

Tisser

hand to heart

ARTISANS TRUST

CRAFT MAPPING INITIATIVE · MAHARASHTRA

Maharashtra: A Journey Through Crafts

महाराष्ट्र : हस्तकलेचा प्रवास

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-six 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 PIGMENT

Sawantwadi Ganjifa

सावंतवाडी गंजिफा

SINDHUDURG

Chitari painters, under Sawantwadi royal patronage

Hand-painted circular playing cards, lacquer-sealed. The Dashavatara pack runs to ten suits of twelve; Mughal, Navagraha, Rashi and bird-and-animal packs are also painted. Card blanks were once tamarind-seed paste and cloth; today they are painted in tempera and sealed in lac.

GI 812

● AT RISK

▲ 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 6 regions

Colour follows Maharashtra's revenue divisions — the unit that district industry offices, handloom schemes and ODOP funding actually use.

 Konkan Coast, laterite and lacquer	 Pune & the Desh Leather, silver, copper, sound
 Nashik & Khandesh Zari, wool and the Satpuda line	 Marathwada The Deccan Sultanate inheritance
 Amravati & Berar Cotton country and the tandas	 Nagpur & East Vidarbha Tussar, bamboo and the saw-tooth border

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 Maharashtra 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

Marathwada's smaller districts — Jalna, Beed, Latur, Hingoli — are thinly represented here, almost certainly because they are thinly documented, not because they are thinly skilled. The same is true of Ahilyanagar and of the Konkan interior. Urban craft inside Mumbai is undercounted for the opposite reason: it is classified as industry.

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 36-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, eleven material families

62

craft entries mapped in this first edition, across 36 districts

14

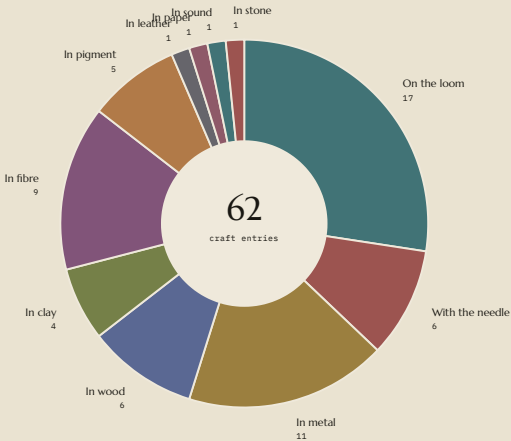
handicraft geographical indications registered to Maharashtra, one of them shared with other states

35

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

15

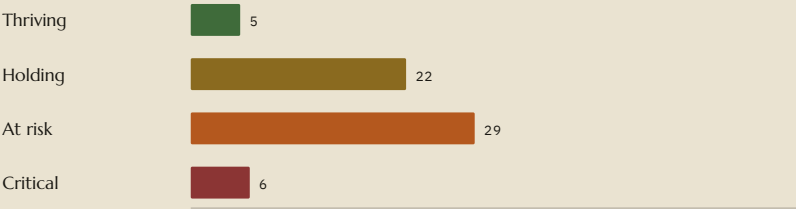
entries still awaiting a field visit before they can be called confirmed



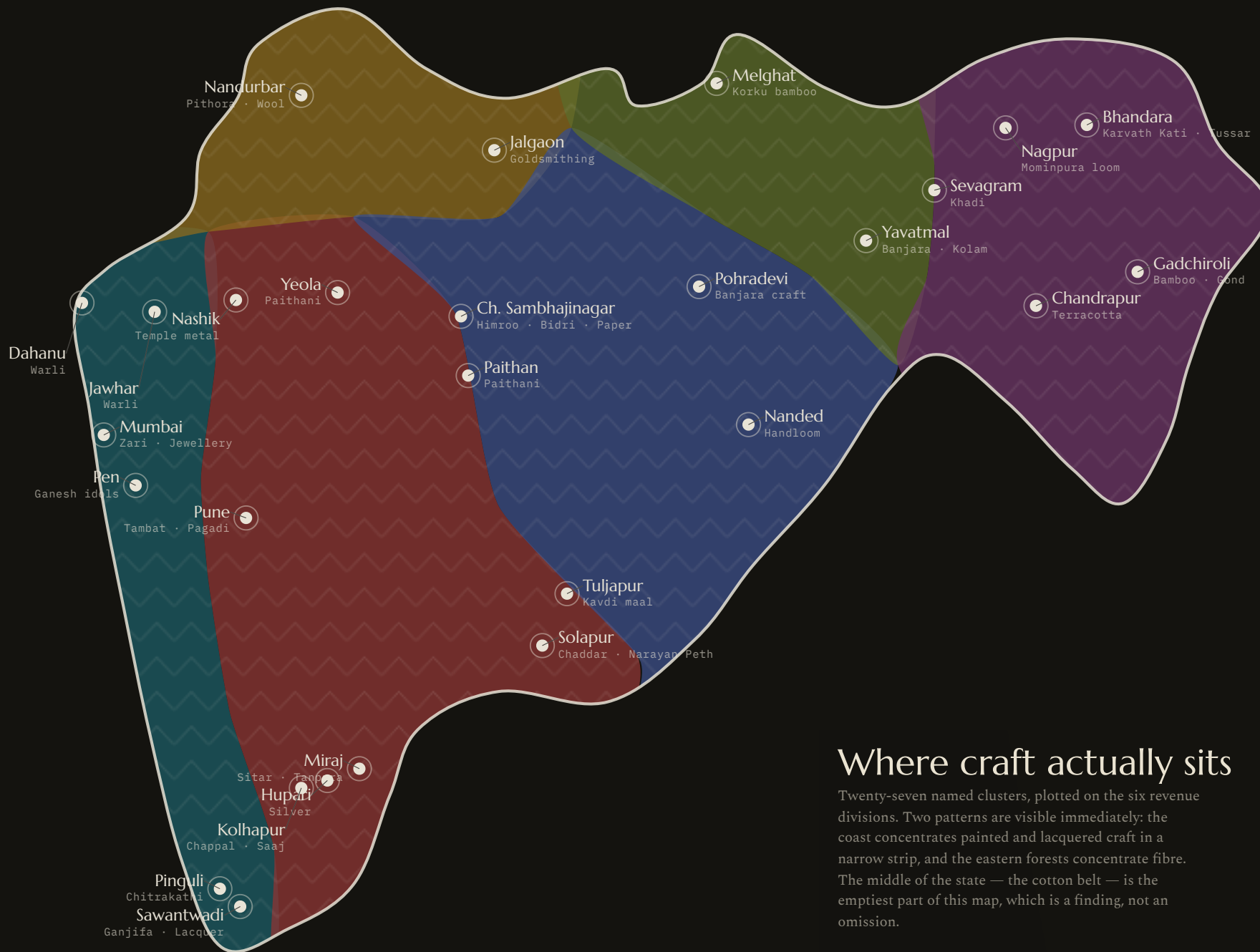
What the shape of the wheel says
Maharashtra is usually described as a textile state, and the loom does hold the largest share. But the second and third largest families are fibre and metal — bamboo, cane and cowrie on one side, copper, silver and zinc alloy on the other. That is a plateau-and-forest economy, not a weaving economy.

Only one entry sits in the paper family and one in sound. Both are single-cluster crafts: lose the cluster and the family empties.

