

Tisser

hand to heart

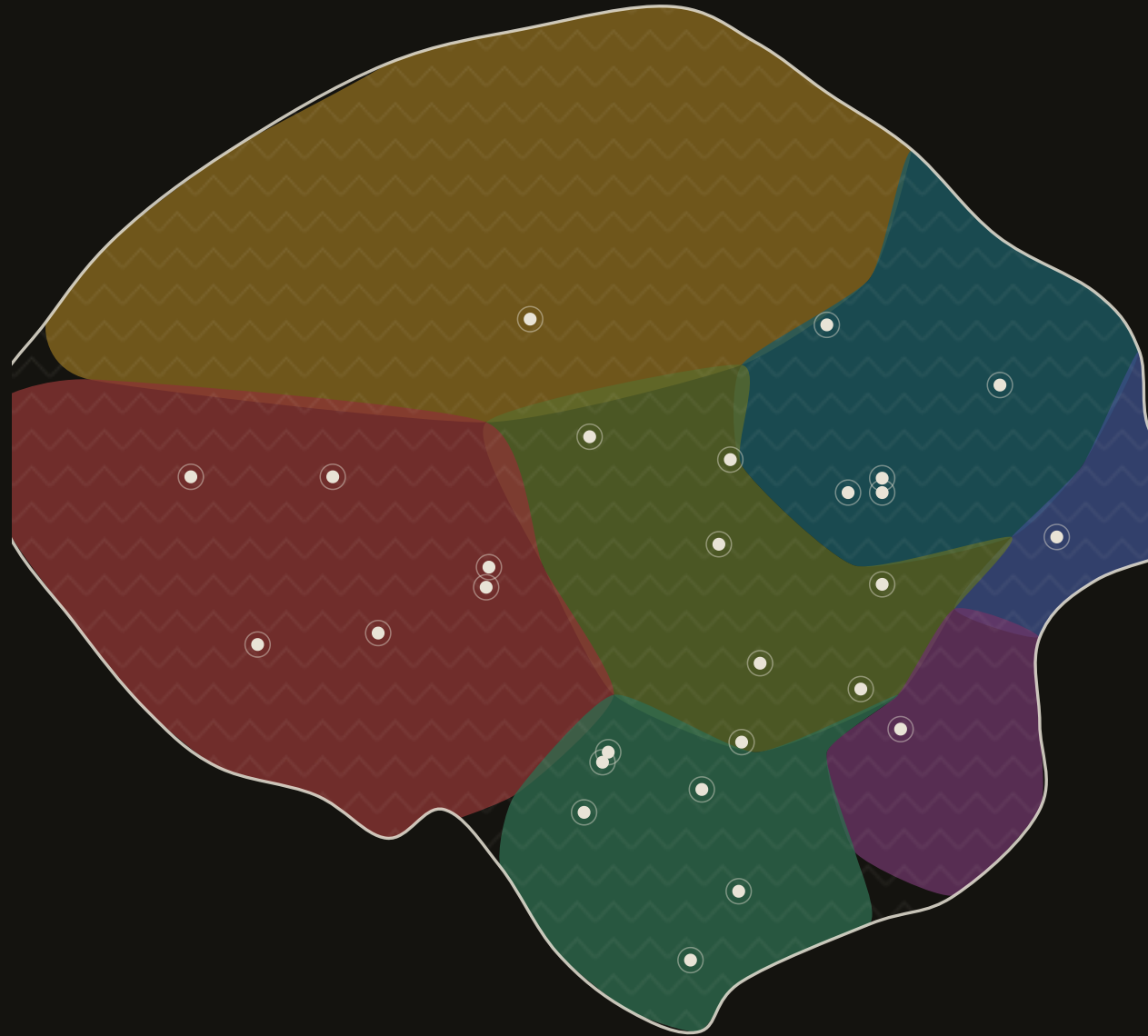
ARTISANS TRUST

CRAFT MAPPING INITIATIVE · RAJASTHAN

Rajasthan: A Journey Through Crafts

राजस्थान : हस्तशिल्प यात्रा

A district-by-district map of the state's living handloom and handicraft traditions — their makers, materials, geographies and legal protections. Sixty-four entries across forty-one 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.



▲ A finished entry, at printed size.

01 Band

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

03 Panel

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

05 Makers

The community, workshop or settlement that carries the skill.

07 Status

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

02 Name

In English, with the local name below it. Both are searchable terms.

04 Place

District, or the belt a craft crosses. Not a boundary claim.

06 Note

Technique, history and the one thing worth knowing about this craft.

08 Vitality

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

The 7 regions

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

Jaipur Division

The planned city and its guild lanes

Jodhpur Division

Marwar, the Thar and the long trade road

Udaipur Division

Mewar, the Aravalli and the tribal south

Ajmer Division

The centre, and the wool road

Bikaner Division

Camel country and the gold-ground painters

Kota Division

Chambal water and the lightest cotton in India

Bharatpur Division

Sandstone, ravine and the eastern edge

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

Critical

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 Rajasthan 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

The eastern districts — Bharatpur, Deeg, Dholpur, Karauli, Sawai Madhopur — are thinly represented here, and the newly carved districts of Phalodi, Kotputli-Behror and Khairthal-Tijara carry nothing at all, because craft documentation is still organised around the pre-2023 district map. Sirohi and Dausa are almost certainly under-counted for the same reason. Urban craft inside Jaipur is under-counted for the opposite reason: much of it is classified as industry or as the gem trade.

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 41-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-four entries, twelve material families

64

craft entries mapped in this first edition, across 41 districts

14

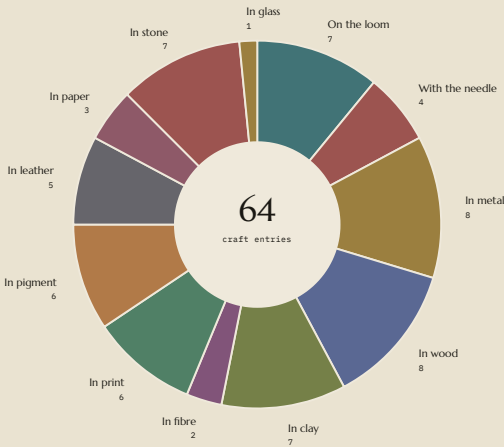
handicraft geographical indications registered to Rajasthan, one of them shared with other states

41

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

17

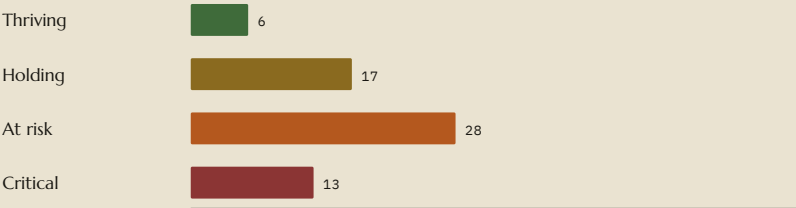
entries still awaiting a field visit before they can be called confirmed



