

Design is a Geographical Indication (GI) of the Mising Textile

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ABSTRACT

Textile is an important component of human civilization. It involves many activities. Design is used to convey different meanings, in ornamentation of textiles. The term ‘design’ implies the arrangement of motifs or units. It is very important aspect of weaving. It lends intricacies and adds beauty to the fabric. It may however, relevantly be noted here that sometimes the word design is loosely used as a synonym for pattern or motif.

The *Misings*, one of the major tribe and second largest schedule tribe (S.T.) of Assam. Majority of them are residing in the plains along with the bank of Brahmaputra. They belong to Tibeto-Burman family of the great Mongoloid race. The *Misings* having their own rich traditions and textile is one of their distinctive features. They have been maintaining some of their traditional customs and practices. The weaving textile represents the traditional legacy of the *Mising* women. At the present time there is growing impact of science and technology, in one or other way in the weaving or textile industry of the *Mising*. The objective of the present paper specially focuses on identifying the design or geographical indication (G.I.) of the *Mising* textile and attempt to build a case for Intellectual property right (I.P.R.).

Keywords: *Design, Mising Textile, Mising, Assam.*

INTRODUCTION

Textile is an important component of human civilization since it is related to meeting the basic needs of human life. It is a complex process and it involves many activities. It is the production of fabric by interlacing two sets of yarns, so that they cross each other normally at right angles, usually accomplished with a hand or a power-operated loom. Lengthwise yarns are called wrap; crosswise yarns are called weft or filling. The two are interwoven on a device known as loom. A finished textile is not only a product of loom, but a chain of integrated process starting from growing or rearing of cotton to the finished product passing through the various stages of yarn of production, clearing, drying, spinning and weaving. The most common method for converting yarn into fabrics is by weaving or textile, that is by the interlacing of threads or yarns into a bound system.

Design is used to convey different meanings, in ornamentation of textiles. The term ‘design’ implies the arrangement of motifs or units. Motif is the distinctive feature of the dominant idea in an artistic or literary composition. Design is derived from the Latin word ‘*designare*’ meaning ‘to mark out.’ It is very important aspect of weaving. It lends intricacies and adds beauty to the fabric. It may however, relevantly be noted here that sometimes the word design is loosely used as a synonym for pattern or motif.

The *Misings*, one of the major tribe and second largest schedule tribe (S.T.) of Assam. Majority of them are residing in the plains along with the bank of river Brahmaputra. Now they are mainly found in Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sibsagar, Jorhat, Golaghat, Sonitpur, Darang, Kamrup districts of Assam and also found in different parts of the world.

The *Misings* having their own rich traditions and textile is one of their distinctive features. Textile art are entirely carried out by womenfolk. Its designing have been a very ancient art in their society. It is a cultural sign of them. They even give certain pattern and designs of simple standard from their own idea. They usually used two types of looms, a mini or loin loom and a common ordinary loom. It is ascertained from the investigations that, the weavers of the *Mising* could make the designs by watching natural objects like the stars, the moon in the sky, flowers of different varieties of nature, picture of birds, animals, fishes, butterfly, historical monuments, and so forth. The weavers weave varieties of cloths for use to all other members of the family, having designs of artistic beauty. The

typical usage of design, unique color combinations and selection of motifs prominently characterize their cloths. Priority is mostly given to bright different colors and the cloths are exclusively designed using different color threads like black, red, green, orange, yellow, brown etc.

TRADITIONAL DESIGNS OR GAMIG OF THE MISING TEXTILE

In *Mising*, design is called ‘**Gamig**’. The term ‘**Mimang**’ is called model or data copy of different types of weaving patterns and it gives detailed information on arrangement of lines, shapes, colors etc. The basic of **Mimang** is known as **Gai Gamig** (main design) expressed in graphic details. Its graphic directions consisting of straight, angular, rectangular, triangular, square form etc. ultimately give rise to particular design or shape. In giving shape or design specific pattern, mixing different color of threads, a great care, concentration, eyesight, patience and skill are required to a weaver. Moreover, a good weaver should have thorough knowledge in every aspect of a *gamig* (design), inclusive graphic directions, their names, techniques, utility etc. related to it. Some forms of *gamig* which are devoid a alam or motif, being represented by circular, semicircular, cured, irregular lines etc. could be grouped in a category called **Appun gamig** or design of flowers, and it mostly includes design of flowers, animals, birds, etc.

The following are the weaving or textile designs of the *Mising*

Mimang (Model): The basic of **Mimang** is known as **Gai Gamig** (main design). The main design or **gai gamigs** are-

1. **Korotkoli** (a design of front side of saw)
2. **Tayob** (a design of caterpillar)
3. **Yammig** (a type of design, specially used in *Yambo*, *Gero* cloth or shawl etc.)
4. **Le'bog** (a type of graphical design)
5. **Arre** (a type of graphical design)
6. **Ke'si** (a design of geometrical area)
7. **Kisu Le'po/Sisug le'po** (a design of rein deer leg)
8. **Keteri** (a design of geometrical area, flowers etc.)
9. **Gorge** (a type of design bordering the principal pattern horizontally at both sides)
10. **Ngosig** (a design of a fish shell)
11. **Koligai** (a type of design)
12. **Laksin** (a design of finger's nail)
13. **Yokmo Re'ngke** (a design of arrow head)
14. **Gayob** (a type of geometrical design)
15. **Me'yab** (a design of fan)
16. **Pe'ki** (a design of dove bird)
17. **Marsang punjer** (a design of vegetable flower, locally called huhuni/Makathi)
18. **Pe'sang** (a type of graphical design)
19. **Sormon oyyin** (a design of vegetable leaf)
20. **Karpumpuli** (a design of stars and moon in the sky)
21. **Bame/Pame** (a design of orchid flower)
22. **Babori** (a design of plant flower)
23. **Dumsung** (a design of deer)
24. **Iki punjer** (a design of twenty five poise coin)
25. **Adoli punjer** (a design of fifty poise coin)

