

## Report of Seminar on 'TEXTILES OF PUNJAB'



To celebrate the National Handloom Day, Textiles & Clothing Research Centre (TCRC), New Delhi organized the Seminar in collaboration with Government Museum & Art Gallery, Chandigarh on 6th August 2022 under the 'Amrat Mahotsava' programme. The theme for this seminar was 'Textiles of Punjab'. It was an endeavour to reflect light upon a variety of Punjab textiles; weaving, dyeing, embroidery, conservation, iconography, design and various other cross-cultural influences in the region. The seminar was intended to bring people from academia, young researchers, educators and students working in the different areas of textiles together for mutual exchange of ideas and presentation of their latest findings.

The Punjab, north-western state of India, boundaries have changed from time to time; also, migration of tribes and cross-cultural influences were evident in their art forms. The region has contributed significantly to Indian textile traditions, like spectacular embroidery, weaving, dyeing and printing works besides significant influence in fashion too. Some of the famous ones are; richly embroidered phulkari, costumes, utilitarian textiles, cotton, khaddar, malkha, khes weaving, woollen jamawar shawls, panja durries, parandi, nada (braids for hair and costumes), along with variety of costumes of different communities. The aim of seminar was to study variety of Punjab textiles, unheard textile traditions, processes, sustainable practices, conservation or related findings.

The event was inaugurated by Dr Anamika Pathak, Chairperson, (TCRC), giving tribute to Dr Binoy Kumar Sahay, founder member and Joint secretary of TCRC, Deputy Curator, National Museum, New Delhi, followed by a brief introduction about TCRC and its activities where she also talked about the amicable persona of Dr Sahay and his contribution towards TCRC.

The seminar was divided into three sessions to discuss the historical, fashion, contemporary and sustainability aspects of various kinds of textiles of Punjab and each session was followed by question-answer to discuss the finer elements of the subject, where involvement of all the participants makes the sessions interesting.



The first session was started by Dr Anamika Pathak on Maharaja Ranjeet Singh's period woollen shawl, in which speaker focused on 'kanikar' and 'amlikar' multicolour 'long -do-shalla' with a whole lot of new designs. Ms Smita elaborates the importance of conservation, mounting and display of textile heritage and shared her vivid experiences in the field. Ms Namita Jaspal discussed the preservation of rare and different types of fabrics of Punjab. Dr Sarika read the paper of Dr Varsha Gargy and Dr Mona Suri on embroidery works of Malerkotla: Decorating Heraldry. Dr Toolika Gupta briefly shared her views on Sartorial Sensibilities of the Fashion Icon-Maharani Sita Devi of Kapurthala through video message.

In the second session, Ms Jasvinder Kaur gave the insight of western influences on embroidery and handiwork of Punjab. With visual examples she focused on the variety of embroidery practised during the 18-19th century under the western influences. Ms. Pragya Sharma took fashion research further discussion and highlighted the Mapping British Influence of Domestic Crafts in Undivided Punjab through the archival records. Her focus was on various skills of needlework (embroidery, cross-stitch, cutwork), crochet, lace making and knitting with various resources. Dr Anu H. Gupta presented the 'Creative Bridal Textiles: Pulkaris and Baghs of Punjab'. With finer details she provides the insight of trousseau, which plays a significant place in the life of Punjab girl. These were created with love, and care of the elderly women for their daughters and daughter-in-law. Dr Rohini Arora spoke about the 'Embroidered cholis of undivided Punjab'. She discussed the variety of cholis, its constructional variations and stitches that lend special features to these cholis. Next paper was on 'Sustaining Phulkari Embroidery' of Dr Vandana Bhandari and Ms Neeti Banga was just run through the presentation by Dr Rohini Arora, as the speakers were not able to come.

The third session focus on sustainability aspects and speaker Ms Anupama Datt in 'Punjab Textiles: beyond Phulkari' spoke how woven fabrics feed into garment construction and pattern development, with the examples of her family members with Punjab roots. Ms Sareekah Aggarwal, discuss 'Cultural Stories in Textile Traditions of Punjab: why Story Telling Matters'.



Speakers along with TCRC Chairperson and other members

She focused on the story telling as an important tool for preserving the rich history of heritage textiles of any region, with focus on Punjab region textiles. Ms Gurvinder Kaur Gunde and Dr Anjali Karolia spoke on 'Bagh & Phulkari: Reading Through Embroideries'. She shares the newly developed very fine work on stole and scarf based on the traditional Phulkari motifs, which everyone enjoyed. Ms. Poonam Aggarwal Thakur spoke about the journey of Khadi being the fabric of revolutionaries to fabric with philosophy. Mr Sidhant share his stuff based on phulkari, which he had been creating for European market.

The researchers, academicians, curators, archivist, writers, design practitioner and textile conservators participated and shared their views on this occasion to make this event an enriching experience. Some of distinguished ones were Dr Banani Bhattacharya, Deputy Director, Dr Surichika, Supervisor (Projects) from Department of Archaeology and Museums, Haryana, museum personals, Mr Navneet Cheema Takhar, Liberal History, faculty of Government HSC, Students from NMI, New Delhi, NID Ahmedabad and from different Universities and Institute etc. It was a wonderful blend of talk from varied personality and youngsters in the field of conservation, history, fashion and designers. The research of each one was very helpful in understanding the Punjab textiles in totality that will be beneficial to take up the textile craft of India with more interest & love and work towards its development.

Dr Rohini Arora acknowledged the presence of family members (Ms Anju Sahay, Divanshu and Suryanshu Sahay) of Dr. B.K. Sahay, important contribution of Government Museum and Art gallery for hosting the event, Indian Institute of Craft & Design, Jaipur for sponsoring special memento to speakers, eminent speaker's valuable contribution and all the attendee of the seminar to make this special event successful.

**Introduction of speakers** - Dr Anamika Pathak, Former Curator, National Museum, New Delhi, Chairperson, TCRC; Dr Anu H. Gupta, Chairperson, University Institute of Fashion Technology & Vocational Development, Punjab University, Chandigarh; Ms Anupama Datt, Assistant Professor, Indian Institute of Art and Design; Ms Gurvinder Kaur Gunde and Dr Anjali Karolia, Senior Archivist, and Dean, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara; Ms Jasvinder Kaur, Author, academican and Visiting faculty; Ms Namita Jaspal, Conservation Consultant for Heritage & Cultural Property, Chandigarh; Ms. Pragya Sharma, Design Practitioner, Researcher and Writer; Dr Rohini Arora, Academic and Design Consultant, founder-Rumals of Chamba, editor of TCRC; Ms Sareekah Aggarwal, Archivist, Academican, Research scholar, Repository project, NIFT, Mr Sidhant, designer; Ms Smita, Textile Conservation Consultant, New Delhi, Chief editor of e-journal, TCRC; Ms Poonam Aggarwal Thakur, Principal, NIIFT Mohali and NIIFT Campus Ludhiana; Dr Toolika Gupta, Director Indian Institute Craft and Design, Jaipur and Secretary of TCRC; Dr Vandana Bhandari and Ms Neeti Banga, Professor, and Associate Professor, National Institute of fashion Technology, New Delhi; Dr Varsha Gargy and Dr Mona Suri, Textile and Garment Designer and Education Consultant, Associate Professor, PFHEA, Higher Education Academy, UK.

**PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE EVENT :**

