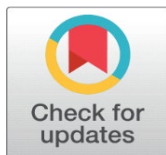


KHADA DUPATTA "A STUDY OF ELEGANT TIMELESS ART OF DRAPERY"

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ABSTRACT

"Khada Dupatta - A Study of Elegant Timeless Art of Drapery" is an exploration of the Khada Dupatta, a traditional South Asian attire, known for its exquisite grace and cultural significance. The given study delves into the historical origins, intricate craftsmanship, regional variations, and contemporary adaptations of Khada Dupatta, highlighting its enduring relevance in the ever-green, ever-changing and ever-evolving fashion landscape. By examining the evolution of Khada Dupatta, this study seeks to spot some light on the reason behind the timeless appeal of Khada Dupatta, with emphasis on the role of cultural heritage and the intricate artistry that goes into creating this elegant drape. The research draws its conclusion from various sources, including, literature, historical records, fashion archives, classical movies, and personal narratives, providing a comprehensive overview of the Khada Dupatta's significance in Hyderabad Royal Nizam women's attire. Ultimately, this study underscores the importance of preserving and celebrating the cultural heritage embodied by the Khada Dupatta.

Keywords: Khada Dupatta, Traditional Attire, Cultural Heritage, Craftsmanship, Fashion History, Timeless Fashion, Draping

1. INTRODUCTION

Dupatta is a rectangular piece of scarf or stole which is paired with salwar kameez or with Anarkali, Masakali or any other traditional garments worn by Indian women.

The Khada Dupatta, by some historical accounts, is a draping style that was fashioned and perfected for the Mughal Empress Noor Jehan. Meant to be a drape for the nobility, this dupatta draping style moved to Hyderabad, when the Mughal governor Mir Qamar-ud-din Khan Siddiqi Bayafandi established the estate of Hyderabad.

The next big mention of the Khada Dupatta was in the 16th century (Qutub Shahi dynasty - Golconda Sultanate) and the Nizam household in the 17th century. The state's nobility took notes and the common populace followed. Khada Dupatta drapes became a style statement, which continued beyond the Hyderabad Nizams and into our modern times.

The coolest bit about these royal dupattas? The Nizam begums had theirs crafted with real gold and silver thread, called Sancha.¹

Though often perceived as a Muslim dressing style, the Khada Dupatta defines elegance and sophistication of the bygone era. Why? As it's an art to drape the six-metre-long dupatta with a heavy and ornate zardosi border in the two-panel style and bring it up to cover the head!

The Khada Dupatta is a three-piece bridal ensemble worn by Hyderabad Muslim brides composed of a kurta, a brocade chudidaar, and a six-yard dupatta. The Khada Dupatta's distinctive feature is the dupatta itself, specifically the way it is draped. The Khada dupatta is also known as "**Sancha**" or "**Chaugoshia**" or even "**Khadi Parda**".

This royal ensemble dates before to the Qutub shahi dynasty Sultans made it as their own unique royal traditional attire in Golconda currently in Hyderabad, Telangana. The style of the khada dupatta travelled from turkey and Persia, got customized by Mughal Empress Noor Jahan by the craftsmen of turkey and Persia which gave its classical three-piece ensemble and still worn by the royal nizam women of Hyderabad on their wedding gracing the beauty, craftsmanship and elegance of the khada dupatta.

The Golconda kingdom was one of the Deccan Sultanates that controlled the region from 1512 to 1687 under various rulers/kings or Sultans of the Qutub Shahi dynasty. They had proclaimed their independence from the Deccan's ruthless but eroding Bahmani rule. Their extravagant style of living placed a strong emphasis on the development of literature, art, and architecture. The Persian court had a big impact on their behaviour and attire. They promoted tongues like Telugu, Dakhni, and Persian. The Sultans themselves were poets. They made a lot of art throughout the time. Asaf Jahi's dominance began when miniature paintings were created at the Golconda and then Hyderabad schools. Many travellers who entered the kingdom as diamond traders also included some information about the attire and culture of the time in their trip diaries. At the Qutub Shahi court, clothing and textiles were of a hybrid sort that combined Telugu, Vijayanagar, and Mughal traditions.

Cotton was abundantly grown due to the region's black soil. At the time, the weaving community was significant. The common folks also wore brightly colored clothing in various shades. In the summer, lighter colors were preferred, and the jama (upper garment) was made of ordinary cotton while the dhoti (lower garment) was made of mulmul (thin cotton). Most of the well-known Kalamkari fabrics were printed and dyed with madder red color, an extract of a plant found in Masulipatnam and Palakollu, together with other natural components.

