

REFLECTION OF TYPOGRAPHIC PATTERN DESIGN ON PRINTED TEXTILES

Tülay Gümüşer^{1*}

*Dr. Öğretim Üyesi, Selçuk Üniversitesi Mimarlık ve Tasarım Fakültesi

Abstract

Printed textile design is an integral process in decorating both the clothing and the design objects. Printed textiles have been displaced by modern production techniques such as transfer printing in a historical process, starting with the traditional production techniques such as tie-dye, block printing and natural dying, which enabled the detailed patterns to be formed and limitless colors to be used on the surface design of textiles. With the new communication tools and artistic approaches arising thanks to the technological developments, typography makes it possible for different approaches in contents and aesthetics to be used on textile surfaces. This article deals with the way in which the craft-based design feeds typography and the new dimensions that it has brought to textile designs. How and in which way the combination of crafts, arts and designs turns into practice has been examined over the design objects created with the use of the traditional production techniques such as quilt technique and the modern production techniques such as sublimation printing and digital drawing.

Keywords: Surface Design, Typography, Craft, Textile Patterns

TIPOGRAFİK DESEN TASARIMININ BASKILI TEKSTİLLERE YANSIMASI

Özet

Tekstil baskı tasarımı hem giysilerin hem de tasarım nesnelerinin süslenmesi açısından vazgeçilmez bir süreçtir. Baskılı tekstiller; batık, kalıp baskı ve doğal boyama gibi geleneksel üretim teknikleriyle başlayan tarihsel sürecinde, yerini transfer baskı gibi modern üretim tekniklerine bırakmıştır. Bu gelişim, tekstil yüzey tasarımında detaylı desen oluşturma ve sınırsız renk kullanıma imkan sağlamıştır. Teknolojiyle ortaya çıkan yeni iletişim ortamları ve sanatsal ifade tarzıyla tipografi; tekstil yüzey tasarımında içerik ve estetik açıdan farklı anlatımları mümkün kılmaktadır. Bu makalede, 21. yüzyılda, zanaat temelli tasarımın tipografiyi nasıl beslediği ve tekstil tasarımına getirdiği yeni boyutlar araştırılmaktadır. Makalede, yorganlama gibi geleneksel, süblimasyon baskı ve dijital çizim gibi modern üretim teknikleri kullanılarak oluşturulan tasarım nesneleri üzerinden zanaat, sanat ve tasarım birlikteliğinin nasıl ve ne şekilde pratiğe dönüştüğü incelenmektedir. Sonuç olarak, yaratıcı ve yenilikçi bir yaklaşımla malzeme ve biçim birlikteliğini bir araya getiren yazarın tipografik tekstil sergisindeki işlerinin tasarıma pozitif etkiler kattığı görülmüş; geleceğin tasarım nesnelerinin geleneksel ve modern üretim anlayışıyla oluşacağına altı çizilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yüzey Tasarımı, Tipografi, Zanaat, Tekstil Desenleri

Introduction

A design is a whole of the elements such as projects, drawings and models which come to appear at the end of a design process and which direct the preparation of an original work. Designing, on the other hand, is a whole of the works, which are carried out to create a product with an artistic value but do not include the stages of making the product. Textiles are of course one of the most common fields of design. In other words, a textile, with the creativity and functionality in it, appears in a wide range from both visual and technical designs to the production process (Önlü, 2004:90).

Textile printing, in general terms, is the surface design of the textiles, which are not yet to be produced, with traditional or industrial methods (Akbostancı, 2014:31). Digital revolution, on the one hand, has restricted the

¹ Sorumlu yazar e mail: tulaygumuser@gmail.com / Doi: 10.22252/ijca.782280

production based on a hand work, on the other hand it has supported the development of the designers through the computer-assisted designs and digital printing techniques. Today, some designers formulate a new language in their designs by focusing on crafts, designs and arts. At this very point, typography, a graphic design element, attracts the attention with its applications combining crafts and different design disciplines on a common platform. Therefore, the rising value of typography comes to the agenda as a research topic in theoretical and practical studies on design. The aim of this study is to exemplify how and in which way or ways the combination of crafts, arts and designs provides new dimensions for textile surface design. The examples under discussion consist of some of the designs from the author's *Typographic Textile Exhibition (SHE – Tipografik Tekstil Sergisi)* in 2018-2019.