Vitality across all entries



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

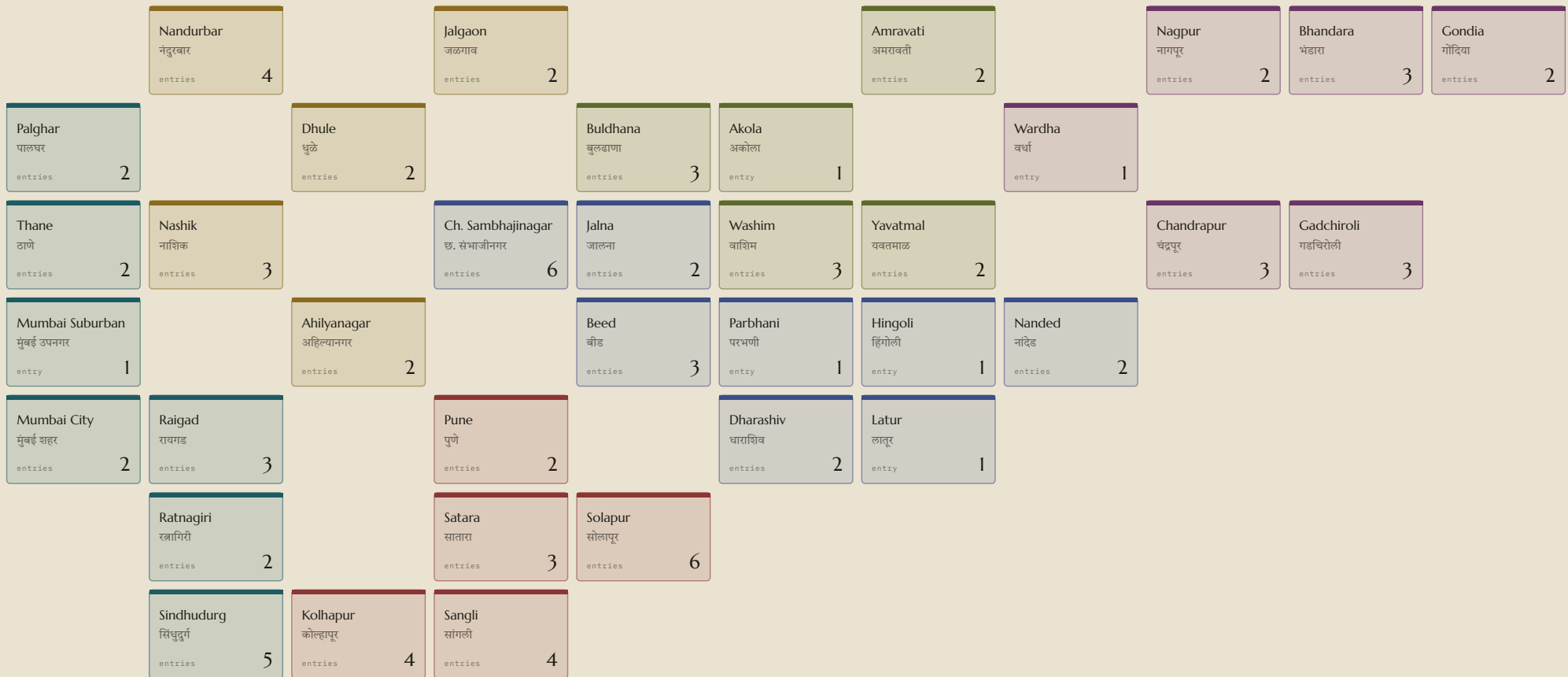


Where craft actually sits

Twenty-seven named clusters, plotted on the six revenue divisions. Two patterns are visible immediately: the coast concentrates painted and lacquered craft in a narrow strip, and the eastern forests concentrate fibre. The middle of the state — the cotton belt — is the emptiest part of this map, which is a finding, not an omission.

All thirty-six 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.



Fourteen protected handicrafts

APP.	GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION	PLACE	REGISTERED	SCOPE
8	Solapur Chaddar	Solapur	05.04.2004	Maharashtra
9	Solapur Terry Towel	Solapur	20.05.2004	Maharashtra
128	Puneri Pagadi	Pune	10.06.2008	Maharashtra
150 & 153	Paithani Sarees and Fabrics	Paithan · Yeola	05.01.2009	Maharashtra
169	Kolhapuri Chappal	Kolhapur belt	04.05.2009	Shared
239	Warli Painting	Palghar · Thane	06.07.2011	Shared
390	Karvath Kati Sarees and Fabrics	Bhandara · Nagpur	07.01.2013	Maharashtra
791	Miraj Tanpura	Sangli	08.11.2021	Maharashtra
792	Hupari Silver Craft	Kolhapur	08.11.2021	Maharashtra
793	Miraj Sitar	Sangli	08.11.2021	Maharashtra
806	Sawantwadi Wooden Craft	Sindhudurg	22.12.2021	Maharashtra
812	Sawantwadi Ganjifa Cards	Sindhudurg	10.01.2022	Maharashtra
949	Pen Ganesh Idol	Raigad	29.08.2022	Maharashtra
952	Kavdi Maal of Tuljapur	Dharashiv	29.08.2022	Maharashtra

Registered in other classes

385	Nagpur Orange	Nagpur · shared with Madhya Pradesh	Agricultural
240	Kolhapur Jaggery	Kolhapur	Food stuff
123	Nashik Valley Wine	Nashik	Manufactured

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. Maharashtra has 14 handicraft tags and very few authorised users.

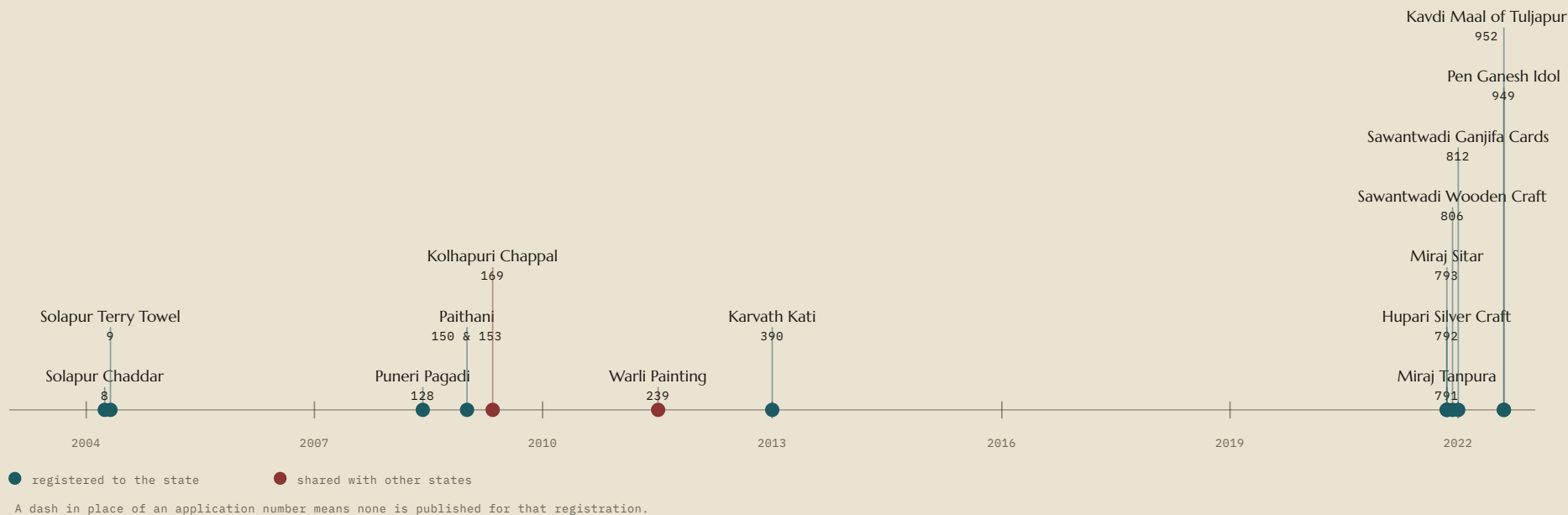
Significant crafts with no protection

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

Banjara Handicrafts & Mirror Work	Vidarbha & Marathwada tandas
Terracotta of Pen	Raigad
Copperware of Pune	Pune
Himroo and Mashru	Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar — never filed
Kagzipura handmade paper	Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar — never filed

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.

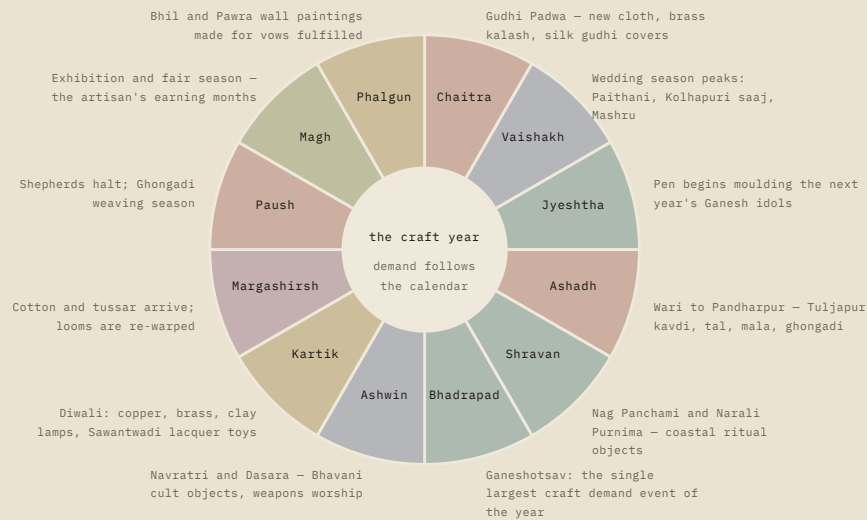
2023 · Five in one day

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. Kavad. 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.

