
Review of Literature

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Crafts have always been integral to the life of Indians. It has been a creative manifestation of people's skills displaying both form and function. Therefore, craft is both a method of industrial production and a form of artistic activity. Apart from it being a cultural and creative manifestation, it has also, been an important commodity for world trade and economy, since ancient times.

This chapter would include an inventory and review of literature pertaining to the historical aspects of embroidery craft and trade in India, influence of external and internal factors on the embroidery craft and craftsmen, development and significance of Zardosi craft, organisations and government policies for the development of handicrafts, role of technology in crafts, production and marketing of crafts, trade and economics of craft. These have been covered under the following heads:

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.2 Research Review

2.1 THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1.1 Definition of craft and craftsperson

According to dictionary meaning the word craft denotes, skill, art, trade, etc. in India however the craft is always associated with art and that is why a craft example is usually considered to be a specimen of folk-art or people's art.

A definition, which resulted from the Craft Symposium in Bangalore conducted by Crafts Society of India, was craft in India is a cultural and a creative manifestation, and also, a mainstream commercial product.

In the province of Quebec, the definition of crafts has been embodied in law, (Lois 32-01). Sabourin-(1999) has defined craft as the production of original pieces, unique in several copies, aimed at a utilitarian, decorative or expressive function and is related to the transformation of wood, leather, textiles, metals, silicates or any other materials. (46)

There are three main classifications of crafts (92)

- **Folk crafts:** People for their personal use or for a limited client base create folk crafts. Folk embroideries done by the village women folk of India are a good example. There are craftsmen who are specialized in creating textiles or jewellery which meets the criteria set up by a particular group of people, usually a particular caste or community. They have their own distinctive designs and styles
- **Religious crafts:** Religious crafts are developed around religious centers and themes. These craft items are connected with religious institutions and relevant ceremonies.
- **Commercial crafts:** Specialized craftsmen of a particular group who are specialized in a particular skill and who can completely master the craft do commercial crafts. They even have sub groups, which work for particular groups, and their tools and techniques may vary. The Weavers, the Dyers, the Printers, the Goldsmiths and the Carpenters are some of the commercial craftsmen.

A craftsperson according to Dhamija Jasleen is one who is skilled in a craft technique and though he may produce a number of similar objects, each one however expresses the maker's creativity. Besides, he also creates a number of other objects, which are a total expression of his or her creative self (18).

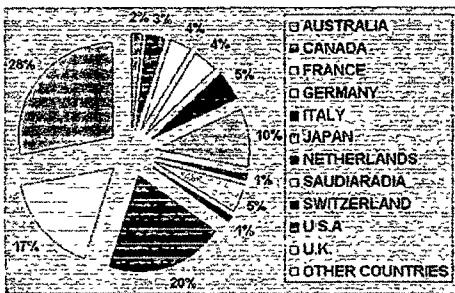
The traditional crafts are still a part of the life style of the more coherent traditional communities, in spite of major sociological changes that are taking pace, even in the rural hinterlands. Crafts are being absorbed into the larger urban and metropolitan markets, where their social value has been diminished and reduced to being ethnic images without specific meaning.

2.1.2 Handicraft industry in India

Handicraft is our national heritage and despite its substantial contribution to the Indian economy in terms of employment and income, there is near total lack of information on the artisans. Policy-makers lack data for suitable planning, as even the size of the artisan population is not available.

Handicrafts in the past, were an integral part of the people's religious and domestic life, and remain so, in many rural areas. Historical and social factors especially industrialization and thus the availability of cheap machine made products diminished the market of the crafts. After independence, Mahatama Gandhi's efforts helped in reviving the cottage industries. Later the setting up of All India Handicrafts Board contributed towards the public marketing, though major role of marketing of handicrafts was handled by the private enterprises in the field. Various projects and schemes for preservation and development of handicrafts were envisaged in the First and Second Five Year Plans. The establishment of a Crafts Museum was an integral part of this policy (50).

The All India Handicrafts Board was originally set up in 1952 to advise the Government on problems of handicrafts and to suggest measures for improvement and development. The Board was also required to study technical, marketing, financial, organizational, artistic and other aspects of handicrafts and to formulate plans on these lines. Its function also included advice and assistance to the state Governments for planning and executing schemes for the development of handicrafts. The government policies have helped in marketing of handicrafts internationally. The main markets for Zari and Zari goods (figure-1) have been USA, Saudi Arabia, U.K. and Japan (75)



The Office of the Development Commissioner [Handicrafts] has also set-up Five Regional Design and Technical Development Centres at Delhi, Calcutta, Mumbai, Bangalore and Guwahati to provide design inputs

Figure-1: Country wise Exports of Zari and Zari Handicrafts (1998-99)

and technological improvements for better development of Handicrafts sector and marketability for export orientation apart from domestic need for these regions (87)

Marketing crafts in India in a sustainable equitable manner is indeed a challenge in the face of globalization, world trade organization, rapid socio-cultural changes, introduction of "disposable" mind-set wherein products are consumed and discarded quickly. (80)

2.1.3 Profile of the locale

Production of Zardosi is cluster centric. Karigars and their families make various articles on the basis of orders handed to them by the Karkhandars. The product of each cluster has different characteristics. Though this activity is spread all over India the clusters covered for the study were from Lucknow, Bareilly, Kolkata and Surat. The profile of the selected places has been given below.

2.1.3a Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh

Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh is situated between 26 degree - 30 minute and 27 degree - 10 minute on North latitude, while on the East longitude it lies between 80 degree - 30 minute and 81 degree - 13 minute. Lucknow covers an area of 2544 sq.km. It is surrounded on the eastern side by District Barabanki, on the western side by district Unnao, on the southern side by Raebareli and on the northern side by Sitapur and Hardoi districts. River Gomti flows through the city. The population of district Lucknow as per census 1991 was 27, 605,915 lakhs.

Lucknow became important in 1528, when it was captured by Babur, the first Mughal ruler of India. Under Akbar, his grandson, the city became part of Avadh province. Asaf-ud-Dawlah, who became Nawab of Avadh in 1775, transferred his capital from Faizabad to Lucknow, making it the focal point of cultural renaissance. (76)

Despite the Indo-Persian legacy, Lucknow has a composite Indian culture. The welding of various cultural strains nurtured by centuries of Mughal and later Delhi Sultanate rule, to the folk traditions of the Indo-Gangetic plains has produced a complex, yet rich synthesis. The Urdu language acquired its baffling phonetic nuances and suave perfection here. (86)

The Nawabs of Avadh were great patrons of fine arts. The term 'Chowk' has become synonymous with Lucknow. 'Chowk' has played a vital role in the development of the Lucknowi culture. It has been the pivotal point around which the traders, engravers, painters, artisans, weavers, singers and nautch girls flourished and grew. This main bazar of yester years has not changed much but transformation is there.

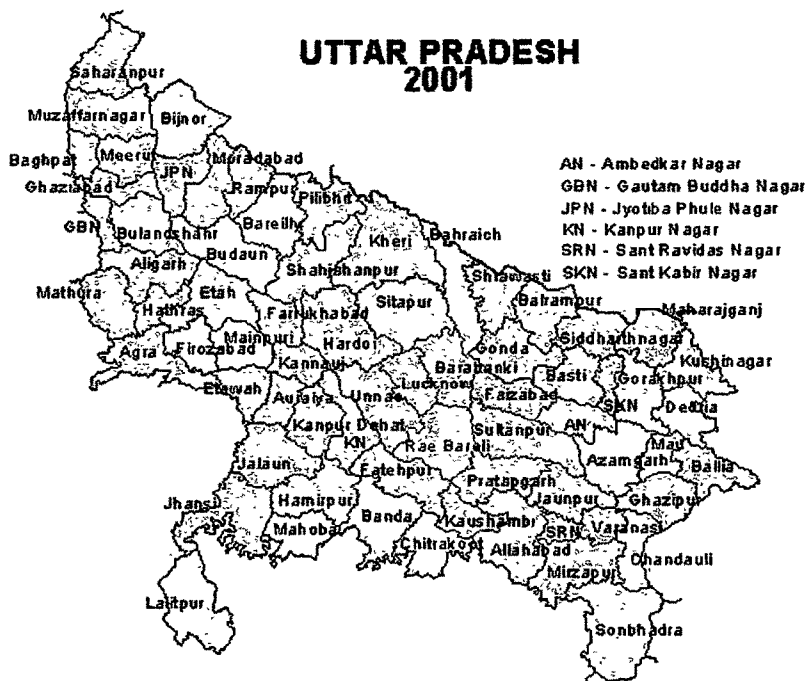


Figure-2: Map of Uttarpradesh

Its humming and lively characteristics represent Lucknowi culture in its modern day context. Lucknow's industries include food processing, manufacturing and handicrafts. The 'chikan' and 'Zardozi' (embroidery) works of Lucknow are famous. Besides these are the craft works of Bidri and Zربولand silver, Life - like ivory and bone carvings, 'Attar'('Itr') or perfumes, Lucknowi Paan, Zarda (chewing tobacco), Khamira, and Kite making. There are some other flourishing crafts like gota weaving, dyeing and calico printing, silver varq

making, woodworks and tazia making of zari, gold and silver paper by master craftsmen to mark the solemn occasion of Moharrum. The Hussainabad or Chota Imambara - a Nawabi father's parting 'gift' to his daughter houses an intricately carved stage, dozens of flags richly embroidered with zardosi work, profusely decorated taziyas (replicas of the tomb and coffin of Hussain) embellished with gilt, mica, tinsel, which are the ephemeral symbols of a people's undying faith. Besides chikan work the Zardozi and Kamdani works of Lucknow have been appreciated far and wide with gold and silver thread etc. (91). In 1999-2000, Lucknow city had 1000 Zari and Zardosi units employing 60,000 persons directly or indirectly and these units had an annual turnover of Rs.100 million. 20 per cent of the total value of the production was exported (3).