The attire worn by Bhagmati appears to be an early version of the "chaugoshia," which was popular in the Asaf Jahi "mahallat" and consisted of four separate pieces of clothing. During the Qutub Shahi era, telia rumal made in Kurnool, Pochampalli Hanamakonda, and Devarakonda was frequently used to make sarees, dhotis, turbans, and patkas, or waistbands. Women from Qutub Shahi wore Paithan-made sarees. Incredible himroo and kimkhab textiles were manufactured in Hyderabad. Additionally, zari employs silver and gold threads. Sarees were also produced in the Dharmavaram and Anantapur centers. The borders typically included bird and animal designs. The saree hems of women wearing pearl embellishments are mentioned in the Kulliyat of Mohammad Quli Qutub Shah.

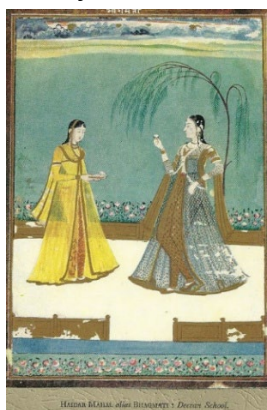


Figure 1 Bhagmati in early interpretation of "Chaugoshia" Khada Dupatta

¹ <https://www.weddingwire.in/wedding-tips/khada-dupatta-how-to-drape-it-the-right-way--c688>

The royal Mughal women were well-known for this. As time went on, only Mughal ancestors continued to practice the trade of making dupattas. The women of the Royal Nizam dynasty modified the artistic style of the Mughals to create a typical Khada Dupatta decades later, when Nizam-ul-Mulk, the Mughal administrator, asserted his authority over Hyderabad Deccan. The Khada Dupatta is still a vital component of weddings, parties, and celebrations even after hundreds of years. The Chowmahalla Palace is where the Nizam's begums' explicit regal attire, which primarily consists of Khada Dupattas, is kept, and displayed.

A traditional Hyderabad Khada Dupatta's dupatta is embroidered with zardozi design and is made of net, tissue, or chiffon. The show-stopping masala on the dupatta border steals the show. The chudidaar is made of Banarasi brocade and typically matches the kurta's color.

The Khada Dupatta, despite its noble beginnings, overcame social barriers and gained popularity among common ladies from various ethnic backgrounds in the state of Hyderabad prior to independence.

A Khada Dupatta demands flawless artistry to create. The Khada Dupatta is a long, upright dupatta or veil, as the name would imply. Four primary components make up its intricate design, which includes lavish embroidery: a sleeveless kurta, a choli with short sleeves worn over the kurta, straight pyjamas, and the unusual six-meter-long dupatta that hangs over the kurta. Even while the Khada Dupatta is still well-known in Hyderabad today, Muslim women now wear it most often, especially on their wedding day. In Hyderabad, wearing the Khada Dupatta is quite customary among Muslim brides. During the wedding festivities, the bride's bridesmaids and close female relatives also proudly display this clothing.



Figure 2 Modern Muslim women in Traditional Khada Dupatta ensemble

The Khada Dupatta is remarkably time-effective to wear, taking only around 10 minutes to drape. It emanates flair and refinement. This traditional attire has been seen on celebrities in fashion publications and photo shoots. Rekha has frequently shown her affection for the Hyderabad Khada Dupatta, demonstrating her deep respect for the regal tradition it represents.

Ancient and Mediaeval Periods: South Asian dress customs have long included the wearing of draped apparel, such as scarves and shawls. There have probably been many variations on the idea of draping a dupatta over the shoulders and letting it fall beautifully down the front.

The Mughal Empire had a significant impact on fashion and apparel patterns on the Indian subcontinent throughout the Mughal era (16th to 19th century). During this time, elaborate and expensive textiles as well as various draping styles rose to prominence. It's conceivable that at this time, other iterations of the khada dupatta style began to emerge.

Colonial Period (19th to mid-20th centuries): Industrialization and Western influences, among other things, contributed to changes in dress trends during the colonial era. As traditional clothing evolved, several regions may have created their own versions of the khada dupatta style at this time.