A Brief History of Printed Textiles and Typography

Digitalization is of course the last point of this rapidly-advancing technological age. Digital printing machines, which can print the large and detailed patterns at once with the use of limitless colors, lead to the experimental works. The machines at issue, which are ecologically friendly and can carry out the chemical processes after feeling the fabric, have brought significant innovations to textile printing industry (Colchester, 2007:187). When the history of decorating fabric surface with dyeing and patterns have been examined, it appears that there are some statements that dyeing the textile patterns has a longer history and a more extensive geographical spread than the printed textiles (Haris, 2006:39).

The industrial process built on a rich history of aesthetics started with the need for overcoming the impossibilities between a design and its production. This process has become one of the impulsive powers in the technological systems from wood block printing to ink-jet (Akbostancı, 2014: 32). In order to be able to understand the advantages of the digital technology in textile printing design, it is necessary to learn about the previous technologies (Bowles and Isaac, 2009:168).

Traditional printing methods starting with wood block printing have gained a variance since the early ages with cylinder print, transfer print and digital print thanks to the technological developments (Öpöz, 2018: 3). Cylinder printing machine, which was an industrial printing machine and the first development in printing the patterns with multiple colors, was invented by Thomas Bell in 1783. The cylinder printing machine continued to be used until the 20th century without losing its effect. Rotation printing machine replaced the cylinder printing machine in the 20th century (in 1962). Transfer printing machine was invented in 1965. Transfer printing is one of the most commonly preferred printing methods by designers because of its limitless options in color and because it gives freedom to print a pattern with a lower cost (Yüksel, 2009:4). The history of sublimation printing, one of the transfer printing methods, has also been examined in this research.

It is understood that this system, based on transferring the patterns on transfer papers that came to be used in textile industry in the mid-1960s to the fabric with heat and pressure media in the screen printing machine, paved the way for experimental processes that gave new meanings to print designation (Uygur and Yüksel, 2013:4). Transfer printing is a process enabling the ink in the transfer paper to pass onto the fabric by way of hot pressing. With a temperature over 140 °C, the ink turns from a solid phase into a gas. This process is used for polyester-covered materials, fabrics and non-fabric materials. In addition, it loosens the molecular structures and enables the ink to permanently combine with the materials. At the end of the application, washable surfaces or fabrics with no extra thickness are obtained.

The patterns on printed fabrics today have a new and universal fluidity, which leaves a conceptual trace in people's mind, which is strong enough to make them sensible again and which synthesizes the cultural differences (Clarke and O'Mahony, 2005: 122). In brief, transfer printing is preferred because "it can be used in short-term productions, it occupies a small area and it makes a production without any need for water or any finishing process with low-cost machines" (Denizel, 2011:1). From this point of view, each innovation contributing to the creativity and aesthetical expression of a designer has an effect on transferring a design onto a surface. Figures are not generally used in modern types of design.

Over-stylized ornaments and calligraphic brush strokes are typical examples of this style. The inspirational sources that can be applied on a textile surface are the patterns that make illusions in the eye, the printing simulations of the traditional textiles such as ikat, kasuri, tie-dye, shibori and etc., Art Deco, Art Nouveau, Op and Postmodern arts and architectures and the ethnic patterns inspired by different cultures (Joyce, 1993:53-75). Extending with the improved devices, the concept of typography has not only gone beyond just expressing a technique but it has also revealed several usages of typography with the contribution of modern art

movements.

Humans' performing drawings such as lines, signals, symbols and pictures to communicate with each other dates back to very old times. Writing as a recording tool were developed in different styles such as linear cuneiform script in Sumerians and pictorial hieroglyphs in Egyptians. Considering the development of writing, it is understood that broad meanings were given to those symbols that can be perceived in a short time and kept in mind for a long time. Typography, referred to as a letter drawing or a letter graph, is one of the fields that is given importance by designers and design theoreticians. The characters used in typography have become a way for people to express their thoughts and ideas. Typography, which comes to the forefront with its conceptual aspect and means more than a function and aesthetics, is among important elements that affect the expressions for textile surfaces. Writing, which is the visual manifestation of a language-dependent communication, is the most basic sign and the result of social development of human beings. Writing has enabled the languages and thoughts to be preserved, and served for the development of science and arts and their transmission to next generations. At the point where the communication technology has reached, the fields in which writing is used have varied as a result of the development of new communication ways. Today, thanks to the opportunities provided by typography, it becomes possible to create different arrangements and expressions in many design disciplines.