More than 50 per cent of the population of the district lives in the urban areas and it is the only district of the state with such unique feature. There are several important industrial concerns located in the district, which adds to the economic development. Being the state capital, the district has well-knit system of transportation and availability of finances from various sources in addition to scope of expansion. The district has, therefore, great potentials for Industrial development (91).

2.1.3b Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh

The city and district of Bareilly - one time kingdom of the Rohila Emperors also known as *Bareli* or *Bans Bareli* is located in the Tarai region of Himalayas. It is situated between the latitudes of 28 degree 10 minutes and 28 degree 54 minutes and longitudes of 78 degree 58 minutes and 79 degree 47 minutes on the Ramganga River, 812 m. North West from Calcutta by rail. The northern boundary of the district is contiguous with that of Nainital district; on the east lays the district of Pilibhit and on the

south-east, Shahajahanpur district. On the south and southwest, the district of Badaun is located. On the West lies the district of Rampur. Bareilly forms a part of the Rohilkhand Division founded in 1537 by Bans Deo and Barel Deo, the two sons of Jagat Singh Katheriya, who founded a village called Jagatpur, a name that is still retained by one of the localities of the old city (79).

Bareilly is known for its vivid skills in manufacturing of various types of handicrafts, especially Zari-Zardozi, Wooden furniture, Bamboo work, Patang and Manjha, Surma etc. Zari-Zardosi is one of the oldest traditions of the Bareilly District. The master craftsmen have perfected this legendary art over the years. The latest fashion is blended with historical grandeur. According to the estimates of District Industry Centre, Bareilly (2001), the district has about 25000 families (Urban and rural both) engaged in manufacturing activities relating to Zari - Zardozi. The production of Zari and Zardosi products has provided employment to 1, 00,000 people and involved an annual turnover of Rs.150 million. Long gowns, jackets, tops, skirts, salwar suits, purses, shoes uppers etc. were embroidered with dazzling beads, sequence, gold and silver wire, resham etc. and done in Ari-Zardozi work. Several master craftsmen create Zari articles with other embellishments on all kind of fabrics and costumes adorned by connoisseurs in India and in foreign land as well. About every area in Bareilly the craftsmen were employed in the craft of Zari-Zardosi.

Very few units of Bareilly are engaged in direct export of Zari items. According to a sketchy assessment, about 250 - 300 Delhi, Bombay and Jaipur based suppliers are engaged in exporting this specialty of Bareilly to many foreign countries like Germany, U.S.A. West Asia etc, amounting to nearly fifty million rupees.

Bareilly is a large district of the region and it boasts of many large and small Industries apart from the stated handicrafts, giving employment to around 90,000. Most of these units are Agro Based, Forest Based and Demand Based units (79).

2.1.3c Kolkata in West Bengal

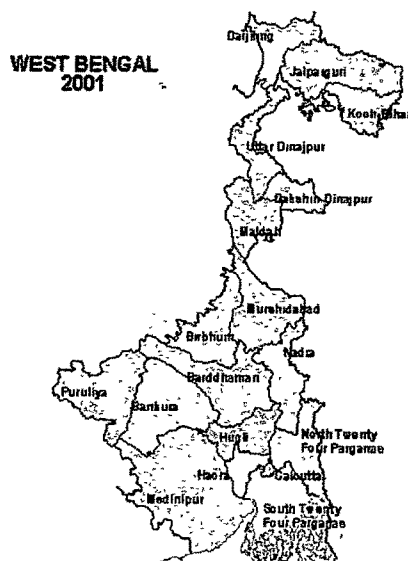


Figure-3: Map of West Bengal

Kolkata, formerly Calcutta, Bengali Kalikata, is the capital city of West Bengal, in India. It is surrounded on the north eastern side by Twenty four North Paraganas, on the north western side by district Hugli, on the south western side by district Medinipur and on the south eastern side by Twenty four South Paraganas districts.

Kolkata was just a village; and the capital city of Bengal earlier was Murshidabad, around 60 miles north of Calcutta. Later, Kolkata was the capital (1772 - 1912) of British India. Calcutta is located on the eastern

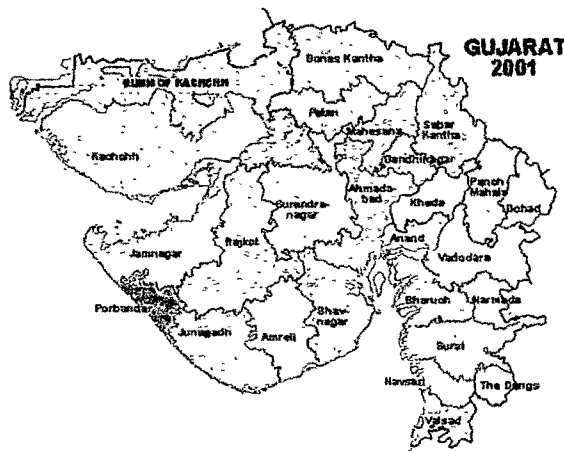
bank of the Hooghly River, an arm of the Ganges, about 96 miles (154 km) upstream from its mouth at the head of the Bay of Bengal. Kolkata is located in the eastern part of India at 22°82' N 88°20' E. Calcutta is known as the "Cultural Capital" of India.

Howrah is one of the most populous cities of West Bengal, other than Calcutta and Haldia. **Haora** or **Howrah** [hou'rä], city (1991 pop. 947,000), is situated on the Hugli River opposite Calcutta. It is located at the region's main railway terminus. The district is bounded in the north by the Arambagh and Shrirampur sub-divisions of the district of Hugli. On the east by Calcutta and South Twenty Four Parganas districts, on the south by the Tamluk Subdivision of Medinipur district; and on the west partly by the Tamluk and Ghatal Subdivisions of Medinipur and partly by the Arambagh subdivision of Hugli (91). One part of the district is fully engaged with industrial activities while other part is still going through the agricultural efforts. Traditional crafts-work is unique in the district (98). Second only to Calcutta in the Hugli side industrial complex, Haora produces textiles, glass, hosiery, cigarettes, batteries, and products made from jute, cotton, and wood. (72)

Forty nine percent of the population lives in the rural area. Howrah a metropolitan district has a large proportion of its population obtaining employment in the adjoining city of Calcutta. Only 25 per cent of the total workers of the district are engaged in agricultural pursuits. The district Howrah is essentially an industrial district and these industries may be broadly classified into two groups; the large-scale industries and the cottage industries. The large-scale industries include jute mills, cotton mills and the like. The cottage industries in the district have made up with

modern techniques to some extent keeping at par with the industrialization of the district. Educational facilities of one type or the other is found in 709 (96.6%) of the inhabited villages (92).

2.1.3d Surat in Gujarat



• **Figure-4: Map of Gujarat**

Surat is located in the state of Gujarat, in western India. It is situated on the bank of the perennial river Tapti which flows into the Arabian ocean, just 16 kms. from the Surat City. The location of Surat is 21°15'N Latitude and 72°52'E Longitude. The Northern boundary of the district is adjacent with that of Bharuch and Narmada districts; while the South boundary is contiguous with Navsari and Dangs. Arabian Sea coast forms its eastern and western boundaries. Surat was a port of prime importance for export - import during the British period and was also a leading industrial centre for textile. Textiles of Surat were in great demand in European markets. In addition to cotton textile, other products exported were carpets with "butta" (ornamented with flowers), beautifully designed quilts filled with cotton etc. Goods from North, South and East India were brought to Surat for trade and export purposes.

During the 16th Century, there was a vast market for textiles of Surat in South-East Asia, Gulf countries and East Africa. During the Mughal period, the products of Gujarat like 'paghdi' (headgear) of golden thread, cloth for sash and veil 'burkha', 'jamvar' (woven with 'butta'), 'khasa' (very fine muslin-velvet) and velvet, were very well-known. In the second half of the 17th century the European traveller Manucci (1653-1708) described Surat as the most industrially developed city of India. He saw many mercantile ships arriving from many parts of the world (96)

Surat has a very well developed infrastructure and national connectivity and hence many large industries have located their plants. Surat is one of the most important city on the industrial map of the country with many large industries like Reliance, Kribhco, Larsen and Toubro, ONGC, etc developed in the vicinity of Surat. Surat contributes to 28 per cent of the nation's total man made fiber production, 18 per cent of the nation's total man made fiber export, 40 per cent of the nation's total man made fabric production, 12-per cent of the nation's total fabric production, 70 per cent of the nation's total rough diamond cutting and polishing, 42 per cent of the world's total rough diamond cutting and polishing, 40 per cent of the nation's total diamond exports. Surat provides one million industrial employment (1998) with over 0.7 million employment in textile sector and 0.3 million employment in diamond sector. Surat today has nearly zero percent unemployment due to the unparallel growth of various industries.

The Zari craft is one of the oldest in Gujarat. The manufacture of real Zari threads was once a large and important industry, which has declined with the advent of synthetic materials. Surat is the most important Zari manufacturing centre in India today. Embroidery done in metal wires by kalabattu or Zari as it is popularly called is in a class by itself. (95)

2.1.4 Historical aspects of embroidery craft and trade in India

It is said, history is dynamic, not static; it is a process of change and movement in time. An attempt to emphasize the change, expansion and contraction is made; which further conveys the continuity of Zardosi embroidery craft through ages.

An effort to include visual records of the historically significant and characteristic products of the time have been made to indicate the cultural connotations and at the same time to make the presentation vivid.

