
DEVELOPING AND CREATING CONTEMPORARY TEXTILE DESIGNS INSPIRED FROM SELECTED MUGHAL MONUMENTS OF AGRA

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Abstract: India is a profolic of tradition and culture both in custom, art and craft. India, wrapped in mystique enhanced with romance of fable crafts has one of the finest textile traditions in the world. Since decades highly developed civilizations continue to produce remarkable, eminent and ornate textiles with its distinct patterns, designs and motifs having different placements and layouts. However, escalating demands of consumers requires modification in the fashion industry with respect to design, motifs, colour, style and technique. In design-making process, source of inspiration has a vital role, both in defining the characteristics of a new design and in informing the creation of a distinct design. The purpose of this study was to create some original and innovative designs for textiles inspired from selected Mughal monuments of Agra. Several designs were developed on Adobe Photoshop software taking inspiration from three different monuments. Thirty designs that were innovative and suitable for textile designing were screened by experts. Through this study, an attempt was made to incorporate the rich motifs and designs of the various mughal monuments into contemporary forms on textile products. The present research also contributes to documentation and digitization of the motifs of these architectural wonders. It holds incredible promise for both collections and researchers through greater access, interaction and preservation of heritage for future generations. All the developed designs were subjected to visual evaluation for ranking of best designs in each category by the panel of fifty respondents to find out the suitability of the developed designs for textile design applications.

Keywords: Design, Inspiration, Mughal monuments, Adobe Photoshop, J Album software, Pattern, Layout, Repeat unit, Documentation, e-Library/Repository

1. INTRODUCTION

India had always been known as the land that portrayed cultural and traditional vibrancy through its conventional arts and crafts. Every region in India has its own style and pattern of art and designs. Accordingly, textile manufacturing is one of the major global industries. A wide range of products are made from textiles or have textile components. Therefore, nowadays many companies worldwide are involved with manufacturing textiles which are sold as apparel, furnishing, or household textiles (Wilson 2001). The constant growth of textile industry and the large investments in it annually clearly proves an unquestionable

market demand for textile products. Many famous textile design companies are looking for unique, exotic, and dynamic patterns for their products to defer them from their competitors.

A design is a key element for preparing a new marketing foundation by raising the value of a product and its competitiveness. To reach this kind of goal, creativity is certainly an essential ability that a designer must attain and definitely should be an area that has to be developed in order to come out with best results in any field of design (Warr, 2005). In a design process artists use sources of inspiration as a basis to explicitly communicate new designs, styles and moods. An inspiration can come from any stimulus that starts the creative process. Sources of inspiration are literally everywhere, but more importantly; it is the designer's artistic sensibility and interpretive style that brings creative design into being virtually live. Any objects or things we see in our daily routine are possible design sources. These may include nature, temples, famous monuments, furniture, folk arts and crafts such as wall paintings, floor paintings, sculptures, carvings etc. They can also be created through adaptation of a specific design base and by fusion of different arts. These sources of inspiration play a powerful role in the beginning of the design process and in research and strategic collection planning. They also play an essential role in the communication of design ideas, both among designers, and between designers and managers and buyers.

As the demand for new motifs and design grow over the years, there is need of using technology to overcome the problem of storing and retrieving these images for future references. Therefore, the motivation of this study involved creation of textile designs taking inspirations from the architecture i.e. the historical source and transformation these patterns to ensemble in textiles.

Architectural works, in the material form of buildings, and their inscriptions, designs, patterns and motifs on them are often perceived as cultural symbols and as works of art. Historical civilizations are often identified with their surviving architectural achievements. In the present research, an attempt was made to archive/document the designs and patterns inscribed on the selected Mughal monuments of Agra and to create new range of textile designs by maintaining their beauty and originality. Moreover, the heritage, which is on constant depletion, can be protected thereof by documenting these images in an e-repository.

As (Ward,2008) stressed, archives are increasingly important to creative industries, especially the clothing & textiles sector, which often relies on historical collections for design inspiration, product-development, and market strategizing. On the other hand, finding physical space for storage, the task of finding certain motifs or the task of finding certain motifs or designs for references is incredibly tedious. Creating a digital copy of an item provides a surrogate which can be accessed and used instead of the original, thereby assisting in the preservation of the original (Brown, 2006).

