

Faculty of Design, Department of Textile design.

The Relationship between Indian Block Printed Cottons and the
Trade Routes, from 1300 AD.

by
Naomi Varian



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National College of Art and Design
Faculty of Design, Department of Textile design.

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Reference is made to

the letter of the 15th of January 1944, in which the

authorities of the said State are requested

to take the necessary measures to ensure that

the said letter is duly executed and that

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Introduction

The impact on Europe of the introduction of Indian textiles has been phenomenal; as a nation their produce has penetrated everywhere, they have become known as the greatest exporter of textiles the world has ever known.

Indian textiles have always been renowned for their bright and vibrant colours; in recent years this vibrant trait has frequently verged on the gaudy as India has become a haven for the production of cheap, plastic ornaments. It still remains by European standards a source of cheap labour used particularly by many European clothing companies. Coupled with the fact that the majority of the population understand and speak English, (a hallmark of British colonisation), there still remain very strong social and industrial links between India and Europe.

The area of Indian textiles is vast, as is the country and the variety of cultures. I have not attempted to discuss the history of Indian textiles as a whole. Instead I have chosen to discuss Indian block printed cotton chintz textiles; the role they have played in the development of trade routes between Europe and India and the comparisons between the traditional block printed cottons that were produced during this development and the traditional block printed cottons that are produced today. What I find so unique about the trade routes between India and Europe is the fact that the cottons that are traded on these routes nowadays are very similar to the cottons that formed these trade routes over two thousand years ago.

In researching this thesis, I contacted The National Museum of Ireland, ^{which} but unfortunately do not have any samples of old Indian block printed textiles in their possession.

I contacted the Indian Embassy in both London and Dublin to

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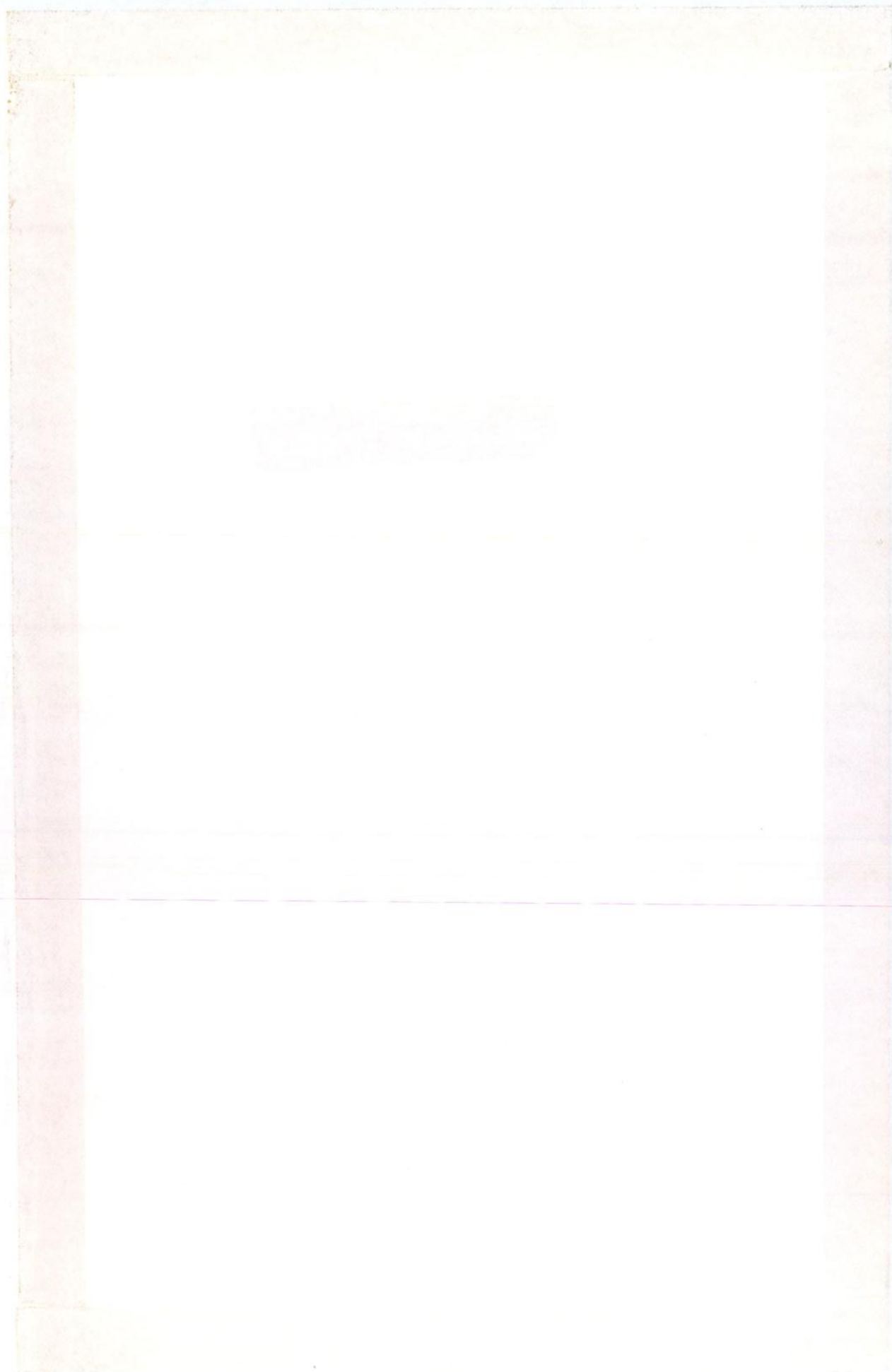
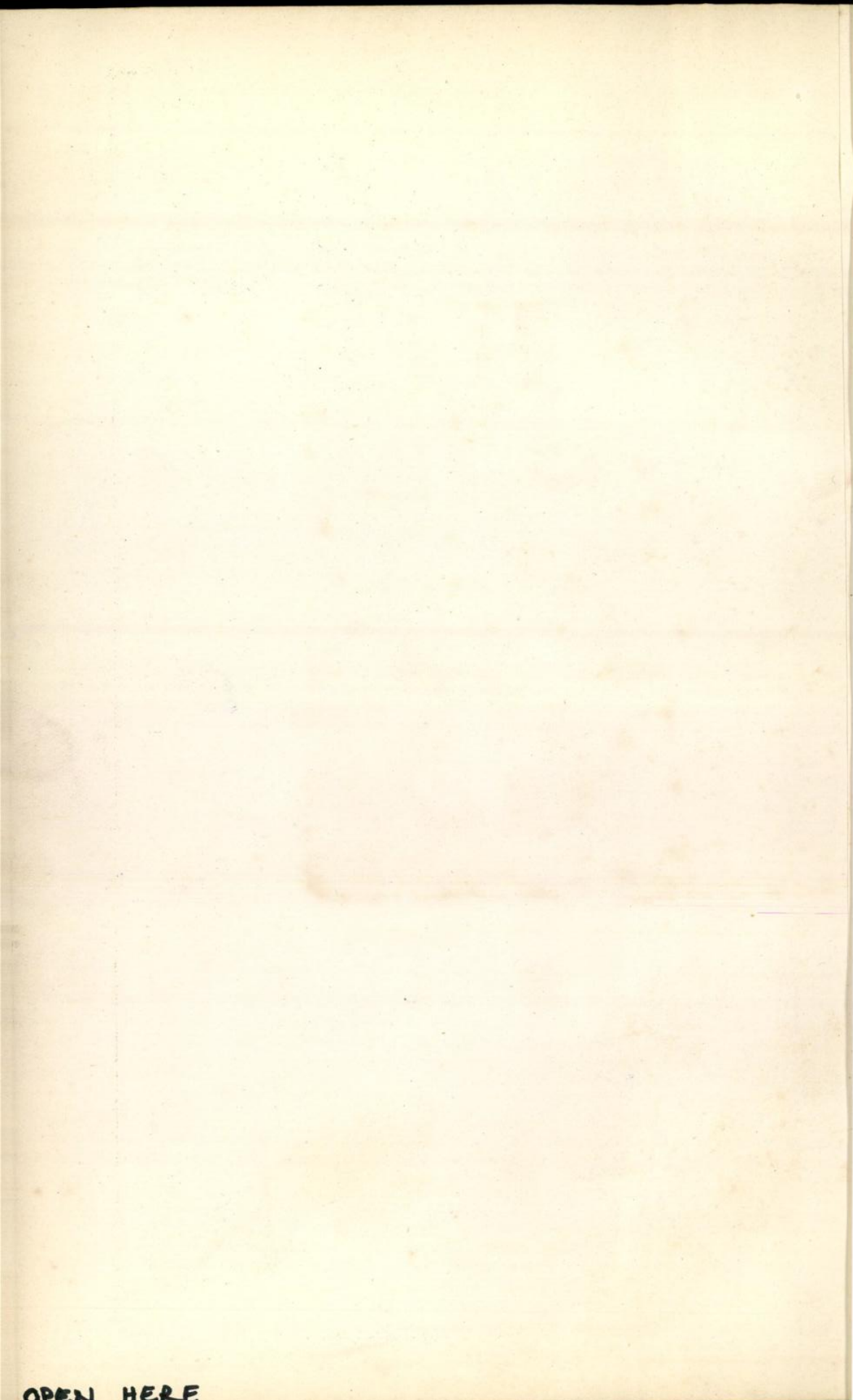
enquire about the Indian governments policy on companies like Oxfam Trading operating in India. They stated that as far as they were concerned the Indian government was aware of these companies operating in India but had no particular policy on their operations.

In my research, both Oxfam Trading and Anokhi have been by far the greatest sources of information for contemporary work. Subsequent to my inquiries I received a large amount of illustrations and literature about the traditional block printing industry in India and the structures the respective companies, in India and Britian.

I begin my discussion by outlining chronologically the role of block printed cottons in the development of the trade routes from the 13th century to the beginning of the 20th century. From there I intend to complete short case studies of two British companies, Oxfam Trading and Anokhi who are involved in the production and export of traditional Indian block printed cottons; analyse their role in the preservation of not just the traditional textiles but also the communities of people in which these textiles are produced, which are vital in the preservation of tradition.



FIG. 1.



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FIG. 2(a)

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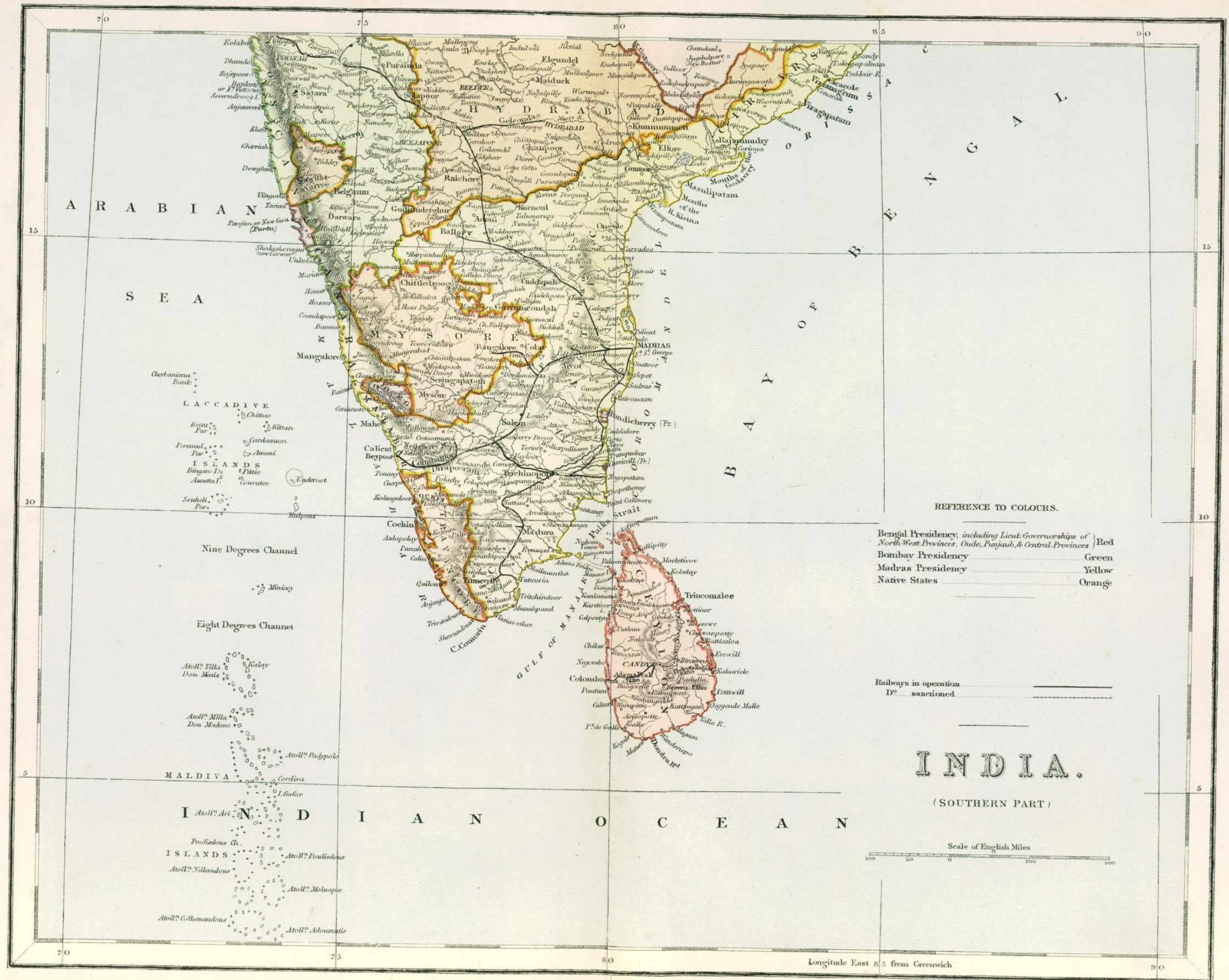
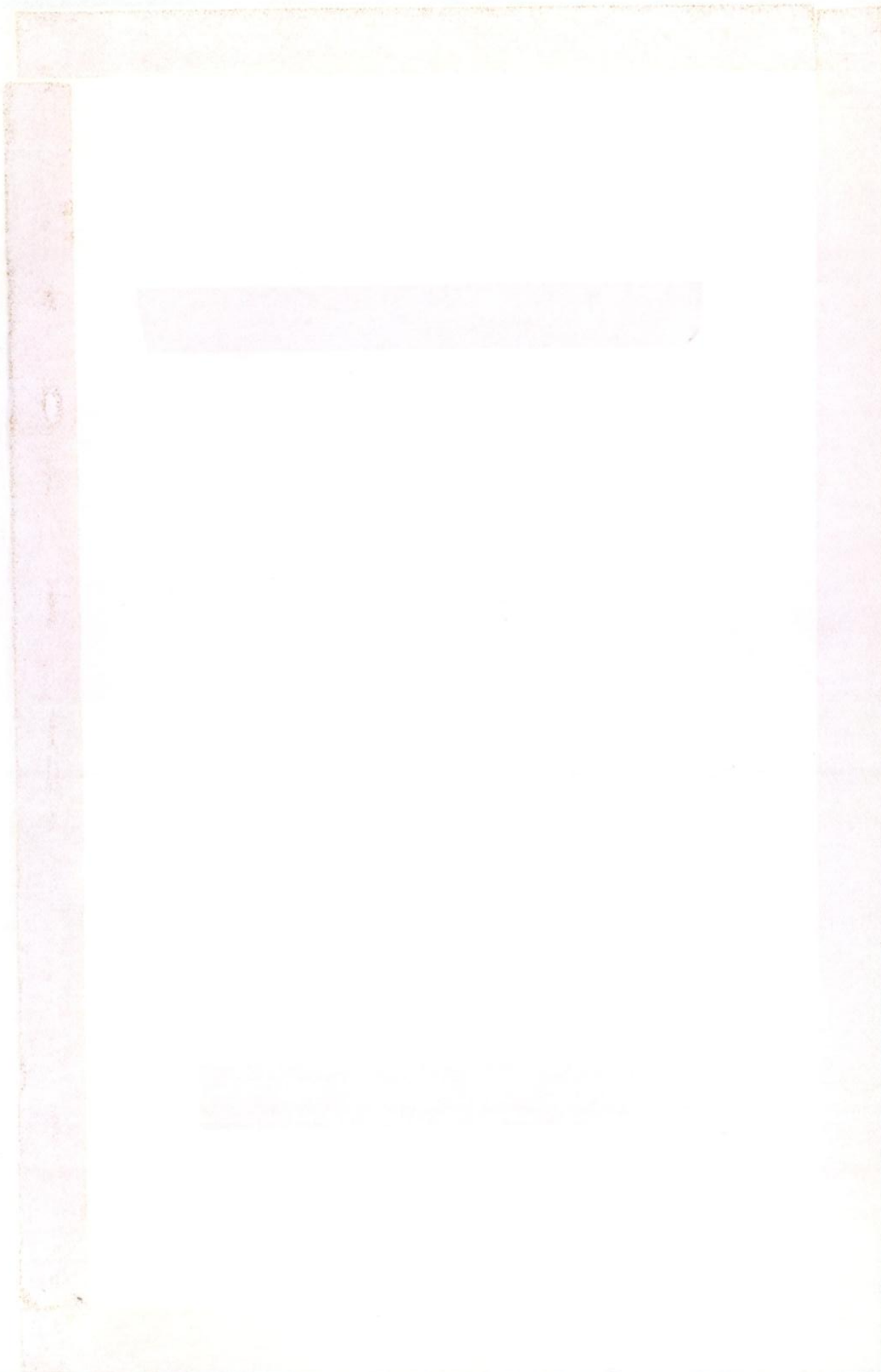


FIG. 2(b)

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Chapter One

The Role of Indian cotton in the development of trade routes, 1300-1600.

The earliest records of ancient and medieval Indian textiles exist in the form of literature, sculpture and obviously archaeological findings. Subsequent to these we rely on the written words of 14th century explorer Marco Polo; in the 15th century it is the word of Vasco da Gama and the Portuguese authorities who set up bases on the east coast of India.

India, has since ancient times been the most famous exporter of textiles to much of western Europe. The effect of the monsoon climate in India has unfortunately prevented the preservation of any examples of these ancient textiles. Egypt on the other hand with quite the opposite of climate, provides a perfect atmosphere for the preservation of cotton materials. It is not suprising therefore that the finest examples of 13th, 14th, and 15th century Indian cotton textiles are to be found there.

The first evidence which shows that Indian cottons were use as trade items is during the 11th century when dyed and undyed cottons were being exported to south China. It was considered more of a luxury than silk. This trade route slowly grew, and soon Indian textiles were been used as the principal currency of the spice trade in the Malay Archipelago and other parts of Asia.

Trade with the West was linked by trading stations on the Arabian sea and Red sea. Arab sailors used *Stellar navigation* throughout monsoon blown summers to sail east, remained in India until the opposite winter winds returned them to the ports of Aden and Socotra.

Indian textiles in particular possess the advantage of being lightweight, strong and easily transported during a time when the

transportation of any object whether large or small was a very time consuming and dangerous exercise.

The earliest evidence on record to suggest that India exported its cotton was found at Fostat (fig.3 and 4), the harbour site of Old Cairo, Egypt. Archaeologists were searching for the site of Babylonia- a Roman city and fortress which was part of their empire in Egypt. The excavations were centred on the fort where by the southern wall the excavators found thirty feet of accumulated rubbish , river silt and sand, they also discovered a Roman quay and steps which formerly led to a Roman canal which linked the river Nile to the Red sea.

