



CENSUS OF INDIA 1961

VOLUME XVI

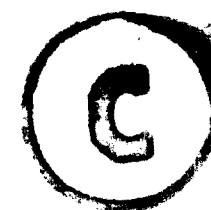
WEST BENGAL & SIKKIM

PART VII-A(1)

HANDICRAFTS SURVEY MONOGRAPH

ON

CONCH SHELL PRODUCTS



INVESTIGATION, TABULATION AND 1ST DRAFT

DIPANKAR SEN, M.A.,

Investigator

FINAL DRAFT, EDITING, SUPERVISION AND GUIDANCE

SUKUMAR SINHA

of the West Bengal Civil Service,

Officer on Special Duty

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF CENSUS OPERATIONS,
WEST BENGAL & SIKKIM

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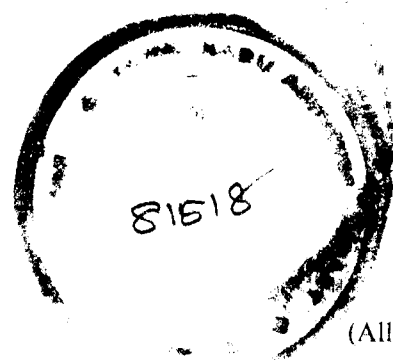
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(iii)

Photographs & Art Work :

SRI ARUNABHA DUTTA,
Artist-cum-Photographer

Maps, Charts & Diagrams :

SRI BIMALESH KUMAR DAS,
Draughtsman

District Map :

SRI SATYENDRA NATH GANGULY,
Cartographer

F O R E W O R D

One of the first steps to be taken in the First Five Year Plan was the establishment of Six Boards for the promotion of handicrafts, village and small industries : (1) The Khadi and Village Industries Board ; (2) The All-India Handicrafts Board ; (3) The All-India Handloom Board ; (4) The Central Silk Board ; (5) The Coir Board ; and (6) The Small Industries Board.

The rapid expansion of the activities of these Boards which concentrated not only on production and techniques, but also on organisation, extension, credit, marketing, and export, consolidated and enlarged the position that the household industries sector had so long enjoyed in the nation's economic life. It was this fact that forced itself upon the preparations for the 1961 Census and demanded that household industry should be separately investigated for a proper accounting of the nation's manpower, resources and its specific contribution to the national income. The 1961 Census therefore asked a special series of questions on household industry, in put of family and hired labour, and the periods over which household industry is conducted. It was felt, however, that an enumeration of the total number of establishments and their industrial classification would be incomplete without a proper description of what they produce and how they produce. It was important to make an assessment of the limits of rigidity within which traditional skill operates. This could be obtained by studying the caste, occupational, social and economic stratifications, the limitations of credit and marketing facilities, the dominance of custom over contract, the persistance of traditional tools and design forms, the physical limitations of transport, communication and mobility, the inability to adopt new lines or adopt to changing circumstances. It was important also to make an assessment of the limits of flexibility that traditional skill is capable of, because the transformation of traditional skills to modern skills is easier said than done and a thorough study may well reveal that it is perhaps cheaper from the social point of view to develop industrial skills from scratch than to try to graft traditional skill on alien soil. A rather tragic case of failure to make what would on the face of it seem a minor adjustment cast its heavy shadow on the nation when it was discovered that goldsmiths used to working on 22 carat gold all their lives felt sadly helpless when asked to work on 14-carat, so narrow and unadaptable were the limits of their skill and proficiency and so rudimentary the tools and equipment with which they and their forefathers had worked. This fiscal accident revealed that tools are even more important than skills.

An early opportunity was therefore taken in February 1960 to suggest to State Census Superintendents, that the Census provided a unique opportunity for conducting and documenting a survey of this kind. As such a survey was quite outside the usual terms of reference of Census work it was thought prudent cautiously to feel one's way with the thin end of the wedge of what would, it was hoped, prove to be an exciting pursuit. It was therefore considered the wiser course to wait until the State Census Offices felt so interested that they would no longer take the inquiry as an imposition but rather want to do it on their own and ask for the necessary staff and equipment. This office, too, in its turn, could make use of the interval to organise and elaborate the design of inquiry in order to feed the appetite that work in progress would serve to wheat. Because it

was a labour of love, sought to be unobtrusively thrust on one's colleagues and because the inquiry itself was so vast that normally it would demand in any country as big a set-up, if separately established, as the Census organisation itself and that over a much longer period, and because it was almost a pioneer venture, nothing like it having been undertaken since the 1880's, it was decided to move towards a build-up by stages, to let the inquiry unfold itself only as fast as my colleagues chose to ask for more.

Thus, in the first circular of 18 February 1960, it was suggested that the inquiry might be conducted through the agency of the Development Department, the State Director of Industries, the Director of Tribal Welfare, the Registrar of Cooperative Societies, and other organisations concerned with the promotion of household industry. A draft questionnaire containing 30 questions in three parts was recommended for canvassing. It was suggested that information on this questionnaire, village by village and area by area, might either be obtained through the regular departmental channels of the State Government, or through the newly set up Census Organisation, or through the hierarchy of the newly-created Panchayats. Stress was laid on the need of photographic documentation and illustration of designs, shapes and forms not only by photographs but with the help of line drawings or sketches together with a full description of the materials used.

Almost the whole of 1960 and the first half of 1961 were spent in organising and taking the census count, although several States even during this period had not allowed the grass to grow under their feet but made exploratory studies and decided in their minds how the inquiry should be organised. A series of regional conferences held in Trivandrum, Darjeeling and Srinagar in May and June, 1961 revealed much enthusiasm among State Superintendents to proceed with the Survey, but the need of separate staff and equipment was felt at the same time as the realization dawned that this was much too serious an inquiry to be treated causally and left to be achieved through the usual administrative channels and State Census Superintendents proceeded to augment their staff with qualified research and investigating officers, technical persons, photographers, artists, draughtsmen and other trained personnel.

This was followed by rapid progress in coordination between the Central and State Census offices in the matter of exchange and processing of information, documentation and investigation, of assisting each other with trained investigators and in editing and finalizing drafts, layouts, presentations.

Mention has been made of a questionnaire in three parts and thirty questions. The idea was to make a beginning with empirical, analytical studies based on a structured questionnaire which would replace general descriptive accounts that had obtained so far. The primary aim was to obtain a picture as much of the artisan himself as of his craft, to obtain a perspective of the artisan and his craft in his social and economic setting, the extent to which tradition bound him and the winds of change ruffled him, the extent of his mobility and immobility, the conditions of market, credit, new contracts and designs in which he operated, the frame of new as well as traditional producer-customer relationships in which he still worked, and how far he was ready to pierce his own caste-tribe socio-economic cocoon and make a break through to new opportunities promised by the Five Year Plans. The aim was to hold up the mirror to hereditary skills struggling with the dialectics of tradition and change.

Thus the first part of the questionnaire, purporting to be a village schedule, sought to take account of the size and population of the village, its remoteness from or proximity to centres of trade and commerce, in short, the degree of isolation in which the artisan worked, and the relative strengths of various communities in the village which would afford clues to social interdependence and the prevalence of the jajmani system. The second part was devoted to artisan communities in the village : the several castes of artisans, the number of families in each, the total number of workers, males and females, the extent of cooperative activity among them, the extent of dependence upon employers and of wage or contract labour. There were questions on the raw materials used, the means of their procurement, the possible extent of dependence on others for raw materials, the extent of the material that artisans can handle within the limits of their skill. There were other questions on the exchange and flow of designs, the use of colours, the ancientness of the craft and legends associated, the colonization of the craftsman, on patrons and customers and on social and economic contact with the world inside and outside the village. There were specific questions on the workshop itself and particularly the tools and the source of supply of these tools, because it was felt that tools decide everything and are the surest index of inertness of flexibility. Separate blocks of questions were designed to bring out the ramifications of artisan castes throughout the country and the ways they sustained themselves, the type of clientele they catered for, the extent to which they operated on money or barter or service, how specialized their craft was, how wide the market, how dependent they were on their socially preordained clientele and how restricted the latter was by the seemingly unalterable laws of social custom ; the extent to which they could operate in the open market, the range of their wares and the sizes to which these were ordinarily restricted either by the limits of their own skill or the length of their customers' pursestrings. Inquiries were to be made about the operation of middlemen and of cooperative societies, the people who gave new designs and demanded new products. Finally the several stages of production of the articles themselves were to be fully described including final and finishing stage and a list of very skilled craftsmen of each community was to be furnished. The third part was devoted specially to tribal communities and designed to find out how self-sufficient or dependent they were on the production and supply of manufactured goods, the extent to which they produced themselves or depended on others, their contacts with other communities and the specific forms of production and commerce through which these contacts were maintained.