2.1.4a Early Embroidery

In Atharvaveda one finds mention of *drapi* which probably signified a sort of mantle or cloak; it was close fitting and gold embroidered (Rigveda). "The mention of *Hiranyanatkan*, which emphasizes that the garments in Vedic age were often embroidered with gold. *Marut* was often described as wearing mantles adorned with gold. *Usha* was described as wearing shining clothes, ... Rig Veda also refers to some words *atka*, *drapi*, *pesas* indicating sewn garments. The term *atka* means a garment embroidered with gold thread. References indicate this continuity in the epic period as well. *Swarnatantu nirmita* and *maharajatvasas*, the word occurring in Valmiki's Ramayana, means adorned by gold wire and the clothes embroidered with gold and silver respectively." (45). There are interesting accounts of costly embroidered clothes with gold, also used as gifts, in the Mahabharata, which was indicative of the presence of gold and precious stone work in the royal courts. References indicate that royal courts were making frequent presentations of fabrics with gold and precious stone work. (25)

2.1.4b The Ancient period

There were several references of the gold embroidery in India found in the accounts of Greek travellers. In the late 4th Century B.C. Megasthenes

(C.302-298 B.C.) described the accounts of India and the Greek geographer Strabo wrote '..... the Indian's love of finery and described them as wearing robes worked in gold and other garments of richly-flowered muslin' (*euanthesis sindonas*) (26). A king rides in a golden palanquin, garnished with pearls which dangle all around it and he was robed in fine muslin embroidered with purple and gold (25).

Jain literature provides interesting information about the silver or gold work on clothes. ... The sacred text says, 'no monk or nun should accept golden plaids, glittering like gold, embroidered with gold'. This description in *Acharanga sutra* clearly spells out the evidence of the use of such clothing either by the royal courts or moneyed people.' (25).

Contrary to this one can find a collection of Jain book cover embroidered, in the collection of Calico Museum. The small panels are a complete expression of various themes of Jainism, providing in miniature a complete representation of the decorative style of silk and gold embroidery in Gujarat (26). Without the specificity of embroidery mentioned, several researchers have drawn attention to the presence of embroidered patterns in the cave templés, paintings and sculptures.

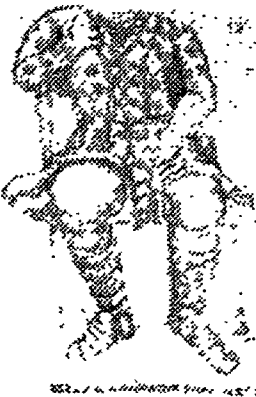


Plate-1: Male costumes in the Mathura sculptures of Kushana period - king shown wearing decorative coat, trousers and full boots (Source: Costumes and Textiles of India-Jamila Brijbhushan, Pg.11)

"The *champiya Jataka* represented in cave no. I illustrate small stars worked in silk and gold or silver thread on a dull yellowish texture over the cushions and back rests. The black spaces visible underneath indicated the embroidered portion." In cave II women have been represented wearing a striped and embroidered cap showing profusion of gold.

The presence of embroideries of various kinds in the Mathura Sculptures of the Kushana period (Plate-1) has been noticed. The decorative designs found on sculptures have been claimed to be in gold and silver thread, as they were very similar to leather objects found on the grave goods of Scythian burials with designs in gold (25)

2.1.4c Medieval Period

Marco Polo (1254-1324) had recorded that "Guzzerat" embroidery was regarded as the finest in the world and "all the clothes of gold and silver that were called mosolins were made in this country" (62). He has mentioned that couches and cushions were made in gold thread in the coast of Gujarat (25). While mentioning the prices of commodities he said they were so fine that they were worth six marks of silver a piece, and all these goods he thought more skill fully embroidered than anywhere else in the world (26). He has described the robes received by the twelve thousand barons from the Emperor on the great festivals of India, as garnished with gems and pearls, and other precious things in a very rich and costly manner. (25) He took back to Europe valuable knowledge of India and the east.

In medieval India, Ahmedabad was a great centre for articles of gold thread, and had trade contacts with Eastern markets from Cairo to Peking. This continued until Portugal set up its colonies in India and the East India Company established its factory at Surat (19). Gujarat had been annexed to the Mughal Empire in 1572. Prince Khurram, son of Jahangir was appointed as the governor of Gujarat in 1617-18; maintained here, in miniature, the splendour of the Mughal court. The city thus, remained one of the foremost centres of fine brocade, kinkhab weaving, and embroidery in silk and gold until after the nineteenth century (26).

Late medieval development suggested that the eventual settling of north and central India by Turkish and Afghan sultans by the late twelfth century created Delhi sultanate (23). It has also been mentioned in the *history of textiles* that Northwest India came under the influence of Turko-Afghan hegemony (1200-1500 A.D.). The exodus of craftsmen from Persia into India following a Mongol conquest of central Asia in the 13th century, led to a strong Persian influence under the Delhi sultanate, a regime that sponsored the arts with lavish displays of court patronage (62). Substantial documented information exists of large scale manufacture of Zardosi textile after the advent of the sultanate ascendancy.

The expressions in *Harshacharita* and *Kadambri*; the popular work of Banabhatta, speak of the silk clothing embroidered with gold and studded with pearls. (16)



Umari gives a clear description of the dresses worn by the notables of Delhi at an Islamic court of North India during the sultanate rule, where in the mentions; most of their Tartar (*Zartavi*) robes (Plate-2), are embroidered with gold (*muzarkasabi-dhahab*), where as some of them wore garments with both sleeves having a *tiraz* border of gold embroidery (*zarkash*) and others for example the Mongols, place the *tiraz* inscription between the shoulders (11).

Plate-2: *Portrait of Shuja-Ud-Daula in Tartar dress.* By Mihr Chand after a painting by Tilly Katta, Faizabad, circa-1772. Victoria and Albert picture library CT17352 IS. 257. 1951 (Reproduced from Lucknow then and now)

Ibn Batuta, who travelled India during the sultanate period (1287-1290), has given interesting details of a robe of honour, which probably came from the Delhi *tiraz* factory embroidered with gold and studded with precious stones. The precious stones were so many in numbers that even the colour of the cloth was hidden from view" (6).

The Mughal paintings from the time of Akbar provided an illuminating picture of Zardosi work prevalent during this time. Not only were the royalty and nobility represented richly attired in gold and jewels; the horses, the camels, the elephants were all depicted with richly embroidered saddles. Such gold embroidered pieces became popular with the Mughal kings as gift items as well. The gifting of such items, to the non-Muslim courts, particularly in Rajasthan and Gujarat, where the opulent traditions already existed. Slowly the Hindu elite also started using gold embroidered dresses as a form of aristocracy in contemporary India (25).

Abul Fazl has given an elaborate explanation of the use of Zardosi work on various objects in *Ain-i-Akbari*. According to him, a lot of attention was rendered to craftsmanship and the genuineness of material, further describing the production of embroideries under the karkhana system. He comments that apart from garments, the Mughals adopted this craft for various other objects especially tent materials (*Ain-a-Akbari*) (1) "His majesty paid much attention to various stuffs; hence Irana (Persian) and European and Mongolian articles of wear were in abundance. Skillful masters and workmen had settled in this country to teach the people an improved system of manufacture. The imperial workshop, the towns of Lahor, Agra, Fatehpur, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, turned out many masterpieces of workmanship; and the figures and patterns, knots and variety of fashions which now prevail, astonished experienced travellers.

The reproduced list of state of things officially recorded at the death of Akbar, revealed the collection of fifty lakh items of gold and silver decoration, comprising of covers and decorations not only as furnishing of various type, but clothes for horses and elephants. Also, included were variety of garments, arms bone and insignia, worked and embroidered with gold, silver and precious stones (4).

Travels in India by Tavernier, describes the magnitude of seven Mughal thrones; studded entirely with diamonds, rubies, emeralds or pearls (55).

Describing an account of craft and industries of different provinces in *khulasat-ut-tawarikh* the author wrote, "Agra was famous for its gold and silver embroidery on turbans and Gujarat for stuffs of gold embroidered velvet" (58).

Muslims of Benares (Varanasi)... for many centuries have probably been the world's most accomplished embroiderers. Every sari displayed in the teeming arcades of Benares for the admiration of wealthy pilgrims was an identically sized length of silk with endless variation in border designs, embroidered in twisted thread of silver and gold, in paisleys and peacocks. The motifs originated in Hindu mythology. (10)

Firozshah Tughlak imposed general restrictions on gold embroidery and also banned figurative motifs; those which include all anthromorphic representation on robes. These he said were non-Islamic and against the prescriptions of Shariyat (68). The Zardosi craft thence suffered a set back during his reign.

Aurangzeb, the last Mughal emperor (1658-1707) extended the limits of the empire further south (60). The mention of the word *sonapana* in *kanhadade prabandha* of Padmnabha, implying a rich silk stuff decorated with gold leaf, revealed the presence of Zardosi in South (56).

The period of Aurangzeb was recognised as the turning point in the power of the Mughal imperial court. Resources were weakened due to incessant warfare, and to a reduction in the scale of court patronage (26).