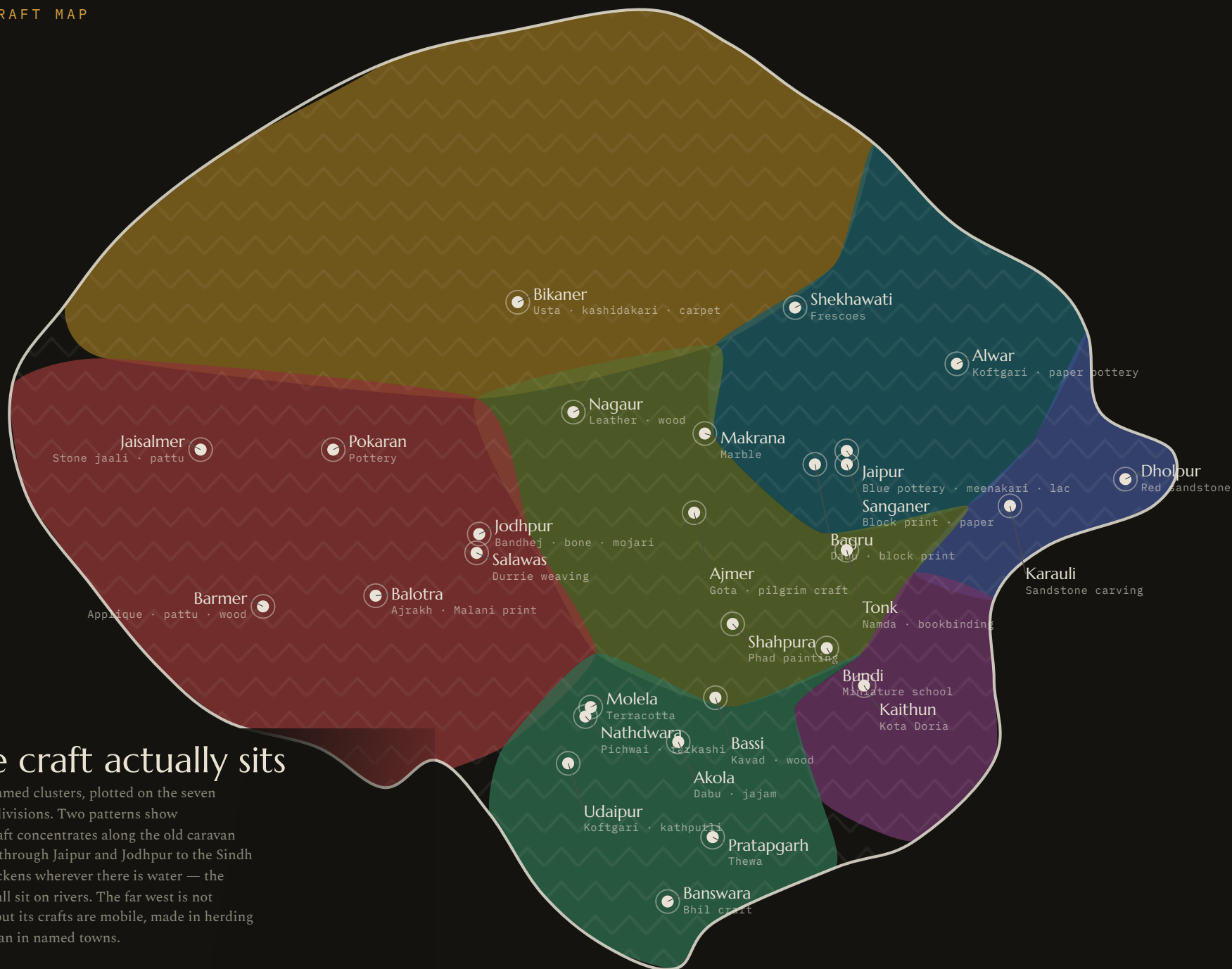
What the shape of the wheel says
Rajasthan is usually described as a textile state, and cloth does hold the largest share once printing and weaving are added together. But the next three families are metal, clay and stone — enamel, kundan and koftgari on one side, blue pottery, Molela and the Makrana and Dholpur quarries on the other. That is a court-and-quarry economy, not a weaving economy.

Stone appears here as a craft family in its own right, which it did not in the Maharashtra volume. In Rajasthan it has to: the state's buildings, its temples and a good part of Mughal Delhi came out of these quarries, cut by hand.

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-eight named clusters, plotted on the seven administrative divisions. Two patterns show immediately: craft concentrates along the old caravan line from Delhi through Jaipur and Jodhpur to the Sindh ports, and it thickens wherever there is water — the printing towns all sit on rivers. The far west is not empty of craft, but its crafts are mobile, made in herding camps rather than in named towns.

All forty-one 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 64. Low numbers mark thin documentation at least as often as they mark thin craft — and five districts currently carry nothing at all.

Fourteen protected handicrafts

APP.	GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION	PLACE	REGISTERED	SCOPE
12	Kota Doria	Kota · Kaithun · Baran	01.07.2005	Rajasthan
27	Phulkari	Shared — Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan	01.04.2010	Shared
66	Blue Pottery of Jaipur	Jaipur	01.10.2008	Rajasthan
67	Molela Clay Work	Rajsamand (Molela)	01.10.2008	Rajasthan
68	Kathputlis of Rajasthan	Udaipur · Chittorgarh · Jaipur	01.10.2008	Rajasthan
147	Sanganeri Hand Block Printing	Jaipur (Sanganer)	01.04.2010	Rajasthan
183	Bagru Hand Block Printing	Jaipur (Bagru)	01.07.2011	Rajasthan
244	Thewa Art Work	Pratapgarh	01.04.2014	Rajasthan
519	Pokaran Pottery	Jaisalmer (Pokaran)	19.01.2015	Rajasthan
—	Jodhpur Bandhej	Jodhpur	09.08.2023	Rajasthan
—	Udaipur Koftgari Metal Craft	Udaipur	09.08.2023	Rajasthan
—	Nathdwara Pichwai	Rajsamand (Nathdwara)	09.08.2023	Rajasthan
—	Bikaner Usta Kala	Bikaner	09.08.2023	Rajasthan
—	Bikaner Kashidakari	Bikaner	09.08.2023	Rajasthan

Registered in other classes

405	Makrana Marble	Nagaur (Makrana)	Natural goods
142	Bikaneri Bhujia	Bikaner	Foodstuff
—	Sojat Mehendi	Pali (Sojat)	Agricultural

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

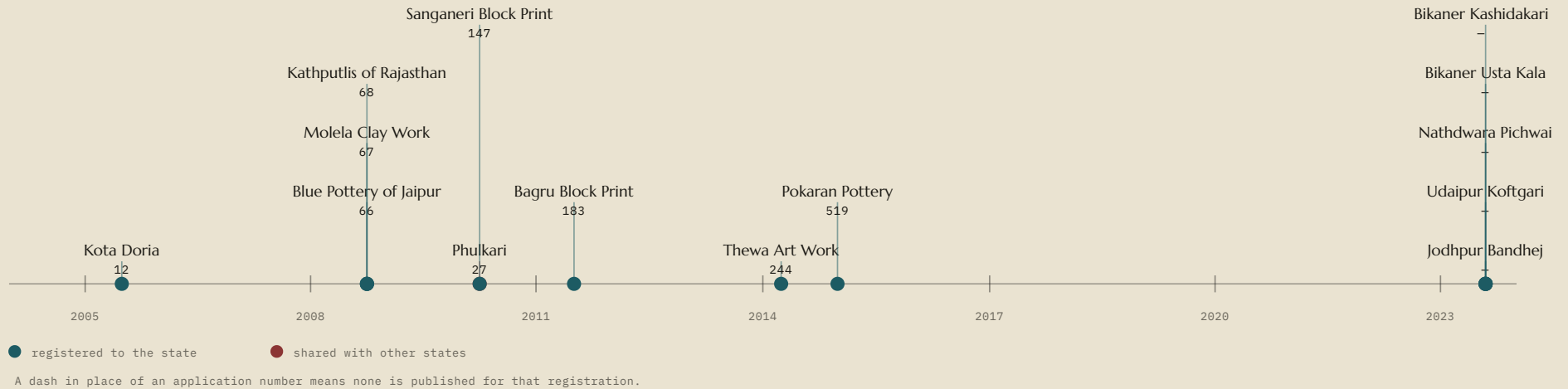
Significant crafts with no protection

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

Leheriya	Jaipur · Jodhpur · Pali — no registration of its own
Jaipur Meenakari and Kundan	Jaipur — the state's highest-value craft, unprotected
Salawas Durrie	Jodhpur
Kavad of Bassi	Chittorgarh
Namda felt of Tonk	Tonk

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.

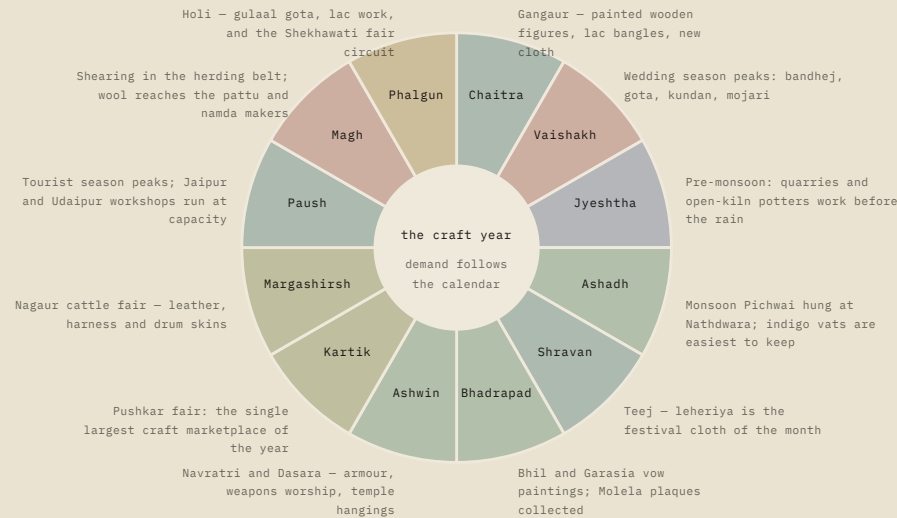
2023 · Five in one day

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.