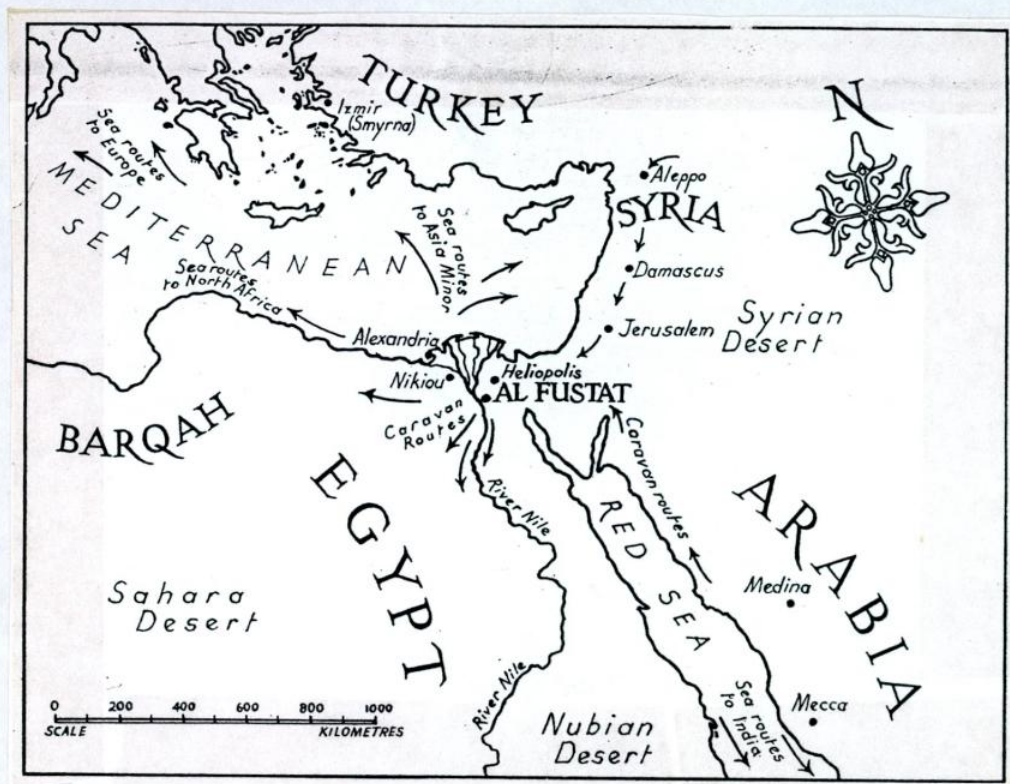


FIG. 3 The position of Al Fustat as a centre of East-West trade.

When the Arabs captured the city of Babylonia in 641AD they set about re-opening the canal which had been silted up. Their main objective was to create closer links with Mecca but by doing this they also re-opened the trade routes with the East.

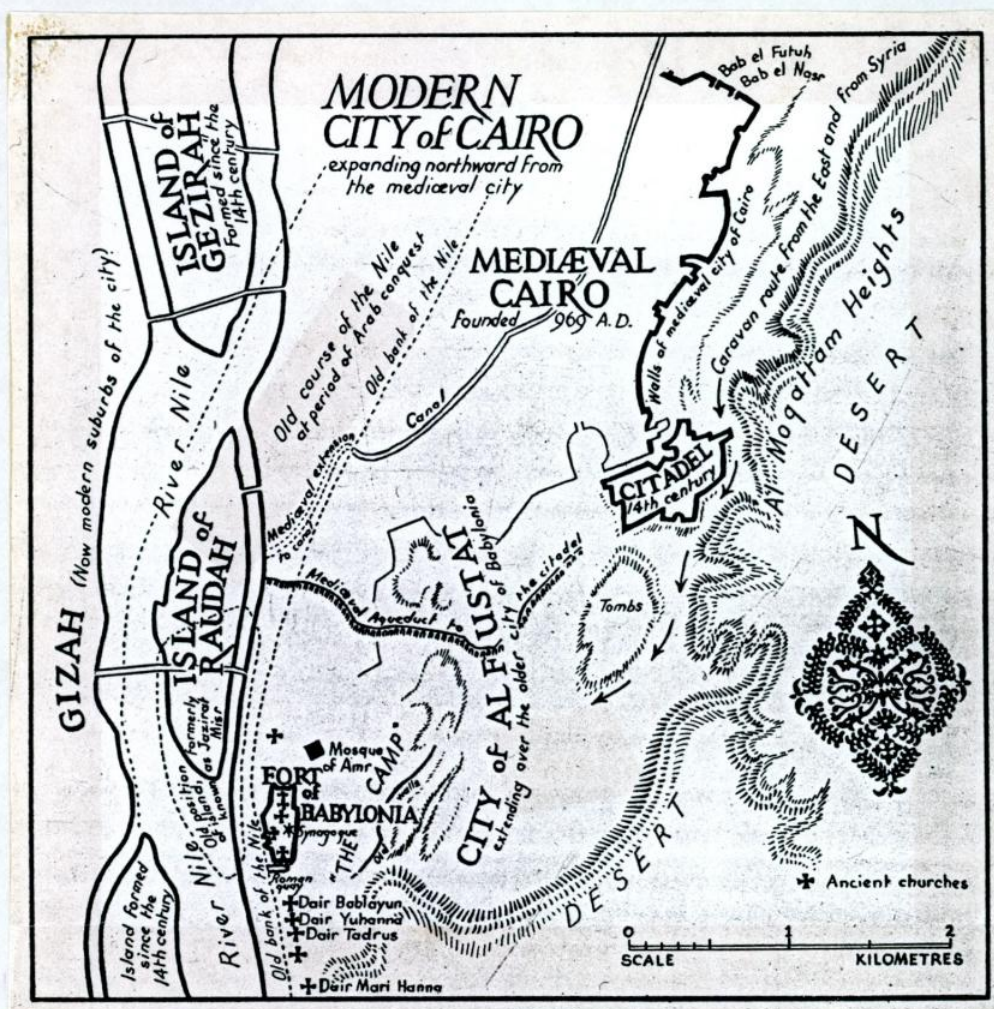


FIG.4 The position of Al Fustat in relation to Cairo.

Between the 10th and 14th centuries the new Cairo (just north of Old Cairo) developed as a major trading emporium and served as a principal meeting point between the merchants of the Red Sea and the Mediterranean respectively.

The fragments of Indian cloth found by the archaeologists at Fostat during the first dig were unfortunately discarded, and left exposed to the elements for a further number of years until more controlled excavations were carried out. Further fragments were excavated at Quseir -al- Qadim , which was once a small port on the Red sea. It formed a major trading point during Roman and Islamic times (1200-1500 AD). By comparing the motifs and designs from both the dateable samples from Quseir-al-Qadim and



the samples found at Fostat, a time frame for the samples from Fostat was established. The earliest samples date to the 13th century, the presence of blue and red coloured pattern can be dated to the 14th century while most of the samples at Fostat are from the 15th century. (fig. 5)

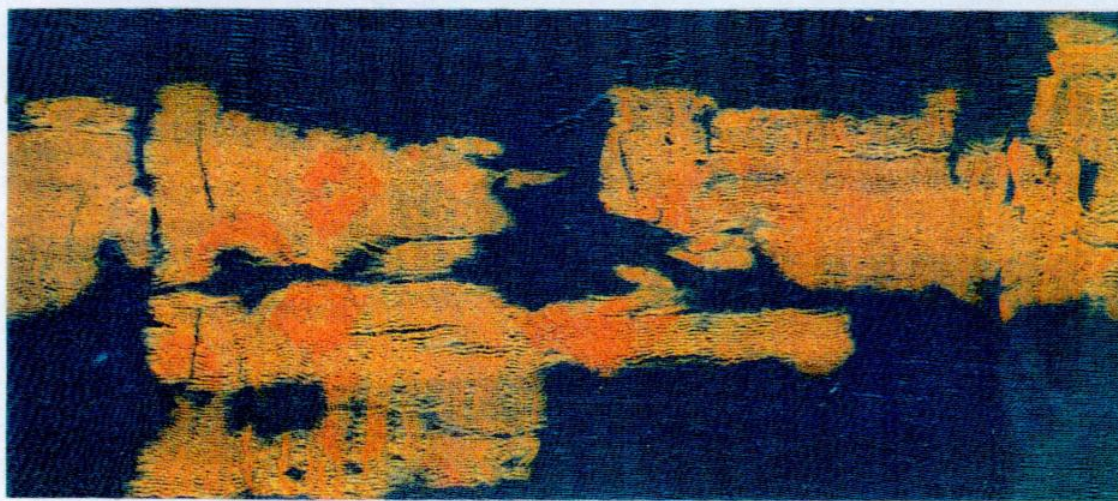


FIG.5. Fragment of cotton, resist printed and indigo dyed, 15th century or later. Excavated at Fostat in Egypt, where the recovered textiles span several centuries, this fragment is printed with an imitation *bandhani* design.

The designs on these samples clearly imitate the traditional tie-dyed '*bandhani*' patterns that are still in production and an important part of Indian lifestyle today. (fig.6) Looking at these samples (fig.5 and fig.6) there is one important factor to remember; there is 500 years between the production of the two samples. Bearing this in mind and also looking closely at the similarities between the two, the similarity in colour, the similarity in the design characteristics of the three pieces. Although tie-dyeing is considered a craft exclusively for the home market, quite a number found their way to the auction rooms of 18th century London via the East India Company. Their popularity in England

London via the East India Company. Their popularity in England can be gauged by the number of *Bandhanis* that appear in British 'genre' paintings of the period. (fig.7)



FIG.6. *Odhani* cotton dyed with green spots painted separately.



FIG.7 Watson and the shark. oil painting by J.S. Copley, 1778. National Gallery of Art, Washington.

The significance of Fostat as a trading port can be traced back to the first century AD when the Romans reopened the canal that linked the Nile to the Red sea.

The area around the Red sea, the Nile and the eastern half of the Mediterranean is collectively known as the Levant. Situated where it is, these are the first countries to receive riches and luxuries from India and East Africa, hence the Phoenicians, the Greeks, the Arabs and the Italians who all ruled the Levant at one time or another also all controlled the trade and access routes to the East. Coupled with the geographical situation of the Levant, it enabled each group to establish a monopoly of power over trade and prevented any other country from entering this



FIG. 7. A photograph of the white rectangular object with the three strips of tape or adhesive applied to its surface.

The white rectangular object is a piece of paper or a small board. The three strips of tape or adhesive are applied to its surface in a triangular pattern. The strips are arranged in a triangular pattern: one at the top left, one at the bottom left, and one at the bottom right. The object is set against a light-colored background.

trade.

This however, did not discourage other interested parties from starting their own search for riches. Iberian people were particularly inspired to find their own route to the riches as they were prevented from using the main route through the Red sea. So too were the Italians ; Christopher Columbus in his voyage of 1492 ended up discovering the Americas rather than the India he was looking for.

The most successful of the Portuguese explorers was Vasco da Gama who in 1498 finally after several attempts discovered a route to India which circumnavigated Africa. India at this time was under Muslim rule and in a letter from its leader to the king of Portugal which was probably the first written order between the two countries, he wrote of ~~the~~ da Gama's visit ,
 given me great pleasure. In my kingdom there is an abundance of cinamon, cloves, ginger, pepper and precious stones. What I seek from thy country is gold, silver, coral and scarlet. (8, p.231)

Subsequent to ~~the~~ da Gama's discovery of a route around Africa the Portuguese authorities set up trading stations on the West coast of India and retained a monopoly on the trade routes for a further century until they became embroiled in their own religious affairs and the Dutch and English surpassed them in their knowledge of navigation and sailing techniques.

The primary driving force for a European presence in India was the value of spice in Europe, an essential flavouring and preservative for meat. The market for spices in Europe coupled with an anti- muslim sentiment and the desire to overturn the Venetian and Egyptians monopoly on the trade routes sent Columbus West and da Gama East both in search of 'Christians and spices'.(11, p.8)

All of these routes I have mentioned are relatively common

knowledge, the ancient route to Europe through the Levant from the Orient and the later route around Africa, have been well documented. What has been forgotten about and is not common knowledge is the significant role that the countries of Scandinavia played in East West trade. They, like the other European countries soon realised that if they were to survive economically they too would have to be part of the commerce of Indian cotton that had been going on for so many centuries previous to its introduction into Europe.

Instead of trying to compete with the various countries of the Levant for lucrative trade with the Orient, the Scandinavians beginning with the Viking period looked towards the north for a route to the riches of the East. They looked to Russia and even the Arctic Ocean as a route. Contemporary accounts tell of the Norsemen's voyages to the Byzantine Empire and further East. During the 9th century AD a Swede named Rurik found a domain of their own in Russia which included the town of Kiev, this story is included in 'The Chronicle of Nestor'¹ which was written during the 12th century AD in a monastery in Kiev. The Russians called the Swedish explorers and their domain at Kiev 'Rus'². The first route the 'Rus' took to the East was by way of the Baltic sea and the Gulf of Finland; from there they went on to Lake Ladoga via the Volkhov river to Novorod they then rolled their ships on logs to reach the Dnieper. They then sailed through Kiev and on into the Black Sea and from there Constantinople was easily accessible. These were the beginnings of Swedish trade with the East. Subsequently these routes were run solely by the Swedish, who enjoyed the benefits of their monopoly on these routes right up to the 16th century AD.

By this time trade with the Orient for many European countries was of major importance to their economic stability. The major

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trading nations of Europe , England and Holland were continually looking for faster and cheaper routes. They soon realised that the Swedish were enjoying a monopoly situation. Plans were made by both the English and the Dutch to circumnavigate Norway and penetrate Russia through the Arctic Ocean , which was a slightly different route to that of the Swedes, but it was still going to be competition which they were not familiar with. The first English explorer to take this route was a Richard Chancellor who arrived in Moscow in 1553. On this particular trip he was received by the Tsar, Ivan the Terrible, it was a result of this meeting that in 1555 England was awarded extensive rights for the Muscovy Company which they formed to deal with their trade through the Arctic.

This created intense competition between the two export routes; the route used by the English and Dutch was much longer, it was icebound for much of the year but it had the advantage that there were no tariffs or dues to be paid apart from the Russian transit duty. The route used by the Swedes on the other hand through the Baltic sea was quite often disrupted by wars , and there were extra dues to be paid for passing through the Baltic ports.

To sum up, I have looked at the beginnings of Europe's trade with the East and brought the story of trade with the Orient right up to the middle of the 16th century. It is at this time that the trade routes with the East became very commercial and played a large role in the economic stability of many European countries particularly England, Holland, Portugal, and France. Four hundred years later and we are still in a similar situation; The countries of England and Holland in particular still import Indian goods in vast amounts . Germany has now joined the ranks of one of the biggest importers of Indian carpets into Europe.

Although in terms of communication systems the world has decreased in size the European importers of to-day still use the same transport routes that were used during the 16th century.

Footnotes

1. 10, pp.227.
2. 9, pp.227-228

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Chapter Two

The progression of the trade routes into commercial projects, 1600-1800 AD.

The adoption and rate of increase in consumption of Indian textiles in the western world during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was one of those astonishing processes of diffusion which is compared to the discovery and spread of tobacco, potatoes, coffee...(6, p.14).

The middle of the 16th century marks the turning point so to say, in Europe's trade with the Orient. The Portuguese were the first European nation to engage in trade with India. Not long after Vasco da Gama had discovered his route that circumnavigated Africa they established trading stations along the west coast of India. They, like the Swedes, enjoyed a monopoly situation for over two hundred years until the Dutch and English took over at the beginning of the 17th century.

The English who set up their East India Trading Company in 1600 were primarily concerned with the importation of spices and pepper into Europe, they were well aware however that any of their home produced goods or *bullion* was of no use as a trade item in the East Indies, the only goods that were of use were Indian cottons or barter, which was the only practised trade of the Spice Islands. It is for this reason that trading stations called *Factories* were set up along the west coast of India, so that European countries could exchange their home produced *bullion* for the Indian cottons which could be used to purchase spices in the East Indies. The English, however, tried to introduce their *Broadcloth* to India but it proved to be no more of a novelty to the Indians whose range and quality of textiles was far superior to that of the English. The Dutch succeeded in forming a monopoly in Indonesia where they set up their trading centre in Java.

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A four cornered trade developed in England ; as the spices arrived from the east, the East India Trading Company sold the Indian cotton they brought back with the spices to the Royal Africa Company who in turn shipped it to Africa as *Guinea-cloth* where it was exchanged for slaves, who were in turn shipped to the West Indies and exchanged for sugar and tobacco. So by the middle of the 17th century Indian goods were been used as the basis of trade that was spreading all around the world.

The introduction of Indian cotton into Europe at first as a novelty was to coincide with a wider social revolution (which preceded the Industrial revolution) that was taking place. Living habits were changing which was accompanied by the growth and spread of the middle classes particularly in England. These changes were creating a healthy demand for decorative fabrics which much of the home industry was not equipped to supply.

The first Indian textiles to arrive in Europe were in the form of elaborately figured court and temple hangings; they made a big change to a market which was previously dominated by unwashed heavy linens, silks and woollen printed with oils and other pigments (rather like a painting on a canvas). Coupled with the fact that they were bright , colourful and exotic in design they were an instant success with the colour starved ladies of Europe. Using abundant surrounding animal, bird and plant life as their main themes for design, the final product was luscious and plentiful although remaining very delicate. Colours that did not fade and improved with washing was something of a novelty to the Europeans.

By 1560, Europeans particularly the English and French ; where the prosperity of the middle classes was most prevalent, could afford to install chimned fireplaces, glass-pane windows and first

floor chambers. People were taking a stronger interest in the interior decoration of their homes now that the smoke from the fire place was contained and that it was easier to keep the interior of their houses clean. Until the middle of the 17th century the family bedstead was the most prized piece of household furniture where sometimes the only piece of decorated fabric in the household would be displayed ; but attitudes were changing, patterned cushions were now to be found in the parlour, as were coverlets (or carpets) on stools, chairs and tables.

The demand for Indian cottons as costume fabric did not start until much later, sometime around 1640. The first mention of them been used by the upper classes is in 1647 when Lady Vernally wrote to her husband in France, asking for,

'anything that will be soever wellcom as gorgetts, and eyther cutt or painted calicos to ear under them or what is most in fashion.'(6, p. 30).

By 1687 it was reported that Indian cottons had

become the weare of ladyes of the grandest quality which they wear on the outsie of gowns and mantuoës, which they line with velvet and cloth of gold.(6, p. 30)

The importation of Indian cottons which were more commonly known as *chintz*, into Europe created such a threat to the home industries in France and England that in 1686 the French silk weavers formed a complete ban on all *chintz* imports into France. The authorities in England soon followed suit and 'forwarned total prohibition of all sales for home consumption after Michaelmas 1701'.(6, p. 5)

Their Dutch counterparts however did not follow suit with the result that *chintz* still flooded into Europe even though there were heavy fines for wearing *chintz* in both England and France.

There was however a loop hole in the laws in England where companies were permitted to import *chintz* but for re-export only. This explains why many of the surviving samples in the Netherlands bear stamp marks of the English 'United East India Company'.



FIG.14 *Chintz* used in a fashion garment, 18th century.

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Eight years after the introduction of prohibition in England Daniel Defoe wrote the following scornful comment:

the chintz and painted calicoes, which before were only made use of for carpets, quilts, etc. and to cloth children of ordinary People, became now the Dress of our ladies and such in the power of a mode, we saw our Persons of Quality dress'd in Indian Carpets, which a few Years before their Chamber- maids would have thought to ordinary for them.(6, p.30)

Many similar statements appeared during the following years, some of them appearing in political pamphlets, keeping strong the political protest on behalf of the silk weavers.

Bed hangings are first mentioned in East India Company records in 1626, that does not mean that *chintz* was not used for bed hangings before this date; previously the valances and counter panes would of been made up from imported lengths of *chintz* which would of been cut up by purchasers according to size, in it same way it is practised to-day in fabric shops.

From 1640 onward the various trading companies began commissioning special designs to suit European taste. After 1680 the demand in Europe for *chintz* was so great that furnishing fabrics were ordered to size as well as pattern.

The flourish in ready-made *bed-hangings* began in 1683 with the first order of it's kind;

100 suits of painted curtins and valances to be 1 foot deep and 6 1/2 yrs compass. Curtins to be from 8 to 9 foot deep, the two lesser curtins each 1 1/2 yds wide, the two larger curtins to be 3 1/2 yr. wide. The Tester and headpiece proportion . A counterpane of the same work to be 3 1/2 yr. wide and 4 yds long half of them to be quilted and the other half not quilted.(6, p.25)

It is clear from the measurements that the pieces been ordered were for the houses of the gentry; High-ceilinged bedrooms were especially esteemed.