Textile designs can be creatively and diversely illustrated through following the creative process and digitally manipulating the design. Today, with the advent of technology, textile designers use computer-aided CAD software to increase the productivity and improve the quality of design. It also aids in improving communications through documentation, and creating a database for manufacturing. Contemporary art is not limited to the creation of the object itself but in terms of offering new ways of articulating the design. All textile designers should have an understanding of how their final design will be projected. One design sample can be altered to many different final designs. Therefore, it is important that a designer understands the repeating structures and considers one in the beginning of design to follow. Different repeating structures should however be tried out in order to see different results. Some of the basic repeat structures are straight repeat, half drop, borders, mirroring, and tile or brick repeat (Wilson 2001).

Thus, the present research was carried out with objective of generating an e-repository of the patterns and motifs inscribed on the selected three Mughal monuments of Agra city, viz. Tajmahal, Sikandara and Red Fort and to create unique contemporary textile designs inspired from these Mughal monuments. Furthermore, evaluation of the created contemporary textile designs on the basis of their preference amongst the respondents was carried out.

2. METHODOLOGY.

The present study was a combination of Documentation and Experimental research. The methodology for the present study was divided into three phases. They are as follows:-

2.1 Phase I - Documentation

The Documentation phase involved creation of an e-repository of the patterns and motifs inscribed on the selected three Mughal monuments of Agra city, viz. Tajmahal, Sikandara and Red Fort. A survey of the selected monuments was carried to gather the first hand primary information. A collection of motifs and patterns was done by clicking the inscribed patterns.

2.2 Phase II- Experimentation

In the Experimentation phase, unique contemporary textile designs were created taking inspiration from these Mughal monuments. The designs were created through Adobe Photoshop software on the following lines - (refer fig 1)

- (a) Adapting to different textile design layouts
- (b) Arranging the motifs into different repeat patterns/units
- (b) Adding special effects and texture

2.3 Phase III - Evaluation

In this phase, a self made questionnaire was prepared for collection and analysis of the study. Questionnaire was prepared with the help of related literature. Evaluation of the created designs was carried out by 50 respondents having a background in arts and design. The created textile designs were ranked subjectively analyzed in terms of transformation in style, form, colour, and placements.

3. RESULTS AND DISCSSIONS

3.1 Development of e- repositories:

Digitization of collections enables easier reference of art items, designs and fusions of intercontinental cultural aspect development. It eases the dissemination of art information to thousands of users at any part of the globe at a particular time. Digitization of artifacts offers the easiest and most user-friendly approach to enrich knowledge on rare material heritage and deploy them on database accessible to large audience. It also aids in prompt access and preservation of collections of yester years for future generations as well as sustaining the cultural heritage knowledge of the country.

Based on the objectives of the research, an, e- repository was thus, developed. In this process the monuments were surveyed and first hand primary data was collected in the form of digital images. These digital images were then developed into e-repository by using J Album software. Following e- repositories of the motifs of Taj Mahal, Sikandara and Red fort monuments were created. Print screen versions of the same are attached. (Fig: 1)

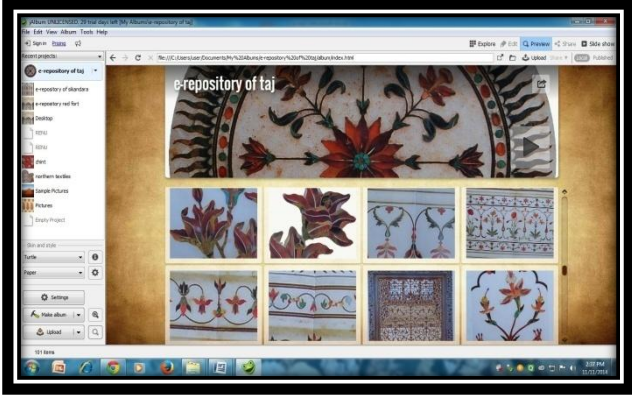
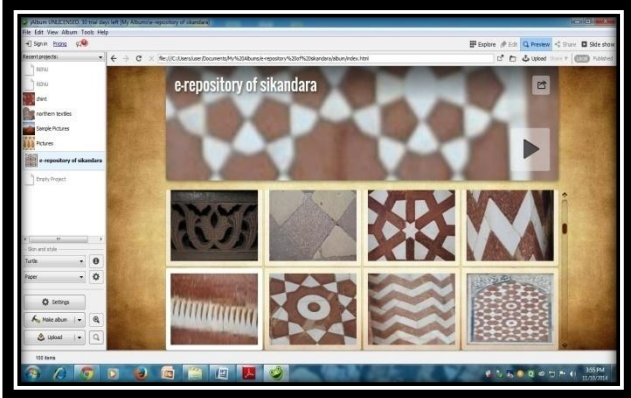
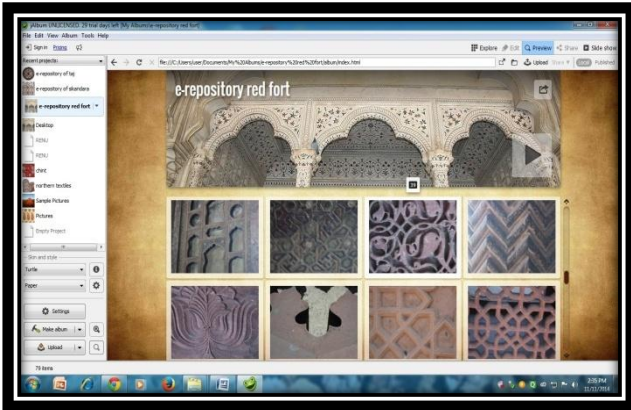
Development of e- repositories	
e-repository of Taj Mahal motifs	
e-repository of Sikandara motifs	
e-repository of Red fort motifs	