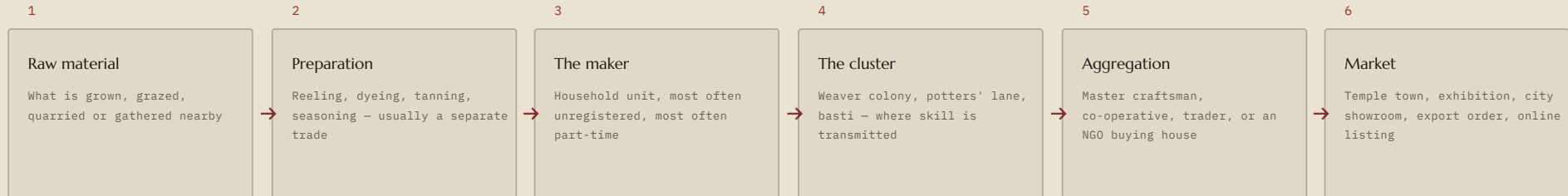
The crafts that run against the year

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. Maharashtra 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 six regions

Maharashtra

महाराष्ट्र

WHY CRAFT SITS WHERE IT SITS

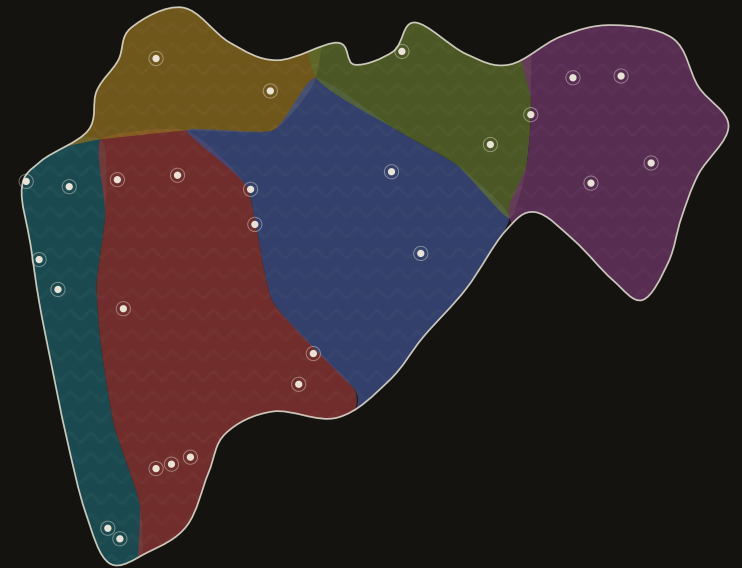
Three hundred and seven thousand square kilometres, six revenue divisions, thirty-six districts — and a craft map that is not evenly spread across any of them. This chapter sets out the three forces that put each craft where it is: the ground it is made from, the courts that paid for it, and the communities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

TERRAIN

DYNASTIES

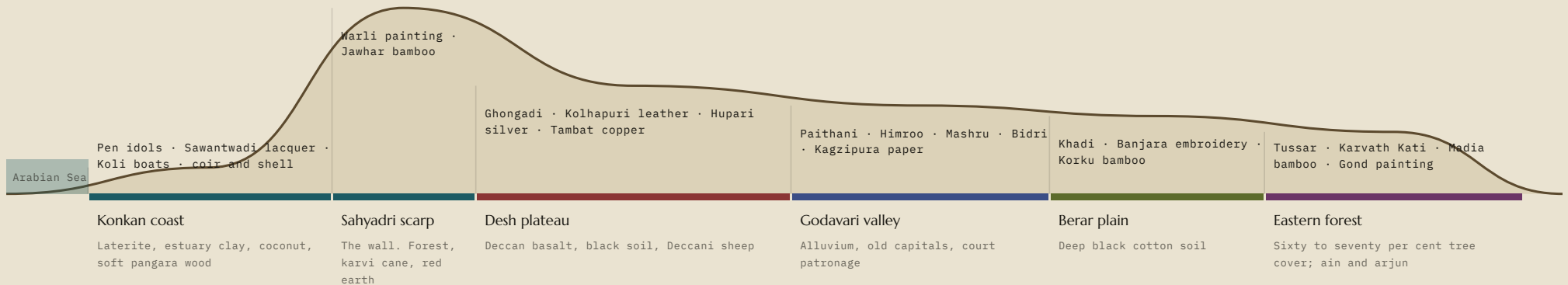
COMMUNITIES

MATERIALS



Six landscapes, west to east

Maharashtra falls in bands. The sea, then a narrow coastal shelf, then the Sahyadri wall, then eight hundred kilometres of basalt plateau tilting gently east into forest. Craft follows those bands more faithfully than it follows any administrative line — which is why a map drawn by district will always mislead slightly, and a map drawn by terrain will not.



west ← the Arabian Sea

the Chhattisgarh 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 Maharashtra holds so many techniques whose original customer no longer exists.

c. 200 BCE – 200 CE	 Satavahana	Paithan on the Godavari is an imperial capital and a trading city. Its silk reaches Rome through the Konkan ports.	Paithani begins
3rd – 5th century	 Vakataka	Ajanta is painted under Vakataka patronage, eighty kilometres from Paithan.	The motif vocabulary
12th – 14th century	 Yadava of Devagiri	A Marathi-speaking court at Devagiri; temple building across the Desh and the Godavari valley.	Temple metal, stone
1327	 Tughlaq	Muhammad bin Tughlaq moves the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad. The court returns; the trades it brought do not.	Himroo · Kagzipura paper
14th – 17th century	 Bahmani and the Deccan Sultanates	Persian and Turkic craft vocabulary settles permanently into the Deccan.	Bidri · Mashru
17th – 18th century	 Maratha	A new court aesthetic – martial, portable, unmistakably regional – spreads from the fort belt.	Kolhapuri saaj · footwear
18th century	 Peshwa Pune	Pune becomes an administrative capital. Craft organises into urban guild lanes named after the trade.	Tambat Ali · Puneri pagadi
18th – 20th century	 The princely states	Sawantwadi, Kolhapur and Miraj sustain court workshops long after the empires end.	Ganjifa · lacquer · sitar
19th century	 Colonial Berar	Berar cotton is pulled into ginning and export. Local spinning, dyeing and weaving are hollowed out.	The emptiest map region
1930s – 1940s	 Wardha and the charkha	Gandhi makes hand-spinning a political argument from Sevagram, in the middle of the cotton belt.	Khadi institutions
1950s – 1990s	 Co-operatives	Handloom boards, weaver societies and emporia. Craft is organised as welfare rather than as enterprise.	Survival, thin margins
2004 – 2026	 The GI era	Fourteen handicraft registrations, eight of them after 2021. Protection arrives – enforcement mostly does not.	Names, at last

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.

Weaving

Koshti	Vidarbha, Nagpur
Padmashali	Solapur
Devanga	Solapur, Sangli
Sali	Paithan, Yeola
Momin / Ansari	Mominpura, Nagpur

Earth and fibre

Kumbhar	potters, statewide
Burud	bamboo and cane
Kagzi	Kagzipura — paper
Vadar	stone dressing

Painting and performance

Chitari	Sawantwadi — Ganjifa, lacquer
Thakar	Pinguli — Chitrakathi, puppets

Adivasi — west

Warli	Palghar
Kokna	Palghar, Nandurbar
Mahadev Koli	Jawhar
Bhil · Pawra	Satpuda

Formerly nomadic

Banjara / Lambani	tandas across Vidarbha and Marathwada
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Metal

Tambat	Pune — copper
Kasar	brass vessels
Otari	casting
Sonar	gold and silver

Leather

Chambhar	Kolhapur belt — footwear
Dhor	bag tanning

Pastoral

Dhangar	Deccani sheep, Ghongadi
Sangar	wool weaving

Adivasi — east

Gond · Pardhan	Gadchiroli, Chandrapur
Madia	Gadchiroli
Korku	Melghat
Kolam	Yavatmal — PVTG

Coast

Koli	Mumbai, Thane, Raigad — boats and nets
------	--

Nothing here travels far before it is made

From the animal

● Deccani sheep
→ Ghongadi

● Bag-tanned hide
→ Kolhapuri chappal

● Tussar cocoon
→ Karvath Kati

● Cowrie shell
→ Kavdi maal

From the ground

● Shadu clay
→ Pen idols

● Zinc and copper
→ Bidri

● Fort earth
→ Bidri oxidising

● Deccan basalt
→ Vadar stone work

From the forest

● Bamboo, karvi
→ Gadchiroli baskets

● Pangara, hedu
→ Sawantwadi toys

● Babul bark
→ Vegetable tanning

● Lac
→ Lacquer turnery

From the field

● Berar cotton
→ Khadi

● Mulberry silk
→ Paithani

● Rag and cotton waste
→ Kagzipura paper

● Pandharpur gourd
→ Miraj tanpura

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 Maharashtra 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 06

Konkan

कोंकण

COAST, LATERITE AND LACQUER

A 720-kilometre coastal shelf between the Sahyadri wall and the Arabian Sea. Its crafts are made from what the coast yields — soft pangara and hedu wood, laterite-red earth, coconut, cane, fish-leather glue and lac. Two royal-patronage traditions (Sawantwadi's lacquer workshops and the Thakar storytellers of Pinguli) sit beside the largest ritual-image industry in India, at Pen.

MUMBAI CITY

MUMBAI SUBURBAN

THANE

PALGHAR

RAIGAD

RATNAGIRI

SINDHUDURG





IN PIGMENT

Sawantwadi Ganjifa

सावंतवाडी गंजिफा

SINDHUDURG

Chitari painters, under Sawantwadi royal patronage

Hand-painted circular playing cards, lacquer-sealed. The Dashavatara pack runs to ten suits of twelve; Mughal, Navagraha, Rashi and bird-and-animal packs are also painted. Card blanks were once tamarind-seed paste and cloth; today they are painted in tempera and sealed in lac.

