

CHAPTER : 9

CULTURE, ART AND CRAFT

Culture refers to the total way of life of any society. Every society has a culture no matter how simple this culture may be and every human being is cultured in the sense of participating in some culture or other. Ralph Linton's idea regarding culture is applicable to the culture of the tribes of Gujarat including the Rathwa culture. The Rathwa and other tribes live in a different environment. Their way of living is very much simple. The dialect spoken by them is limited to their society or, at the most is understood by the neighboring tribes. These tribal hut-dwellers depend upon primitive way of hunting, fishing and a crude way of agriculture. This group of people has a common social organization. They are still in a premature stage of development.¹

'Ralph Linton further defines culture as the learned belief, values and behavior generally shared by the members of a group.'² The belief of raising memorials to their ancestors after death is common among the Rathwas, the Bhils, the Dhankas, the Gamits, the Koknas, the Naikas, the Chodhras, etc. and is known as 'Khatrum' or 'Khatro'. Columns of stones or of wood are raised in the memory of deceased for the

1. Ralph Linton, The Cultural Background of Personality, New York, 1945, p.30
2. Ibid.

diseased, if it was an important person. The stone or wooden slab is carved with a human figure and worship is performed by the Priest. The music mourning for slow in rhythm is played to the beats of brass plate. (Photo) The relief figure is covered with red cloth while reciting the Mantra. The Priest requests the diseased not to harass anyone from now onwards. The sacrifice of a chicken or a goat is offered as per the instruction of the Priest. The blood of a goat or a chicken and liquor is offered to the wooden slab known as 'Vetra'. The mixture is partly drunk by the Priest. The cooked heart and liver are offered to 'Vetra'.

The Rathwas and the tribals of Chhotaudepur worship wooden or stone memorials raised for their dead ancestors. It is their belief that the diseased would travel on the horse and protect the village from calamities. A clay horse is offered in Puja so that his journey is made easy to complete. (Photo)

When a person dies in an accident, the Bhagat or Priest advises the dead person's family to paint a Khatridev figure on a wooden slab and perform Puja (worship) so that the soul does not harm anybody. (Photo)

To fulfill their desires, the Rathwas take a vow to offer clay horse to their Mother Goddess. In case the horse is not offered, the Mother Goddess would appear in their dreams, sit on their chest, and ask them why they did not fulfill the promise.

The Bhagat is an important person in the tribal society. They work under his guidance and act according to his instructions

The belief in the existence of supernatural power is found in almost all the tribes. Certain day-to-day experience and sudden illness, death and natural disaster have led the aborigines into believing in the invisible spirits and ghosts. They have established a kind of close relationship between themselves and the supernatural powers, by controlling and practising some techniques and diverting the power for good as well as bad. In this connection, they offer puja or worship to propitiate. Tribal magic is an integral part of their religion. Magic, religion, myth and legends are of great value for light through on the tribal mind. It is their belief that god is the creator of the earth and mankind. Myth explains why a ceremony is observed and what one would get from it and so on. The tribal religion is considered to be animistic. It is their belief that man, as he pass through his life, is surrounded by ghostly powers. Diseases like small-pox, cholera, etc. natural calamity, waterfalls, ferocious animals and surreal mountainous regions create frightful thoughts in their mind. All these aspects compel them to be superstitious.

The tribals live near rivers like the Tapi, the Narmada, or near the Sea, and are scared of crocodile. They might have had bad experience, and therefore, due to sheer fear, they seem to have started worshipping crocodile. It is known as Mogra dev. The village carpenter prepares wooden crocodile; the Bhagat performs the Puja and prays that the Mogra Dev should not harm the villagers. The Gamit, the Dubla, the

Chodhri, and the Vasava tribes worship Mogra Dev. Rathwa go to Bharuch, Surat, Valsad for job then they worship Mogra Dev. (Photo)

The Rathwas and other tribes consider horse as a noble animal. It may be traced, perhaps, to the Ashwamedha or the sacrifice of horses in the Vedic times. The horse is considered a family god. Clay horses are offered to Indra dev as well as to the other gods. Clay horses are also offered when crops are ready to be harvested.

L.K. Mahapatra notes that 'Culture is changing through adaptation, contact and integration....'³ The mode of livelihood of the tribals in the earliest time depended on the collection of food and hunting. They lived in isolated pockets in the jungle in small numbers. They might have found serious shortage in the gathering of forest materials and animals. As time passed, population increased. These factors compelled them to shift to areas favorable to the gathering of food and gradually in the practice of agriculture in a crude form. The hunting tribes were quipped with poor indigenous tools like stones, digging sticks etc. This changed over to bow and arrow, (Photo) spear, sickle, axe etc. in due course of time.

3. Mahapatra. L.K., "Cultural Anthropology", A survey of Research in sociology and Anthropology (sponsored by ICSSR), Vol III, Bombay, Popular Prakashan, 1972.

The Rathwas and the other tribes came in contact with the urban people and their influence on these tribes. Some of them took to jobs as farm-laborers, wood cutters, laborers in construction work masons, plumbers, etc. Now as days they have started taking part in politics. However, the pace of change is very slow.