When the designs of the designers who use typography in their works have been analyzed, it is possible to say that they use it mainly as a way of visual and conceptual expression (Çeliker, 2017:2545). Considering the inspirational sources, a typographic surface design appears both to be a design object and to be an artistic work/product depending on their role, position, size, weight, color, style and relationship with other design and craft elements.

Objectives and Methodology

The design studies conducted in textile field nowadays focus only on quantitative and qualitative methods, which allow a hypothesis to be tested and a deduction to be made (Parsons, 2015:282). "Qualitative methods of research were the most appropriate methods of obtaining the detailed information about textile design applications" (Studd, 2002: 38). The basic characteristics of a qualitative study is that it tries to examine the cases, facts, norms and values with the viewpoints of the people on whom the study has been done. This article has been prepared with the methods of qualitative and field studies. The objective of the research is to make the printed textile design process more understandable and to identify the key stages of the typographic textile design process.

The primary objective of the research is to scrutinize the concept of craft, oppressed by the industrial society and marginalized today, and to create an artistic design by combining the traditional production techniques such as quilting with the modern production techniques such as transfer printing and digital drawing. The design process usually starts with a requirement in design for a new item or a new product. The design of printed textiles often begins with a drawing or a pencil sketch. Sketching has traditionally been regarded as an important part of a design, primarily because it may cognitively support the idea of a design and the collaboration in ways that lead to the creativity in it (Hua, 2019:1). In the design process of the project under discussion (SHE), a conclusion has been reached with the steps in the chart below after a plan has been made for the study (Chart 1).

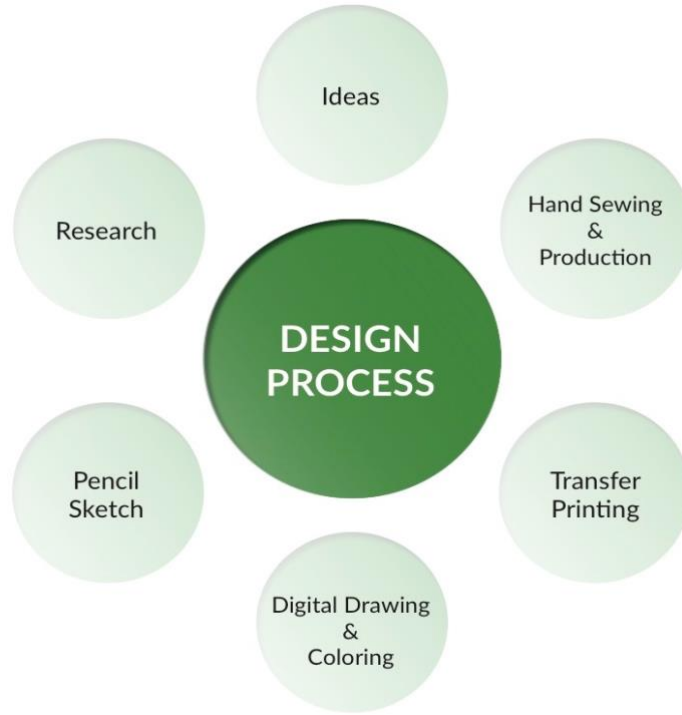


Chart 1. The Design Process of the “SHE” Series

SURFACE DESIGN PRACTICES BASED ON CRAFT AND TYPOGRAPHY

Design Process

The design process includes the realization of the ideas that are transformed into tangible products. Floral and stylized plant motifs were widely used as the patterns of the traditional-printed textiles. Today, the use of the motives and patterns with an inspiration from many other designs and art disciplines have become widespread. Typography, as a design element, is one of the most popular fields in textile and fashion design. The combination of crafts and designs shows itself on many design objects. The letters can be in such styles as cursive, block, graffiti, bold, italics, written ink pen, rotary tip, felt tip and feather. They can also be written in calligraphy style (Kendra, 2014:34).