It is believed that with the emergence of Muslim nobility in Bengal; stuffs as silk handkerchief and caps embroidered in gold were manufactured in Bengal (56)

2.1.4d Colonial Period

According to Birdwood, perhaps the most wonderful piece of embroidery ever to be done in India was a veil ordered by one of the Gaekwads of Baroda for the tomb of the Prophet Mohammed at Medina. In his own words, "It was composed entirely of inwrought pearls and precious stones, disposed in an arabesque pattern, and is said to have cost a crore of rupees (39)

The Delhi exhibition of 1902-03 included several divisions of embroideries. One of which, was gold and silver embroidery. Watt George had documented the displayed samples that had obtained awards at the exhibition. Award winning samples were - An embroidered piano-cover, made by Manikchand of Delhi, on a pale-buff coloured silk velvet and was worked in purest quality of gold, an embroidered curtain in dark buff-coloured silk velvet, worked in purest and most massive gold. The design was graceful one drawn mainly from the lily and made by Kishanchand of Delhi, a large white silk curtain, embroidered in gold and pale coloured silks, from designs taken from the Taj (57).

Delhi art exhibition also included "leather sheets" from Hyderabad in Sindh: "These consisted of sambar leather and had central medallions, borders, and corner pieces done in appliqué with black, red or green leather, elaborately embroidered over the surface in chain stitch and with silver and gold judiciously intermixed". Specimens of similar type have been preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, including a sheet dating from the third quarter of the nineteenth century (26).

When Queen Victoria assumed the title of the "Empress of India" or *kaisar-i-Hind* in 1877, Delhi durbar was richly decorated with finest examples of Zardosi work. In 1911 when George V held another durbar, he wore an insignia worked in gold thread, Officers of the British and later the Indian army wore Zardosi epaulettes and rank badges on their uniform (32).

With the gradual inceptions of British rule, the Zardosi craft underwent changes at two levels. Firstly, as there was no longer royal patronage, both the *karkhana* and *riyasati kharkhana* systems completely crumbled down. Secondly, the craftsperson felt the need of finding a market to sell the finished products. The expensive nature of the craft restricted its use (25)

2.1.5 Influence of external and internal factors on the craft and the craftsman

There were several literary sources, ancient carvings, artefacts and archaeological finds which pointed out to both external and internal factors; as agents of change.

As industrial infrastructure came in (electricity, roads & transport, communications), craft products were instantly undermined by mass-produced goods of better "value" (in terms of price: performance), made in

remote factories. Traders started to dominate the local markets, edging out the historic designer-manufacturer-trader communities, rendering their knowledge acquired over generations virtually useless (29)

The ebb and flow of immigrants and invaders had instituted a series of complex cultural interchanges that 'had accommodated a multitude of faiths, and had brought inspiration to many a craftsman.

Commerce with the Roman Empire was particularly successful, fed by the ports on the Gulf of Cambay and carried principally by Arab seafarers who exploited the monsoon winds for their annual cycle of voyages. It was these merchants who first carried the Islamic faith to India, and brought to the textile artisans of coastal Gujarat cosmopolitan influences from across the globe. (5).

In the midst of the Aryan colonization northern India witnessed the birth of another world religion Buddhism which, dominated learning, social organization and patronage of the arts and crafts, elevating select craftsmen to the employ of the court and so creating an important precedent. Successive waves of Central Asian and Persian raiders and invaders poured in, forcibly converting their conquests to their own Islamic faith. For over 500 years, Islam held sway over northern India, a period of exciting cultural change. Travellers and artisans from all over the Islamic world - which stretched from Portugal to Bengal came and went, some remaining to add yet another layer to the demographic mix and architectural variety of north India. Although the Hindus remained in the majority, the converts to Islam were many, especially from the lower Hindu castes seeking to improve their lot, and from the Buddhists, who could adapt more readily to such a strict and formal religion. (5).

Pre Buddhist India presented a prosperous picture of India's trade with Persia and other countries further west as well as with countries in the Far East, in the course of which merchandise, including muslins, brocades and embroideries, were said to have been exported from India to those countries (19).

Under the patronage of the various royal clans that ruled India, particularly the Mughals, the Rajputs and the Deccani nawabs, the decorative arts and crafts reached unprecedented heights. These traditions were continued, and even augmented by later regional nawabs in Bengal, Mysore, Central India, Punjab, Awadh and Kashmir.

European traders did not fail to notice the relatively high quality of Indian craftsmanship and proceeded to set up their own "*karkhanas*" i.e. factories that rivalled the Mughal and Deccani establishments. In the '*karkhanas*' of Akbar, skilled Hindu craftsmen were just as likely to find employment as skilled Muslims. Both courts strived towards perfection in their manufactures, and could not afford religious discrimination.

Visitors of many diverse origins, as Jews, Christians, Muslims, Arabs, Chinese, Portuguese, Dutch, French and English had all come to the southern coastal lands of India and left influences that still abound in the robust, open-minded and extrovert culture of the south. The even temperament of the people had encouraged the continuity in purpose and content of such crafts; for it was, on the whole, rare to find a craftsmen working to the requirements of a foreign interpretation of a traditional Indian art form.

Unable to supervise the vast regions under its authority, the Mughal state disintegrated. Craftspeople employed in the Mughal '*karkhanas*' sought patronage from the regional courts of Awadh and Bengal, or Rajputana and Punjab, or the Marathas of Central India, all of whom

experienced a short-lived, but often-brilliant cultural renaissance. Mughal and Hindu (or Sikh) styles were fused in the regions, producing several unique and syncretic traditions.

Burdened by the dumping of mass produced goods from British factories from the mid nineteenth century onwards, the creative heart of the nation, its craftspeople, were poisoned by trade in the mediocre, and the minds of the people were polluted by the mimicry of European culture (5) To reawaken a sense of national, cultural and social pride, Gandhi chose to highlight and promote the merits of India's indigenous craftwork. Mahatma Gandhi looked to create a renewed sense of national identity and independent self-respect. In turn, this movement inspired the post independence interest in handicrafts and the setting up of the All India Handicrafts Board in 1948. The annual presentation of national awards from 1965 and cash gifts to master craftsmen and women of exceptional skill and imagination had increased the excellence in craftsmanship (29)

2.1.6 Spread and significance of Zardosi craft

The spread and significance of Zardosi craft across the globe and in India has been highlighted to understand the presence of Zardosi embroidery and the method and materials employed.

2.1.6a Zardosi around the world

Metal-thread embroidery as a craft has been worked all across the globe, traditionally on costly materials like velvet, silk and satin as religious and ceremonial paraphernalia's, for court costumes and animal trappings. It has also been used in moderation to embellish the dress of rich and wealthy (24). It has been used to denote rank in Church, State, Military and Civilian life. (10)

. Frequent references of woven and embroidered golden textiles have been made in Iliad, Odyssey and Roman writings. Furthermore, evidences were also found in Graeco-Roman and Phrygian costumes and stuffs. The elaborately designed ornament upon the King's robe in Assyrian sculpture (884 B.C.) testified to the consummate skill of Assyrian or Babylonian workers at that date. Herodotus had described woven in or gold embroidered corselet given by the king of Egypt to the Minerva of Lindus. (77). The Balinese culture too, mentions the use of pieces decorated by the introduction of gold and silver threads known as 'Songket', worn as ceremonial pieces by the princely families (96). Craftsmen in the city of Bukhara specialized in the art of Zardosi or gold-thread embroidery. The gift of *chapan*, an Uzbek robe, with Zardosi embroidery was a favourite present for honoured guests (76).

There were certain styles, which were said to have originated in Islamic world and then to have spread to India and South East Asia, which had their counterparts in Christian Europe and Africa.

Samplers in the given plates display the skills of a professional embroidery workshop in Malta, Italy or Spain (Plate-3) and England (Plate-4).

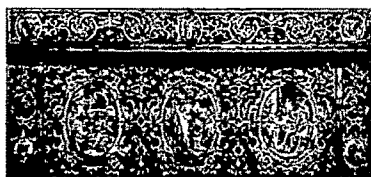


Plate-3: ALTAR FRONTAL - (Italy or Spain, about 1600), Silk with metallic gold thread embroidery on silk velvet with applied semiprecious stones, 45 x 110 in. (114.3 x 279.4 cm) Costume Council Fund, M.66.71

(Source: http://www.lacma.org/art/perm_col/costumes/costume2.htm#atop)



Plate-4: MAN'S GAUNTLETS - (England, 1610-20), Leather, gold and silk thread embroidery on silk satin, and gilt lace edging, Length: 14 in. (35.6 cm), Gift of Mrs. Margaret Isabel Fairfax McKnight, 49.451a-b The design and construction of the splendid gloves disclose their use as courtly attire; originally belonging to Thomas, first Lord Fairfax (1560-1640)

(Source: http://www.lacma.org/art/perm_col/costumes/costume2.htm#atop)

Moreover, China had its own style of metal-thread work, which was understood to have spread to South East Asia. The New world has had no indigenous tradition of metal thread work, until the Spanish introduced it for Church and court use. (24)

During the middle ages European royal personages and high ecclesiastical dignitaries used cloth and tissues of gold and silver for their state and ceremonial robes, as well as for costly hangings and decoration. Amongst Western communities the demand for gold and silver embroideries and braid lace existed chiefly in connection with naval, military and other uniforms, masonic insignia, court costumes, public and private liveries, ecclesiastical robes and draperies, theatrical dresses (78).

Immaterial of the origin the techniques of metal thread embroidery remained the same all over the world. Most professional metal thread work was done by men who, by and large, sew it in workshops using a frame as this kept the fabric taut and left the embroiderer with both hands free. Women used metal thread for folk, embroidery extensively in the Balkans, the Islamic world, in India and South East Asia and mainly embroidered without using a frame (24). The gold worker in the Medina at Tunis would use his leg as a support instead of the usual frame. Gold work from Ottoman Empire would contain beaten gold strips cut from a plate, in the embroidery (10)

2.1.6b Zardosi embroidery in pre and post independent India

Brijbhushan J., states the work on lighter fabrics as *kalabattun* or *karchob*, wherein there is no foundation padding for the embroidery, the gilt wire or spangles being stitched directly to the fabric or the wire itself used as embroidery thread making tiny dots, flowers or stars to cover light silk, cotton

or chiffon. This kind of embroidery was used for clothing and small articles of every day. *Karchob* was done by fixing the fabric to be embroidered on a framework. The patterns were first lightly painted or printed on the fabric with some kind of coloured material, and which the embroiderer followed in laying the *Kalabatun* thread.