The best known surviving bed hangings are to be seen in The Garrick bed on display at the Victoria and Albert Museum,

London.(fig.8) The *chintz* had been sent from India to Mrs. Garrick by her husband who was stationed there, and is the finest example of eighteenth century *chintz* on display. The pieces (bed-hanging, curtains, coverlet and valance) were obviously made up and then printed, the design been based on the single flowering tree motif. In some places the tree has been slightly modified according to the size and shape of the pieces. The valance has a repeating design of matching treeless, originally cut from a single piece (this is the only part of the bed completed in this way). It is evident from examining the covers of the bed that all the components have been reduced in size as it is quite clear that the hanging and valance have been crudely adapted to the new size.

By far the most popular of the furnishing fabrics to be imported ready-made into Europe were quilts and palampores. They far outnumbered wall hangings and other furnishing fabrics .Soon the European market was been swamped by Indian quilts. Eventhough the prohibition laws remained in both England and France, Indian goods flooded through the ports in Holland.

In 1687 the following quote was written in the Indian Office Records; '.....send noe more quilts of any sort wee having enough to last five or six years, being putt quite out of use by palempores.'

The use of *chintz* in clothing fabrics is thought to have started with the men's morning gown, what is more commonly known to us as a dressing gown. The trend is said to have started in 1661 when Sammuel Pepys brought '.. an Indian gown for myself'.

1. Introduction. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the results of the study conducted by the research team. The study was designed to investigate the effects of the proposed intervention on the target population. The results of the study are presented in the following sections.

2. Methodology. The study was conducted using a quasi-experimental design. The participants were divided into two groups: the control group and the intervention group. The control group received the standard treatment, while the intervention group received the proposed intervention. The data was collected over a period of six months.

3. Results. The results of the study show that the proposed intervention had a significant positive effect on the target population. The intervention group showed a significant improvement in the outcome variable compared to the control group. The results are statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

4. Discussion. The findings of the study suggest that the proposed intervention is effective in improving the outcome variable. The results are consistent with the hypotheses of the study. The study has implications for the practice of the field.

5. Conclusion. The study concludes that the proposed intervention is a promising approach for improving the outcome variable. Further research is needed to confirm the findings of the study.



FIG.8 The Garrick Bed, Furnished with chintz 1774, V&A museum, London. The Tree of Life printed on a *Mezzara* of mixed silk and cotton. An 18th century- type design with 19th century floral features.

The men's informal morning gown was most popular in Holland where many eighteenth century examples have survived, some of these garments are examples of high fashion but the majority are in the form of popular regional dress. In Friesland (an area of north Holland), it was incorporated into part of the national dress. (fig. 13)

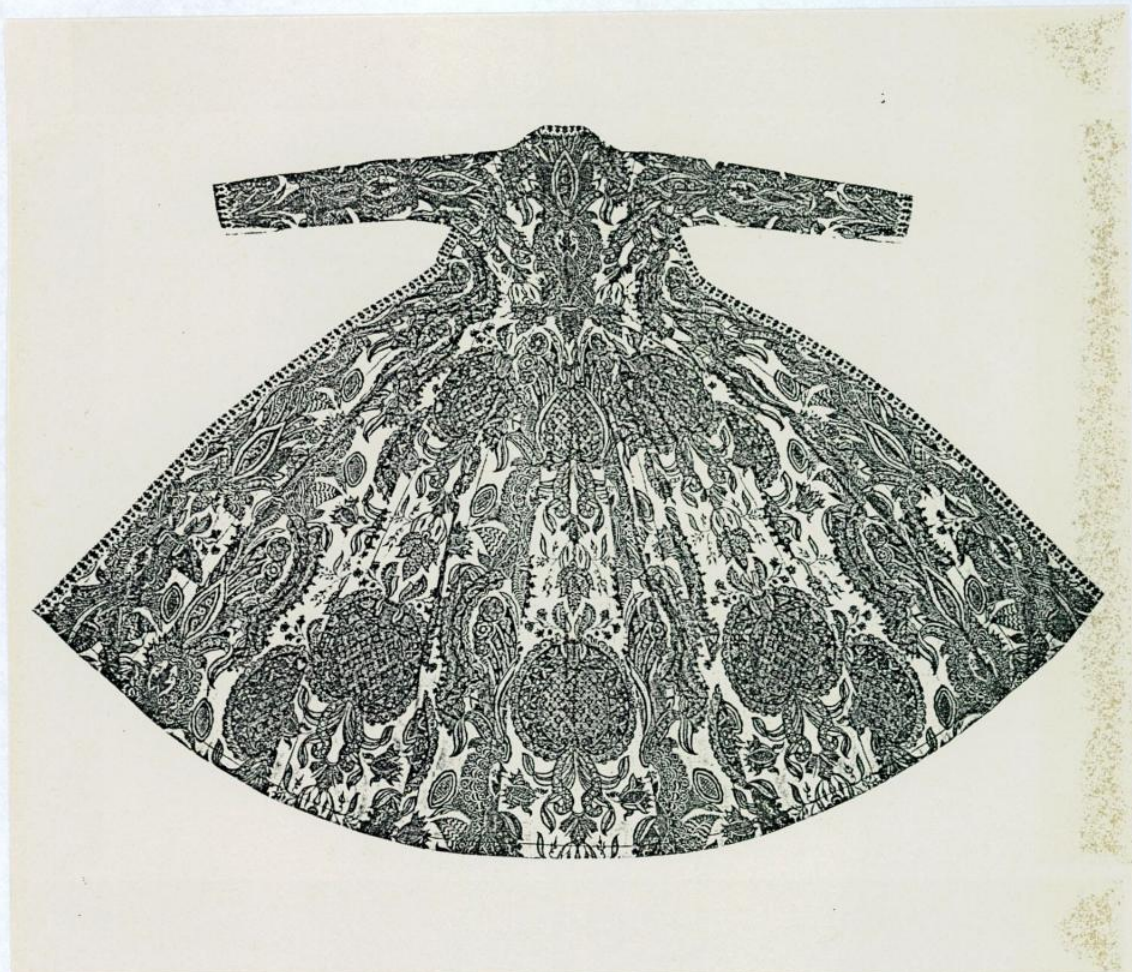


FIG.13 Gown *Wentke* Coromandel coast, 18th century.

A similar practice was happening in England, '.....the ladies converted their carpets and quilts into gowns and petticoats and made the broad and uncouthed Bordures of the former serve Embroideries they were used to wear.'(6, p.30)

This type of garment was known as a one off; there are very few references to these one offs in East India Company records which suggests that trade in these garments was done privately by English and Dutch merchants.

The rise of William of Orange and Mary to the English throne in 1690 gave the English ladies special reason to follow Dutch trends. In 1694 directors of the English East India Company



1. The first of the three main points of the report is the fact that the economy is in a state of recession. This is due to a number of factors, including a decline in consumer spending, a rise in unemployment, and a fall in business investment. The second point is that the government has taken a number of measures to stimulate the economy, including cutting taxes and increasing public spending. The third point is that the government is considering a number of other measures, including a new tax on high earners and a new system of social security contributions.

2. The second of the three main points of the report is the fact that the government has taken a number of measures to stimulate the economy. These measures include cutting taxes, increasing public spending, and introducing a new system of social security contributions. The government is also considering a number of other measures, including a new tax on high earners and a new system of social security contributions.

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were writing to their agents in Surat

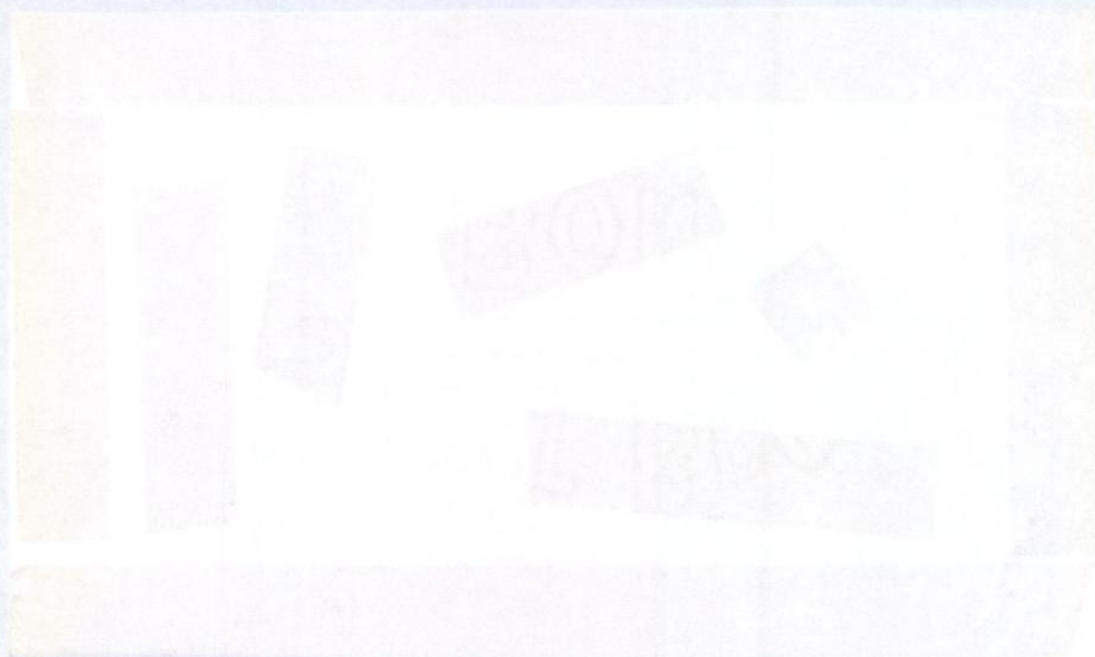
'.....the greatest ladyes will now wear (chintzes) for upper Garments as well as for petticoats. They can never make, nor you send us, too many of them.'(6, p.30)

From 1640 onwards the various trading companies began to commission special designs to suit European taste. This practise has continued write up to the present day and forms the basis of much of the East West trade. The beginning of the 18th century however saw a slight deviation from the normal procedure ; European designs sent to India for production were returning highly exotic and unrecognizable from the original design.



FIG.12 Valance; Indian early 18th century. Cotton; handpainted, madder-dyed.

The valance in fig.12 is part of the Rhode Island School of Design's collection of Indian painted and printed *chintz*. It is unusual in the fact that the design of this piece has a strong European influence which was uncharacteristic for this period. It is also one of the finest examples of *chintz* available at that time, by virtue of the fact that it is handpainted and madder-dyed,



with blue details pencilled on in indigo.

With designs ~~been~~ sent from Europe to India for printing, it is not suprising that the designs sent back follow closely on stylistic grounds of current fashions of the time. Quite a number of the surviving *chintz* can be traced to European copperplate and woodblock designs.

The embroidered panel of linen and cotton in fig. 15 is an example of early 18th century work. To look at it critically it has all the design trappings ~~been~~ produced in India; the parrots, peacocks, squirrels, curled flowers, leaves and branches (which developed from the Tree of Life theme.) It is only through looking at the material (namely the fact that it is linen embroidered in coloured wools with crewel and tambour stitch) we discover that it is European rather than Indian. This is a fine example of how popular Indian designs had become in Europe during this period. This actual piece was sold in 1986 for £3,520. Bear in mind it is only 1.75 x 2.20 metres in size !



FIG.15 Embroidered panel of linen and cotton, 18th century.

As with the fashion industry to-day, there was a yearly change in designs and requirements for the European market,

Now this for a constant and general rule that in all flowered silks you change the fashion and flower as much as you can every year, for English Ladies and they say French and other Europeans will give twice as much for a new thing not seen in Europe before through worse, than they give for a better silk of same fashion worn the former years.(6, p.31).

The 17th century saw a vast increase in European trade with India, we must remember that the Suez canal was not open at this time so the route to India still involved circumnavigating Africa or transporting the goods part of the journey over land through the Levant and paying heavy duties in Constantinople. So it is quite remarkable that trade between India and Europe was such an important part of the economic infrastructure of the European countries involved. We must also remember that the introduction of *chintz* into Europe was purely accidental although the countries of the Levant and Sweden had been trading in Indian goods for a number of years. As a result of the popularity of *chintz* in Europe there developed a strong reciprocal trade between the two, particularly England.

By the last decade of the 17th century the Indians had managed to clothe people in the four corners of the world in their brightly coloured fabrics; from the sarongs in the east, turbans in the middle east to the costume and furnishing fabrics of Europe; which was quite a remarkable achievement considering that during this time India was troubled not only by a civil war but also plague, cholera, famine which to a large extent cumulated in the ruin of her home industries.

It was primarily the Indian cotton *chintz* that created great interest in Europe at the turn of the 17th century, little of which we see for sale in Europe to-day, that is not to say that *chintz*

is not popular. The last five years has seen the greatest revival of *chintz* in furnishing fabrics since it was first introduced onto the European market. The design characteristics remain the same, the only difference been that the majority of the yards of *chintz* for sale in the shops over the past five years have all been designed and produced in Europe. What was significant to the 17th century *chintz* was the tree of life motif which was printed on nearly every *palampore* that left India during that period. (fig.9 and 10)

So in summing up this chapter, trade between Europe and India took a vast leap forward during this time and became the commerical enterprise that it is today.

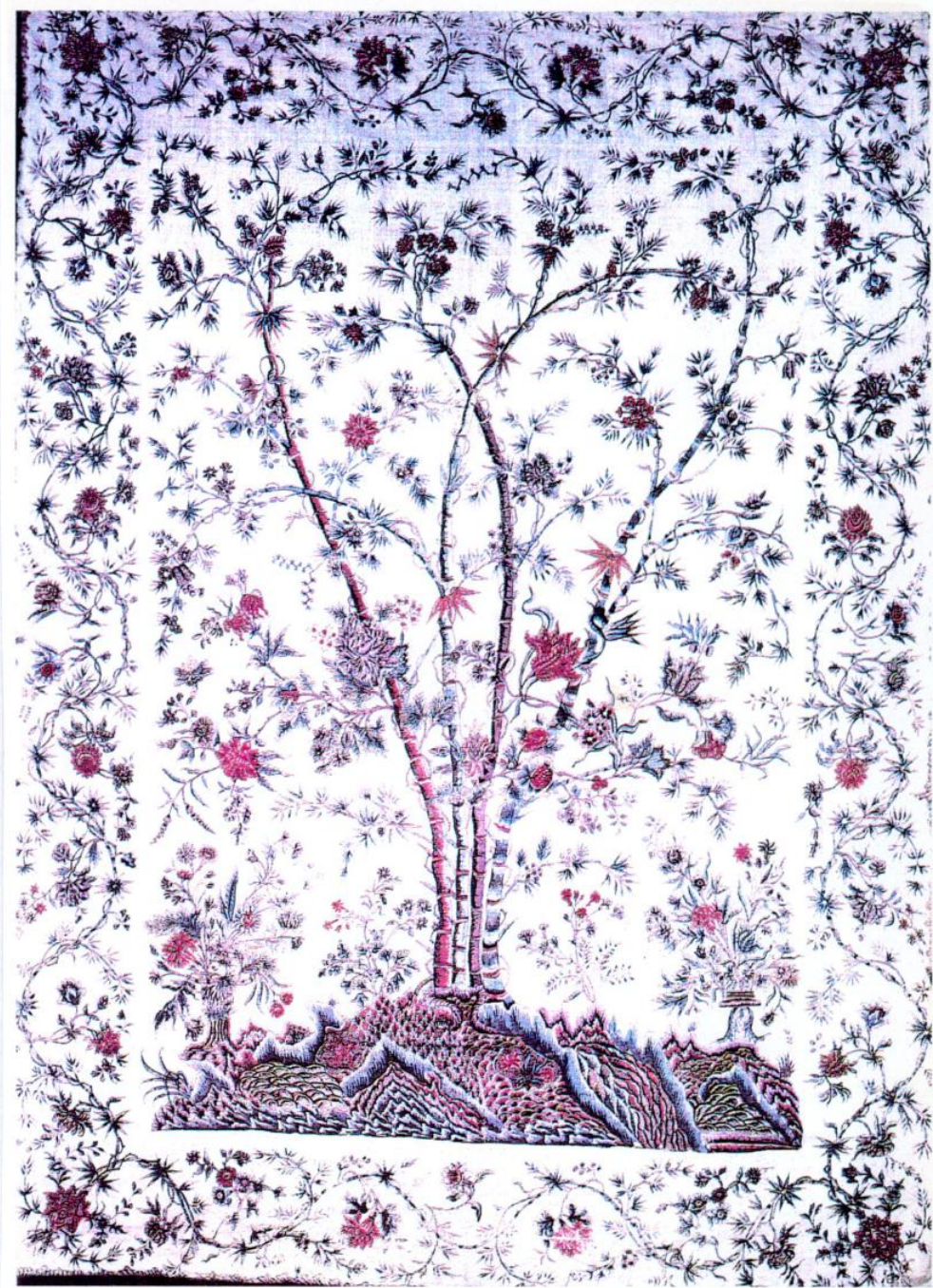


FIG.9 Chintz Palampore Indian, Coromandel Coast, for European market, Circa 1775.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250



FIG.10 Chintz palampore Indian, Coromandel Coast, for the European market, circa 1740.



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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60607-7090
U.S.A. AND CANADA
0022-2195/95 \$10.00



FIG.11. Rumal, stencilled, painted and dyed cotton. Indian, Golconda mid 17th century.



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Chapter Three

The increase of the British presence in India, 1800-1900 AD.

The effect of the introduction of Indian goods onto the European Market as a commercial enterprise in the 17th and 18th centuries can be gauged by Indian words still in use to-day: chintz, calico, dungaree, gingham, kaki, pyjama, sash, seersucker, and shawl. Of these it is perhaps *chintz* has had the most profound effect. Its importation into Europe has had a dramatic effect not only on the fashions of the European ladies but more importantly it put the economic stability of Europe in jeopardy and threatened the strength of governmental rule in more than one country.

Trade between India and Europe during the 18th century became dominated by the British. By 1650 they had succeeded in driving the Portuguese out of their major trading station in Bengal and were they opened a trading *factory*. The Dutch were never a threat to the English in India as they had their trading centre in Java, Indionesea. British diplomatic relations with the Mughals who ruled India were during this period were exceptionally good. They succeeded in obtaining trading privileges for the East India company in return for providing the Mughals with a naval force to protect their pilgrims on their way to Mecca. It followed that where the Dutch, French, Portuguese, and Danes failed the British usually prospered. With the Portuguese gone the British monopoly trade route with India grew steadily as did their presence there.

Positions with the East India Company were exciting for young up and coming Englishman but were also highly sought after by the Gentlemen of society. The Company established the

Haileybury College in London to prepare their cadets for careers in India.

The Mughals began to defy the British presence in their country but that problem was easily solved by the British who stood firm against them and bribed them with presents such as clocks, European fuses and field pieces.

The British furthered their presence by founding Calcutta which was to become not only the major seat of British power in India but also centre of sea trade. With its prime location close to both the Ganges and Bhagirathi rivers the Company was given the privileges of collecting taxes in Calcutta and also enforcing a ban placed on all Mughal ships from entering the port.

During this time trade between the two countries naturally grew although what had started out as a major concern for the East India Company was by 1750 one of their lesser worries, they were now involved in the administration of a rather large country. It had a bureaucracy larger than that of many nations. In 1813 the British Parliaments passed the Charter Act, which declared its sovereignty over the Company's growing dominions. With the increase in British control, many old-age Indian customs were discouraged or outlawed. By 1835 the British presence in India had reached such strengths that English was declared the official language. It wasn't until 1858 that Queen Victoria took control of India ; she issued this proclamation which was read throughout India

For divers weighty reasons, we have resolved, by and with the advice of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in Parliament assembled, to take upon ourselves the government of the territories of India, heretofore administered in trust for us by the honourable East India Company.(13, p.251)

Not long after the crown took control of India. Arthur Liberty

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single entity, but a collection of many different parts.

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single entity, but a collection of many different parts.

opened his shop in Regent street, London. He gave it the grand name of East India House and opened it to the public on 15th May 1875. As the name suggests it sold only goods from the East primarily coloured silks. By the last quarter of the 18th century the trade routes were so well established that a symbiotic relationship was developing between the two continents. Designs were been sent from Europe to India to be produced there and then sent back to Europe for sale. The balance of this symbiotic relationship was crucial to the economic stability of both parties involved, like most things this balance could not last for ever.

