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### THE EMERGING DESIGN TRENDS OF HANDMADE EMBROIDERY ART IN PAKISTAN: A SOCIO-CULTURAL APPROACH

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Handmade embroidery and needlework in Pakistan have indigenous significance with regard to its cultural heritage and aesthetic identity. The following research seeks to analyze the shift that has occurred in the practices and manifestations of embroidery designs in Pakistan. Handmade embroidery art and designs serve the purpose of aesthetic identity and the artistic ability for Pakistani women to develop their skills, additionally providing them autonomy and agency in the private and public realms of life. This ethnographic study was carried out to analyze the emerging embroidery art trends in relation to the altering patterns and practices of hand needlework in Pakistani society. The key data collection methods used in this study were participant observation and in-depth interviews. The study was conducted in the Rawalpindi neighborhood of Lalazar, Tulsa Road. Purposive sampling was used to collect data from 20 participants for in-depth interviews, including 10 hand embroiderers and 10 consumers from varied age groups, educational levels, and ethnic origins. The results suggest that patterns of embroidery making and its industry has gone through noticeable changes in the past decade but still, this form of art and design serves the purpose of identity, aesthetics and autonomy for women to develop their skills and take part in the economic prosperity. Additionally, the influence of media on the shifting trends in this field of art and design has been analyzed, and

it has been concluded that social media platforms construct and promote the development of novel ideas and their dissemination into the world of fashion.

## INTRODUCTION

Art has deep roots in cultural heritage and historical origins. It represents the inventiveness of an individual, the norms and values of a culture, as well as the aesthetic preferences of those who identify with that culture (Bleiker & Butler, 2016: 56-74). Indigenous art of any region reflects the individuality of its inhabitants and is particularly linked to the traits of a particular culture. Embroidery and stitching are the arts that are not specific to Pakistan. These arts are utilized in numerous ways all across the world, which increases their significance as expressive arts in a variety of cultural contexts. With the application of these arts as learned talents, the tastes, trends, opinions, and needs of the people are directly communicated (Pires, 2017: 13-17). Eventually, as globalization and cultural transmission take place; the arts also modify their forms, enabling greater diversity to be observed in societal life and structure, but ultimately, some individuals think that this cultural blending devalues the original creative forms of art (Lee & Lin, 2021: 1-9).

Embroidery is an artistic medium with global significance. The embroidery process has a wide range of culturally diverse patterns and stitches, and its applications broaden the scope of anthropological research. This style of art also has multiple sociocultural, political, and economic facets. The history of embroidery begins in the Middle East and Ancient China. Archaeologists have discovered the first examples of needlework dating from 3 CCE to the 15th century BC when the Scythian inhabitants of Persia produced highly embroidered clothing with gold engravings (Stella, 2020: 375-378). This is how embroidery evolved over time and was divided into numerous categories based on various cultural influences. Embroidery techniques include shadow work, outline embroidery, candle wicking embroidery, patchwork embroidery, and fish scale embroidery. Moreover, different stitches can be utilized to create embroidery designs. Back Stitch, Running Stitch, Chain Stitch, French Knot, Lazy Daisy Stitch, and Satin Stitch are the fundamental six stitches (Galletta, 2013: 3-22). The needlework patterns vary by location and are given names that reflect either the names of the cities or cultural characteristics. By incorporating new concepts from other cultures into their existing forms of art, people are beginning to practice multiculturalism and increase public diplomacy and cultural diversity in different areas of the world (Baloch, 2014: 87-106).

Anthropological studies on needlework in particular have concentrated on how the idea and ability of handmade embroidery are tied to the feminist side of women and the skills they may achieve via mastering this technique (Sheikh, 2014: 385-395). Women are the creators of culture through the practice of this art since it allows them to live a professional life and earn a living. Also, anthropological studies have emphasized on the progression of the use of embroidery art. Embroidery has frequently been utilized to advance social equality and the status of women in patriarchal institutions, and it has also been used to depict various feminist themes and paradigms (Barrett, 2008: 1-18).