After India and Pakistan gained their independence in the middle of the 20th century, there was a resurgence of interest in native clothes and culture. As traditional fashions gained popularity, khada dupatta varieties may have been adopted or modified to fit contemporary tastes.

Significance of Khada Dupatta



Figure 3 & 4 Women in their traditional wedding attire the khada dupatta

Cultural Symbolism: The Khada Dupatta has a rich cultural significance for Indian marriages. It typifies the modesty, elegance, and grace of the bride. It is thought to bring blessings and good fortune to the bride and is a potent sign of purity.

Regional Variations: Different Indian regions have their own unique ways of wearing the Khada Dupatta. For instance, it is draped beautifully over the head and fastened at the shoulder in North India while it is wrapped around the waist in South India.

Fabrics and Embellishments: The Khada Dupatta is crafted from opulent materials like silk, chiffon, or georgette and lavishly embellished with elaborate embroidery, sequins, beads, and zari work. According to Aaliya Deebea, the creative founder of Ideebs London, a prestigious Couture Label, these decorations add grandeur and splendour to the bridal dress.

Colour Symbolism: The Khada Dupatta's colour has significant significance in Indian marriages. The colour red, which stands for love, fertility, and prosperity, is most popular. However, modern brides are experimenting with pastel, pink, maroon, gold, and other colours to match their wedding gown.

Draping Styles: The Khada Dupatta's draping style is a flexible canvas that may be used to suit the bride's preferences and local traditions. It might be gracefully looped around the waist and draped over the head, artfully pleated to resemble a sari pallu, or delicately pinned to the shoulder while concealing the head.²

Wedding Veil: The Khada Dupatta takes on the function of a wedding veil, covering the bride's face during rites like the exchanging of garlands or the arrival of the groom. The bride's presence has an aura of mystery and expectation because of this cloaked quality.

Bridal Entry: The bride's arrival to the wedding location is frequently adorned by the Khada Dupatta. It is raised by family members or bridesmaids, who then create a beautiful archway for the bride to pass through. This moving chapter marks her journey from a maiden to a married woman.

Suggestions for styling: The Khada Dupatta must be perfectly integrated with the bridal attire in order to be styled effectively. It is crucial to match its colour and ornamentation to the bridal gharara or sharara. Effective pinning and draping methods are essential to guarantee its stability throughout the ceremonial activities.

² <https://indiawest.com/the-significance-of-the-khada-dupatta/>

Personalization: Modern brides add unique touches to their Khada Dupatta while traditional patterns and colours continue to enthrall. Initials, wedding dates, or other significant symbols embroidered on it give it personality and purpose.

2. THE EVOLUTION OF KHADA DUPATTA

The Mughal empress Nur Jahan invited master craftsmen from Turkey and Persia to create stunning regal garments, who handcrafted the custom made Khada Dupatta for the empress and dressed in a special draping technique that was created and refined just for her. When Mir Qamar-ud-din Khan Siddiqi Bayafandi founded the Hyderabad estate, this method of draping quickly gained widespread popularity and transferred to Hyderabad. In the 16th century, during the Qutub Shahi dynasty, during the Golconda Sultanate, and in the 17th century, in the Nizami family, the khada dupatta emerged as a fashion statement. The Khada Dupatta rapidly became popular among the general public once the city's elite started dressing in this customary attire. The Khada Dupattas worn by the begums of the Nizams were hand-stitched with sancha, or genuine gold and silver threads. Beyond the Nizam era, this traditional dress has persisted and is still worn gracefully now. In fact, it is practically unthinkable for the bride to not wear a Khada Dupatta at any traditional Muslim wedding.



Figure 5 Noor Jahan in Traditional attire



Though it is difficult to ascertain when the dupatta became prevalent, a similar veil-like garment has existed since the Vedic period. Words used for such a garment during this period include avagunthana, niringi, nirangika, mukhapata, shirovastra and yavanika among others. Sanskrit and Pali literature mention the *uttariya*, a veil or shawl worn over the

head and shoulders, which could possibly have been the precursor to the dupatta. Further, sculptures from the Gandhara and Mathura schools also show evidence of the existence of such a garment in that period. Scholars believe that the dupatta might have been a pre-existing Indian dress that was adopted by the Mughals upon their arrival in India. During the medieval period, dupattas made of fine, translucent muslin were used both to veil the face and to cover the head and shoulders. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the dupatta became a part of the men's clothing as well, appearing in the Mughal courts alongside garments such as the jama, pyjama and turban. This dupatta was worn draped across the chest, with both ends of the cloth hanging at the back.³

Hyderabadi khada dupatta also known as "Hyderabadi Khada Sancha" is known to be a traditional style of draping a dupatta or a long scarf/stole, popularly associated with the brides of Hyderabad and is often known to be worn during special occasions of weddings or festivals.