The huts of the tribals and the Rathwas are made of mud and roofs are of bamboo. This yielded gradually to roofs of tiles or corrugated iron sheets. The rate of literacy was nil, and though their children have now begun to go to schools now, their literacy rate is much too low. As they are continuing living beyond the level of poverty and illiterate, they have not yet adapted modern method of cultivation.

They believe that their gods, Priests and quack-doctors (Bhuwa) have power to cure illness. But most of the villages now have medical facilities and, therefore, the importance of quack-doctors or Bhuwas is fast losing ground among the people.

The state of the change in culture is not uniform. The tribals living closer to the urban areas adapt the urban culture faster than those who live far off from such areas.

The aboriginals have a Hindunized section, as they have come in contact with the Hindu rites and rituals in the matter of religion. They have shown a tendency to look upon themselves as Hindus or people connected with the Hindus.

Edward B. Taylor states that “culture evolved from the simple to the complex and that to all societies passed through three basic stages of development from savagery through barbarism to civilization.⁴ According to him, the aboriginals have not yet reached the higher stage of development. The simple tribal society in modern times still resembles a primitive society. In the words of Taylor, they continue to live a savage life. The change among them is extremely slow, compared to that of the contemporary society.

Dialect:

The tribal groups of Gujarat have their distinctive dialects. The Rathwas have a dialect of their own used among the members of their own society. When and how they started speaking, one does not know various expressions used by the tribals in the beginning, for instance, facial expressions to represent sorrow or joy or to say yes, or no by nodding their heads in different ways or to express their feelings by crying or laughing or showing anger. The aboriginals and other human society as a whole used such expressions to give vent to their desires in the initial stage of the development of speech.

The tribal dialect is used for the purpose of communicating among them selves. The use of this dialect affects their culture. A majority of the tribals of

4. Edard B. Taylor, Primitive Culture, New York Harper Toeck Books, 1958.

Gujarat speak the Bhili dialect. Nothing is known about the origin of this dialect. These aboriginals live in different environmental regions of Gujarat. The very form of their dialect reflects the particular region and the social class to which they belong. In some cases, two different dialects differ from one group to another. The boundaries of these dialects may be geographical, social and psychological. The dialect spoken by the tribal seems to be based on a grammar which is in many ways closer in its similarity to Gujarati. The Gujarat tribe has had close contact in the north with Rajasthani and Marwari, with Hindi in the east, and with Marathi in the south. Many words of these languages have been borrowed and assimilated current tribal dialect. But Gujarati has had more of influence on them. Many words used by the Bhils are simply corrupt forms of Gujarati words.⁵

Some of the letters have been changed, and few are differently pronounced. The work shows that 84% of the words are derived from Sanskrit, 10% from Arabic and Persian and 6% are of them as being of an uncertain origin. It is clearly seen that the tribal were and are under more influenced by the Hindu Society and, therefore, a higher percentage of words in their dialect seem to be adapted from the sources and less of those of the people speaking other languages.

5. Acharya. Shantibhai., Bhili Gujarati Lexicon, 1965, Tribal Research and Training Institute Gujarat Vidyapith Ahmedabad.

The Dhankas used to carry wood down the River Narmada to Bharuch where they came in contact with the Gujarati speaking contractors and, therefore, adapted quite a few Gujarati words. The tribal dialect is a mixture of Bhili and Gujarati. Grierson writes “in spite of the variety of dialects, however, it would appear that Bhils from different regions do understand one another, for instance the tribals of Jhabua (MP) could communicate with the Vasavas of Surat in Gujarat”⁶. This obviously seems to suggest that there is some relationship or social contact among them. The Glatter reports of 1969 show that the Bhilalas of Ali Rajpur (MP) cannot understand Hindi or Gujarati but do understand the Chodhri dialect with which the Bhilalas have great similarity.⁷ E. Stiglmayr writes⁸ that the Bada Bhilala (Rathwa) and Chhota Bhilala (Rathwa) could hardly understand each other.

The bada Bhilala used Gujarati whereas Chhota Bhilala used Hindi as a medium in their conversation. It may be possible that some of the tribals who have migrated from Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan speak more of Hindi words whereas some others who remained in Gujarat are more influenced by Gujarati in their speech. This is true, though both these groups of Rathwas have common religion and culture.

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- 6. Grierson G.A., Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. IX, Indo-Aryan family, Gujarat Group, Part III, The Bhil Language, 1907, p. 4, 5.
 - 7. Ibid
 - 8. Ibid.

Different aboriginals have their own dialects but the basic vocabulary is common. The geographical regions play an important part in adapting words from the neighbouring areas as, for example, the Warli tribe which lives near the Khandesh border (Maharashtra) and which has borrowed Marathi or Khandeshi words. The same Warli tribe living in south Gujarat is closely related to a group of people known as 'Kunbi' who are engaged in agriculture. Many words from the Kunbi (farmer) are adapted by the warlis.