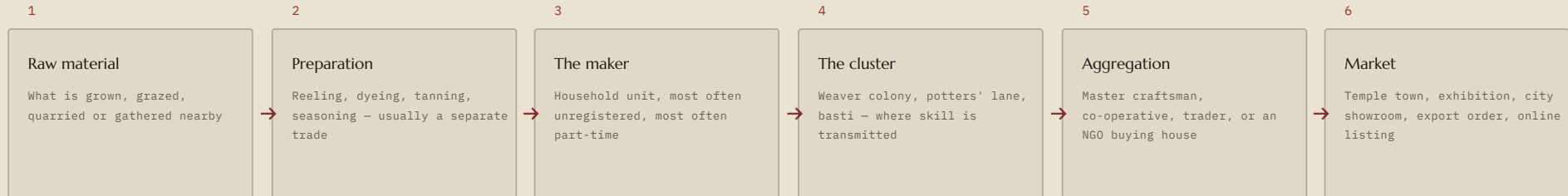
The crafts that run against the year

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. Rajasthan 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 seven regions

Rajasthan

राजस्थान

WHY CRAFT SITS WHERE IT SITS

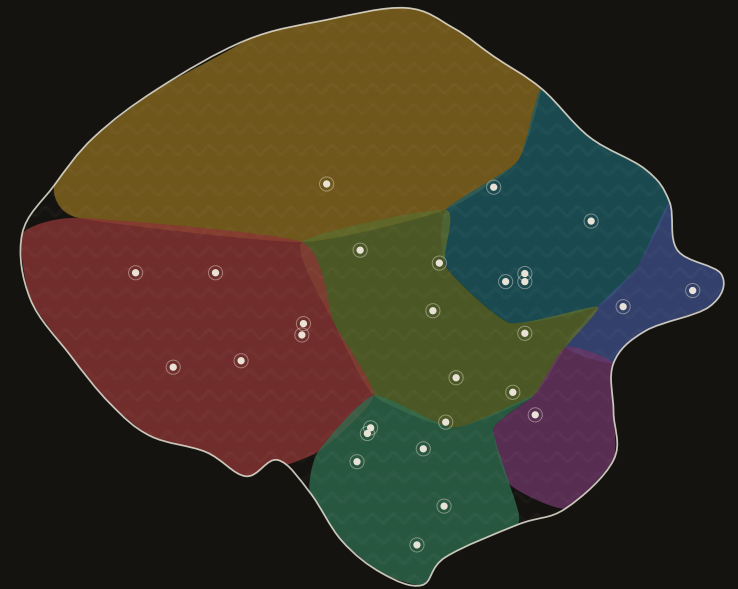
Three hundred and forty-two thousand square kilometres — the largest state in India — seven divisions, forty-one districts — and a craft map that is not evenly spread across any of them. This chapter sets out the three forces that put each craft where it is: the ground it is made from, the courts that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

TERRAIN

DYNASTIES

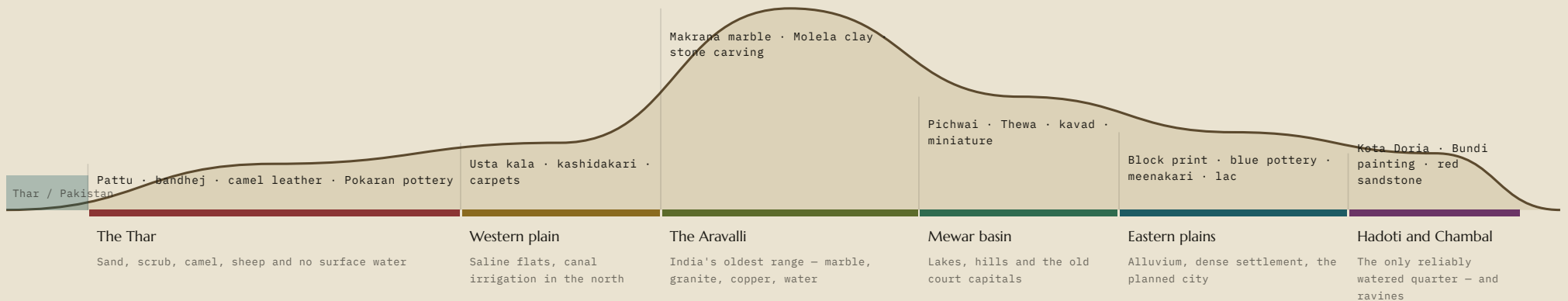
COMMUNITIES

MATERIALS



Six landscapes, west to east

Rajasthan falls in diagonal bands. Sand in the west, then the Aravalli running south-west to north-east like a spine, then the alluvial east and the watered Hadoti plateau. The range is the hinge: it blocks the monsoon, which makes the desert a desert, and it supplies the marble, sandstone, clay and metal that half the crafts in this volume are made from.



west ← the Thar and the Pakistan border

the Chambal ravines → 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 Rajasthan holds so many techniques whose original customer no longer exists.

8th – 12th century	 Curjara-Pratihara and the early Rajput courts	Temple building across the Aravalli and the eastern plains establishes stone carving as the region's foundational craft.	Stone, bronze
1156	 Jaisalmer founded	A desert fort on the caravan route between Delhi and the Sindh ports. Trade wealth, not agriculture, pays for the carving.	Sandstone jaali
14th – 16th century	 Mewar and Marwar consolidate	Chittorgarh, then Udaipur and Jodhpur. Court workshops are established as permanent institutions with hereditary craftsmen.	Miniature, armour
16th century	 The Mughal alliance	Rajput houses marry into and serve the Mughal court. Enamel, inlay, carpet and manuscript traditions travel both ways.	Meenakari · koftgari
1707	 Thewa begins at Pratapgarh	Nathuji Soni fuses pierced gold onto glass. The technique stays inside one family for three centuries.	Thewa
1727	 Jaipur is founded	A planned city laid out on a grid, with craft quarters allocated by trade before occupation. Artisans are recruited from Lahore, Delhi and Central Asia.	Blue pottery · lac · kundan
18th – 19th century	 Marwari merchant wealth	Trading families return fortunes to Shekhawati and build painted havelis at extraordinary scale.	Frescoes
19th century	 The princely workshops	Karkhanas at Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner and Kota formalise training, and supply the colonial exhibition circuit.	Carpet · enamel
1850s – 1900s	 The exhibition economy	Rajasthan craft is shown at London, Paris and Delhi exhibitions. Export demand begins to reshape what is made.	Export forms
1949	 Rajasthan is formed	Twenty-two princely states merge. Court patronage ends almost overnight; many karkhana crafts lose their only customer.	Patronage ends
1950s – 1990s	 Emporia and co-operatives	State emporia, weaver societies and the handicrafts board. Craft is organised as welfare and as export, rarely as enterprise.	Survival
2005 – 2026	 The GI era, and tourism	Fourteen handicraft registrations, five of them in a single day in 2023. Tourism becomes the largest craft market in the state.	Names, and footfall

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

Chhipa	Sanganer, Bagru, Akola
Khatri	Balotra — Ajrakh
Rangrez	dyers, Jodhpur and Jaipur
Bandhara	tiers, Jodhpur

Metal and gem

Sunar · Soni	gold, and Thewa at Pratapgarh
Meenakar	Jaipur enamel
Sikligar	koftgari, armourers
Kasera · Thathera	brass and bell metal

Wood

Suthar	Bassi — kavad, puppets, doors
Kharadi	lathe turners

Performance

Bhat	kathputli puppeteers
Bhopa	Phad singers
Kavadiya Bhat	kavad narrators
Manganiar · Langa	desert musicians

Adivasi

Bhil · Bhil Meena	Banswara, Dungarpur, Udaipur
Garasia	Sirohi, Udaipur
Damor	Dungarpur
Sahariya	Baran — PVTG

Weaving

Ansari	Kaithun — Kota Doria
Meghwal	pattu, durrie, embroidery
Prajapat	Salawas durrie

Earth and stone

Kumhar	potters — Molela, Pokaran, Jaipur
Silawat	stone carvers — Makrana, Jaisalmer, Dholpur
Chejara	mason-painters, Shekhawati

Leather

Regar · Mochi	mojari, harness, Nagaur
Usta	Bikaner — gold on camel hide

Glass and lac

Manihar	lac bangles, Jaipur
Varaksaz	gold and silver foil

Pastoral

Raika · Rabari	camel and sheep herders — wool and hide
Gujjar	Bharatpur, eastern belt

Nothing here travels far before it is made

From the animal

● Camel hide
→ Usta kala

● Camel bone
→ Jodhpur carving

● Desert sheep wool
→ Pattu · namda

● Goat and buffalo hide
→ Mojari

From the ground

● Makrana marble
→ Carving and inlay

● Dholpur sandstone
→ Jaali

● Quartz and glass
→ Blue pottery

● Banas river clay
→ Molela plaques

From the plant

● Harda (myrobalan)
→ Bagru base

● Indigo
→ Ajrakh · leheriya

● Madder and pomegranate
→ Block print reds

● Sabai grass, bamboo
→ Sahariya baskets

From elsewhere

● Gold and silver
→ Meenakari · thewa · gota

● Coloured gemstones
→ Kundan setting

● Mulberry silk
→ Kota Doria

● Lac (Jharkhand, MP)
→ Jaipur bangles

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 Rajasthan 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 07

Jaipur Division

जयपुर संभाग

THE PLANNED CITY AND ITS GUILD LANES

A capital built in 1727 to a drawn grid, with a quarter set aside for craftsmen before the first house was occupied. Sawai Jai Singh II imported artisans — enamellers from Lahore, potters from Central Asia, stone carvers from Bengal — and Jaipur has been importing and absorbing skill ever since. More craft trades sit inside this one city than in most Indian states.