In the examples given in this article, traditional quilting, which is produced by a small number of masters today and has an important place in daily lives of Turkish people, has been converted for the first time into artistic objects by bringing them together within an aesthetic dimension and a narrative aspect of typography.

Following the stage of thinking for nearly 6 months, the visual examples of typography were analyzed; the sketches were prepared by hand and the drafts were formed in accordance with Hua’s approach after the planning of how to use letters and numbers in the design. In order to provide easiness in printing, the drafts were installed in the computers, and their repeat systems and color arrangements were processed in Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop programs. Computer technology gives a chance to intervene again in the design, makes the designing process shorter and provides a great opportunity to the designer. In the conversion of the designs from being two-dimensional into three-dimensional, the inspiration has been gained from the traditional quilts still in use particularly in the Eastern and Southern Anatolia in Turkey. Satin or silk fabrics used in traditional quilts are sewn by putting the wool inside after its back side is sewn with cotton lining fabric. The patterns drawn by the quilt master with a piece of chalk or soap with the help of a compass or a ruler on the surface are sewn by hand in order to obtain a fluffy appearance. Various examples of quilting in different countries, which come together with typographic surface design and transfer printing, have been presented in the following part.

In the digital drawing seen in Figure 1 (left), there is a letter “T” in the center, repeating both on the left and the

right sides to the infinity. The integrity of the design, which was drawn in a bold and black writing style, was tried to be obtained with the dots going from dark to light on the upper right and bottom left corners. The lines and dots were used to make an illusion. It is possible to see the effects of Op Art movement in 1960s on the above-mentioned design, where the black and white colors form a sharp contrast. The design, which was sent to the printing process after the completion of the drawings, was printed on the fabric surface with the use of transfer printing. The surroundings of the letters and number, which were expected to be clearly seen on the surface of the design, were given a three-dimension with a traditional way of sewing by hand. Based on this process, the design remained not far from a handicraft created with the traditional quilting technique, although the typography on the surface (Figure 1, right) still have some traces of modern arts.

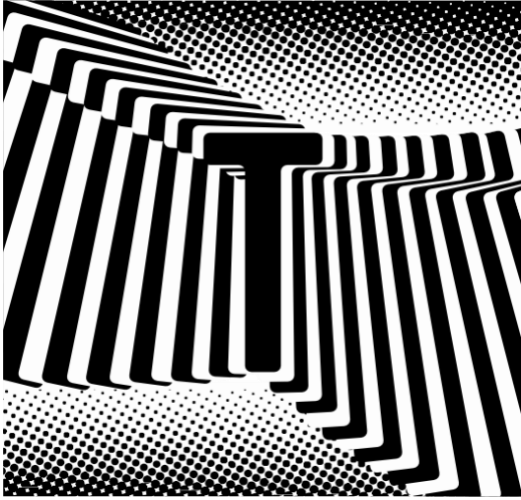


Figure 1: SHE No:1 Digital Drawing



Figure 1: SHE No:1.2018. 95x95cm

Designer's attempt to focus on handicrafts depends on the fact that she wanted a cultural object important in the past to be remembered again. The designer made a speech about her works in an interview during which she also told some parts and the last one year of her life.

All of these are small details which I re-built on the existing ones, that is, the works which I brought together by collecting identities and materials we know. In this building process, each of the letters, numbers and the planned ever-repeats of forms symbolizes a motion in itself. These elements have been placed either as a whole, as a half, as upside down or as straight, all of which are locked up in a geometric area on the fabric surface, carrying a trace from the subject (SHE). Actually, these elements form a kind of a visual diary, which has been designed according to the designer's psychological mood on that day and in that year (Keskin, 2019).