The Rathwas and other tribes are gradually giving up their dialects these may as they mix very often with the people of neighboring urban areas for work. There is a Gujarati saying that "the dialect changes every twelve Gau (38.62 km)". Many other languages like Urdu, Sindhi, Marathi, etc. are spoken in Gujarat. These have borrowed words equally from these languages too and have adapted them in their dialect. The younger generation has started going to school. In future, their dialect may be wiped out looking to the pace of change. They will adapt the language which they learn at school. However, their women folk will continue to speak their dialects for a few more years. When Rathwa girls begin going to the school and learning the respective regional languages, then their dialect will become extinct. The decline in their dialect will bring about a cultural change among them.

In Gujarat the hunting culture of the late stone Age continued until the first half of the first millennium BC and probably even later. During this period, man used to live a nomadic life. He took shelter under trees or caves formed naturally out of

hollow places in the mountains and hills, to protect him against animals and natural calamities. He tried to select his abode, where he would get water and jungle food easily. He probably found out the places which were neither located at very higher nor lower regions

From the north east to south Gujarat up to the Dangs have a hilly terrain. Scattered hills are located in Saurashtra. Natural caves have been excavated in these hilly regions like, for instance, the natural caves found in the tribal areas like the Panchmahal, Sabarkantha, Vadodara, Bharuch and the Dangs. The caves are located at Tarsang (the Panchmahal), Sanpada and Laloda (Idar taluka, Sabarkantha) Such caves have been also discovered from the Girnar hills of Saurashtra. Man tried to live a sedentary life in these natural caves.

The excavation at Langanj and other sites in Gujarat has led to the discovery of stone tools. It appears that man used stone tools during the same period. Iron arrow heads have also been discovered from Langanj. The people of Gujarat used arrow with an iron head. It seems that the stone tools were later replaced by bows and arrow with an iron head. The Langanj people were obviously hunters, for animal bones have been found. They used the shoulder blades of Rhinoceros as an anvil, probably in the manufacture of composite arrow heads and other small tools.⁹ Arrow heads

9. Gregory L.(Ed), Ancient Cities of the Indus, Vikas Publishing Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, p. 53.

were used by the people of the Indus also. The archaeological sites of Gujarat have yield many arrows and not bows. This may be due to the fact that the bows were and are made of bamboo and so these are destroyed by insects. The arrow heads which have been discovered from Langnaj are thin and flat. They are cut out from the copper sheets.¹⁰

In the Hindu mythological stories and the epic of the Ramayana and the Mahabharat, bows and arrows are used as evident from the story of Guru Dronacharya, who taught archery to the Pandavas and the Kauravas. The Bhil boy, Eklavya, was an expert in archery. He erected a sculpted figure of Guru Dronacharya derived inspiration from the sculpture and learnt archery this way all by himself. The Bhil tribes are proud of this art that they learnt from Eklavya. The Bhils passed this art from generation to generation. The Rathwas, the Bhils and the other tribes are brought up in different environments, and, therefore, the art of archery was a must for them for the purpose of self defense and for gathering food.

The Rathwas are very fond of bows and arrows. They protect themselves in forest, and some of them also kill fish with these. On ceremonial occasions, the Rathwas worship their bows and arrows. During their marriages, they keep these with them. Some of them are expert at archery and kill animals.

10. Ibid.

The bow is prepared from the split of a bamboo. It is made of flexible bamboo, which can bend. A string is tightened on the two ends of bow to form a structure like 'D'. An arrow is adjusted in the centre of the bow and released by the finger and thumb of the right hand. (Photo)

Small birds of pray are killed by a catapult by aiming and throwing a people at great speed which is known as a 'Galol'. (Photo) A stone is thrown with the help of a sling for killing birds which is another type of tool for hunting, which is known as a 'Gofan'.

Another weapon used by Rathwas and other forest tribes is a spear. It is equally an old weapon discovered from Lathol and other excavated sites of Gujarat. The spear found at both what have a copper head and thin leaf-shaped blades with a tang. However, the shape is very much similar to a knife¹¹.

11. Sankalia. H.D., The Pre History and Proto History of India and Pakistan;
Deccan College, Post Graduate and Research Institute, Puna.

AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS:

Plough:

Plough is used since olden days. During Pre-Indus period, the first half of the third millennium BC, a plough and other agricultural implements were found at Kalibagan in Ganganagar district of Rajasthan.¹²

The Rathwas and other aboriginal called it 'Hal'. The plough is made from the wood of the Babul, Acacia and Catechu trees. The wood of these trees is more durable and the plough lasts long. 'Hal' is made from wooden pieces. Its handle is roughly 186 to 217 centimeters in length. The wooden hammer-shaped part attached to the handle is about 15 to 31 centimeters in length. One end of it is fixed by a wooden nail. The nail is known as 'Khila' or 'Khunta'. The lower end of the 'Hal' is slightly curved inwards and is fixed. The iron rod is supported by a wooden piece, which is made teakwood. The plough was two wooden rods. It falls on the center and the bullocks draw the plough. Most of the tribes of Gujarat use the plough. (Photo)

Before the use of the plough, cultivation was done with the help of digging sticks and hoes. These implements are still used in remote areas. There is a lot of evidence of their use in ancient times. It is strong and pointed. (Photo)

12. Dr. K. Kirishna Murthi, Archaeology of Things, Sundeep Prakashan, p. 82.

Plank:

Plank is used for breaking colds and covering the seeds after sowing. Plank is also used for standing crops such as millets. The colds of black soil are often hard and heavy and do not break easily. Therefore, a heavy log of wood is used for breaking such clods.