Particular emphasis was laid on the need of obtaining as full an account as possible of unique regional design differentiations as they reflect not only the very culture patterns of the country but the persistent inventive faculties of the craftsmen. The importance was emphasised of giving full attention to articles of domestic use as it is in their shapes, designs and forms that the culture patterns and traditional skills persist most tenaciously.

Simultaneously with the investigation of specific crafts, State Superintendents proceeded to compile a comprehensive list of all types of handicrafts obtaining in their State. As for the specific crafts to be investigated several tables were devised from the structured questionnaire in order to guide investigators towards pointed observation and analysis, to enable them to write, not just general descriptions, but with their eye on the object and on facts.

Investigations conducted between September 1961 and May 1962, including study group of all States and Social Studies Division in December 1961 at Delhi, stimulated many of the States into going in for a much enlarged schedule. The revised village sche-

dule itself, the counterpart of the first part of the February 1960 schedule, contained nineteen large sections containing elaborate and probing questions. The Family Schedule for practising artisan families similarly contained nineteen main questions each subdivided into many questions. The family schedule for non-practising artisan families contained twentyone questions. There were schedules for the study of cooperative societies, of production-cum-training centres, and of consumer's preference. This enlarged schedule of investigation, in the formulation of which the States themselves actively assisted was greatly welcomed. The surveys that will appear in this series will therefore consist of two main types : (a) those based on the original short schedule and (b) those based on the much enlarged schedule. In some cases Census Superintendents felt enthused enough to scrap the work based on the original short schedule and do it over again on the enlarged schedule. In the meantime much experience was gained on the analysis of facts and figures to clothe each observation with plenty of authentic information so that the reader could make his own judgement instead of being expected to see all the time through another pair of eyes.

This programme of survey of handicrafts and household industries has been fortified by several ancillary surveys, each one of which would deserve major attention. Along with the survey a compilation has been made of all handicraft centres in each State and an inventory prepared of skilled craftsmen. Photographic and other documentation has been built up to constitute what may now be regarded as the most considerable repository in the country. Elaborate and accurate maps of craft centres in taluks, tehsils and districts are either ready or under preparation. A full census of all fairs and festivals, weekly hats and markets, throughout India, has been taken and is being published for the first time. Andhra Pradesh has embarked upon a project of chronicling the social and religious antiquity and uniqueness of every fair and festival. A separate volume will be devoted to each district which promises to be of the utmost value to sociologists and orientalisists. A full and complete inventory, replete with sketches and measurements of every object, has been prepared of exhibits in museums of tribal crafts in India. There has been a fairly satisfactory survey of houses and buildings, indigenous architectural designs and use of local building material of the whole country. All this has been entirely a labour of love, patiently organised and executed under great strain and in disregard of health and comfort, for which I take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation and grateful thanks to my colleagues.

New Delhi
July 30, 1964

ASOK MITRA
Registrar General, India

P R E F A C E

The legend goes that in the mythological period the Demon Sankhachur was killed by Lord Vishnu and his body was thrown into the sea. Thus was born the conch shell of the corpse of the Demon. The story is as fascinating as the legends of Greece and Rome. It is, therefore, quite interesting to take up the study on a craft which flourishes on an article with which a legend is associated.

The present monograph is the first of its series proposed to be written on the eleven crafts in West Bengal. The survey was in fact taken up in 1962 May, under Shri J. C. Sen Gupta, I.A.S., formerly Superintendent of Census Operations, West Bengal and Sikkim, to whom I am grateful for being given the precious opportunity to associate myself with a study, which is thought-provoking and interesting, not only to a person entrusted with social studies but also to any student of history, legends and of antiquities. Shri Sen Gupta had accepted the short schedule enclosed in the appendix. After negotiations with Shri B. C. Mullik, the then Director of Industries, Govt. of West Bengal, who had kindly allowed six members of his staff in the Statistical Cell of the Directorate, to conduct the field survey, Shri Sen Gupta saw to the completion of the field survey in seven villages. The tables prepared on the basis of the survey have also been included in the appendix.

In 1964, in the month of February, with my visit to Delhi, in the Office of the Registrar General, India, I had the rare opportunity and privilege to see the prodigious task of unveiling the hitherto unknown compartments of our art and culture from oblivion. Dr. B. K. Roy Burman, the Officer on Special Duty (Handicrafts and Social Studies) took much pains to explain to me at length the purpose of the study. He kindly handed over to me a set of expanded schedules proposed for the craft survey and discussed on them at length. We accepted the schedules because we thought that the target would be far from being realised with the short schedules.

The intensive field survey with the expanded schedules over in the village of Raibaghini, we took upon the task of collecting materials from numerous sources. The toil and labour for the entire task as well as the anxiety and impatience in getting materials for some of the chapters should better be felt than explained.

The present monograph has been the product of joint labour and the fruition of some faint hopes and unfulfilled dreams, in which the contributions, big or small, have equal importance. I have separately mentioned the persons and institutions, to whom I am grateful.

I am grateful to Shri A. Mitra, I.C.S., Registrar General and *ex-officio* Census Commissioner, India, who has been a source of inspiration and reverence to me althrough. I present the monograph in diffidence with the feeling that compared to the vastness of his knowledge in this sphere how small our efforts have been.

My friends and colleagues Shri J. Datta Gupta, W.B.C.S., Superintendent of Census Operations, West Bengal and Sikkim, and Shri B. Ray, W.B.C.S., Deputy Superintendent of Census Operations, West Bengal, have been more than confidants to me in my present work. Their cheery words and invaluable suggestions stirred my imagination for which words are but poor tributes.

Dr. B. K. Roy Burman enthused me with his encouragement and guidance, kind scrutiny and invaluable comments in the light of which the monograph has been written. His indulgence to me is to be cherished and recalled in solitude.

But, I should specially record the name of Dr. P. K. Ganguly, Ph.D. (Edin.), Assistant Professor of Geology, Presidency College, Calcutta, who kindly contributed a short morphological account with a sketch and photograph to us in order to enable the readers to have a first hand idea about the material on which the artisans spend their days working. I am more than grateful to him for "the labour of love".

Sri D. Sen, M.A., Investigator worked with me not in his capacity as an Enquirer or a Tabulator or a Draft writer but as a Co-author. Whatever has been written was thought and discussed and written jointly. As such, it is very difficult to distinguish the thought currents of either of us separately. Still, follies and foibles have been entirely mine and I do not disown my responsibility for the same.

Sri Arunava Dutta, Artist-cum-Photographer, Sri Bimalesh Das, Draftsman and Sri Satyen Ganguly, Cartographer fortified this report with their eloquent minds not in words but in brushes and artists' implements. Their silent contributions have bound me in bonds of reverie and gratefulness.

If the monograph has been the work of all in the Social Studies section, the printed volume is the meticulous handiwork of Sri Ram Chandra Bhar, Printing Inspector and his associates Sarbashri Amiya Kar, Satinath Chakraborty, Ajit Kumar Ganguly and Sitangsu Bhattacharya. Sri Bhar watched the printing work as an affectionate guardian and did not rest till the monograph has not seen the light of the day.

Sri A. Chandra Sekhar, I.A.S., Officer on Special Duty, New Delhi appreciated our efforts and cheered me up to move forward. I remember him in silent deference.

Lastly, I must recall the silent help extended to me by my father Shri Shyamapada Sinha, a friend, philosopher and guide throughout my work, who preferred pains of his ailment to detachment of retired life in going through the whole work and suggesting changes only to better it.

Calcutta,
the 22nd January, 1965

SUKUMAR SINHA

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Artisans of Raibaghini.

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Government of West Bengal.

