

## **Designing stoles for the adolescents taking inspiration from the Buddhist Art**

**BINU KAPOOR**

Asistant Professor

P.G. Dept. of Fashion Designing and Merchandising,  
BBK DAV College for Women, Amritsar (Punjab) India

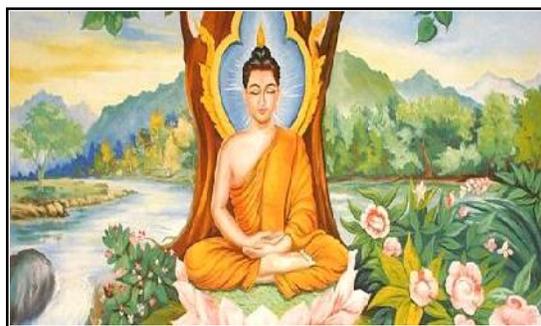
### **ABSTRACT**

Adolescent period is characterized with mixed feelings of childhood and adulthood. This period is largely concerned with the sexual behavior with a strong impact on the clothing styles. Young people adopt styles of dress that make them stand out in a group. Designers and manufactures are constantly in a race to bring out novelty designs. Adolescents are the major target group of the designer world. Indian peninsula is an amalgamation of various arts. Buddhist art is one of the art forms that stand out in the cosmos. It includes an array of symbols and motifs, each having a significance of its own. Interesting shapes, colour combinations and backgrounds attract the viewers. Many designers are working with Buddhist art- Jeff Banks, Ossie Clarks, Nidhi Yasha to name a few. The present study takes inspiration from Buddhist art to design stoles for the adolescents.

**Key Words :** Designing stoles, Adolescents, Buddhist art, Physical beauty

### **INTRODUCTION**

Adolescents undergo through a very tender age. It is a period when they realize about their physical beauty and even show it off in order to be accepted in the group. Hebdige (1979) and Odeleye (2000) observed that in making choices, adolescents are demonstrating awareness that a style or mode of appearance has meaning. Ojo (2008) too finds out that adolescents are aware of the fact that the current style of dress may make him noticeable to the opposite sex. This instinct in the adolescents make them crazy towards fashion products- be it bags, shoes, glares, a scarf, a stole, a new shift dress, a tunic or a new pair of jeans. The present study attempts to design the stoles for the adolescents taking inspiration from the Buddhist art.



**Plate 1 : Painting of Lord Buddha**

### **Objectives**

1. To review art forms and symbols of the Buddhist Art.

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2. To design stoles for the adolescents using motifs, symbols, shapes from the Buddhist art.

**Review of literature :**

Buddhism is one of the oldest religions of mankind, and is still a major faith of large community of the world. It is a part of the common human heritage of wisdom, by which men have succeeded in overcoming this world, and in gaining immortality, or a deathless life. Buddhist art originated in the Indian subcontinent following the historical life of Siddhartha Gautama, during 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. Thereafter it evolved by contact with other cultures as it spread throughout Asia and the world. It developed to the north through Central Asia and into Eastern Asia to as the Northern branch of Buddhist art, and to the east as far as Southeast Asia to form the Southern branch of Buddhist art. In India, Buddhist art flourished and influenced the development of Hindu art, until Buddhism nearly disappeared in India around the 10<sup>th</sup> century due to the vigorous expansion of Islam alongside Hinduism, leaving only a few votaries in Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Assam, Bengal and Orissa.

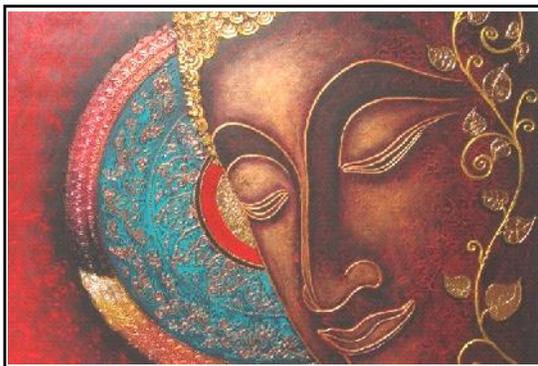
In recent years, Buddhism has undergone a come-back to its homeland; but the revival of Buddhism in India, as a distinct faith, is still far from realization. The Buddha is considered a great ‘reformer’ of Hinduism and, indeed, a maker of modern Hinduism.