Kadel :

Kadel is used as an agricultural implement. It is generally used by the Rathwas, the Gamits, the Naiks, the Dhankas, the Patelis, the Chaudhris, the Dhodias, etc. The tribes of Sabarkantha, the Panchmahals, Banaskantha, Vadodara, Bharuch, Surat and the Dangs and Valsad use Kadel.

A Kadel is made from bamboo. A large piece of bamboo is cut with its original ends from a cluster of bamboos that grow freely. It is known as 'Khampo'. One end from the top of the branch-shoot is cut to a size as per requirement. The rest of bamboo is used for a handle. The upper off-shoot is cut to the size of 12.5 centimeters in length for a hook. The stem is thin from above and slightly thick towards the lower end. The length of one Peria portion of Kadel is 3.5 centimeters. In all, the stem is made out of four and half Perias. They are almost equal in length. The Kadel is neither completely straight nor even curved. The off-shoots of the branches are cut at the knot side, where it is flattened. The upper portion where the

hoot is left overlooks like the beak of a bird. At the beginning of the off-shoot, there are two indents which look like the eye of a bird. The beak like part is smooth.

After pounding the grain with the help of bullocks, the Kadel is used to remove all the waste material from barn. It collects and moves aside heaps of waste material. If any waste material gets mixed with the grains, the Kadel is used to separate it out. It works as a hook as well as a tool to make things work. A Kadel collects the things as well as throws them apart at some distance. Before pounding, the grain, the Kadel is used to lift the bundles of the crop from the fields and bring them from outside to inside of the barn. Kadel works as a stick while pounding the grains to drive bullocks. It is kept horizontally in the hollow space between the wooden rafters of the ceiling after its use¹³.

Seed Dispenser:

Seed dispenser is used for sowing seeds and is made from Babul wood. It is made by the local carpenter. The Rathwas and other tribes call it 'Or niyo' or 'Or niyu' or 'Fadaka'. There are two coulter attached to the head piece in it. There is a hole in the coulter to fix a bamboo or hollow iron tube for allowing the seed to pass through into the soil. Both the tubes from coulters are kept fixed together to a bowl. The seeds to be sown are evenly distributed in the both the tubes. The seed bowl and

13. Shah P G., Tribal life in Gujarat, Gujarat Society, Bobmay, 1964.

the tubes are tied to the centre of the head piece by a string. This kind of seed dispenses requires one man to drive a pair of bullocks attached to the implement and another man to feed the seed bowl with seed to be sown. It can be used to sow about 3 to 4 acres of land a day.

Leveling:

The leveling of the field is done by a wooden tool known as 'Vavrio' or 'Panue-Ken'. It is a flat smooth piece of wood measuring 300 to 360 centimeters in length. The holes are made at motley the distance of 60 centimeters from all sides, the leveling is fixed vertically in this and the reigns controlling the bullocks are tied to it. Five or six persons stand on it, when it is drawn by a pair of bullocks.

Sickle:

Many seals are found in Mohenjodaro and Harappan sites showing people cutting grass with a sickle¹⁴. The Rathwas and other Gujarat agricultural tribes use sickle. It is known as 'Datardu' or 'Datedu'. It is used for cutting grains, grass etc. It has a lunette shape. The sickle is made of hand forged iron.

14. Sankalia. H.D., The Pre History and Proto History of India and Pakistan; Bombay University, Bombay, 1962.

The Rathwas keep sickles in their houses and sometimes with on their person. They believe that iron is supposed to ward off evil. The pregnant women keep these to protect themselves against the witchcraft or other evils. During rituals, goats, or hens are beheaded with a sickle. A Rathwa laborer always keeps one on his shoulder when goes to work.

Axe:

An axe is one of the most ancient tools of man. The stone axes were of vital use in the Neolithic period about 5000 BC at Mesopotamia. Three types of axes have been found from Mohenjodaro and also the excavation sites of Gujarat such as Lothal, Rangpur and Rojdi. One of them has a long but narrow blade, a second one with a broad blade and third one of a triangular shape. The tribes in Gujarat largely used an axe with narrow blade.¹⁵

An axe is used for felling trees. The axe head is relatively thick so as to bear the shock of the blow. It has a wooden handle, parallel to the blade. The perfected axe had to await the invention of steel. An axe can be used as a weapon for offensive or defensive purpose.

15. Gregory L Posschl (Ed), Ancient cities of the Indus, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd , New Delhi, p 529.



