GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION; A CASE STUDY OF ‘KASHMIR SOZANI’ AND ‘KANI SHawl’

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Abstract
The protection of Geographical Indications (GIs) has, over the years, emerged as one of the most contentious intellectual property right (IPR) issues in the realm of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). It has gained more interest since its protection has been ensured multilaterally under the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement of the World Trade Organisation. ‘Kashmir Sozani’ and ‘Kani Shawl’ are the officially registered items in GI registry of India under Handicraft goods form Jammu and Kashmir. A GI certification is licensed to the producers and other business operators of the GI production line through a membership application in a GI club. This paper aims at identifying factors that are likely to predict the behaviour/characteristics/unaleness of Kashmir Sozani and Kani Shawls in adopting a GI certification in general and by this bring to light the lacunas in the Geographical Indications and its implementation in particular.

Introduction
Crafts of various forms play a significant role in the overall economic growth of the Jammu and Kashmir state. Most of the crafts are based on traditional material, traditional knowledge and local skill. It makes good economic sense to protect them legally under the GI Act. Among the craft items of Jammu and Kashmir, Sozani Embroidery and Kani Shawls have been registered as GI are ‘Kashmir Sozani’ and ‘Kani Shawl’. They got its GI cover in 2008 acceding to the longstanding demands of Pashmina weavers of patenting it. In Kashmir valley Embroiderer’s plays a very significant role in the production of Pashmina Shawls. They follow simple traditional pattern of Production with the help of family members. Generally after washing Pashmina Shawl, embroidery is done. The value of Pashmina is highly influenced by the nature and pattern of the embroidery.

On the basis of process of embroidery it is divided into two parts.

a) Sozni embroidery (Kashmir Sozani)
A form of embroidery using thin needles and therefore a very fine and accurate art requiring much skill and attention to detail. Using needles of different sizes, one shawl may be worked on
by as many as two or three artisans and can take any time between one month and a year to complete.

**The Production process of Sozani craft**

**Materials and tools:**

The base fabric is of natural fibres like Cottons. Silks and Woollens and synthetic fibres being mostly Crepes, Georgettes and Polyester. The threads used are single ply viscose and pure silk threads. Viscose threads are called 'staple' by the embroiderers and costs around Rs. 20/- per 50 gms. Silk threads are available for Rs. 35/- for 10 gms. The threads are brought from wholesale markets from other centres of the country and supplied to manufacturers after dyeing it in various colours. Most of these retailers also have an in house dyeing facility.

Tools that are employed in the embroidery process are Needles of 7 No. to 10 No. sizes and a steel cap wrapped around the linger called yeuf, and sometimes scissors to nip knots in the threads. The process involves selection of the pattern and tracing of it subsequently on to the fabric surface to be embroidered. The traced pattern is first filled in with embroidery starting with individual motifs of flowers, then finished with defining the outlines and finally the continuous lines that connect these motifs. A single patch is done first and then repeated after it is approved. Typically the pattern is bound on all sides with a ‘Hashia’ border and a kingri- a smaller running ornament

**Selection of the Pattern:**

Once the fabric is ready, the most important stage is the selection of the pattern. The client consults with the master craftsman regarding changes in the pattern or a different colour scheme based on feedback from previous designs. A deal is negotiated once the pattern is selected, which is usually a lump sum amount of money, depending on the intricacy of the work and the estimated time that it would require. For e.g. a typical 'Beldaal border of \( \frac{1}{2} \) on all four sides would be Rs. 2500 for an estimated 40 days of work and the material being provided by the client while a ‘Jamawar’ with all over, filled in type of work can cost Rs. 28000/- for estimated time of 14-15 months. The master craftsman receives an advance of 10% and is also responsible for guiding his team of embroiders in all stages of the execution of the work and ensuring delivery within the specified time. After the selection of the pattern, the colours arc selected and a shade card prepared with the threads of the final approved ones. Colours play a very important role and the yarn is dyed several times till the exact shade is procured. Most patterns use 7 to 15 shades of colours to create their unique kind of effect typical of Sozani embroidery.

**Tracing the Pattern:**

Moorcroft mentions a method of tracing on the fabric with transparent paper and charcoal powder. Though this method is currently used in other embroideries, it is not used for Sozani craft. The tracing for Sozani is printed on to the stretched fabric by specialized tracers (Naquash) in Kashmir with the help of engraved wooden blocks dipped in a watery solution of charcoal powder mixed with a type of binder

**Engraved blocks with Sozani patterns:**
These blocks of wood are first engraved in fine detail by the specialized wood workers called 'Naqash Gurs'. Sozani embroiderers rely on this method for the fineness of the tracing and also because it stays for the required time to complete the work which takes sometimes up to two years. These blocks consist of a single section of the pattern that is repeated one next to the other to cover the entire surface to be embroidered.

Tracers usually have hundreds and thousands of blocks with all different motifs for the embroiderers to choose from but connoisseurs invent a new pattern every time with slight changes from the traditional ones and retain their blocks so that their exclusivity is maintained and the designs are not copied.

