

BA-(Semester II)
GE: Home Science
HSC GE 202
Appreciation of Textile Crafts
Unit –III

IKATS

Prepared by :
Dr Suniti Bhagat
Assistant Professor
P.G. Department of Home Science
Patna Women's College P.U.
Email: sunitibhagat@gmail.com



Tie-and-dyed Ikkat textiles

Ikat, a derivative of Malay word 'mengikat', meaning 'to tie' or 'to bind' this technique entails binding/resisting and dyeing the warps or wefts before weaving. Bundles of threads are arranged to prepare design and bound with impermeable yarn or rubber bands so that as the yarn is dyed with a range of colours, the areas protected from each dye are resisted in succession. The cloths produced by this yarn resist work are called 'tie-and-dye', bandha, patola, chitka and telia rumal.

Special significance is the patola cloth - patola weaving is an ancient Indian textile craft well known as a luxury export to Malaya and Indonesia in the sixteenth century, where it was cherished as the grab of the nobility and revered for its magical and sacred properties. Today these fabulous and costly silk textiles are made in, Gujrat (Patan), Orissa, Andhra Pradesh .

The processes of tie and dye design require the fixing of the designs and patterns before the warp and weft are coloured. The threads forming the design are tied and dyed repeatedly to bring in the right colour at the right place and the interlacement of the threads produces the design on the fabric.

The dyeing over the warp and weft are spread out for weaving on a loom. As patterns and designs emerge they impart elegance and beauty to the woven fabric. Tie and dye techniques may be applied on the warp threads(warp Ikkat) or the weft threads(weft Ikkat) either of which is called **single Ikkat** or they may be applied on warp and weft threads in such a way that the two designs overlap each other called **double Ikkat**.

In single as well as double Ikkat, warp and weft threads which are tied and dyed as per design should not only be positioned accurately in proper sequence in weaving as required by the design and its colour scheme but also should be accurately secured to prevent shifting, displacing or entangling. With this highly sophisticated Ikkat technique complicated motifs appear exactly the same on either side of the fabric.

Ikat, or **Ikk**at, is a style of weaving that uses a resist dyeing process similar to tie-dye on either the warp or weft before the threads are woven to create a pattern or design. A **Double Ik**at is when both the warp *and* the weft are tie-dyed before weaving.

Like any craft or art form, ikats vary widely from country to country and region to region. Designs may have symbolic or ritual meaning or have been developed for export trade. Ikats are often symbols of status, wealth, power and prestige. Perhaps because of the difficulty and time required to make ikats, some cultures believe the cloth is imbued with magical powers.

In double Ikat weaving Orissa and Andhra Pradesh have prospered flooding the handloom cloth market with fashionably coloured and patterned single- and double -ikat sarees, garment and furnishing cloth.

In Orissa the fine, detailed and curvilinear patterning is achieved by using very thin yarn, and by tying and dyeing small number of threads - commonly two or three (compared with twelve in Gujrati patola ikat) - in a cluster on a rectangular frame. Orissan ikats are woven on counter balance flyshuttle treadle looms, the structure resting on the ground over the edge of the weaver's pit. The heddle and the harness system hangs from the ceiling and the warps to be woven are either wound on to a cloth beam or run over a beam and tied in the roof space out of the way.