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Documentation of the traditional garments preserved in the textile art museum, the maharaja Sayajirao university of Baroda, Vadodara

Vandana Chauhan and Kajal Prajapati

Abstract

India is a land abundant in traditional costume that have lent themselves to the creative hands. Another thrilling factor is the numerous processes that these materials go through before they take final shape. Indian traditional costumes are truly fascinating: it is incredible how ancient practices and traditions have continued since time immemorial.

It is necessary for cultural heritage information, in all its forms to be preserved. Valued and conveyed for the reference of the future generations and it cannot advance without consistent and reliable access to information sources. Making resources accessible is important but ensuring precision in resource discovery is very important for future reference.

This study was an endeavour to document and digitized the traditional Indian garments of the collection in Textile Art Museum of the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. An earnest attempt was directed towards analysing, documenting and digitizing the artifacts of the museum with their unique characteristic features with in terms of origin, articles, fabric, fabric colour, surface ornamentation, seams, stitching, present condition and description.

The descriptive and analytical research design was planned to accomplish formulated objectives. The relevant data was procured through secondary sources. The documentation of the traditional garments artifacts were done through preparation of the catalogue supplemented with photographs. The first phase included classification of the traditional garments according to the gender which they belonged to. The second phase comprised of collection of relevant data about textile artifacts and analyses of each artifact based upon procured data. The third phase included the drafting instructions and paper patterns were developed for the preservation of the data of the selected blouse. Fourth phase included of digitization by making the catalogue.

Keywords: traditional garments, museum

1. Introduction

Clothes are natural to men and their proper decoration on his unclothed body is not ugly, on the contrary it is beautiful and pleasing. History testifies that man has throughout been inventing and creating for their fulfilment. It is, therefore that his essential love of nature has been manifest directly or indirectly in all such creations. His needs, his socio-geographical environment, his economic status is all fully represented therein. Particularly, among these, his costumes show the utmost influence of the social life, the seasons and his field of work.

Textiles have been produced in India since antiquity. However, very few of the old textiles still exist. One reason is that cloth has long been regarded solely as an article of consumption, rather than as an art form, and designs are lost through everyday wear and tear.

The Indian village of now bears little resemblance to its predecessor of about four thousand years ago. Yet the bulk of early styles of costumes, such as embroidered, painted, dyed and printed textiles, may be described as genuine traditional art in the original sense of the term.

Another factor, which played an equally important role in the development of traditional Indian textiles and costumes over several thousand years, is the country's geography. In the cultural and historical sense, India constitutes a vast subcontinent of strongly contrasting physical features and corresponding variations in climate.

From the earliest period of Indian proto history, the Harappa culture, the evidence about textiles and dresses is scant but not unimportant. The survival of an actual fragment of cotton cloth, and the upper garment draped around the body like a shawl.

The earliest clothes were made of vegetable bark and animal skins and subsequently of felted fibres and woven yarns. Most ancient peoples living in hot climates wore lengths of cloth draped over the body. The Egyptian mantle, the Abyssinian, Syrian and African shama, the Jordanian loin-cloth, the Greek himation, the may be called "core" garments whose shapes and silhouettes developed regionally along Roman toga and the Indian dhoti and sari are all unstitched lengths of fabric wrapped around the body in different ways. Fabrics were also stitched together to produce what may be called "core" garments whose shape and silhouette developed regionally along the same instinctive lines as the unstitched cloth. The tunic, skirt, and trouser which were originally designed for purely functional purposes evolved into more sophisticated and decorative items of clothing.

What a person wears are often indicative of his or her personal and social identity, marital status, occupation and sometimes even religion. The flavour of Indian costume is sensed through movement, drape and detail. No less important is the association of the colour of apparel with custom and ritual. (Kumar, 1999) [10].

2. Purpose of the Study

India is a country which has a treasure of traditional garments, which can be adapted to bring individuality glamour and style to modern fashions. India has record of unbroken living vibrant traditional garments which needs to be preserved. There is no doubt that every effort to be taken to revive the traditional styles, for that paper patterns and drafting instructions were needed to preserve it. Keeping artifact in the museum is one way of preserving it.