Fig:1 Print screen versions of created e- repositories

Total 300 motifs and patterns were documented, 100 from each monument and the e-repositories will be later uploaded on the web, after the formalities of this research work would be completed.

3.2 Development of Designs:

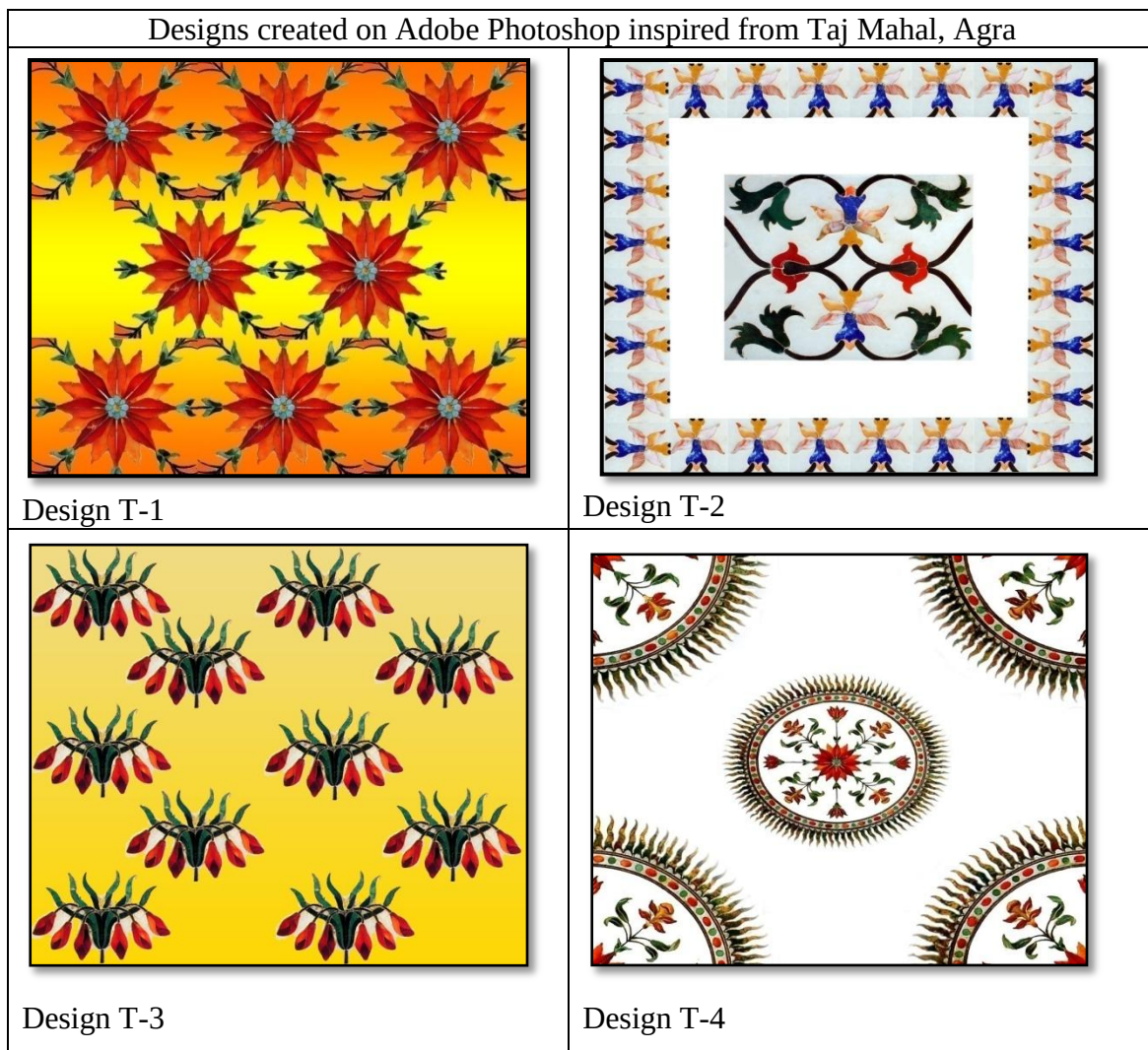
Design is the method of putting form and content together. Design, just as art, has multiple definitions. Design can be art. Design can be aesthetics. Design is so simple, that's why it is so complicated (Rand, 2001.) Textile designing involves producing patterns for cloth used in clothing; household textiles and decorative textiles. Different colours and motifs are used to make textiles attractive. Making a good colour combination with appropriate motif and its layout is an essential part of the textile designing. Layout is the