JAIPUR

SIKAR

JHUNJHUNU

ALWAR

DAUSA

KHAIRTHAL-TIJARA

KOTPUTLI-BEHROR





IN CLAY

Blue Pottery of Jaipur

जयपुर नीली मिट्टी के बर्तन

JAIPUR

Kumhar and Muslim potter families of Jaipur city

The one Indian pottery that contains no clay. The body is quartz powder, powdered glass, fuller's earth, borax and gum, pressed into moulds and fired low — which is why it is fragile, and why the cobalt and copper glazes stay so bright. Brought from Central Asia through the Mughal court and revived in the 1960s.

GI 66 CLUSTER

● THRIVING



IN PRINT

Sanganeri Hand Block Printing

सांगानेरी छपाई

JAIPUR (SANGANER)

Chhipa printer community of Sanganer

Fine floral repeats — the buti and the trailing bel — printed in clear colour on a white ground. Sanganer's water is low in iron, which is why its whites stay white; the entire cluster exists because of the chemistry of one stretch of river.

GI 147 CLUSTER

● THRIVING



IN PRINT

Bagru Hand Block Printing

बगरू छपाई

JAIPUR (BAGRU)

Chhipa printers of Bagru village

The dark cousin of Sanganer. Cloth is first steeped in harda (myrobalan), which turns it buff; dabu mud-resist and iron-and-jaggery black are printed over it. Every colour here is grown or dug, not bought.

GI 183 CLUSTER

● THRIVING



IN METAL

Meenakari Enamelling

मीनाकारी

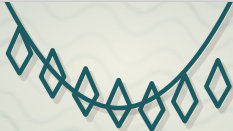
JAIPUR

Meenakar families of Jaipur's old city

Colour fused into engraved gold at furnace heat, one pigment at a time, hardest-firing first. Jaipur's red — the ruby enamel that no other centre reliably achieves — is the craft's signature. Brought from Lahore by Raja Man Singh in the sixteenth century.

UNPROTECTED SIGNATURE CRAFT

● HOLDING



IN METAL

Kundan and Jadau Setting

कुंदन व जड़ाऊ

JAIPUR

Sunar, kundansaz and jadiya workshops

Stones set without claws: purified gold foil is worked cold around the gem until it grips. The reverse of a jadau piece is enamelled, so the jewel is finished on the side nobody sees. Jaipur is the world's largest coloured-gemstone cutting centre.

UNPROTECTED

● THRIVING



IN WOOD

Lac Bangles and Manihari Work

लाख की चूड़ियाँ

JAIPUR

Manihar community, Maniharon ka Rasta, Jaipur

Lac warmed over coals, rolled, joined into a ring and studded with mirror and glass while still soft. A whole lane of the walled city does nothing else. The gulaal gota — a hollow lac ball filled with colour, thrown at Holi — is made only here.

URBAN CLUSTER

● HOLDING



WITH THE NEEDLE

Gota Patti Work

गोटा पत्ती

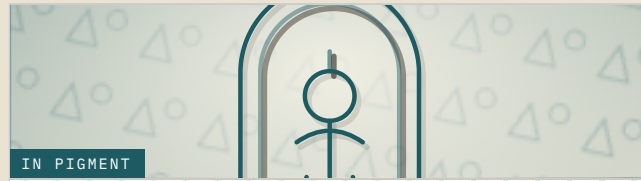
JAIPUR • SIKAR • AJMER

Household embroiderers across the Shekhawati and Jaipur belt

Flattened gold or silver ribbon cut into leaf and petal shapes and appliquéd to cloth, rather than stitched through it. Cheap to imitate in plastic lamé, which is most of what is now sold under the name.

WOMEN'S CRAFT

● HOLDING



IN PIGMENT

Shekhawati Fresco Painting

शेखावाटी भित्तिचित्र

JHUNJHUNU • SIKAR • CHURU

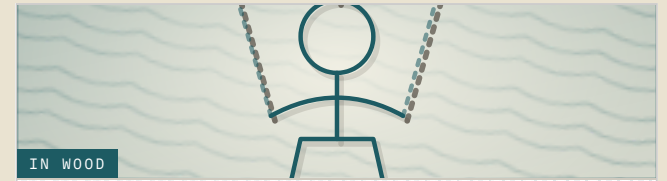
Chejara mason-painters; Marwari merchant havelis

True fresco — pigment laid into wet lime plaster, so the colour is in the wall rather than on it. Thousands of merchant havelis across three districts carry it. Almost nobody is left who can repair them, and the paint is being lost faster than it is recorded.

UNPROTECTED

HERITAGE AT SCALE

● CRITICAL



IN WOOD

Kathputli Puppets

कठपुतली

JAIPUR • UDAIPUR • CHITTORGARH

Bhat community puppeteers

Carved from soft aadu wood, strung without legs, worked on two strings from a single crossbar. The Bhat carry a repertoire of Amar Singh Rathore episodes that functions as oral court history — the puppets are the archive.

GI 68

SHARED ACROSS DISTRICTS

● AT RISK



IN STONE

Jaipur Blue-Grey Stone Carving

पत्थर की नक्काशी

JAIPUR

Silawat stone-carving families

Jaali screens, brackets, chhatris and image sculpture in marble and local sandstone. The jaali is an environmental device before it is ornament: it cuts glare, accelerates air through the gap, and keeps the interior cool.

ARCHITECTURAL CRAFT

● HOLDING



IN METAL

Koftgari Damascening

कोफ्तगिरी

ALWAR • JAIPUR

Sikligar armourers of the Alwar and Jaipur workshops

Gold or silver wire hammered into a cross-hatched steel ground, then burnished flush. It is an armourer's craft: it exists because sword blades and shields needed decorating without weakening the steel.

GI 2023 (UDAIPUR)

● AT RISK



IN CLAY

Paper Pottery of Alwar

कागजी मिट्टी के बर्तन

ALWAR

Kagzi potters of Alwar

Pottery thrown so thin the wall is translucent and the vessel can be crushed in one hand — hence the name. Finished with pierced jali work. Reported to be down to a very small number of practising potters.

UNPROTECTED

● CRITICAL



IN PAPER

Kutti Papier-Mâché

कुट्टी

JAIPUR

Workshops attached to the Jaipur toy and idol trade

Paper pulp bound with clay and gum, pressed into moulds for masks, toys, festival figures and the hollow heads of kathputli puppets.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN METAL

Varak Beating

वरक

JAIPUR

Varaksaz beaters

Gold and silver beaten between leather sheets until the foil is a few hundred atoms thick. An invisible trade that supplies confectioners, temples and the enamellers — and which machine rolling is steadily replacing.

SUPPLY CRAFT

● AT RISK

Blue pottery: the ceramic with no clay in it

Every other pottery in India is clay, thrown and fired until it vitrifies. Jaipur blue pottery is quartz powder, powdered glass, fuller's earth, borax and gum — a body closer to glass than to earthenware, pressed into plaster moulds because it has no plasticity to be thrown with.

That composition explains everything about the craft. It fires low, around 800–850°C, so the cobalt blue and copper green stay brilliant instead of burning out. It is porous and brittle, so it chips if you look at it wrongly. And it needs no kiln furniture, because the pieces are fired resting on each other.



Where it came from

The technique is Persian and Central Asian, and reached Jaipur through the Mughal court and through Sawai Ram Singh II's school of art in the nineteenth century. Its revival in the 1960s is credited to the painter Kripal Singh Shekhawat, who widened the palette beyond cobalt and turquoise and moved the craft from tile-making to tableware.

The thing that makes it fragile — twice

Commercially, it competes against bone china and stoneware that do not chip. Technically, it cannot be made thicker to compensate, because a thick body cracks in the single firing. The craft is stuck with its own chemistry, which is also the reason it looks like nothing else.

PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOOT • JAIPUR

Raw white moulded blanks racked before painting — the stage nobody photographs, where the pieces look like plaster. Then a painter's hand with the cobalt brush, shot close, no props.