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All of Census
Office, West
Bengal, Calcutta

Calcutta,
the 22nd January, 1965

SUKUMAR SINHA

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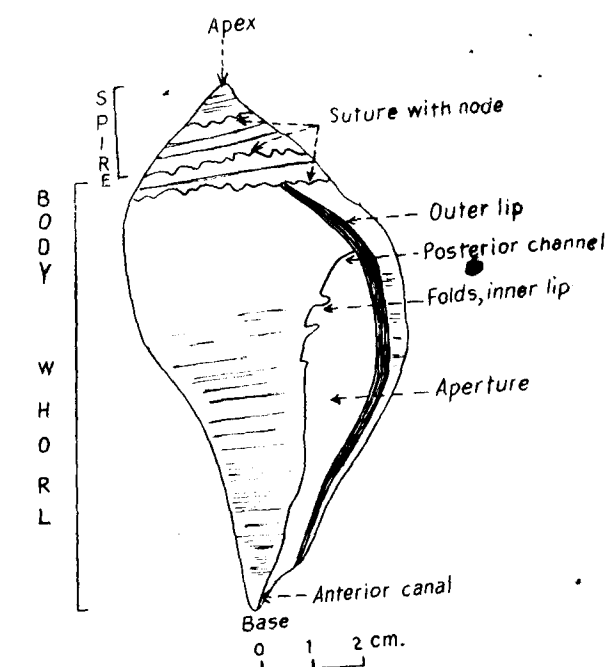
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**MORPHOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE OUTER PART OF A GASTROPOD SHELL
USED BY CONCH SHELL CRAFTSMEN OF RAIBAGHINI, VILLAGE IN BANKURA
DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL**



PHOTOGRAPH OF THE SHELL

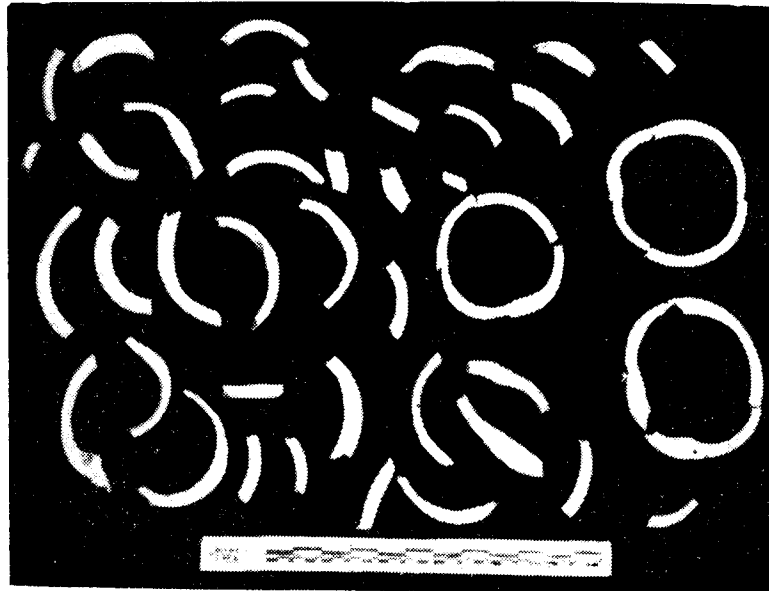
APERTURAL VIEW OF A GASTROPOD SHELL



SKETCH OF THE SHELL

Univalve, asymmetric gastropod shell. Shell milky white in colour and thick with umbilicus, enamelled, large; helicoid spiral, fusiform, elongate; spire sharp, short and conical with a few convex whorls; whorls with spiral striation and distinct nodes; nodes confined to the posterior part of the shell; apex pointed; base drawn into a neck-like form; aperture lensoid, dextral; outer lip thick and smooth; innerlip with prominent parallel folds; deep and narrow anterior canal, not closed; posterior angular channel; anterior canal somewhat curved; siphonostomatus.

The morphology and thickness of the shell indicate that it is a shallow marine water form.



FRAGMENTS OBTAINED FROM CHANDRAKETU GARH
(Photographed in Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta)
[PAGE 11]

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CONCH SHELL PRODUCTS

Introduction :

Conch ornaments have a glorious tradition of their own in India ; more especially the Chank bangles and bracelets which were once regarded as their proud possession by Indian married women, had an extensive use in this country from the earliest times. Evidences as to their existence and use are based upon classics, archaeological exploration and historical records. The available testimonies are being classified into I. Puranic, II. Pre-historic and III. Historic Groups without, however, strictly adhering to a chronological order.

I. Puranic

In Puranic evidence we have references from classics, scriptures and books of eminent authors of the centuries gone by.

To begin with the blowing of a conch (shell horn) we quote from SRIMADBHAGBADGITA I. 15-16

“পাঞ্চজ ন্যঃ হৃষীকেশো দেবদত্তং ধনঞ্জয় ।
পৌণ্ড্রং দধৌ মহাশঙ্খং ভীমকর্মা বৃকোদরঃ ॥
অনন্তবিজয়ং রাজা কুন্তীপুত্রো যুধিষ্ঠিরঃ ।
নকুলঃ সহদেবশ্চ সূৰ্যোষ্মনিপুষ্পকৌ ॥”

“Panchajanyang Hrishikesho Devadattang Dhananjayah, Poundrang dadhmau Mahasankhang Bheemakarma Brikodarah. Anantavijayang Raja Kunteeputro Yudhisthirah, Nakulah Sahadevashcha Sughoshamanipushpakau.”

It was in the battlefield of Kurukshetra that Hrishikesh (the other name for Lord Krishna) had blown his famous Conch-Panchajanya followed by successive or simultaneous blowing of Devadatta by Dhananjaya (Arjuna), Poundra by Bheemsena, Anantavijaya by Yudhisthira, Sughosh by Nakula and of Manipushpaka by Sahadeva. The object of producing a terrific sound from these conchs was purely to strike terror into the hearts of the opponents.

“স ঘোষো ধর্তরাষ্ট্রানাং হৃদয়ানি বাদায়য়ৎ ।
নভশ্চ পৃথিবীঞ্চৈব তুমুলোহভানুনাহদয়ন্ ॥”

“Sa Ghosho Dhartarastranang Hridayani Vyadarayat Navascha Prithibeenchaiyba tumulobhyanunadayan”. Gita I. 19

As was the custom, the kings in the Epic Age possessed their respective conchs which like the bugle of today were wont to blow in the battlefield.

In her struggle with Mahisasura the goddess Durga was presented by Varuna the Lord of the Ocean, conch and other conch products.

“শঙ্খং বরুণঃ :.....”

“.....Sankhancha Varunah.....”

Sri Sri Chandi Madhyamacharitam, II. 21

Since then she holds in one of her ten hands a conch as she holds weapons in her other hands.

“শঙ্খচক্রগদাশাঙ্গগৃহীত পরমায় ধৌ ।”

“Shankhachakragada shangagrihita paramayudhey” Shri Sri Chandi Uttarcharitam XI.16

It is a recognised fact in our country that from time immemorial conch has been looked upon as a very sacred prerequisite in religious matters and that the blowing of a conch shell has been taken as most auspicious in all religious and social ceremonies of the Hindus till today.

Turning to the conch ornaments we find that they were widely in use in those days for decorating the hands of the womenfolk, as we have such references in the Mahabharata and the Harivansa.

“গতা স্বদেশং দ্রাক্ষ্যামি স্থূলশঙ্খাঃ শুভাঃ স্ত্রিয়ঃ ।

সুবর্ণমালাঃ কঙ্কুশ্চ কুণ্ডলে পরিহারকে ॥”

“Gotwa swadeshang drakshyami sthula-shankhaah Shubhaah Striyah Subarnmalaah Kambushcha kundalay pariharakay.”

Mahabharata IV. 15.2

“শঙ্খপূর্ণাভ্যাং বাহভ্যাং”

“Shankhapurnavyaang Vahubvyaang”

Ibid IV. 21.7

“ভূষিতং তমলঙ্কারৈঃ কুণ্ডলৈঃ পরিহাটকৈঃ ।

কঙ্কুপাণিনমায়াস্তং দৃষ্ট্বা সীদতি মে মনঃ ॥”

‘Bhushitang tamalankaraiyh Kundalaiyh parihatakiyh Kambupaninamaayantang dristwya seedati maymanah”.

Ibid IV. 21. 26.

“একশঙ্খা নর্যিঃ”

“Ekashankhaah naryah”

Harivansa III. 64

In court epics and the dramas, however, jewels and gold ousted the conch ornaments.