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26. **Tasang** (a design of weaver bird)
27. **Ge'rgur** (a type of graphical design)
28. **Pe'tung** (a type of graphical design)
29. **Kepsed** (a type of geometrical design)
30. **Murkong punjer** (a design of ten poise coin)
31. **Takar** (a design of star)
32. **Gurdung** (a type of graphical design)
33. **Sondrong:al** (a design of ornament)
34. **To:de** (a design of peacock)
35. **Popir** (a design of butterfly)

(The names of different gamig or designs are represented according to their underlying meanings in the *Mising* language).

The following different alam or motifs are used in every gai gamig or main designs; -

1. **Ke:si kongar** (a type of alam or motif)
2. **Kongar keteri** (a type of alam or motif)
3. **Dugsub dugjar** (graphic lines covering and diverging to a particular point in horizontal direction)
4. **Ge'ryi ge'rsang** (a type of alam or motif like crawling snake)
5. **Dugyi hugsang** (graphic lines covering and diverging to a particular point in up and down direction)
6. **Kingkub kilab** (a pattern of repetition at regular interval)
7. **Kebyir kebgur** (types of alam at border of a cloth)
8. **Tigur** (a type of alam at border of a cloth)
9. **Appun** (flower alam or motif): It has two types- 1. **Punbug** or **Punjer** (blooming or blossom flower) and 2. **Moimang** (picture).

The above designs are also used in different clothes. For example:

1. **Gadu** (mirijim): *Gorge, Pe'tung, Pe'sang* etc.
2. **Gadu galug** (a jim shirt): *Gorge, Pe'sang* etc
3. **Tapum gasor** (a shawl for man): *Gorge, Pe'tung, Gurdung* etc.
4. **Gonro: ugon** (a loin cloth for man): *Keteri, Pe'sang, Pe'tung* etc.
5. **Tongali** (a cloth for man, used on head): *Pe'tung, Pe'sang, Ke'si, Keteri, Ge'rgur* etc.
6. **Me'rpung** (a cloth for man, used on head): *Pe'tung, Pe'sang, Ke'si kongar* etc.
7. **Ri:bi** (a type of shawl): *Karpumpuli, Sormon oyyin, Gurdung, Ge'rgur* etc.
8. **Gase'ng** (a type of shawl): *Karpumpuli, Sormon oyyin, Gurdung, Ge'rgur* etc.
9. **Mibu/Mibo galug** (a shirt): *Ngosig, Gorge, Ke'si, Keteri* etc
10. **Yambo** (a type of cloth for female, length 7 ft., used in marriage ceremony): *Yammig, Koligai, Karpumpuli, Le'bog, Gurdung, Arre* etc.
11. **Biryin gasor** (a type of cloth, length 12 ft., specially used in ritual purposes): *Ke'si, Keteri* etc.
12. **Gero:** (a type of loin cloth for female): *Tayob, Me'yab, Korotkoli, Yammig, Keteri, Kesi, Lebog, Gorge, Ge'rgur, Gurdung, Pe'tung, Pe'sang* etc.

13. **Mosang ege** (a type of loin cloth or mekhela): *Babori, Tayob, Korotkoli, Me'yab, Yammig, Ge'rgur, Adoli, Iki, Marsang* etc.
14. **Mosang gasor** (a type of cloth or riha): *Adoli, Babori, Marsang, Ge'rgur, Ta:sang, Pe'ki, Dumsung* etc.
15. **So:rí** (a type of loin cloth or shawl): *Arre, Keteri* etc.
16. **Dume'r** (a type of cloth like gamucha): *Pe'ki, Ta:sang* etc.

So, from the different sources it is confirmed that, the traditional **Gamig** or design is a geographical indication (GI) of the *Mising* textile and it is very important for them as their property. At present, they also used different types of modern and modified designs in their clothes.



Fig. A Glimpse of the Design of Mising Textile

CONCLUSION

The present study specially focuses on identifying the Geographical Indications (G.I.) of the Mising textile and attempt to build a case for Intellectual Property Right (I.P.R.). The geographical indication is a name or sign used on certain products that have a specific geographical origin or location and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. Most commonly, a geographical indication includes the name of the place of origin of the goods. Agricultural products typically have qualities that derive from their place of production and influenced by specific local factors, such as - climate and soil. Whether a sign is recognized as a geographical indication; it is a matter of national law. Geographical indications are typically used in agricultural products, foodstuffs, wine and spirit, drinks, handicrafts and industrial products.

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The intellectual property (IP) means the legal right which result from intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, literary, and artistic fields. It refers to creations of the mind such as -inventions, designs, literary, artistic works, symbols, names, images and performances.]

At present time, there is growing impact of science and technology in one or other way in weaving industry of the *Mising* society. The necessity to produce cotton plants in the fields for yarns has reduced considerably because of easy availability of variable qualities of cotton threads in the market; and also lack of expert or dedicated weavers in the society. Moreover, the repeated effect of floods of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries has inundated a major portion of high fertile lands suitable for cotton cultivation in the *Mising* inhabited areas. For these reason, they have become reluctant to produce cotton in their limited cultivating land.

So, the different *Mising* organizations, N.G.O. and the Handloom Textile Department of Assam and must need to take positive response for preservation and development for this textile tradition.

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