The Department of Clothing and Textiles has very valuable collection of traditional garments. The main purpose of the proposed research was to document the identifying features and development of drafting instruction and paper pattern of the traditional garments' artifact preserved here.

The researcher was interested in carrying out a study in the aspects of database by using reliable and economic means of modern technology. The researcher had made a catalogue which would provide other researchers and students information about traditional garments. A museum cannot display all the artifact all the time. So, making a catalogue of these was providing a long term compact and easily accessible product which can be invaluable reference and research tool.

This research was an endeavour to make the traditional garments known to even common man with respect to its characteristic details, original name, identifying features such as its origin, fabric, fabric colour, stitching, seams, surface ornamentation, closures, present condition and other description. The researcher also developed drafting instruction and paper pattern for the preservation of its originality in terms of flat pattern.

3. Objectives of the Study

- To study and analyse the traditional garments from the collection present in the Textile Art Museum.
- To develop the drafting instructions and paper patterns of the blouses.
- To prepare a catalogue of the documented traditional garments.

4. Method of Procedure

The main objective of the research was the documentation of

the traditional garments which are preserved in the "Textile Art Museum" of the Department of Clothing and Textiles, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of the Baroda, Vadodara. The type of research was descriptive as well as analytical.

Museum traditional garment artifacts were cultural resources for the nation, which provides base line information about the lives and history of people and groups throughout the nation. To obtain the relevant literature, the investigator visited the libraries and museums of Gujarat.

The investigator browsed websites with the help of search engine to collect the review of literature. Various books, brochures, leaflets, articles published in magazines and unpublished dissertation were mainly referred which served the purpose for identifying, understanding and studying the artifact in the collection.

The researcher did a thorough study of all the traditional garments from the secondary source. Historical details, origin, significance etc. was also done. Based on the knowledge obtained through the secondary data, the researcher then analysed the artifacts present in the Textile Art Museum in terms of catalogue no., artifact, origin, fabric, fabric colour, stitching, seams, surface ornamentation, closure, present condition, description and measurement of the garment.

Total 63 garments were selected for analysing from the traditional garments of the 'Textile Art Museum'. For this research paper 11 traditional garments were taken. The garments were classified on basis of gender i.e. male and female.

Relevant data was collected through primary as well as secondary sources. Primary data collected through observation method was applied to documentation of the traditional garments of the "Textile Art museum" of the Departments of the Clothing and Textiles. The photography was captured through Nikon D1300 18 to 50 Mega pixels. The photography was done in proper light. The artifact was placed on the mannequins or flat on the table. The front and back of each artifact were photographed.

Data through the secondary source was collected from the books, journals, dissertation, thesis, magazines and through various websites.

After observation and taking measurements of the actual traditional garments, drafting instructions were developed and converted into paper patterns for only blouses.

5. Result and Discussion

The study was carried out in four phases. Firstly, garments were broadly classified according to the gender they belonged to. Secondly, collection of relevant data which would aid the researcher with the information required. Throughout analysis and description of each artifact was carried out by the researcher. In the last the drafting instructions and paper patterns were developed for the preservation of the data of the selected Blouses. Fourth phase included of digitization by making the catalogue.

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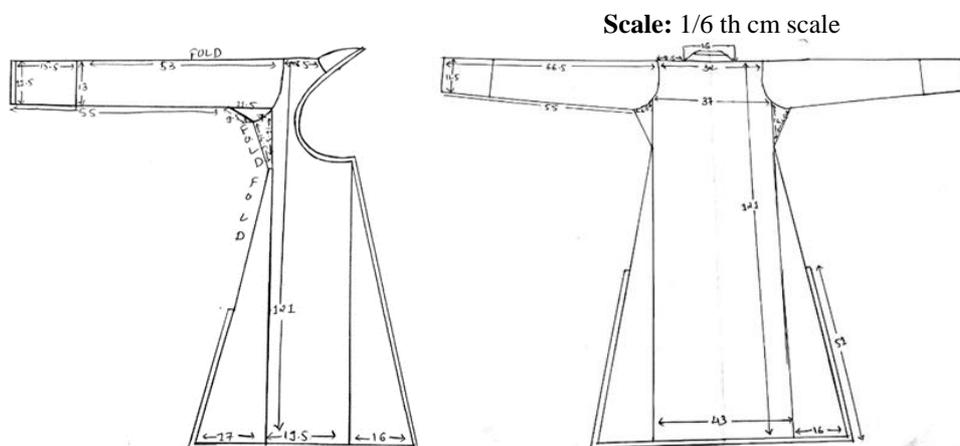
5.1 Male Garments