Not only this, Buddhist art developed to an ecstatic height which could inspire one and all. It included artistic forms influenced by Buddhism. This art media depicts Buddha, Bodhisattvas, and others entities; notable Buddhist figures, both historical and mythical; narrative scenes from the lives of all these; mandalas and other graphic aids to practice; as well as physical objects associated with Buddhist practice, such as vajras, bells, stupas and Buddhist temple architecture.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the Northern dynasties developed rather symbolic and abstract modes of representation with schematic lines. Their style is said to be solemn and majestic. The lack of this art, and its distance from the original Buddhist objectives of expressing the pure ideal of enlightenment in an accessible and realistic manner, progressively led to a change realism leading to the expression of Tang Buddhist artist. The forms of Northern Buddhist art are followed in Tibet and Vietnam. The orthodox forms of Buddhism, also known as Southern Buddhism are practiced in Sri Lanka, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia. This demand revived the sea connection between the Mediterranean Sea and China, with India as the intermediary of choice. From that time, through trade connections, commercial settlements,



**Plate 2 : Tantrism**



**Plate 3 : Buddha form**

and even political interventions, India started to strongly influence Southeast Asian countries. Trade routes linked India with southern Burma, central and southern Vietnam, and numerous urbanized coastal settlements were established. The earliest specimen of Buddhist paintings can be found in the Indian sub continent. Gautama Buddha was after all born here. Buddhist paintings evolved by contact with other cultures as Buddha spread throughout Asia and the world. Early Buddhist paintings were characterized by the Indian tradition which avoids direct representation of the human figure. Around the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD an iconic period emerged surviving till present the Buddha in human form. Mural paintings survived from both the earlier and later groups of caves several fragments of murals preserved from the earlier caves are effectively unique survivals of court led paintings in India from this period and show that from Satavahana times. The Indian painter had mastered an easy and fluent naturalistic style, dealing with large groups of people in a manner comparable to the reliefs of the Sanchi. Paintings often decorate the inside of the walls in Thai temples. Where in the life of Buddha is portrayed. Also scenes from the previous life of the Buddha (the Jatakas, mainly the last ten incarnations) are seen.

#### **Symbols used in Buddhist Art :**

Basically the artists render certain scenes from the life of Buddha and the Jatakas. Thai Buddhist recognizes the different scenes by looking for key elements in the Thai mural paintings that are highly stylistic. Also member of symbols are used in the composition. For example, the scene below Mahajanka Jataka depicts the ocean with fish, and close by a shipwreck.

#### **Mandala :**

Mandala (Sanskrit: Maala circle) is a spiritual and ritual symbol in Hinduism and Buddhism,



**Plate 4 : Sand Mandala**

representing the universe. The basic form of most mandalas is a square with four gates containing a circle with a centre point. Each gate is in the general shape of [T] Mandalas often exhibiting a radial balance. The term 'Mandala' is of Sanskrit origin. It appears in the Rig Veda as the name of the sections of the work but it also used other religious philosophies particularly Buddhism. The various spiritual traditions, mandalas employed for focusing attention of practitioners and adepts, as a spiritual guidance tool, for establishing a sacred space, and as an aid to meditation and trance induction. Mandalas have now become a generic term for any diagram, chart or geometric pattern and represent the cosmos. Many contemporary

artists have made use of Buddhist themes Bill Viola, John Connell, Allan Graham to name a few. In UK the networks of Buddhist organization are working in identifying Buddhist art through festival, 'A lotus in flower' in 2009 organized the two-day art conference on "Buddha mind-a creative mind".

The eight auspicious symbols of Buddhist art are known in Sanskrit as 'Ashtamangala'. 'Ashta' means eight and 'mangala' means auspicious. These eight symbols are ubiquitous throughout Buddhist art. They are as follow:

**The Conch Shell**

The conch shell is said to represent Buddha’s beautiful and resonant voice, through which he introduced his followers to dharma. Shells that spiral to the right in a clockwise manner are rare and considered to be especially sacred. The right spiraling conch is believed to symbolize the motion of the sun, moon, planets and stars. The hair of Buddha’s head and body is spiraled to the right. This is seen as one of the many manifestations of Buddha’s deep connection to the universe.



**Plate 5 : Resonant Voice**

**The Lotus :**

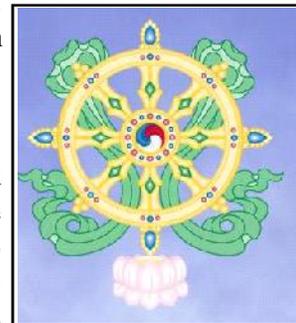


**Plate 6 : The Lotus  
(Growth of the soul)**

The roots of a lotus are in the mud and the stem grows up through the water, and the flower opens above the water. This symbolizes the growth of the soul from the dirty physical world through the course of Buddhist teachings.