It is known for its regal elegance and is mostly paired with traditional attires like sharara or lehenga and adorned with intricate embroidery, zari work, embellishments etc. The dupatta is made of rich fabrics like silk, georgette or chiffon which adds to its grandeur. Apart from its elegance, the attire signifies grace, beauty and tradition into weddings. Khada Dupatta's grace and elegance has been passed on through generations and continues to be cherished as a part of richness for the city's cultural and historical heritage.



Figure 7 Wife of H.E.H. The Nizam VII, Mahal-e-Mubarak 1915



Figure 8 Chunnu Begum wearing Khada Dupatta, Hyderabad 1915

³ <https://mapacademy.io/article/dupatta/>



Figure 9 Hyderabad Girl 1915.

Within the Indian fashion scenario, the evolution of Khada Dupatta is a fascinating journey that reflects the intertwining of tradition, culture, and modern influences. The khada dupatta, a style of draping a long scarf or shawl, holds a special place in the heart of Indian fashion, embodying the rich heritage of the subcontinent while adapting to changing times.

Historical Origins and Influence: The khada dupatta's roots can be found in South Asian history's ancient and mediaeval eras. Traditional clothing typically included draped items like scarves and shawls. The luxurious fabrics and regal aesthetics of the Mughal era inspired the way the dupatta was draped and worn, which furthered the evolution of this fashion. The characteristic drape and beautiful fall of the khada dupatta were established at this time.

Colonial Period and Cultural Synthesis: Industrialization and Western influences throughout the colonial era led to changes in fashion. However, despite change, traditional clothing continued to hold importance. The khada dupatta was able to adapt to new textiles and fashion trends during this time, keeping it relevant in a changing industry. The integration of various cultural components during this time led to original interpretations of the khada dupatta that fused tradition and creativity.

Post-freedom Rediscovery: After India gained its freedom, interest in native clothes and culture reawakened. As designers and people looked to rediscover their roots, traditional clothing underwent a rebirth. The khada dupatta, with its classic elegance, served as a blank canvas for artistic expression. Designers started experimenting with materials, hues, and stitching methods, giving this traditional design new vitality.

Contemporary rebirth & Runways: The khada dupatta underwent a rebirth on the runways and in everyday wear in the late 20th century and beyond. Fashion designers understood the elegance of conventional attire and its capacity to appeal to contemporary tastes. The khada dupatta has changed over time to accommodate many situations, from casual outings to formal gatherings. Celebrities frequently wore exquisite renditions of the khada dupatta, further boosting its appeal. Bollywood is also known for setting fashion trends.

Design Innovation and broad Appeal: The khada dupatta evolved in the modern fashion scene to appeal to a broad clientele. As designers started experimenting with various fabrics, designs, and draping methods, the style took on many distinct forms. The traditional clothing has a glamorous touch thanks to the elaborate details, mirror work, and embroidery. This blending of tradition and creativity let the khada dupatta cross international boundaries and find a following with people all over the world.

Social Media and Cultural Exchange: As social media grew in popularity, traditional clothing styles like the khada dupatta were able to appeal to a larger audience. Influencers and fans of fashion displayed their individual

interpretations of the look, igniting discussions on cultural identity and legacy. For many people, the khada dupatta evolved into a source of pride and a declaration of cultural allegiance.

The development of the khada dupatta in the context of Indian fashion is a prime example of the dynamic nature of the industry, in which tradition and modernity live in perfect harmony. This historically based fashion has withstood change and adjusted to shifting tastes. The khada dupatta continues to retain a distinct place in Indian design, honouring the past while embracing the future, from its historical beginnings to its contemporary interpretations. Its trip serves as evidence of the cultural heritage's lasting appeal in terms of fashion and self-expression.



Figure 10 Indian celebrity Rekha attending a party in the White khada dupatta inspired from the Chunnu Begum's styled khada dupatta

The Khada Dupatta its called a Chaugoshiya and this sartorial style is easily over a 150 years old. It comprises of Chau or four garments - a choli(tight blouse), a Kurti(loose tunic) a tight pajama(pants) and a five meter khada dupatta thats draped in a special way (I can inbox details to those interested) The chaugoshia is the traditional garment for women in Nizam's Hyderabad, incredibly stylish and still worn by women on their nikaah or wedding ceremonies.