In *Zardosi*, the outline of the design was first worked either with Gijai or with twisted gold thread. With the left hand, the wire was twisted into the required position and stitched down on the material by a needle threaded with yellow cotton held in the right hand. (17) Salma pieces, stiff gold wires twisted like a spring, were then cut to the required length. These were placed near the surface to be embroidered and picked up with the delicate thrust of the needle, filling in the petals of flowers and the leaves of the motif. Quite often, the centres of the flowers were studded with shining glass pieces, which earlier used to be precious or semi-precious stones.

Kamdani, a lighter needlework done on lighter material, mostly on wearing apparel, such as scarves, veils, caps, etc. utilized a needle which was threaded with ordinary thread doubled, the ends being secured with a knot. When the knotted end of the wire was pressed and pulled through the materials with the wire pressed down at every stitch, small dots of overlapping satin stitch were thrown up (12). A shimmering effect was created by the hazara buti in which a thousand dots were produced from roughly 1/80 kg. of wire (9).

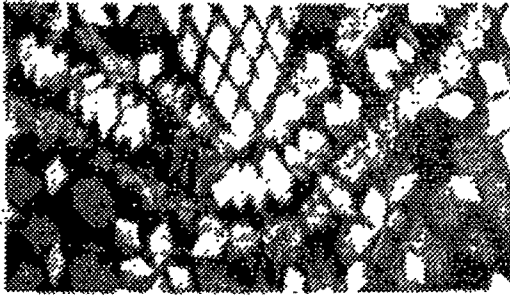
Lucknow exported its embroidered fabrics to all parts of India. Gold and Silver embroidery was produced to a certain extent in Dera Ismail Khan and Patiala too. Dr. Bidie's remarks about embroidery work carried

on in the Madras Presidency states that, the Madras work included net embroidered with silk thread, silver thread, gold, or gold and silver, gold and beetle-wings, and woollen cloth embroidered with silk thread and gold apart from other embroideries. (42)

Aurangabad and Gulbarga, in Haidrabad (now of Pakistan) turned out quantity of embroidered stuffs. In the Bombay Presidency embroidery was principally carried on in Kachh, Surat, Shikarpur and Haidrabad in Sind, and Bombay. A little work in gold and silver spangles and twisted gold wire was common in Kathiawar; while in Surat the design was sometimes completed in flattened silver or gold wire or thin gold braid. (38) There were four chief varieties of embroidery locally known as *Hatjari*, *Karchobi*, *Badlani* and *Reshmibharatkam* in Surat. Of these, the *Karchobi* and the *Reshmibharatkam* required frames. The *Reshmi-bharat-kam* was done in chain and backstitches while *Karchobi* work in gold and silver thread was sub-divided into five groups:

- (1) *Kasabtiki*, gold or silver thread spangles, which was peculiar to Surat,
- (2) *Jhikchalak*, from the twisted thread (jhik) and the zigzag thread (chalak);
- (3) *Bharat-karachi* from its being an imitation of the Karachi work, in which bits of card-board were used for giving a raised body to the designs;
- (4) *Jhik-tiki* from the twisted threads and spangles used; and
- (5) *Chalak-tiki* from the zigzag thread (chalak) and spangles tiki.

Another kind of embroidery extensively practiced at Surat was called *Badlani*, in which the design was worked in flattened gold or silver wire, and was done by Bhora women during their leisure hours (42). The technique of Badla, Kamdani or Mukesh, was probably brought to India by the Mughals, conquerors of Turkish and Mongolian descent in the 16th Century. The small dots (*fardi*) have been found on textiles in many countries of Turkish and Muslim influence, for example, Egypt, India and Iran, (Plate-5) (41).



Makaish or Badla work was considered one of the oldest styles, done with the use of silver wire *badla*. In fact, this served as a needle for piercing the material, to prepare a variety of designs. (12)

Plate-5: Detail of badla on a bandhani (tie-dyed silk fabric). Mid C. 20, India – used by vohra muslims women. (Reproduced from Calico museum - Monograph folder series no. 1)

The Surat embroiderers in silk thread were called *Chikandaz*, a name also given by the Sindis to the embroiderers of Shikarpur, Rohri, Karachi and Haidrabad in Sind

A kind of embroidery, heavy in character, called *Bharatkam* literally 'work filled in', was first worked in relief in a coarse cotton thread and afterwards covered with gold or silver thread, was extensively made for caps, coats, Masnads, saddle-cloths, etc. (32) The technique of Gold Embroidery upon velvet was reputed to have been introduced into India by the Portugese. (*John Irwin*) Velvet was not made in India then, but imported. Some of the best gold embroidery was done on a velvet ground or

on English broadcloth. Embroidery done on velvet or satin or other heavy materials came to be known as Zardozi. (9) Embroidery in gold and beetle wings from Haidrabad(now of pakistan) was in great demand among Europeans for ball dresses. (42).

A species of needle embroidery was also much in vogue in Assam. This kind of work was usually carried on by Muhammadans, on Karsipi-kapar, a richly embroidered cotton cloth used as a wrapper. It was made of very fine material and decorated profusely with representations of butterflies, animals and flowers worked in flattened gold wire. *Rihar-achal*, the ends of a silk Riha or scarf and borders were usually decorated with gold thread twisted with steel wire, or with gold thread alone and commonly worn by women. *Kaparer-achal*, the ends and borders of a cotton chadar, was ornamented in much the same way as the *rihar-achal*. (42)

Zardosi embroidery made its presence even in the South. The production of beautiful embroidered liturgical vestments in traditional designs was a branch by itself in embroidery in Kerala done by men alone. As Christianity took root very early, it came to flower perhaps at its best there. The liturgical vestments in Kerala were prepared by stretching the cloth to be embroidered on a frame and then the design was traced out. Generally, stem and satin stitches were worked obliquely and the stem stitch would be without any foundation of running stitch. (12)

Another style of embroidery known as tilla or marori work was done by twisting gold thread on the surface while a needle was pushed at the back to stitch the gold thread down to the basic cloth. (12) A technique known as marorhi used fine gold thread wrapped around a wooden peg (fatila) was twisted each time a couched stitch was put in to lay it on the ground fabric

(white silk was used for silver thread and yellow for gold). Marorhi examples are still to be seen on the silk kurtas and abas of Memon communities in Karachi who have close links with Kutch and Gujarat. (43)

There was mina work (enamel), which perhaps got the name from its resemblance to enamel, done in gold. (12) The flat wire would be twisted at different points to make for variety. The effect was achieved by using coloured threads for fillings of flowers and leaves while outlining them with gold and silver thread. The effect was that of enameling from which the work derived its name mina. (9) A border pattern known as katao-ki-bel was made of stiff canvas with the whole surface of the design covered with wire and spangles – plain gold, silver or coloured or a combination of all three and filled in with sequin edging. The redundant canvas was cut away leaving a scalloped or plain edge and holes in the design producing a lacy effect. Being so stiff it was useful only as edging. Another border technique was lace made on net and gracefully filled in with Zari stitches and spangles.

Lace made on net was embroidered with gold thread, salma and sitara which made a nice edging for sleeves and bottoms of kurtas or the short ends of dupattas as well as for sarees. A variation was to make the base material with strips or tiny squares of different coloured fabrics and to do the embroidery in wire. (9)

The *Gota* and *Kinari* work, a specialty of North India. The chief feature was cutting the woven gold border into different shapes or twisted into flowers, leaves or borders such as Champakali or Chutki which were stitched on to the material so as to give a variety of textures to the patterns (17). Chutki was prepared using narrow gold woven borders which

were sharply pressed between the two thumbs nail after every centimeter or so along its length. The pressed portion made a sharp ridge and the whole presented a spiked appearance. Thus was normally used as an adjunct to another border but was used alone on the field of the work. (9) Another interesting use of gota kinari was done in Jaipur. Here the gota was cut into different shapes of birds and animals and human figures, which were stitched on to the surface and enclosed, with wires of silver and gold. Certain areas were filled in with coloured silks giving the appearance of minakari (17). Men and women of the Muslim community were highly proficient in this form of textile embellishment (12).