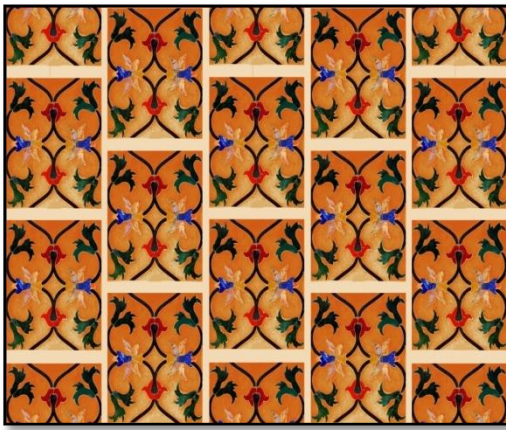
placement of the motif relative to another. It takes into account the distance as well as the direction of the second motif in relation to the first motif. Layouts play a major role in enhancing the beauty and overall textile effect and can be used effectively taking into consideration the nature of the objects to be used in the design process in order to meet the taste of the consumer. The use of different layouts in conjunction with different repeat patterns can further enhance the beauty of the textile pattern.

In the present study total 420 designs were created based on

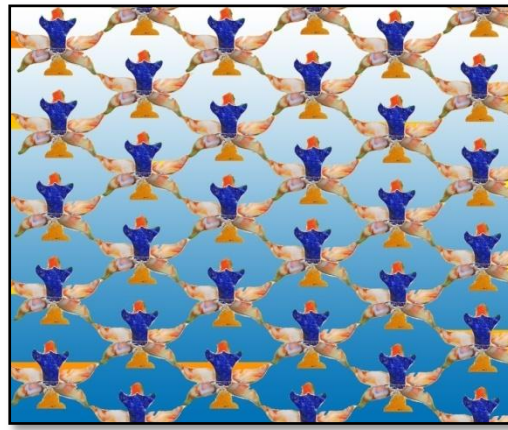
- eight different layouts (*All-over, Ogee, Bayadere, Border, Engineered, One-way, Two-way, Multidirectional layouts*)
- three repeats patterns (*Straight Repeat, Half Drop, Brick repeat patterns*)
- addition of special effects and textures to each using Adobe Photoshop software.

The designs developed are shown in figures below : Taj Mahal designs (Fig: 2), Sikandara designs (Fig: 3), Red fort designs (Fig: 4).