In the Shishupalbadha of the famous author Magha we have a further reference of these conch shell ornaments. There is a description of a great festivity among the womenfolk of Indra-prastha by the august presence of Lord Krishna on the eve of the performance of Rajasuya sacrifice by the king Yudhishthira. The sharp clinking sound of the conch bangles and bracelets produced by the hilarious movements of the women is being referred to :

“.....প্রচলংকলাপিকলশঙ্খকস্বনা ।

অভিকৃষ্ণমঙ্গুলি মুখেন কাচন ক্রতনেককর্ণবিবরং

ব্যঘটয়ং ॥”

“Prachalatkalaapikalashankhakaswanaa Abhi-krishnamanguli mukhena kachana druta-mekakarna vivarang Vyaghattayat”.

Shishupalbadha XIII.41

Vaishampayana and the king Virata, the two characters of Mahabharata speak of chank bangles or bracelets worn by Arjuna in the guise of a female. *Vide* Virata Parba Chapter XI of Mahabharata by Kali P. Singha.

Besides, there are other books in Sanskrit literature which speak of conch ornaments but it is our belief that the evidences presented in this chapter will amply prove the extensive use of these adornments in former days in our country.

II. (a) Pre-historic, Neolithic and later Neolithic Stage

(i) *Glimpses from MEMOIRS OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, Vol. III by JAMES HORNELL*

“The prevalence of the use of chank bangles among...Dravidian races, the present animistic beliefs of the Santals and Chota Nagpur Kurmis, and the comparatively recent renunciation of the same cult by the great Koch tribe, taken in conjunction with other facts and especially with the widely spread archaeological finds point to the use of chank bangles as having had a purely Dravidian origin and as having been a custom prevalent and solidly established among at least certain sections of the race throughout India anterior to the advent of the Aryan invaders and the rise of the Brahmanic faith.”

[Bruce Foote collection of antiquities about the early existence of bangle factories in the Deccan, in Gujrat and Kathiawar.]

That “the industry of chank cutting and the custom of wearing chank bangles had once much less restricted geographical range than at the present day” has been demonstrated by Bruce Foote Collection of Indian pre-historic and protohistoric antiquities in the Madras Govt. Museum, observed Hornell. This valuable series comprises of amidst other things “the numerous fragments of chank bangles and chank workshop cuttings and waste”, many of which “were found associated with undoubted neolithic stone implements....The collection includes worked specimens of bangles in fragmentary condition....from.....Mysore, Bellary, Anantapur, Kurnul, Hyderabad (Raichur Doab), Kistna, Gujrat, Kathiawar”.

Mysore

“Half a dozen pieces of broken bangles of chank shell” among the potsherds found in Srinivasapur, which according to Hornell “indicates the age to be considerably later than neolithic days and at a time when iron was freely employed”, because chank shells cannot be “sawn and bangles made there from without the use of a metal saw.”

Bellary

(i) Manakurti Hill. “Columella of a chank shell upper end ground.” Hornell observes that hill tribes of N. E. India use the similar fragments “as ear or hair ornaments”.

(ii) Nayaldini, Adunitaluq. “Three fragments of chank bangles came from made ground.” Plough turned up a large number of chank bangles in the fields, mixed with shell beads and pottery, probably of iron age,” Bruce Foote says.

According to Hornell these unornamented bangle fragments are in simplest and most primitive form and similar types are worn by Santals or low caste Hindu women.

(iii) Sandurvallam—“two fragments of worked chank bangles and a working fragment of chank shell found.”

(iv) Hampasagra—“Eighteen fragments of chank bangles and a shoulder portion of shell sawn off as in the cutting up of shells for bangles, from made ground on the right bank of the Tunga Bhadra....furnishes evidence of the extensive use of chank bangles in ancient days in the neighbourhood....Mr. Bruce Foote places the age as late neolithic or early Iron Age.” (p. 75. Vol-II)

(v) Malyam—Found “three fragments of chank bangles” along with other finds which Mr. Bruce says “Probably neolithic”.

Anantapur

(i) Havaligi Hill. ‘Eight fragments of chank bangles without incised ornamentation were found....associated with a granite-mealing stone and several celts, hammers, flakers, and corncrushers chiefly of basalt and diorite and all of neolithic facies, together with a large number of chert and agate flake artifacts, many of which were serrated and biserrated.’ Mr Bruce Foote (Loc. cit., Vol. 1, P. 81) says, “exactly for what purpose they” (these highly worked flakes) “were made is problematic unless indeed they were used for working the patterns on chank shell bangles. Some are really delicate objects the preparation of which must have required much time and great care”.

From the discovery of a fragment of iron slag marks Hornell, it appears that “a knowledge of iron, a much more suitable material for chank working tools than chert or agate flakes, however carefully worked. Besides, the remains give no indication of this site having been the scene of a bangle factory, as all the fragments are worked and just the fragments which we see when bangles being broken accidentally or purposely are thrown aside by the wearers”.

Bruce Foote says (Loc. cit.), “There are many signs of continued habitation on the middle and eastern parts of the hill, especially the latter, in the shape of mealing places, mostly small and deepish ovals; the shallower hollows are of much larger size superficially.”

(ii) Tadpatri Railway Station—A plain unornamented bangle remain was found and also “cores of red jasper and of chart and a fragment of steatite vessel showing signs of having been turned on a lathe. All the remains are classed as neolithic by Mr. Bruce Foote”.

(iii) Cuddapah—Out of 29 fragments of chank bangles “three exhibit carved patterns such as may be made by a saw or a file, the other without incised carving”.

Kurnul

Bastipad on the Hindri river. In 1888 Mr. Bruce Foote found “a large number of interesting potsherds, fragments of finished and unfinished chank bangles, and over a score of pieces of chank sells....A piece of iron slag and another of specular iron were also produced by the same site, together with a broken celt and an oblong hone both made of diorite, and some neolithic chert flakes”.

Mr. Hornell observes “These remains appear to have been collected from the surface of ploughed fields as Mr. Bruce Foote says the pottery was mostly much broken up by the ploughing of the fields which had come to occupy

the old site in which they had been buried. This site must have been a populous village in olden times to judge from the quantities of potsherds found, and there can be no doubt that one of the industries of this ancient village was that of chank bangle manufacture. The waste pieces and the ring sections cut from the shell are precisely” in the likeness of those in Bengal workshops in the early thirties. “The striations made by the slicing saw are still clearly to be discerned, and their regularity and the straightness of the cut are the same as those produced by the big semilunar fine toothed saw now in use in Dacca factories for this purpose. The presence of the hone and the two pieces of iron have a direct bearing on this matter. The evidence taken altogether disproves completely to my mind, the possibility that the bangle fragments found here and in other localities by Mr. Bruce Foote were produced by neolithic people using finely serrated chert or agate flakes as suggested by him (Loc. cit. P. 81, Vol. I). Had such been the case the shell sections and the waste fragments cut off in the course of sectioning the shoulder of the shell and the lip portion of the mouth whorl would not exhibit the perfect regularity and evenness of sawn surface which they do. It is quite possible to cut a ring section from a chank-shell by means of a flint “saw” but the task is one involving prodigious difficulty and the waste pieces must necessarily be broken and chipped off in the process in consequence of the impossibility of cutting cleanly through the shell owing to the smallness of the tool and the thickness of its back. Only a thin blade, such as the employment of iron or steel permits, will perform the task of sawing off the shoulder or the lip portion in one continuous operation and without breaking off the waste parts piece meal as the sawing progresses, as must necessarily be the case if a small thick backed stone tool be employed.”

“The hone found may conceivably have been used for rubbing down the thickness of the edge of the iron saw employed, as at Dacca to-day or in sharpening the edge of the chisel-edged, implement used in sharpening the teeth of the saw itself.”

Raichur Doab (S.W. Hyderabad)

The then probably populous districts of Kurnul, Cuddapah and Bellary have yielded remains of bangles and of those one has undoubtedly been a manufacturing centre where raw material has been cut up and worked into bangles for sale to the people of the district. This ancient factory was located near Maski on the right bank of a tributary of the Tungabhadra.....There are examples of obliquely cut “shoulder pieces” with the apex purposely smashed in as in modern

rejects from a Dacca factory, of fragments of the Columella and of cut off 'Beads'.....

A considerable proportion of fifty three fragments of worked bangles exhibit traces of ornamentation in the form of usually cross grooves.....The find of a broken iron blade.....is of the utmost importance, it may well be the remnant of a small hand saw such as is used today by Bengal workmen for roughing out much of the line decoration so characteristic of bangle ornamentation.

