

Tisser

hand to heart

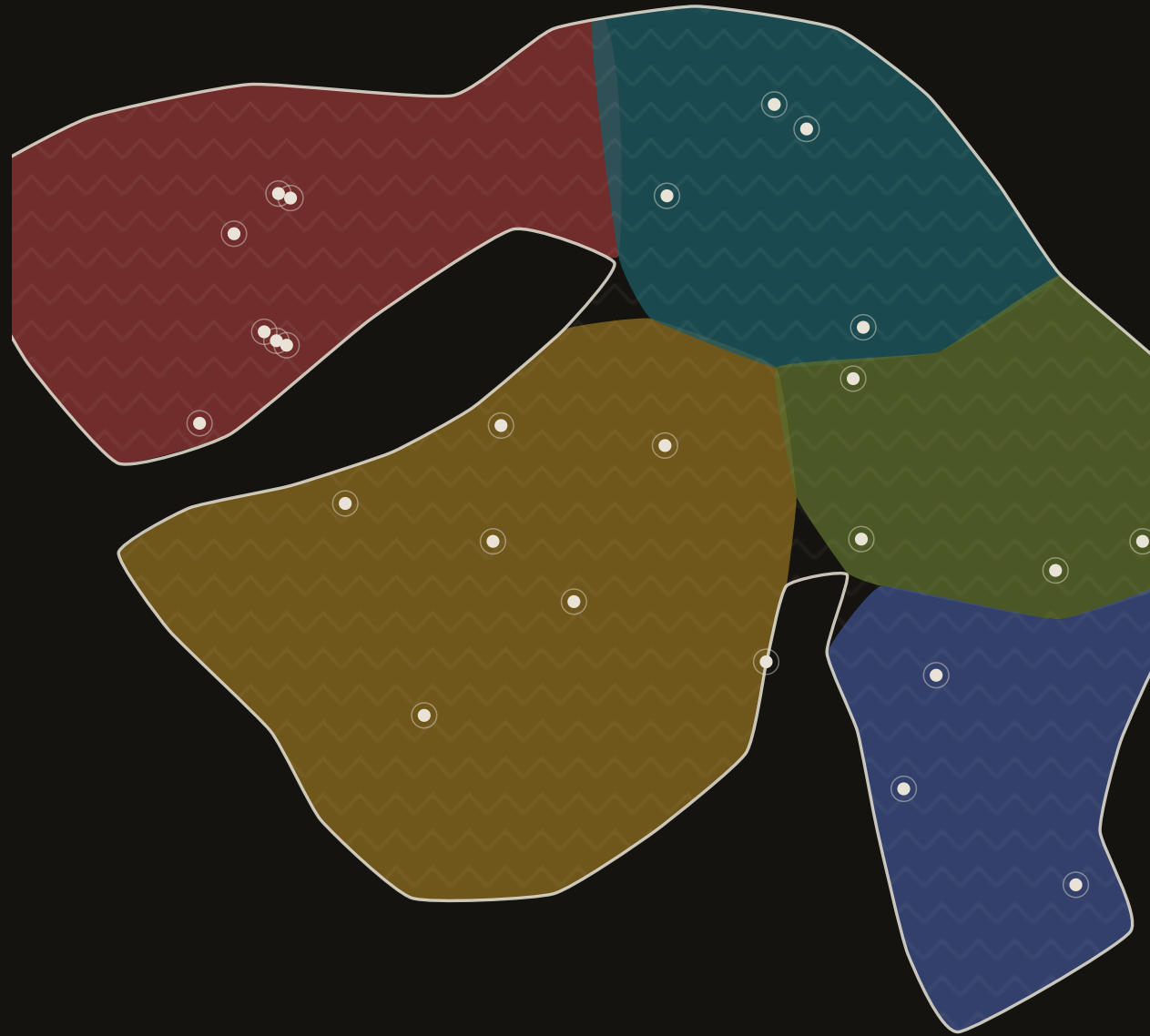
ARTISANS TRUST

CRAFT MAPPING INITIATIVE · GUJARAT

Gujarat: A Journey Through Crafts

ગુજરાત : હસ્તકલાની સફર

A district-by-district map of the state's living handloom and handicraft traditions — their makers, materials, geographies and legal protections. Sixty-two entries across thirty-four districts. A first edition, and an open one.



What is in this volume

This volume maps craft by geography. A second volume, planned, will map it by maker — named artisans, workshops and co-operatives, with contact routes for buyers, designers and researchers.

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Every craft is one card

Each entry carries the same eight pieces of information in the same place, so that entries can be compared across six hundred kilometres and a thousand years. Nothing here is ranked: a craft with one surviving family takes exactly as much space on the page as a craft with four thousand workers.



IN PRINT

Ajrakh Block Printing

અજરખ બ્લોક પ્રિન્ટિંગ

KUTCH (AJRAKHPUR · DHAMADKA)

Khatri printer families, Muslim, originally from Sindh

Sixteen or more stages of resist and mordant printing, worked on both faces of the cloth in exact register, in madder red and indigo on a black ground. The village of Dhamadka was abandoned after the 2001 earthquake and the printers built Ajrakhpur from nothing — the craft survived by moving.

GI 1050

CLUSTER

● THRIVING

▲ A finished entry, at printed size.

- 01 **Band**

The material family — loom, print, needle, metal, wood, clay, fibre, pigment, leather, paper, stone, glass.
- 02 **Name**

In English, with the local name below it. Both are searchable terms.
- 03 **Panel**

Original illustration made for this edition, in the region's palette. Every one is a live photo slot.
- 04 **Place**

District, or the belt a craft crosses. Not a boundary claim.
- 05 **Makers**

The community, workshop or settlement that carries the skill.
- 06 **Note**

Technique, history and the one thing worth knowing about this craft.
- 07 **Status**

Legal protection, cluster recognition, and flags — including Field-check.
- 08 **Vitality**

How close this craft is to ending, read from cluster size, age and market.

The 5 regions

Colour follows Gujarat's craft regions — the unit that district industry offices, handloom schemes and ODOP funding actually use.

- Kutch

One district, the densest craft map in India
- Saurashtra

The peninsula: bandhani, beadwork and the patola echo
- North Gujarat

Patan, Patola, and the block-carvers
- Central Gujarat

City craft, court furniture and the Pithora wall
- South Gujarat

Zari, the Parsi needle and the Dangi forest

The vitality reading

An editorial judgement, not a census. It is printed so that it can be argued with — and corrected.

- Thriving

Growing cluster, young entrants, working market.
- Holding

Stable numbers, ageing workforce, thin margins.
- At risk

Falling numbers; skill still transmissible.
- Critical

A handful of practitioners. One generation from silence.

What was counted, and what was left out

What counts as a craft here

A skill that shapes material by hand, transmitted within a community or a workshop rather than through a syllabus, and still practised by someone in Gujarat today. That definition lets in quarry carving and gold-foil beating, and keeps out revived hobby practice with no inherited line.

Where the entries come from

Three layers. The GI Registry's state list, which is authoritative but narrow. State ODOP, handloom and handicraft cluster records, which are broader but commercial in framing. And published documentation — craft council surveys, museum and university records, and reporting on individual clusters.

What this document cannot yet claim

It has no artisan headcount. Loom censuses, cluster registers and co-operative rolls disagree with each other and with the ground, and publishing a wrong number is worse than publishing none. It has no verified list of living practitioners — that is Volume II.

The known gaps

Kutch is the best-documented craft district in India and the rest of Gujarat is not, which skews this map: eighteen of the entries here are Kutchi. Saurashtra's household crafts — beadwork, patchwork, quilting — are made by women for the home and are almost absent from any register. The eastern Adivasi belt of Dahod, Mahisagar and Panchmahal is under-counted for the same reason, and the newly created Vav-Tharad district carries almost nothing because documentation still follows the old Banaskantha boundary.

An honest caution about maps

The outlines and region shapes in this volume are drawn for legibility, not for survey accuracy. Cluster pins mark craft towns, not administrative boundaries. No inference about any border should be drawn from this document.

On naming

District names follow current official usage after the 34-district reorganisation, with older names retained where a craft is known by them. Crafts are listed under the name their makers use.

Sources for the legal status

GI application numbers and dates in this volume are taken from the Geographical Indications Registry, Chennai, and from the published state registration lists. Where an application number is not published for a registration, the entry shows a dash rather than a guess.

Sixty-two entries, twelve material families

62

craft entries mapped in this first edition, across 34 districts

22

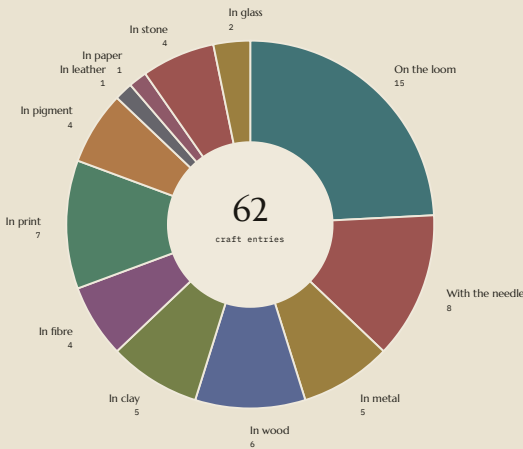
handicraft geographical indications registered to Gujarat, one of them shared with other states

42

entries read as at risk or critical — more than half of everything on this map

11

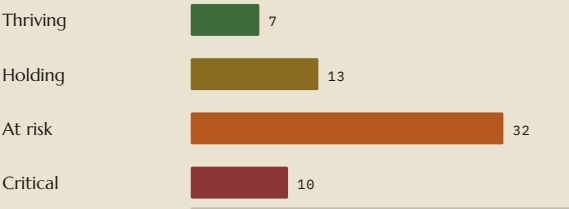
entries still awaiting a field visit before they can be called confirmed