**Embroidery work:**

Once the patterns and colours are decided, each fabric piece with the tracing is given exclusively to one craftsman to work on, as the handwork of each is distinct and identifiable. In an all over ‘Jamawar’ the craftsman starts from one edge of the fabric and works towards the centre in patches while borders are usually embroidered from one end to the other. Utmost care is taken to work on the outer edges last so that the threads do not catch dust or stains from the floor. One patch is first completed fully to check out the balance of colour and clarity in form before it is repeated all over. The sequence of embroidery is as follows; The individual flowers are treated first, with the filling in stitches of stem and sozani for the petals with a kind of knot stitch in its centre and finally outlined with a dark coloured Sozani stitch. The buds and leaves follow next and finally the creepers firmly made in Sozani stitch. Abstract patterns like Dantavoith are outlined in a buttonhole stitch with a knot in each. The borders are finished before the last Kingri and Kanj are added to complete the piece. Vatakhan and Chikandozi stitches are also used sometimes to fill larger flower petals using longer stitches but in limited, quantities.

**Washing and Ironing:**

The embroidered pieces at this stage have a withered, wrinkled and dirty appearance with the charcoal printing stains, given all the manual handling of months and the tensions of the embroidery not evened out. It is only after vigorous washing by traditional washers and calendaring process that the brilliant colours shine out of a clean background in beautiful patterns and the beauty of this embroidery is revealed. The finished pieces are pressed and carefully packed in plastic coverings to keep it dust free.

**Specification:**

- Fine Needle work on various fabrics, done by a Sozankar employing predominantly the Sozani Stitch, Darn Stitch and Stem Stitch using silk and viscose yarns. Button hole stitch, Herring bone stitch, Chain stitch, Satin stitch and Knot stitches are also used, though in limited proportions.
- The Sozani stitch is a fine couching stitch with a reinforcing stitch laid over a basic stitch.
- The Sozani stitch can be a simple, continuous line or a diamond shaped outline used for petals and flowers. It can also be used in filling up of a motif. It always has a reinforcing stitch.
• The Sozani stitch lends a delicacy to the overall embroidery and uniformity on both sides of the fabric.

• The Sozani Embroidery involves minute work and is highly skill intensive.

• The most dominant motif in Sozani Embroidery is the 'buti', which is a floral or Almond motif with a bent tip'

• Sozani Embroidery has a rich colour spectrum and exquisite workmanship, with intricate patterns with predominant use of motifs depicting natural flora and fauna of the Kashmir Valley. Popular motifs include the Chinar leaf and Cypress tree, Almond, Grapes, Pomegranates and Cotton seeds, and flowers like the Iris, Narcissus, Lotus, Daffodil, Pansy, Lily and Rose; Geometrical themes like the octagonal Phanus, Dontavot and Agraphool.

Name of the Geographical Indication (and particulars):

Sozani Embroidery: herein called as "sozani Kashmir", visually identified as fine needle based embroidery done with silk and viscose yarn using primarily Sozani stitch, depicting motifs based on flora and fauna of Kashmir Valley and done on various textiles.

Description of the goods:

Sozani embroidery used in different apparel and textile products

Method of production:

The Sozani Embroidery process involves visualization and tracing of a pattern on to a fabric surface which is subsequently filled in with minute stitches and finally finished with defining the outlines of the motifs with yam that has been dyed in specific colours. The embroidered fabric is later washed and pressed, using traditional methods to provide lustre and final finish

Uniqueness:

• Use of minute Sozani stitches, a type of couching stitch, which has a reinforcing stitch, laid over a basic stitch.

• Use of Sozani stitch as a continuous line, as outlines of different motifs or as a filling-in stitch.

• Strength and durability in the embroidery with the stitches laid as flat as possible against the fabric.

• Predominant use of motifs depicting natural flora and fauna, like Chinar leaf, Almond, Pomegranates, Grapes and Cotton seeds, flowers like the Iris. Narcissus, Lotus Daffodil, Pansy, Lily or Rose blossoms, of the Kashmir Valley.

• Use of colour palette commonly described as "Sofiyana Rang" associated to a subtle yet colourful look with many shades of colours blending harmoniously.

• The Embroidery is applied in the following ways:
2. "Butis", mostly small sized individual motifs that are repeated in several ways.
3. "Jaali", a kind of net like pattern embroidered all over the fabric in straight lines, or criss- crossed or in wave like patterns inter-spersed with floral butis.
4. "Jama", a highly intricate Sozani Embroidery style that is so closely filled-in with fine stitches that it barely allows any ground fabric to be visible.
5. "Kunj", a large sized Almond motif that is placed on the corner of the fabric facing towards the centre.

b) Kani or Loom woven:

A Kani shawl takes weeks to a year for an artisan to complete depending on the embroidery. The shawl is woven with special wooden needles, called ‘kanis’ in Kashmiri, and on a traditional hand loom, hence the name “kani shawls”. The knots are made according to a set design, which is already printed on paper called ‘taleem-e-kakud’ in a language only the taran-guru can interpret. The process of weaving line by line is repeated time and again until the final masterpiece is ready.