The Industrial revolution was developing fast in England; by the early 19th century the sheds of Lancashire were mass producing finely printed cottons and fast coloured cotton yardage designed especially for the Indian market. The English producers were using the new inventions of the Industrial revolution to perfect the dying and spinning techniques of the Indians. This production of Indian designs in Europe was not just confined to the English, the French were also in production (fig.16) By comparing the French produced printed cotton with an Indian produced palampore,(fig. 10) which were both produced within 50 years of each other, 1790 and 1740 respectively. There are a number of common characteristics; the bamboo trees and foliage and the floral decoration. The only major design difference in the way in which the Indian piece is a one off design and the French production is in repeat. It was the Indians who produced the designs but it was the Europeans who held the technical knowledge to make the production of Indian cottons a commercially sound venture.



FIG.16 'L' Arbre des Indes" (indian tree), woodblockprinted from Mulhouse, France. About 1790, still in production to-day.

The Indian traditional textile industry as a result was in a dismal state for the first seventy years of the 19th century. It suffered from an influx of English cottons and protectionist legalisation in favour of these cottons. In response to this the first mechanised cotton mill was opened in India in 1854, by the



end of the century the Indian cotton industry was flourishing capitalizing on the demise of the North American cotton industry during their civil war. The cotton that the Indians were producing was of the best quality, it was the printing and finishing techniques that fell by the way side. The abolition of the protectionist legalisation coupled with the independence movement saw a clear path for the redevelop of the traditional textile industry.

Although parts of the world have transformed themselves in the last three hundred years, what I believe to be so unique and important about the cotton trade routes between Europe and India is the fact that they have barely changed since then. They still deal in the same goods, (that does not mean to say that India does not export any other goods) and of the cotton that they do export the majority of it is based on the same traditional designs and colours that were popular three hundred years ago.

To sum up the last four hundred years of east west trade, since the 17th century trade between Europe and India has completed more than one full circle of events; the 17th and 18th centuries saw a rapid expansion of the trade routes, trade became very commercial, British presence in India was increased ten fold in the space of 200 years to such an extent that they monopolised the trade routes and ruled the country. The 19th century saw the development of the Industrial revolution in Britain, the tables were turning the British were now exporting English produced printed cottons to India. The popularity of Indian cottons in Europe was diminishing as the finished quality of the products was deteriorating under the pressures of commercial trade.

...ancient traditions of craftsmanship crumbled in the face of commercial pressures.'(18, pp 11.)

No other land enjoys such a profusion of creative energies for the production of textiles as the sub continent of India. The interaction of peoples - invaders, indigenous tribes, traders and explorers - has built a complex culture legendary for its vilality and colour; today, over ten million weavers, dyers, embroiders and spinners contribute their handmade textiles to this melting pot.(11, p. 6)

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FIG.40. Promotional card given by Anokhi to their customers in their shops.



FIG.34. Invitation card to forthcoming presentation.



Chapter Four

The 20th Century

The quality of the fabrics being imported into Britain deteriorated so much that in 1924 Arthur Liberty sought the advice of dyers and printers Thomas Wardle of Staffordshire as to how he was to continue a successful business venture in the light of deteriorating stocks. Together they designed a new range of colours and designs that were strongly influenced by Wardle's own travels in India and the Far East. Liberty's began to import large amounts of undyed silk to be processed and sold in England.

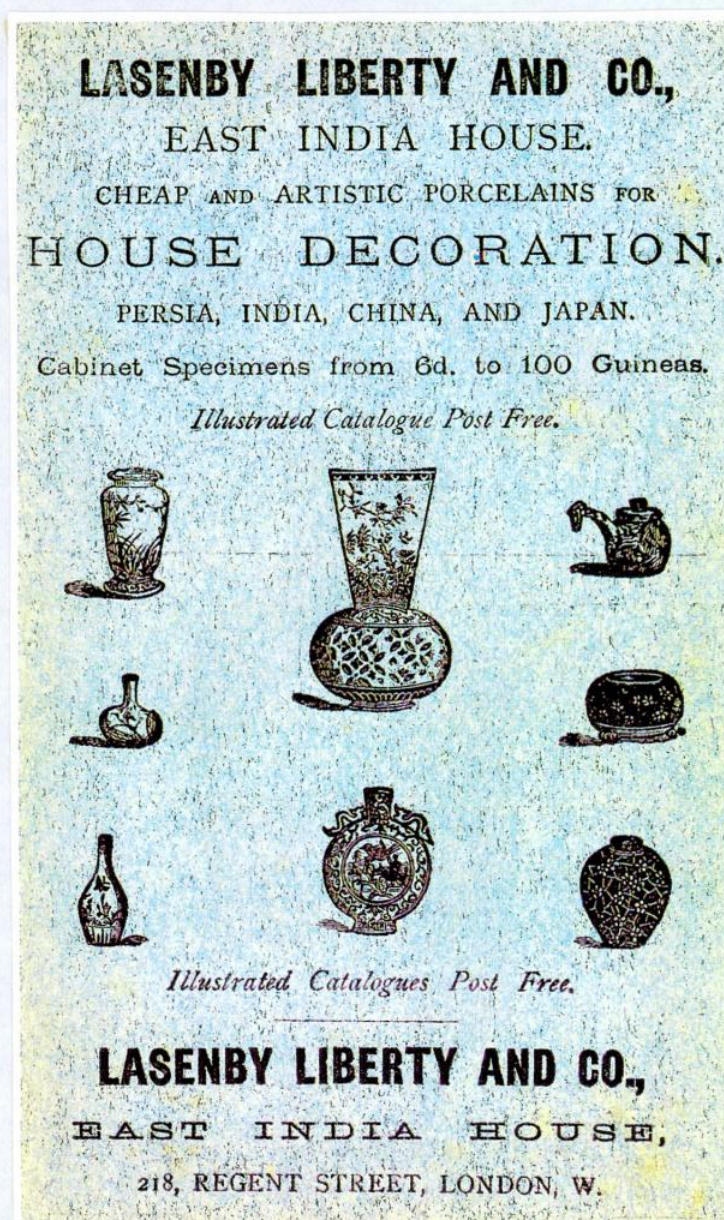


FIG.18. One of Liberty's very first advertisement, c.1875.



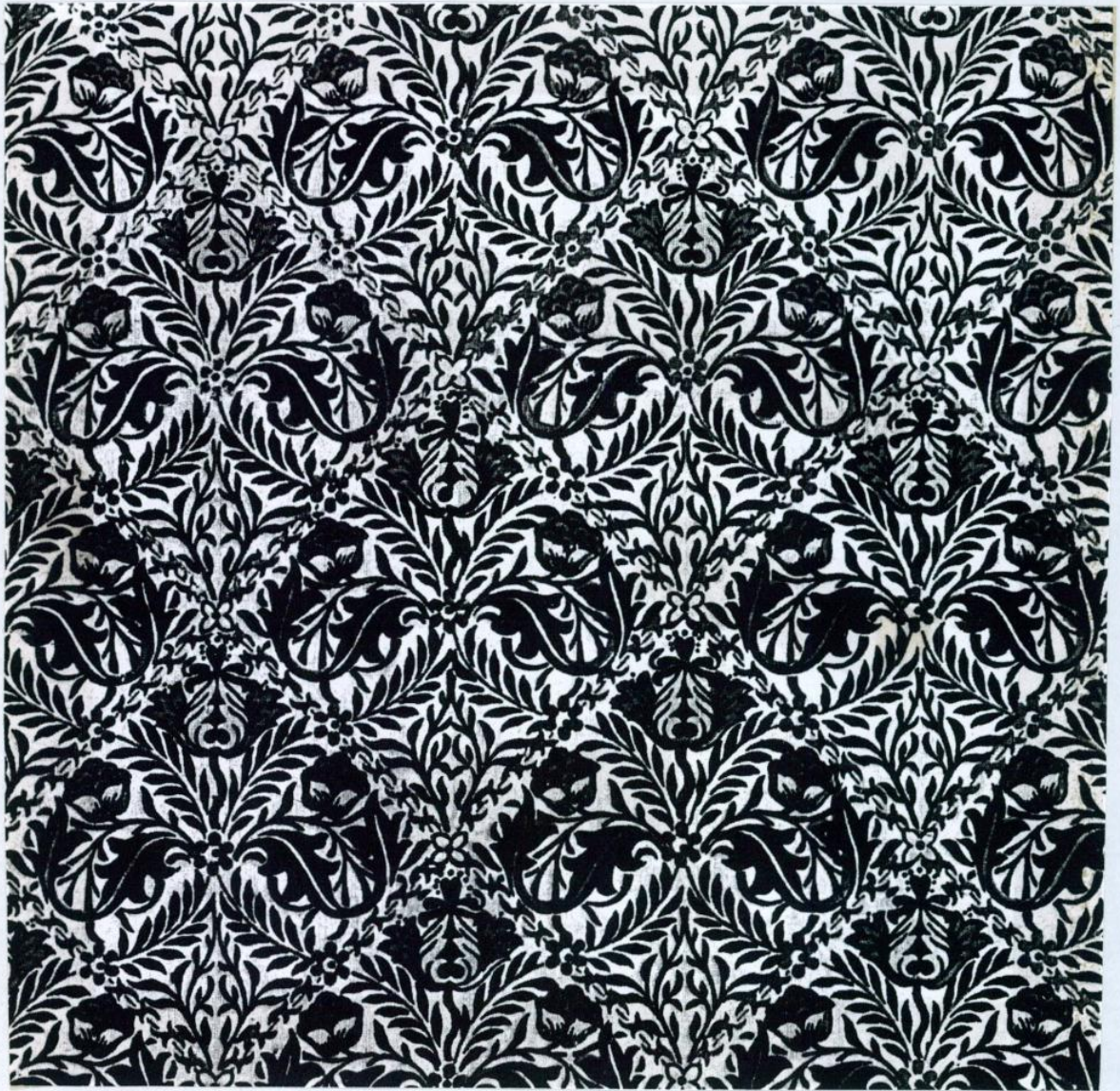


FIG.19. William Morris: 'Indian Diaper', block printed cotton manufactured by Morris & Co., designed late in 1875 when Morris was working at Leek with Wardle.

At the same time G.P.& J. Baker, a similar firm who dealt in the importation of Oriental goods, were looking to English manufacturing companies to produce Oriental embroideries as printed textiles. Their motive was slightly different from that of Liberty's in that they were merely looking to produce a new type



FIGURE 30. A white rectangular object, possibly a piece of paper or a small box, with several pieces of translucent tape applied to it. The tape is arranged in a pattern that suggests it might be a label or a repair. The object is placed on a light-colored surface. The word "fig 30" is handwritten in green ink on the right side of the object.

of product for sale in England. They also approached Thomas Wardle who was unwilling to accept their proposal as it was without '....some degree of permanency.'¹ They instead turned to the Swaisland Printing Company of Kent, with whom they set up in business with.

Libertys remains prominent in the importation of Indian textiles into Europe today although not to the same extent as they were when they first opened in 1875.(fig. 18.) In the 20's and 30's they were concerned with a trend for the traditional English design. The 50's saw them returning to their previous role as pioneers of contemporary British design but still maintaining a traditional image which is so familiar today.

Both companies are still very much alive and dealing in the same business they started into. Perhaps the only difference is the way in which both companies have their own design studios where the designs for their fabrics are produced and in some cases sent back to India for production, as India still remains as great a source of cheap labour as it was three hundred years ago.

In the struggle to achieve independence from Britain, Mahatma Gandhi used the idea that by using the domestic weaving industry as a symbol of nationalism it would bring home to the people the implications and reality of commercial domination by foreign rulers. The 'Kadhi programme'² was introduced to the people of India, it symbolised for them an independence and self-sufficiency within the village unit. The programme has helped to inspire highly successful co-operative movements throughout the country and created an identity for the people.

The popularity of India cottons to-day can be gauged by a very recent article, "Red Hot Madras" in the British magazine Elle Decoration January-February 1992 issue (fig. 17). It advertises 'a

of products for which the demand is inelastic. While it is true that the demand for many products is inelastic, it is not true that the demand for all products is inelastic. The demand for many products is elastic, and the demand for some products is unit elastic. The demand for a product is elastic if the quantity demanded is highly responsive to changes in price. The demand for a product is unit elastic if the quantity demanded is proportional to changes in price. The demand for a product is inelastic if the quantity demanded is not very responsive to changes in price.

There are many factors that influence the demand for a product. These factors include income, tastes, prices of related goods, and expectations. Income is a major factor in determining demand. As income increases, the demand for many products increases. Tastes also influence demand. If a product becomes more popular, the demand for it increases. Prices of related goods also influence demand. If the price of a substitute good increases, the demand for the original good increases. Expectations also influence demand. If consumers expect prices to rise in the future, they may increase their demand for a product now.

The demand curve for a product is a graph that shows the relationship between the quantity demanded and the price of the product. The demand curve is downward sloping, which means that as the price of a product decreases, the quantity demanded increases. The demand curve is also convex to the origin, which means that the slope of the curve becomes flatter as the quantity demanded increases. The demand curve for a product is determined by the factors mentioned above. The demand curve for a product is a key concept in microeconomics, and it is used to analyze the behavior of consumers and the market for a product.

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sizzling array of checks and plaids in fabrics from sumptuous silk to earthy Indian cotton.' (6, p.50) available from no less than twenty English companies. The 'Shyam Ahuja Shop' at Libertys is not suprising one of the larger importers named in the article.



FIG.17. A sizzling array of checks and plaids in fabrics.

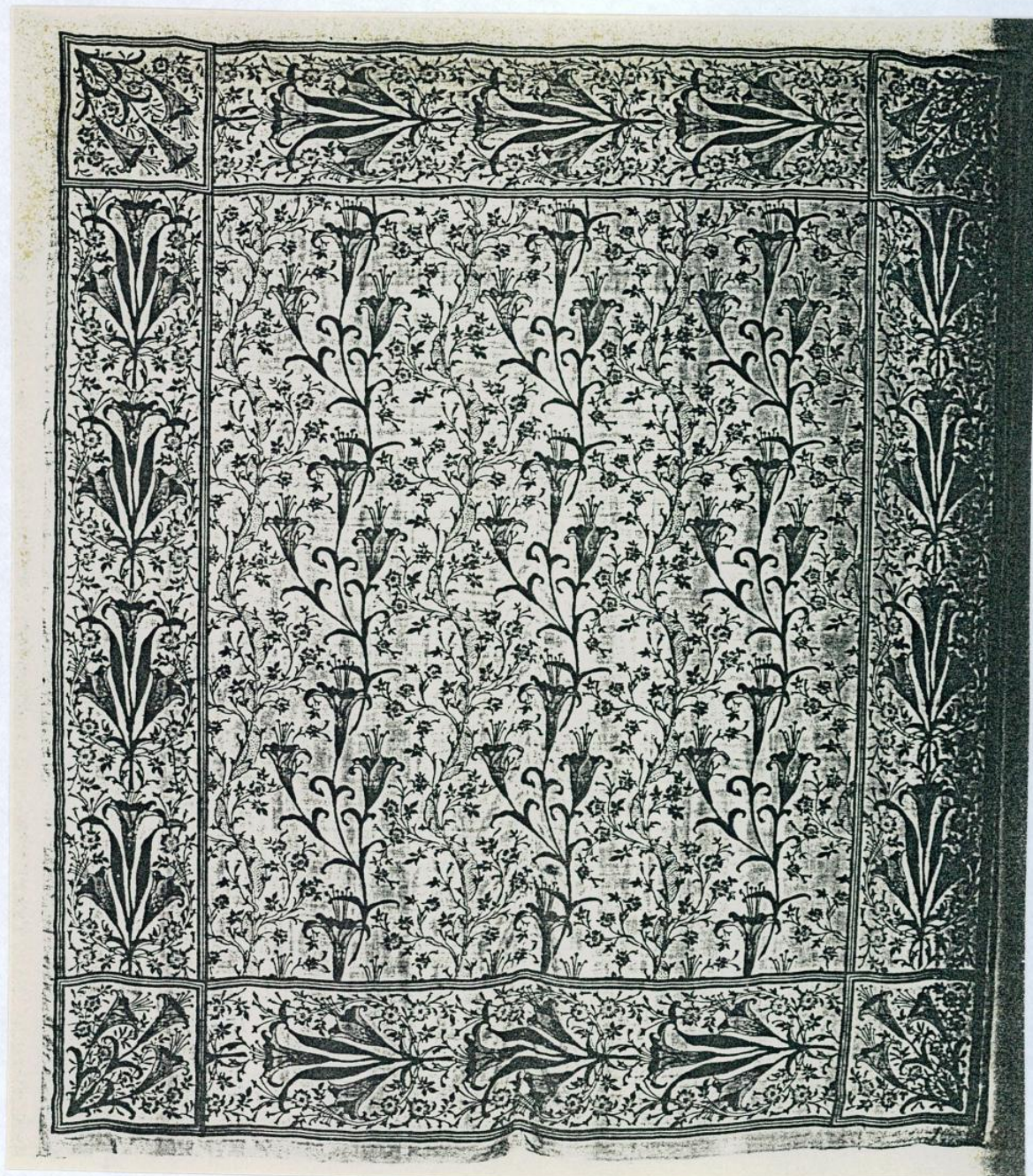
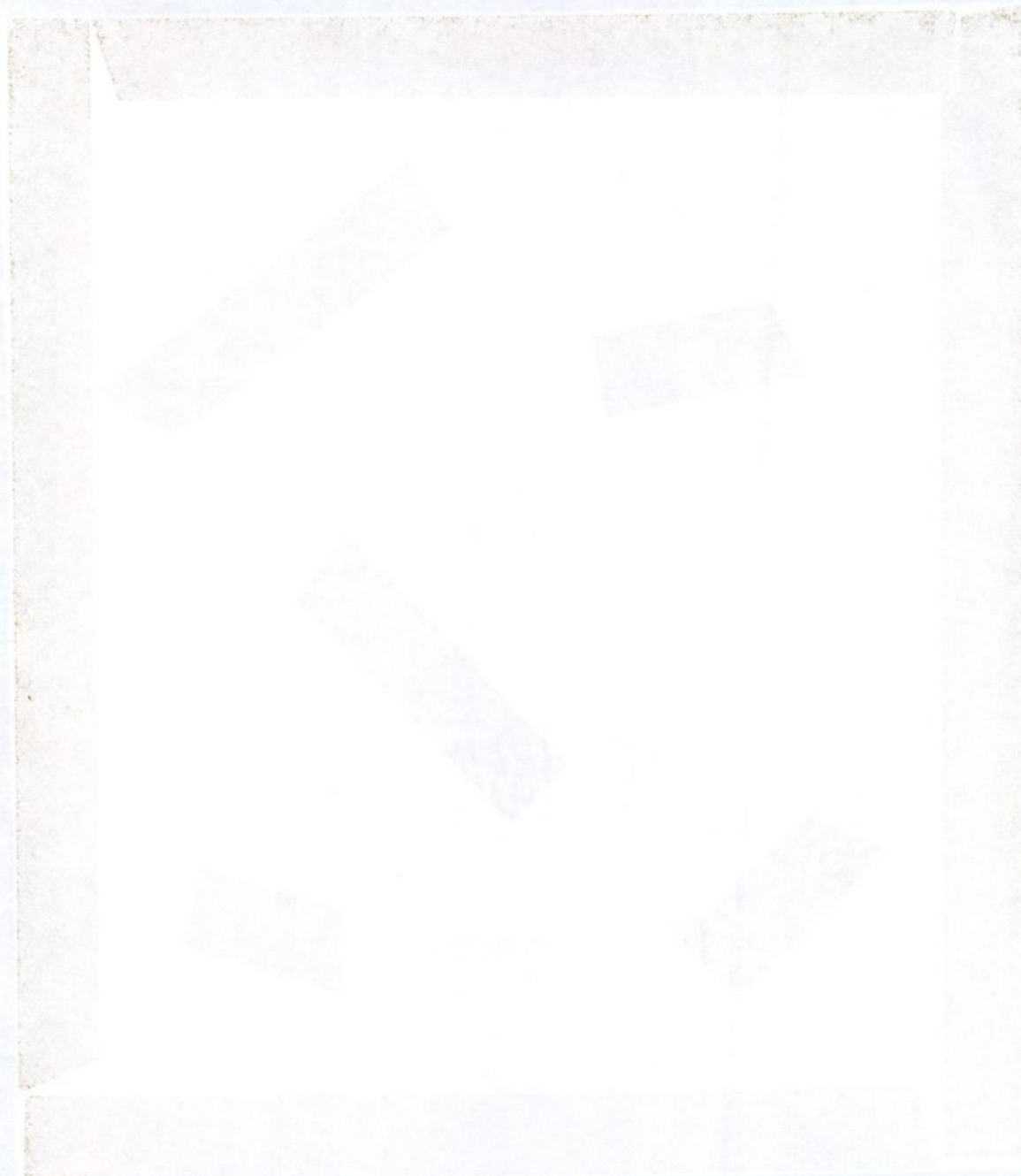


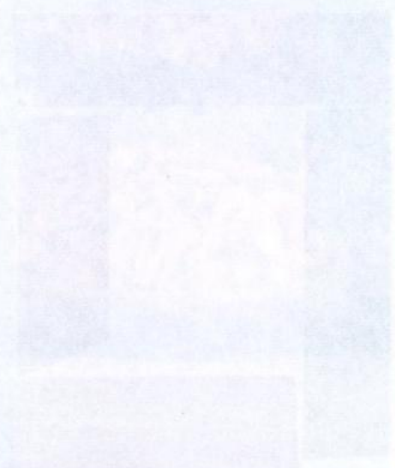
FIG.20 John Illingworth Kay: 'Lily', block printed silk bedcover manufactured at the Swaisland print works Of G.P. &J. Baker in 1893. Covers of this type were sold throughout Liberty's, Heal's and Story's shops.