In Pakistan, both men and women learn to embroider and sew, and as a result of their expertise, new stitches have been created in the area. Men also earn a living through the development of these talents, despite the fact that women are more devoted to these pursuits and develop a more professional attitude in this field (Kamran, 2021: 132-141). Hand embroiderers have developed a variety of stitches in Pakistan and given them indigenous terms. The indigenous term for a stitch is **'Taanka'**, embroidery is referred to as **'Karhai'** and sewing is known as **'Silai'**. Every culture in Pakistan has a distinctive manner of displaying stitched garments, with embroidery designs serving as a decorative and enhancing element. The embroidery and sewing styles of Sindh, Punjab, Baluchistan, Kashmir, Gilgit, and Peshawar are all distinct from one another, capturing the essence of those cultures and showcasing the diversity of Pakistan through colors and patterns. The identities of the people who belong to that particular culture are influenced by all of these patterns and fashions. In Pakistan, there are several types of cultural embroidery patterns, including Doch<sup>1</sup>, Pakkoh<sup>2</sup>, Masnat<sup>3</sup>, Phulkari<sup>4</sup>, Shisha<sup>5</sup>, and Zardozi<sup>6</sup>. These patterns serve as markers for the distinctiveness between the various civilizations in Pakistan (Suleman, 2021: 1-28).

Early on, women in Pakistan employed these crafts to make their own clothing and other items, which they marketed in their local communities. The women would frequently knock on the doors of people in the neighboring areas with their collection of clothing, which included hand-embroidered items, and offer them for sale to other women at various prices (Khakhan, 2015: 4661-4665).

The prominence of hand-crafted items declined in Pakistan after the invention of sewing and embroidery machines, and companies began to employ these artistic mediums and launch enterprises by using machines to produce new patterns and serve their intended purposes. This is how the practices changed along with different forms of art. The arts of sewing, stitching, and embroidery continue to play a significant role in Pakistani culture till date (Poray, 2019: 14-20). They are linked to the crafts of knitting and crocheting, both of which are still widely used in Pakistan. Moreover, these arts allow individuals to display their social standing and affiliation with particular Pakistani communities.

As mentioned above, there exists a close relationship between art and culture. The field of the arts, aesthetics, and its designs has its own place in sociocultural anthropology. Likewise, distinct importance is given to the anthropology of

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<sup>1</sup> Doch is a type of geometric and abstract Baloch embroidery used to adorn clothing and home décor with mirrorwork and beads.

<sup>2</sup> An embroidery style from India called pakkoh is also well-liked in Gujrat, Pakistan. Floral and geometrical patterns are used in this needlework, which is generally embroidered into the shapes of peacocks and birds.

<sup>3</sup> Masnat is a piece of hand-woven velvet that is embellished with gleaming zari handiwork. It was quite form of clothing in the Mughal era.

<sup>4</sup> Phulkari is the folk embroidery of the Punjabi culture meaning floral work. Although the term "phulkari" refers to floral work, the designs include a variety of themes as well as geometrical patterns and shapes in addition to flowers.

<sup>5</sup> Shisha means mirror. Shisha embroidery is a style of embroidery which attaches little bits of mirrors or reflected metal to fabric.

<sup>6</sup> Heavy and intricate metal embroidery called Zardozi is typically done on a silk, satin, or velvet cloth. Zardozi has been derived from two Persian terms 'Zard' meaning "gold" and 'Dozi' meaning "sewing".

fashion and apparel. The arts of sewing and embroidery can be understood in the context of all these anthropological realms. A significant portion of anthropological study involves the exploration of societies and their elements, and art is a powerful cultural indicator among them. There is a wide variety of cultures in Pakistan, and each one expresses itself via its clothing and embroidery as well as through its tastes and fashions (Craciun, 2017: 1-18). Additionally, the ways in which these arts serve as a medium for interpersonal exchange and communication, as well as how they change over time, become branded, and affect social status dynamics is an intriguing area of study that arouses a great deal of interest. Particularly in anthropological studies, much attention is given to the exploration of how a single work of art or design can have significant indigenous and cultural significance (Perkins, 2021: 1471-2458). The use of art and design in embroidery and stitching in Pakistan has evolved into many other forms, and now individuals employ these abilities to decorate their homes as well. Individuals start off using them for leisure and subsequently start using them for profit, which helps them meet their financial demands while also helping them to develop their skills in the area.