No: 1



Fig 1: Angarkha's front and back

- **Catalogue No:** G 69
- **Artifact:** Angarkha
- **Origin:** Uttar Pradesh
- **Fabric:** Satin
- **Fabric colour:** Pink
- **Fabric construction:** Satin woven fabric
- **Stitching:** Hand Stitch
- **Seams:** Plain seam
- **Surface ornamentation:** Golden ribbon, Zardozi embroidery.
- **Closures:** String, Potali buttons
- **Present Condition:** Torn, Stain observed, unravelling of golden ribbon.
- **Description:** It had gusset attached with sleeve and side seam with side slit. The pink Angarkha had bias piping of 1.5 cm on the neckline, sleeve hemline, front line, side slits and garment hemline. Angarkha had cotton lining. Golden ribbon was attached at neckline, armhole, sleeve hemline, over the gusset, kali and bottom hemline. Zardozi embroidered patch attached on the sleeve and at the center back. It had full-length set-in sleeve. It reached till below the knee.



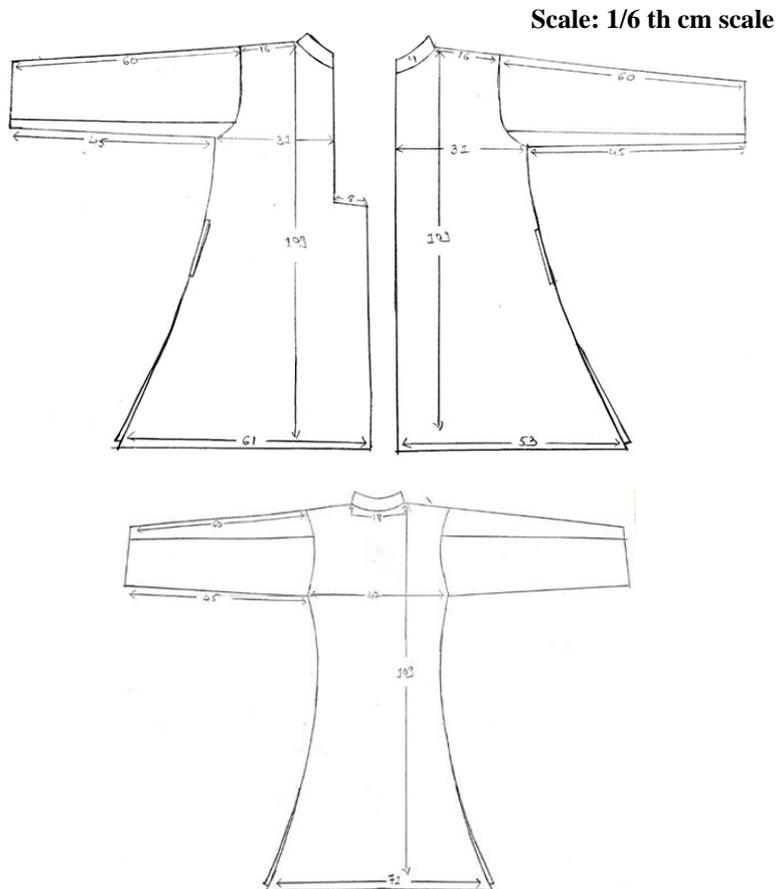
III 1: Angarkha's front and back

No. 2



Fig 2: Sherwani's front and back

- **Catalogue No:** G 65
- **Artifact:** Sherwani
- **Origin:** Uttar Pradesh
- **Fabric:** Brocade
- **Fabric colour:** Golden, Cream
- **Fabric construction:** Jacquard woven fabric
- **Stitching:** Machine Stitch
- **Seams:** Plain seam
- **Surface ornamentation:** ----
- **Closures:** Button
- **Present Condition:** Torn observed.
- **Description:** Sherwani had high neckline with Chinese collar. It had single waist dart on front side only. The pockets were side seam pocket with side slits. It had lining of satin fabric in golden coloured. The opening was full front opening. It reached below the knee. The sleeves had upper sleeve and lower sleeve of full length.