"Fragments of chank bangles have also been found at two other places in Raichur Doab-at Kotegallu, Ling Sugur Taluq and at Rawalkondaassociated with neolithic implements."

Kistna District

"In Southern India, apart from the Southern region of Deccan, the only find of chank bangle remains has been at Gudivada in Kistna District. The two fragments there found are without decoration and their approximate age is more easily assignable than that of any specimens from other localities ; the associated objects are undoubtedly early Buddhist in their origin....."

Gujarat and Kathiawar

According to Mr. Bruce Foote the custom of using chank bangles was as extensive as numerous were the chank bangle factories at different places of these two provinces in ancient days.

With reference to the plentiful fragments of finished bangles at Ambavalli and Valabhipur it is interesting to note that "two bangles fragments from Mahuri, one from Babapur, ten from Valabhipur, one from Kamrej and seventeen fragments from Ambavalli are figured, ornamentation is well executed and exhibits considerable taste, a high degree of skill and undoubtedly the employment of effective tools of several sorts-saws, drills, files".

Mr. Hornell observes that "as the chank is a religious symbol both to Hindus and to Buddhists, we may reasonably conclude that the remains of chank bangles found in Valabhipur" which was visited by two Chinese pilgrims, Hiuen Tsang and I. Tsing and described by them 'as a large and flourishing city and a great centre of Buddhist learning, its streets and schools crowded with students' and where 'the reigning dynasty themselves of the Brahman faith, appear to have been tolerant like many of their contemporaries' 'were made for the use of the women of the town and neighbourhood not later than the eighth century'.

Relics associated with the existence of the chank industry in Tinnevelly at the early Christian era.

Ancient Tamil classics tell of chank cutting industry and wide spread use of carved and ornamented chank bangles by the women of the Pandyan country (roughly modern districts of Tinnevelly, Madras and Ramnad in Madras). They give evidence of the existence of an extensive chank bangle industry in the extreme south of India 'during the height of ancient Tamil civilisation 1200 to 2000 years ago'.

'Two Tamil stanzas which chronicle a passage at arms between a Brahman and Nakkirkar, the celebrated poet president of the Madura Sangam in the reign of the Pandyan King, Nedunj Cheliyan II who flourished probably about the beginning of the 2nd century A.D.' furnish valuable reference to the chank trade.

'The Brahman named Dharmi presented to the Sangam a poem purporting to be composed with the aid of Siva' 'but Nakkirkar, the president' criticised the poem mercilessly and rejected it as unworthy of literary recognition. The Brahman took revenge by presenting another poem' in which 'he held the president up to ridicule on account of his caste trade in following pungent lines :'

(In literal translation)

Brahmi's criticism :

'Is Kiran fit to criticize my poem ? Spreading his knees wide, his joints loosened (by the labour) does he not saw chanks into sections, his ghee-smear saw murmuring the while Kir-Kir ?'

Dharmi's description contains a realistic picture of 'a chank cutting workshop, the men seated on the floor with knees widely spread and depressed outwards almost to the ground to give free play to the great crescentic two-handled saw monotonously droning a single note as it cuts its way laboriously through the hard substance of the shell'. In the poem 'the sound given out during the sawing of chank shells' is to be noted.

Nakkirkars' Counter-criticism :

Chank-cutting is indeed the calling of my caste ; of that I am not ashamed. But of what caste is Sankara ? (one of the many names of Siva) 'we earn our livelihood by cutting chanks we do not live by begging as he did'. Nakkirkar, the Chank Cutter President of the Sangam, was a Parawn by caste. These Parawns were divers for pearl oysters and shells and chank-cutters.

Maduraik Kanchi, a Tamil poem referring to the ancient importance of the chank industry on the Indian shore of the Gulf of Mannar, depicts the city of Korkai as the chief town in the country

of the Parawas, the then 'sub-capital of the Pandyan Kingdom and as the great emporium familiar to the Greek and Egyptian sailors and traders and described by the geographers of the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. under the name of Kolkhoi'.

'The great epic, the Silappathikaram or "Lay of the Anklet", written about the same period by a junior poet, gives further information about Korkai from which we gather that on account of the great value of the revenue derived from the pearl fishery, this city was a sub-capital of the Pandyan realm and the usual residence of the heir apparent, boasting great magnificence and adorned with temples and palaces befitting its wealth and importance.'

The evidence furnished by Tamil Classics received conclusive corroboration by the discoveries made by Hornell 'on the once-famous Tamil cities of Korkai and Kayal' (known as Palayakayal).

On the landward outskirts of Kayal Mr. Hornell unearthed some 17 fragments of a chank workshop waste, containing a saw-like instrument, 'a thin-bladed iron saw.....eight fragments.....obliquely cut' 'shoulder-piece' six of the columella and part of the oral extremity of the shell, and the remaining three..... fragments of the lip—all show a sawn surface, the positive sign of treatment by skilled artisans'.

"an excellently preserved sawn shoulder piece with the marks of the apex having been hammered in....." was found at Kayal.

There was another find by Mr. Hornell at Tuticorin, 'a sawn and hammered shoulder piece of typical form'.

These evidences point out that the chank bangle workshops existed at the three places.

But nobody probably knows, 'why the seat of Bangle cutting trade became transferred or limited to Bengal'. Hornell says, it is presumably 'the close of unchallenged Hindu Supremacy in the South, the spoliation of the east riches of the Pandyan cities by the Moslem and the hey day of Arab sea-power on this part of the Indian coast' that the trade changed its seat.

(b) Indus Valley Civilisation

Extracts from Mohenjodaro and Indus Valley Civilisation.

By Sir John Marshall

Shells used for bangles—

House XII (plates VI, IV & LVI)—other antiquities of interest found in this house were a board of 41 cores of shells (V.S. 3192) all

serviceable parts of which had been used for the making of bangles, etc. a cubical terracotta objects (V.S. 2585) pierced with one to six holes on different faces ; possibly a gumming die and six seals.

Shell objects (p.p. 471-478,479) :—

The four ladles illustrated in plate CLVI are made of shell. They vary considerably in size, layout being 6"—8" inches long. Each ladle was made from a single piece of shell and its size therefore was in a measure governed by the size of the shell from which it was cut. These objects are naturally irregular in shape but are otherwise well-finished and finely polished. Very similar ladles were used in Mesopotamia in very early times.

Shell ladles are found in both the intermediate and lake levels of the Mohenjodaro.

Small cones with rounded tops—

A small number of very carefully made cones with rounded tops were made of shells or pottery. The three illustrated in plate cxxxiv were all found together 4'—4" below the surface of the mound..... The use of these three objects is uncertain. They are perhaps too large to be games men.

.....a group of 3 (cones) all beautifully made in shell.....one made of shell, the only ones found at Mohenjodaro and on account of the hardness of this material their points have not broken off. They are all somewhat roughly made, and the base of the two are rounded, the third flat.

Shell caps—

.....They are always in two pieces which fit more or less directly together, according to the skill of the carver, but the two halves have never been found together to make one of these caps.

Two of these pieces belong together but the third is part of another cap. This type of cap is rare for the reason it must have necessitated considerable labour to fit three pieces accurately together.....

Shell Bracelets—

Shell bracelets.....which measure 2.25" inches diameter by 1" inch wide and 0.12" inch thick are of ten found. They were roughly cut from large "sank-shells", the columella being first removed and the shell then sawn into sections. Beyond smoothing, the edges of the cuts and removing the saw marks no further attempt was made in the majority of these bracelets, either to round or to ornament them. None the less, despite this lack of finish, they are quite presentable objects which probably account for their

great popularity at all periods. Similar bracelets are favoured ornaments in Bengal at the present day, but they are better finished and sometimes engraved.....It dates from the late period.....The armlets worn by the dancing girl were probably made of shell or similar light material since metal would have proved much too heavy. The decoration is always the same, namely a deeply record line around the edge of the rounded upper surface and quartering by means of three parallel lines. The lower surfaces of the two halves always show the convolutions of the shell and apparently no attempt was ever made to smooth them down.

When two halves are placed together there is a natural hole between them and this compiled with the fact that the top shows traces of a slight fattening; suggests that a small metal plate was placed on the top with a wire passed through it for a handle. Possibly a metal plate once covered the base, if so, this would account for the lack of finish in this part of the object. These objects may have been used as jar covers.