One of the most popular and widely used traditional arts in Pakistan is embroidery. The culture of a place is intrinsically related to its art. It represents the creativity of the individuals, the norms and values of the culture, as well as the preferences of those who identify with that culture. Indigenous art and design in any location relate to the identity of the local population, which is closely related to the characteristics of a specific culture. Similar to how embroidered art and design have been passed down from generation to generation, adding to diversity as ideas change through time, stitching is an important kind of cultural legacy storage (Kakar, 2019: 664-675). While new skills are transmitted through learning, individual preferences and trends are immediately expressed through the use of this art. In Pakistan, embroidered art with various regionally specific designs is extensively used on the traditional clothing worn by the various regions as well as the accessories that go with it. Although cultural exchange and globalization introduce fresh perspectives and a fusion of art and design styles, cultures have the capacity to revive their original creations, maintaining their uniqueness (Siddiq, 2017: 283-294). In Pakistan, embroidered art may be found in a variety of shapes and styles, and with time, certain social practices that are related to this art have also changed. While embroidery techniques and applications have not diminished over time, there have been changes in fashion for this form of art. If, before a decade or two, this art was only used on fabrics or for some hand-made products, its uses have evolved and have brought about a variety of new ideas with the help of the media and socio-cultural interaction. This is related to how people consume this art in different eras, which brings back its importance.

The literature that already exists on embroidered art covers a variety of topics, including its designs, cultural backgrounds, and modern applications. In terms of anthropology and its social effects, there is limited literature on needlework art in the context of Pakistani society. In her article "A Stitch in Time: New Embroidery, Old Fabric, and Changing Values", Barrett (2008: 1-18) argues that needlework gives people a platform to express their views on the world and express their emotions as well. She also discusses the role of art in the

relationship to gender and social relationships. Moreover, it is a form of art that has not yet evolved into the age of fine art, but its standing is changing, particularly as more women start to work, participate in society, and make a living.

Similar research on the cultural function of embroidery in the fashion business was conducted by Kaur & Jashanjeet (2018: 482-493). They have studied how to produce clothing in the industry using the embroidery technique and then turn it into a product of fashion for the brands that sell it. They indicated that the fabric may be utilized in a variety of ways and that its' blending with other textiles and colors can produce a wide range of cultural interplay, which can have a significant impact on the evolution of fashion.

Alajaji (2019: 1-8) has also emphasized on how embroidery art can be utilized for decorative reasons and can enhance the decoration of the materials in his paper titled "Traditional Embroidery as a Way of Decoration in Najd Desert Tribes". He has stated that adding embroidery, fabric, and colors improves the aesthetic worth of clothing and that doing so can lead to new fashions that raise its creative value. The research primarily concentrated on the traditional usage of needlework for women's clothes in Saudi Arabia because there has not been much research done on the subject in the area or given embroidery considerable aesthetic weight. The significance of women in the development of the art sector in Saudi Arabia and as a component of the curriculum is discussed by Ejeimi (2016: 23-45), in her thesis on the Hijaz Tribal Embroidery of Saudi Arabia. Her research indicated that people are greatly inspired by the many embroidery designs and that education in this area may greatly benefit the fashion business by fostering the development of fresh ideas and increasing creative output.

Furthermore, Esther (2018: 61-66) examined the effects of modern technology on the production of embroidered clothing in South-Western Nigeria in her article titled "The Effects of Modern Technology on the Production of Embroidered Clothing in South-Western Nigeria." These technologies have made it possible to examine the ways in which embroidery can be used to create more avant-garde artworks and clothing that can be made popular on a national and international level. She analyzes that the use of technology is limited and that it is difficult for embroiderers to use machines and create designs. She also believes that the use of machines is having an adverse effect on traditional hand-made embroidery, which could have a significant impact on many cultural practices. For instance, classes teaching hand-made embroidery and home economics curricula could be affected.

Additionally, Sultana (2021: 601-606) discusses contemporary trends in the use of embroidery art in her paper titled "Embroideries and their Trends in Modern Fashion-A Fusion". She analyzes how, in the digital age, people can get new ideas for fusing one form of art with another to create new forms of art and design, which can be beneficial for the field of art. According to her, the fashion business is capable of introducing new, more expansive approaches as well as making advancements.

Karim (2021: 6-12) investigated an indigenous embroidery from Bangladesh called Kantha, documented its heritage, significance, and history, and then compared it to the modern fashion industry. In his view, indigenous forms of embroidery can open new doors for development in the fine arts and fashion industry because the fabrics cannot look similar to machine embroidery so, the hand-embroidery tradition needs to be revived in the fashion realm.