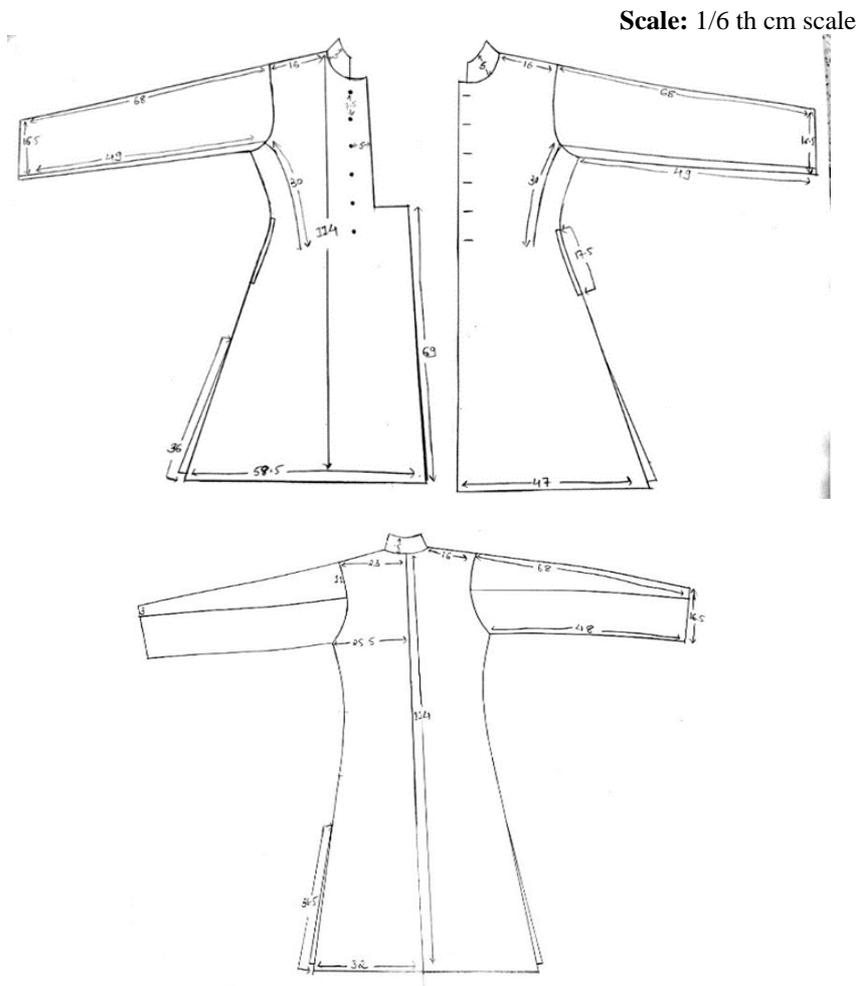
III 2: Sherwani's front and back
~ 241 ~

No. 3



Fig 3: Achkan's front and back

- **Catalogue No:** G 99
- **Artifact:** Achkan
- **Origin:** Rajasthan
- **Fabric:** Muslin
- **Fabric colour:** Off white
- **Fabric construction:** Plain woven fabric
- **Stitching:** Machine Stitch
- **Seams:** Invisible
- **Surface ornamentation:** ---
- **Closures:** Buttons
- **Present Condition:** Stain observed.
- **Description:** The achkan reached till below the knees. It had a Chinese collar. There was a welt pocket on left side of the front at the top. It had full front opening and had slits at side seam, the back had seam. It had armhole dart reaching upto the waist. The sleeves of the achkan had a full length and the sleeves had upper sleeve and under sleeve.