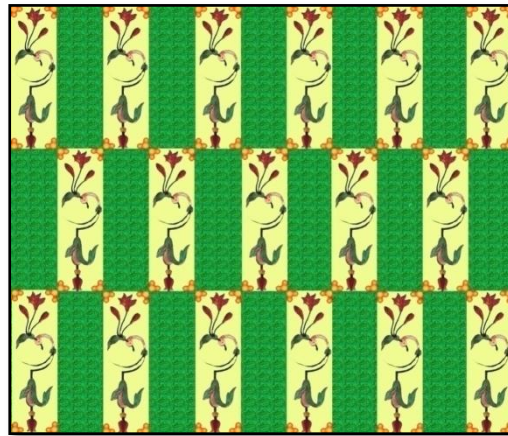
Design T-5



Design T-6



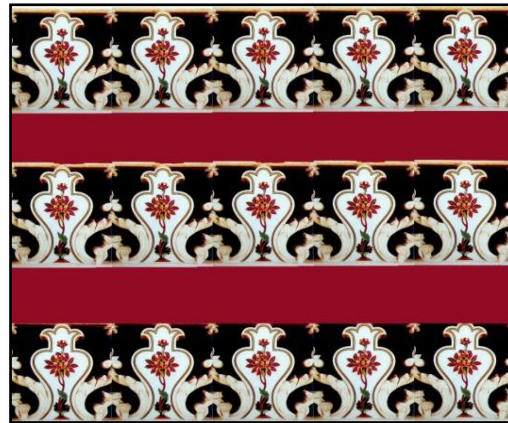
Design T-7



Design T-8



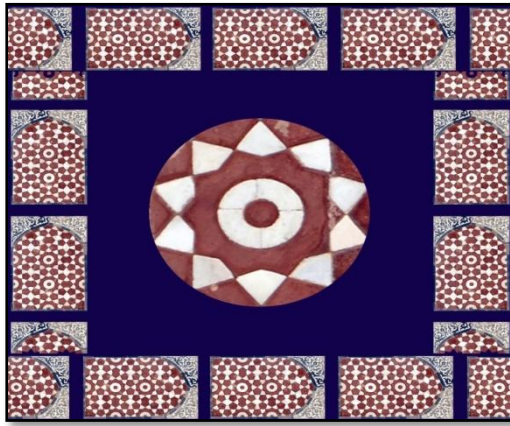
Design T -9



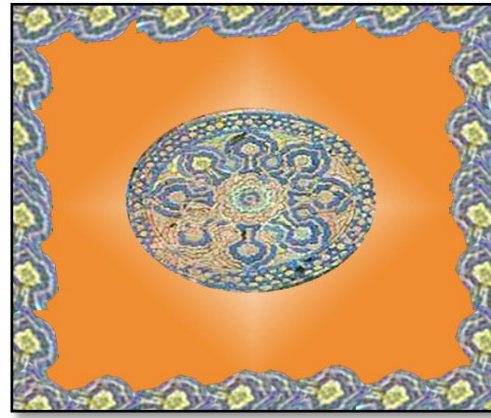
Design T-10

Fig: 2 Selected 10 designs inspired from Taj Mahal, Agra

Designs created on Adobe Photoshop inspired from Sikandara Monument, Agra



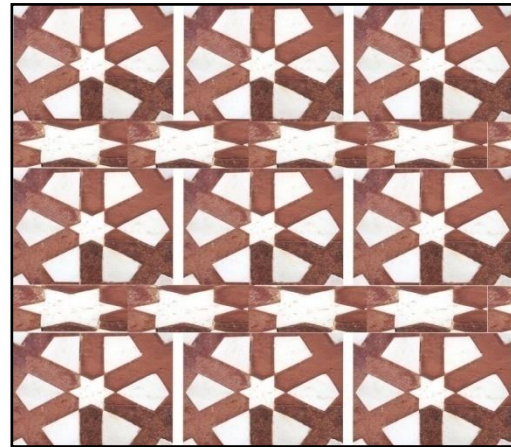
Design S-1



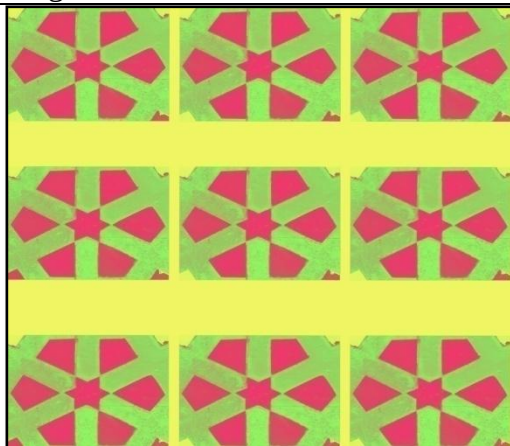