FIG.21 Indigo dyed furnishings.





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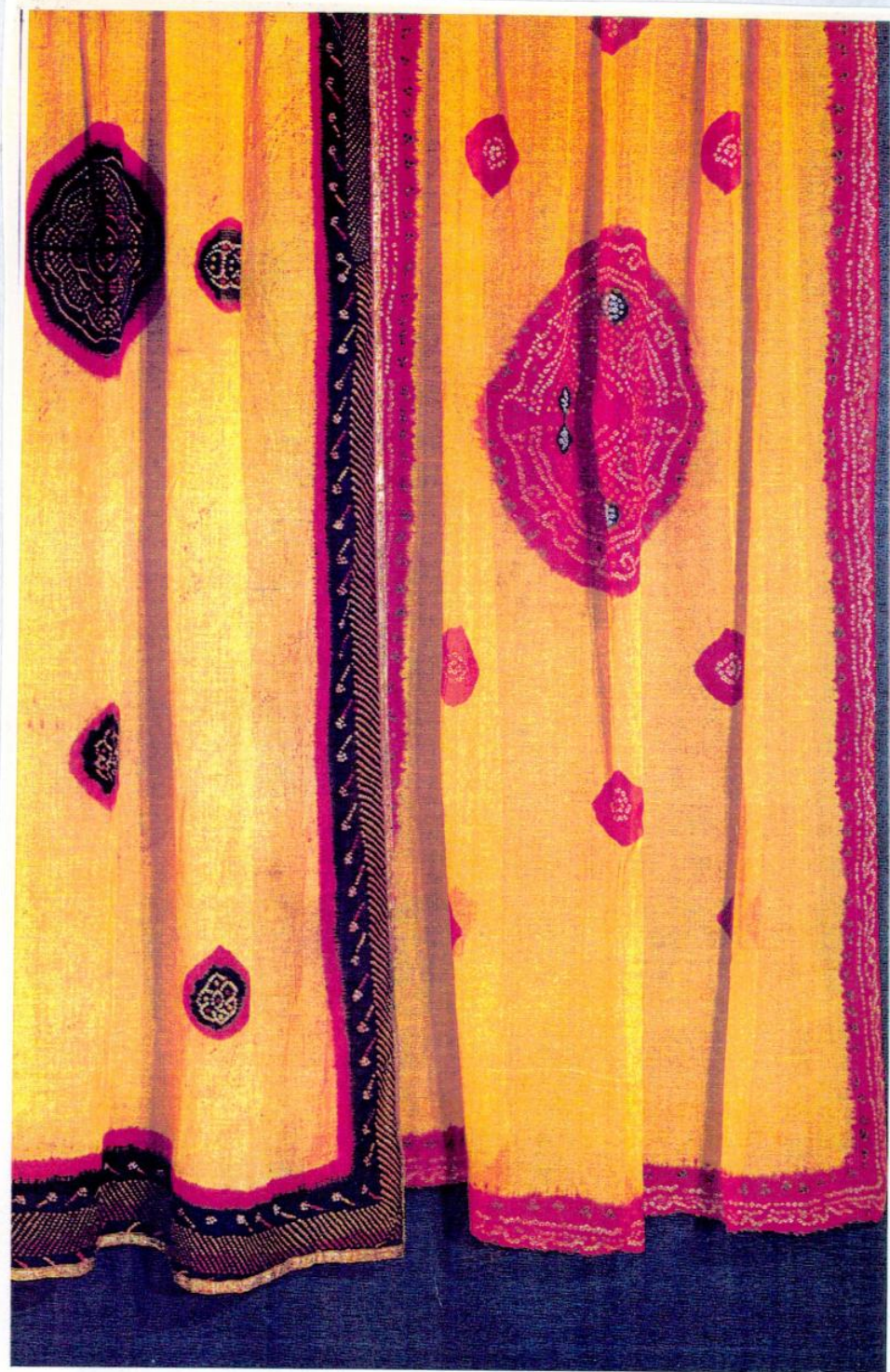
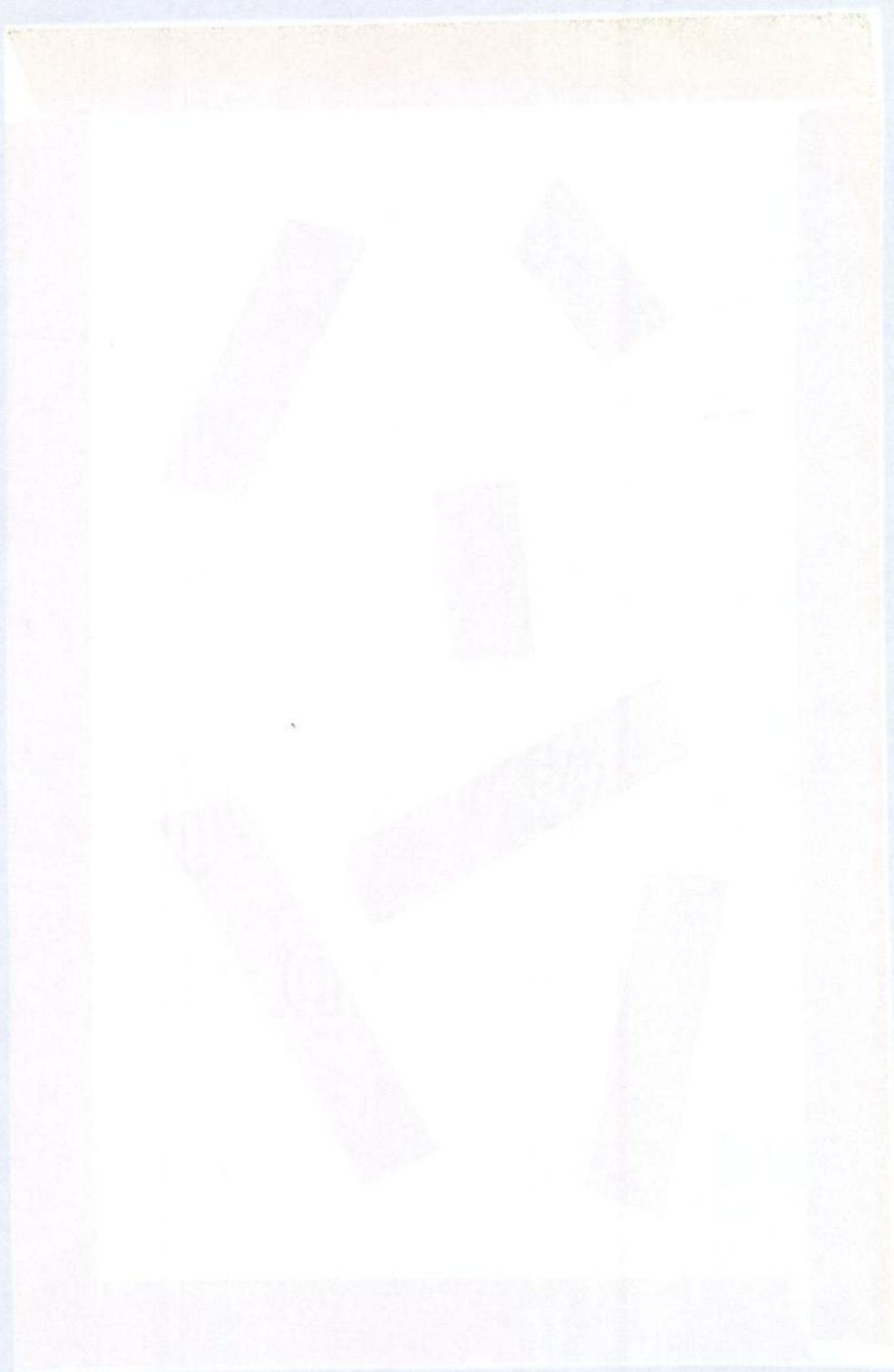


FIG.22 *Odhani*, cotton tie-dyed Jodhpur, Rajasthan; 1988 showing the brightness of colour which Indian textiles are famous for.

I think it is important to mention here, the lack of documented material concerning Indian cotton exports in the latter half of the 20th century. The FIGtrations and literature I received from Anokhi and Oxfam Trading have helped me greatly in piecing



together the chain of events since Indian independence from Britain in 1947 to the present day.

The fifties saw India's preoccupation with their new found independence from Britain, although Britain still remained dominant in the economic stability of the country during the first ten years.

The hippy craze of the sixties started this new interest in natural goods, it was the fashion to dress in Indian saris and live a liberated lifestyle, detached from the trials of a nine to five regular job. It brought Indian fashions to the High street. Interest grew to what it is today, nearly thirty years later, a growing industry.

After the extravagances of the sixties, concern developed in the western world for the people of the third world, this concern nurtured by the hippies soon became of great importance to the West. It was in this atmosphere that the philosophy for the development of Oxfam Trading and Anokhi was conceived.

Anokhi was set up in Jaipur, Rajasthan in 1970. They are a charity rather than a company '.....committed to preserving the ancient skills and crafts of Rajasthan, without altering the environment or culture.'(3(a), p.1)

The traditional skills and techniques of the villagers are employed to produce complete garments, accessories or soft furnishing items which are then shipped all over the world but particularly to Britain where they have opened a chain of shops selling their goods.

Anokhi employ the talents of a number of British designers each year to help put together their collections. Combined with the knowledge of the Indian designers they produce a rich mix of traditional prints and innovative designs, from Indian booti prints, to paisleys, geometrics and florals. (see fig.19)

to the fact that the country is a developing one and that the economy is not yet fully developed.

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FIG.23 Anokhi fabrics in production.

ANOKHI



FIG.28 The natural indigo dyes: Booti print jacket and Navajo print zoave pants and Navajo print dress.





FIG.24 The art of hand block printing, Abdul Hannan demonstrates his specialised craft.

By looking at each of these illustrations (fig.19 and 22) we can assess how the theme of florals is tackled by two very different parties and during two different periods but still using the Indian feeling. FIG.19 shows Anokhi's work with Indian designers and



FIG.22 shows William Morris's work in the late 19th century when he was working with Thomas Wardle. Both Morris work and Anokhis' are very characteristic of the Indian style but also show the time gap. Anokhi are very free and loose in their interpretation of the floral theme, a quality of printed textiles in the 90's. Morris design, on the other hand possesses qualities of the manner in which florals were interpreted during the late 19th century, the art nouveau style was flourishing. Even though there is one hundred years time difference and three thousand miles difference in production both designs possess the same qualities.

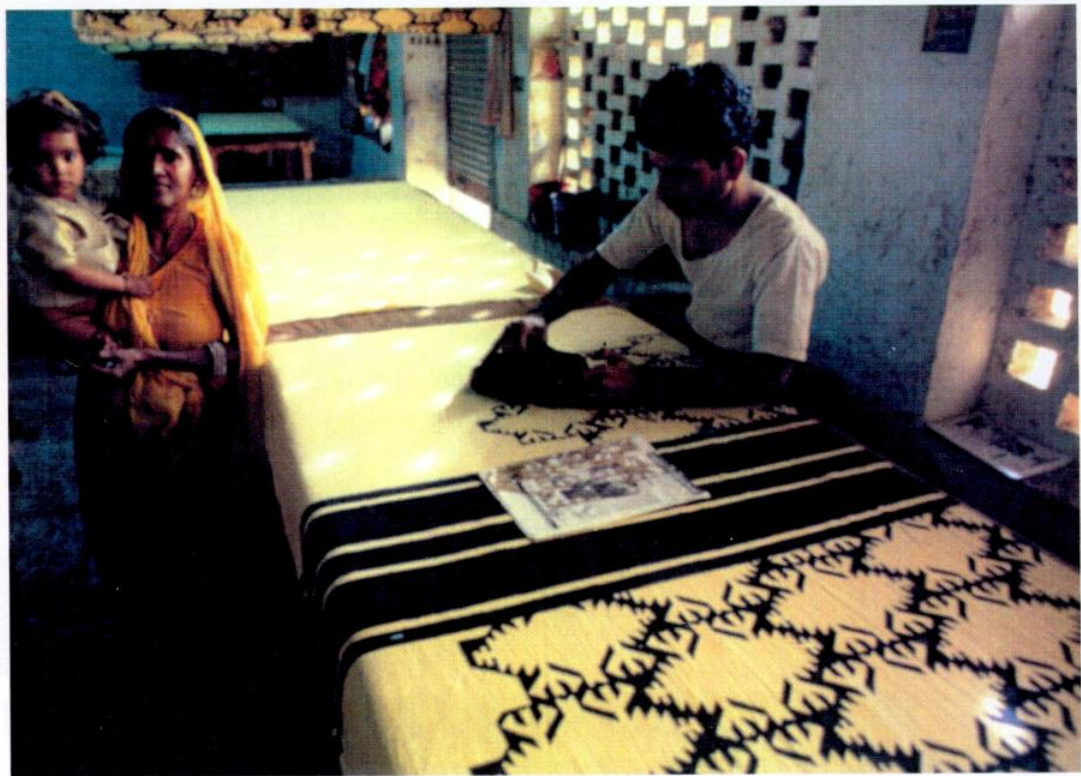
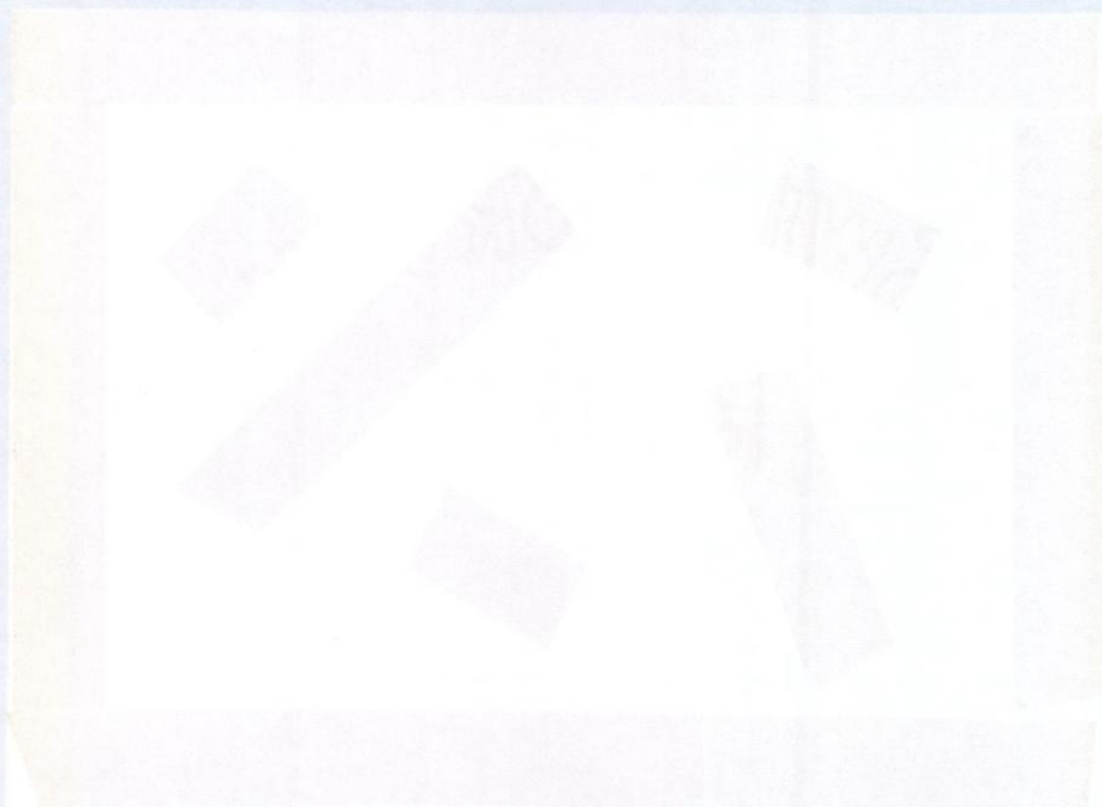


FIG.26 The art of hand block printing. The geometric theme.

All the fabrics Anokhi uses are block printed by hand. Each block is carved from teak wood and may take up to eighty hours to carve. (fig.23 and 24) The printer stamps the cloth from 700 to 1,000 times to complete a single colour on a three metre length; he may have as many as thirty separate blocks for

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FIG.24 Traditional hand carved printing blocks used in printing.

ANOKHI

Presents their Autumn/Winter Collection 1991

The London Show Feb 12th - 14th 1991
Earls Court 2, London, SW5
Stand D42/E40

Harrogate Fashion Fair March 17th - 19th 1991
Stand B17

Viewing by Appointment only Feb 18th - April 5th
at the London Showroom located at:
19-20 Enterprise Way,
Osiers Road,
London SW18 1NL

Contact - Sarah Moran or Justine Gamberoni on 081-877 0807

Press Contact: Gail McGuffie PR 071-731 4202

photograph by Peter Davis

each length. The vegetable, mineral and chemical dyes used during the process are all mixed by hand.

In researching this thesis I obtained an interview with Lucy Goffin, a well known embroidery artist who has worked with Anokhi in India.

Lucy has worked with Anokhi on two occasions and both times she was on location in Jaipur, Rajasthan. She is primarily an embroider who makes one off pieces of clothing such as waistcoats, hats and handbags as well as completing a number of very big commissions. Anokhi approached her and asked would she assist them in one of their community projects in Rajasthan. She then spent six weeks working with the Indians in a village there. The project she was involved with was making waistcoats for Anokhi to sell all over the world. The fabric was first block printed by the group in the village, using some traditional designs but the majority of the designs are produced by the students from the National College of Art and Design in Ahmedabad (the learning centre for textile design in India), who do periods of 'work practice' with Anokhi. So in that manner they are contemporary designs but based on the traditional designs of the area. Under the direction of Lucy, the waistcoats were constructed and then embroidered by both craftspeople of the village and Lucy herself.

In her second project with Anokhi she was involved with the production of block printed and embroidered bed covers. This was a much longer project which is still continuing today although Lucy has since returned to England to continue her own work. Apart from the students from the National College of Art and Design, Anokhi also employ the talents of one or two English fashion designers to advise them on current trends and forecasts.

and, in fact, the only one of its kind in the world.

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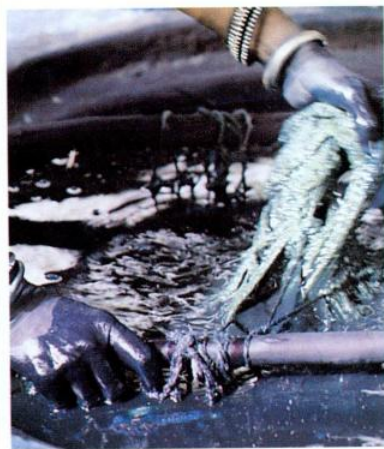
the only one of its kind in the world.

The fourteenth is the fact that the building is

the only one of its kind in the world.

The fifteenth is the fact that the building is

the only one of its kind in the world.



