

THE DESIGN INTERVENTION





CHLAMYS

The Greek chlamys (worn only by men) was a short mantle draped around the upper shoulders, pinned on the right shoulder with a brooch. It left the right arm free and was often used by travellers and military men. The chlamys was made from a seamless rectangle of woolen material about the size of a blanket, usually bordered. It was normally pinned with a fibula at the right shoulder.

Originally it was wrapped around the waist like a loincloth, but by the end of the 5th century BC it was worn over the elbows. It could be worn over another item of clothing but was often the sole item of clothing for young soldiers and messengers, at least in Greek art. As such, the chlamys is the characteristic garment of Hermes (Roman Mercury), the messenger god usually depicted as a young man.

The chlamys continued into the Byzantine period, when it was often much larger and usually worn sideways, at least by emperors, and likely made of silk. It was held on with a fibula brooch at the wearer's right shoulder and nearly reached the ground at front and back. With the even grander loros costume, the "chlamys costume" was the ceremonial wear of Byzantine emperors, and the only option for high officials on very formal occasions.

It is a very comfortable piece of clothing, which despite its material can be worn pleasantly in summer, providing shade to the body while letting the air cool it.

The Chlamys could have less drapes so that is comfortable for the person to move freely. Instead of having a fibula brooch on the right shoulder, it could be placed in the centre keeping the cloth symmetrical from both sides.



SGABELLO

A sgabello is an Italian term for a specific type of backstool, moveable seat furniture typical of the Italian Renaissance, when a chair usually signified an armchair, a seat of some hieratic importance. Sgabelli are generally made out of walnut and consist of a thin plank or panelled back and an octagonal seat, supported on shaped plank supports, strengthened by a stretcher, which may be turned.

This seat would often be placed in hallways, and was often carved with a family's imprese or emblem drawn from its coat-of-arms. Its primary purpose was not lounging comfort. It is attributed to the Workshop of Giuliano da Maiano (1432–1490) and Benedetto da Maiano (1442–1497).



The form of the sgabello derives from a low stool with three legs (a *tre gambe*) mounted at an angle, a very simple type of seat that had been popular since ancient time. By adding an elongated backrest, the designer demonstrated unusual sensitivity to shape and ornament and a degree of subtlety that is rarely found in furniture. The decoration on the back, sides of the seat, and feet consists of delicately carved elements and a small line of geometric inlay. The latter is consciously contrasted with the dramatic veining of the walnut wood. The elegant concept and the attention given to minute details indicate that this was a very special commission for all the artisans involved.

Since, furniture works as a functional and circulatory element in interior design, a chair is also a part of Interior design. Interior designers use furniture to establish a pleasing sense of order. They consider two-dimensional and three-dimensional design in the arrangement of furniture along with the elements of design such as shape, form, color, and texture. The Sgabello seems to be a marvel of discomfort, to make it more comfortable the size of the back rest and the seat could be wider and it could also have a hand rest on both the sides.



REWA DAGGER

A dagger is a knife with a very sharp point and usually two sharp edges, typically designed or capable of being used as a thrusting or stabbing weapon.

The Daggers have been worn and appreciated throughout the times of history for self-defense. The dagger has quite a contradictory symbolism. Because of its small size and ability to be hidden, it is symbolized as a weapon of treachery and duplicity. In some cultures, they are neither a weapon nor a tool, but a potent symbol of manhood; in others they are ritual objects used in body modifications such as circumcision.

Rewa is small city in north-eastern part of Madhya Pradesh. A city which is known for its rich culture and heritage owned this dagger which now sits in the Prince of Wales Museum.

The Rewa Dagger is a stunning piece of a royal olden amour. The blade of the dagger is made of high-quality watered steel and can be lethal. The scabbard is covered with a pink silk brocade and a decorative cape and locket to match the hilt. Such bejeweled daggers tucked in the sash or waistband of royalty in many miniature paintings as well.

This dagger is from the 17th century CE. Having said that, the dagger is covered with a decorative cape. Due to that it might become very incompatible for self-defence. The decorative cape may get tangled or stuck which will lead to slower reflexes during a fight or a war.



INDIAN YELLOW MINIATURES

Pigments give color and opacity to paints. Paints were made by using the ground pigment with gums or animal glue, which made them workable and fixed them to the surface being decorated. Pigments are extracted from colored earth, minerals or from leaves or flower. These pigments are in powder form and are pre-applied by melting gum Arabica extracted from bark of babul tree.

These colors and pigments were used in the miniature paintings in medieval India. However, the process of the yellow paints and pigments extraction is an interesting story. Yellow was one of the most expensive colors back in the day. It was a mystery until the secret was revealed in the 19th century. It was found when a small group of cattle owners fed their cows mango leaves and water. The cows' urine would result a bright yellow. They were extremely undernourished as they only received normal fodder occasionally. The yellow pigment was refined by heating the liquid and pressing it into round balls.

The issue with this process was that it was extracted through animal cruelty. To extract yellow color, the cows were consciously kept nourished on only mango leaves and water. This made them malnourished at all times, which would sometimes lead to the death of the cow. the idea of Killing the cow intentionally was a contradiction to the Hindu religion beliefs. The Hindu religious beliefs were of the fact that a cow is a sacred animal and one should consider it as a godly creature. The idea of extracting pigments from this “scared animal” was against their religion.

COIN OF CHANDRAGUPTA II



Towards the beginning of the 4th Century A.D. the Gupta dynasty rose out of a small principality in North India and established a powerful and prosperous empire that lasted for more than two hundred years. The Gupta era hence came to be known as the Golden Age of Indian History.

The Guptas issued coins of gold, silver, copper and lead. The gold coinage of the Gupta rulers is remarkable for its superb execution and artistic merit. The coins are thematic and depict various facets of the Gupta rulers' personal and social life. The ornate script on the coin is Brahmi.

This coin was issued by Chandragupta II, the third Gupta King. Proud of their multi-faceted personalities, the Gupta kings consciously depicted themselves engaged in various martial as well as artistic activities. In this coin, we see Chandragupta II in the act of felling a lion with his bow and arrow. The Brahmi legend below his left arm reads 'Chandra' and that around the coin reads - 'Devashri Maharajadhiraja Shree Chandragupta' On the reverse of the coin is the Goddess Laxmi, seated on a lotus. The legend on the reverse reads 'Shrivikramah' This coin belongs to the famous Bayana hoard found in Rajasthan.

The coin is irregular in shape, and doesn't have clear details. The carving of the coin should have been a little more detailed and clean in order to portray a clear image.

CHANDRAVO



This square piece of crimson satin ground is finely embroidered with zardozi. Jari embroidery was a much developed craft and there are about thirteen different varieties of material used for this kind of embroidery, which was generally done on velvet or heavy silk.

The craftsmen of Ahmedabad and Surat were particularly known for this embroidery and the Jain temples patronized them. The jari embroidery of Gujarat was famous even in the 13th century as noted by Marco Polo. It was created in 19th century.

There are too many motifs on just a single piece of cloth. These include the temple and domestic shrine decorations, devotional offerings, banners, ritual costumes and narrative scrolls. Large painted textiles have often been used to narrate stories and exploits of deities, saints and heroes to the common folk.

These are also used to decorate temple walls as well as rathas (temple chariots) at the time of a procession. This piece of clothing is something unique and the color palette suits its use.

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