III 3: Achkan's front and back
~ 242 ~



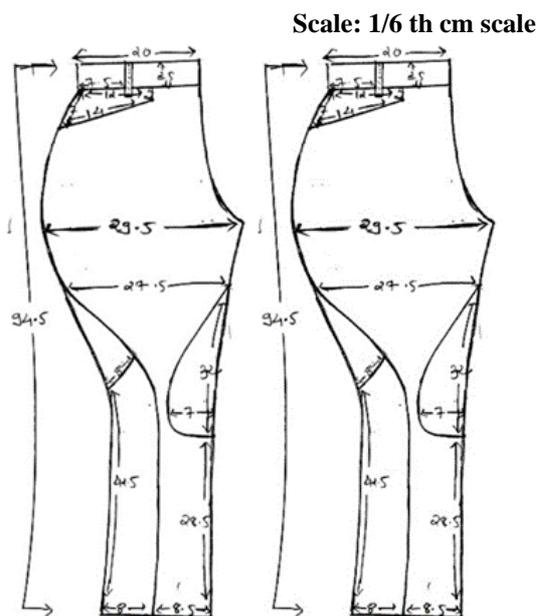
Fig 4: Breeches front and back

- **Catalogue No:** G 101
- **Artifact:** Breeches
- **Origin:** Rajasthan
- **Fabric:** Muslin
- **Fabric colour:** Off White
- **Fabric construction:** Plain woven fabric
- **Stitching:** Machine
- **Seams:** Flat & fell seam
- **Surface ornamentation:**
- **Closures:** Zipper and Clip
- **Present Condition:** Good
- **Description:** Breeches was lower garment of men. It was fitted garment from knee to till the ankle. It had reinforcement from mid-thigh to below the knee. There was a front pocket and the waist band was 1.5 inches wide with 3 inches extended at the opening. The back had single waist dart. There was a loop on the waist to pass the belt. It was loose fitted garment from wait till the knee

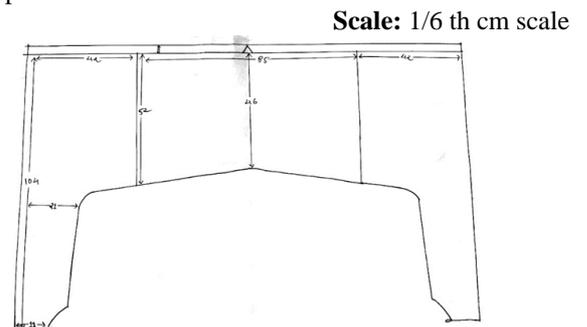


Fig 5: Vanjani's front and back

- **Catalogue No:** G 85
- **Artifact:** Vanjani
- **Origin:** Gujarat
- **Fabric:** Cotton Polyester
- **Fabric colour:** White
- **Fabric construction:** Plain woven fabric
- **Stitching:** Machine Stitch
- **Seams:** Plain seam
- **Surface ornamentation:** -----
- **Closures:** String, Buttons & loop.
- **Present Condition:** Stain observed.
- **Description:** Vanjani was worn by the Ahir community's men. It had casing self-folded in the front and had an opening at the front and back for the string in front. The mori had buttons to close it with cotton thread loop.