**The Wheel :**

The wheel is also called Dharmachakra. Buddha is said to have “turned the wheel of the dharma” also known as the “wheel of law”. It represents the overall teachings of the Buddha and is



**Plate 7: The Wheel  
(transformation)**

one of the most important Buddhist symbol. In Tibet, it is called the “Wheel of Transformation”.

**The Parasol :**

The umbrellas symbolize the dome of the sky, casting its shadow on the earth. This shadow is the shadow of protection. The umbrella is carried above an important person or the image of a deity, to indicate that the person or symbol below the umbrella is the centre of the universe. In Tibet some dignitaries are entitled to certain parasols. Religious dignitaries are entitled to silk parasols and secular rulers are entitled to parasols that are embroidered in peacock feathers.



**Plate 8: The Parasol  
(Protection)**

**The endless knot:**

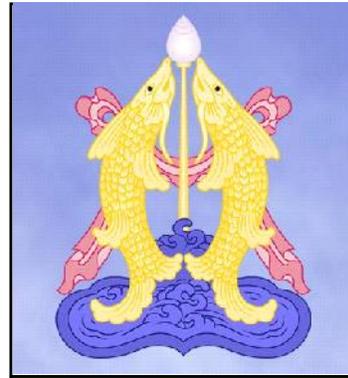


**Plate 9: The endless knot  
(The brighter Path)**

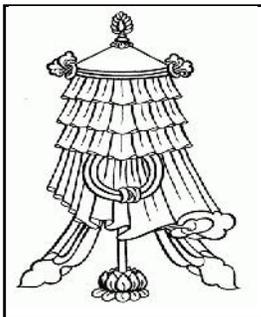
The intertwining of lines reminds us that all events are conjoined together in a cycle of cause and effect. The knot also represents the binding to our Karmic destiny. Since there is no beginning or end, the knot symbolizes the infinite wisdom of the Buddha. The knot is one of the most frequently used symbols in Buddhist Art and often appears independently. This is also symbolizes the link between the giver and the receiver. The recipient is granted righteous karma, which may brighten their path as a result of their good deed.

**The two Fishes :**

The Two Fishes symbolize the two Indian rivers, the Ganga and the Yamuna. With regard to meditation, the Ganga and the Yamuna are thought to symbolize the flow of the breath through inhalation and exhalation. In addition, they also represent the lunar and solar channels. In Buddhism, the golden fishes also symbolize happiness, as they are free in water. . Buddha is referred to as the “fisher of men” because his teachings rescue people from “the ocean of suffering”.



**Plate 10 : The two Fishes**



**Plate 11 : The Victory Banner**

**The victory banner :**

The victory banner signifies the triumph of knowledge over ignorance. The banner is indicative of Buddha’s enlightenment. According to the legend; Buddha planted the banner on top of Mt. Meru to symbolize his victory over physical barriers.

**The Vase of inexhaustible treasures:**

The vase of Inexhaustible Treasures is also known as “The Treasure Chest”. It symbolizes the spiritual abundance of the Buddha. The vase also represents longevity, wealth, prosperity and the manifestation of desires. The jewels that appear on the upper rim of the vase represent Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.



**Plate 12 : The Vase (Spiritual Abundance)**

**Meaning of colours in Buddhist Art :**

The Buddhist art uses the concept of the Pancha-Varna “the five colors ”

It is believed that by meditating on the individual colors, the following metamorphosis can be achieved:

1. **Black** symbolizes anger and killing.
2. **White** symbolizes rest and thinking. White transforms the delusion of ignorance into the wisdom of reality.
3. **Yellow** symbolizes restraint and nourishment. Yellow transforms pride into wisdom of sameness.
4. **Red** symbolizes subjugation. Red transforms the delusion of attachment into the wisdom of discernment.
5. **Green** symbolizes exorcism. Green transforms jealousy into the wisdom of accomplishment.