GI 812

● AT RISK



IN WOOD

Sawantwadi Wooden Craft

सावंतवाडी लाकूडकाम

SINDHUDURG

Chitari community

Lacquer-turned toys, fruit sets, boxes and bullock carts in soft pangara and hedu wood. Colour is applied on a spinning lathe by pressing a lac stick against the turning form — the heat of friction melts and bonds the pigment.

GI 806

● HOLDING



IN PIGMENT

Pinguli Chitrakathi

पिंगुली चित्रकथी

SINDHUDURG

Thakar Adivasi community, Pinguli village near Kudal

Picture-storytelling. Paintings roughly 12×18 inches, in natural reds, yellows and greens, are turned one by one while a sutradhar sings the Ramayana, Mahabharata or Nandi Purana to the vina, taal and huduk. Fewer than a handful of families still perform it.

LIVING TRADITION

● CRITICAL



IN WOOD

Kalsutri Bahulya & Shadow Puppets

कलसुत्री बाहुल्या

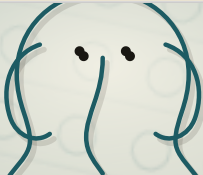
SINDHUDURG

Thakar puppeteers

String marionettes carved from light pangara wood, and translucent painted leather figures for shadow play behind a lit cloth screen. Part of a repertoire of eleven Thakar art forms, most of which are no longer performed.

LIVING TRADITION

● CRITICAL



IN CLAY

Pen Ganesh Idols

पेणचे गणपती

RAIGAD

Hundreds of workshops in and around Pen town

The largest ritual-image cluster in India. Moulded in shadu clay and plaster, dried, primed and painted by hand. The annual cycle is set entirely by Ganeshotsav; work on next year's idols begins within weeks of the last immersion.

GI 949

CLUSTER

● THRIVING



IN PIGMENT

Warli Painting

वारली चित्रकला

PALGHAR · THANE

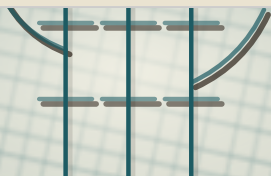
Warli community; Dahanu, Jawhar, Talasari

Rice-paste white on a cow-dung-and-earth ground. Built from three shapes — circle, triangle, square — and organised around the tarpa dance spiral and the marriage-square chauk of Palghata. Ritual wall art that became the state's best-known export.

GI 239

SHARED GI

● THRIVING



IN FIBRE

Jawhar Bamboo & Warli Wall Work

जव्हार बांबूकाम

PALGHAR

Warli, Kokna and Mahadev Koli households

Grain bins, winnowing fans, fish traps and roof screens in split bamboo and karvi, made to domestic order rather than for sale. The same households now supply mural and canvas work to urban buyers.

TRIBAL CLUSTER

● HOLDING



IN WOOD

Koli Boat & Net Craft

कोळी नौकाकाम

MUMBAI · THANE · RAIGAD

Koli fishing communities of Versova, Karanja, Uran

Plank-built fishing craft, hand-knotted nets and cane fish traps, still made in the working koliwadadas inside the metropolitan region. Under-documented as craft because it is classified as an occupation.

FIELD-CHECK

● HOLDING



WITH THE NEEDLE

Zari, Zardozi & Jewellery Ateliers

जरी व जडावकाम

MUMBAI CITY · SUBURBAN

Karkhana workshops, largely migrant karigars

Metal-thread embroidery and fine setting work concentrated in the city's bullion and garment districts. Mumbai functions as the state's finishing floor — much rural craft passes through it before reaching a market.

ODOP: GEMS & JEWELLERY

● HOLDING



IN FIBRE

Coconut Shell & Cane Ware

नारळ करवंटी काम

RATNAGIRI · SINDHUDURG

Household units across the coastal talukas

Ladles, bowls, lamps and buttons cut and polished from coconut shell; baskets and mats in cane and screwpine. A low-capital craft that expands and contracts with the tourist season.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN WOOD

Kokan Lacquer & Wood Turnery

कोकण लाखकाम

RATNAGIRI

Turners along the Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg belt

An extension of the Sawantwadi lathe tradition down the coast: cradles, rolling pins, toys and ritual objects finished in coloured lac.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN CLAY

Alibag & Chaul Pottery

अलिबाग मृत्तिकाकाम

RAIGAD

Kumbhar potters of the Raigad coast

Wheel-thrown storage jars, water pots and roof tiles from estuarine clay. A GI application for Terracotta of Pen was filed and refused; the cluster remains unprotected.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK

Ganjifa: a game played with a hundred and twenty paintings



Ganjifa came into the Deccan through the Mughal court and stayed in the Konkan under the Sawantwadi royal house, where the Chitari painters made it their own. The Dashavatara pack takes ten suits — one for each incarnation of Vishnu — of twelve cards each: ten numbered pips, a vizier and a king.

The cards are round, small enough to hold in a fan, and painted individually. A blank was once cut from cloth stiffened with tamarind-seed paste; today it is board. Colour goes on in tempera, then the surface is sealed with lac so the card survives handling.

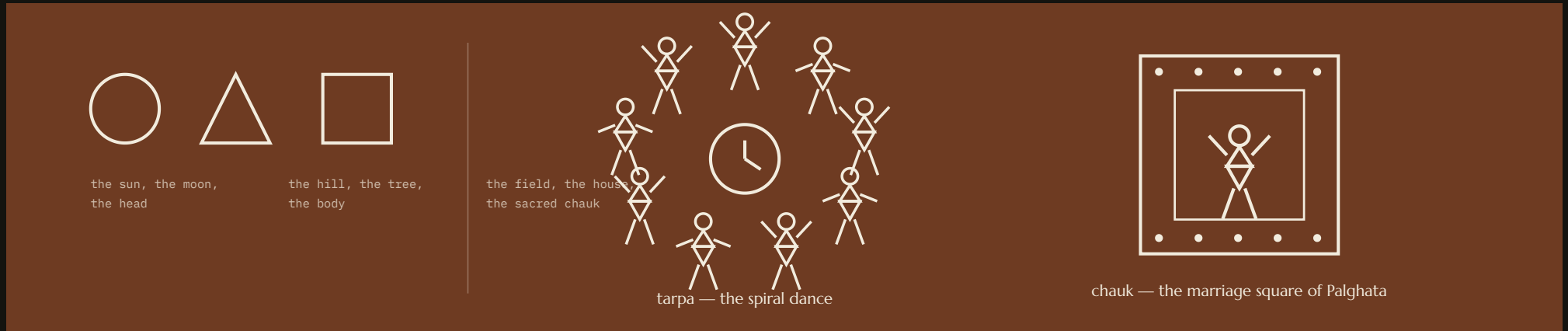
Why it nearly ended, and why it did not

The game stopped being played long before the painting stopped being made. What kept the craft alive was its second life as an object — collectors, museums and finally a GI in 2022. Sawantwadi now paints Mughal, Navagraha, Rashi, zodiac and bird-and-animal packs alongside the Dashavatara.

PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOOT · SAWANTWADI

A full Dashavatara pack laid out in ten arcs on a dark ground, top-down, raking light to catch the lac. Second frame: the painter's hand, brush loaded, card held against the thumb.

Warli: three shapes, and everything made from them



The ground and the line

The wall is prepared with cow dung and red earth. The line is rice paste, drawn with a chewed bamboo twig. Two materials, one colour, no shading — the entire vocabulary comes from the circle, the triangle and the square.

The chauk is not decoration

The marriage square, holding the mother goddess Palghata, is painted by married women for a wedding and is the only part of the tradition that was ritually restricted. Everything around it — hunt, harvest, tarpa dance, village life — is the world in which the marriage happens.

From wall to canvas

Warli left the wall in the 1970s and became the state's most exported craft. That brought income to Palghar and a flood of unattributed copying. The 2011 GI covers the painting across four territories; enforcement against machine-printed Warli remains almost non-existent.

Region 02 of 06

Pune & the Desh

पुणे व देश

LEATHER, SILVER, COPPER, SOUND

The Deccan plateau heartland of the Maratha and Peshwa courts. Craft here is urban, guild-organised and metal-heavy: the coppersmiths of Tambat Ali, the silver anklet town of Hupari, the bag-tanned leather chain that produces the Kolhapuri chappal, and the only cluster in India making concert sitars and tanpuras to a single, protected specification — Miraj.

PUNE

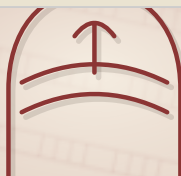
SATARA

SANGLI

SOLAPUR

KOLHAPUR





IN LEATHER

Kolhapuri Chappal

कोल्हापुरी चप्पल

KOLHAPUR · SANGLI · SATARA · SOLAPUR

Chambhar and Dhor artisan families

Made entirely from bag-tanned leather — hide cured in babul bark and myrobalan fruit, never chrome. Sole, upper and heel are all vegetable-tanned; the braided kanwal and hand-plaited toe loop are stitched without nails.