3. THE COMPONENT, DRAPE & TECHNIQUE

The six-yard khada dupatta required a whole nine yards of the heaviest gold borders to include both elaborate edges or pallows, with a particular order of gota masala stitched just so. The gala, the baghli, the aasteen, borders around neck, armholes and arms had to match the one attached to the chowhashia dupatta, a heavy fabric of gold checks, specially woven in Paithan and Banaras. On her wedding day, for the first time, a girl wore a kurti choli with the khada dupatta. The choli, her only undergarment, all handstitched and knotted in front with gorgeously bordered sleeves, over which came the sleeveless kurti with a heavily worked round neckline, provocatively slit in front. The Banaras brocade pyjama was colour coordinated with the kurti choli. (Paraphrase)

4. THE COMPONENTS OF KHADA DUPATTA ENSEMBLE

Choli

The choli is a waist-length, fitting top that resembles a blouse or top. The richly embellished choli has a simple neckline and elbow-length sleeves.

Kurta Kalidar

The top of the kalidar kurta is fitting, while the bottom is flared. The sleeveless kurta is made up of many Kalis, or panels, and has a thick embroidered border at the armhole and collar. Typically, the kurta is composed of pure silk or brocade and worn with a fitting choli.

Churidar

Churidars are straight-fitted trousers that are longer than the length of the leg, leaving gathers or churi at the ankle. As the name implies, they resemble churies or bangles at the end. typically constructed using brocade cloth.

Long dhoti

This distinguished outfit's 6-yard-long dupatta is longer than the typical dupatta (nearly as long as the saree). The brocade and gold or silver tissues used to create this magnificent dupatta. Masala, Almas, and Dori are the three separate layers of the heavily embroidered border on the dupatta. The dupatta's whole edge is covered by the border, leaving a one-foot plain edge in the middle of each side.

5. THE DRAPING TECHNIQUE

- The elegance of bridal attire lies in the intricate technique of draping a six-yard dupatta. The steps are given below:
- One-foot plain edge at the mid of dupatta is tuck on churidar at the back waist similar to saree.
- The loose end of the right side of the dupatta will be placed at the left shoulder by neatly pressed accordion pleats.



Figure 11 Illustration of the dupatta placed on the left shoulder with pleats and just let loose

The loose end of the left side of the dupatta will again be placed at the left side of the shoulder (similar to the previous one), in such a manner that all four borders of the dupatta will be visible.

Secure the border with a broach after equally balancing both ends.

One free end of the dupatta will be used to cover the head or placed under the right shoulder crossing over the elbow.

The other end of the dupatta will hang loosely at the back waist.



Figure 12 Illustration of khada dupatta draped as dhoti around the legs

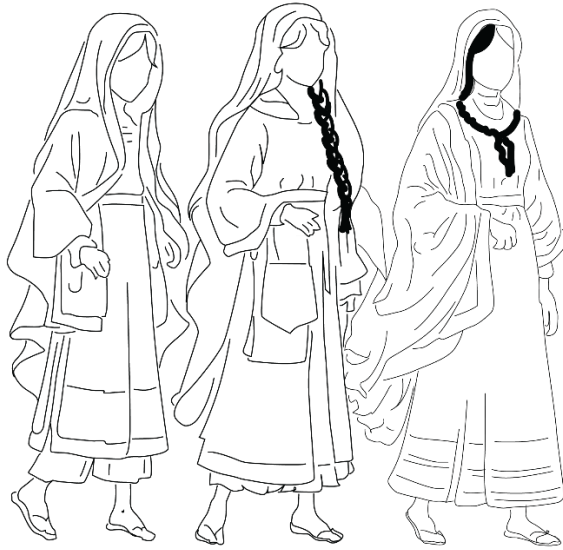


Figure 13 Illustration of khada dupatta draped with skirt look

6. THE EMBROIDERY ON THE KHADA DUPATTA AND THE KARCHOB WALA

The primary handcraft method utilized in the traditional and ethnic "Khada Dupatta" border is zardozi. In the past, noble women would embellish gold and silver metal wires with priceless gems and Resham (Silk) threads. New embroidery designs with floral and geometric motifs and a play with motif sizes were created as inspiration from Persian architecture.