In the context of Pakistan, Bilal & Nadeem (2021: 237-250) have observed the emerging fashion trends of women in the nation and have observed how embroidery is a significant component of the heritage of the country. In their opinion, embroidery can continue to play a significant role in the world of fashion, particularly for Pakistani women as their skills can be used to develop hand-made embroidery and it can also have a significant impact on consumer culture as it would hold notable value.

The aforementioned discussion covers a variety of topics, including hand-made embroidery designs, evolution, and function in the fashion business. Also, the anthropological research on the subject is inadequate and requires greater exploration into the associations that needlework can have with particular socio-cultural domains and how it relates to ideas of gender and class in a particular society. The relevance of this study lies in the ethnographic approach of data collection, which was employed in conjunction with participant observation and in-depth interviews. The study focuses on the function of embroidery in the Pakistani fashion sector and how this skill has aspired to be of paramount importance in the country. The use of embroidered art and design in the modern day as well as its fusion with various art forms have also been studied.

In light of the aforementioned topic, this ethnographic study explores the value of embroidered art and design in Pakistan and how Pakistani needlework trends have changed over time. This study also addresses the relationship between women's roles and growth in Pakistan and embroidery art.

In Pakistan, embroidery has undergone some significant changes and developments and now occupies a significant portion of the art market of the nation. Of course, as time progresses and the tastes, inclinations, and viewpoints of individuals alter, so do cultures and all of their related elements. A similar process was applied to Pakistani embroidery. There is a discussion over capitalism and elite culture in nations since certain sociocultural elements have an impact on societal trends and fashions.

The Theory of Cultural Change by Pierre Bourdieu has been employed in the study. The theory focuses on how several external social elements are affecting the supply and demand of the market economy. According to him, the higher classes (bourgeois), who in turn exploit the other groups in society, are solely responsible for the changes in culture or trends because they have an outsized influence on how people perceive certain things and set standards for the other classes to follow in society (Bourdieu, 1993: 29-73). Additionally, he contends that the dynamics of cultural change are two-sided because it results from the power that both producers and consumers wield.

Applying the theory in the current study, it can be theorized that in the context of Pakistani society, class differences do affect the tastes and fashion sense of individuals, and trends that emerge in all spheres of life are largely the result of the influence that elite producers and consumers have on the general populace. Furthermore, their power play also causes the fashion business to evolve. In terms of needlework and its practices, this art has been popularized and depopularized in a variety of historical periods, and the practices associated with it have faded with time. Nonetheless, it has offered people a new trend. In Pakistan, hand needlework has taken root in a variety of methods. In the past, women employed embroidery art as a skill and part of their activities. Later, it was added to the curriculum. There have been trends where this skill has lost significance in the lives of women and young girls who are pursuing schooling. Yet, as a result of the effects of globalization, embroidered art has evolved and combined with DIY arts and other forms. This has had a profound effect on the lives of the people, including the resurgence of this talent being learned. So, the emergence and the relevance of trends depending on how individuals interpret them and perceive their significance at various points in time. Certain groups have an influence over others and serve as the foundation for trends that are followed.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In order to explore the evolving new patterns of hand embroidery in Pakistani society, an ethnographic research methodology has been employed in the research. Furthermore, perspectives on how embroidered art and design have influenced individuals and their fashion trends have been collected and analyzed using ethnographic research methodologies as the primary data collection instruments. Additionally, this study investigates the viewpoints on the novel shapes that embroidered art and design have acquired in Pakistani society. Moreover, the relationship between this art and gender has been thoroughly analyzed.

The study has been carried out in the Lalazar neighborhood on Tulsa Road, Rawalpindi. Since there are numerous clothes and fabric stores nearby where all of the work for sewing and embroidery is also done, this location was chosen for the research because it allowed for the convenience of data collection. Also, the neighborhood is home to people who go to the shops and have their outfits produced there, allowing for the gathering of their opinions on hand-crafted needlework, its trends, and on the consumer and culture.

