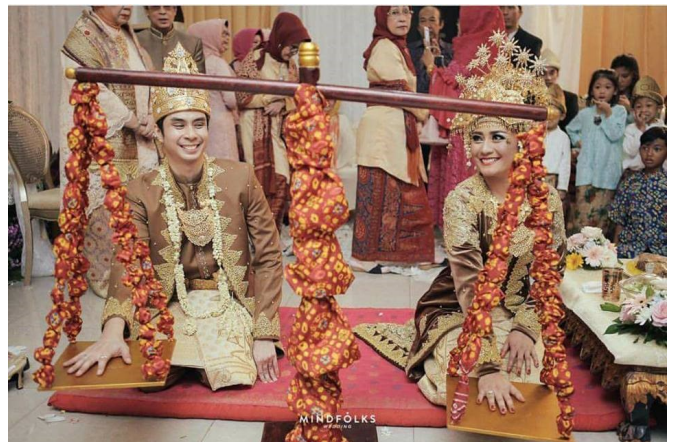
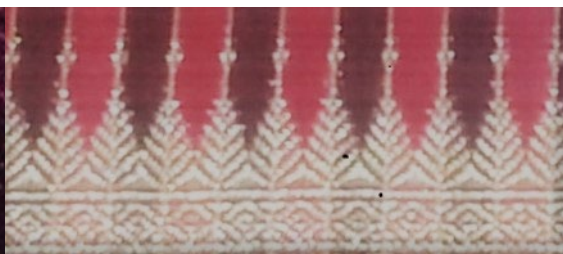


Photo 16-

Photo showing Malay wedding couple of Palembang putting their hands on a ceremonial scale with *pelangi* cloth tied around the ropes that hold the trays of the scale. Photo public domain Balaputradeva Museum, Palembang.



On the mannequins of a wedding couple in the Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II Museum, also in Palembang, we see *pelangi* used as waist bands for the bride and groom. These are tied around the waist and allowed to hang down on one side. (Photo 17)



Photo 17-

Traditional Palembang wedding dress showing the use of *pelangi* as a waistband
Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II Museum, Palembang.

Other less common uses of *pelangi* in the Malay World include, ceremonial hangings known as *pidan* in the Khmer language. Such an example is seen in a tie-dyed cloth measuring 155 cm by 77 cm. According to Gillian Green, these Cambodian tie-dyes were used as the brides' sashes. However, for this example, such usage would seem unlikely since the top of the textile has tie-dye patterns depicting a row of tassels. This would make the piece more appropriate as a hanging rather than as a sash. As a hanging, it is also very interesting as it has patterns of birds, *nak* (snake dragons), *nak* headed boats and trees. Such boats are called *pratib* and were launched into the rivers with candle or electric lights during the 3-day *loy pratib* festival, which is held after the end of every rainy season. Ikat hangings with the same motifs were used during this period to celebrate the full moon that marks the end of a successful rice harvest and to give homage to the river that supplies the water of life. (See Green, Gillian, "Pictorial Cambodian Textiles," p. 85 and 86 photos 16 and 18). Could this rare tie-dye example also have the same purpose?

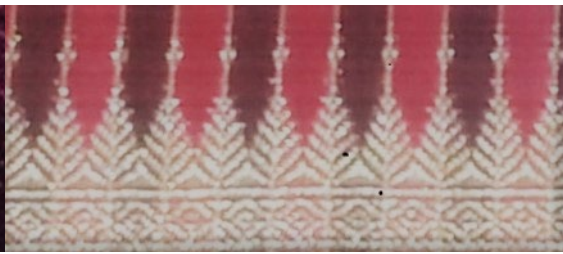


Photo 18-

Kiet pidan, tie-dye silk ceremonial hanging
from Cham community in Cambodia 155 x 77 cm

The last but not least of the uses of *pelangi* in the Malay world is as shroud covers known as *tutup jenazah*. This use can be seen in a recent photo at a hospital in Pontianak, West Kalimantan, where a recently deceased member of the Pontianak royal family is covered with a brightly coloured tie-dye cloth. Where most funerals mark the occasion with dark colours, the bright colours of this shroud cover may perhaps represent the celebration of the completion of a successful life, but this

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is just a conjecture which must be further investigated.
(Photo 19)

YURT INSPIRATION

By Lori Fleury



Photo 19-

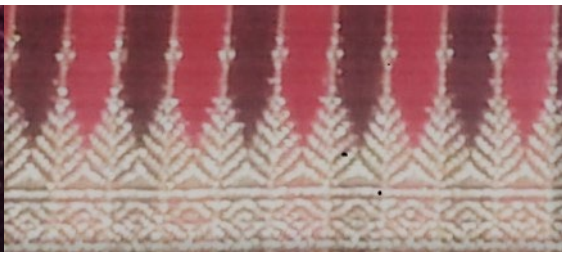
Tutup jenazah pelangi, tie-dye silk ceremonial shroud covering. Measurements unknown.