Superiority of Shell—

People of Mohenjodaro were fortunate in having in shell a material which is in some ways superior to ivory, although its brittleness makes it more difficult to work. The supply of shell was inexhaustible.....

Proficiency—

In the manufacture of articles of shell the people of Indus Valley Civilization were extremely proficient. In this respect they resemble the inhabitants of early Babylon. The extensive use of shell for ornaments and in particulars its use in the manufacture of cylinder seals has been adduced as a proof of the entry of the Sumerians, even if they did not already know the art of shell working, found the craft we established in the country of their adoption.

Shell working still extensively practised in India and a full report of the method employed may be found in one of the "Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal" (Vol. III).

Manufacture—

"The manufacture of shell articles was evidently carried on in certain parts of the 'L' area at Mohenjodaro. We found no less than..... 120 shells (in all) as well as in other parts of the area. 'Most of these shells were whole, but from some columella had been removed, and from the condition of the latter it is clear that the columella was detached from the walls of the shell by means of a hammer, just as it is done at the present day.'

Waste—

At Mohenjodaro practically the whole of the shell was utilised. The walls are used for bangles, both wide and narrow, and the columella for making beads. For the simpler form such as disc shaped or cylindrical beads, the columella was simply sliced with a saw. For the more elaborate beads, a considerable amount of shaping by other means was required after they had been sawn off. The columella was also used for making piece of the inlay work which required considerable skill, especially in the fretting of designs, which is a difficult task with such a very brittle material.

[In the plate CLVI No. 21 two of these "Sank" shells are seen with the columella lying beside them (Nos. 22, 23), and a smoothed columella with several partially finished beads, may be seen in Nos. 15 and 24 of the same plate.]

Dipper—

The shell dipper.....must have taken a large part of the shell for their manufacture, the smaller one being made from small shells and the bigger one from those of the larger size.

.....A shell object of unknown use..... which measures 1.7 inches high. The object seems to have had another piece of shell fitted to it, for it has a slanting and somewhat roughly finished back, with a vertical channel scooped in it measuring 0.25 inch wide. There is a highly incised herring bone pattern around the base of the object, and each of exposed sides bears an incised pattern.....This object may be part of the head-dress of a small statue.'

C. Vedic

Coming to the Vedic period we find that the Aryans carried with them the traditional use of the conch shell products and left them as a most valuable heritage to be borne by the succeeding generations in this country. So, there is a reference of "shell amulets" in the Atharva Veda.

III. Historic

Buddhist Sources—

From the mention of "Guild of shell works" in *Jataks* we understand that there was definitely some association of the craftsmen. Vinay Pitaka furnishes another evidence of this craft during the Buddhist period.

Mauryan Period—

Excavations of almost every important city in the Mauryan period bear testimony of this craft.

It is written in Kautilya's Arthashastra that "the Superintendent of Ocean-mines attended to the collection of conch shells, diamonds, precious stones, pearls, corals and salt and also regulated the commerce in these commodities". Ancient India. R. C. Mazumdar. Indica by Megasthenes also gives evidence of the craft during Mauryan period.

Between the close of Hindu rule and Advent of the Moslems in India

That conch shells were in use in our country during the 11th and 12th century A. D. may be found in NAISADHACHARITA XII. 35 XV. 45 vide Socio Economic History of N. India by B. P. Mazumdar.

Excavation Reports—

Tavernier in 1666 found Bhutanese merchants taking home from Pabna and Dacca bracelets sawn from "sea-shells as large as an egg", Memoirs of Asiatic Society of Bengal Vol. III Hornell.

Besides all these historical accounts, excavation reports of different places in India provide further proof of the existence of this craft. The following reports are worth mentioning:

(a) Guide to Taxila—J. Marshall.

Page 52 -Bhir Mund- "The room 7 of Block-D overlooking second street (square 17-60) was evidently a shell worker shop as many pieces of cut shell and mother of pearl were found in it." Page 104. The Dharma Rajika of Chir-Tope.

"The original floor of the procession path was composed of lime and river sand plaster, and part of it in the North-west quadrant was adorned in a curious fashion with shell bangles imbedded in the plaster and arranged in various geometrical designs, some of the bangles being whole, others cut in halves or in quarters."

N.B.—'For the protection of the decoration it has been covered again with a lair of earth.'

(b) Mohenjodaro and Indus Valley civilisation- J. Marshall. Findings already mentioned in this chapter.

(c) Excavation at Hastinapur and other exploration in the upper Ganga and Sutlej Basins 1950-52.—B. B. Lal (M. 91-Sec. 10) "Fragmentary bangle of shell, rectangular in section—From a mud level of period 5 (H. S. T.1-229)."

Period 5—"After a considerable lapse of time, a fresh settlement cropped up at Hastinapur towards the end of 11th century."

(d) Megalithic tools.

(e) Ahichhatra.

(f) Arikaketu Chandraballi.

(g) Nagarjuna Kunda.

(h) Chandra Ketugarh—Conch shell fragments (from 3rd and 4th century B.C. down to the end of the Pal period).

Shell bangles during Gupta period.

(i) Karna Subarna

4th century A.D.

Large perior of bangles at a particular place.

Simple in design.

'The Castes and Tribes who use chank bangles'
Based on observations by Mr. Hornell in his
Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
Vol. III.

What was once the custom of the whole of India especially the Tamil Country, the Deccan, Kathiawar, Gujrat and Bengal has now been restricted to West Bengal only and the custom of wearing chank bangles still persists in this province with some social importance as well as in those places where the Bengali race has established colonies.

The red sankha has a special significance to a Bengalee bride for it is a necessary requisite during the marriage ceremony and has to be put on as soon as the smearing of 'a streak of vermillion.....down the parting of the bride's hair' is accomplished.

It is significant here to quote Garcia da Orta, a Portuguese writer of the sixteenth century, "This chanco is a ware for the Bengal trade, and formerly produced more profit than now..... and there was formerly a custom in Bengal that no virgin in honour and esteem could be corrupted unless it were by placing bracelets of chanco on her arms; but since the Pathans came in, this usage has more or less ceased and so the chanco is rated lower now."

The customs tends to die out from among the 'women of castes holding good social status.... particularly if their husbands be well to do; they prefer wearing handsomely carved ornamental chank bangles' or replacing them, 'when the means permit, by gold and jewelled ones'.

But there is yet a section of the women folk who inspite of their large means are too conservative to do away with the old custom. They belong largely to the households in the country districts.

"The use of the ornamental bangles (*bala* and *churi*) and also of the red marriage bangles is limited almost entirely to the thoroughly Hinduised sections of the Bengali people more particularly to those inhabiting the districts in the North, North and East of Bengal together with the Hindu Communities settled in Assam."

Though Baishnav women do not wear these bangles 'women of the lower classes of this community in Dacca, Darjeeling and Assam are said also occasionally to wear chank bangles as wrist ornaments.'

Koch Tribe Rajbansi and Paliya—

'Among Bengal Castes of inferior social status, particularly those whose physical characteristics bespeak Dravidian descent and whose customs are not yet thoroughly Hinduised, the use of chank bangles in the form of massive gauntlets made up of numerous separate bangles is very prevalent. Prominent among these are the widely spread Koch tribe in their two principal subdivisions of Rajbansi and Paliya.' The tribe has its settlement in Dinajpur, Rangpur, Kuch Behar, Jalpaiguri, Purulia, Maldah, the Darjeeling Terai, Bogra, Murshidabad, Nadia and Dacca. The Rajbansi gauntlets consist of ten separate bangles, they are broad and thick and mostly without any decoration whatever. Even if there were any, 'it consists of simple line patterns made of shallow groovings'. It is strong, effective and elegant. The wearers belong to the labouring and agricultural classes.

Muchi—

The leather-dressing and cobbler caste known as Muchi in Bengal regard the system of wearing of chank bangles among their women as a distinctive custom. They appear to be a branch of the Chamars though they claim to be socially a shade higher. The obvious distinction that lies between a female Chamar and a Muchi woman is that the former, prides herself in wearing 'huge bracelets of bell metal,' whereas the latter has always aliking for chank bangles. The Muchis are largely the caste drummers of the province as the 'Pariyar of the south'.

Santals—

Like the Rajbansi and Paliyas of North Eastern and Eastern Bengal the Santals are 'the chief chank bangle-wearing tribe' in West Bengal.