Indigo dye bath.



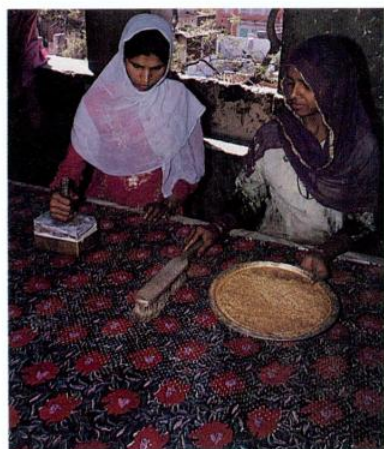
Carved wooden blocks.



Washing fabric.



Block carver, Abdul Majib.



Gold printers, Majeedan & Khirunissa.



Checking & packing.

FIG.26 Traditional methods of production of Anokhi fabrics.

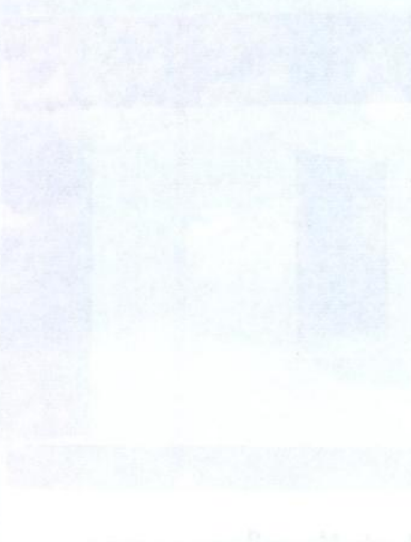
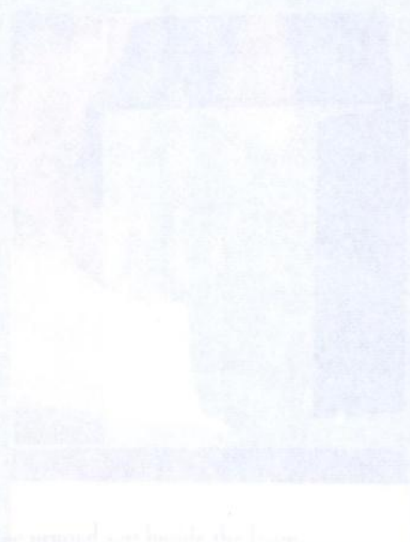
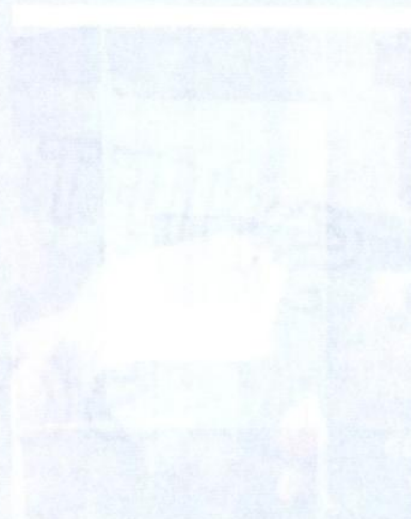
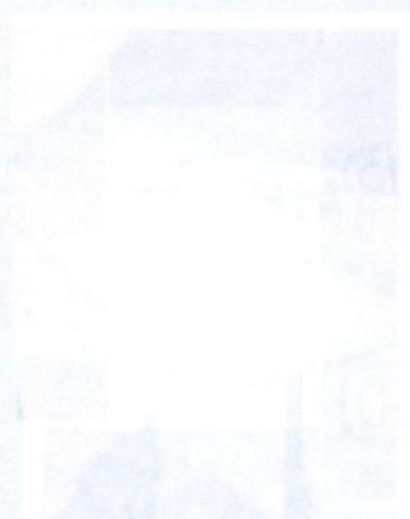
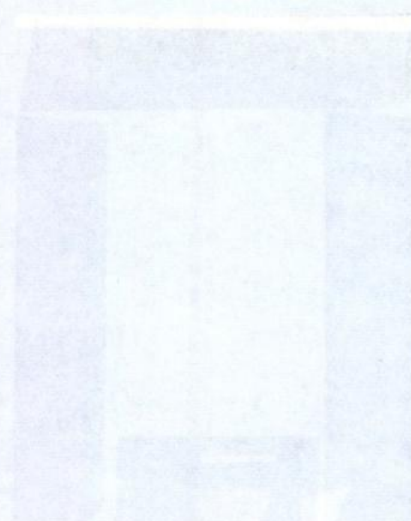


Fig. 1. *Thalassoma* sp.

Fig. 2. *Thalassoma* sp.

Fig. 3. *Thalassoma* sp.

Fig. 4. *Thalassoma* sp.

Fig. 5. *Thalassoma* sp.

Fig. 6. *Thalassoma* sp.



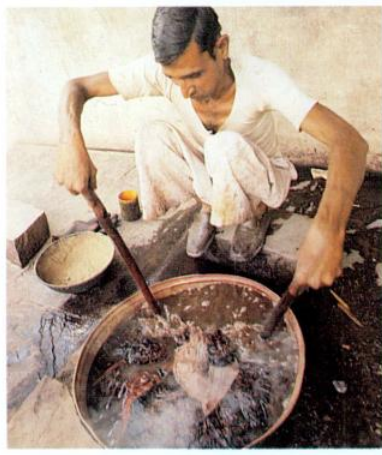
Block carver, Ram Dayal.



Packing orders for the U.K.



Carved wooden blocks.



Prahlad Dosaya dyeing.

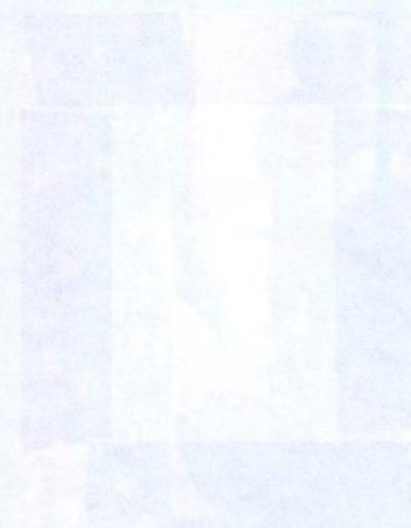
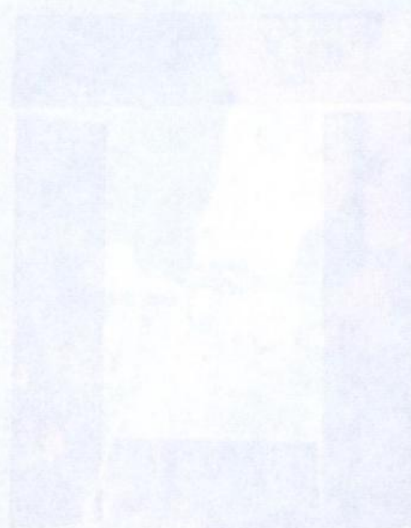
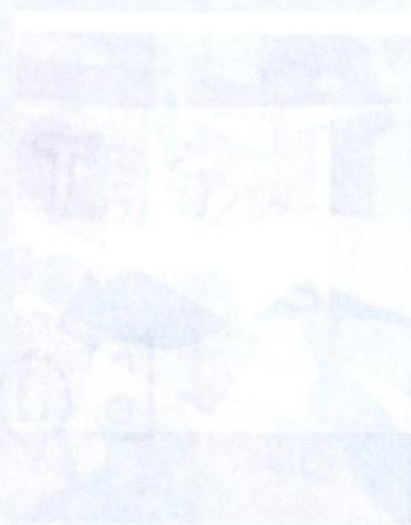
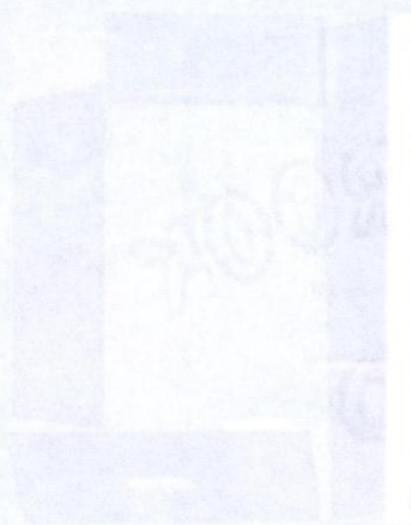
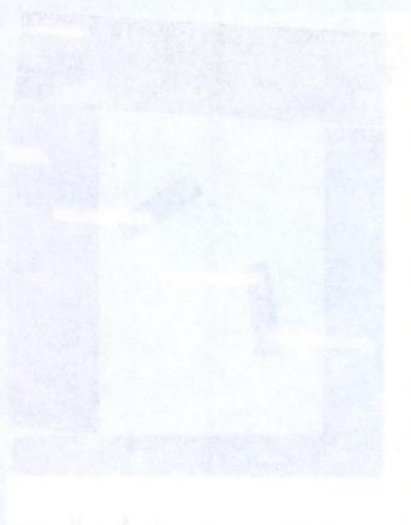
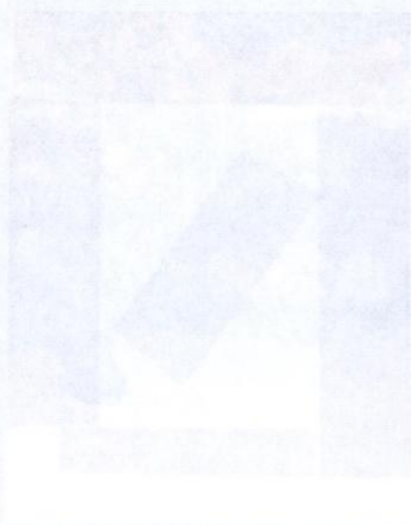


Gyarsi Ram block printing.



Begam spinning.

FIG.27 Traditional methods of production of Anokhi fabrics.



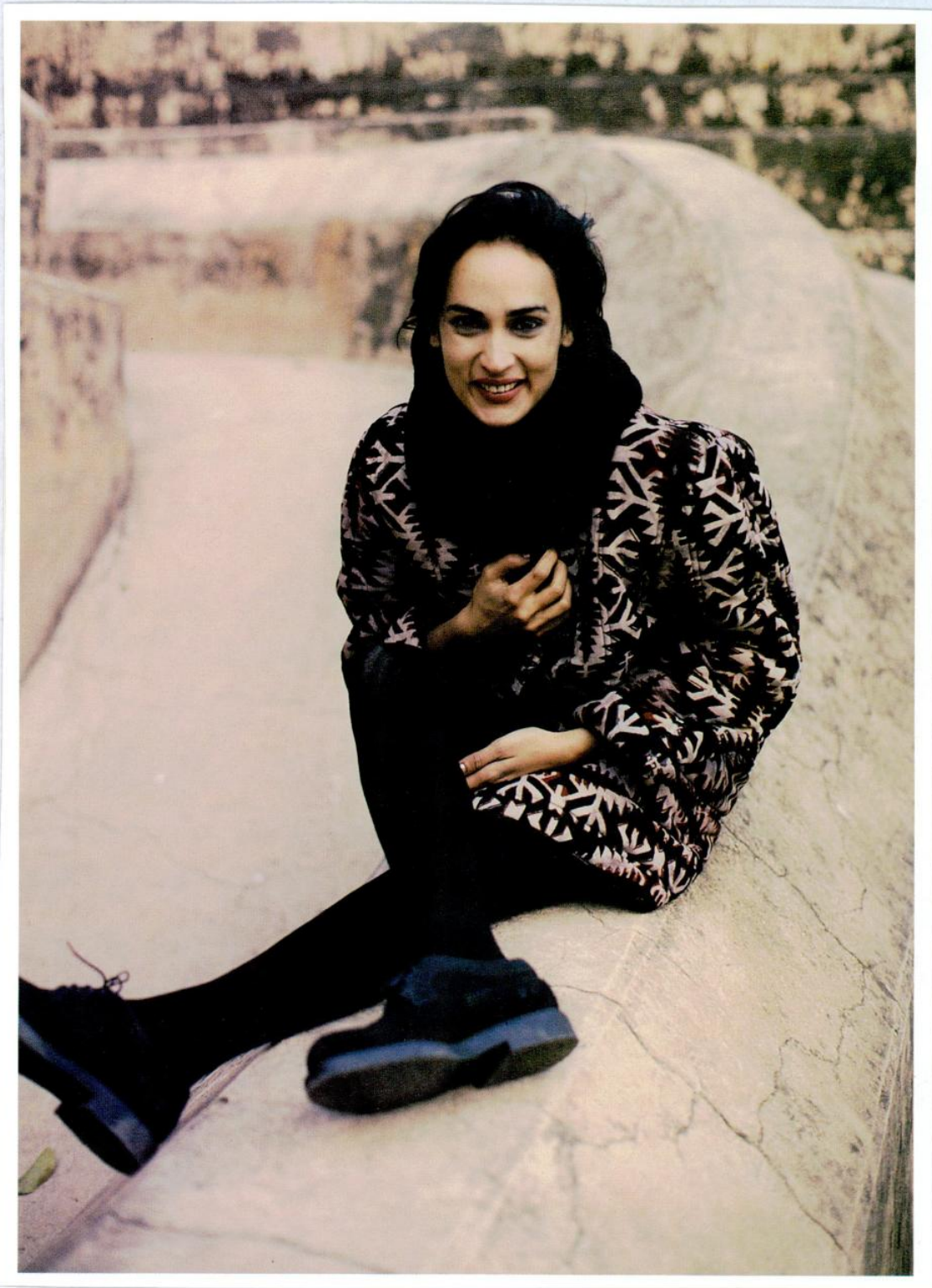


FIG.29 The finished product, Navajo print quilted jacket.

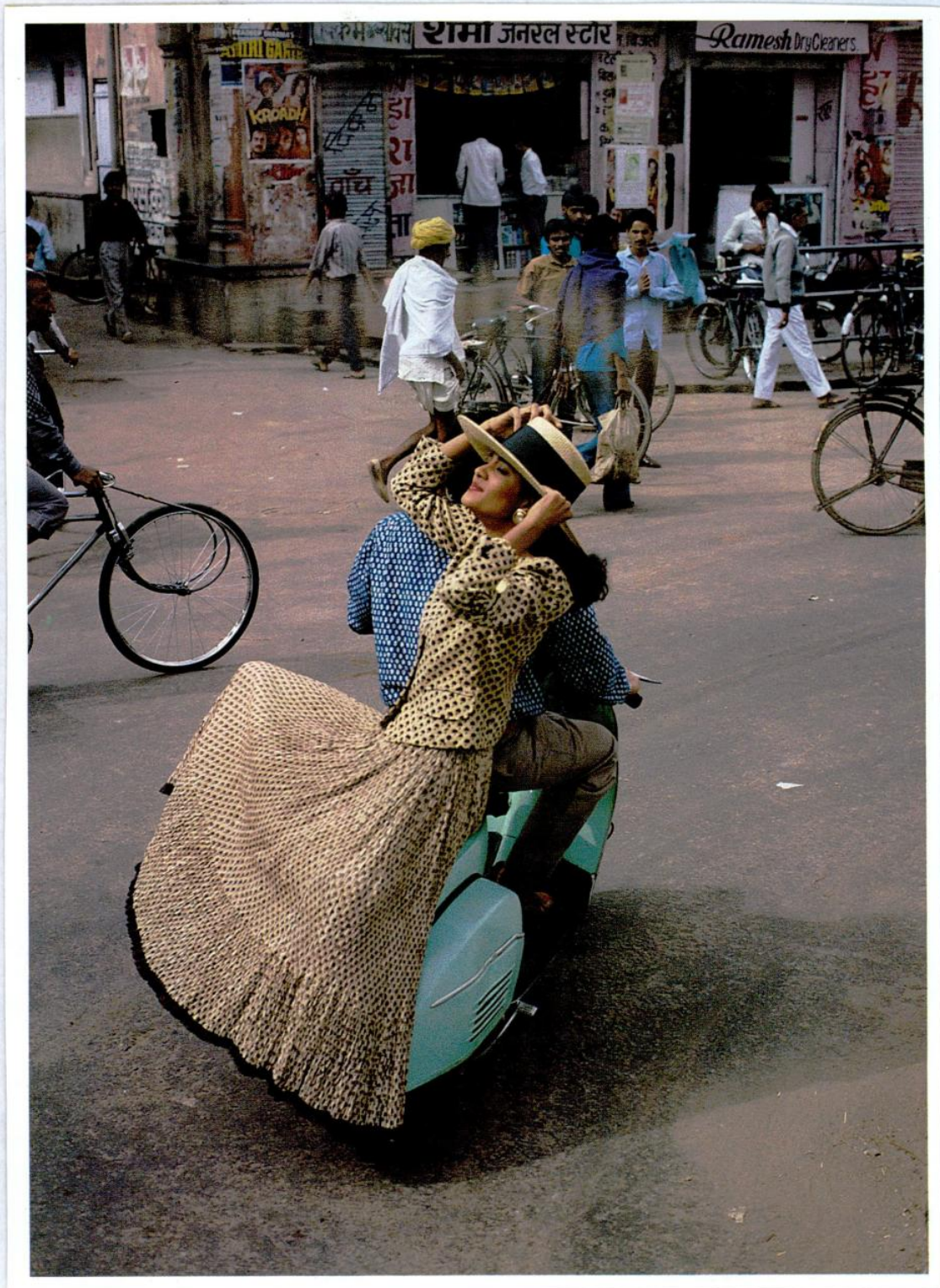
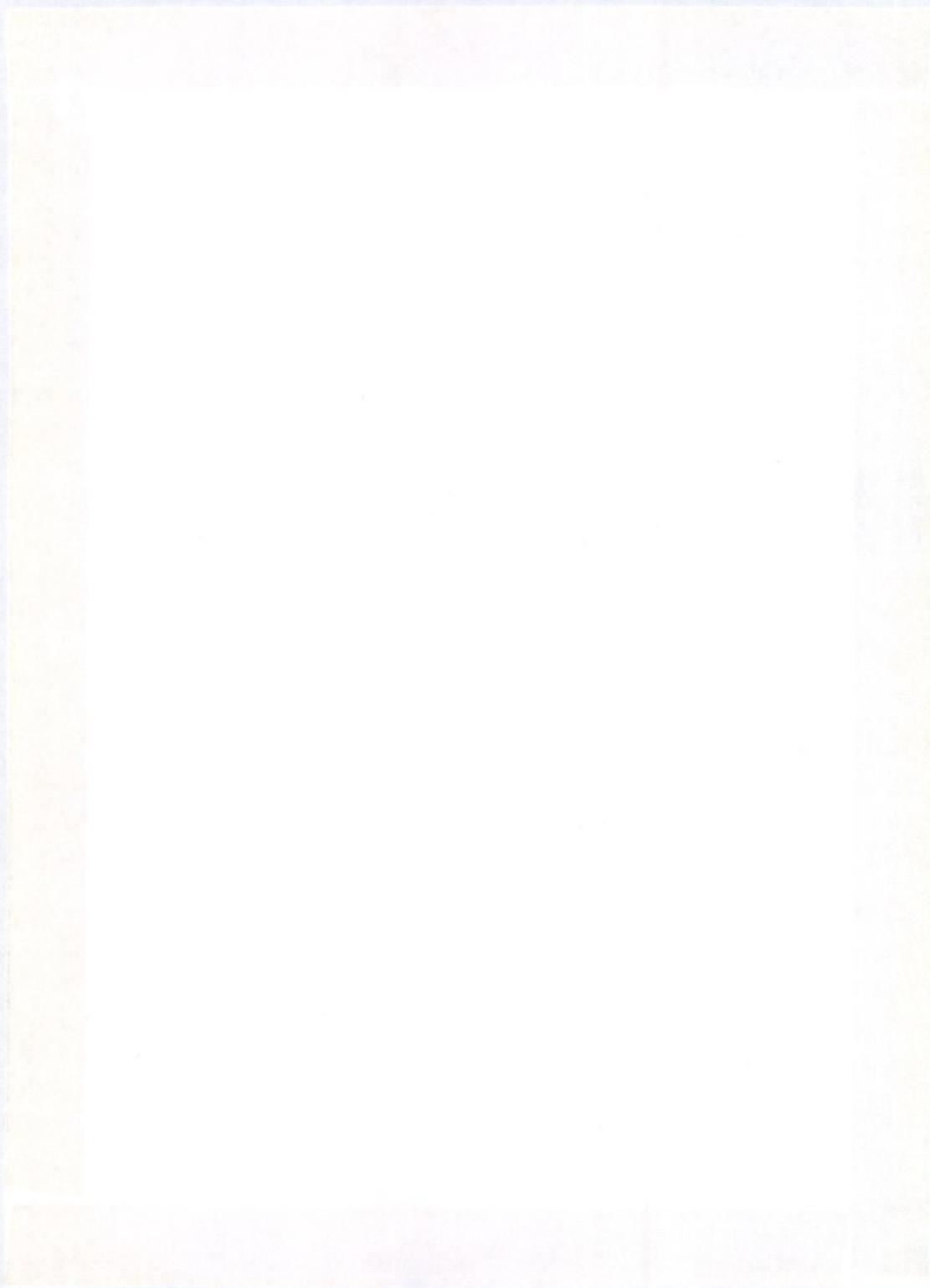


FIG.30. Scooting through the streets of Jaipur in a traditional booti print jacket and skirt.