Lori's self-handmade yurt

I love wool; it is my Norwegian DNA. I love working with wool: weaving wool rugs, knitting wool sweaters, carding and spinning wool of yurts (Mongolian portable tents). Then came the obsession of making my own yurt, I absorbed everything I could learn about them. I then started the long thinking process that took a couple of years, of making a small yurt. I thought of different designs and ways to assemble a small yurt that I call a 'fleurt', the combination of last name Fleury and yurt.

The final criteria was: free standing, collapsible so it could be used as a sleeping bag in the back of a car, made from recycled wool materials, small enough to put on a sled, self-standing and easy to set up in a cold dark environment. The top of the yurt would be black wool to absorb any sunlight and heat, the sides of a different color from the front and top of the fleurt. As a traditional yurt has layers - black on the outside and a light color inside - the inside of my yurt was made from sweaters, to take advantage of the pockets and sleeves. I had a beautiful sweater with a sunset design on it, which I used at the back of the yurt. There are four parts to the fleurt: the top, two sides, and the front door. Each of the four parts were made separately. There were two woolen layers to each section, the outside and the inside and in



some places raw wool was layered in between the two. I used a quilting method to sew the layers together, applying additional stitching to the top as decoration. The pieces were then sewn together using a strong wool yarn, with the wool floor added last. Lastly, strong fiberglass poles were added for support, then attaching the woolen creation of the fleurt with plastic shower curtain rings to the poles. The original fiberglass pole was not strong enough and had to be substituted by an aluminum pole that was bent to the desired size by a friend.



Inside the fleurt



KALAMKARI

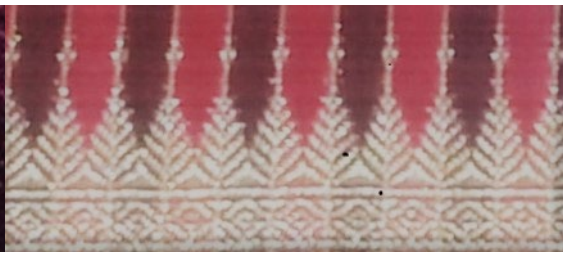
The art of painting on cloth

By Ruth Gerson



Kalamkari is a hand-painted or block-printed cotton textile, produced in the south Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana (which was part of Andhra Pradesh until 2014), an art that was introduced into India from Iran and is still practiced in both countries. The word kalamkari is derived from the Persian words *kalam* that is a pen-like tool, and the term *kari* meaning craftsmanship. Of the two techniques, printing with the woodblocks is dominant in the vicinity of Machilipatnam near the Coromandel coast of the Indian Ocean, while freehand painting is done in Srikalahasti in the Chittoor region of the southern part of the Andhra Pradesh. The production of kalamkari requires much water, therefore these two centers were located near main rivers - Machilipatnam is near the Krishna River, while Srikalahasti is by the Swarnamukhi River. These two distinctive styles are referred to today as Machilipatnam style and Srikalahasti style. Only natural dyes are used giving the finished product a soft and pleasing look.

The popularity of kalamkari is in part credited to the *chittrakattis* who were singers, dancers and painters who moved around the countryside to entertain the people in the villages. To illustrate their stories, the performers brought with them many cotton cloths on which they drew pictures on the spot relating the



themes of their performance, generally Hindu epics and mythological tales.



Rinsing the cloths in the river



Dyeing and rinsing vats

It was during the reign of the Qutub Shahis (1518-1687) who ruled from Golconda, near today's Hyderabad, that the art of kalamkari was introduced to India. Weavers at that time made up a large part of the inhabitants, and even today, there are still numerous weaving villages continuing the tradition of weaving, bleaching and creating designs on textiles.