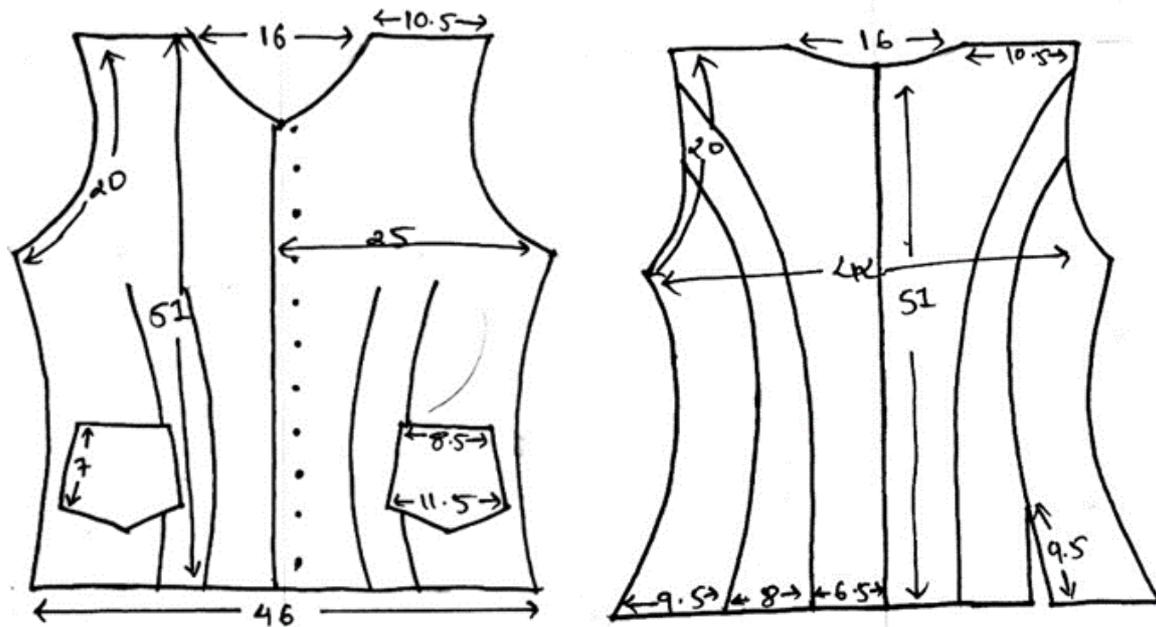


III 4: Breeches's front and back



III 5: Vanjani

Scale: 1/6 th cm scale



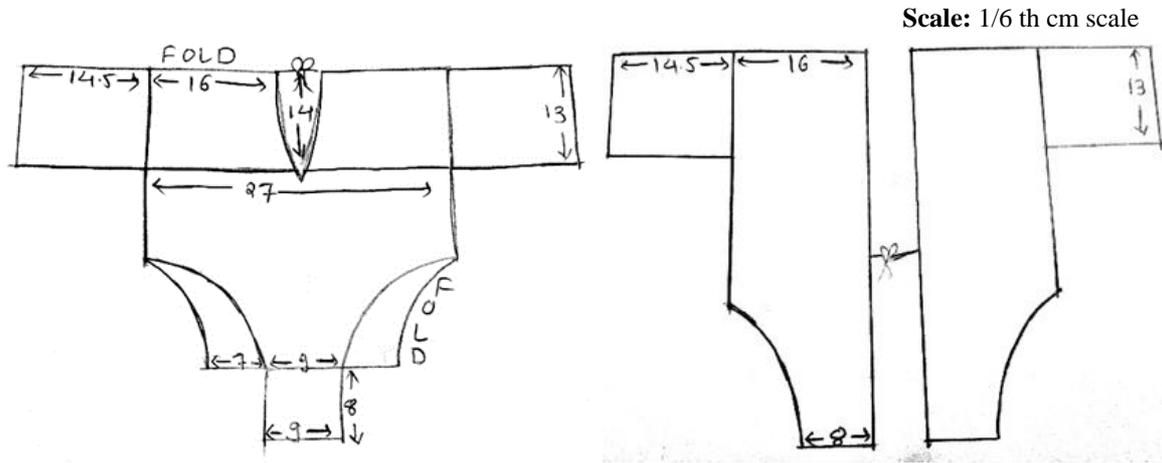
III 7: Koti front and back

No. 8



Fig 8: Choli's front and back

- **Catalogue No:** G80
- **Artifact:** Choli
- **Origin:** Andhra Pradesh
- **Fabric:** Khadar, Synthetic
- **Fabric colour:** Yellow, Red, Blue
- **Fabric construction:** Plain woven fabric
- **Stitching:** Machine Stitch
- **Seams:** Flat & fell seam
- **Surface ornamentation:** - Mirror work, hand embroidery, applique work
- **Closures:** string
- **Present Condition:** Holes and perspiration Stain observed
- **Description:** Choli back was backless with string as a closure. It had the yoke. The choli reached till below the waist. The sleeve length of the choli was just above the elbow. The embroidery was done by hand in maroon, pink, yellow, orange coloured. The applique work was triangular and were in green, red and yellow colours. Just below the yoke. There was a flap attached having two large mirrors, two small mirrors and metal beads and pendants. In the center at the