GI 169 SHARED GI

● THRIVING



IN METAL

Hupari Silver Craft

हुपरी चांदीकाम

KOLHAPUR

Hupari town — several thousand families in a single trade

Anklets, toe-rings and chain in drawn silver wire. Hupari supplies a large share of India's silver anklet market; the craft is organised as a dense home-based supply chain rather than as individual studios.

GI 792 CLUSTER

● HOLDING



IN METAL

Kolhapuri Saaj

कोल्हापुरी साज

KOLHAPUR

Goldsmiths of Kolhapur city

A necklace of twenty-one leaf-shaped pendants — each a jav or motif of a plant, creature or deity — closed with a taviz. Worn as a mark of marriage; the form is specific enough that it functions as a regional signature.

SIGNATURE FORM

● HOLDING



IN SOUND

Miraj Sitar & Tanpura

मिरज सतार व तानपुरा

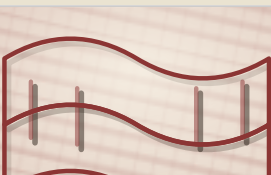
SANGLI

Instrument-making families of Miraj, since the nineteenth century

Gourds grown to size in Pandharpur, seasoned teak and tun for the neck, bone and horn inlay. Miraj is the only town in India with separate protected specifications for both the sitar and the tanpura.

GI 793 GI 791

● HOLDING



ON THE LOOM

Solapur Chaddar

सोलापूर चादर

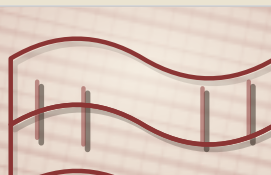
SOLAPUR

Padmashali and Devanga weaver communities

Heavy jacquard cotton bedcovers, woven double-warp for a reversible face. The first product from Maharashtra to receive a GI, in 2004; the cluster was built by weavers who migrated from the Telugu country in the nineteenth century.

GI 8 FIRST GI IN THE STATE

● HOLDING



ON THE LOOM

Solapur Terry Towel

सोलापूर टेरी टॉवेल

SOLAPUR

Solapur powerloom and handloom units

Loop-pile cotton towelling with woven-in borders. Registered a month after the Chaddar, and the reason Solapur is the only district in the state with two textile GIs.

GI 9

● HOLDING



ON THE LOOM

Ghongadi Wool Blankets

घोंगडी

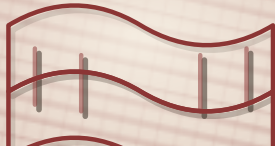
SANGLI • SOLAPUR • SATARA

Dhangar and Sangar shepherd communities

Coarse black-brown blankets woven from the wool of Deccani sheep on a pit loom, taking about a week to complete. Water-resistant, near-indestructible, and used as bedding, raincoat, floor seat and ritual object.

PASTORAL CRAFT

● AT RISK



ON THE LOOM

Khana / Khunn Blouse Fabric

खण

SANGLI • KOLHAPUR

Weavers of the Maharashtra-north Karnataka belt

Short-length silk-cotton yardage woven specifically for blouses, in strong contrast colours with a small repeat butta. Traded across the state line for generations; increasingly reworked into contemporary garments.

CROSS-BORDER TRADITION

● AT RISK



WITH THE NEEDLE

Puneri Pagadi

पुणेरी पगडी

PUNE

A small number of pagadi-makers in the old city

A flat-topped, forward-tilted turban of stiffened cloth, worn in the Peshwa court and later adopted as civic dress by Pune's public figures. Now largely ceremonial — and produced by very few hands.

GI 128

● HOLDING



IN METAL

Tambat Copperware

तांबट कला

PUNE

Tambat coppersmiths of Tambat Ali, Kasba Peth

Sheet copper raised and planished by hand into water vessels, cooking pots and temple ware. The matt hammered surface — thousands of overlapping strikes — is the maker's signature. A GI application for Copperware of Pune was filed and refused.

URBAN CLUSTER

● AT RISK



IN METAL

Wai & Satara Stone Carving

दगडी कोरीवकाम

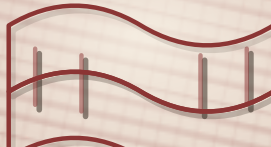
SATARA

Stone carvers along the Krishna ghats

Basalt image-carving and temple repair work on the river ghats at Wai, sustained by restoration commissions rather than by new construction.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



ON THE LOOM

Ganga-Jamuna Sarees

गंगा-जमुना साडी

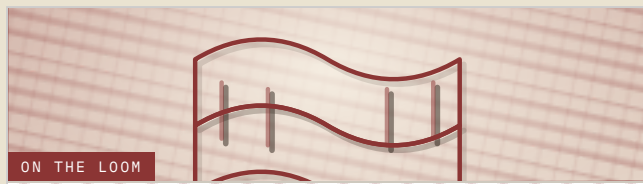
SOLAPUR

Solapur handloom weavers

Two-tone sarees named for the meeting of two rivers — one border in gold, the facing border in silver, or two contrasting colours run along the same length.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



ON THE LOOM

Narayan Peth Sarees

नारायण पेंठ साडी

SOLAPUR

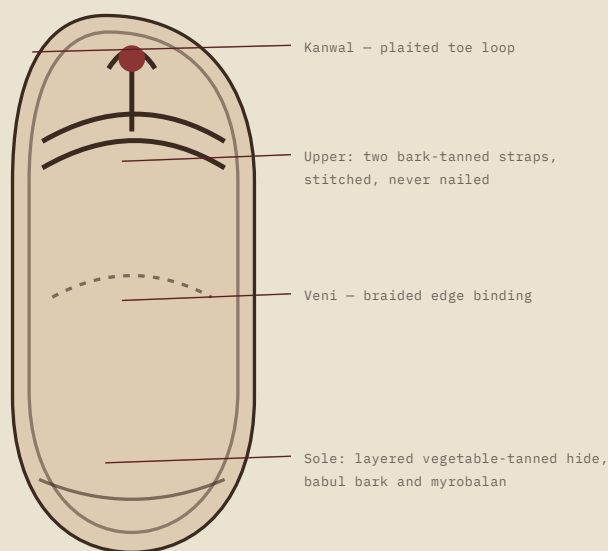
Padmashali and Devanga weavers of Solapur city

Cotton and silk-cotton sarees in strong plain colour with a contrast zari border and a distinctive chequered pallu. Named for a town now across the Telangana line, and woven in Solapur by the same Telugu-origin weaver communities that built the chaddar trade.

WEAVER CLUSTER

● HOLDING

The Kolhapuri, taken apart



The Kolhapuri is defined by its tannery, not its shape. The specification protected in 2019 is a material one: every part — sole, upper, heel — must be bag-tanned leather, cured in babul bark and myrobalan fruit, never chrome.



Where it is made

The protected belt runs across Kolhapur, Sangli, Satara and Solapur in Maharashtra and four districts of Karnataka — one of very few GIs in India held jointly by two states.

What threatens it

Not fashion. Bark-tanned hide is slower and dearer than chrome, and a machine-made lookalike costs a fifth as much. The craft's own specification is its commercial disadvantage — which is exactly what the tag exists to correct.

Two crafts that are really one supply chain

Miraj: gourd, teak, and a protected sound

Miraj has been building sitars and tanpuras since the nineteenth century, when the town's court drew musicians and the instrument makers followed. The resonating gourd is grown to size in the fields around Pandharpur, dried, cut and matched by ear. The neck is seasoned teak or tun; the frets are brass; bone and horn go into the inlay.

Both instruments hold separate geographical indications, registered together in 2021. That is unusual — it means the specification protected is not a shape but an acoustic result.

The supply chain nobody maps

A Miraj tanpura depends on a Pandharpur gourd farmer, a Konkan timber seasoner and a wire drawer. None of them is called a craftsperson. All of them can end the craft.

PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOOT · MIRAJ

Gourds racked by size in the drying loft, morning light from one side. Then a maker tapping a joined neck to test resonance — hands and ear in one frame.

Ghongadi: the blanket the flock pays for

Deccani sheep produce a coarse, springy, dark wool that no mill wants. The Dhangar shepherd communities have spun and woven it on pit looms for centuries into ghongadi — a blanket that repels water, survives decades, and doubles as raincoat, floor seat, bedding and ritual object. One takes about a week.

It is not sold as luxury and it is not protected. Its market is the village it comes from, and the wari — the pilgrimage to Pandharpur, where a ghongadi is the walking pilgrim's entire kit.

Why it matters beyond craft

Ghongadi is the last commercial reason to keep Deccani sheep. When the blanket goes, a breed and a grazing route go with it — which makes this entry a livestock question as much as a textile one.

PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOOT · SANGLI OR SOLAPUR

Pit loom in a courtyard, weaver seated below floor level, the dark warp running out into sunlight. Wide frame; keep the flock visible if it is there.

Region 03 of 06

Nashik & Khandesh

नाशिक व खानदेश

ZARI, WOOL AND THE SATPUDA LINE

Where the Tapi valley meets the Sahyadri. Yeola in Nashik now weaves more Paithani than Paithan itself; north of the Tapi, the Satpuda hills hold Bhil, Pawra and Kokna traditions of wall painting, wood and grass. The Dhangar shepherd routes that produce Ghongadi wool blankets begin in these uplands.

NASHIK

AHILYANAGAR

DHULE

NANDURBAR

JALGAON





ON THE LOOM

Yeola Paithani

येवला पैठणी

NASHIK

Several thousand weaving households in Yeola town

The larger of the two Paithani clusters. Silk warp, pure zari weft, and a tapestry pallu built by interlocking coloured wefts by hand — no shuttle passes the full width. A heavy saree can take a weaver a year.

GI 150 & 153

ODOP

● THRIVING



IN PIGMENT

Bhil & Pawra Wall Painting

भिल भित्तिचित्र

NANDURBAR · DHULE

Bhil and Pawra households of the Satpuda

Votive horse-and-rider paintings made on the interior wall of a house to fulfil a vow, commissioned from a lakhara and consecrated by a badva. The painting is an offering, not a picture — its making is the ritual.

RITUAL ART

● AT RISK



WITH THE NEEDLE

Ahirani & Banjara Embroidery

अहिराणी भरतकाम

DHULE · NANDURBAR · JALGAON

Khandeshi and Banjara women

Mirror shisha set in chain and cross stitch on cotton, worked in dense bands on cholis, bags and hangings. A GI application for Banjara Handicrafts and Mirror Work was filed from Maharashtra and refused; the tradition remains unprotected.

GI REFUSED

● AT RISK



IN FIBRE

Satpuda Bamboo & Grass

बांबू व गवतकाम

NANDURBAR

Bhil, Pawra and Kokna forest households

Storage bins, mats, brooms and roofing in bamboo, sabai and date-palm leaf. Almost entirely a subsistence craft, made in the months between sowing and harvest.

FOREST CRAFT

● HOLDING



ON THE LOOM

Ghongadi of the Shepherd Routes

घोंगडी

NANDURBAR · AHILYANAGAR

Dhangar shepherd families

The northern end of the same wool economy as the Desh: flocks move, wool is shorn on the route, and blankets are woven at the winter halt.

PASTORAL CRAFT

● AT RISK



IN METAL

Nashik Temple Metalware

नाशिक धातुकाम

NASHIK

Brass and copper workers around Panchavati and Trimbakeshwar

Lamps, kalash, puja vessels and bells produced for a continuous pilgrim market — an example of craft sustained by ritual demand rather than by design intervention.

PILGRIM ECONOMY

● HOLDING



IN WOOD

Rudraksha & Tulsi Mala

रुद्राक्ष माळ

NASHIK

Stringers at Trimbakeshwar and Nashik ghats

Sorting, grading, drilling and knotting of rudraksha, tulsi and sandal beads. Grading by mukhi — the number of natural clefts on the seed — is the skill that carries the value.

PILGRIM ECONOMY

● HOLDING



IN METAL

Jalgaon Goldsmithing

जळगाव सुवर्णकाम

JALGAON

Goldsmith families of Jalgaon city

A market town known across western India for hand-finished gold ornament. Machine-made chain now dominates volume, but hand-setting and repoussé finishing remain hand work.

TRADE CLUSTER

● THRIVING



IN METAL

Ahilyanagar Brass & Bell Metal

पितळकाम

AHILYANAGAR

Kasar metalworking families

Cast and spun brass household vessels and temple bells, supplying the Ahilyanagar and Nashik pilgrimage circuits.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK

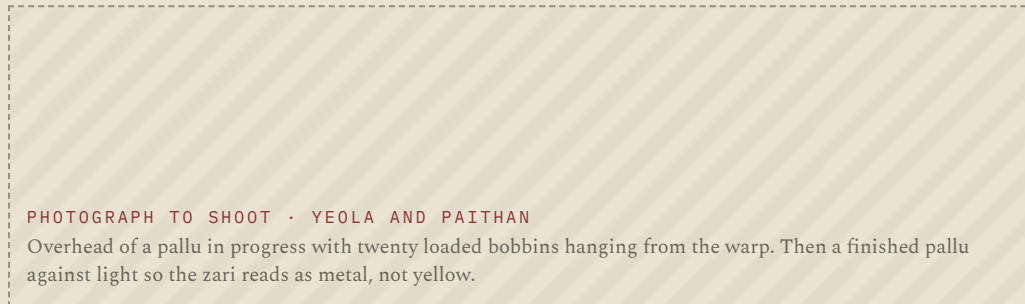
Two towns, one saree

Paithani is named for Paithan, on the Godavari, where it has been woven for close to two thousand years. Most Paithani sold today is woven in Yeola, a market town in Nashik district two hundred kilometres away. Both are covered by the same geographical indication, filed in two parts in 2009.

The migration was economic. Yeola had traders, road access and a labour pool; Paithan had the name. Today Yeola runs thousands of looms and Paithan runs hundreds — and the finest work still tends to be claimed by Paithan.

How the pallu is actually made

No shuttle crosses the full width of a Paithani pallu. The weaver builds the design by interlocking small bobbins of coloured silk against the warp, one motif at a time, turning the fabric into tapestry rather than brocade. There is no float on the reverse, and there is no way to speed it up. A heavy saree can take a year.



Motif glossary

Muniya

मुनिया

The parrot, in parrot green — the motif most associated with the saree, worked into border and pallu.

Asavali

असावली

A flowering vine climbing the border, taken from Persian garden imagery and absorbed early.

Bangdi mor

बांगडी मोर

Peacock in a bangle — a peacock drawn inside a circular frame, the most demanding pallu.

Narali

नारळी

The coconut border: a simple repeated triangle, the oldest and plainest of the edges.

Akruti

आकृती

Ajanta-derived figures and lotus medallions — the direct quotation from the caves eighty kilometres away.

Kadiyal

कड्याळ

Interlocked border: body and border in different colours, joined without a seam or a float.



Region 04 of 06

Marathwada

मराठवाडा

THE DECCAN SULTANATE INHERITANCE

Four capitals in five centuries — Devagiri, Daulatabad, Paithan, Khadki — left Marathwada with the state's densest concentration of court crafts. Paithani silk, Himroo and Mashru weaving, Bidri metal inlay and the 700-year-old rag-paper mills of Kagzipura all sit within eighty kilometres of one another.

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR

JALNA

BEED

DHARASHIV

LATUR

NANDED

PARBHANI

HINGOLI





ON THE LOOM

Paithani

पैठणी

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR (PAITHAN)

Weavers of Paithan on the Godavari

Called Mahavastra. Woven at Paithan for close to two millennia — the Satavahana capital traded its silk to Rome. Motifs read straight off the Ajanta ceilings: the muniya parrot, the lotus, the peacock, the asavali vine.

GI 150 & 153

ODOP

● HOLDING



ON THE LOOM

Himroo

हिमरू

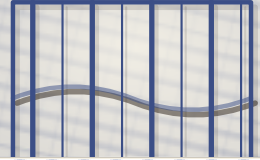
CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR

A handful of workshops in the old city

Silk-and-cotton figured weaving with an extra weft, brought to the Deccan when the Tughlaq capital moved to Daulatabad. Persian vines and arches on a cotton ground — a lighter, wearable answer to solid-silk kinkhwab. Very few looms remain.

CRITICALLY SMALL

● CRITICAL



ON THE LOOM

Mashru

मशरू

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR

Weavers working alongside the Himroo looms

Silk face, cotton back — from misru, 'mixed'. Satin-bound so that only silk touches the outside and only cotton touches the skin. Traditionally striped or zig-zagged; Gul Badan, Sangi and Ilaycha were the nineteenth-century types.

AT RISK

● CRITICAL



IN METAL

Bidri Metal Inlay

बिद्री काम

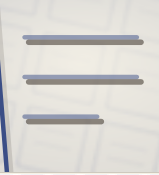
CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR

Bidri workers of the old Nizam's territory

Zinc-copper alloy cast, engraved, inlaid with pure silver, then blackened in a paste of soil taken from unlit fort earth. The soil reacts with the zinc, not the silver — so the ground goes matt black and the inlay stays bright.

GI HELD BY BIDAR

● AT RISK



IN PAPER

Kagzipura Handmade Paper

कागजीपुरा कागद

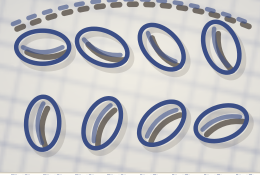
CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR

Kagzi papermaking families near Daulatabad

Rag paper beaten from cotton waste and old cloth — no tree is cut. The trade is said to have arrived with Muhammad bin Tughlaq's court and stayed when the court left. Manuscript paper from here once served the whole Deccan.