Harrow:

A Harrow is made of iron. It is a fork-like implement with pointed ends with the iron bars attached horizontally. The harrow is fixed on a wooden handle. It is called 'Karab' or 'Ranpadi'. The harrow has four parts such as the head piece (Lodhio), the prong (Danta), the blade (Pas), and the beam (Hal). All other parts except the blade are made from babul wood. A harrow, drawn by a pair of bullocks, is used for harrowing the field. It is about 60 to 70 Lbs. in weight. It is used for digging the field. The Rathwas can harrow about two acres of land a day.

Yoke:

A yoke consists of a wooden log tied to two parallel logs with string is another useful agricultural implement. The necklace with jingling bells put round the necks of the oxen is made by the Rathwas as an ornament for their cattle.

Knife:

Knives are made of different shapes. A knife is slightly bent from the top edge. Some are broad and thin and made for weeding, winnowing and cutting purposes. The jungle knife is used for cutting raw materials from the forest.

The Rathwas have a very crude method of exploiting nature. The implements and tools used by them are very primitive and obsolete. They are of simple

craftsmanship. Most of these implements are generally made by them or the local carpenter or are bought from the periodical markets.

The Rathwas worship agricultural implements. According to the Hindu Calendar, the month known as AkhateeJ or the third day of the rising moon is the day when this is done in the month of Vaishakh (April), that is before rainy season starts. The Priest finds out the auspicious day and time to perform the ceremony to signal the starting of cultivation. (Photo)

KITCHEN UTENSILS:

In the far of Neolithic Age, man began to domesticate himself. He needed clay for making vessels for use. He made vessels with his hand, and these were unbaked and unpainted. A lot of Indian ancient pottery motifs related to pre-Harrapan Culture is now available with archeological museums. Various types of pots available at the excavation sites of Gujarat namely Lothal, Rangpur, Dholavira etc. also provide evidence. The Pottery available from these sites consists of earthen bowls, jars, lamps, deep saucers (Kodiya), cylinders etc. the clay tablets represents human figures that are both male and female, animals like dogs, bulls, horses, goats, camels, etc, birds including peacocks, hens, sparrows, etc. Some of the vessels are decorated with floral, animal and geometrical designs. Some of these designs are seen in the tribal art of India even today. The aboriginals appear to have drawn these designs on walls or floors or vessels, either for performing rituals or on festival

occasions These are the legacies of faith, die-hard tradition, and oral tradition handed over through generations¹⁶.

The immediate need of the aboriginals is to store food, water, seeds, etc. Tribals made earthen vessels without the knowledge of clay and technique in whatever way they could. A person making pottery using day work is called a Kumbhar. The use of earthen materials is made for domestic, worship and votive purposes. Clay plays a vital role in the life of the Rathwas and the other tribes. On a philosophical level, the tribal consider life to be just a lump of clay. Their material equipments, huts, fields, and everything around them is composed of clay. The earthen wares are made by hand. It is done by flattening or rounding or punching and pressing clay softly with hands. The Rathwas and the other Adivasis use earthen wares which are hollow, semi-hollow, and solid. While animals, lamps, cylinders and pots are made hollow, birds and human figures are given solid shapes.

The utensils used for cooking, (Photo) drinking, storing and eating by the Rathwas and the other tribes are all made from earth. One of the storing vessels is known as Matlu (Pitcher) It is used for storing drinking water. A round ring of coir is made for keeping matlu. The colour of pitcher is black or red. The upper side of the

16. Sankalia. H.D., Prehistoric Archaeology of Gujarat, Munshira and Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1987, p. 254.

vessel is round and opens from the top. It is decorated with floral designs in white, zigzag, and plain lines.

Necessity is the mother of invention. True to this proverb, the Rathwas, the Bhils and the other tribes, who badly needed to take liquid materials, out of home might have perchance the idea stumbled upon the dry pumpkin of making a spoon out of the dry pumpkin. The dry pumpkin skin is used for taking out water from a pitcher. The top part of the pumpkin is used as a handle. The front part has round hole in it. It is called Tumdi or Tumdo. The coastal tribes prepare a ladle from the coconut shell which is known as Dongo. Some use wooden spoons for taking out liquid substances like oil etc. The flat wooden spoon is known as Choto or Olaki.