Referring to Delhi, J.L. Kipling wrote: "Nothing could be prettier or more dainty than some of the slippers made for native ladies' wear, embroidered with seed pearls, usually false, with spangles and every variety of gold and silver thread, and inlaid with red, black or emerald green leather in decorative patterns. Gilded and silvered leather were also used"(39). The varieties of Gold and Silver embroidery were grouped together under the generic term of Zardozi, simply 'gold embroidery'. Mehta R. J. states, there were many varieties of materials and technique and styles used, to give a wide range of effects. Yet, surprisingly enough, no special marked characteristics was noticed in the different parts of the country, and it was technically almost the same wherever it may be produced. Similar work was very popular in the major centres of Bhopal, Lucknow, Madras, Kashmir, Ajmer, Jaipur, Bombay, Surat, Gujarat, Aurangabad, Hyderabad, Agra, Delhi and Varanasi, done by both men and women (38)

Supply and Manufacture of gold / silver thread

The use of metal and related materials, such as iridescent beetles' wing cases, to embellish textiles has been immensely popular in India at least since Mughal times, and probably earlier (23). Real silver thread, gold plated thread or an imitation, which has a copper base, gilded with gold or silver colour was used for the Zari in the later part of the 19th Century. The silk used in preparing the gold and silver thread for embroidery was called Asara, and the silk thread used in sewing the Karchobi or framework embroidery was called Nakh. Asara meant that which was spun on the Asari or reel, and Nakh meant that which was spun through holes bored into the nail (nakh). (42)

The manufacture of the gold and silver wire or thread used in the embroidery was a minor industry on its own. A bar of silver, about 45 cms in length and roughly 2 cms. in thickness, was completely wrapped round with pure gold leaf and then heated in a furnace sufficiently to fuse the gold. The thicker the gold leaf applied, the richer the red-gold of the final product. Then the gold-covered silver bar was turned into wire by pulling it through steel draw-plates. The wire was made thinner and thinner by drawing it through finer and still finer holes in the draw-plate until it would measure miles in length and be as thin as a human hair. 'The tensile capacity of the gold was wonderful, for however fine the bar may be drawn out, the gold surface always remains,' so confirmed D.H. Baden Powell. The wire thus prepared was then flattened by gently hammering it on a small anvil, and finally wound round silk thread. Hence, it appeared thicker than it really was and yet remained strong and flexible, characteristics very essential in thread to be used either for weaving or embroidery. The manner in which the metallic wire was wound round the thread was very original and hence interesting (38)

The materials made by the use of gold and silver wire known as 'badla' or 'Kasab' were varied. Plain wire was called *badla* and when wound around thread it was called *Kasab*. *Gijai* was a circular thin stiff wire, so called because of its resemblance to an insect of that name. This was used in intricate patterns. *Sitara* the star was a small round metal piece, which when set in embroidery looked like a star, and was used mostly in floral designs. This type of embroidery was known as salma-sitara. Small spangles called *sitara* were used for the centre of flowers too. Piled together they would make up a whole design. Their name was derived from their capacity for reflecting light and they create the play of light and shade that mirrors or pieces of mica do in other embroideries. Tiny bowls i.e. the *katoris*, with a perforation through the centre were also used like *sitaras*. There were various types of *Zari* threads. The thicker *kalabattu* was braided-gold thread, used in the border, while the thinner variety was used at the end as soft laces of *batwas* (purses), tassels, necklace, strings, etc. *Tikora* was gold thread spirally twisted for use in curves and convolutions in complex designs. There was a dull *zari* thread, *kora* and a lustrous one, *chikna* (*Kamladevi Chattophadyay-1975*) Silk thread, sequins, beads and *gota* i.e. ribbon-like strips woven from yellow silk and gold thread were also used in conjunction with the wires, fine silver wire beaten into a flat ribbon was often used too. (43) *Salma* was very fine, soft, flexible unflattened wire wound spirally without a thread in the centre. It was used in *Kalabattu* for making flowers and leaves, which were attached by tiny stitches to the base material. For use in *zardosi* work, however, the wire was much thicker and the spirals much stiffer. It could be used with close spirals or stretched to make shallower indentations according to the requirement of the design. (9)

Products and its promotion

The variety of objects decorated with metal thread ranged from heavy velvet floor spreads to diaphanous garments and decorative caps from the courts of Delhi or Lucknow, or men's robes from Sindh and Punjab (23).

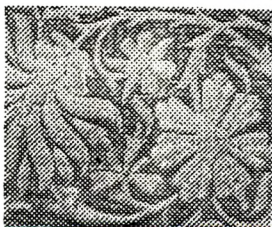
Superb and very varied work was done on leather, felt and velvet, usually on animal carts, footwear, handbags, chogas and overcoats. (*Textiles and embroideries of India-Marg publication*) Elephant-jhuls, horse-trappings, canopies with fringes, Palki-covers, gowns, jackets, dresses, bodices, prayer-carpet, caps, slippers, moneybags, belts, were embroidered with Karchob or Karchikan work in Murshidabad and Patna. Dresses for dancing girls and turbans used by itinerant theatrical players were embroidered with Kalabatun work in Calcutta. Saris, sheets called Dupattas, coats, mantle-fringes, saddle-covers, bags, hangings, caps and shoes were articles prepared in Lucknow. Gold and silver embroidered banners were made at both Lucknow and Benares. Caps, belts, and Hukka pipes were extensively embroidered at Agra. False lace and gilt wire-threads were largely used for the decoration of cotton caps. Whips and walking sticks were ornamented with embroidered work at Fatehpur. Caps called Kallas were made in Dera Ismail Khan, around which the Afghan and frontier turban was wound. Horse saddlecloths, table-covers, and mantle-borders were made at Patiala. Chessboards were embroidered in handsome old style of gold work at Charkhari in Central India. Gold embroidered scent-stands, caps, sword-belts, mats, and bags were made at Dhar. Handkerchiefs and Hukka mouthpieces in imitation gold and silver were worked in Ratlam. Handkerchiefs and caps were wrought in handsome gold embroidery at Datia. Pouches and gun-cap holders were silver-embroidered at Alipura.

Handkerchiefs, Pardas or curtains made of flattened wire and silk were characteristics of Burhanpur. Aurangabad in the Haidrabad territory was famous for its valuable heavy and rich embroidery work on saris, coats, caps, handkerchiefs, turbans, saddlecloths, tray-covers and cushions. (42) The main vestments for liturgy in Kerala were flowing robes, stoles, cloaks, surplices, etc. (12) Borders of various kinds were made as edging for sarees, dupattas, etc. or as an adjunct to other embroidery. The katao-ki-bel being meant as edging for sarees was nine yards long. Other borders were made of cloth on which a design in sequins and wires or various kinds was embroidered. This was then used along with braids, twisted wires, woven gold border, salma, sitara, katori, seed pearls and beetles' wings to make elaborate designs on silk or heavy cotton. (9)



Zari mukats (crowns) (Plate-6), for the images of worship continued to be made in bulk without deterioration in workmanship. The heavy karchop work (Plate-7) was confined to the preparation of Masnads (floor coverings) Kanats (side walls of tents, Palans (elephant covers).

Plate-6: Detail of a headdress from mathura in uttarpradesh, 20th C. (source: *Craft traditions of India- Jaya jaitly*)



This work has also been adapted to the production of badges for uniforms and Christmas decorations.

Plate-7: Detail of a royal carpet from Benaras, 19th century (Source: Indian Textiles).

Many articles of best and purest workmanship were displayed in the Colonial and Indian Exhibition such as Canopy with fringe embroidered with gold and silver from Murshidabad, pillowcases embroidered in similar way,

from Saran, specimens of handkerchiefs and curtains, a very fine sample of Burhanpur work a Choga, prepared of cloth of gold, richly embroidered, a gold collar and cuffs, gold coiffure and fichu, as well as silver fichu, coiffure, and cuffs from Madras. A collection of gold and silver embroidered fabrics, fringes, crowns, turbans, caps, wreaths, embroidered Hukka pipes, etc. was sent from Calcutta. A collection of embroidered caps was sent to the Calcutta International Exhibition from Surat. The patterns in them bore the names of Hire-bandi or "Diamond-set," Ardha-buti or "Half-foliaged," Kothani or "Fortified". (42)

Several examples cited in 'Shopping in India' (1954) suggests, that foreign tourists were the clients for gold embroidered sari; and it has travelled to foreign land, especially Europe and U.S.A.

The silver and gold embroidered evening bags of black velvet (Plate-8) were found to be so high priced as "Oriental Exports" in a Swank Manhattan store which in India would cost only its one-fifth.

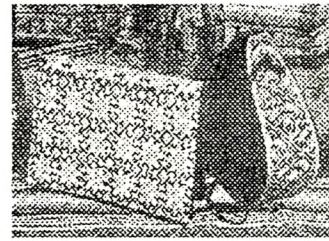


Plate-8: Black velvet bags embroidered with gold and silver thread. (Source: Shopping in India, p-15)



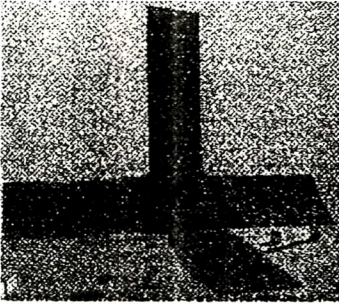
This further confirmed the presence of gold and silver velvet evening bags in U.S.A. in the mid 20th century. The historical city Delhi's handicrafts included the metallic embroidered silk, gold embroidered purses and belts worked in rich black velvet or golden silk available only in the quality shops.

Plate-9: Velvet handbag with Zari gold and silver embroidery. (Source: Shopping in India, p-26)

Agra was known for black velvet bags with intricate gold and silver embroidery (Plate-9) while Banaras for shoes and purses with zari embroidery work (Plate-10).



Plate-10: Shoes and purses with Zari embroidery work.
(Source: Shopping in India, p-90)



Agra, Bhopal and Bombay were noted for Zari work, while Amritsar, Delhi and Patna for Zardosi. A cloth of dice, worked in zardosi (Plate-11) also makes its presence during the 20th C.

Plate-11: Dice cloth with Zardosi (Source: Indian Handicrafts – Chattopadhyaya Kamaladevi)

The Zardosi craft traditions of the post independence are reflected in these plates (Plate-12).

Plate-12: Zari handbag, pocket books, pouches, belts.
(Source: Indian Handicrafts – Chattopadhyaya Kamaladevi, p-73)



Stitches used

Gold and silver embroidery used most of the stitches in other forms of the craft. Satin, chain, stem, running stitches were all used but the most important stitch, of course, was the couching or laid stitch. While the chain stitch was used in light embroidery, the laid or couching lend itself to heavy work, the running stitch to the more delicate, net and lace like fabrics (9).