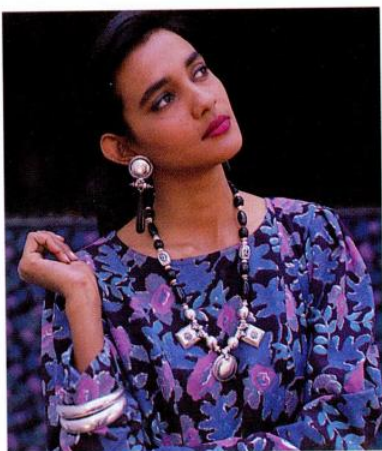




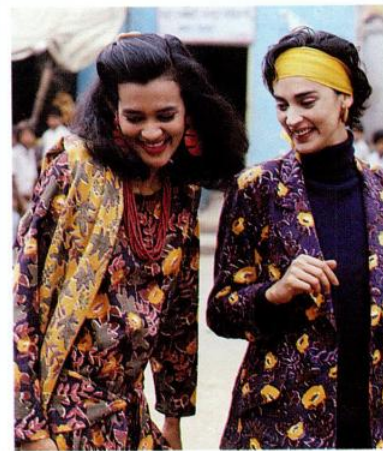
Tweed print jacket.



Short evening dress.

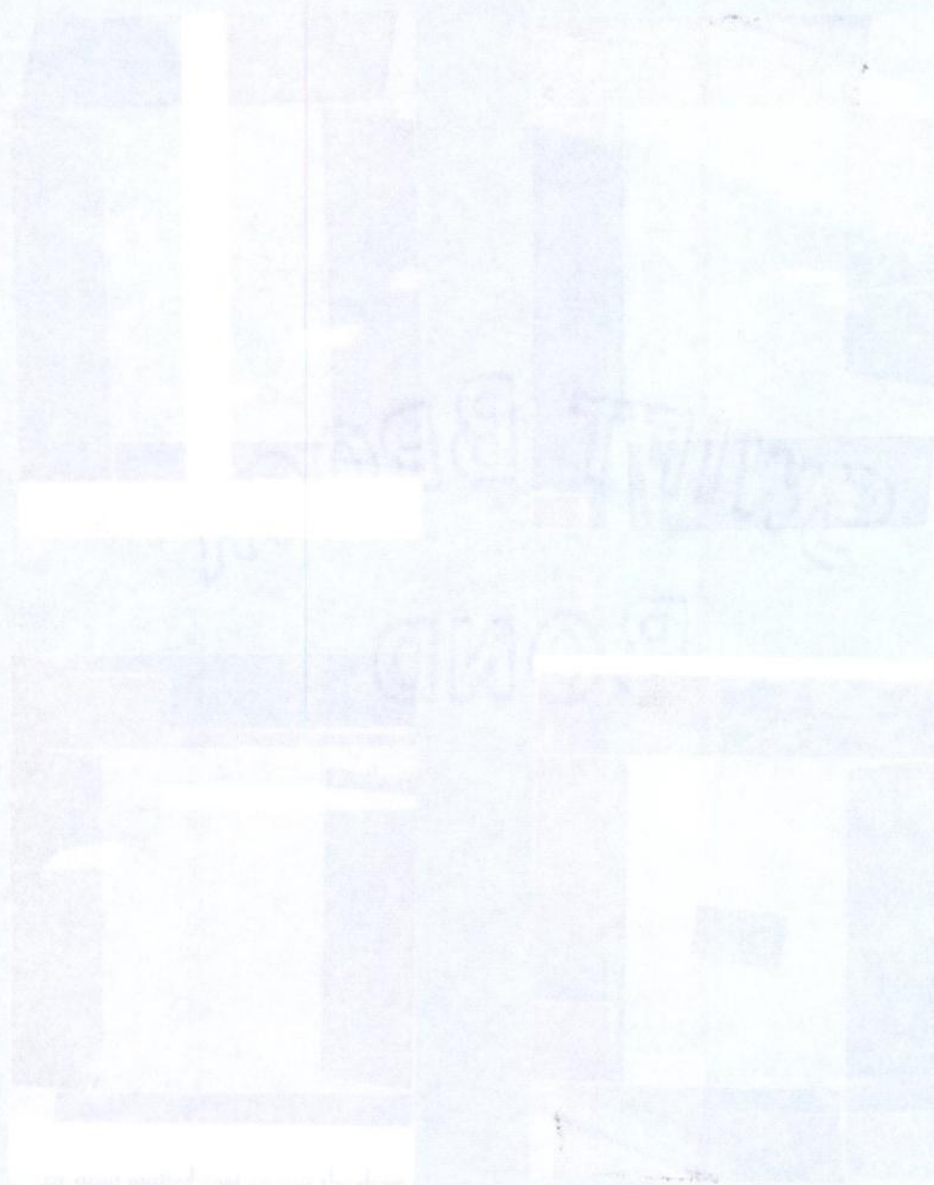


Holly leaf print.



Floral prints.

FIG.31 The European influence on Anokhi fabrics.



Oxfam Trading (a subsidiary of Oxfam) carry out similar projects in India and other 3rd world countries. Their aim is to help the most disadvantaged people in the world namely handcraft producers by improving their economic and social status. These people often work in family groups or as individuals, they are isolated from the market, are extremely susceptible to exploitation by middle men and live in countries where their heritage is not valued. Oxfam Trading have developed the 'Bridge Program'³; it aims 'to link craft and food producers in developing countries with customers in the UK.'(2(c), p.2) Its purpose is to 'empower people to increase their income and improve the quality of their lives through a programme of marketing and assistance which reaches directly to the producer.'(2(c), p.2)

What we as the consumers are really witnessing is the re-introduction of Oriental goods onto the market to make us aware of the poverty and hardship experienced in other parts of the world. I think it is important to note at this stage that one of the reasons why the Oriental goods imported by Oxfam remain so unique is that they are produced by some of the poorest people in the world, people who by virtue of their place in society have remained in a time warp and unaware of change. They have become victims of the western world's capitalist society but still remain relatively oblivious to it.

Oxfam, through its 'Bridge program' is endeavouring to create an identity for these people by encouraging them to produce what they are skilled in, handcrafts. One of the 'Bridge program' primary concerns is that the handcrafts must remain traditional handcrafts from that area that they are produced in; this cumulates in my topic for discussion, the comparisons between the contemporary traditional block printed cottons and

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the block printed cottons that first hit the European market in the 16th century.



FIG.37. Frilled duvet produced under Oxfam Trading's 'Bridge program'. 1990.



Quilt & cushion covers.



Table setting.

FIG.38. Anokhi's furnishing range

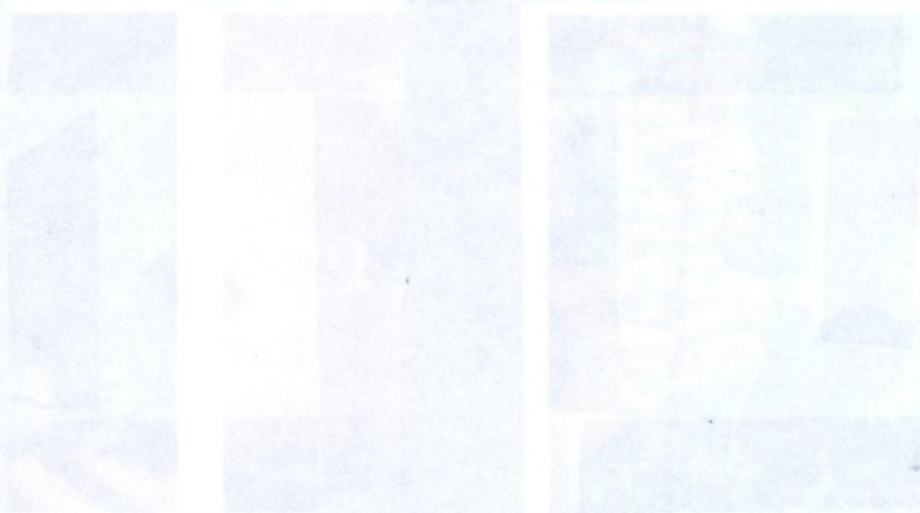
The first part of the report is a general introduction to the project.

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The fifth part of the report is a detailed description of the project.



The sixth part of the report is a detailed description of the project.



FIG.39. Promotional card for Anokhi's soft furnishing range.

ANOKHI

Fig 39

Presents their 1992 Soft Furnishing Collection

A Comprehensive Range of 100% Cotton Handblock Printed Quilts,
Bedspreads, Cushion Covers and Table Linen all Competitively
Re-Priced for the New Season.

We will be showing at The Spring Gift Fair
Birmingham N.E.C. - Stand N1 Hall 6
February 2nd - 6th 1992

Also by appointment at our London showroom
Please ring Sarah Moran, Alison Yeo on 081-877 0807

Press contact: Gail McGuffie PR 071-731 4202

Photograph by Sarah Mitchell

What is evident after reading Oxfam's case reports of the villages the have set up in is their preoccupation not only with the quality of the goods been produced, which was the main reason that Libertys stopped importing silks and printed cottons from India in the latter part of the 19th century, but also the welfare of the producers involved in each of the 295 groups in the 43 countries they are involved in. Oxfam stresses the point that their 'Bridge program' is not only about trading but also about helping the producer in the longer term. If we look at one case study where a group of 6 printers are involved in making block printed bedspreads, Oxfam funds the purchase of the wood blocks, chemical dyes and cotton and also funds the training of new printers. They then buy the finished bedspreads from the printers for a rate which is usually higher than the regular market price, the producers then receive a dividend from the profits Oxfam make from the sale of their bedspreads in Britain. The designs remain traditional although the style may be changed, for example where it involves the production of clothes, such as waistcoats. The dividend the producers receive may be used as a subscription to Elle magazine, so the style of the clothes is geared towards the western market.

Oxfam in their stated aim to make the third world a happier and better place for the people who live there are also ensuring that the traditional designs and textiles of the respective countries are preserved for another few decades and continue the history of the trade routes that began over 15 centuries ago.

Apart from the two British based companies already discussed, namely Oxfam Trading and Anokhi there are groups in India which are set up by the craftspeople themselves to promote their crafts, and complete the same task that Oxfam Trading is trying to complete.

One particular company is based in New Delhi. 'Dastkar'⁴ was founded in 1981 by six women who had worked in the craft development sector. It aims at improving the economic status of craftspeople; thereby promoting the survival of traditional crafts. Its policy is to help artisans become self reliant. Its work with the crafts people has developed in the follow directions;

1. Organising craft bazaars where artisan groups interact directly with the urban market and consumer.
2. Obtaining and co-ordinating orders for artisan groups from retail outlets and other buyers.
3. Assisting with information on sources of loans, grants and developmental schemes, both government and private.
4. Holding design workshops with craft groups with the emphasis on quality products with an essentially utilitarian purpose.
5. Organising workshops for accountancy, marketing, production procedures and group structure.
6. Creating awareness of craft issues and skills in the media, government, public and craftspeople themselves.

Dastkar have proved to the craftspeople themselves that the crafts business is commercially viable, which in turn encourages the continuation of the crafts business. In essence it is carrying on with Mahatma Gandhi's 'Kadhi programme'.

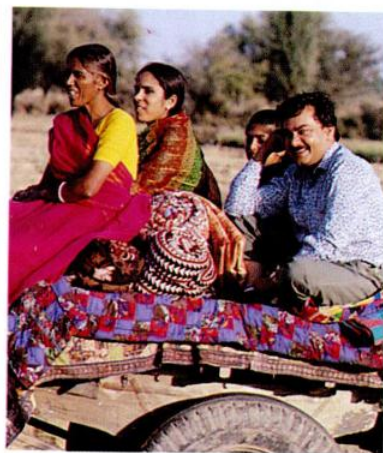


Jaipur blue pottery.

FIG.35. Jaipur pottery.

In writing this chapter I have endeavoured to successfully present a case study of two British companies and one Indian group who are involved in the production of traditional Indian block printed cottons and who at the same time aim to ensure that the communities that these textiles originate from are preserved, which is vitally important. To attempt to preserve the environment in which these textiles are produced ensures that the traditional methods by which the textiles are produced will be passed on from generation to generation which in the environment of the latter part of the 20th century is growing increasingly difficult; big European traders are offering higher prices to the craftspeople if they move to bigger cities and work in factories producing badly finished junk that will sell in the souvenir shops. The people work long hours for what in the beginning seemed like good pay, Exploitation is a word that captures the feeling.

'Young in contact with the outside world have embraced the view that traditional ways are illegitimate and irrelevant.'(17, p. 53)



Shrimati, Krishna, Vikram & Sonu.

FIG.36. Taking a break.

Footnotes

1. Wardle, 22, p.69.
2. 'Kadhi' cloth handwoven from indigenous handspun cotton. The name given to Mahatma Gandhi's programme to develop the home weaving industries after independence from Britain. 11, p.13.
3. Oxfam trading's development program. It involves the injection of cash in communities for the development of their traditional crafts industry. The produce is then sold on the European market and the profits injected back into the respective communities.
4. A registered Indian society, promoting the survival of traditional crafts in India.

1. The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the plane was the humidity. It was a warm blanket, wrapping around me in a way that felt both comforting and overwhelming. The air was thick with the scent of tropical flowers and the distant call of birds. I had heard that the weather was perfect, but I didn't realize how much it would affect me. The humidity seemed to seep into my skin, making every movement feel like a struggle. I had to take deep breaths, trying to steady myself. The humidity was a challenge, but it was also a part of the experience. I had come here to explore, and I was determined to embrace everything I encountered. The humidity was just one of the many things that made this place so unique. I was going to make the most of it.

SWIFT BROOK
BOARD



Fairisle knits.



Coordinating separates.



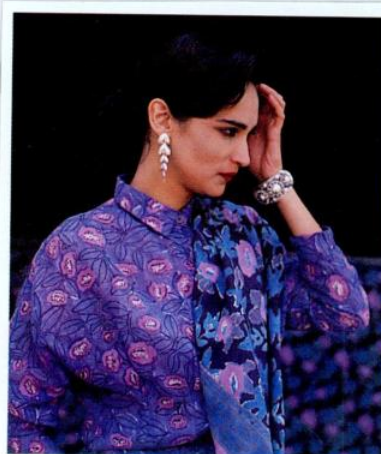
Guatemalan stripe print.



Wrap up for Winter.



Next Summer's evening wear.



Pansy print.

FIG.32 The finished product ready for the European market.

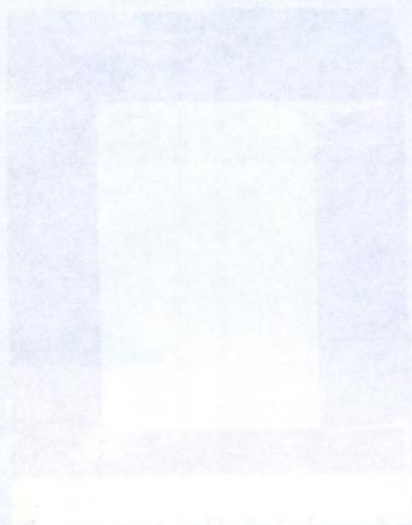
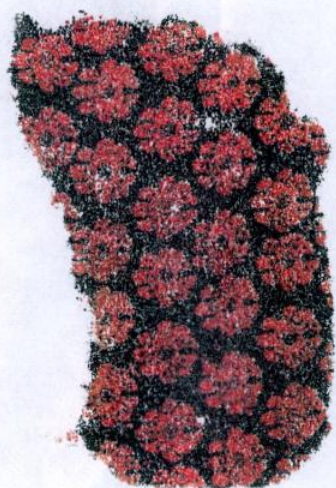
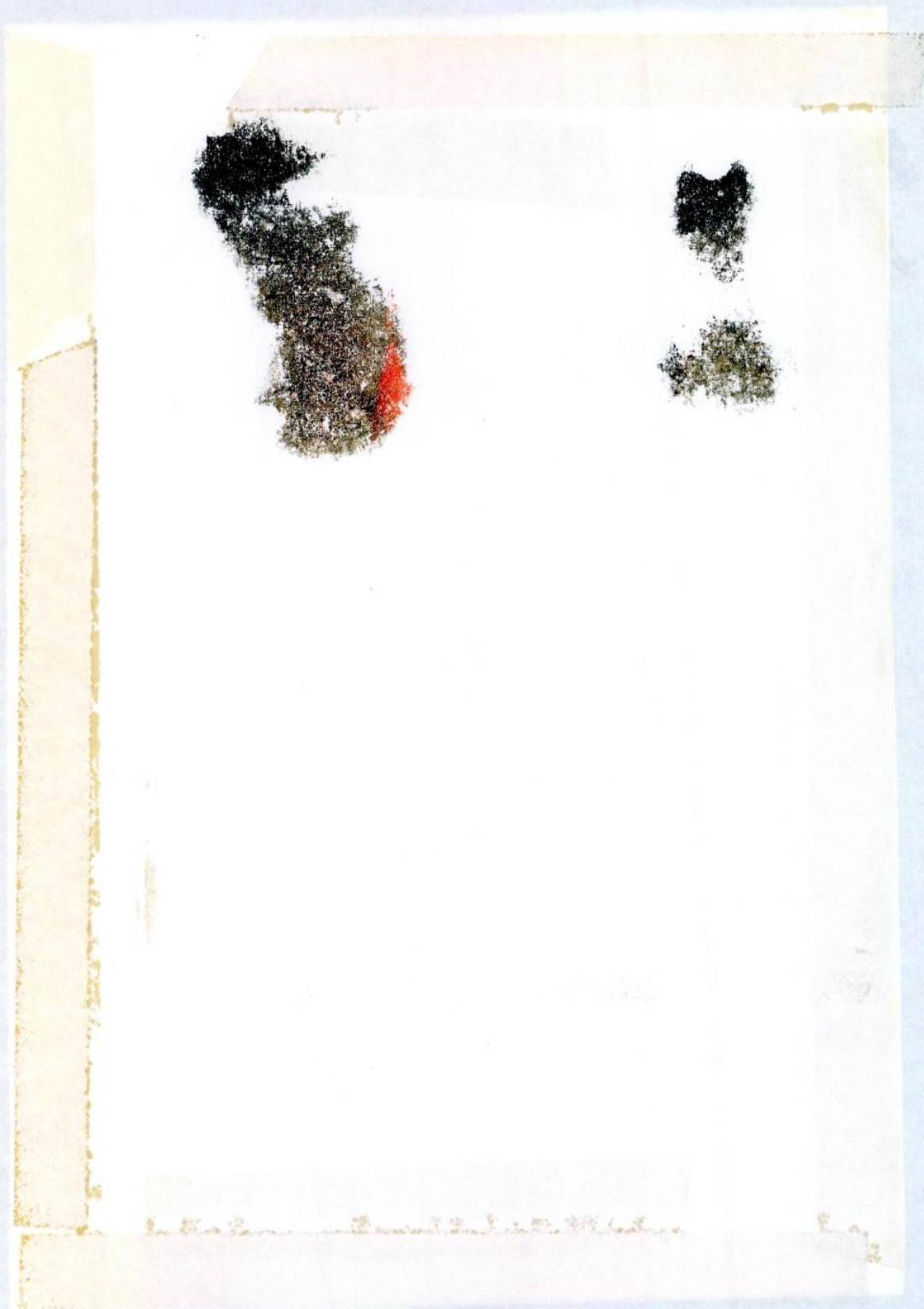




FIG.41. Traditionally produced block printed cotton 'sadlo, a womans wrap worn over a 'choli'(blouse) and petticoat in the manner of a sari. 1988.