The sample of the study consists of 20 individuals (both men and women), 10 hand embroiderers, and 10 consumers. The ethnographic research approaches of participant observation, in-depth interviews, and informal interviews were used to gather data. Purposive sampling was used to choose male and female participants for in-depth interviews from a variety of age groups, educational levels, and ethnic backgrounds. These samples were chosen based on the information required for the study and for the analysis of particular dynamics and trends relating to the needlework artwork.

As the research required data from the individuals who were directly involved in the research parameters, the purposive sampling technique was employed.

Because everyone, male or female, has their own opinions on how embroidery artwork, designs, uses, and trends have changed over time in Pakistan and have affected the fashion industry and the market, the methodology used for the study is suitable (Shaheen, Ranajee & Pradhan, 2019: 25-51).

In order to protect the identities of the respondents during the research and its analysis, pseudonyms were used in place of their real names. Also, the scheduled time and date were closely adhered to to see the participants, and it was ensured that their regular activities would not be interrupted. Also, the ethics were upheld in that region and nobody was forced to join in the chats against their consent.

## DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Research on the new hand-embroidered trends in Pakistan brought light to some fascinating discussions that have been covered in the analysis of the study. The methodology of participant observation and in-depth interviews helped to elicit a variety of viewpoints from both men and women. The three themes that make up the following research shed new insights into a different aspect of Pakistani embroidery art. The analysis explores how embroidered designs are used and play a vital role in the Pakistani fashion industry to how the trends of hand-embroidery are developing in the country. Furthermore, the relationship between the art of embroidery and women's development and gender roles has been explored.

### *The Role of Embroidery Art in the Fashion Design Industry of Pakistan*

Several trends have emerged in the Pakistani fashion sector throughout the years, and what has been noticed by the people is that some designs and styles have persisted. One of these is embroidered art, which has been around for quite some time. People in Pakistan learn how to embroider by hand, and there are fashion trends that revolve around it. In terms of clothing patterns and designs, embroidery has maintained a significant component across several eras in the fashion business. The participants who were interviewed in this respect felt that needlework plays a significant role in portraying the cultural heritage and the diversity of existing cultures in Pakistan (Kunbhar, 2020).

Moreover, the empowerment of women is also evaluated in terms of their abilities and femininity, particularly in their houses, through the skills that they acquire in this art. Young girls are therefore encouraged to participate in activities that are connected to such arts. In the world of fashion, hand-embroideries are and have always been a significant component of fabrics, apparel, and accessories like bags, shawls and other fabrics. One of the respondents named Hina, age 32, belonging from Punjab stated that:



**Figure 1: Sindhi Handmade Patchwork in Pakistan, Image by; Handmade Pakistan via Facebook**



I remember 10-15 years ago that women used to sell their hand-embroidered handiworks at every door, which preserved a culture of social interaction and promoted fashion, but that has declined in recent years.

According to the respondents' perspective, one hand-embroidery-related practice served the functions of social contacts in rural and urban settings where individuals could not only exchange goods but also learn about the preferences of one another and their tastes based on their way of life. So, one practice served the function of both interaction and promotion of new fashion. This signifies the importance of art and its related practices in various spheres of life.



**Figure 2: Various Embroidery Stitches for Clothes and Wall-hangings, Image by; EtsyCA via Pinterest**

One of the respondents, Amna, who is a 28 years old woman working in the stitching and sewing industry, expressed the opinion that brands are now restoring the tradition of hand-made embroidered pieces, including mirror work and other styles that ladies prefer to purchase. This has transformed the fashion business and introduced a tonne of fresh ideas to it. Also, men's apparel has been changing as well, and embroidered pieces are now a part of their design. Thus, the Pakistani fashion industry places a lot of importance on embroidered art and design.

### ***Changing Trends of Embroidery Art in Pakistan***

The data gathered indicates that embroidery is a changing craft with new trends emerging in it. Nida, a 27-year-old respondent, expressed her thoughts on how she has picked up new techniques for the art. In this regard, she detailed:

I enjoy watching YouTube videos on art and have frequently discovered new applications for needlework. The usage of buttons with embroidered designs is a new trend, so I have created various new things with it. I have created embroidery works of my own mixed with DIY art.

Analyzing this viewpoint, Bourdieu's theory that there are elite or powerful forces that influence the populace can also be related. When asked how she discovered



**Figure 3: Fusion of DIY art and Embroidery Designs, Image by; Debbie Tate via Pinterest**

new trends, the respondent explained that they came about as a result of interactions with people from various cultures on social media who uploaded videos. As a result, the influencers and the power of the media have a significant impact on trends, as well as thinking and fashion styles. Some people responded differently to the merging trends.