2.2 RESEARCH REVIEW

The research review of the study has been further divided into the following subsections:

2.2.1 Embroidery Craft and Crafts producers

2.2.2 Production and marketing of Crafts

2.2.3 Role of Technology in Crafts

2.2.1 Embroidery Craft and Crafts producers

2.2.1a Embroidery as a Craft

Sehgal B. (1998) conducted an exploratory study on Gold and Silver embroidery of Punjab and its use in Contemporary fashion. The study was limited to the bigger cities, Ludhiana, Jalandar, Patiala and Amritsar. It was revealed that the Adda work i.e. gold and silver embroidery done on frame existed in Punjab since the times of pre-partition. During the same period the Zardosi work was practiced with real work known as *Succha kaam*. The respondents predominantly men belonged to three religious classes i.e. Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs and they had learnt this art from their ustads. The Muslims outnumbered the Hindu and Sikh craftsmen since they migrated from Uttar Pradesh to avail better returns on time invested. It was revealed that two third of the respondents were residents of Punjab and one third were non-resident respondents from Bareilly and Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh. Considerable amount of child labour was found to be associated with this craft. It was established that the introduction of boutiques in the social setup had increased the preferences of this embroidery in Punjab. It was noted that Ludhiana being the biggest hosiery producing centre had craftsmen working with woollen threads and sparing use of Zari and Beads to work embroidery

on ladies sweaters and jerseys. The craft workers were versatile and produced articles as per the requirements of the customers. The articles included suits, jutis, roomaalas, religious covering, knitted woolens, sari and sari blouses, lehngas, net laces of Zardosi and rakhis in their decreasing order of preference. Though, local people were the major consumers of this work, orders from countries like America, France, Dubai, England, Germany and Arab countries were engaged too (51).

A comparative study of Zardosi and Aari embroidery of Saharanpur revealed that velvet and silk were popular fabrics for Zardosi embroidery and though fabrics like georgette, crepe, chinon, chiffon, nylon and velvet were used for Aari embroidery, silk was more preferred. Tissue and velvet was stated to be unsuitable for Zardosi and Aari respectively. The other difference between the two embroideries was noted in their profit margins. The Zardosi had five per cent higher profits, since it involved more efforts and had an expensive look too. (15)

Another study on Adda / Karchob embroideries of rural Chandigarh stated that aari, salma, bead, thread and gota kinari were the types of embroideries executed on a frame in the selected place of investigation. It was revealed that all the embroiderers had migrated from different places like Saharanpur, Luknow, Delhi, Bhuj, Ajmer, Jaipur, Amritsar, Patiala and Agra for employment. All the embroiderers were catering to direct orders from the customers and 75 per cent of these were receiving orders from boutiques too. Majority of the embroiderers were working alone on Adda. (53)

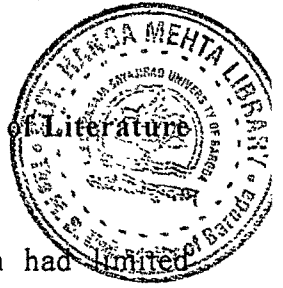
Mahajan S. (1999) took up a study to trace the continuity and change in Zari embroidery (Zardosi) in India. The fieldwork and market survey done at Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh revealed that the tradition of Zardosi craft

has continued and expanded in demand. Use of Zardosi in domestic items is no more prevalent and Zardosi is restricted mostly to apparels today.

A drastic change was noticed in terms of its appearance; now it is used even for casual wear; with the introduction of silk thread i.e. Resham ka dhaga. Use of raw materials like ribbons, beads, crystals, silk thread instead of normal gold and silver thread are a result of catering to export orders (36).

Jain A. (1992) had conducted a study of the Artisans in the Jari Industry of Surat focusing on women's role and participation. The study revealed that

- Artisans who took to work at an early age had more of vocational training and less of formal training.
- The productivity of the male workers was found to be higher than the female workers. This was perhaps due to the frequent attention of the female required by the family, which resulted in reorientation, less speed and poor quality.
- Almost all the workers acquired the skills through 'learning by doing' technique. The production level of the traditional workers was higher than the non-traditional workers
- Majority of the women workers were familiar with the craft activity before marriage. The female workers in the product making had taken up craft as their subsidiary source of income to support family economically. None of the women workers were employed in the embroidery units neither were they employed in 'Pawtha making', 'Tania making' and 'Gilding which required speed, high skill and more manual work.



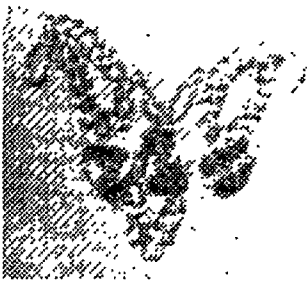
- Women and children were employed in units which had limited technological development. The tools and equipments used were simple, traditional (27).

Mehorta S. and Mario B. (2002) carried out surveys in five Asian Countries – two low income countries India, Pakistan and three middle income countries Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines where, home based work was widespread. Their paper examined the social protection needs of the women workers, and argued for public action to promote such work as a possible new labour intensive growth strategy. In India Zardosi was selected as one of the sectors of home based work. The main findings were:

- Asian developing countries with subcontracting involving home based work displays the characters of “dirt road”, which brings no human development. The subcontracted workers are offered very little Government action to ensure social protection for the workers.
- Most of the home worker households in the clusters of South-Asia live below poverty line.
- Value chain analysis revealed that the home workers were working under conditions, which are exploitative – with the workers obtaining a small share of the total price, paid by the consumer of the product they produce. They work long hours, especially in the high season, for low piece rates and with delay in payment in many cases.
- The feminization of the work has important implications for the gender dimension of a household’s human development cycle from generation to generation.

- The low educational level of the home workers, and the health – related problems faced by them, indicated that without public interventions, the first synergy between basic services can not be triggered in the case of these families, which has been confirmed by the econometric results, examining the determinants of health status in India and Pakistan (37)

A study by NCAER on “Outsourcing of manufacturing households: subcontracted home-based work in India,” covered three sectors. One of the sectors studied was Zardosi – gold thread embroidery on finished garments, revealed (i) outworkers carried out their activities as secondary activities (ii) there existed a shift between status of worker i.e. the same worker was self employed at one point of time and sub-contracted at another and (iii) the existence of ‘centres’ – a place where workers come together to work under the supervision of a sub-contractor (not the work places of employers). Home based workers were found to shift between works at home and work in such centres depending on availability of work (74)



Sisodia A. (1989) in her study on Kasida of Kashmir had mentioned the existence of a number of varieties of embroideries in Kashmir Chikan dozi (plate-13) also known as Tilla work was one among them.

Plate-13: Chikandozi / Tilla work of Kashmir

It was done with the help of metallic yarns in gold and silver colour. Three metallic yarns taken together were twisted round to form circles or loops (Plate-17). This Zari embroidery craft was practiced by 1,100 workers. Of these 40 per cent of them were skilled workers. This embroidery was done on kurtas, phirans and shawls for the domestic market, and it had potentials for the export market.

2.2.1b Status of the producers of Craft

Indian crafts scene has been summarized in 'India's Artisans. a status report' prepared by SRUTI, a Delhi-based NGO, in 1995. The state of India's artisans was stated as a matter of concern. The proud and industrious artisans, once the backbone of the Indian economy were said to have been marginalised by the "modernisation" and "industrialisation" of society. Though some have managed to adapt to changing times, and a few have even thrived, most of them live in abject poverty with no prospects for a better tomorrow. It has been indicated that this destruction is not yet complete and their assessment was that the artisanal 'sector can only survive in pockets.

Report of the Task Force on Handicrafts for the VIII Five Year Plan, Ministry of Textiles, New Delhi revealed that households headed by artisans, in general have much lower net wealth and 90 per cent are landless as against 36 per cent for households headed by others. The average income derived by a craftsperson was Rs.2000 per month for an average family of five members. The state of India's artisans was stated as a matter of serious concern. (69)

A baseline survey of the artisans producing Zari embroidered Jootis in Punjab under taken by FDDI to identify and prioritize appropriate interventions by the support from Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion revealed that the artisan families engaged in this sector had neither a vertical nor horizontal linkage in the clusters. The clusters were inert and migration of artisans to other cities and adopting different professions was indicative of this sector losing its competitiveness. The major issues affecting the growth of this sector were identified as non-

availability of institutional finance, lack of institutional framework for skill, technology and product up gradation, marketing structure serving the interest of artisans, and lack of social capital among artisans. It was concluded that this sector might become competitive and also provide sustainable livelihood provided package assistance dictated by market trends were provided. (84)

2.2.2 Production and marketing of Crafts

2.2.2a Child labour in crafts

Several bodies have discussed the issues of child labour in the crafts sector. The reports of census of Handicraft artisans brought out by NCAER indicated that 10.55 per cent of child workers were engaged in the Handicrafts sector in India (Table-1).

Table-1: Handicraft Artisans in India Classified by Sex and Age Group (per cent)

Age group in years	Male	Female	Total
Up to 14	10.03	11.13	10.55
15-25	34.23	35.92	35.03
26-40	33.90	33.92	33.91
41-60	19.06	17.12	18.14
Above 60	2.78	1.91	2.37
All age groups	100.00 (2503905)	100.00 (2257281)	100.00 (4761186)
Note: Figures in parenthesis are absolute numbers			

In India, where over 40 per cent of the population live in conditions of extreme poverty, in such a situation children work out of necessities and without their earning, the standard of living of their families would decline further (2).