Their women are mostly in the habit of wearing three to five bangles 'as a massive cuff, like gauntlet or compound bracelet'. They are a poor people and can not afford to buy gauntlets of superior quality. To make their adornments showy and perfect they use red and yellow lac upon these gauntlets "Dead shells are usually

employed by the cutters for Santal bangles." In Birbhum known to be a representative district for the Santals about half of the female population observe the custom and wear the chank bangles at marriage but do not attach any religious significance to the custom. Even girls put on them from an early age. Like Hindoo widows the Santals break their bangles reassuming others, should they marry again.

Kurmi—

The Kurmi caste found in Chota Nagpur and Orissa also wear chank bangles. Their religious beliefs and social customs are similar to those of the Bhumij or a Santal in Manbhum and North of Orissa.

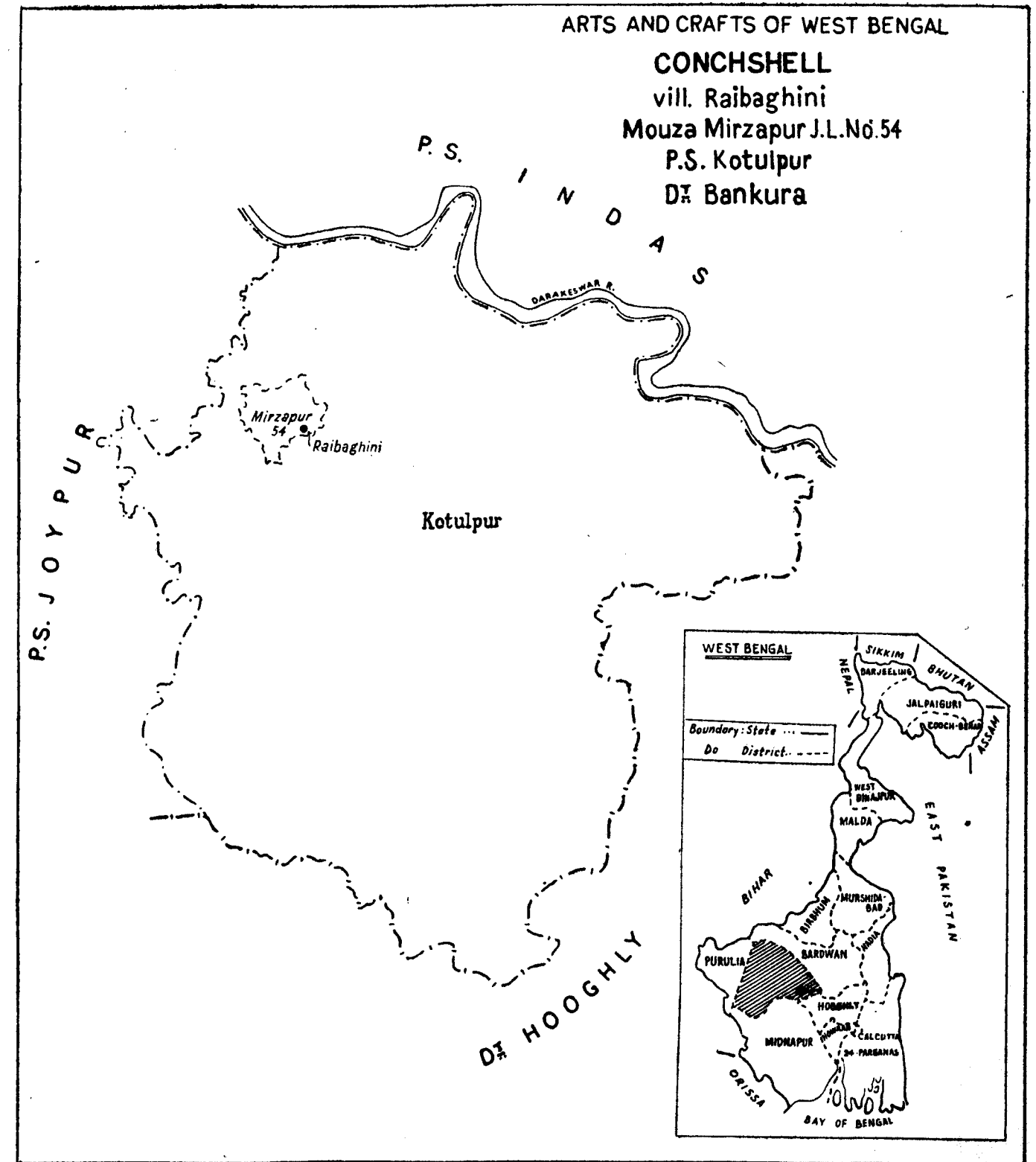
Maghs—

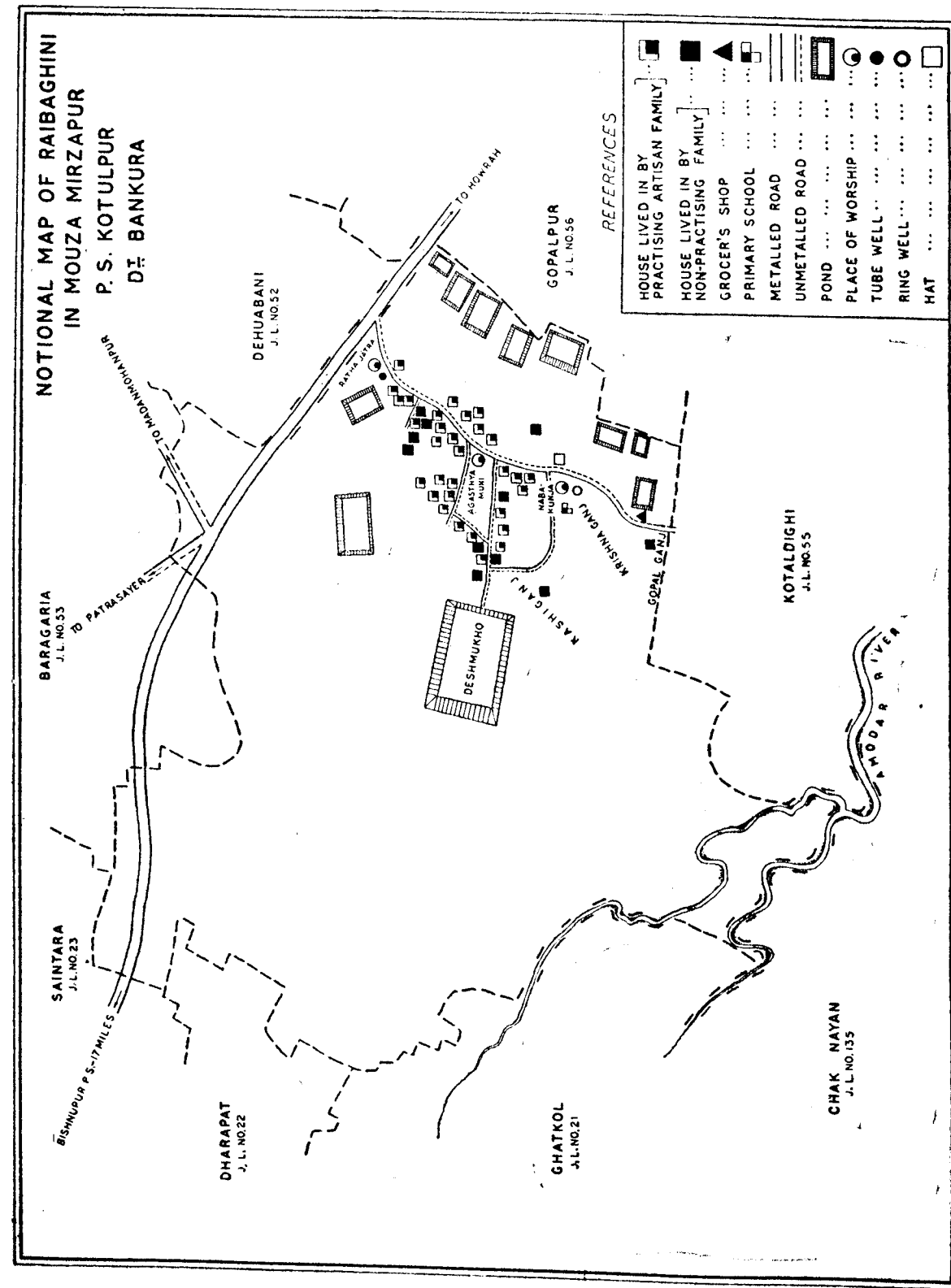
In the hill districts of Chittagong 'the women of the Maghs, a race of Indo-Mongolian extraction and Buddhists by religion' use very broad and unornamented chank bracelets in the manner the Tibetans and the Bhutanese do. Bangle cutters, chiefly Muhammadans, supply the needs of the Maghs who wear the crudest and most inartistic form of bracelets probably more 'as charms than as ornaments'. Papuans and the inhabitants of the Melanesian islands put on similar broad arm ornaments 'sometimes round the wrist, sometimes on the upper arm above the elbow'.