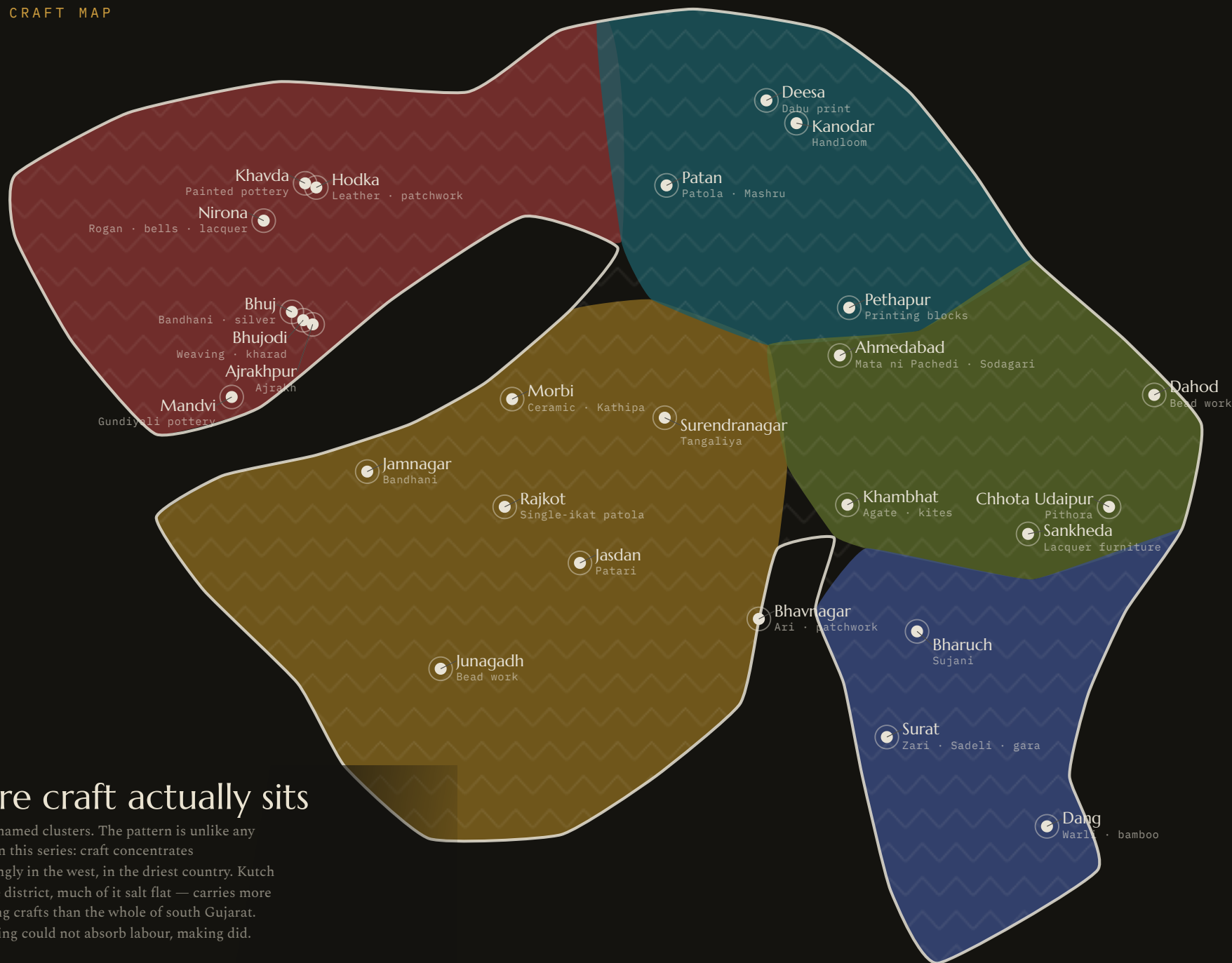
What the shape of the wheel says
Gujarat is the textile state in a way no other is: loom and print together hold more than half this register, and the state's two defining techniques — double ikat and resist dyeing — are both about controlling colour before the cloth exists.

The second thing the wheel shows is how much of Gujarat's craft is a *supply* craft. Surat draws the zari that other states' looms depend on. Pethapur carves the blocks that Gujarat and Rajasthan print with. Neither makes a finished object, and both can end a dozen other crafts by stopping.

Vitality across all entries



Indicative vitality, assigned from cluster size, age profile and market access.
To be validated in the field survey round.



Where craft actually sits

Twenty-six named clusters. The pattern is unlike any other state in this series: craft concentrates overwhelmingly in the west, in the driest country. Kutch alone — one district, much of it salt flat — carries more distinct living crafts than the whole of south Gujarat. Where farming could not absorb labour, making did.

All thirty-four districts, arranged as they sit

A schematic grid, not a survey map: each district is one tile, placed in roughly its geographical position, coloured by region, and carrying the number of entries that name it in this edition. A craft practised across a belt is counted once in every district it names, so the tiles total more than 62. Low numbers mark thin documentation at least as often as they mark thin craft — and zero districts currently carry nothing at all.

Twenty-two protected handicrafts

APP.	GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION	PLACE	REGISTERED	SCOPE
100	Sankheda Furniture	Vadodara (Sankheda)	05.07.2007	Gujarat
101	Agates of Cambay	Anand (Khambhat)	05.07.2007	Gujarat
103	Kutch Embroidery	Kutch	11.07.2007	Gujarat
127	Tangaliya Shawl	Surendranagar	09.06.2008	Gujarat
171	Surat Zari Craft	Surat	21.05.2009	Gujarat
174	Kachchh Shawls	Kutch	04.06.2009	Gujarat
221	Jamnagari Bandhani	Jamnagar	13.09.2010	Gujarat
232	Patan Patola	Patan	09.03.2011	Gujarat
239	Warli Painting	Shared — Dang · Valsad	06.07.2011	Shared
380	Rajkot Patola	Rajkot	16.03.2012	Gujarat
585	Pethapur Printing Blocks	Gandhinagar (Pethapur)	28.08.2017	Gujarat
644	Pithora	Chhota Udaipur · Panchmahal	23.01.2019	Gujarat
694	Mata ni Pachhedi	Ahmedabad	14.07.2020	Gujarat
718	Kutch Rogan Craft	Kutch (Nirona)	09.11.2020	Gujarat
756	Kutch Bandhani	Kutch	26.04.2021	Gujarat
838	Gharchola Craft of Gujarat	Jamnagar · Kutch	22.02.2022	Gujarat
997	Gujarat Suf Embroidery	Kutch · Banaskantha	26.10.2022	Gujarat
1050	Kutch Ajrakh	Kutch (Ajrakhpur)	31.01.2023	Gujarat
1063	Ahmedabad Sodagari Block Print	Ahmedabad	21.03.2023	Gujarat
1064	Surat Sadeli Craft	Surat	21.03.2023	Gujarat

What a GI does, and does not, do

A geographical indication is a collective right. It cannot be owned by one workshop; it is held by a registered body on behalf of everyone producing to the specification inside the named territory. It stops a mill elsewhere calling its cloth Kota Doria. It does not stop that mill underselling Kota Doria, and it puts no money in a weaver's hand by itself.

The value shows up only when the tag is paired with an authorised-user register, a hallmark the buyer recognises, and someone willing to litigate. Gujarat has 22 handicraft tags and very few authorised users.

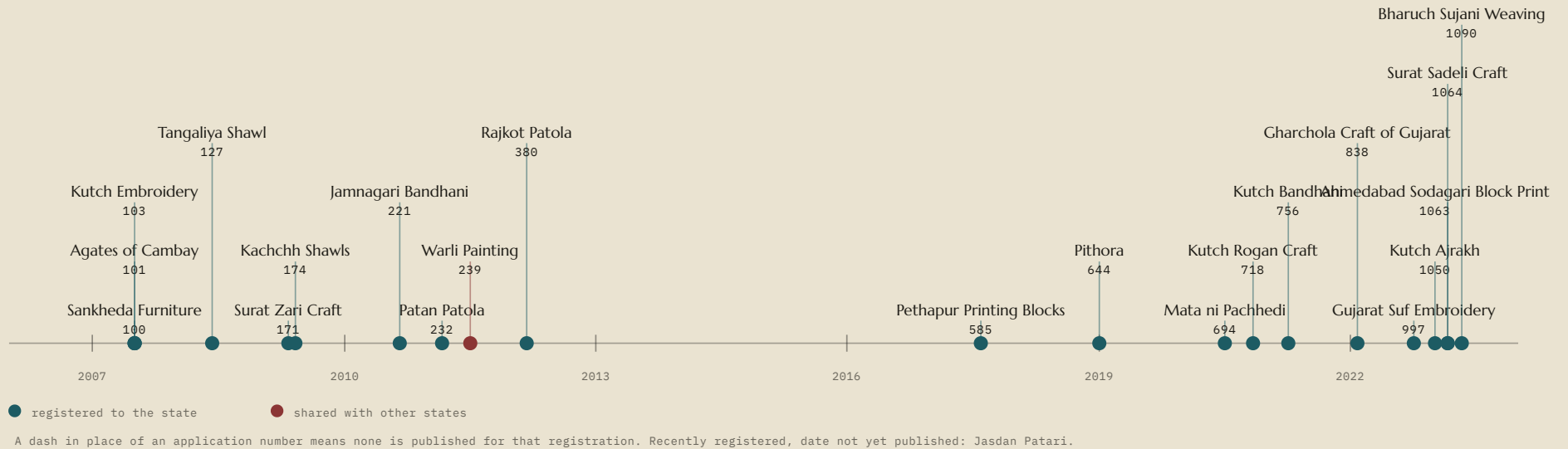
Significant crafts with no protection

These are practised, documented and commercially significant, and hold no geographical indication of their own.

Dahod Bead Work	Dahod — in the registration pipeline
Khambhat Kite	Anand (Khambhat) — in the pipeline
Saurashtra Dhabla and Shawl	Saurashtra — in the pipeline
Deesa Dabu Block Print	Banaskantha (Deesa) — in the pipeline
Kutchi Mud and Mirror Craft	Kutch — in the pipeline
Khavda pottery	Kutch — unprotected
Copper-coated iron bells of Nirona	Kutch — unprotected

Jaipur meenakari and kundan is the conspicuous absence: by value it is almost certainly the largest craft economy in the state, and it is protected by nothing but the reputation of the city's workshops.