Design S-2



Design S-3



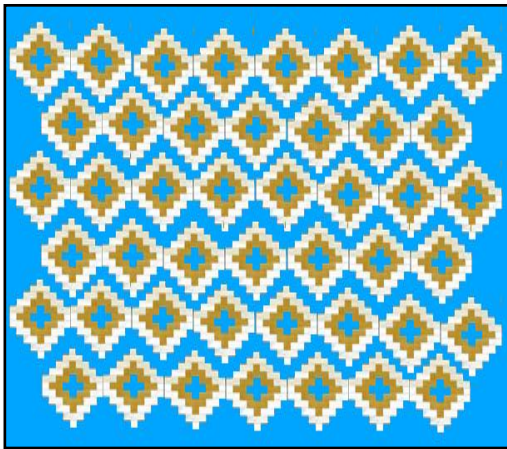
Design S-4



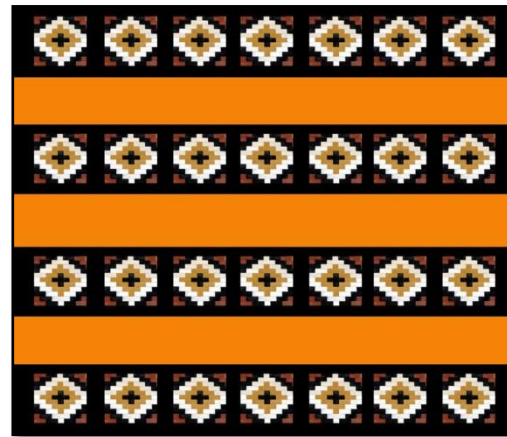
Design S-5



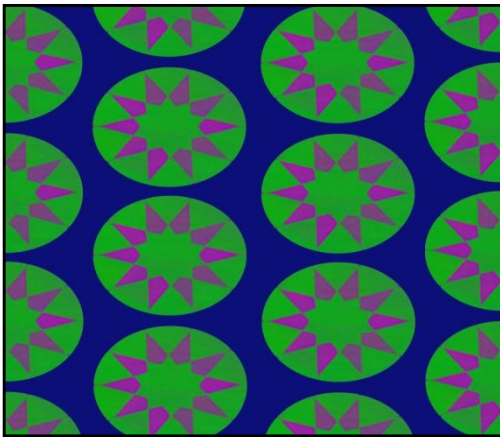
Design S-6



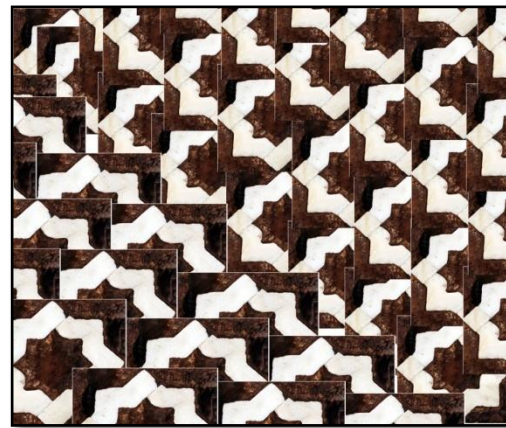
Design S-7



Design S-8

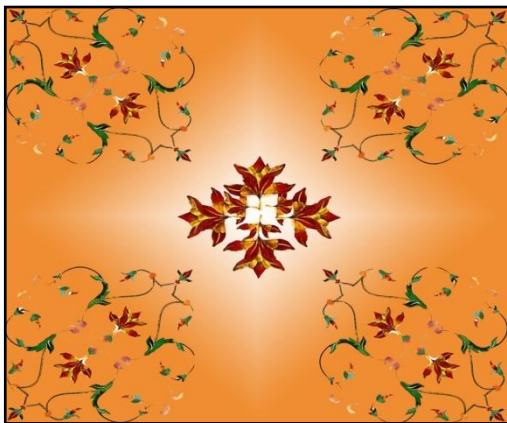


Design S-9



Design S-10

Fig: 3 Selected 10 designs inspired from Sikandara Monument, Agra
Designs created on Adobe Photoshop inspired from Red Fort, Agra