Sanganer and Bagru: two villages, one river, opposite methods

Sanganer — printing onto white

Sanganer prints colour directly onto a bleached white ground: fine floral butis, trailing bells, and a delicate line that survives because the water here is low in iron and does not dull the whites. The town's whole reputation rests on a water chemistry nobody chose.

Because the ground stays white, Sanganeri work reads as light and formal. It was the print of the Jaipur court and, later, of the export trade — which is why it was among the first Rajasthani crafts to be registered, in 2010.

Bagru — printing onto mud

Bagru begins by making the cloth dirty. It is steeped in harda, a myrobalan solution that turns it buff and acts as a mordant. Dabu — a resist paste of clay, gum, lime and wheat chaff — is then block-printed on, dusted with sawdust, and the cloth dyed. Wherever the mud sat, the cloth stays pale.

The black comes from iron filings fermented with jaggery; the red from alizarin and alum. Every colour in a Bagru print is grown, dug or fermented. Registered in 2011.

The block is the capital asset

A set of teak or sheesham blocks for one design — outline, filler, background — takes a block-carver weeks and lasts decades. Printers inherit blocks. A family's block cupboard is both its design archive and most of its net worth.

What screen printing took

Screen and digital printing reproduce the look of both towns at a fraction of the cost, and the market mostly cannot tell. The GI exists precisely to make the difference legible — but without an authorised-user mark on the cloth, it rarely reaches the buyer.

And what it could not take

Dabu cannot be faked convincingly, because the mud resist leaves a soft, slightly irregular edge that a screen cannot imitate. The crafts that survive mechanisation tend to be the ones whose imperfection is structural.

Region 02 of 07

Jodhpur Division

जोधपुर संभाग

MARWAR, THE THAR AND THE LONG TRADE ROAD

Two-thirds desert, and the richest craft region in the state — because scarcity and caravan trade both produce craft.

Bandhej and leheriya tie-dye, Salawas flatweave, the woollen pattu of the herding belt, Ajrakh at Balotra, camel leather, bone and the mojari. Water is the constraint that shaped all of it.

JODHPUR

JAISALMER

BARMER

BALOTRA

PHALODI

PALI

JALORE

SIROHI





IN PRINT

Bandhej — Tie and Dye

बांधेज

JODHPUR • JAIPUR • SIKAR

Bandhara tiers and Rangrez dyers

The cloth is pinched into thousands of points, each bound with thread by a woman working with a sharpened fingernail ring, then dyed. The knot count is the grade: a fine Jodhpuri odhni can carry tens of thousands. Registered in 2023 after decades of imitation.

GI 2023 **CLUSTER**

● THRIVING



IN PRINT

Leheriya

लहरिया

JODHPUR • JAIPUR • PALI

Rangrez dyers of Jodhpur and Jaipur

The cloth is rolled diagonally into a rope, bound at intervals and dyed, producing stripes that run on the bias — impossible to weave and hard to fake well. Mothra is the same technique run twice in opposite directions to make a lattice.

UNPROTECTED

● HOLDING



ON THE LOOM

Salawas Durrie Weaving

सालावास दरी

JODHPUR (SALAWAS)

Prajapat and Meghwal weaver households at Salawas

Flat-woven cotton and camel-hair floor rugs on pit looms, in panja technique — the weft beaten down with a clawed iron comb. One village, several hundred looms, and an export market that arrived without any GI protection to anchor it.

UNPROTECTED **VILLAGE CLUSTER**

● HOLDING



IN PRINT

Ajrakh Printing

अजरख

BALOTRA • BARMER

Khatri printer families of Balotra and Barmer

Sixteen or more stages of resist and mordant printing, printed on both faces in exact register, in madder red and indigo. The western Rajasthan line is older than the Kutch one it is usually confused with, and far less documented.

SHARED TRADITION

● HOLDING



IN LEATHER

Mojari and Jutti

मोजड़ी

JODHPUR • JAIPUR • NAGAU

Mochi and Regar leatherworking families

Vegetable-tanned camel, goat or buffalo hide, stitched with cotton thread and no nails, with no left or right — the shoe takes the shape of the foot that wears it. Embroidered on the vamp in silk, zari or appliqué.

CLUSTER

● HOLDING



ON THE LOOM

Pattu Weaving

पट्टू

JAISALMER • BARMER

Meghwal weavers serving Rabari and Raika herders

Woollen shawls and blankets woven in narrow strips on pit looms and joined — the loom is as wide as a seated weaver's reach, so the cloth is built from panels. Patterns are named for the herder group that commissions them.

PASTORAL CRAFT

● AT RISK



IN WOOD

Camel Bone and Horn Carving

हड्डी नक्काशी

JODHPUR

Carving workshops of Jodhpur

Carved as a legal substitute for ivory after the 1990 ban — inlay, jewellery boxes, knife handles and lattice panels. A rare case of a craft that grew because another was stopped.

SUBSTITUTE CRAFT

● HOLDING



IN STONE

Jaisalmer Stone Jaali

जैसलमेरी जाली

JAISALMER

Silawat carvers of Jaisalmer

Golden sandstone soft enough to cut with a chisel when freshly quarried and hardening on exposure — which is why Jaisalmer's havelis carry lattice so fine it reads as lace. The Patwon ki Haveli screens are the reference work.

ARCHITECTURAL CRAFT

● HOLDING



IN CLAY

Pokaran Pottery

पोकरण मिट्टी के बर्तन

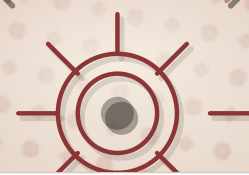
JAISALMER (POKARAN)

Kumhar potters of Pokaran

Red and brown desert clay, hand-thrown and fired in an open wood avada, decorated with geometric bands in white and ochre. Registered in 2018; the cluster remains small.

GI 519

● AT RISK



WITH THE NEEDLE

Barmer Appliqué and Embroidery

बाड़मेर अप्लीक

BARMER • BALOTRA

Meghwal, Rabari and Jat women of the Barmer villages

Cut-cloth appliqué and mirror embroidery on quilts, canopies and animal trappings. Barmer's vocabulary is closer to Sindh than to eastern Rajasthan — the border is political, not cultural.

WOMEN'S CRAFT

● AT RISK



IN WOOD

Barmer Carved Woodwork

काष्ठ नक्काशी

BARMER

Suthar carpenter families

Deep-carved doors, jharokha brackets and low chests in sheesham and local acacia, painted and lacquered. Increasingly serving the architectural salvage trade rather than local building.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN LEATHER

Mashak and Leather Vessels

मशक

JALORE • BARMER

Regar and Meghwal tanners

Water bags, grain containers and churns built from whole tanned hides, stitched to hold liquid without a seam leak. Made obsolete by plastic within one generation; a handful of makers are reported to remain.

FIELD-CHECK

● CRITICAL

Bandhej: the craft is counted in knots

A bandhej odhni is graded the way a carpet is graded — by density. The tier works with a pointed metal ring on one fingernail, lifting a few threads of cloth, twisting them, and binding the point with thread in a single continuous motion, thousands of times. A fine Jodhpuri piece can carry tens of thousands of points.



The crinkle matters. Printed imitation bandhej is flat; a genuine piece never fully loses the pucker where the thread was. That is the test a buyer can apply without any certificate.

Who does which half

Tying and dyeing are separate trades. The tying is done almost entirely by women, often at home and paid by the piece; the dyeing is done by Rangrez dyers in workshops. The skill that determines the grade sits in the half that is paid least and named least — which is the single most common pattern in this volume.

Leheriya, the same logic turned diagonal

Instead of thousands of points, the whole cloth is rolled corner to corner into a rope and bound at intervals. Dyed, it comes out striped on the bias — a line that cannot be woven and is hard to print convincingly. Run the process twice in opposite directions and the stripes cross into mothra.

Leheriya has no geographical indication of its own, despite being the festival cloth of Teej across the state and instantly identifiable as Rajasthani.

PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOOT • JODHPUR

A tier's hands, close, with the nail-ring visible and bound points massed across the lap. Then an opened cloth held to light so the crinkle reads.

Region 03 of 07

Udaipur Division

उदयपुर संभाग

MEWAR, THE ARAVALLI AND THE TRIBAL SOUTH

The hills break the desert here, and with water comes a different craft economy — Nathdwara's painted Pichwai hangings, Molela's terracotta plaques, Chittorgarh's Kavad shrine-boxes and Pratapgarh's gold-on-glass Thewa. South of Udaipur the Bhil and Garasia belt begins, and the register thins sharply.

UDAIPUR

RAJSAMAND

CHITTORGARH

PRATAPGARH

DUNGARPUR

BANSWARA

SALUMBAR





IN PIGMENT

Nathdwara Pichwai

नाथद्वारा पिछवाई

RAJSAMAND (NATHDWARA)

Painter families attached to the Shrinathji temple

Large cloth hangings placed behind the Shrinathji image and changed with the season and festival — lotus pools for the monsoon, cows for Gopashtami, white for Sharad Purnima. The painting is liturgical furniture, made to a calendar rather than to a commission.