Kota first, then a slow climb, then a single day in 2023



2005–2015 · The famous nine

The first registrations went to crafts that were already internationally known — Kota Doria, blue pottery, the block prints of Sanganer and Bagru, Molela, the puppets, Thewa. Protection followed fame, not fragility.

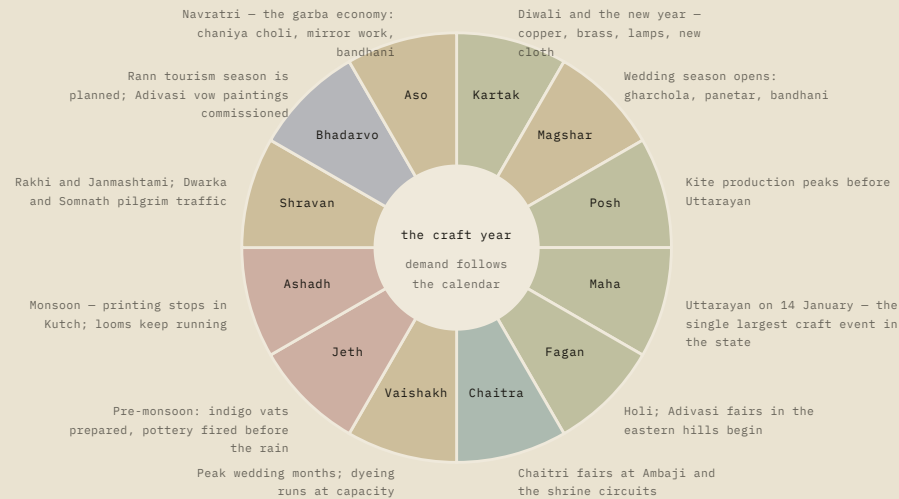
2023 · Five in one day

Jodhpur bandhej, Udaipur koftgari, Nathdwara pichwai, Bikaner usta kala and Bikaner kashidakari were registered together on 9 August 2023, under a NABARD-supported filing programme. Three of the five are read in this volume as at risk or critical.

What is still uncovered

Meenakari. Kundan and jadau. Leheriya. Salawas durrie. Kavadi. Namda. Shekhawati fresco. The Jaisalmer and Dholpur stone traditions. Several of these are larger, by employment, than crafts that already hold a tag.

Demand follows the calendar, not the market



Almost every craft in this volume earns in bursts. Pushkar in Kartik and the Nagaur fair in Margashirsh are not promotional events; for a large share of artisans they are the year's income. Wedding-season bandhej and gota orders are placed months before they are worn.

This is why craft finance fails when it is designed like retail finance. A dyer does not need a loan spread evenly across twelve months; a dyer needs working capital for cloth and indigo in Chaitra and a buyer in Vaishakh.

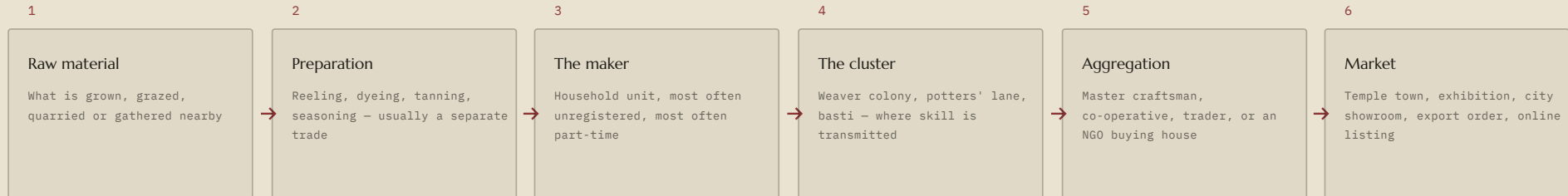
The crafts that run against the year

Quarrying and open-kiln pottery stop for the monsoon; indigo vats work best in it. Shearing in the herding belt sets when pattu and namda can be made at all. Three different calendars run inside one state.

And the one that runs all year

Tourism. Gujarat receives more visitors than any other craft state in India, and in Jaipur, Udaipur and Jodhpur the showroom season now matters more than the festival season. That is a genuine shift — and it concentrates income in three cities.

Six links, and the two places value leaks out



Where value leaks: between 2 and 3 (raw material cost), and between 5 and 6 (the margin the maker never sees).

Every intervention in this document – GI, ODOP, cluster funding – is an attempt to shorten the distance between 3 and 6.

The raw material squeeze

Gold, silver, coloured stone, natural indigo and good quarry stone have all risen faster than the price a finished object commands. When a printer switches from madder to a synthetic, the craft has not been abandoned — it has been priced out of its own specification.

The margin the maker never sees

Between the cluster and the shelf sit anywhere from one to four intermediaries. In a tourist economy a fifth appears: the shop that pays a commission to whoever brought the customer through the door.

What actually shortens the chain

Direct selling at fairs. Producer companies that hold their own stock. Authorised-user registers under a GI. Workshop visits and craft tourism at the cluster itself. None of these is a subsidy; all of them are structure.

The state · before the five regions

Gujarat

ગુજરાત

WHY CRAFT SITS WHERE IT SITS

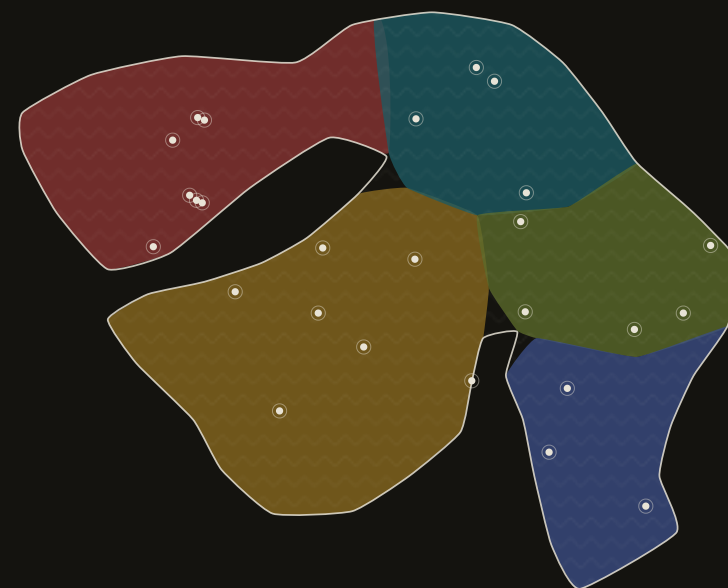
A hundred and ninety-six thousand square kilometres, the longest coastline in India, thirty-four districts — and a craft map that is not evenly spread across any of them. This chapter sets out the three forces that put each craft where it is: the ground it is made from, the courts that paid for it, and the communities that carry it.

TERRAIN

DYNASTIES

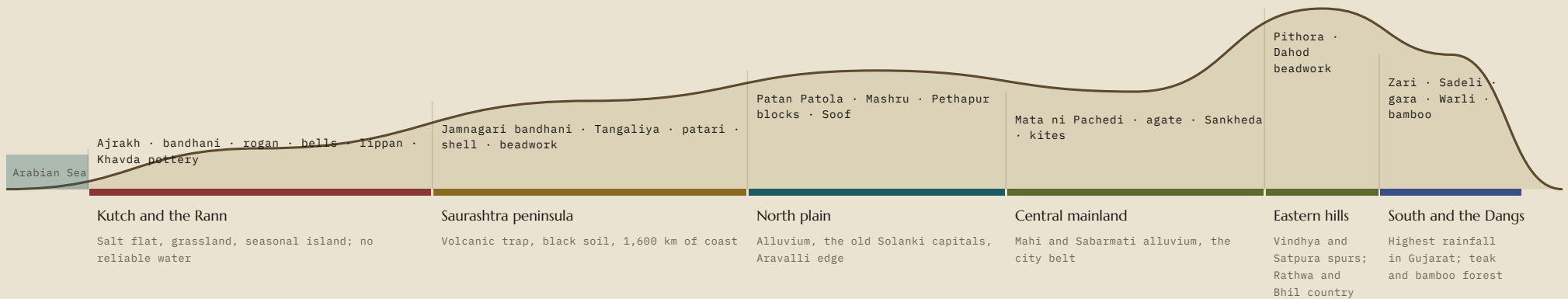
COMMUNITIES

MATERIALS



Six landscapes, west to east

Gujarat is three landscapes that barely speak to one another: the salt desert and grassland of Kutch, the volcanic peninsula of Saurashtra ringed by sixteen hundred kilometres of coast, and the alluvial mainland running down to the forested Dangs. The sea is the connecting thread — Gujarat's crafts were shaped by export markets long before anyone used the word.



west ← the Rann and the Arabian Sea

the Satpura and the Madhya Pradesh border → east

Scarcity is a craft input

The Thar produces more craft per head than the watered east, not despite the desert but because of it. Where agriculture cannot absorb a household's labour, craft and herding do — and where caravans pass, there is a market for what is made.

The Aravalli is the supply depot

India's oldest range gives up marble at Makrana, sandstone at Dholpur and Jaisalmer, zinc and copper at Zawar, and the clay of Molela. Half the crafts in this volume are made of the mountain.

Water changes the product, not the skill

Printing needs running water, so Sangner, Bagru and Akola sit on rivers. Kota Doria needs humidity, so it is woven where the Chambal keeps the air damp. The map of wet places is the map of textile finishing.