The curry pot is known as Handli or Handlo with a cover, both of which are made of earthen material. There is a small knob on the cover to be used for lifting. The round flat earthen pan, slightly deep at the centre is used for baking bread. It is called 'Chajla' or 'Kuladu'

Generally the tribals of Gujarat purchase earthen pots from the village potters. They do not make these themselves. However, the Rathwa women prepare earthen pans which are known as 'Tavlo', 'Pano', and 'Thikru'. These pans have different sizes. The Tavlo is a big plate with a circumference varying from 30 to 45 cms. The circumference of Pano varies from 22.5 to 55 centimeters, whereas the Thikru is

about 37.5 cms. The Talvo or Pano are coated with Lac, whereas, Thikru is uncoated. It is used for baking bread and for the purpose of frying food items. (Photo)

These earthen pans are made from the sticky mud which is collected from the nearby forest by the Rathwa women. This black soil is made into a very thick substance like kneaded flour by beating the mixture of fifteen kgs of black soil, one kilogram cow dung and required quantity of water. The mixture is kneaded with legs and balls are made out of it with hands. An old earthen pitcher is kept upside down and ash is then sprinkled on it. The ball is put on the pitcher and is given shape by patting it with the left hand. Its edge is made with the right hand. It is shaped as a reverse plate. It is allowed to dry for 2-3 hours, and is then removed from the pitcher and the front part is allowed to dry. A rope shape is given to some sticky mud and attached on the edge of the pan. It is allowed to dry. Some pieces of Tavlo are given a quadrilateral shape. It is then colored with red soil. When it dries, it is slowly rubbed with a smooth stone. These pans are then baked in an open furnace, where pieces of wood and palm scrap are used to support the pans during the process. The Tavlas are arranged in such a way that the heat will be available from all sides. The Rathwas live near the forest and collect the lac from it. The lac is called Khobhro. The Lac juice is collected from the steam of the Kusum and Khakra trees. It is diluted in hot water. It is then made into a lump and smashed. The color obtained from the Lac is dark red or reddish brown. Lac tablets are prepared this way. The Talvo is then removed from the hot furnace and the Lac tablet rubbed hurriedly to make its surface smooth. This process is done with great care so that the color spreads evenly

on it. The Rathwa women sell them in the weekly market. The urban people buy items like the Talvo as decorative pieces. (Photo)

The Earthen Jars:

The Rathwas, the Bhils and the other tribals of Gujarat make earthen jars for storing grains. The men folk shape the jars and their women help in their preparation. The jars differ in sizes and shapes. Those tribes, mainly depending on agriculture, have big jars whereas others use smaller ones. The small jar is known as Matlu and the big one is known as Kothi. (Photo) Some jars have stands and some do not. A jar has two legs like a stand and the bottom has a 'round' shape. Its upper part is round. It is roughly 82 x 102 centimeters in length and 89 x 140 centimeters in breadth. Its cover has a slanting shape with a thick round edge. Its top-most part is open in circular shape. It has a round knob handle (photo).

The flat bottom jar is decorated with earthen lines in the centre with other lines on the edge at the top. (Photo) The top-most part has a circular hole in its lid. Its circumference is 88 cms. Its top-most mouth is 60 centimeters and has a lid to cover it. (Photo)

The length of the bigger jar is about 136 centimeters. Its color is black or an off-beat white. It has a hole, slightly higher at the base to remove grain. The hole has to be covered either with a piece of cloth or with a wooden cover. The jar has round cylindrical shape and is slightly narrow from the top covered with a lid. The edge is

rectangular in shape. The base of jar has a small stand. Some have a broad or a round base with varying designs. (Photo)

Sherio:

A peculiar vessel used for measuring liquid is known as Sherio. It is used by the Rathwas as well as the other tribes of Gujarat. Sherio means something which is 500 grams in weight. It is a conical shape with a round flat base. The top is open in a circular shape with its edge. The edge is made in such a way that the liquid does not spill over. One side of it has a handle and a hole for the purpose of tying. It is 10 x 7 and 4 x 2 centimeters. Some of these vessels do not have a handle. These are used for storing liquid materials like ghee, butter, milk, oil, liquor, etc. Some of them are plain while some are carved with zigzags or slanting lines and small horizontal and vertical lines cross and made into squares. The designs are carved on its neck and on the central parts

A Sherio is made from a single piece of wood too. The wood is collected from the forest. Its mouth is 204 and edge 1.7 centimeters. The whole mouth is about 5.8 centimeters in circumference. The bottom of sherio varies from 9.2 to 13.3 cms. While the size of the Sherio without a handle varies between 12.3 and 13.5 cms, the one with a handle varies from 2 to 10 cms. The entire handle is 1.3 cms long. The length of the Sherio with a handle is roughly 23.5 cms and its hanging thread is 9.5 cms only. The carvings on the neck are 3.2 cms in size. The circumference of the

central part is 7 cms. It measures one sheer (500 gms) of liquid. It is heavy, for it is solid and almost a round pot. (Photo)

Thapa:

Thapa is the designer for making bread and is made of wood. Its shape is round with handle. Thapa looks like a table tennis racquet. The round shape has designs of circular tines, stars, sun, vertical and slant lines. The loaf is rolled round in shape and then it is pressed on the Thapa to make design. Once this is done, the bread is fried or baked. (Photo)

Sev Padvano Sancho:

The Rathwas use this macaroni-making machine. It is known as Sev Padvaos Sancho. It is made of wood and is rectangular in shape. The wooden body of the machine is fixed on a wooden table. Roundish on one side, it has an animal head carved on its body on the other side. The figure looks like a cat or a tiger head with ears. The central part is hollow. A brass plate of varying size of holes is used as per the requirements and then a wooden handle is pressed inside the hollow portion. The body of the gadget is carved with circular, zigzag and such other designs. (Photo). The Bhills, the Bhilalas, the Dublas and other tribes also use this machine quite frequently.