hemline there was a square piece attached with both small and large mirrors. The choli had a khaddar lining. The side panel had applique, embroidery and mirrors or small and large size.



III 8: Choli front and back

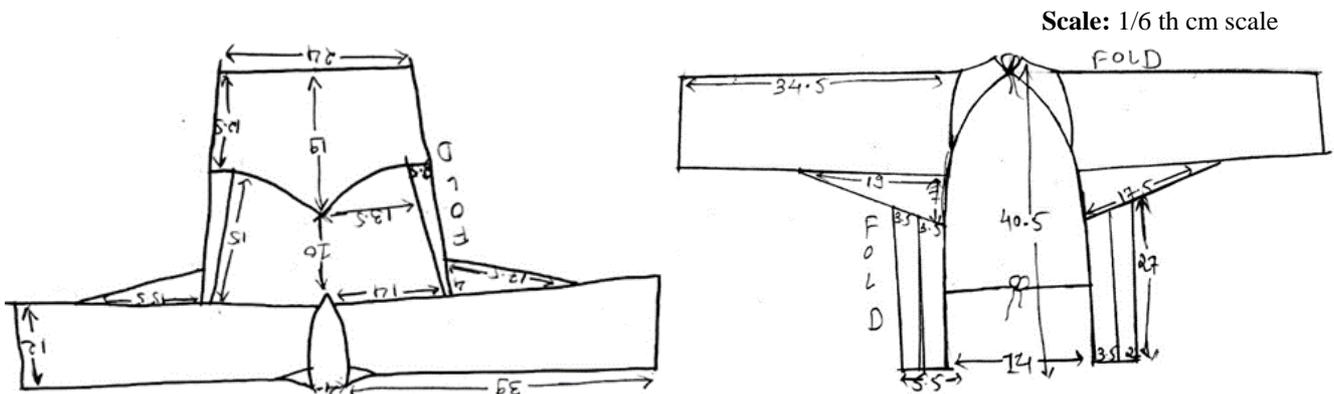
No. 9



Fig 9: Pink Blouse's front and back

- **Catalogue No:** G1, G7, G9
- **Artifact:** Blouse
- **Origin:** Gujarat
- **Fabric:** Satin fabric
- **Fabric colour:** Red & Yellow, Purple(G1), Red & Green (G7), Pink (G9)
- **Fabric construction:** Dobby woven & jacquard woven fabric
- **Stitching:** Machine Stitch
- **Seams:** Plain seam
- **Surface ornamentation:** Lace, Zardozi work.

- **Closures:** Tie string
- **Present Condition:** Good
- **Description:** The Blouse had katori and back. It had slight gathers at the center front to add the fullness. It had piping at the neckline and hemline. It had cotton lining, both the lining. Both the fabric, lining as well as the main fabric was quilted by machines stitches. The sleeves had square design and the katori had floral design. The hemline of the sleeve had brocade border. The back was backless.