**METHODOLOGY**

Buddhist art is very inspirational and has an array of motifs, colour combination and forms to work with. The present study takes inspirations from its symbols and designs the stoles for the adolescents. The material that may be used for stoles is found to be chanderi silk, pure silk, tabby silk, georgette, chiffons. Tabby silk is selected for the final product. Market survey of the material

required was done in the Amritsar city. Decision regarding the technique to be followed was made. Out of the two choices- photo chemical screen printing and digital printing, the former was selected the digital printing for final product. Costing sheet regarding to stole as the base of the stole fabric would be same for the designs.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

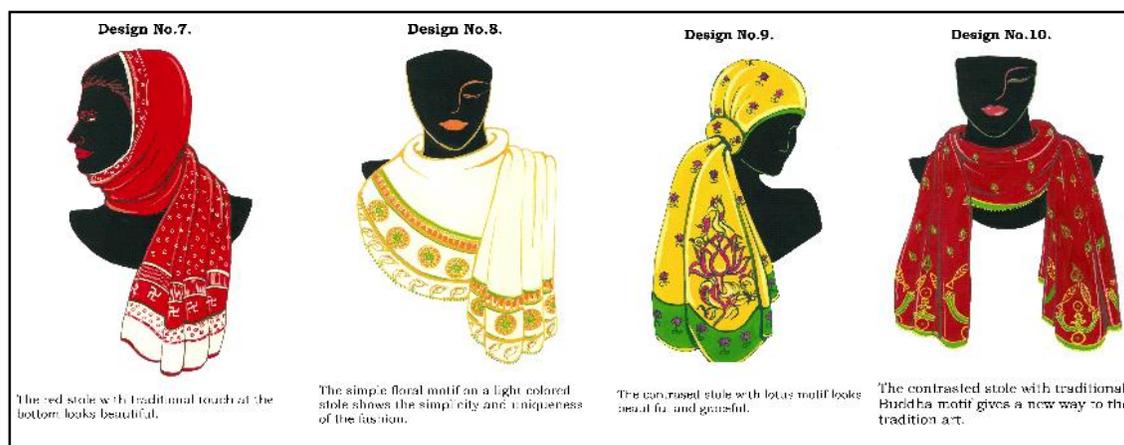
Ten Designs were prepared by taking inspiration from Buddhist art keeping in mind the choice of young generation. A clear sketch of the front and the back side of the design was prepared on the sheets along with the style lines of the particular design. The costing sheets were also prepared for each design to have an idea about the total cost of the garment.

Later on the ranking of the design was done on 1-10 ranking scale by group A & B comprising of a panel of 7-8 judges in each group.

Group A comprised of experts from the field of fashion designing and group B includes the adolescents. The following results are obtained.



DESIGNING STOLES FOR THE ADOLESCENTS TAKING INSPIRATION FROM THE BUDDHIST ART



**Table 1 : Ranking**

Design Judges	Group- A									
	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10
J1	1	7	4	2	8	9	6	5	3	10
J2	4	7	1	2	6	10	8	3	5	9
J3	1	4	7	5	2	10	3	8	6	9
J4	6	5	1	7	2	4	3	10	9	8
J5	2	10	1	4	9	8	3	6	5	7
J6	4	5	1	2	3	6	7	8	9	10
J7	2	9	1	5	3	10	4	6	8	7
Total	20	47	16	27	33	57	34	46	45	60
Rank	2 <sup>nd</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>

**Design no. 3** was ranked at the **1<sup>st</sup> position** because of the color combination and an interesting Buddha motif.

**Design no. 1** was ranked at the **2<sup>nd</sup> position** because of a novel combination of French blue and soft green color. And the Buddha motifs are beautifully designed on the stole.

**Design no. 4** was ranked at the **3<sup>rd</sup> position** as the print very well displayed, with a beautiful combination of soothing colors.

**Design no. 10** was ranked at the **10<sup>th</sup> position** because of routine color combination.

**Table 2 : Ranking**

Design Judges	Group – B									
	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10
J1	1	10	2	4	6	8	9	3	5	9
J2	1	7	3	2	6	8	4	5	7	9
J3	2	5	1	4	9	6	3	7	10	8
J4	2	1	5	9	7	10	3	8	6	4
J5	2	1	4	8	7	5	3	6	9	10
J6	4	7	3	9	7	6	8	1	10	2
J7	1	4	5	8	9	6	3	2	7	10
Total	13	35	23	44	51	49	33	32	54	52
Rank	1 <sup>st</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>

Design no.1 was ranked at the **1<sup>st</sup> position** of french blue and soft green color look nice and the print was beautifully display.

Design no. 3 was ranked at the **2<sup>nd</sup> position** color combination and Buddha motifs are attracted to the viewer.

Design no. 8 was ranked at the **3<sup>rd</sup> position** because the color combination and the boarder look elegant.

Design no. 9 was ranked at the **10<sup>th</sup> position** the color combination was not very attractive.

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