Kalamkari saw its peak during the Mughal rule of southern India, who in the late 17th century had vanquished and replaced the Qutub Shahis. They were

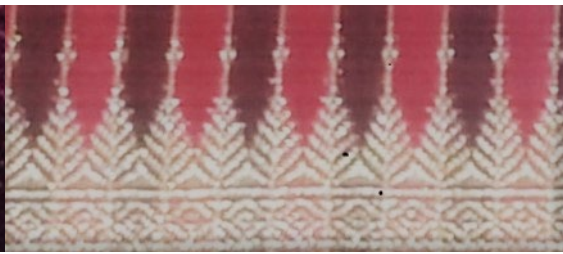
patrons of the arts, and under their tutelage both methods of creating kalamkari flourished. It was also during the 17th century that a kind of kalamkari known as chintz found favor in Europe giving rise to a great industry that created specific designs and colors for those distant markets. These were treasured for the fine quality of the cottons, the freshness of designs and the fastness of colors that did not run in the wash.

Preparing the cloth

There are a few ways of softening the cloth in preparation for the designs to be added to it. Most workshops use the method of soaking the cloth for at least one hour in cow's milk in some cases adding resin to it, while in some places it is soaked in a pond with algae which removes the starch from the material. Cow dung can be used afterwards to add softness and sheen to the cloth. The cloth is soaked once again in water with crushed myrobalan seeds, changing its color from cream to gold. It is a process that helps the colors bond with the cloth.



Cloth with initial black design



Colors added to the design

Kalamkari is a complex and time-consuming process, with up to 20 steps of drawing and coloring the designs with various dyes and washing after each application of color. The initial colors applied are black and red, extracted from an iron mixture, with which the outlines of the designs are drawn. Brown is used as well in the second step, by mixing the black with the red. The next step is to wash the cloth again to remove the fixing gum of these colors. If this is not done, the following dyes applied to the cloth will bleed (run out of the lines of the design).

Dyes

Natural dyes are used to color the designs applied to the cloth. Colors are extracted from flowers, leaves, bark, roots, and plants. A number of sources yield similar colors, here are some common dyes used for making Kalamkari.



Natural dyes

Red – obtained from madder root

Yellow – pomegranate shell and mango tree bark

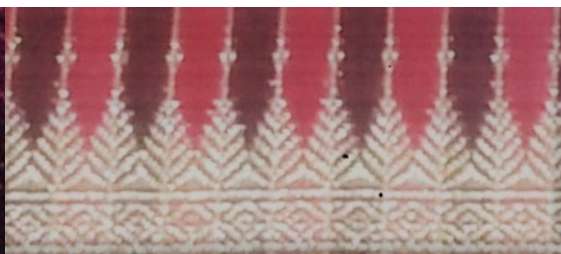
Black – myrobalan fruit, a purple-leaf plum

Indigo – unlike the other dyes, it is not water-soluble, it is soaked in soluble caustic soda to absorb the color; to develop it a hydrosulfate solution is used.

Minerals used as mordant (dye fixative) binding the colors onto the fabric are salts of iron, tin, copper and alum.

Prescribed colors are used in depicting the figures on the cloth: women are in shades of yellow, gods are blue, while demons are red and green. The most common background color is red

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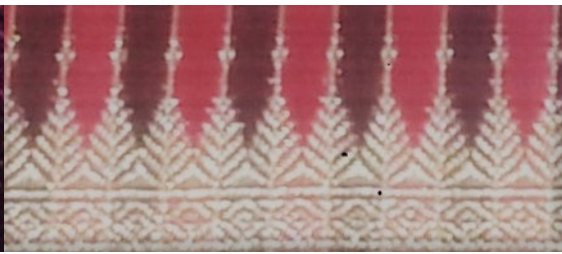
Design



Hand Painted Kalamkari

Woodblock printed Kalamkari

The kalamkari designs have Persian motifs as well as Hindu mythological figures, and religious symbols. The natural dyes are applied by a pen made of a thin bamboo reed, some use a pen made of date palm wood. The handle is covered with wool to absorb the dye, and the craftspeople squeeze out the amount of desired color each time. The wool is tied in place by cotton thread. A modern innovation in some cases is to replace the wool by a sponge. Bunched up hairs are attached to the end of the pen next to the point and can be used as a brush, the artist having the choice of either one. To draw the design the pen is held upright with the tip on the cloth, then dragged along to create the design. To fill in the colors the craftspeople used their fingers to spread the dye onto the cloth.



Woodblock Kalamkari printing

The popularity of kalamkari declined during the 19th century, and came close to disappearing in the 1950 due to lack of interest in the art. The government of India made a concerted effort to revive it. Today both forms of kalamkari are well known and enjoy popularity in India and abroad.



**Customer delighted
with the selection of Kalamkari cloths**