700-YEAR CLUSTER

● AT RISK



IN FIBRE

Kavdi Maal of Tuljapur

तुळजापूर कवडी माळ

DHARASHIV

Devotee-artisans at the Tulja Bhavani temple town

Garlands strung from cowrie shells, worn by Bhavani devotees and by Gondhali and Potraj performers. A ritual object with a registered geographical identity — one of very few in India in that category.

GI 952

● HOLDING



WITH THE NEEDLE

Banjara Tanda Embroidery

बंजारा भरतकाम

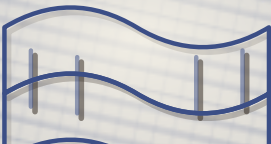
NANDED • HINGOLI • PARBHANI

Banjara (Lambani) women in tanda settlements

Mirror, cowrie and coin worked into heavy geometric bands on skirts, cholis and bags. Marathwada's tandas hold one of the largest concentrations of the tradition in the state.

GI REFUSED

● AT RISK



ON THE LOOM

Nanded Handloom

नांदेड हातमाग

NANDED

Weaver settlements at Kandhar and Degloor

Cotton and silk-cotton sarees on the Telangana border, sharing motif vocabulary with Narayanpet across the state line.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN FIBRE

Jalna & Beed Cane and Wood

बांबू व लाकूडकाम

JALNA • BEED

Burud basket-making households

Bamboo baskets, grain measures and cattle muzzles made for the sugarcane and cotton economies. Documented thinly; a priority for the next survey round.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN METAL

Paithan Zari Drawing

जरी ओढकाम

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR

Zari suppliers to the Paithani looms

The drawing and flattening of gold and silver-gilt wire that the Paithani weft depends on. An invisible craft: when it fails, the visible craft fails with it.

SUPPLY CRAFT

● CRITICAL



IN STONE

Vadar Stone Dressing

वडार दगडकाम

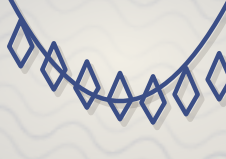
BEED • DHARASHIV • LATUR

Vadar community, traditional quarriers and stone dressers

Hand-cut grinding stones, jatas, thresholds, troughs and step blocks in Deccan basalt, worked by a community whose name is its trade. Mechanised quarrying has taken most of the volume; the dressing of domestic and ritual stone is what remains.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN METAL

Jalna and Beed Silver Ornament

चांदीचे दागिने

JALNA • BEED

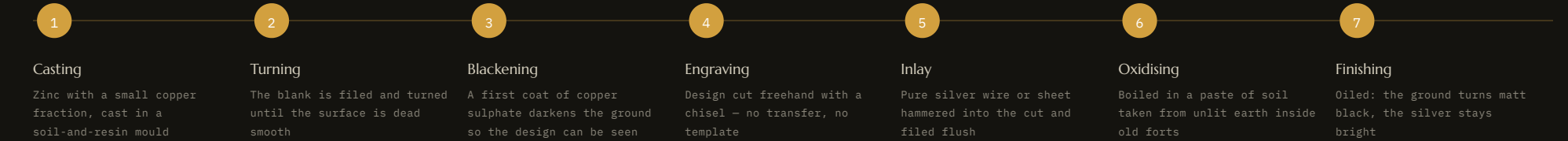
Sonar goldsmith families of the market towns

Regional silver — anklets, waistbands, toe rings and the heavy Marathwada necklace forms — made for an agricultural clientele that banks in metal. Documented thinly, and the clearest craft lead in two districts that otherwise carry almost nothing.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK

Bidri: the black comes out of the ground



Why the fort soil

The soil used for oxidising is prized because it is unweathered and unexposed — old fort interiors are the classic source. It reacts with the zinc in the alloy and not with the silver, which is why the contrast is total and permanent rather than a surface finish.

Whose craft is it

The geographical indication for Bidriware belongs to Bidar in Karnataka, where the technique is named for the town. But Bidri travelled with the Deccan Sultanates, and it has been worked in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar for as long as anyone can date. The craft here is real; the name is not available to it.

Marathwada's four court crafts

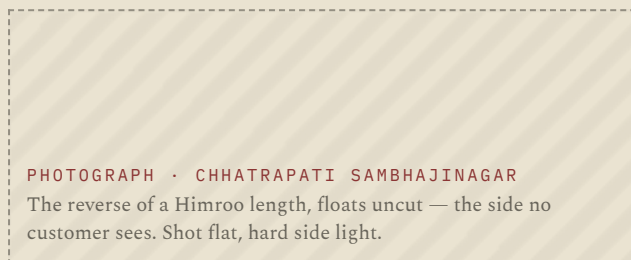
Bidri, Himroo, Mashru and Paithani are all within eighty kilometres of one another, and all four arrived or expanded under court patronage. When courts moved, the crafts stayed — which is why Marathwada holds the densest cluster of luxury technique in the state, and the thinnest market for it.

Himroo, Mashru, and a seven-hundred-year-old paper mill

Himroo

Silk figure on a cotton ground, made with a supplementary weft that floats across the face and is cut away behind. It arrived when the Tughlaq capital moved to Daulatabad and became the Deccan's affordable answer to solid-silk kinkhwab — Persian vines, arches and medallions at a weight you could actually wear.

Fewer looms run it now than at any point in its history. It is the most endangered entry in this volume that still has a functioning workshop.



PHOTOGRAPH • CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR

The reverse of a Himroo length, floats uncut — the side no customer sees. Shot flat, hard side light.

Mashru

From *misru*, mixed. A satin binding puts silk on the face and cotton against the skin, in bold stripes and zig-zags. It was worn where silk next to the body was avoided, and it is one of the few textiles whose structure exists to solve a religious question rather than an aesthetic one.

Gul Badan, Sangi, Ganta and Ilaycha were the nineteenth-century types. Mashru is also woven in Gujarat, at Mandvi and Patan — the Deccan line is the thinner of the two.

Kagzipura

A village on the road between Daulatabad and Ellora whose name simply means paper town. The kagzis beat rag and cotton waste into pulp, sheet it by hand and dry it in the sun — no tree is cut anywhere in the process. The trade is said to have arrived with Muhammad bin Tughlaq's court in the fourteenth century and stayed when the court went back to Delhi.

Its paper carried Deccan manuscripts for centuries. It now makes bags, folders and notebooks, kept alive by conservation-sector interest rather than by the writing market.

Three crafts, one argument

None of these three is protected. All three are single-cluster. Each is one workshop closure away from being a historical entry in a book like this one.

Region 05 of 06

Amravati & Berar

अमरावती व बऱ्हाड

COTTON COUNTRY AND THE TANDAS

The black-soil cotton belt of western Vidarbha. Craft survives here in two forms: the Korku bamboo and wood work of the Melghat forests, and the mirror-and-chain-stitch embroidery of the Banjara tandas — settlements of a formerly nomadic salt-trading people, scattered across Yavatmal, Washim and Buldhana.

AMRAVATI

AKOLA

BULDHANA

WASHIM

YAVATMAL



IN FIBRE

Korku Bamboo & Wood Craft

कोरकू बांबूकाम

AMRAVATI (MELGHAT)

Korku households of the Melghat hills

Split-bamboo baskets, granary liners, fish traps and carved wooden house posts. The Melghat tiger reserve buffer both supplies the raw material and restricts its collection.

FOREST CRAFT

● HOLDING

WITH THE NEEDLE

Banjara Mirror Work

बंजारा आरसाकाम

YAVATMAL • WASHIM • BULDHANA

Banjara tandas across western Vidarbha

Lepo, mirror and shell work in a colour palette — madder, indigo, saffron, white — that is recognisable across four states. Yavatmal's tandas are among the most active.

GI REFUSED

● AT RISK

IN FIBRE

Kolam Basketry

कोलाम टोपली

YAVATMAL

Kolam community, a PVTG of the Yavatmal forests

Fine coiled and woven bamboo work made for household use and barter. Recorded as skilled and specific; almost absent from craft marketing channels.

PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE GROUP

● AT RISK

ON THE LOOM

Berar Khadi & Handspun Cotton

बऱहाडी खादी

AKOLA • AMRAVATI • BULDHANA

Khadi Gramodyog societies of the cotton belt

Hand-spun, hand-woven cotton in the region that grows the fibre. Berar's cotton built the colonial ginning economy; khadi is what remains of local value addition.