III 9: Blouse front and back

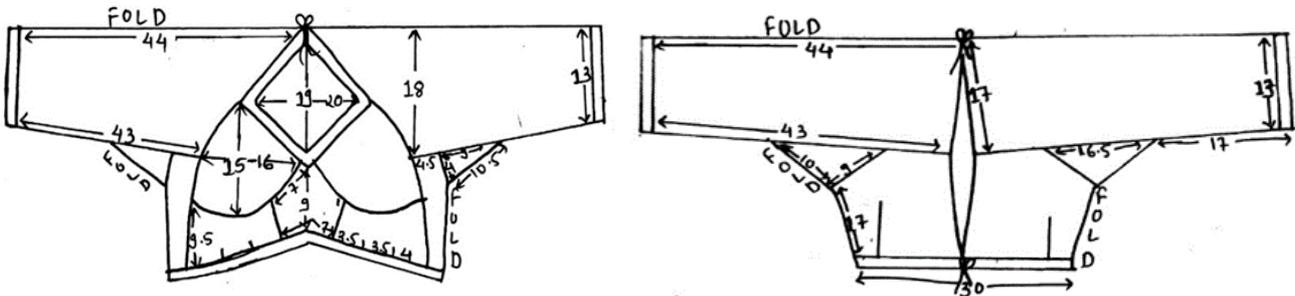
No: 10



Fig 10: Kachali Blouse's front and back

- **Catalogue No:** G 106
- **Artifact:** Kachali
- **Origin:** Rajasthan
- **Fabric:** Cotton printed
- **Fabric colour:** Cream, Red, Green,
- **Fabric construction:** Plain woven fabric
- **Stitching:** Machine Stitch
- **Seams:** Plain seam
- **Surface ornamentation:** ---
- **Closures:** Tie String
- **Present Condition:** Good.
- **Description:** The Kachali was based on the Katori Blouse cut. The katori of the kachali had two waist darts. The sleeve had a gusset. All along the shape of the katori, the neckline and the hemline of the sleeve had a narrow bias piping in plain red colour. The sleeve was reaching just above the elbow. The back was backless which was tied with strings.

Scale: 1/6 th cm scale



III 10: Kanchali blouse front and back

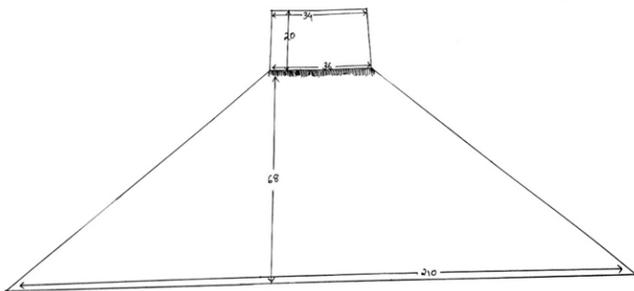
No. 11



Fig 11: Ghagara

- **Catalogue No:** G79
- **Artifact:** Ghagara (Skirt)
- **Origin:** Andhra Pradesh
- **Fabric:** Khadarass
- **Fabric colour:** Yellow, Red, Blue, Green, Brown
- **Fabric construction:** Plain woven fabric
- **Fabric construction:**
- **Stitching:** Machine Stitch
- **Seams:** Flat & fell seam
- **Surface ornamentation:** Mirror work, hand embroidery, applique work
- **Closures:** Tie string
- **Present Condition:** Stain and holes observed
- **Description:** The Ghagara had yoke at the waist with mirrors and embroidery in chain stitch and herringbone stitch. The yoke was 20 cm wide below the yoke the skirt was knife pleated the thighs. Below this a 10 cm wide blue coloured panel was stitched which had appliqué in triangular and herringbone stitch. After this panel there was a base fabric panel was stitched which had herringbone stitch, small tassels and applique of base fabric in square shape. Last panel was again of base fabric, had applique at the edge and above it triangular with tassels.

Scale: 1/6 th cm scale



III 11: Ghagara

6. Conclusion

India is a land of rich traditional costume which needs to be preserved. Documentation and digitization of these costumes will provide long term easy access to the data and will also serve as ready reference as this tradition will deteriorate over the period of the time and museum cannot display all the artifacts. Today making a catalogue of these will provide a long term compact and easily accessible product which can be invaluable reference and research tool. This computerized documentation will facilitate the museum to managerial as well as curative work and also research, publication and proper public access to the collection. The research would provide educational resource both within the university and beyond. This documentation and digitization would make available the comprehensive information with images and 1/6th cm scale flat pattern of each garments in the Textile Art Museum, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara. The development of drafting instruction and paper pattern for the preservation of its originality in terms of flat pattern were also developed during this study.

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