Grinder:

The Rathwas grind grain at home. The grinding work is done by women. A hole, which is roughly 15-20 cms deep and 10-15 cms in diameter, is made in one of the corners of the kitchen and a wooden pestle is used for grinding. This type of grinder is used to remove husk from paddy. But a stone-grinder is used for flour. While some stone-grinders have a stand, there are others without stands. Two round stones are placed one on top of other. The central part of the stone below the other has a pivot. The round stone slab on the top has a hole in the centre to put it on top of the other below. The pivot is of wood. The stone slab on the top has a wooden handle on one side. The grinder has a wooden stand. One side of the stand has a slightly open space to allow the flour to fall on the sides or be removed after grinding. The grains are the opening in the central part of the grind-stone on the top. This has a handle which is used for rotating it till grain turns into flour. There are round shaped bamboo strips with a small knob at the centre cover it on all the sides. The stone grinder is generally placed in the front portion of the hut or inside the room. The Rathwa women get up early in the morning in order to do their daily grinding. It is also used by the other tribal women folk of Gujarat. However, now a day many villages have flour mills - a modern facility which is used by some of them. For kitchen use, the rectangular shape flat stool with small stand of roughly 8-10 cms is made. (Photo)

Votive Images:

The tribals generally buy the images of their votive gods from their village potters. Some make these themselves. Some village potters use kilns to toughen these objects of worship but most of the tribals use sun-dried ones. The clay forms may have originated with them. Their technique is very primitive and they use rough materials for the purpose. Clay, such as sticky or 'Chikaswali Mati', sandy or 'Retiwali' and white clay or 'Bhukuri' which is available from the fields, is used.

The votive terracotta differs in size and shape from 2 cms to 100 cms. The smallest ones are of solid clay and large ones are hollow. Some are partly solid and partly hollow. The South Gujarat clay is not suitable for use on the wheel and, therefore, the terracotta made is neither big nor entirely hollow. In North Gujarat, the clay is good and can easily be given shapes on the potter's wheel.

The Rathwas and the other Advasies worship god, goddesses, animals and also things they are afraid of such as snakes, evil eyes etc. This sense of fear has helped create the terracotta art and craft. These tribals think that a horse is a faithful and useful animal. The ceremonies are performed to offer terracotta horses to their gods. While offering a horse, the Rathwas pray to god for their betterment, good crops and happy life. The tribes of central Gujarat like the Rathwas, the Bhils, the Bhilalas, the Tadvīs, etc. make their horses heavy bodied. The horses made in South Gujarat are not delicate but a bit larger in size ranging between 15 cms and 90 cms. To make horse in North Gujarat, a potter requires six clay pipes and two pots, one big

and one small. The horse-god is called as 'Ghoelo-dev'. The horses are made straight with long necks but are hollow. The mouth is given a circular shape. Some horses are made with men riding on them. Some earthen horses have a honey-comb pattern. The body of the horse is oval-shaped at the front and is hollow and made with a person riding on them. Some of these horses have strings made of clay attached to them. A reined - horse is made out of six hollow parts, five cylinders and one jar-shaped body sprinkled with white. This terracotta horse is offered to the gods by the Rathwas, the Bhilalas and the Naikas in thanks giving on the fulfillment of a wish. When a couple desires a son, an elephant is offered on the Dhanteras, that is two days before Diwali. A terracotta elephant god is prepared with his round ears and trunk. An elephant with a hollow is made. An earthen tiger made with its open mouth and teeth to represent 'Vagh Dev'. The Rathwas believe that the tiger is next to God. They call it 'Bhagwan no Kutro' (God's dog). The Rathwas, the Bhils and the other tribes believe that the tiger's abode is next to that of the gods. In Chhotaudepur, terracotta offerings are made in a similar fashion.

Different god and goddess with animals and weapons are depicted on clay tablet. For instance, Goddess Durga with numerous hands riding a lion, with a sword in one of her hands and bow in the other. The tablet is made either into circular or a rectangular pattern. Some times, decorative arches are also included on them. One of the gods is 'Thakor Bapji'. He is depicted on a clay tablet. A horse adorned with ornaments is depicted and wearing Thakor Bapji a crown is shown riding on its back with a sword in one hand. The background has decorative arches with small pillars.

The artists try to give as much detail as possible. The earthen clay work consists of clay baked either in the sun or in a Kiln on slow fire using rice husk or other grain husk as the fuel. Generally made of red clay, these are unglazed terracotta. The snake figure in clay is made with its eyes and hood. Human and animal figures are shown on small clay tablets and worshipped as Gova Dev or Shepherd god, who protects shepherds in the forest when they take cattle for grazing. A dome-shaped holy lamp is made with square holes to keep the flame burning inside. The central and the bottom parts of the lamp have designs made of twisted rope. The top-most dome has different designs like arches, moon, and figures of god and goddess and pattern semi circle.