As for another example of a similar design, the letters (T) were placed in a square form divided in equal spaces, some of which are upside down, some are straight, some are horizontal and some are vertical. In this arrangement in which the similar forms are together, the letters in the same size properly form a harmonic repeat. The letter "T" placed next to one another and geometric forms were emphasized in black, white, and dark and light tones of grey. Some squares were left empty inside in order to form a depth and a volume in the design.



Figure 2: SHE No:12. 2018. 95x95cm



Figure 3: SHE No:4. 2018. 95x95cm

The designers' ideas and the messages they want to send in the formation process of a design are important for a better understanding of the works. In the formation processes of SHE series, the letters and numbers tell a story in an order. The designer tells the story with the letters and numbers that played a role and left a mark in her life (referring to 2017). (referring to 2017). While eleven of the textile works, each referring to a month, are in monochrome (black and white), the last work referring to December is formed of the letters she chose from *Orhun Yazıtları / Orkhon Inscriptions*, which starts to get colorized from the center and symbolizes the subject's return to her origins (the Turkish origin) (Figure 3). The designer described her stressful and stable one year without using any color and tried to express her life with her last work, which gets colorful with the new year. This design at the same time refers to the second one of the series, giving hints about the works' change into being polychrome. The letters designed vertically in small squares are those in the name of the subject written in modern Turkish alphabet. Contrary to the monochrome squares mostly filled with the letters, inner parts of some colored squares were left empty.

The colors black and white were not used in the second series of typographic surface designs, formed with the combination of handicraft, design and art. Typographic elements on the surface were not different because they are the follow-ups of the first series, which was again composed of the letters in the name of the subject (SHE) and of the numbers reflecting its identity. The vertical letters T, G, Ü, A, Y, L and the numbers 77 and 9 in figure 4 interact with each other and arise a feeling like flowing up from the top to the bottom. The right vertical column gets darker on the surface coloured in light and dark purple. The use of light-dark colors in the consciously-made arrangements reflects the differences in the psychological mood of the designer. In this design, the readable letters and numbers seem different with equal spaces in between, which are presented in a symmetrical and simple arrangement in the same font.



Figure 4: SHE II No:11. 2019. 95x95cm



Figure 5: SHE II No:7. 2019. 95x95cm

In the last example (figure 5), the letters and numbers are in square forms, they are placed in one under the other and it seems like a game setup. The surface, which is in light and dark tones of yellow and green, stands fluffy with sewn edges thanks to the fibers in squares, which makes it three-dimensional. In this example, as in the other ones, the letters were placed horizontally and vertically in a single font type. An attractive typographic design was obtained with the letters being gathered with the combination of light and dark colors. The colors used here seem contrast with each other, although a vintage style was tried to be made with pale yellow tone. The greatest dynamism in the design is the change in the forms of the letters with a bold style. Giving a dynamism in a typographic design, the colors to be used are of importance as well as the fonts and the font sizes.

The main element here is that all design elements comply with each other whether there are many different colors or different tones of the same colors.

Conclusion

A pattern is of course one of the important elements in decorating a fabric surface (Humbert, 1975: 3). This study gains value as it covers an original subject, which has not been encountered in the researches made before. There is not any example of design, which combines the art of quilting and typography apart from this study. The originality of this study comes from the fact that it has been prepared with the materials and techniques used in the art of quilting, which is one of the branches of typography and handicrafts. The use of the materials and techniques of quilting, which is one of the fields of typography, has made the design objects in the exhibition "SHE" original in terms of creativity. The designs that remove the boundaries between the disciplines have not only given an aesthetic value to the place it was exhibited but also made the audience think about the relationship between the design elements.

The relationship between the material and form was reflected on the textile design while being enriched with typography. The first series, which the designer performed in black and white, and the parts of her life story, which was the starting point of the colorful series following the first one, revealed not only the visibility but also the conceptuality of the design. The similarities in the form, color, size, and material of the designs create an understanding of the unity. Considering the differences in individual approaches and experiences, the whole process and the results, it is possible to say that the interdisciplinary cooperation have had positive consequences. These examples build a bridge between the past and today, reflecting the broadening contents and changing definitions in design. Such approaches can increase the visibility and function of the crafts and make them gain more value. From this point of view, it is clear that the interdisciplinary approach will become more effective in the researches and practices of design to be carried out in the future.

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