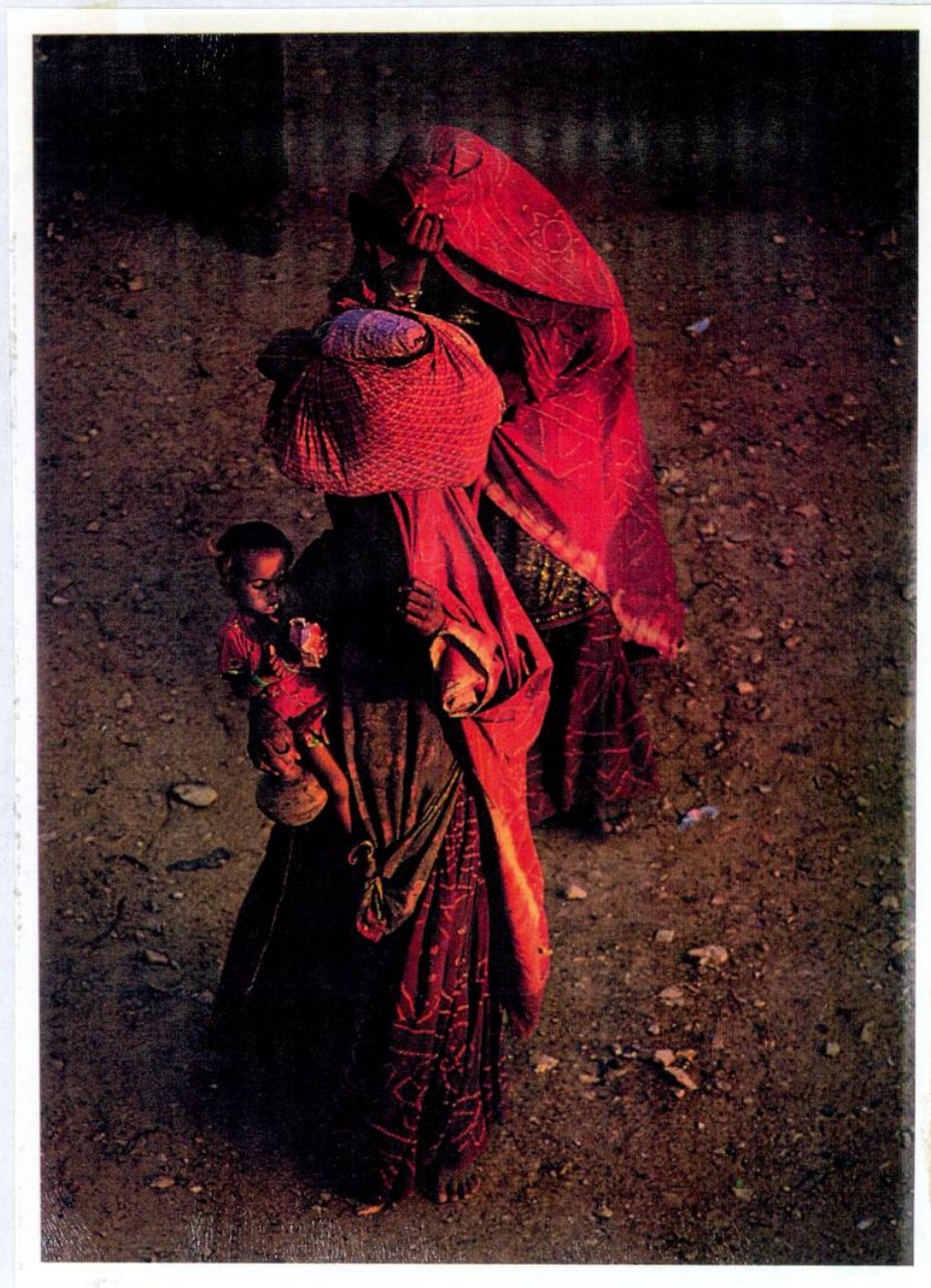
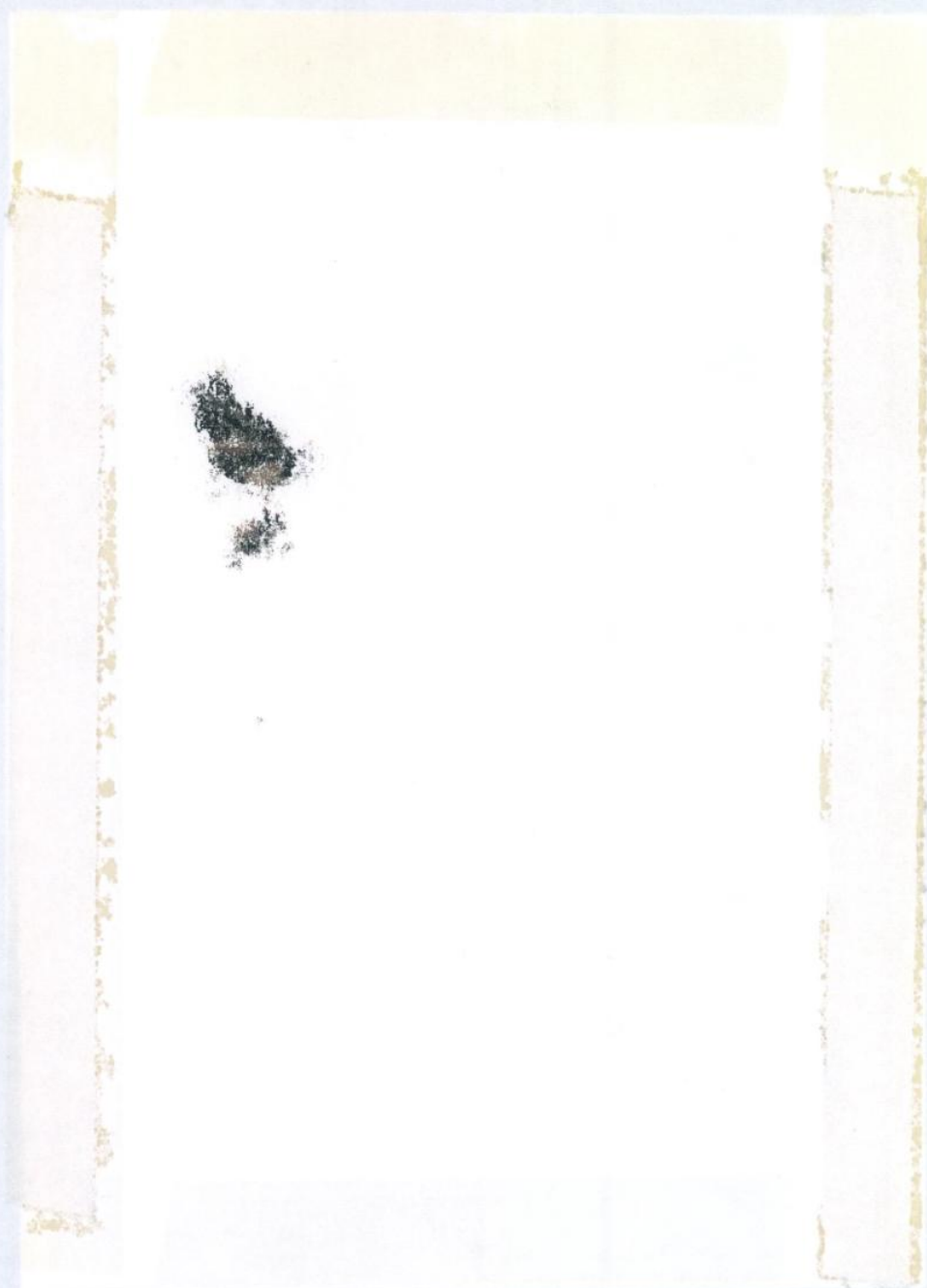


FIG.42. Muslim women wearing bandhani 'odhnis' and 'gaghras'(shawls and skirts), Rajasthan.



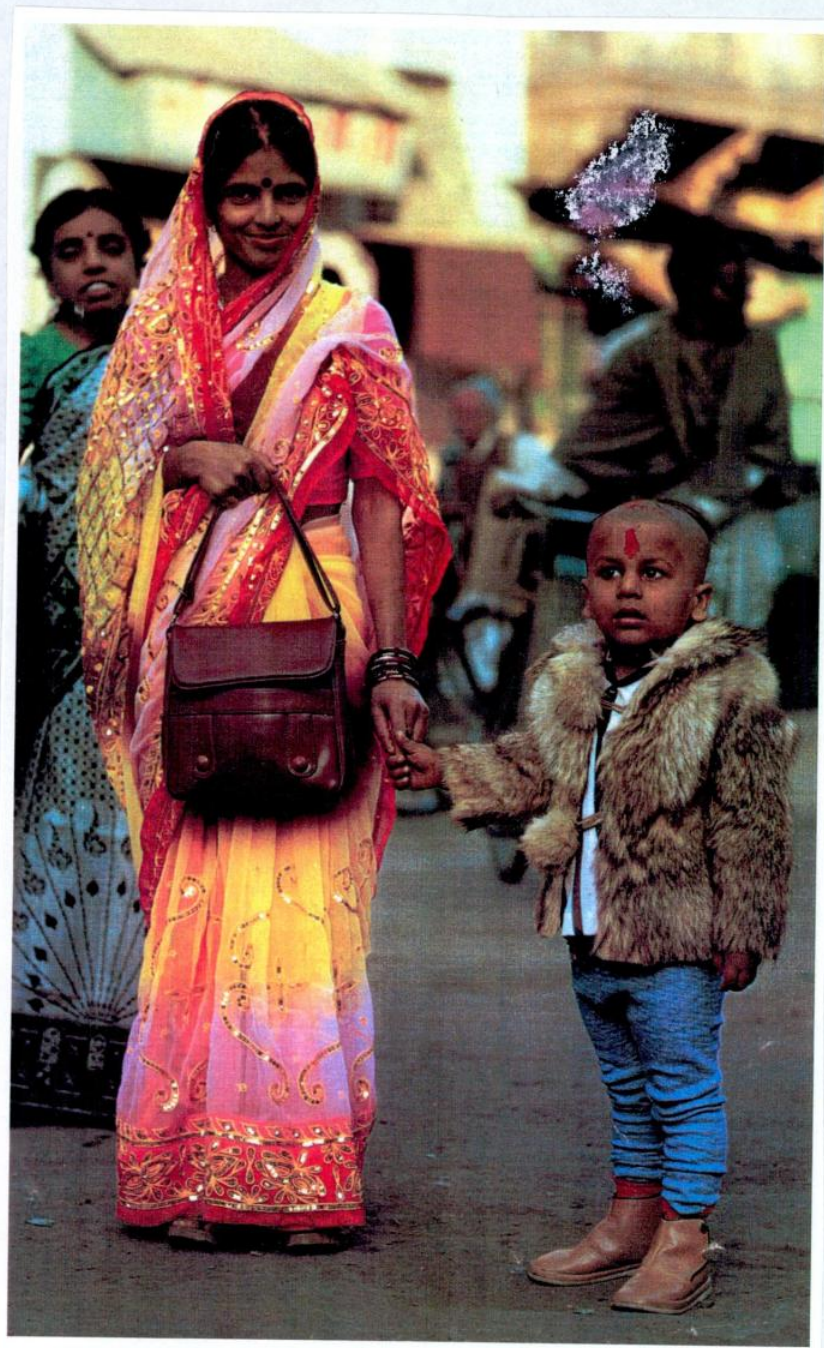
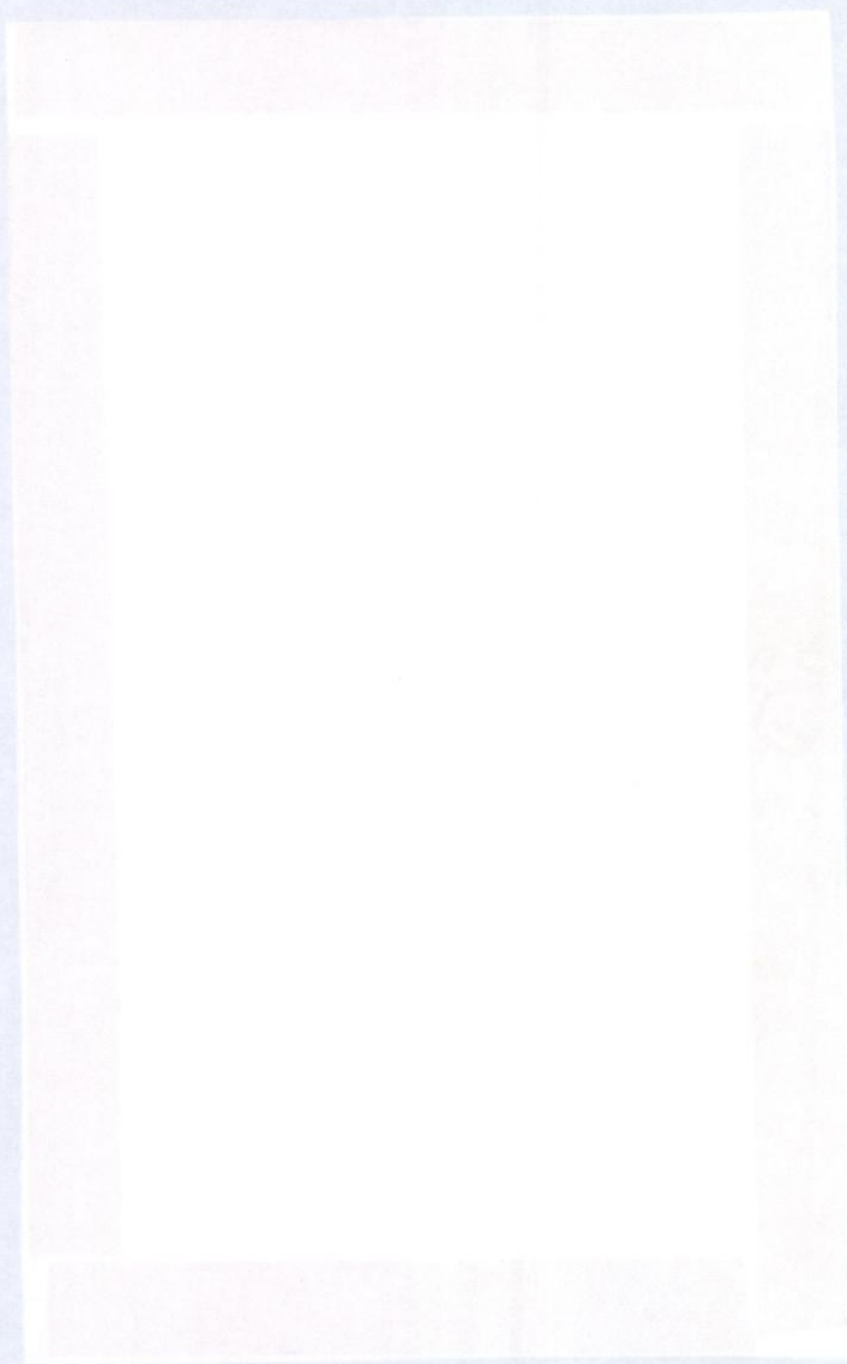


FIG.43. Traditionally dressed banaras's woman on festival day dressed in an elaborate sari.



Conclusion

Companies like Oxfam Trading and Anokhi have done a vast amount to revitalise the trade routes between India and Europe. The traditional cotton textiles produced nowadays are similar but not the same as the textiles that were produced at the turn of the 17th century. A complete circle of trade has taken place; Anokhi, apart from its high street outlets in Britain has recently opened its first shop in Europe, in Amsterdam. The Dutch role in the development of the trade routes of the 18th century is been rekindled in the 20th century. The European presence has clearly left its mark on India; (fig. 41) The woman is dressed in her traditional sari while her son has clearly a European influence about his clothing, although he still bears the traditional red marking which is a symbol of devotion applied by a priest, showing his body has been ritually cleaned.

The Indian 'palampores' or bed covers as they are more commonly known to us in the 20th century we see for sale in Oxfam (fig. 37) and in Anokhi nowadays are certainly derived from the Tree of Life motif but are very different if we compare it to an 18th century Palampore imported by the East India company (fig. 9). The tree of Life motif was a very important element of Indian design particularly in palampores that originated from the Coromandel coast of India. A logical explanation for the demise of the Tree of Life Motif is that it was a hand painted on cotton rather than block printed. It also is the only design characteristic of Indian block printed cottons from the 17th and 18th centuries that has not been revitalised by the work of Anokhi and Oxfam. There remains in India very little handpainting of cotton, this is partly due to the introduction of chemical dyes and also the difficulty in reincarnating the

technique because it is such a specialist craft and over the centuries has become extinct.

The Green movement that has developed over the past five years, coupled with increased media coverage of the plight of the Third world and the state of the environment has undoubtedly done a vast amount to encourage the popularity of 'natural' goods whether it be a type of food, a type of furniture or a type of cloth. The goods produced and sold on the European market by Oxfam and Anokhi are to be considered 'natural products', it is certainly a very positive coincidence that the development of both their trade with Europe and the growth of the green movement has occurred simultaneously.

The role block printed Indian cottons have played in the development of the trade routes is phenomenal. The introduction of Indian cottons to Europe first as a novelty in the 16th century proved to be a major commercial enterprise in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The last hundred years has seen the biggest fall off in trade since they first developed but the trade routes are growing again, the popularity of Indian cottons has coincided with the growth of the green movement, an inclination towards the use of more natural materials, a rejection of synthetics and a concern for the people of the third world.

The elements of block printed cottons have remained of utmost importance to the popularity of the products. What is unique about them, is the fact that their basic characteristics have remained constant since the initial establishment of the trade routes, although they have shown the ability to respond accurately to the demands of the European market without losing their basic characteristics. It is the garments that change to suit current fashion trends not the designs on the fabric.

This is I believe the key element attributed to the success of Oxfam Trading and Anokhi, they have captured the unique qualities of Indian block printed cottons and taken them a step further by developing them into fashion garments that the general public will buy. What is also an extremely important point is the fact that they have marketed them as goods produced by people in the third world the general public feel that by purchasing their goods that they are in turn helping people in the third world.

I believe the work of Oxfam and Anokhi has gone a long way to ensuring that the ethnic techniques of design and production are preserved for posterity in view of the fact that indigenous cultures all over the world are diminishing at an astonishing rate. In writing this dissertation it has not only expanded my knowledge of India textiles and the role they have played in the development of world trade routes but it has also enriched my understanding of the cultures from which they originate.

'They do not always die out, but the soul of their culture withers away.'

Eugene Linden

'Lost tribes, lost
knowledge'(18, p.54)



ILLUS.33.Anokhi advertisement for Autumn\Winter collection 1992.

ANOKHI

Presents their Autumn/Winter Collection 1992

This range provides both a fresh and classic look for the season. Combining a solid collection of striking new fabrics, shapes and handblock prints from Jaipur with an extensive range of Silks, Jerseys, Cotton, and Hand Knits.

We will be showing at Premier Collections -
N.E.C. Birmingham
Stand Y110 - Hall 5
February 16th - 18th 1992

Also by appointment at our London showroom
February 20th - March 31st

Please ring Sarah Moran/Lorraine Kirk on 081-877 0807

Press contact: Gail McGuffie PR 071-731 4202

Photograph by David Woolley

GLOSSERY

Bandhani: Hindi word, 'tying'. Tie-dye work in general.

Broadcloth: English woven wool cloth.

Bullion: Uncoined gold or silver.

Chintz: Nowadays used to describe any cotton or linen furnishing fabric of floral pattern stained with fast colours. In the eighteenth century it was applied to dress materials as well as furnishing fabrics, but of cotton only, the distinguishing feature being that they were made in India for the European market by the process technically known as mordant and resist-dyeing.

Factories: Establishments set up in India by the East India Company to transact business, they acted as bases for further trade into the East Indies.

Palampore: Bed cover or wall hanging.

Stellar navigation: A sailing term for navigation using the stars.

Wentke: Traditional dutch gown.

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