GANDHIAN INSTITUTION

● AT RISK

IN CLAY

Lonar & Buldhana Pottery

कुंभारकाम

BULDHANA

Kumbhar potters around Lonar and Mehkar

Black-soil wheel pottery for water storage and ritual use, fired in open ground kilns.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK

IN WOOD

Washim Wood Turnery

लाकूडकाम

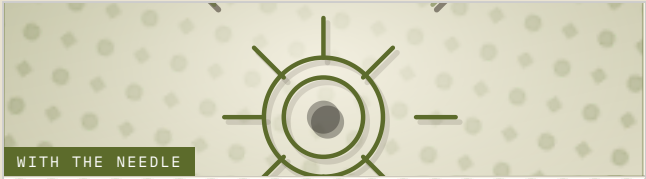
WASHIM

Turners and toy-makers of the Washim talukas

Lathe-turned toys, cradles and ritual objects, sometimes lac-finished. Reported but not yet surveyed.

FIELD-CHECK

● CRITICAL



Banjara Beadwork of Pohradevi

बंजारा मणीकाम

WASHIM (POHRADEVI)

Banjara women of the Pohradevi tandas

Pohradevi is the spiritual centre of the Banjara across India, and the trade in beaded jewellery, coin ornament and embroidered cloth runs on its pilgrim calendar. A state heritage museum opened here in 2024, which makes Washim the one Vidarbha district where Banjara craft has an institution behind it.

PILGRIMAGE CENTRE

HOLDING

The tandas: the largest craft nobody has a name for

The Banjara — Lambani, Gor — moved salt, grain and cattle across the Deccan for centuries before rail ended the trade and the caravans settled into tandas: hamlets set slightly apart from the villages they adjoin. Vidarbha and Marathwada hold hundreds of them.

The embroidery that came with them is one of the most immediately recognisable textile languages in India — mirror, cowrie, coin and cross-stitch banded across a red, indigo and saffron ground. It is worked almost entirely by women, almost entirely at home, and almost entirely outside any register.

What refusal cost

An application for Banjara Handicrafts and Mirror Work was filed from Maharashtra and refused by the registry. Karnataka's Sandur Lambani embroidery holds a tag; Maharashtra's does not. The same stitch, on the other side of a line, has a protected name — and a price difference to match.

What changed in 2024

Pohradevi in Washim — the community's principal pilgrimage centre — gained a state heritage museum devoted to Banjara culture. It is the first institution of its kind for this craft in Maharashtra, and it gives a scattered tradition one address.

Berar, and the emptiest part of the map

The five districts of this region grow a large share of Maharashtra's cotton and hold among the fewest craft entries in this volume. That is not an accident of surveying alone. Berar's cotton was pulled into colonial ginning and export in the nineteenth century, and local value addition — spinning, weaving, dyeing — was hollowed out early and never rebuilt.

What survives is at the two ends: khadi societies at the institutional end, and the Korku and Kolam forest crafts of Melghat and the Yavatmal hills at the other.

Kolam basketry

The Kolam are recognised as a particularly vulnerable tribal group. Their coiled and woven bamboo work is fine, specific and made for use rather than sale — which is precisely why it is invisible to every craft-marketing channel that exists.

Priority for the next round

Buldhana and Akola carry two entries each in this edition. A single week of field survey in each district would almost certainly double that.

Region 06 of 06

Nagpur & East Vidarbha

नागपूर व पूर्व विदर्भ

TUSSAR, BAMBOO AND THE SAW-TOOTH BORDER

Sixty per cent forest, and the only region in Maharashtra where the full silk cycle — cocoon rearing, reeling, weaving — happens in one district. Bhandara's saw-toothed Karvath Kati border is the region's signature; Gadchiroli and Chandrapur hold the state's largest bamboo craft economy, worked by Gond, Madia and Kolam artisans.

NAGPUR

WARDHA

BHANDARA

GONDIA

CHANDRAPUR

GADCHIROLI





ON THE LOOM

Karvath Kati Sarees

करवत काठी साडी

BHANDARA • NAGPUR

Weavers of Andhalgaon, Mohadi and Palandur

Karvat means saw. The border is a row of hard triangular teeth, and the temple-tower motif in the field is drawn from the Ramtek shrine. Woven in cotton, and — since Bhandara rears its own cocoons — in tussar.

GI 390 ODOP

● HOLDING



ON THE LOOM

Tussar Rearing & Reeling

टसर रेशीम

BHANDARA • GONDIA • GADCHIROLI

Forest households rearing cocoons on ain and arjun trees

The rare case where cocoon rearing, reeling and weaving all sit in one district. The yarn is uneven by nature, and that unevenness is what gives tussar its dry, gold-grey light.

WHOLE-CYCLE CRAFT

● HOLDING



ON THE LOOM

Mominpura Handloom

मोमीनपुरा हातमाग

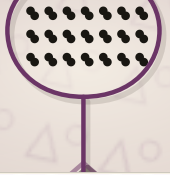
NAGPUR

Weaving families of Mominpura, Nagpur

A city weaving quarter producing Paithani- and Himroo-type figured cloth, stoles and dress material — a Vidarbha reading of Marathwada's court textiles.

URBAN WEAVING QUARTER

● AT RISK



IN PIGMENT

Gond & Pardhan Painting

गोंड चित्रकला

GADCHIROLI • CHANDRAPUR

Gond and Pardhan artists of eastern Vidarbha

Line-and-dot painting of animals, trees and clan stories. The better-known market sits in Madhya Pradesh, where the form holds a GI; Maharashtra's Gond belt is the same cultural region and remains largely unrecorded.

TRIBAL ART

● AT RISK



IN FIBRE

Madia & Gond Bamboo Craft

बांबू हस्तकला

GADCHIROLI • CHANDRAPUR

Madia, Gond and Burud artisans

Around seventy per cent of Gadchiroli is forest. Baskets, mats, furniture, lampshades and structural bamboo are made here at a scale unmatched in the state, and increasingly through community forest-rights enterprises.

LARGEST BAMBOO ECONOMY

● HOLDING



ON THE LOOM

Wardha Khadi & Charkha

वर्धा खादी

WARDHA

Institutions and societies around Sevagram

The charkha that Gandhi promoted from Wardha is still turned here. The district's ODOP product is cotton yarn — a rare instance of a craft technology, rather than an object, being named as a district's signature.

ODOP: COTTON YARN

● HOLDING



IN METAL

Bhandara Brass Ware

भंडारा पितळकाम

BHANDARA

Kasar and Otari metal-casting families

Cast and beaten brass vessels and lamps, historically enough of a trade to shape the district's identity. Present strength needs verification.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN CLAY

Chandrapur Terracotta

चंद्रपूर मृत्तिकाकाम

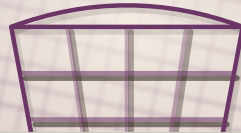
CHANDRAPUR

Kumbhar potters of the Chandrapur talukas

One of the pottery clusters named in national handicraft mapping. Storage vessels, votive figures and roof tile, fired in wood kilns.

RECOGNISED CLUSTER

● AT RISK



IN FIBRE

Gondia Bamboo & Forest Fibre

गोंदिया बांबूकाम

GONDIA

Burud and Gond households

Baskets, brooms, mats and rope from bamboo, sabai and date palm, made alongside paddy cultivation in the state's rice belt.

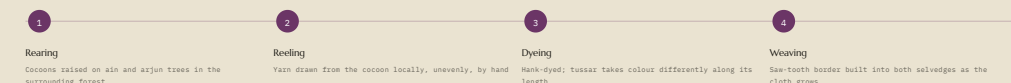
FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK

The saw-tooth border, and the silk that never leaves the district

Karvat means saw. The border of a Karvath Kati saree is a row of hard triangular teeth, woven in — not printed, not applied — along both edges, and the temple-tower motif in the field is drawn from the Ramtek shrine north of Nagpur. It is the only saree in Maharashtra whose signature is a shape rather than a colour or a fibre.

It began as a cotton gamchha border in the villages of Andhalgaon, Mohadi and Palandur in Bhandara. When weavers began substituting locally reeled tussar for cotton, the same border became a silk saree — and in 2013, a geographical indication.



Rearing, reeling and weaving all happen inside one district. That is rare anywhere in India, and it means the entire value of the cloth can, in principle, stay in Bhandara.

Seventy per cent forest

Gadchiroli is the most forested district in Maharashtra, and bamboo is its largest craft material by a wide margin. Madia, Gond and Burud artisans make baskets, mats, furniture, lampshades and structural bamboo at a scale no other region approaches.

What changed here is not technique but tenure. Community forest-rights recognition gave gram sabhas the right to harvest and sell bamboo directly, turning a collected material into a village-owned one — the single most consequential craft-economy shift in the state in the last two decades.

Gond painting, on the wrong side of a border

The Gond belt runs across Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and eastern Maharashtra. The painting tradition holds a geographical indication in Madhya Pradesh. Gadchiroli and Chandrapur's Gond and Pardhan artists work in the same idiom, in the same cultural region, with no tag, no cluster funding and very little documentation.

PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOOT • BHANDARA AND GADCHIROLI

Macro of the saw-tooth selvedge on the loom, shallow depth. Then split bamboo stacked by gauge at a gram-sabha depot — wide, 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

6 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; Maharashtra almost certainly holds twice that number, and fifteen 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 Maharashtra 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.



Artisans Trust

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