According to a correspondent of 'Islamic Voice' (2004) the lives of ten thousand little Muslim Children employed in Zari workshops in the dusty by lanes of Mumbai have been pathetic. These children worked for over 15 hours; many of them were under 14 years of age. They would get a meagre salary of Rs.10 a week after their year long unpaid traineeship was over. By the age of 14 the child was able to send a sum of Rs.10, 000 a year to his parents back home in Bihar, Uttarpradesh or West Bengal. This was an average price at which an employer sold a Zardosi saree or kurta. Most of them suffered from skin infections and even leprosy. An initiative taken by Pratham, a local Non-Governmental Organization had brought some change in their work schedule. The children have begun getting a 30 minutes break when they can study (34)

A detailed micro-empirical study (2002) of the worker settlements in the Zardosi and Hathari (embroidery) industry of Varanasi conducted by National Labour Institute revealed that the strong kinship and neighbourhood networks, in which the industry operated, made it doubly easy for the entry of children at an early age.(30)

Child labour was also in plenty in some rural home-based industries. In unorganized sector; child workers were not organized on the line of trade unions and hence they could not fight for their rights (40).

Most of the child labour took place in home based industries. UNICEF with several NGO activists has made an attempt to liberate children from formal employment and prevent child labour, in Zardosi units in entire Uttar Pradesh.

Mahajan S (2002) a preliminary field survey of Zardosi workers of Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh showed that the child labour (both boys and girls) in Zari embroidery was very conspicuous. More than one-fourth of them

were child labourers in the age group of 8 - 14 years from a Muslim artisan family. They worked for long hours at addas or at homes, in some cases from 10 to 12 hours a day. Most of them worked in hazardous conditions under congested sheds on the roof-tops, small shops and rooms in the houses in narrow streets having inadequate ventilation and insufficient lighting. Frequent light failures in the city make the situation even worse. The return for their work was much less than the labour they put in. They would get 10 to 15 rupees daily and in any case it was less than rupees 25. Among the child labourers in Zari industry, there were apprentices as well as the artisans who easily adjusted with the work activities at this early age. A majority of the child labourers got their job through relatives or friends and they were recruited on oral basis. The economic conditions, problem of growing unemployment and the social environment of these families forced them to engage their children in this profession, as they needed their income to supplement their family income (35).

2.2.2b Market trends and marketing of crafts

Market trends are useful elements of external analysis. It has two important attributes, one it focuses on change and second it tends to identify what is important. It is suggested that three questions can help detect a real trend (59).

1. What is driving it?
2. How accessible it is in the mainstream?
3. Is it broad based?

A study was conducted by IRMA (1998) to assess the market potential of Zari and Zari products made in Surat. The study revealed that Surat based Zari industry, has a market for the Zari threads and other Zari

items, in almost all the states of Indian Union, but its marketing is not systematically organized. With the absence of any associations, rules for guidance and standard contracts, the deals were either against definite orders or as was often the case on consignment basis. The market was thoroughly loose and absolutely unorganized. The products of Zari industry were exported abroad too. The major markets for the products of Zari industry were internal, which consumed nearly 80-85 percentages of the total annual production. While the rest 15 percent was exported outside the country. The total export of Zari-based product was about Rs 80 crore, mostly to the USA. The principal Indian markets for Zari products were Madras, Mysore, Rajasthan, Delhi, Uttarpradesh, Calcutta and Maharashtra. Due to unplanned production and marketing programme, the internal market had turned to a "buyer's market", while the external, more adverse due to severe competition offered by French Zari. The important countries wherein Zari products were marketed were Pakistan, Afghanistan, Ceylon, Burma, Indonesia, Canada and the Middle East countries(48).

In order to harness the intrinsic marketability of Indian Handicrafts, the Exim Bank's Occasional paper on "India Handicrafts -: A New Direction for Exports" puts forward a case for the repositioning of the handicrafts sector as 'industry' rather than cottage enterprise based on trend analysis in the world market. The study identified a number of constraints faced by this sector and emphasized the need to improve India's export penetration of growth items of handicrafts in sizeable growth markets such as France, Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland, Canada, Japan and Hong Kong. At the enterprise level, suggestions for exports included re-orientation in products, engage designers, be customer focused, utilize improved tools and equipments, specialize in limited areas, hire professionals, pay attention to packaging and endeavour to obtain International quality Certification(52).

2.2.3 Role of Technology in Crafts

The need for constant design input and technological improvisation even in a traditional area of activity as Handicrafts has always been felt and appreciated.(87)

Media Lab Asia: a joint initiative of MIT Media Lab and the Indian Government has created computers that transcend these barriers to bring digital services to everyone. Their design goal of the world computer was a locally localized, "grassroots interface" and Digital Village. One such attempt has been made by the Media Lab Asia. A project was undertaken by IIT Kanpur to revive the rich Indian craft tradition, which were vanishing due to its complex design, material, manufacturing process etc. With the philosophy that modern technology can simplify and restore the heritage of traditional craft design without losing its essence, Lucknow Chikan embroidery was identified for experiment through field application. The main aim of the project was to develop an in-house design tool using CAD for making Chikan embroidery designs and developing a hand-held computer printer for easy transferring of designs directly from computer to the fabric surface. The software was expected to generate large variations of designs, which while being effective would also be less time consuming than the existing traditional Chikan embroidery (33).

Technology plays a large role, both directly and indirectly, in bringing crafts to market. Modern technology brings the craft traditions of many ethnic groups and localities to outsiders. Television and satellite radio, for example, bring the traditions of rural crafts to the urban lands and 20th century transportation takes the craftsmen to different lands. This has increased the demand for craft materials, craft classes, and crafts themselves and opened new markets to craftsmen. Technology also directly affects craft marketing.

To promote the Handicraft Industry in India, a web based information system, which would provide online information on various craft production centres, distribution of artisan, exporter locations and participatory NGO's was designed by IIT, Delhi (2001) using Geographic Information System and CAD tools, taking Uttar Pradesh as a pilot case. The respective information was made available at three different levels i.e Country level, State level and Tehsil level. In addition, the system would provide commercial utilities and E-commerce facilities. The entire application has been tested on the local network of IIT, Delhi and waits uploading on the world wide net (22).

The Internet today has become a great way to contact clients directly. It has been an increasingly competitive market place. The efforts towards E-marketing from Foundations for Occupational Development (FOOD) exemplify it. It has established an on-line supermarket that specializes in the sale of local products made by village crafts people. FOOD had observed that rural women cooperatives and NGOs that produce indigenous products were working in isolation within a market that was restricted to their local area. Their limitation in promoting the sales of products had often been exploited by middlemen. Internet E-commerce, however, held a promising future for such enterprises that could utilize it to market and sell their products on the local as well as global market. Also to eliminate the middleman in the sale of products made by the CBOs and to increase income of participating women a demonstration project for the micro Enterprise Development in Tamilnadu, India was accomplished by providing the community based organizations (CBOs) with communications links by way of cellular phones to enable them to network for marketing their products. The project would also help in creating direct market for the products made by women and artisans and in establishing state level market for local products (73).

A study by TIFAC - Technology Information Forecasting and Assessment Council on Management of Text and Graphic Manuscripts, which was based on consultation of several prestigious Universities in the world and other organizations, observed that paper has been the repository of documented knowledge for at least fifteen countries. Magnetic Tape and Photographic films have been storage media for sound and images, which experts agree is the best media at present for long time preservation. Also, filming and scanning are two important technologies for preservation and access. These technologies have made it possible to transfer non-written forms of information to computer media for storage of documented knowledge. An alternative is a Digital Camera, which at present is not yet suitable for documents. The digital technology is excellent but the fast pace of development has itself become deterrent for the purpose of long-term preservation. Further, it has been suggested that the present level of technology and its availability in India, availability of required inputs, and the necessary expertise available in India are enough to convert information on paper copy to a computer media (98).

Operational Definition

The terms operationally defined to serve as empirical referents of the present investigations are

Cluster: is a geographically bounded concentration of similar, related or complementary businesses with shared markets and faced with common opportunities and threats.

Contracted Karigar: is a regular wage worker, who is engaged in any of the activity of the craft along with other workers, in the premises of the employer's enterprise and in return gets wages on a regular basis. The category not only includes persons getting time wage but also persons receiving piece wage and paid apprentices, both full time and part-time.

Craft: is an art as well as an industry i.e. a "kala" that utilizes manual skills and is an expression of a person's dexterity and creativity, which involves economic activity, apart from it being a cultural activity.

Entrepreneur: is a person who owns a business of Zardosi craft, either as an Exporter, Trader or a Merchant, supplying the capital for the trade and producing jobs for others. This person can be a karigar too.

Market Trend: is an existence or general direction in which the styles and products tend to move based on demand in a specified region or a country.

Master Craftsmen: is a karigar who has professed and practiced the craft of Zardosi for long and who may not have received awards in the respective trade.

Opinion Leader: is an individual who is a figurehead of a group with a strong viewpoint and a clear expression

Privileged Observer: is an expert in the respective field to guide or inform a probable fact or situation. The observer could be an individual or an institution such as Government authority, Non-Governmental organization, worker's association, local agency and researcher.

Sub-Contracted Karigar: is a casual wage worker or a self employed worker, who is engaged in any of the activity of the craft, but not in the premises of the one or more employers from whom he fetches work and in return gets wage according to the terms of the daily or periodic work contract. The worker may be an occasional subcontracted worker.

Zardosi: is a hand embroidery that allows the craftsman to use both hands as he works with a hand sewing needle or a needle that resembles a very small crochet hook which is run up and down through the cloth, much like a sewing machine, while the cloth is pulled tightly over a large wooden frame, utilizing metallic wire, silk threads, beads, stones and a variety of materials to be applied on the fabric surface, employing several stitches, which results in different forms of the embroidery. It also includes embroidery done with flattened metal strips on fabric without the use of a frame.