The tribal ceremony of Menhir or the memorial service to the dead ancestors involves carved wooden or stone slabs. Such belief has inspired some people to use this opportunity to demonstrate their talent of art and craft in carving. The figures are carved under the guidance of the Priest, though these are not masterpieces. The carving is done by carpenter or an interested person. The simplest of the tools like saw, chisels, axes, pencils, and adze, wooden base etc. are used.

The Rathwas paint the figure of Khatri dev when someone has met with an accidental death: Wood is brought from jungle; a figure is carved, painted in bright colors; and later installed ceremonially by the Priest.

A large rectangular slab with a decorated top is carved. The backside of the slab is generally flat. The base is dug into the earth. It stands vertical, and is semi-circular or triangular in form or a trapezium or even a circle. The semi-circle head is topped with a semi-circle in the shape of a flame or given a rectangular in shape. It is created out of a single slab of wood. Some minor details such as the projecting nose are carved on it. The cheeks taper slightly towards chin. The eyebrow is horizontal and deep set, eyes are made as deep shadow spots. The body is squarish in some slab. The nose, mouth and chin are not shaped in detail. The body is made very simple. At the height of the hips, two chins are made inward from the outer edge. The legs are parallel to the edge of block and are slightly raised above the rectangular area. The arms are bent at elbow. In some slabs, the eyes are made in circular holes. The nose is made using parallel grooves and the breasts are made as two elevated circles. In some slabs, the body is made up of thin fillets sitting on top of a tiny horse. Sometimes two or more figures are shown on the slab. But they are found very rarely. The heads are made on the same level. The arms of both the figures hang down unconnected, parallel to each other. In many places, the slab has figures of birds. These figures of birds have details like a beak, two thin legs, a head and a tail. Birds like peacock or guinea-fowl are generally shown.

CULTURE, ART & CRAFT



Brass Plate



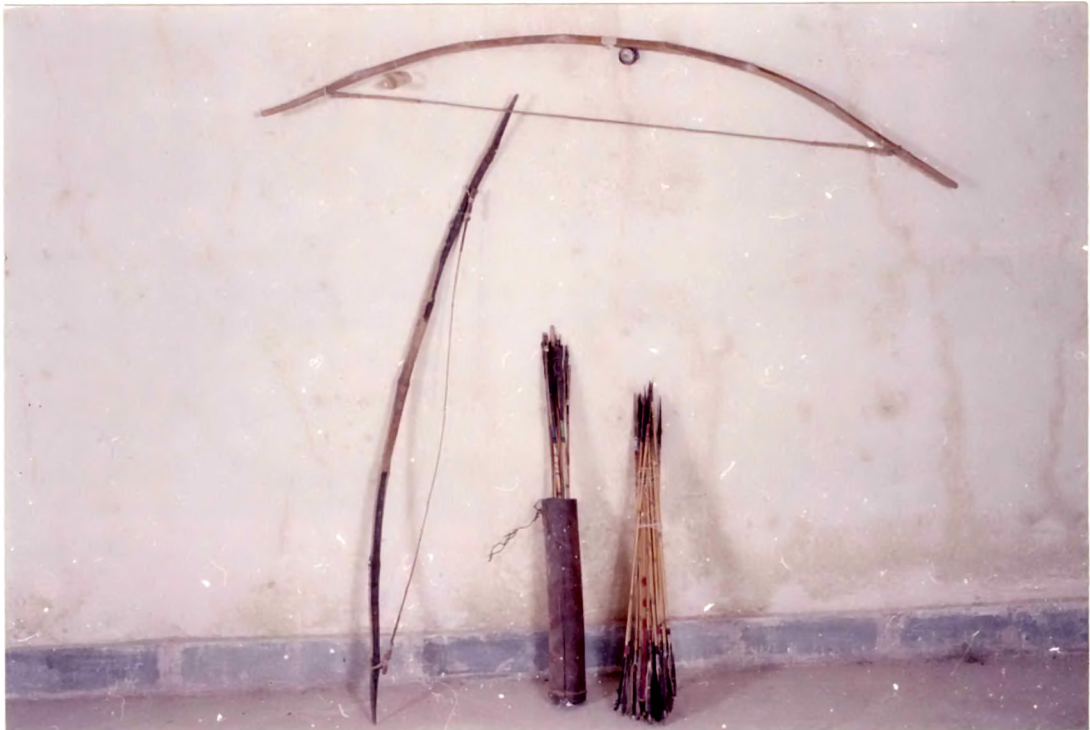
horse offered



Khatridev



Mogar Dev



Bow and arrow



Dance with bow and arrow



Galol

AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS



Plough





'Hal' – plough



Agricultural implements



Sickle, axe and others



Use of Sickle



Clay utensil use for Cooking



Tavlo



All kind of Clay utensil



Grain Jar



Grain Jar



Grain Jar



The Earthen Jars





The Earthen Jars





Shario



Thapa



Sev Padvano Sancho



Grinder