What each period left behind

Almost every court craft in this volume can be dated to the founding or the ending of a patron. Courts commission, courts fall, and the workshops stay — which is why Gujarat holds so many techniques whose original customer no longer exists.

c. 2600 – 1900 BCE	Harappan Gujarat	Lothal and Dholavira. Khambhat's agate beads are already being traded to Mesopotamia.	Agate bead cutting
11th – 13th century	Solanki Patan	Anhilwad Patan is a capital of western India. Court patronage establishes the Patola and Mashru looms.	Patola · Mashru
13th – 15th century	Gujarat Sultanate	Ahmedabad is founded in 1411 and becomes a textile city. Ashavali brocade is woven for the court.	Ashavali brocade
15th – 17th century	The Indian Ocean trade	Gujarati block-printed cotton reaches Egypt, Indonesia and East Africa in bulk. Cloth is made to foreign taste.	Ajrakh · Sodagari
16th – 18th century	Mughal Surat	Surat is the empire's principal port. Zari drawing and Sadeli establish themselves on imperial and export demand.	Zari · Sadeli
17th – 19th century	Sindh and the Rann	Khatri printers, Sodha Rajputs and herding communities move south into Kutch across a porous border.	Ajrakh · Suf · bandhani
18th – 20th century	The princely states	Over two hundred states in Saurashtra and Kutch alone, each with a court, a style and a workshop.	Bandhani · patari · ari
1917 – 1930s	Sabarmati and Bardoli	Gandhi makes hand-spinning the centre of a political programme from an ashram on the Sabarmati.	Khadi institutions
1947	Partition	The Sindh border closes. Craft communities that had moved freely for centuries are cut from their other half overnight.	A severed geography
1960 – 1990s	Co-operatives and emporia	Gujarat State Handicrafts and the first craft NGOs. Documentation of Kutch begins in earnest.	Organised craft
2001	The Bhuj earthquake	Dhamadka is abandoned; Ajrakhpur is built. Reconstruction money and NGO presence reshape Kutch's craft economy permanently.	Ajrakhpur
2007 – 2026	The GI decades	Twenty-two handicraft registrations, more than any state except Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.	Names, and a register

Craft here is carried by communities, not by individuals

A printer in Bagru is not a person who chose printing. Almost every craft in this volume is held by a named community — a caste, a tribe, or a hereditary workshop lineage — into which the skill is transmitted by birth and by household, alongside the tools, the customers and the debt.

That is the fact most craft policy misses. Training a hundred new entrants does not reproduce a craft, because what is transmitted is not only technique: it is the supplier who extends credit, the trader who takes the stock, the knowledge of which buyer pays on time. When a community leaves a craft, all of that leaves with it.

And one craft held by a single family

Thewa has been made by the Sonis of Pratapgarh since about 1707 and taught only within the family. It is the clearest case in India of a technique that survived intact because it was closed — and that is now precarious for exactly the same reason.

A note on naming

Community names are recorded here as they are used by the communities themselves and in craft documentation. They are listed to show who holds a skill, and for no other purpose. Several groups appear under more than one craft; several crafts are worked by more than one group.

Printing and dyeing

Khatri	Ajrakh, bandhani — Kutch and Jamnagar
Chhipa	Deesa, block printing
Vaghri	Mata ni Pachedi, Ahmedabad

Metal and stone

Lohar	Nirona — copper-coated bells
Kansara	copper and brass vessels
Soni	silver and gold
Sompura Salat	temple carving

Pastoral

Rabari	camel and sheep; embroidery and lippan
Bharwad	Saurashtra herders; dhabla
Ahir	Banni — embroidery
Jat	Banni — fine cross stitch
Mutwa	Banni — miniature mirror work

Adivasi

Rathwa	Chhota Udaipur — Pithora
Bhil	eastern and southern belts
Warli · Kukna · Gamit	Dang, Valsad, Navsari
Nayaka	Panchmahal

Trading communities

Dawoodi Bohra	crochet caps, copperware
Parsi	Navsari and Surat — gara embroidery

Weaving

Salvi	Patan — Patola
Vankar (Meghwal)	Bhujodi, kala cotton
Dangasia	Surendranagar — Tangaliya
Marwada Meghwal	Kukma — kharad

Wood and earth

Gajjar	Pethapur — printing blocks
Kharadi Suthar	Sankheda — lathe and lac
Kumbhar	potters, statewide
Vadha	Nirona — lacquer

From Sindh

Sodha Rajput	Suf embroidery, Banaskantha and Kutch
Meghwal	leather, weaving, embroidery

Saurashtra households

Kathi Darbar	ari and silk-floss embroidery
Tatala	Kawand patchwork quilts
Kanbi · Ahir women	beadwork and toran

Nothing here travels far before it is made

From the animal

● Camel and sheep hair
→ Kharad · dhabla

● Rabari wool
→ Bhujodi shawls

● Vegetable-tanned hide
→ Meghwal leather

● Camel dung and clay
→ Lippan

From the ground

● Rann clay
→ Khavda pottery

● Rajpipla agate
→ Khambhat beads

● Ambaji marble
→ Temple carving

● Iron scrap
→ Nirona bells

From the plant

● Indigo and madder
→ Ajrakh · bandhani

● Castor oil
→ Rogan paint

● Kala cotton
→ Hand-spun cloth

● Teak and sheesham
→ Blocks · Sankheda

From elsewhere

● Silver for wire
→ Surat zari

● Mulberry silk
→ Patola · Mashru · gara

● Glass beads
→ Saurashtra and Dahod

● Lac
→ Sankheda · Nirona turnery

Every craft in this volume begins as something grown, grazed, quarried or gathered within a few hours of where it is made. That is the whole argument for mapping craft geographically.

The exception proves it

Gold, silver and coloured gemstones are the materials Gujarat does not produce at the scale it consumes — and they sit at the top of the state's most valuable crafts. When bullion moves, meenakari and kundan move with it, and no karigar has any control over either.

Material is the first thing to break

Crafts rarely die because nobody wants the object. They die because natural indigo gets scarce, the quarry is mechanised, the camel herd shrinks, or the forest is closed. Several entries in this volume are at risk for supply reasons alone.

Which makes the camel a craft question

Usta kala, camel leather vessels, bone carving and pattu all depend on a herding economy that has contracted sharply. Protecting those crafts means protecting the herd — a livestock problem wearing a cultural costume.

Region 01 of 05

Kutch

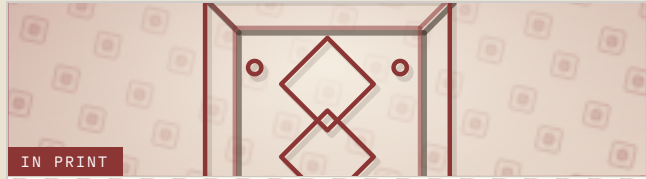
કચ્છ

ONE DISTRICT, THE DENSEST CRAFT MAP IN INDIA

A single district the size of a small state, half of it salt desert. Kutch carries more distinct living crafts than most Indian states manage between them — eighteen recorded here — because drought, pastoralism and a border that moved repeatedly pushed communities into making rather than farming. Six of Gujarat's registered handicrafts are Kutchi.

KUTCH





IN PRINT

Ajrakh Block Printing

અજરખ ઇલકામ

KUTCH (AJRAKHPUR · DHAMADKA)

Khatri printer families, Muslim, originally from Sindh

Sixteen or more stages of resist and mordant printing, worked on both faces of the cloth in exact register, in madder red and indigo on a black ground. The village of Dhamadka was abandoned after the 2001 earthquake and the printers built Ajrakhpur from nothing — the craft survived by moving.

GI 1050 CLUSTER

● THRIVING



IN PRINT

Kutch Bandhani

કચ્છી બાંધણી

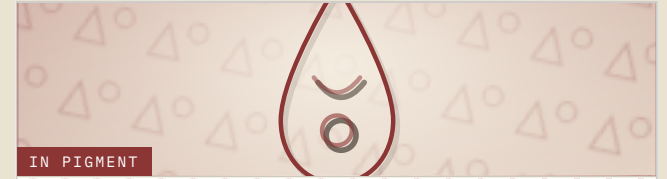
KUTCH (BHUJ · MANDVI)

Khatri tiers and dyers

The cloth is pinched into thousands of points with a sharpened fingernail ring and bound before dyeing. Kutchi work is graded by the fineness of the point — the finest pieces carry a bindi so small the pattern reads as texture rather than dot.

GI 756

● THRIVING



IN PIGMENT

Rogan Painting

રોગન કામ

KUTCH (NIRONA)

The Khatri family of Nirona

Castor oil boiled for hours until it strings, mixed with pigment, and drawn out into a thread with a metal stylus that never touches the cloth — the painter lays the thread down from the air, then folds the cloth to mirror the design onto the other half. Practised by a single family.

GI 718 ONE FAMILY

● CRITICAL



IN METAL

Copper-Coated Iron Bells

તિબાની ઘંટડી

KUTCH (NIRONA · ZURA)

Lohar smiths, Muslim, of Nirona and Zura

Cut from scrap iron sheet, rivetted without welding, coated in copper and brass powder and fired in a mud kiln. Tuned by hammer alone to a set of named notes — a herder can identify which of his animals is moving by the pitch of its bell.

UNPROTECTED

● AT RISK



IN WOOD

Lacquer and Wood Turnery

લખડકામ

KUTCH (NIRONA)

Vadha community turners

Colour applied on a spinning lathe by pressing a lac stick against the turning form — friction heat melts and bonds the pigment, and the pattern is laid in by changing sticks mid-turn. Rolling pins, ladles, cradles and toys.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN CLAY

Khavda Painted Pottery

ખાવડા માટીકામ

KUTCH (KHAVDA)

Kumbhar potters of Khavda, on the edge of the Rann

Thrown from Rann clay, burnished, and painted freehand in geometric bands using red ochre and a brush made from donkey hair. The white is a local clay slip. One of the few Indian potteries where the decoration is more distinctive than the form.

UNPROTECTED

● AT RISK



IN CLAY

Lippan — Mud and Mirror Work

લીપણકામ

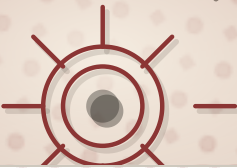
KUTCH (BANNI VILLAGES)

Rabari, Mutwa and Meghwal women of the Banni grasslands

Relief patterns raised in a paste of clay and camel dung on the inner walls of a bhunga, with mirror set into the wet surface. It cools the room, it survives earthquake better than masonry, and it is renewed by the women of the household rather than by a paid craftsman.