The khada dupatta is made of tissue, chiffon, Banaras georgette, and crepe and are heavy decorated with intricate embroidery work like zardozi, naqshi, mukaish, kamdani, dabka or aari and with golden and silver thread.



Figure 12 Zardozi and Lampa embroidery work on the border

Hyderabad based 90-year old Afzal Miyan Karchob Wala from past 70 years has been working on the exquisite work of Kamdani or elaborate zardozi embroidery of the khada dupattas.



Figure 13 Afzal Miyan Karchob wala with intricately zardozi embroidered umbrella

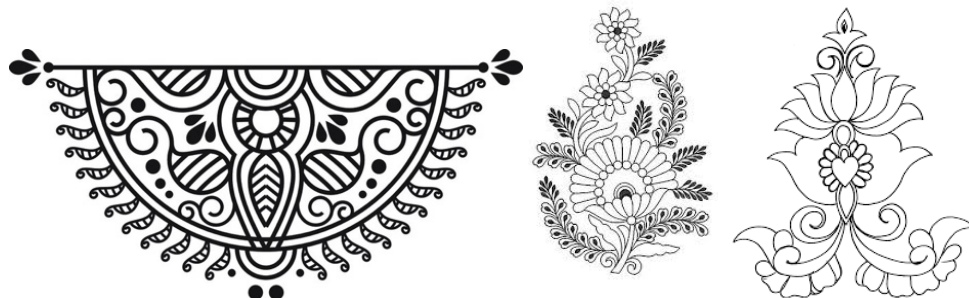


Figure 14 Some Traditional Motifs⁴



Figure 15 Some Traditional Zardozi Motif⁵

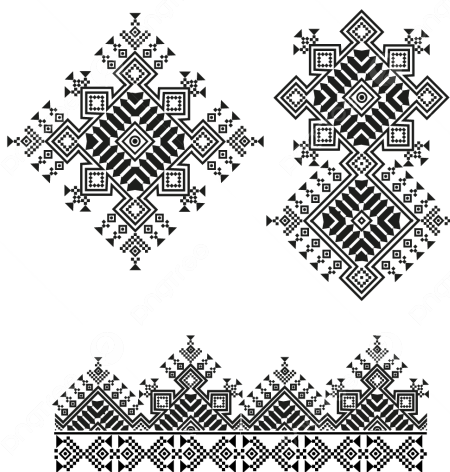


Figure 16 Some Traditional Zardozi Border Motif⁶

7. CONCLUSION

A vault of diverse cultures, the dressing attire of Nizams and its Evolution through time is among the most creative statures in Indian heritage, Nizams have the credit of popularizing achkan, serwani, dastar, and the western costumes under the influence of their begums, also patronizing traditional, The khada dupatta being a legacy worn from time to time to bring out the royalty has undergone a changes with the changing time and trend, but still it remains to a piece of traditional garment which is hardly documented and celebrated for its journey of identity and embodied into the royal nizam women as their wedding attire.

The recent photoshoot of Indian actress Rekha in Khada Dupatta for Vogue Arabia created a stir for the reason of donning regal heritage traditional garment which was effortlessly styled with elegance in her appearance. This iconic fashion moment did leave a lasting impact on the Indian fashion world and people who are related to it. Time to time

⁴ https://t3.ftcdn.net/jpg/04/56/23/60/360_F_456236084_YsyMRNPhBT1NcYIE5t6FXrBfAhZ9BKuk.jpg

⁵ <https://www.4to40.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/textile-design-pattern-motifs-2021-011.png>

⁶ https://png.pngtree.com/png-clipart/20221227/original/pngtree-blockprint-motif-for-beads-and-zardozi-work-png-image_8811078.png

eminent people of Indian film, fashion, sports, and media have been seen donning the Khada dupatta in different colours, designs, and fusion mix drape of the Khada dupatta around the body.

Hyderabad based fashion designer Aaliya Deeda founder of Ideeb's London and Fashion designer Zara Khan founder of Aarz has been revamping the Khada Dupatta for its survival and revival. Nizams of Golconda now Hyderabad was known for their non repetition of their garments, which made difficult to document their garments, style and looks for current fashion archival studies. Few major painting and early invention of photography did leave us with a few evidence of the khada dupatta which is used to recreate it and keep its identity intact without any compromise.



Figure 17 Actor Rekha in khada dupatta for Vogue Arabia

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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