Design R-1



Design R-2



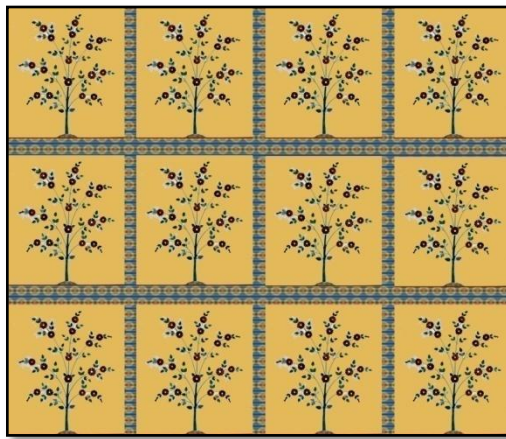
Design R-3



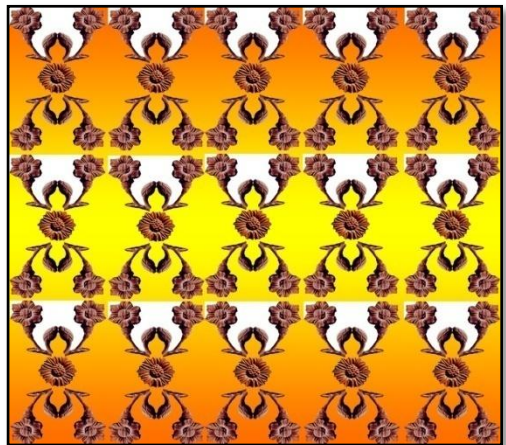
Design R-4



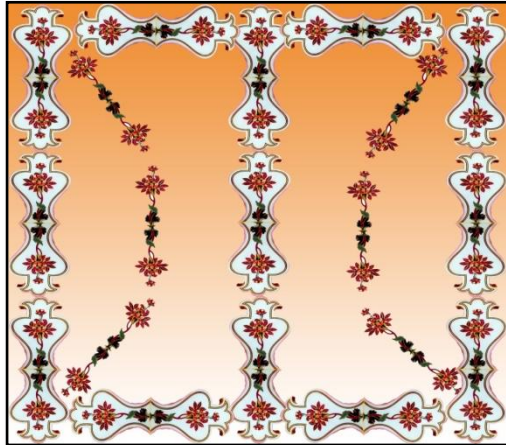
Design R-5



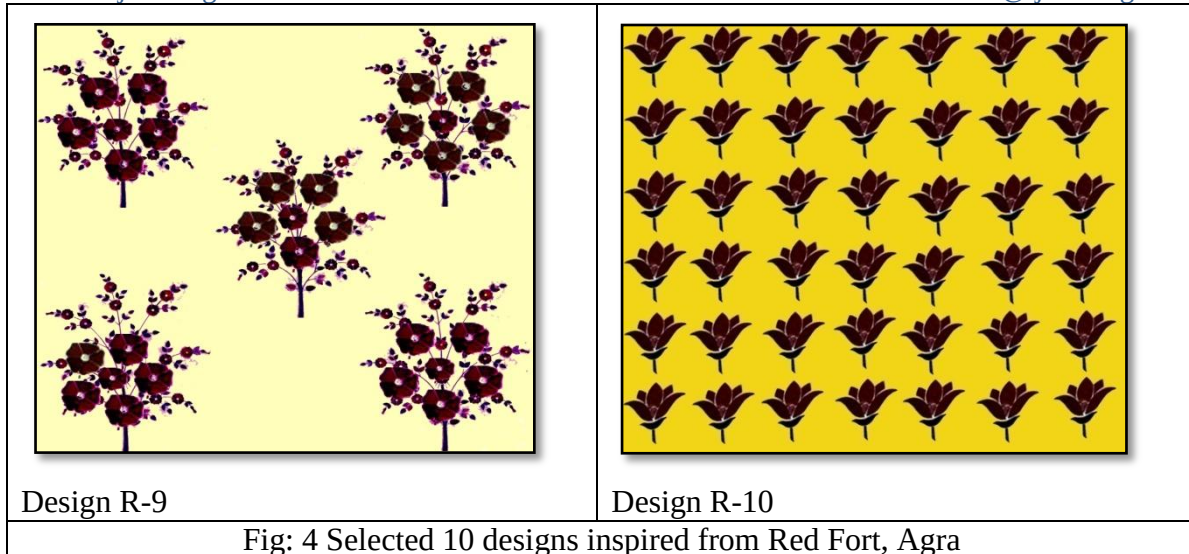
Design R-6



Design R-7



Design R-8



3.3 Evaluation of the created contemporary textile designs on the basis of their preference amongst the respondents.

A self made questionnaire was prepared for 50 respondents, to evaluate the set of created contemporary designs of Taj Mahal, Red fort, Sikandara monuments. The questions included items related to assessing the awareness of respondents regarding importance of archiving of historical monuments and their adaptation and acceptance as textile motifs. The results obtained are as follows:

- 36% respondents were aware of the depleting heritage monuments and had a perception to preserve them and felt that their beautiful inscription and designs could be archived and heritage should be preserved.
- 90% of respondents were of the view that the archived motifs from these three heritage monuments could be used to develop contemporary motifs for textile design.
- The created designs were then judged based in terms of repeats, layouts, texture and colour combination used. 56% of the respondents found the design completely suitable and 44% of the respondents perception the variation in the created design collection were suitable.
- Finally, ranking procedure was carried out for the created contemporary textile designs. The created design collection was assigned ranks by the respondents through subjective evaluation. The 30 designs were displayed on the display board according to their sets. The respondents were asked to rank these created designs in ascending order of their preference i.e. rank 1 to best preferred design.