GI PIPELINE

● HOLDING



WITH THE NEEDLE

Suf Embroidery

સુફ ભરતકામ

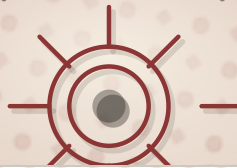
KUTCH · BANASKANTHA

Sodha Rajput and Meghwal women

Counted-thread surface satin stitch worked from the back of the cloth, so the embroiderer counts warp and weft blind and never draws a design first. Geometric by necessity: the grid of the cloth is the only guide.

GI 997

● HOLDING



WITH THE NEEDLE

Rabari Embroidery

રબારી ભરતકામ

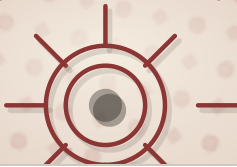
KUTCH · BANASKANTHA

Rabari pastoralist women

Chain stitch with large mirrors in many shapes — round, lozenge, triangular, beak-shaped — outlined in buttonhole. The Rabari dress code once encoded a woman's age and marital status in the density of the work; several Rabari sub-groups have since restricted their own embroidery by community decision.

GI 103 (KUTCH EMBROIDERY)

● HOLDING



WITH THE NEEDLE

Ahir and Jat Embroidery

આહીર ભરતકામ

KUTCH (BANNI)

Ahir, Jat and Mutwa women of the Banni

Three distinct hands under one GI: Ahir chain-stitch floral work; Jat cross-stitch so fine it is counted in threads; Mutwa work in miniature, with mirrors a few millimetres across. The differences matter to the makers and are invisible to most buyers.

GI 103

● AT RISK



ON THE LOOM

Bhujodi Weaving

ભુજોડી વણાટ

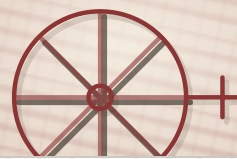
KUTCH (BHUJODI)

Vankar (Meghwal) weavers of Bhujodi

Extra-weft patterned shawls and blankets woven for the Rabari herders who supplied the wool — a closed loop between two communities that lasted centuries. The weavers now sell to cities, and buy wool from elsewhere, which is the whole story of the craft's survival and its loss at once.

GI 174 (KACHCHH SHAWLS) CLUSTER

● THRIVING



ON THE LOOM

Kala Cotton Weaving

કાળા કપાસ વણાટ

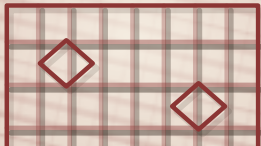
KUTCH

Vankar weavers with Kutch farming co-operatives

Old-world indigenous cotton, rain-fed, short-staple and never irrigated or sprayed. Abandoned as unspinnable by mills, it was revived from the 2000s as a hand-spun fibre. One of very few Indian craft revivals that began with the seed rather than the product.

REVIVED

● HOLDING



ON THE LOOM

Kharad Weaving

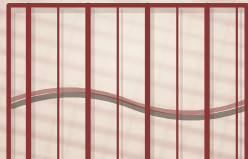
ખરડ વણાટ

KUTCH (KUKMA)
Marwada Meghwal weavers

Heavy floor rugs woven from camel and sheep hair on a horizontal loom pegged to the ground, in bold geometric blocks. Made for herders and for dowry; reported to be down to a very small number of practising families.

TWO FAMILIES

● CRITICAL



ON THE LOOM

Mashru Weaving

મશરુ વણાટ

KUTCH (MANDVI) • PATAN
Khatri and Vankar weavers

Silk face, cotton back — from misru, mixed. A satin binding puts silk on the outside and cotton against the skin, solving a religious question with a weave structure. Woven in bright stripes and arrow patterns.

SHARED WITH PATAN

● AT RISK



IN LEATHER

Kutch Leather Craft

ચર્મકામે

KUTCH (HODKA • BHIRANDIYARA)
Meghwal leatherworkers

Vegetable-tanned hide from the herding economy, cut and embroidered with silk thread and mirror into footwear, bags, horse trappings and water vessels. The embroidery is the Meghwal signature — no other Indian leather tradition stitches like this.

HERDING CRAFT

● AT RISK



ON THE LOOM

Namda Felt

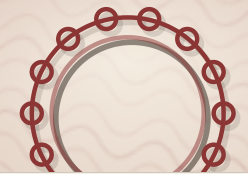
નામદા

KUTCH
Felt-makers of the Kutch herding belt

Wool matted with soap, water and pressure rather than spun or woven, then appliquéd in coloured wool. The oldest textile technique there is, needing no loom at all, and now very thinly practised here.

FIELD-CHECK

● CRITICAL



IN METAL

Kutchi Silver and Bead Jewellery

ચાંદીના ઘરેણાં

KUTCH (BHUJ)
Soni silversmiths of Bhuj

Heavy hollow silver worn by pastoralist women — the nose ring, the neck torque, the anklet — made to be worn daily and to hold value in a household with no bank. Weight is the point, not delicacy.

TRADE CLUSTER

● HOLDING



IN PRINT

Batik Printing

બાટિક છાપકામ

KUTCH (MUNDRA)
Khatri printers of Mundra

Wax-resist printing applied with a block rather than drawn, giving the crackle that distinguishes Kutchi batik from the Indonesian line it descends from.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK

Ajrakh: sixteen stages to arrive at two colours

Ajrakh is printed on both faces of the cloth in exact register, so that the finished piece has no reverse. Everything about the process is designed to make that possible: the cloth is prepared for weeks before a block touches it, and each colour is built from a mordant and a dye bath rather than applied directly.



The red does not exist on the block. It is created in the madder bath, and only where alum was printed many stages earlier. The printer works blind on the colour that defines the cloth.

Dhamadka, and then Ajrakhpur

The Khatri printers came from Sindh and settled at Dhamadka, where the river water suited the dyeing. The 2001 Bhuj earthquake destroyed the village and damaged the water. Rather than rebuild, a group of printer families founded a new village on open ground and named it Ajrakhpur — the craft's town.

It is the clearest case in this series of a craft surviving by relocating. The water, the blocks and the knowledge moved; the place did not.

Two countries, one cloth

Ajrakh is made in Kutch and in Sindh, in Pakistan, by families who were one community before 1947. The patterns, the block names and the sequence are close to identical. The geographical indication registered in 2023 covers only the Indian half.

PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOOT • AJRAKHPUR

Cloth coming out of the indigo vat — green in the air, turning blue as it oxidises. It is the one moment in Indian dyeing that photographs as a chemical event. Then the block table, overhead, mid-register.

Why one dry district holds eighteen crafts

Nothing else to do

Kutch is roughly the size of Belgium and about half of it is salt flat. Rainfall is low and unreliable, and drought arrives on a cycle that families plan around. Agriculture could never absorb the labour of the district, and the surplus went into making and into herding instead.

That is the first reason, and it is the one that holds across the arid west of India: where farming fails, craft is not a tradition so much as an alternative income.

Everyone arrived from somewhere

Khatri printers and Sodha Rajputs from Sindh. Meghwal weavers and leatherworkers. Rabari, Jat, Ahir and Mutwa herding communities, each with its own embroidery. Lohar smiths. The Kutch craft map is a migration map, and the 1947 border froze it in place.

Eight distinct embroidery hands exist inside this one district because eight communities settled here and kept their stitch as an identity marker.

And then it was documented

Kutch has been surveyed, collected and written about more than any other craft district in India — by museums, by craft organisations from the 1970s onward, and intensively after the 2001 earthquake brought reconstruction funding and NGOs.

That attention is why eighteen Kutchi entries appear here and only nine from the whole of south Gujarat. Some of that gap is real. Some of it is simply who got counted.

What the earthquake did

The 2001 Bhuj earthquake killed thousands and flattened villages across the district. The reconstruction that followed brought money, organisations and outside buyers into craft households at a scale and speed that nothing else would have. Ajrakhpur exists because of it. So does much of the market access that Kutchi artisans now have.

And what that cost

The same attention standardised a good deal. Embroidery that encoded a woman's community and marital status became a product line with colourways. Several Rabari groups responded by restricting their own embroidery — deciding collectively to stop making it for sale. That is worth recording as a craft decision, not a loss.

Region 02 of 05

Saurashtra

સૌરાષ્ટ્ર

THE PENINSULA: BANDHANI, BEADWORK AND THE PATOLA ECHO

Eleven districts on a peninsula ringed by coast. Jamnagar ties the finest bandhani in India and holds the GI for it; Rajkot weaves single-ikat patola against Patan's double; Surendranagar's Tangaliya is woven by one community and almost nobody else. Shell, beadwork and patchwork run along the shore.

RAJKOT

JAMNAGAR

JUNAGADH

BHAVNAGAR

AMRELI

SURENDRANAGAR

MORBI

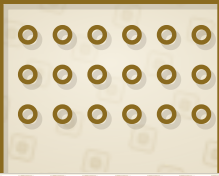
PORBANDAR

BOTAD

DEVBHOOMI DWARKA

GIR SOMNATH





IN PRINT

Jamnagari Bandhani

જામનગરી બાંધણી

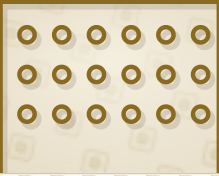
JAMNAGAR

Khatri tiers and dyers of Jamnagar

Jamnagar's water is credited with the depth of its red, and the city has tied bandhani for four centuries. The gharchola and the panetar — the two wedding cloths of Gujarat — are both Jamnagari work, and the trade still turns on the wedding calendar.