GI 2023

TEMPLE CRAFT

● HOLDING



IN CLAY

Molela Terracotta Plaques

मोलेला टेराकोटा

RAJSAMAND (MOLELA)

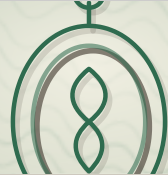
Kumhar families of Molela village

Votive plaques of Dharmaraj, Devnarayan and local deities, built in low relief on a flat slab rather than thrown. Bhil and Garasia communities from across the southern hills collect them annually and carry them home as shrine images.

GI 67

VILLAGE CLUSTER

● HOLDING



IN METAL

Thewa

थेवा

PRATAPGARH

The Soni family of Pratapgarh, since about 1707

A sheet of 23-carat gold pierced into a scene, fused onto coloured glass at heat and framed in silver. Made by one family for three centuries, and taught only to sons — which is both why the technique survived intact and why it is so precarious.

GI 244

SINGLE FAMILY CRAFT

● CRITICAL



IN WOOD

Kavad Shrine Boxes

कावड़

CHITTORGARH (BASSI)

Suthar carpenter-painters of Bassi; Kavadiya Bhat narrators

A portable wooden shrine of hinged panels, painted inside and out, which the narrator opens door by door as the story advances until the innermost doors reveal the deity. Carpenter and storyteller are separate hereditary trades, and both are thinning.

UNPROTECTED

TWO-TRADE CRAFT

● CRITICAL



IN WOOD

Kathputli Carving at Bassi

बस्सी कठपुतली

CHITTORGARH (BASSI)

Suthar carvers of Bassi

Bassi supplies the puppet heads and painted wooden toys that the Bhat puppeteers dress and string. The same workshops make gangaur figures, temple doors and kavad.

GI 68

AT RISK



IN METAL

Udaipur Koftgari

उदयपुर कोफ्तगिरी

UDAIPUR

Sikligar families of Mewar

Mewar's armourers decorated weapons for the Udaipur court for centuries; the 2023 registration names Udaipur specifically. Now applied to boxes, plates and jewellery, because there is no longer a sword trade to carry it.

GI 2023

AT RISK



IN PRINT

Akola Dabu Printing

अकोला दाबू छपाई

CHITTORGARH (AKOLA)

Chhipa printers of Akola on the Berach river

Mud-resist printing: a paste of clay, gum, lime and wheat chaff is block-printed on, sawdust scattered over it, and the cloth dyed — the covered areas resist. Akola's jajam floor-spreads are a regional form found almost nowhere else.

VILLAGE CLUSTER

● AT RISK



IN METAL

Tarkashi Wire Inlay

तारकशी

RAJSAMAND (NATHDWARA)

A small number of Nathdwara workshops

Fine silver or brass wire hammered into grooves cut in sheesham wood, then filed flush and polished. Practised alongside the Pichwai trade on temple furniture and boxes.

FIELD-CHECK

● CRITICAL



IN PIGMENT

Bhil and Garasia Wall Painting

भील भित्तिचित्र

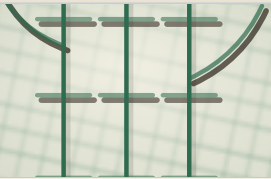
BANSWARA • DUNGARPUR • SALUMBAR

Bhil, Bhil Meena and Garasia households of the southern hills

Votive horse-and-rider wall paintings made to fulfil a vow, commissioned from a painter and consecrated by a diviner. The painting is the offering; its making is the ritual, and its survival depends on the vow continuing to be made.

RITUAL ART **TRIBAL**

● AT RISK



IN FIBRE

Banswara Bamboo and Grass

बांस व घास शिल्प

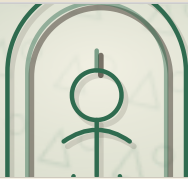
BANSWARA • DUNGARPUR

Bhil and Damor forest households

Granary liners, winnowing fans, mats and roof screens in split bamboo and sabai grass, made for use rather than sale. The wettest corner of Rajasthan, and the one with the least craft documentation.

FOREST CRAFT **FIELD-CHECK**

● AT RISK



IN PIGMENT

Mewar Miniature Painting

मेवाड़ चित्रशैली

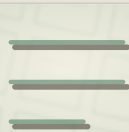
UDAIPUR • CHITTORGARH

Chitera painter families of Udaipur

The oldest continuous Rajput painting school — hot reds and yellows, a flat picture plane, and after the eighteenth century enormous court-life scenes on a single sheet. The city palace workshops still train painters in pigment grinding and squirrel-hair brushwork.

COURT SCHOOL

● AT RISK



IN PAPER

Sanjhi Paper Cutting

सांझी

UDAIPUR • RAJSAMAND

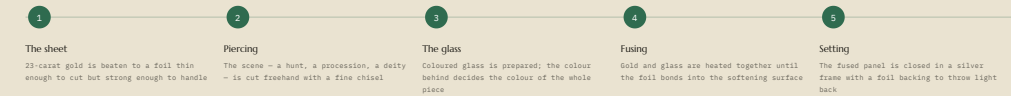
Temple artists of the Vallabha sampradaya

Stencils cut freehand from paper with fine scissors, used to lay coloured powder patterns on temple floors and water. A devotional craft with no market, kept alive almost entirely inside temple practice.

FIELD-CHECK **TEMPLE CRAFT**

● CRITICAL

Thewa: one family, three hundred years, nine hundred degrees



The fusing is the whole craft and it cannot be rehearsed. The glass must soften enough to take the gold and not so much that it slumps; the gold must bond without melting. There is no way to correct a piece that goes wrong — the work of several weeks is lost in the furnace in a few seconds.

Why it stayed in one family

Nathuji Soni is credited with the technique at Pratapgarh around 1707. It has been transmitted, father to son, inside the Soni family ever since, and taught to no one outside it. The state recognised it with a geographical indication in 2014.

Closed transmission is why the method survived unaltered for three centuries. It is also why the craft is listed as critical in this volume: a tradition held by one lineage is one generation's decision away from ending, and no training programme can substitute for it.

What a buyer should know

Thewa is sold widely as pendants and boxes, and a large share of what is sold under the name is printed or transfer-decorated glass. Genuine thewa shows tool marks in the gold under magnification, and the gold stands very slightly proud of the glass where it fused.

PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOOT • PRATAPGARH

Macro of pierced gold foil before fusing, backlit on a lightbox so the cut scene reads as a stencil. Then the finished pendant against black, lit from behind so the glass colour carries.

Three ways of telling a story with an object

Phad — the scroll

A horizontal cloth up to thirty feet long, carrying the entire epic of Pabuji or Devnarayan in one composition. It is not sequential: episodes sit where the geography of the story puts them, and the Bhopa priest-singer walks the scroll, lighting only the panel he has reached with a lamp held by his wife.

The scroll is painted by Joshi families at Shahpura, consecrated before use, and ritually retired into a river when it wears out. It is a stage, a shrine and a score at once.

Kavad — the box

A portable wooden shrine of hinged panels, painted inside and out. The narrator opens one door, tells what is painted on it, opens the next, and continues inward until the innermost doors reveal the deity. The story's structure is literally the object's structure.

Carpenter and narrator are separate hereditary trades — the Suthars of Bassi build and paint, the Kavadiya Bhats carry and tell. Both are now very small, and the craft holds no protection.

Pichwai — the backdrop

Painted cloth hangings placed behind the Shrinathji image at Nathdwara and changed with the festival and the season: lotus pools in the monsoon, cows at Gopashtami, plain white for Sharad Purnima.

A Pichwai is not a picture of a story; it is the setting in which the deity is understood to be present. Registered in 2023 — the only one of these three with a geographical indication.

What they have in common

All three are made to be used by someone other than the maker — a singer, a narrator, a priest. The painter is one half of a two-trade system, and the object is incomplete without the performance. When the performance stops, the object becomes decoration, and the craft's reason for existing quietly changes.

Which is what is happening now

Phad and Pichwai have found a wall-art market that keeps the painting alive while the performance thins. Kavad has not, and it is the one listed here as critical. The lesson is uncomfortable: the crafts that survive are often the ones that successfully stop doing what they were for.

Region 04 of 07

Ajmer Division

अजमेर संभाग

THE CENTRE, AND THE WOOL ROAD

Rajasthan's middle: Ajmer's pilgrim economy, Bhilwara's textile mills and the Phad scroll painters of Shahpura, Nagaur's cattle fair and leather trade, and the Tonk belt where Namda felt and Persian bookbinding arrived with a nineteenth-century Afghan nawabi.