There after evaluation was done thought frequency tables and the results obtained were as follows- (Fig: 5)

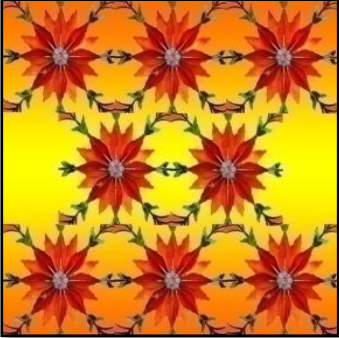
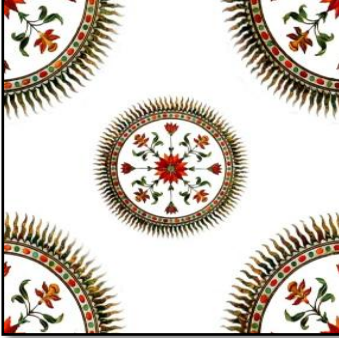
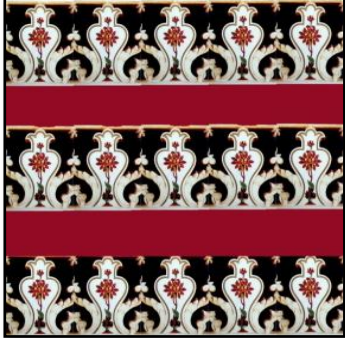
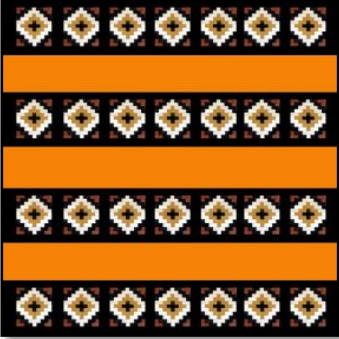
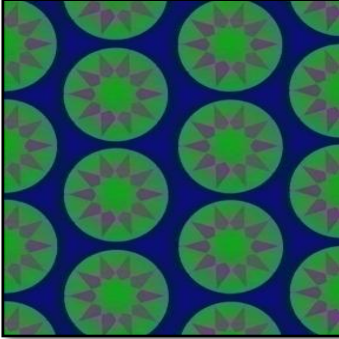
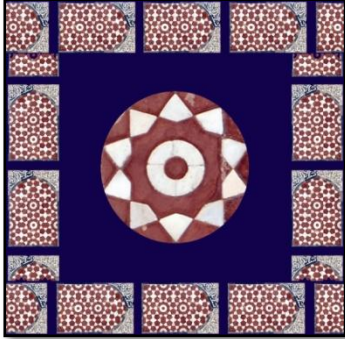
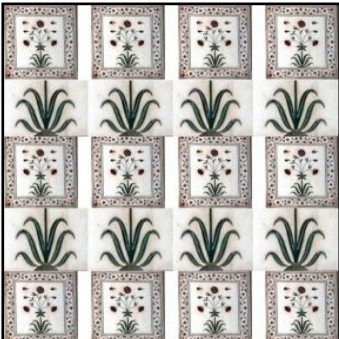
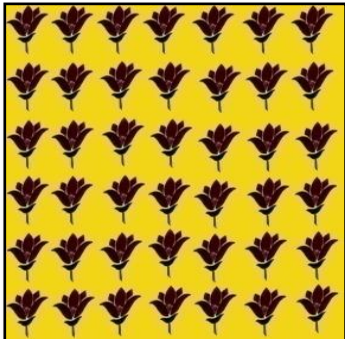
Item	Rank-1	Rank-2	Rank-3
Set 1 Taj Mahal designs			
Set 2 Sikandara designs			
Set 3 Red fort designs			

Fig: 5 Ranking of the created contemporary textile designs created on Adobe Photoshop software.

3.4 of the created textile designs on different articles

In order to check the overall appearance of the motifs developed, they were applied images of various articles like Cushion covers, shawls and Kurtis using the Adobe Photoshop software. The images developed are shown in Fig: 6.

Articles			
Cushion covers			
Shawls			
Kurtis			

Fig: 6 Development of articles like Cushion covers, Shawls and Kurtis using the Adobe Photoshop software, incorporating the designs inspired from monuments

4 CONCLUSIONS

The study reveals that there are a lot that one can learn from one's culture and heritage. Many art forms exist that can be exploited to develop patterns and motifs to design textiles. These art forms are part of our culture and have symbolic, philosophical, proverbial, informative and historical significance. The e-repository developed will provide a lot of learning and creative platforms for both users and designers. To conclude, the researchers asserts that with the proper use of the design elements based on design principles, layouts, repeats, colours and texture effects on the Adobe Photoshop software, innovative design collections could be created for the clothing & textile industry.

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