GI 221

● THRIVING



IN PRINT

Gharchola

ઘરચોળું

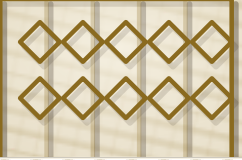
JAMNAGAR • KUTCH

Khatri dyers and zari weavers

A wedding odhani: a grid of gold zari woven into the cloth first, then bandhani tied and dyed inside each square. Twelve squares, fifty-two squares — the count carries meaning. Two crafts and two trades in a single garment.

GI 838

● HOLDING



ON THE LOOM

Rajkot Patola

રાજકોટ પટોળા

RAJKOT

Weavers of Rajkot city

Single ikat — only the weft is resist-dyed before weaving, so the pattern is set by one thread system rather than two. Faster and far cheaper than Patan's double ikat, and routinely sold as though it were the same thing, which is precisely why the two hold separate registrations.

GI 380

● HOLDING



ON THE LOOM

Tangaliya Weaving

તાંગલિયા વણાટ

SURENDRANAGAR

Dangasia community, Surendranagar

Contrasting thread wound around a bundle of warp ends while the cloth is on the loom, raising a bead of colour that stands off the surface — dots that are woven, not embroidered. Practised by one community and taught almost nowhere else.

GI 127

SINGLE COMMUNITY

● AT RISK



IN WOOD

Jasdan Patari

જસદણ પટારી

RAJKOT (JASDAN)

Carpenter families of Jasdan

Dowry chests built in wood and bound in decorated sheet metal, painted and studded. A bride's patari held her textiles and her jewellery, and its size recorded the household's standing. Recently registered after a long campaign.

GI RECENT

● AT RISK



IN GLASS

Saurashtra Bead Work

મોતીકામ

JUNAGADH • BHAVNAGAR • AMRELI

Kathi, Ahir and Kanbi women

Glass beads strung on thread into toran door hangings, peacocks, cradle covers and wall pieces, worked without a loom. Made for the house rather than for sale, which is why it is barely recorded and why the pieces that survive are heirlooms.

GI PIPELINE

● AT RISK



WITH THE NEEDLE

Kathipa and Ari Embroidery

કાઠીપા અરિતકામ

MORBI • BHAVNAGAR • AMRELI

Kathi Darbar and Mochi communities

Bold silk floss on dark cotton, worked with the ari — a cobbler's hook that chains from above the cloth at speed. The Mochi hook-work of Saurashtra once served the princely courts and is now almost entirely gone from them.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN CLAY

Morbi Ceramic and Pottery

મોરબી સિરામિક

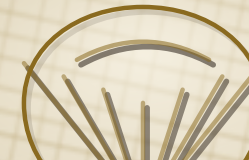
MORBI

Potter families, and an industrial ceramic cluster

India's ceramic capital by volume. The hand-potting tradition and the tile industry sit on the same clay and in the same town — a rare case where industrialisation grew out of a craft rather than displacing it, though the handwork is now the smaller half.

ODOP

● THRIVING



IN FIBRE

Shell Craft

શંખકામ

GIR SOMNATH • PORBANDAR • DEVBHOOMI DWARKA

Coastal households along the Saurashtra shore

Lamps, boxes, jewellery and ritual objects cut and assembled from seashell collected on the Arabian Sea coast. Sustained by pilgrim traffic to Somnath and Dwarka rather than by a design market.

COASTAL CRAFT

● AT RISK



WITH THE NEEDLE

Kawand Patchwork Quilts

કાવંડ

GIR SOMNATH • JUNAGADH

Tatala community women

Quilts pieced from fabric remnants in deliberate colour blocks and stitched through — a textile-recovery tradition that predates the term by several centuries.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



ON THE LOOM

Saurashtra Dhabla and Shawl

ધાબળો

RAJKOT • SURENDRANAGAR • BOTAD

Bharwad and Rabari herders; Vankar weavers

Coarse woollen blankets woven for the peninsula's herding communities, in dark undyed wool with extra-weft bands. In the GI pipeline, and dependent on a sheep economy that is contracting.

GI PIPELINE

● AT RISK



IN STONE

Junagadh Stone Carving

પથ્થર કોતરણી

JUNAGADH • GIR SOMNATH

Sompura temple-building families

The Sompura are hereditary temple architects and carvers whose work runs from Somnath to the Jain shrines of Girnar and on to temple commissions worldwide. The craft and the architectural knowledge are transmitted together.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK

Region 03 of 05

North Gujarat

ઉત્તર ગુજરાત

PATAN, PATOLA, AND THE BLOCK-CARVERS

The old Solanki country. Patan holds the double-ikat Patola — arguably the most technically demanding textile made anywhere — alongside Mashru. Pethapur carves the wooden blocks that print half of Gujarat and much of Rajasthan. The Banaskantha desert edge carries Soof embroidery and votive terracotta.

PATAN

MEHSANA

BANASKANTHA

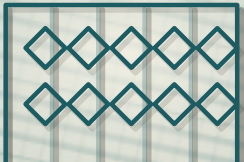
VAV-THARAD

SABARKANTHA

ARAVALLI

GANDHINAGAR





ON THE LOOM

Patan Patola

પાટણ પટોલા

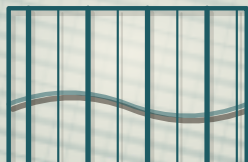
PATAN

Salvi weaver families of Patan

Double ikat: warp and weft are both resist-tied and dyed to the finished design before a single thread is woven, then aligned on the loom so the pattern resolves in the air. There is no reverse — both faces are identical. Three families remain, and a saree takes months.

GI 232 THREE FAMILIES

● CRITICAL



ON THE LOOM

Mashru of Patan

મશરુ

PATAN

Weavers of Patan town

The Patan line of the silk-faced, cotton-backed cloth, historically traded to the Ottoman world in quantity. Very few looms remain, and Mashru is now better known as a lining for other people's garments than as a cloth in its own right.

AT RISK

● CRITICAL



IN WOOD

Pethapur Printing Blocks

પેથપુર બ્લોક

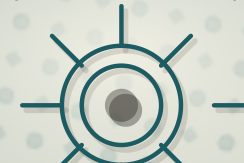
GANDHINAGAR (PETHAPUR)

Gajjar block-carving families of Pethapur

Teak and sheesham blocks carved by hand for printers across Gujarat and Rajasthan — outline, filler and background cut as separate blocks that must register exactly. An invisible craft: when the block-carvers stop, every printing cluster downstream stops with them.

GI 585 SUPPLY CRAFT

● AT RISK



WITH THE NEEDLE

Soof Embroidery of Banaskantha

સૂફ ભરનાકામ

BANASKANTHA · VAV-THARAD

Sodha Rajput women who migrated from Sindh

The Banaskantha line of counted satin stitch, worked blind from the reverse. Recognised as the district's ODOP craft, which has given it more institutional support than most embroidery traditions in this volume receive.

GI 997 ODOP

● HOLDING



IN CLAY

Votive Terracotta Figures

માટીના ઘોડા

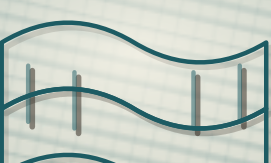
BANASKANTHA · SABARKANTHA

Kumbhar potters serving Adivasi shrine sites

Clay horses, elephants and riders left in their hundreds at open-air shrines as the fulfilment of a vow. The potter makes them to order; the shrine accumulates them; nobody removes them. The object's purpose is completed by being left outdoors to weather.

RITUAL CRAFT

● AT RISK



ON THE LOOM

Kanodar Handloom

કાણોદર હાથશાળા

BANASKANTHA (KANODAR)

Weaver households of Kanodar

Cotton yardage, dhabla and household cloth woven in a single town that has kept a handloom tradition through the collapse of handloom across north Gujarat.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN PRINT

Deesa Dabu Block Print

ડેસા દાબુ

BANASKANTHA (DEESA)

Chhipa printers of Deesa

Mud-resist printing: a paste of clay, gum and chaff is block-printed on, dusted with sawdust, and the cloth dyed — the covered areas resist. The northern Gujarat line of a technique shared with Rajasthan across the district border.

GI PIPELINE

● AT RISK



IN STONE

Ambaji Marble Carving

અંબાજી આરસ

BANASKANTHA (AMBAJI)

Quarry and carving workforce at Ambaji

White marble quarried and carved at a major pilgrimage site, serving temple building across western India. The stone carries a geographical indication as a natural good; the carving of it does not.

GI 1114 (NATURAL GOODS)

● HOLDING



IN CLAY

Sabarkantha Terracotta and Coir

માટીકામ

SABARKANTHA • ARAVALLI

Kumbhar and household makers

Figurines, water vessels and coir rope and matting made in the hill districts on the Rajasthan border. Documented thinly.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN METAL

Visnagar Brass Utensils

વીસનગર પિત્તળકામ

MEHSANA (VISNAGAR)

Kansara metalworking community of Visnagar

Visnagar has beaten, spun and engraved brass and copper for centuries — cookware, ritual vessels and storage. The Kansara lanes work sheet metal by hammer and lathe together, and the town supplies utensil markets across north Gujarat.

TRADE CLUSTER

● HOLDING

Patan Patola: the cloth that is finished before it is woven

In double ikat both the warp and the weft are tied and dyed to the finished design before weaving begins. Every one of several thousand threads carries its own sequence of colour, placed so that when warp meets weft on the loom the pattern resolves — in the air, from two independent sets of instructions.

There is no front and no back. The design is identical on both faces because it is in the thread, not on the cloth. Nothing can be corrected at the loom: an error in the tying appears months later as a flaw that cannot be unpicked.



Three families

The Salvi weavers came to Patan under Solanki patronage in the twelfth century, and the craft has been held within the family line since. Three families remain. A saree takes somewhere between four months and a year and is priced accordingly.

Closed transmission preserved the technique exactly and left it with no depth. There is no second tier of workshops to absorb a lost generation.

Patan and Rajkot are not the same cloth

Rajkot weaves single ikat — only the weft is resist-dyed, so the pattern is set by one thread system and the loom does the rest. It is a fine craft and a far faster one, and it holds its own registration.