A craftsman named Khan, Age 45 said:

In our time, people were eager to learn and were aware of the value of preserving Pakistani culture, so we made sure that what was being passed down was learned responsibly. However, today, boys are not even interested in these things, except those who pursue careers in fashion design, and girls are coming up with new ways of doing things without even being aware of the original, which has an impact on the heritage.

This point of view claims that the attitudes and behaviors of individuals regarding art and design are evolving. Younger generations saw it as a way to advance and expand their creativity, so the process goes both ways, bringing acceptance as well as resistance to the new, emerging trends in art and design. For older generations, these emerging forms of art with embroidery art are directly affecting the art's original forms and practices. This essentially demonstrates the varied views and behaviors of the general public toward emerging fashion trends. Unacceptance and acceptance are both a component of the market since they give creators fresh insights on how to satisfy customer needs and preferences (Pitts & Price, 2021: 131-150). However, as has been studied, tastes vary in particular cultural situations as well, which could be a useful indicator in the creation of new fashion trends.

### ***Role and Development of Women through the Art of Embroidery***

As discussed above, embroidery craft is regarded as one of the standards and refinements of women's femininity. Participants in the research believed that women may succeed if they pursued this art as a career, but the majority of them just used their art for personal purposes. On the other side, some respondents asserted that if women take this art seriously, it can open doors for their advancement. Men also believed that in the past, when men had to handle business including clothing and sewing, they would learn designs from the women, expanding their perspectives and bringing new styles to the works, which also encouraged the women to undertake the projects on their own. Also, widowed ladies were frequently mentioned since they could support themselves via the usage of this craft and sewing as well (Alizai, 2017: 187-202).

Hence, by examining this art and the embroidery design and art abilities that are typically passed



**Figure 4: Handmade Embroidered Wallet for Women. Image by; Trove Craft via Pinterest**

down from generation to generation by women, the empowerment of women may be demonstrated. The majority of the teachers who teach sewing and embroidery classes in schools, colleges, and handicraft stores are women. They distribute the information to other girls and even boys. The younger generation also saw this entire procedure as being a form of stereotyped thinking that specifically selects women for housekeeping or needlework crafts. Due to this social norm, they are not being promoted in more professional fields, but the arguments made in opposition to this claim suggested that fashion designing and boutiques are already professional fields for women and that they are making more progress in these fields to ensure that their role in society is not diminished. So, every argument made emphasized the importance of women in the growth of this art. However, some people also think that women should be promoted for reasons other than the "conventional" ones.

## **CONCLUSION**

The field of anthropological study known as arts and aesthetics has created a new forum for the exploration of modern artistic movements, their historical roots, and contemporary gender, modernity, and globalization challenges. The exploration of artistic trends and their connections to cultural heritage, gender development, and social interaction gain significant importance in this field of study.

The implications of embroidery art as a new trend in the modern day range from learning this skill to using it in the financial industry to creating new types of art from handcrafted embroidery. Due to numerous cultural and regional designs that are a trademark of the existing cultural diversity in Pakistan, the art of embroidery is significant in the art world and plays a significant role in preserving Pakistani culture. It can also be a useful tool for boosting public diplomacy and promoting Pakistani art forms around the world. A significant finding of the study was the shift in established tendencies and perspectives on multiculturalism. Although not all of the participants shared the same perspective, many of them tended to agree that this craft is frequently viewed as a task that women can only perform and that they are only "suited" for it. Therefore, it is necessary to alter habits and viewpoints. The advancement of women was viewed from a variety of angles, bringing light to many points of view.

The study concluded that needlework is a very significant art form for preserving the culture of Pakistan, as well as its heritage and history. Furthermore, the new advancements in this art form are being supported and seen as a part of the shift, though frequently with the exception that the original forms should not be overlooked or disoriented. Lastly, the role of women in this art is of utmost significance. Today, in the world of fashion and design, this art is being promoted and revived in numerous ways to give it both a traditional and modern style. It is also catching the attention of male artists and designers, which sheds light on the gender roles associated with this art, which can be studied in greater detail in sociocultural contexts.

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