Specification:

- It is hand woven using a number of 'Kanis' or 'Tujlis', in the place of a shuttle for the weft yarns. 'Kani' is a small eyeless wooden spoke with coloured yarn that is inserted round a specified number of warp threads as per the design.
- Is woven in the Twill Tapestry Weave with interlocking of weft yarns at each colour joining.
- Is woven with the help of written instructions in the form of a "Talim"
- Is made of warp and weft yarns that have been dyed in varied colours following traditional methods and
- Is woven by traditional artisans of Kashmir'

Name of the Geographical Indication (and particulars):

Kani Shawl is generally identified as a particular type of shawl that is woven using numerous eyeless wooden spokes in the place of a shuttle. These spokes are traditionally called 'Tujlis' or 'Kanis' meaning eyeless in Kashmiri language. This traditional method of weaving is also termed as the 'twill tapestry weaving technique with interlocking of weft yams at each colour joining'.

Description of the goods:

The Kani shawls which are resultant of the above mentioned technique are woven in various highly intricate patterns comprising of floral and almond motifs in subtle shades of colours using the traditional technique of twill tapestry with interlocutory of weft yams at each colour joining' by the artisans of Kashmir.
It has a light weight and compactly woven look comprising of single weft unlike its jacquard woven imitations.

Characteristic Kani Shawls are

- Hashiadaar Shawl, with nanow running borders on all four sides.
- Palladaar Shawl, with intricate pattern only on the two ends of the shawl along with narrow borders.
- Butidaar Shawl, in which small or large 'butis' (individual motif) is used repetitively.
- Khat-e-rass shawl, with various striped patterns rendered with almond' leaf and flower motifs. Longedaar and Thahridaar are variations of striped shawls.
- Jamawar or purmattan shawl in which the entire field is covered with intricate all over patter and motifs.
- Chand-daar Shawl, square or rectangular shawls with a central medallion on four quarter medallions on four corners. It is also called the moon shawl.
- Du-Shaalli

Method of production:

Typically, the Kani Shawl production involves sequence of jobs which are

1. Processing the raw material
2. Dyeing of Yarn
3. Warp arrangement, dressing and threading
4. Weaving of Kani Shawl
5. Clipping and finishing
6. Washing and Ironing

Characteristics and Uniqueness:

The fabric is result of a craft form with traditional roots and renowned all over the world as 'the artistic Kani shawl of Kashmir'. This technique results in intricate, colourful patterned shawls that are fine, light weight and also have a compact weave.

This craft form is also called the twill tapestry weave with interlocking of weft yarns at each colour joining. According to this, wefts of the patterned part of the fabric are inserted by means of wooden spokes without the use of a shuttle. Weft threads alone form the pattern; these do not run the full width of the cloth, being woven back and forth round the warp threads only where each particular colour is needed.

The most unique aspect of this tapestried form of weaving is the interlocking of the weft yarn with the one before it and with the one after it, wherever there is a change of colour, thus distinguishing the different motifs in the pattern. It also gives the shawl strength and durability.
The Kani Shawl is unique also in the way that every single shawl is woven based on a drawing of the pattern and its corresponding 'Talim', which is a written script consisting of precise instructions to be strictly followed by the weaver during the weaving process. Thus the Kani Shawl is woven in a highly streamlined manner employing specialized artisans at each stage. The patterns comprise of arrange of floral, Almond, Cypress tree, Chinar leaf and Fruit motifs depicting the floral and fauna of Kashmir Valley. The predominant motif that is seen in the Kani Shawl is the elongated Almond 'buti' with a bent tip, also known as the 'Teardrop' moti, 'Kairi' or mango motif and the 'elongated cone' or 'Paisley' motif in the Mediterranean, Indian and European cultures respectively.

This craft is presently being practiced in the district of Srinagar and some parts of district Anatrag, district of Budgam, district of Pulwama and district of Baramullah of Jammu & Kashmir, where about 50,000 artisans are working in different capacities required in the process of production of this craft.

**Concluding Remarks**

Undoubtedly, there is vast improvement in the Pashmina production and their support price but still majority of Kashmir Sozani and Kani Shawls Embroiderer’s spend their life under poverty line and far flung from the basic amenities, yet it is true that Craft Development Institute, Srinagar and TAHAFUZ, a society of artisans from Kashmir who is the Registered Proprietors of Kashmir Sozani and Kani Shawl acts as a mile-stone in the journey towards the development of GI in J&K but due to the weak coordination between Directorate of Handicrafts J&K Government, J&K Handlooms Development Corporation, Directorate of Industries and Commerce, J&K Entrepreneurship Development Institution and GI Registry of Government of India, GI registration become fruitless in J&K in general and in case of Kashmir Sozani and Kani Shawl in Particular.

**References**

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