The two are routinely conflated in the market, and a Rajkot piece sold as Patan work is the single most common misrepresentation in Gujarati textiles. The test is the edge: in double ikat the motif is equally crisp on both faces, and in single ikat the weft-wise edges feather slightly.

PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOOT · PATAN

Tied warp bundles before dyeing — the cloth as a coded object, before it is cloth. Then the loom with the weaver's pointed bobbin nudging a weft thread into register, shot close.

Region 04 of 05

Central Gujarat

મધ્ય ગુજરાત

CITY CRAFT, COURT FURNITURE AND THE PITHORA WALL

Ahmedabad's shrine-cloth painters and block printers, Khambhat's agate cutters working a trade two thousand years old, Sankheda's lacquer-turned furniture, and in the eastern hills the Rathwa villages where Pithora is painted onto a house wall to settle a vow.

AHMEDABAD

VADODARA

ANAND

KHEDA

PANCHMAHAL

DAHOD

CHHOTA UDAIPUR

MAHISAGAR





IN PIGMENT

Mata ni Pachedi

માતાની પછેડી

AHMEDABAD

Vaghri community painters of Ahmedabad

A shrine cloth painted and block-printed in red, black and the undyed white of the ground, made as a portable temple for communities historically refused entry to built ones. The mother goddess sits at the centre; the cloth is the sanctum. Its origin is exclusion, and that is inseparable from the object.

GI 694

● AT RISK



IN PRINT

Sodagari Block Print

સોદાગરી છાપ

AHMEDABAD

A small number of Ahmedabad printing workshops

Bold, large-repeat block printing in a limited palette, made historically for export to Africa and the Gulf — sodagari means merchant's cloth. Registered in 2023 with very few workshops left running it.

GI 1063

● CRITICAL



ON THE LOOM

Ashavali Brocade

અશાવલી બ્રોકેડ

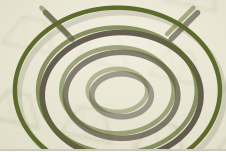
AHMEDABAD

A handful of weaving families in Ahmedabad

Silk brocade with zari, woven in Ahmedabad since the city was called Ashaval — older than the city's present name. A few looms survive. It is the oldest named textile in this volume and among the least known.

CRITICALLY SMALL

● CRITICAL



IN STONE

Agates of Cambay

અકીક

ANAND (KHAMBHAT)

Agate cutters and polishers of Khambhat

Carnelian and agate from the Rajpipla hills, heated in the sun and in pits to bring up the red, then knapped and polished into beads. Khambhat beads have been excavated from Mesopotamia and East Africa; the trade is at least four thousand years old and has never stopped.

GI 101

● HOLDING



IN PAPER

Kite Making

પતંગ

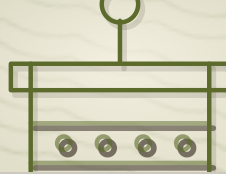
AHMEDABAD • ANAND (KHAMBHAT)

Kite-making households, largely Muslim, in Ahmedabad and Khambhat

Tissue paper on split bamboo, cut and pasted to a tolerance that decides whether the kite flies flat or spins. The whole year's production is sold around Uttarayan in January. Khambhat kites are in the GI pipeline.

GI PIPELINE

● THRIVING



IN WOOD

Sankheda Lacquered Furniture

સંખેડા લકિનિયર

VADODARA (SANKHEDA)

Kharadi Suthar turners of Sankheda town

Teak turned on a lathe and lacquered in maroon and gold while spinning, with the pattern scratched back through the lac to the wood beneath. Cradles, swings and chairs that are instantly identifiable and almost impossible to mistake for anything else.

GI 100

CLUSTER

● HOLDING



IN PIGMENT

Pithora Painting

પિઠોરા

CHHOTA UDAIPUR • PANCHMAHAL • DAHOD

Rathwa, Bhil and Nayaka communities; Lakhara painters, Badva priests

Horses in ranks across the inner wall of a house, painted to discharge a vow after illness or misfortune. The painter is commissioned, the priest consecrates, the household feeds the village. The painting is the ritual's residue, not its purpose — which is why it is made indoors and rarely sold.

GI 644 **RITUAL ART**

● AT RISK



IN GLASS

Dahod Bead Work

મોતીકામ

DAHOD

Adivasi women of the Dahod belt

Beaded ornament, torans and ceremonial pieces from the eastern hill districts, currently in the GI registration pipeline — one of the few Adivasi crafts in Gujarat moving toward protection.

GI PIPELINE

● AT RISK



WITH THE NEEDLE

Bohra Caps and Crochet

બોહરા ટોપી

VADODARA • AHMEDABAD • SURAT

Dawoodi Bohra women

The white crocheted and gold-embroidered cap worn by Bohra men, made at home by women of the community in fine thread, often as an act of devotion rather than for payment. A craft with a defined customer and no open market.

COMMUNITY CRAFT

● AT RISK



IN METAL

Copper and Brass Ware

તાંબા-પિત્તળ કામ

VADODARA • AHMEDABAD • NADIAD

Kansara metalworking families

Raised and spun vessels, lamps and temple ware for domestic and ritual use. The Kansara lanes of the old towns are shrinking as stainless steel replaces the metal for everyday cooking.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN STONE

Stone Carving of the Sompura

સોમપુરા શિલ્પ

VADODARA • AHMEDABAD

Sompura Salat families

Temple image and architectural carving by a community that holds the Shilpa Shastra texts as working manuals. Sompura workshops in Gujarat cut stone for temples being built on four continents — an export craft nobody classifies as one.

HEREDITARY TRADE

● HOLDING



IN WOOD

Kheda Woodwork and Haveli Carving

કાષ્ટ કોતરણી

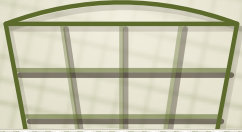
KHEDA (VASO • NADIAD)

Suthar carpenter families of Vaso and Nadiad

Carved timber havelis, bracketed balconies, doors and lacquered furniture in the old merchant towns. Vaso in particular holds one of the densest surviving concentrations of domestic wood carving in Gujarat, and the repair work keeps the skill alive.

ARCHITECTURAL CRAFT

● AT RISK



IN FIBRE

Mahisagar Adivasi Craft

આદિવાસી હસ્તકલા

MAHISAGAR (LUNAWADA · SANTRAMPUR)

Bhil and Nayaka households of the eastern hills

Bamboo and grass basketry, gourd vessels and votive clay made alongside the Pithora belt that continues east into Panchmahal and Dahod. Among the least documented craft areas in the state.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK

Mata ni Pachedi: a temple you can fold

The name means behind the mother. It is a cloth hung to make a shrine wherever it is unrolled — painted and block-printed in three colours only: the madder red of the ground, the iron black of the line, and the white of the cloth left unprinted.

The Vaghri community made these because they were refused entry to built temples. The cloth is not a picture of a shrine; it is the shrine, carried by people who were not permitted the other kind. Its origin is exclusion, and no account of the craft that leaves that out is describing the same object.

How it is made

The ground is prepared with harda. The central goddess — Bahuchara, Meldi, Vishat, one of many — is drawn freehand with a bamboo pen; the surrounding registers of worshippers, animals and attendants are block-printed. The red is alizarin, developed in a boiling bath. The cloth is then washed in running water, traditionally in the Sabarmati.

What changed when it became art

Mata ni Pachedi now sells as a wall hanging, to buyers with no connection to the goddess or the community. That market pays better than the ritual one ever did, and it has kept families in the craft who would otherwise have left it.

It has also detached the object from its use. A pachedi made for a gallery is made to be looked at; one made for a shrine is made to be stood in front of. The painters are explicit about the difference, and some keep the two practices separate.

The river

Washing in the Sabarmati was part of the process and part of the colour. River-front development and water quality have ended it for most practitioners, who now wash in tanks. It is a small change that alters the finish, and it is the kind of thing that disappears from a craft's description within one generation.

PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOOT • AHMEDABAD

A finished pachedi hung as it is meant to be used, with the offering space in front of it empty. Then the bamboo pen mid-line on the goddess's face — the only freehand element on the cloth.

Two crafts that other crafts are built on

Pethapur: the blocks

Gajjar families in one town outside Gandhinagar carve the wooden blocks that printers use across Gujarat and much of Rajasthan. A single design needs several blocks cut to register against each other — outline, filler, background — and a set takes weeks and lasts decades.

The carver never prints. The printer never carves. Every block-printing cluster in this volume and the Rajasthan one depends on a handful of carving families, and almost no account of block printing mentions them.

What happens if it stops

Blocks wear out. A printing cluster with no carver can run on its existing stock for years and then simply cannot make anything new. The failure arrives slowly and then all at once.

Surat: the thread

Surat has drawn metal thread since the Mughal port years. Silver is pulled through successively finer dies until it is thinner than hair, gilded, flattened, and wound onto a silk core. The result is zari, and it is the material that Paithani, Patola, Banarasi, Kanjeevaram and half the wedding textiles of India are made with.

It holds a geographical indication of its own, which is unusual for a material rather than an object — and correct, because the quality of the drawing decides the quality of everything woven with it.

Where the price comes from

Real zari is silver, and it moves with the bullion market. When silver rises, weavers across India substitute — first to lower silver content, then to copper-cored, then to polyester film. The substitution is invisible in the finished saree and permanent in the craft.

Supply crafts are invisible by design

Nobody buys a block or a reel of zari as an object. They are inputs, so they appear in no craft retail channel, no exhibition and almost no documentation — and their makers are classified as suppliers rather than artisans.

Which makes them unprotected in practice

Pethapur and Surat zari both hold registrations, and both still sit outside the schemes, subsidies and market-linkage programmes that reach the crafts downstream of them.

And it makes them the first thing to check

When a printing or weaving cluster starts to fail, the cause is often two steps upstream. Any survey of a craft region should count its block carvers and its thread drawers before it counts anything else.