AJMER

BEAWAR

BHILWARA

NAGOUR

DIDWANA-KUCHAMAN

TONK





IN PIGMENT

Phad Painting

फड चित्रकला

BHILWARA (SHAHPURA)

Joshi painter families of Shahpura; Bhopa priest-singers

A horizontal cloth scroll, up to thirty feet long, carrying the whole epic of Pabuji or Devnarayan in a single non-linear composition. The Bhopa unrolls it at night and sings the story by lamplight, lighting only the panel he has reached — the scroll is a stage set.

NARRATIVE SCROLL

● AT RISK



IN STONE

Makrana Marble Carving

मकराना संगमरमर

NAGAUR (MAKRANA)

Quarry and carving workforce at Makrana

The marble of the Taj Mahal, quarried from the same beds for four hundred years. It is calcite-rich and low in impurity, which is why it stays white rather than yellowing — and why pietra dura inlay works on it at all.

GI 405 (NATURAL GOODS)

● THRIVING



ON THE LOOM

Namda Felt

नमदा

TONK

Felt-makers of Tonk

Wool matted with soap, water and pressure rather than spun or woven — the oldest textile technique there is, needing no loom at all. Tonk's namda carries appliqué and chain-stitch in coloured wool. Very few units remain.

UNPROTECTED

● CRITICAL



IN PAPER

Tonk Bookbinding and Leather Gilding

जिल्दसाज़ी

TONK

Binders attached to the Arabic and Persian manuscript collection

Tooled and gilded leather bindings in the Persian tradition, serving one of the largest Arabic and Persian manuscript libraries in India. The library survives; the trade that maintained it barely does.

LIBRARY CRAFT

● CRITICAL



IN LEATHER

Nagaur Leather and Mojari

नागौरी चमड़ा

NAGAUR

Regar and Mochi families around the Nagaur cattle fair

A leather economy built around one of India's largest cattle fairs — footwear, buckets, whips, drum skins and harness. The fair sets the calendar for the whole trade.

FAIR ECONOMY

● HOLDING



IN GLASS

Kuchaman Thikri and Glass Inlay

ठिकरी काम

DIDWANA-KUCHAMAN

Craftsmen of the Kuchaman and Shekhawati fort workshops

Convex mirror pieces set in lime plaster so that lamplight multiplies across a ceiling. The sheesh mahal of Kuchaman fort is the surviving reference; the technique is now used mainly in restoration.

ARCHITECTURAL CRAFT

● AT RISK



WITH THE NEEDLE

Beawar and Ajmer Gota

गोटा किनारी

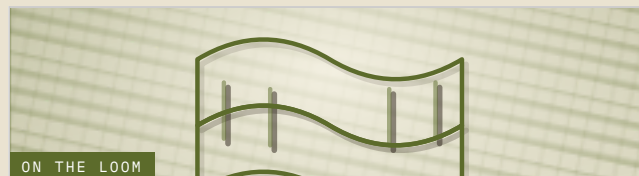
AJMER • BEAWAR

Household workers in the Ajmer belt

Ribbon-lace edging and appliqué supplying the Jaipur and Ajmer garment trade, almost entirely home-based piecework.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



ON THE LOOM

Bhilwara Handloom

भीलवाड़ा हातमाग

BHILWARA

Weaver settlements around Bhilwara and Gulabpura

Cotton and blended yardage, now largely absorbed into the district's powerloom and suiting industry. The handloom remnant is thinly recorded.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK

Region 05 of 07

Bikaner Division

बीकानेर संभाग

CAMEL COUNTRY AND THE GOLD-GROUND PAINTERS

The northern desert, where the camel is raw material as much as transport. Usta artisans raise gold ornament on camel hide; Kashidakari embroiderers work the Meghwal stitch vocabulary; and the state's largest hand-knotted carpet industry runs out of Bikaner's workshops and its jail.

BIKANER

CHURU

HANUMANGARH

SRI GANGANAGAR





IN LEATHER

Usta Kala — Gold on Camel Hide

उस्ता कला

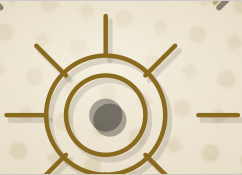
BIKANER

Usta families of Bikaner

Camel hide scraped to translucency, stretched over a form, and painted with raised gold ornament — manoti — so the pattern stands off the surface. Arrived with Persian craftsmen under Raja Rai Singh. Down to a handful of practising families.

GI 2023

● CRITICAL



WITH THE NEEDLE

Bikaner Kashidakari

बीकानेरी कशीदाकारी

BIKANER • BARMER • JALORE

Meghwal women across the northern and western desert

Mirror, interlacing and buttonhole stitch worked in dense bands on cholis, torans and bags. Registered in 2023 — one of very few women's household crafts in India to hold a geographical indication in its own name.

GI 2023

● AT RISK



ON THE LOOM

Bikaner Hand-Knotted Carpets

बीकानेरी कालीन

BIKANER

Workshop and prison weaving units

Wool-on-cotton knotted carpets in Persian-derived patterns, built as an export industry in the twentieth century. Bikaner and Jaipur jail durries are a recognised sub-category with their own buyers.

EXPORT CLUSTER

● HOLDING



IN LEATHER

Camel Leather Kuppi and Vessels

ऊँट चमड़ा

BIKANER • JAISALMER

Leatherworking households of the camel belt

Oil flasks, water vessels and lamp bases moulded from wet camel hide that shrinks hard as it dries, then lacquered and painted. Light, unbreakable, and made from the animal that made desert trade possible.

DESERT CRAFT

● AT RISK



IN CLAY

Golden and Ochre Pottery

बीकानेरी मिट्टी के बर्तन

BIKANER

Kumhar potters of Bikaner city

Wheel-thrown ware finished with a gold-toned slip and painted ornament, made for ritual and gift use rather than storage.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN WOOD

Churu Sandalwood and Wood Carving

चूरू काष्ठ शिल्प

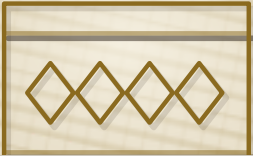
CHURU

Carvers of the Churu havelis belt

Fine figure carving in sandalwood and local timber, historically supported by the same merchant wealth that painted the Shekhawati frescoes.

FIELD-CHECK

● CRITICAL



ON THE LOOM

Hanumangarh and Ganganagar Durrie

दरी बुनाई

HANUMANGARH · SRI GANGANAGAR

Weaving households in the canal belt

Cotton flatweave rugs and bedding in the irrigated north, a craft that followed canal settlement rather than preceding it. Very thinly documented.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK

Usta kala, and what the camel made possible

Camel hide, scraped until it is thin enough to pass light, stretched over a wooden form and finished with raised gold ornament — manoti — so the pattern stands off the surface and catches lamplight. The craft arrived with Persian artisans under Raja Rai Singh in the sixteenth century and is named for the Usta families who have practised it since.

It is applied to flasks, boxes, mirror frames, doors and whole palace ceilings; the Karni Mahal rooms at Bikaner Fort are the reference work. Registered in 2023, and down to a handful of practising families.

Four crafts from one animal

Usta gold work on the hide. Vessels and oil flasks moulded from wet hide that shrinks rock hard as it dries. Bone carving from the skeleton, which became significant only after the 1990 ivory ban. And pattu woven from the hair and from desert sheep wool alongside it.

The number that decides all four

India's camel population has fallen very sharply over recent decades, and Rajasthan holds the large majority of what remains. Mechanised transport removed the animal's economic purpose; a 2015 state law restricting camel slaughter and movement changed the economics again. Whatever one's view of either, the craft consequence is direct: fewer animals, less hide and bone, and a rising raw-material cost for crafts that have no substitute material.

Which makes this a livestock question

Usta kala cannot be saved by design intervention, market linkage or a geographical indication alone. It needs a camel herd. That puts its future in the hands of the Raika herding community and of state livestock policy — neither of which appears in any craft scheme.

PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOOT • BIKANER

Raised gold manoti in raking light so the relief casts a shadow — the whole point of the technique, and the thing flat photography always loses. Then the Karni Mahal ceiling, wide, available light.

Region 06 of 07

Kota Division

कोटा संभाग

CHAMBAL WATER AND THE LIGHTEST COTTON IN INDIA

The Hadoti plateau, watered by the Chambal — the only part of Rajasthan that is reliably wet. Kota Doria, woven at Kaithun in a square check so fine the cloth weighs almost nothing, was the state's first GI. Bundi's miniature school and the Chambal's black clay pottery sit alongside it.