Region 05 of 05

South Gujarat

દક્ષિણ ગુજરાત

ZARI, THE PARSI NEEDLE AND THE DANGI FOREST

Surat has drawn metal thread for four centuries and still supplies zari to looms across India, alongside Sadeli micro-mosaic and the Parsi gara. Inland, the Dang and Tapi forests hold Warli, Kukna and Gamit traditions that share a border and a vocabulary with Maharashtra's Palghar.

SURAT

BHARUCH

NARMADA

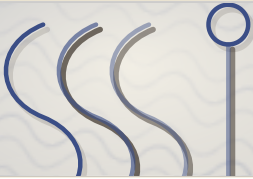
TAPI

NAVSARI

VALSAD

DANG





IN METAL

Surat Zari

સુરતી જરી

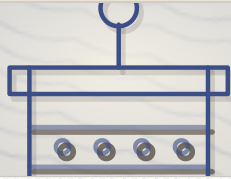
SURAT

Zari drawing and winding units across Surat city

Silver wire drawn to hair fineness, gilded, and wound onto a silk core. Surat has done this since the Mughal period and still supplies the zari that Paithani, Patola, Banarasi and Kanjeevaram all depend on. When Surat's price moves, half the looms in India feel it.

GI 171 SUPPLY CRAFT

● THRIVING



IN WOOD

Sadeli Micro-Mosaic

સાદેલી

SURAT

A small number of Surat workshops

Rods of contrasting wood, ivory substitute, tin and horn are bundled into a pattern, glued, and sliced across the grain into wafers — each slice carries the whole design, and the wafers are applied to boxes and furniture. Persian in origin, perfected in Surat, and now barely practised.

GI 1064 CRITICALLY SMALL

● CRITICAL



WITH THE NEEDLE

Parsi Gara Embroidery

પારસી ગારા

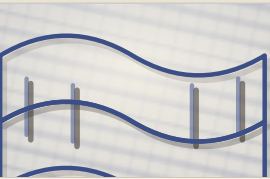
NAVSARI · SURAT

Parsi women of the south Gujarat towns

Dense satin and French-knot embroidery on a silk sari ground, in Chinese motifs — cranes, pagodas, the chakla-chakli birds — brought back by Parsi traders working the China route and absorbed wholesale. A craft created by a trade route.

COMMUNITY CRAFT

● AT RISK



ON THE LOOM

Bharuch Sujani Weaving

ભરૂચી સુજની

BHARUCH

A very small number of Bharuch weavers

A double-cloth quilt woven as a single hollow tube on the loom and stuffed with cotton afterwards — warm, seamless and made in one piece. Registered in 2023; reported to be down to a handful of practising weavers.

GI 1090 CRITICALLY SMALL

● CRITICAL



ON THE LOOM

Tanchoi and Patku Weaving

તાંચોઈ પટકા

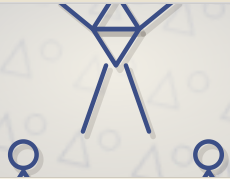
SURAT

Weaving families of Surat

Tanchoi is a satin-ground figured silk said to be named for three Parsi brothers who learned it in China; patku is the woven waistcloth of the region. Both survive in very small numbers against Surat's enormous powerloom sector.

AT RISK

● CRITICAL



IN PIGMENT

Warli and Kukna Painting

વારલી ચિત્રકલા

DANG · VALSAD · NAVSARI

Warli, Kukna and Gamit households of the south Gujarat forest

Rice-paste white on a cow-dung and earth ground, built from circle, triangle and square. The 2011 registration covers four territories including Gujarat — the same community and the same wall tradition that continues across the Maharashtra line into Palghar.

GI 239 SHARED GI

● AT RISK



IN FIBRE

Dangi Bamboo and Forest Craft

વડાસા

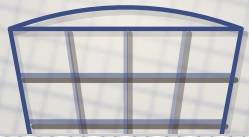
DANG • TAPI • NARMADA

Bhil, Kukna, Warli and Gamit forest households

Baskets, grain bins, fish traps, mats and roofing in split bamboo and forest grass, made for use rather than sale in Gujarat's wettest and most forested district. Almost entirely outside craft marketing channels.

FOREST CRAFT

● AT RISK



IN FIBRE

Navsari and Valsad Matting

સાદડી વણાટ

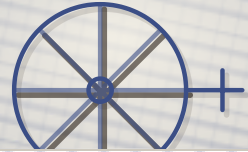
NAVSARI • VALSAD

Household weavers of the coastal strip

Floor mats and screens from local grass and palm leaf, made alongside horticulture in the south Gujarat coastal belt. Thinly documented.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



ON THE LOOM

Bharuch Khadi and Handloom

ખાદી

BHARUCH • NARMADA

Khadi societies of the Narmada belt

Hand-spun, hand-woven cotton organised through the khadi institutions that followed Gandhi's Sabarmati and Bardoli years. The institutional frame has outlasted much of the independent weaving around it.

GANDHIAN INSTITUTION

● AT RISK

The Dangs: a border that is only on paper

The Warli live on both sides of the Gujarat–Maharashtra line, in the Dang and Valsad forests and in Palghar across the border. They paint the same walls with the same rice paste, in the same vocabulary of circle, triangle and square, for the same reasons.

The 2011 geographical indication for Warli painting covers four territories at once — Maharashtra, Gujarat, and the Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu union territory — precisely because the tradition refuses to sit inside one state. It is among very few Indian GIs drawn around a people rather than a place.

What else is in these hills

Kukna and Gamit households make the same forest craft as their neighbours across the line: split-bamboo granary liners, fish traps, winnowing fans, grass matting and roofing. Dang is Gujarat's wettest district and its most forested, and almost none of this reaches a market or a register.

Why the volume keeps meeting this

The Maharashtra volume records Warli under Palghar. This one records it under Dang and Valsad. Both are correct, and a reader comparing the two would reasonably conclude they are different crafts. They are one craft and one community, mapped twice, because craft documentation is organised by state and culture is not.

The same is true three more times in this series

Mashru is woven in Patan and in Kutch and in Marathwada. Ajrakh is made in Kutch and in Sindh. Bidri is worked in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar and registered to Bidar in Karnataka. In each case the state line cuts through the craft, and the register follows the line rather than the craft.

PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOOT • THE DANGS

A painted house wall in situ, with the doorway in frame — the thing that canvas Warli loses. Then split bamboo drying against a wall, documentary, no styling.

What still needs to be shot

This edition is illustrated with original drawn panels so that it can be read, circulated and costed before the photography budget is committed. Every drawing sits in a live photo slot: put a folder named `photos/` beside this file, name each image after its craft id — `kota-doria.jpg` — and it appears here and in the interactive explorer automatically, with the drawing as the fallback. The explorer exports the full filename list as a spreadsheet. This is the shot list.

Cover and openers

5 region openers need one horizontal hero each: a working hand, not a finished object. Shoot at the printing table, the lathe, the kiln, the pit loom, the quarry face.

Every craft card

One object frame, square, plain mid-grey ground, single soft key light from the left, no props. Consistency across sixty-two objects matters more than beauty in any one.

Process sequences

Bandhej tying, dabu resist printing, blue pottery moulding, meenakari firing, thewa fusing, Kota Doria warping. Four to seven frames each, same lens, same height, shot in one sitting.

Detail macros

Thewa gold against glass · the knot density of a fine bandhej · Sangneri block face · mirror couching on kashidakari · Jaisalmer jaali in raking light.

The people

Portraits at the workplace, environmental, eye level. Name, age, years at the craft and consent recorded for every single frame — no exceptions, including for children in shot.

The places

Maniharon ka Rasta · Sangner's drying fields · Molela's plaque yard · Nathdwara's painting rooms · the Makrana quarry face · a Shekhawati haveli courtyard.

Credit and consent

Every artisan photographed is credited by name in the caption, and holds a signed release. Where a craft is a community's ritual property — Bhil vow paintings, Molela plaques, kavad — permission is sought from the community, not only the individual.

Licensing

Commission with full print and digital rights for the trust, and a non-exclusive licence back to the artisan for their own promotion. Artisans should be able to use photographs of their own work.

Specification

Minimum 300 dpi at 200mm on the long edge. Raw retained. Colour-managed to a grey card shot on location — textile and enamel colour is the single most common failure in craft publishing.

This is a first edition, and it is wrong somewhere

Craft mapping is not a publication. It is a register that has to be kept. Sixty-two entries is a beginning; Gujarat almost certainly holds twice that number, and eleven of the entries here are still marked for field confirmation.

Four things would change the next edition materially, and all four need people outside this office.

1 · Correct an entry

Wrong district, wrong community, wrong technique, wrong tense — a craft listed as living that has ended, or listed as ended that has not. Corrections are the most valuable contribution.

3 · Name a maker

Volume II is the artisan register. A name, a village, a craft and a way to reach them is enough to start a record.

2 · Add a craft

If it is made by hand, transmitted rather than taught, and still practised, it belongs here — including crafts with no market and no name.

4 · Adopt a district

currently carry no entry at all. Each needs about a week of field survey. Institutions and design schools can take one district each.

What a good entry looks like

Craft name, in English and the local language · district and nearest town · community or communities · materials and where they come from · one paragraph on technique · roughly how many households still practise it · whether it is sold, and to whom · your name and how you know.

Who made this, and why

Tisser Artisans Trust was founded in 2015 to work with rural artisans through a value-chain approach — design and product development, producer organisations, market access and fair pricing — with a particular focus on women artisans. It works with a network of artisans across India.

This map exists because that work kept running into the same problem: there was no single register of what a state actually makes, where, and by whom. This is the Gujarat volume of that register.

Standing acknowledgement

Compiled from the public record of the Geographical Indications Registry, Chennai; state ODOP, handloom and handicraft cluster documentation; museum, university and craft survey material; and published reporting on individual clusters. Where sources disagreed, the entry is marked for field check rather than resolved on paper.

All illustration, cartography and diagrams in this volume are original work made for it. The maps are schematic and carry no cartographic authority.

Tisser
hand to heart

Artisans Trust

Craft mapping initiative · First edition · Working draft
World Trade Center, Mumbai · tisser.in