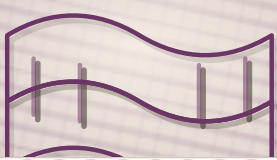
KOTA

BUNDI

BARAN

JHALAWAR





ON THE LOOM

Kota Doria

कोटा डोरिया

KOTA (KAITHUN) • BARAN • BUNDI

Ansari weaver families of Kaithun

Cotton and silk alternated in both warp and weft to make the khat — a square check so open the cloth is almost weightless. The yarn is sized with onion juice and rice paste to survive the loom. Rajasthan's first registered craft, in 2005.

GI 12 FIRST GI IN THE STATE

● HOLDING



IN PIGMENT

Bundi Miniature Painting

बूंदी चित्रशैली

BUNDI

A small number of painters in Bundi town

The Hadoti school: luxuriant vegetation, night skies, elephants and monsoon scenes, with a distinctive treatment of water. The Bundi palace murals are the finest surviving body of Rajput wall painting; the living practice is very small.

COURT SCHOOL

● CRITICAL



IN CLAY

Chambal Black Pottery

काली मिट्टी के बर्तन

KOTA • SAWAI MADHOPUR

Kumhar potters of the Chambal and Banas belt

River clay fired in a reducing smoke-filled kiln, which blackens the body throughout rather than glazing it. Burnished before firing to a low sheen.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN METAL

Baran Metal and Bell Casting

धातु ढलाई

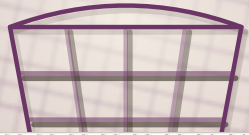
BARAN

Kasera and Thathera metalworking families

Cast and beaten brass vessels, lamps and cattle bells serving the agricultural belt and the Sahariya villages of the district.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN FIBRE

Sahariya Forest Craft

सहरीया वन शिल्प

BARAN (SHAHBAD • KISHANGANJ)

Sahariya community, the only PVTG in Rajasthan

Baskets, rope, brooms and leaf-plate work from forest material, made for household use and barter. Recorded as skilled and specific, and almost entirely absent from craft marketing channels.

PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE GROUP

● AT RISK



IN STONE

Jhalawar Stone and Temple Carving

झालावाड़ शिल्प

JHALAWAR

Silawat carvers of the Jhalawar temple belt

Sandstone image and architectural carving sustained by temple restoration around Jhalrapatan and the Chandrabhaga complex.

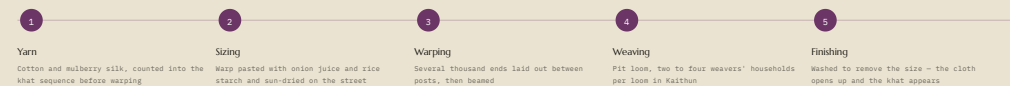
FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK

Kota Doria: the lightest cloth woven in India

The khat is the unit — a tiny square check formed by alternating cotton and silk threads in both warp and weft, in a strict repeating count. Cotton gives the check its body; silk gives it the sheen and the strength to be woven so open. A full saree can weigh under two hundred grams.

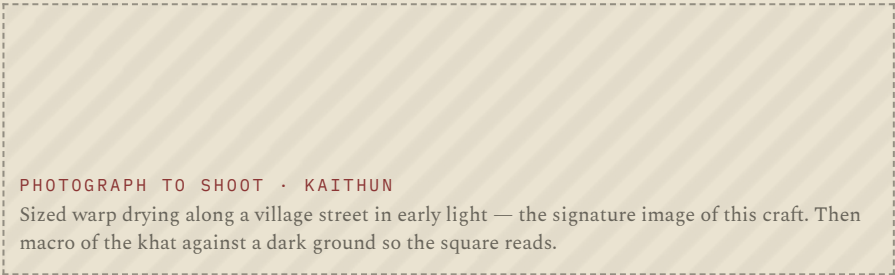
Weaving something that sheer on a pit loom should be impossible — the yarn would shred. It works because the warp is sized with a paste of onion juice and rice, which stiffens each thread just enough to survive the reed and washes out afterwards. The cloth is engineered twice: once on the loom, once in the wash.



Why Kaithun and not anywhere else
The weavers are Ansari families said to have been brought to Kota from the Deccan in the seventeenth or eighteenth century — the cloth was once called Masuria for that reason. The Chambal keeps the air humid, which matters: in dry air the sized warp becomes brittle and breaks. Rajasthan's wettest district produces its finest cloth, and that is not a coincidence.

The first, and the most copied
Kota Doria was registered in 2005 — the first craft in the state to receive a geographical indication. It is also among the most widely imitated, by polyester and powerloom versions sold under the same name across north India.

The test is the burn and the weight: real doria is cotton and silk, breathes, and creases. The imitation is smoother, heavier for its size, and does not crease at all.



PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOOT • KAITHUN

Sized warp drying along a village street in early light — the signature image of this craft. Then macro of the khat against a dark ground so the square reads.

Region 07 of 07

Bharatpur Division

भरतपुर संभाग

SANDSTONE, RAVINE AND THE EASTERN EDGE

Where Rajasthan runs into the Braj country and the Chambal ravines. The region's craft is literally its geology — Dholpur and Karauli red sandstone, quarried and carved for Mughal Delhi and Agra, and still cut by hand today. The least documented division in this volume.

BHARATPUR

DEEG

DHOLPUR

KARALI

SAWAI MADHOPUR





IN STONE

Dholpur Red Sandstone Carving

धौलपुर पत्थर शिल्प

DHOLPUR

Silawat quarry and carving families

The red sandstone of Agra Fort, Fatehpur Sikri and much of Mughal Delhi came from these quarries. It cuts cleanly along the bed and hardens on exposure, which is why it carries deep carving and fine jaali without crumbling.

QUARRY CLUSTER

● HOLDING



IN STONE

Karauli Sandstone Carving

करौली पत्थर शिल्प

KARALI

Carvers of the Karauli quarry belt

A deeper red than Dholpur's and still the preferred stone for temple building across north India. Whole workshops now work to restoration and new-temple commissions.

QUARRY CLUSTER

● HOLDING



IN WOOD

Bharatpur Lacquer and Wood Toys

लाख व काष्ठ खिलौने

BHARATPUR • DEEG

Turner and toy-making households

Lathe-turned lacquered toys, boxes and ritual objects, sharing a vocabulary with the Braj country across the Uttar Pradesh line.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN CLAY

Sawai Madhopur Pottery

सवाई माधोपुर मृत्तिका

SAWAI MADHOPUR

Kumhar potters of the Banas belt

Wheel-thrown storage and ritual ware in Banas river clay, fired in open ground kilns.

FIELD-CHECK

● AT RISK



IN STONE

Deeg Stone Inlay and Fountain Work

डीग पच्चीकारी

DEEG

Restoration craftsmen at the Deeg palace complex

Marble and sandstone inlay and the hydraulics of the Deeg water palace — a craft that now exists almost entirely as conservation work on a single monument.

FIELD-CHECK CONSERVATION ONLY

● CRITICAL

The quarries that built somebody else's monuments

Dholpur and Karauli red

The red sandstone of Agra Fort, Fatehpur Sikri, the Red Fort and much of Mughal Delhi came out of these beds. It splits cleanly along the bedding plane, is soft enough to carve when freshly quarried, and hardens on exposure to air — which is why it holds deep relief and fine jaali without crumbling.

The quarries are still working and the carving is still done by hand, largely for temple building across north India. It is among the few crafts in this volume with growing demand.

Makrana white

Four hundred kilometres west, in Nagaur, the Makrana beds supplied the Taj Mahal. The stone is unusually low in impurity and high in calcite, which is why it stays white instead of yellowing, and why pietra dura inlay holds in it.

Makrana carries a geographical indication, but as a natural good rather than a handicraft — the stone is protected, the carving is not.

Jaisalmer gold

The third stone, and the one that produced the finest work. Jaisalmer sandstone is soft enough when fresh to be cut almost like wood, which is why the Patwon ki Haveli screens carry lattice at a density that looks machine-made and is not.

The jaali is climate control

A pierced screen cuts glare, and accelerates air through the narrow openings so that the room behind stays cooler than the courtyard. In a desert that is not ornament; it is the building's cooling system, and it happens to be beautiful.

Craft recorded as mining

Stone carving falls between two administrative stools. The quarrying is regulated as mining; the carving is treated as construction labour. Neither counts as handicraft, so these workers appear in no craft census, hold no artisan cards, and are eligible for none of the schemes that reach a weaver doing comparable skilled work.

And the health cost nobody prices

Dry stone cutting produces fine silica dust, and silicosis is a recognised and serious occupational disease in Rajasthan's stone belt. Wet cutting and extraction equipment prevent it. Any honest account of this craft has to say that its principal problem is not market access but the lungs of the people doing it.

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

7 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-four 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 · Sanganer 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 · Sanganer'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-four entries is a beginning; Rajasthan almost certainly holds twice that number, and seventeen 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

Phalodi, Kotputli-Behror, Khairthal-Tijara, Dausa, Sirohi 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 Rajasthan 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