There has been a considerable demand for chank bracelets in Tibet and Bhutan since Tavernier's time in the seventeenth century. . . . The poorer women in Kashmiri Tibet 'wear broad shell bangles. They assume these ornaments early in life while the hand is still small and pliable.'

The custom of wearing tabular pieces of chank shell is in vogue among the Tibetans. Nagas use these discs "as necklaces and also to ornament the men's hairbedecked helmets. Columella of the chank is said to be worn by the Bhutea tribes as ear ornaments". The women of the wild Lissus of the Lolo tribe employ chank shell discs to ornament Chinese Caps.

To Buddhists of the Northern cult the chank is one of the eight lucky signs. 'Whether in the form of a bangle, an ear ornament, or a breast disc, it is employed as a talisman to ensure good fortune and possibly even as a charm against the evil eye as is the chank shell placed on the forehead of the draught bulls in Southern India.'





CHAPTER II

Location

Of the many places distributed in the rural areas of West Bengal, Raibaghini is a village where a centre for the manufacture of Conch Shell products has been existing for a pretty long time. This village was specially marked for an intensive on-the-spot study on the handicraft of Conch Shell in all its aspects, such as, the nature, scope and limitation of this time-old craft. The tables of a general nature on some of the other villages where the survey was extended with a very short general schedule will come up in a subsequent chapter.

Raibaghini is one of the constituents of the mouza Mirzapur which has the Jurisdiction List No. 54 in the Kotulpur police station in the subdivision of Vishnupur in the district of Bankura. The term village used in the monograph will refer to the village of Raibaghini only. Raibaghini is located at 23° North Latitude and at 87½° East Longitude. The town of Bankura which incidentally is the district's Head Quarter is at a distance of 40 miles to the west of the village and the Sub divisional Head Quarter in the town of Vishnupur is 17 miles west of this village. The nearest railway station is at Vishnupur on the Howrah-Adra-Gomo Branch Line of the South-Eastern Railway. The journey from Calcutta to Vishnupur will take seven to eight hours by train. There is another route to the village and it involves less time and shorter distance. The travel along this route is especially convenient in dry weather. From Howrah one may travel by train to Tarakeswar, the terminus of the Sheoraphuli-Tarakeswar branch line of the Eastern Railway. From there a bus will take one to Arambagh, a subdivisional town in Hooghly district. At Arambagh one will have to cross the river Darakeswar to reach Kalipur from where a bus plying upto Vishnupur *via* Kotulpur will be available.

The police station at Kotulpur is two miles away from this village. The villagers do not face any difficulty in having contacts with the police station when needs so demand. Their position is somewhat better than that of other villagers who are far-flung from the police station. In case of any disturbance in the law and order situation in the village or around or in case of commission of any serious crime the villagers are quick in contacting the police station and the police is also prompt to respond to the call of the villagers. This has been possible only because of the nearer situation of the police station.

The office of the Block Development Officer which is the lowest unit in the administrative hierarchy is also situated in Kotulpur. The contacts with the Block Development Office have been facilitated by the negligible distance, the people have to traverse. The contacts have consequenced in various benefits drawn by the residents either in the form of relief at the time of distress or in the nature of various assistance, technical or material, drawn during agricultural operations.

A branch office of the Settlement Officer is situated in Kotulpur in charge of a Kanungo which caters help to the villagers in solving problems relating to the land in their possession.

The Kotulpur Higher Secondary School, situated in Kotulpur, is the only Higher Secondary Institution of its kind in the area which serves the academic needs of the village or its neighbouring areas. But unfortunately, very few residents of the village have benefited from the school in the past or are benefiting at present in imparting education to their wards. The educational attainment and the socio-cultural aspirations of the village will be discussed in the appropriate chapter.

The health centre at Kotulpur imparts both outdoor and indoor treatment to the attending patients. The medical facilities, thus offered, are being utilised by a good number of the village people. It has 50 beds for indoor patients. There is another health centre at Mirzapur proper which has a limited provision for indoor patients and offers restricted benefits to outdoor patients. It has only 4 indoor beds. The Kotulpur Health Centre is preferred to the second one by the village people for obvious reasons, even though they have to walk a distance of two miles or so.

There are actually two post offices which serve the villagers. One is at Gopalpur mouza, at a stone's-throw from the village of Raibaghini. It is known as Raibaghini Experimental Post Office. The other, at Mirzapur proper, is at the western corner of the village. The Gopalpur one, being nearer, the villagers have a preference for the post office there.

Transport and Communications

The tarmacadamised Vishnupur-Kalipur Road has run along the northern border of the village. This road is motorable and forms an important line of communication with the outside world. Private buses ply along this road to Vishnupur

and Kalipur, a village in the Arambagh sub division of Hooghly district. It takes about an hour to reach Vishnupur and ten to fifteen minutes to Kotulpur by bus. This road is the arterial highway for the conch shell hawkers who make use of the bus route for the pedlary of their wares. Not to speak of the different occupations the calling of which makes the use of the road imperative for the villagers, even for recreational purpose people have to travel along this highway to Kotulpur or other places. Other means of transport are provided by cycles, rickshaws and carts which ply along the main road and also the kutchha village road. A few muddy tracks have taken off from the village road to lose their course in the heart of the village proper.

Physical environment

The village of Raibaghini with its small hamlets, which in fact are concentration of a few households (Pattis), are bounded on the north by the villages of Bargaria and Pirit Chak and in the south by those of Kotaldighi and Char Narayanpur, all in the same police station. The Vishnupur-Kalipur Road separates the village of Raibaghini from the mouzas of Bargaria and Pirit Chak. The eastern boundary is constituted by the mouza of Gopalpur, while the village of Mirzapur proper stands as its western neighbour.

A small river, rather a rivulet, locally known as Amodar flows past the southern corner of the village of Mirzapur. It has originated in the forest of Joypur in the Vishnupur sub division within the same district and meandering through different areas has ended its course in the river Sankari in the district of Hooghly. The river, which apparently gives an impression of calmness, has a tale about it on the ravages wrought some four or five years back. The villagers report that Amodar had over-flowed its banks and has washed away completely the refugee colony that had found a haven on its over-stretched banks at Mirzapur. The refugee settlers disrupted from their homes had left the place in tears and had never trekked their way back to the village. This place is now as barren and desolate as it was before the people had pitched their homes there.

Topography

The village of Raibaghini is situated in the plains of Bankura district. The fields are slightly undulated and the general slope is towards the east. The reddish soil has greater portion of sand than of sticky clay. During the monsoon the soil becomes muddy but not sticky. Rain water cannot accumulate on this type of soil, because of its porous nature. The soil of the village is more or less fertile and has been found to be

best suited for raising paddy. Except the mango trees, no shade bearing trees are visible here. The date palm and palmyra trees are fairly numerous. The clumps of bamboos are seen in some parts of the village. The other trees are neem, tamarind and babla. Inside the houses of the village neem and tamarind are most commonly seen. Almost in every house, one will find a sacred *tulsi* plant growing in the compound in front of the living room. Some of the trees, already mentioned, can also be seen outside the houses of some villagers.

Animals and birds of the place are of a very common variety.

The different fields or plots of land on the western side of the village are used for agricultural purposes and they constitute the agricultural fields of the village.

The dwellers of the village are not fond of rearing various types of live-stock. Goat-rearing is rarely practised by the villagers. Milch cattle are reared by the people for the supply of milk. But, rearing of cows is not a very common practice among the different artisans of the village. In the absence of any common grazing ground or pasture, cattle are driven to the sides of 'Kotaldighi', a large tank just outside the boundary of the village.

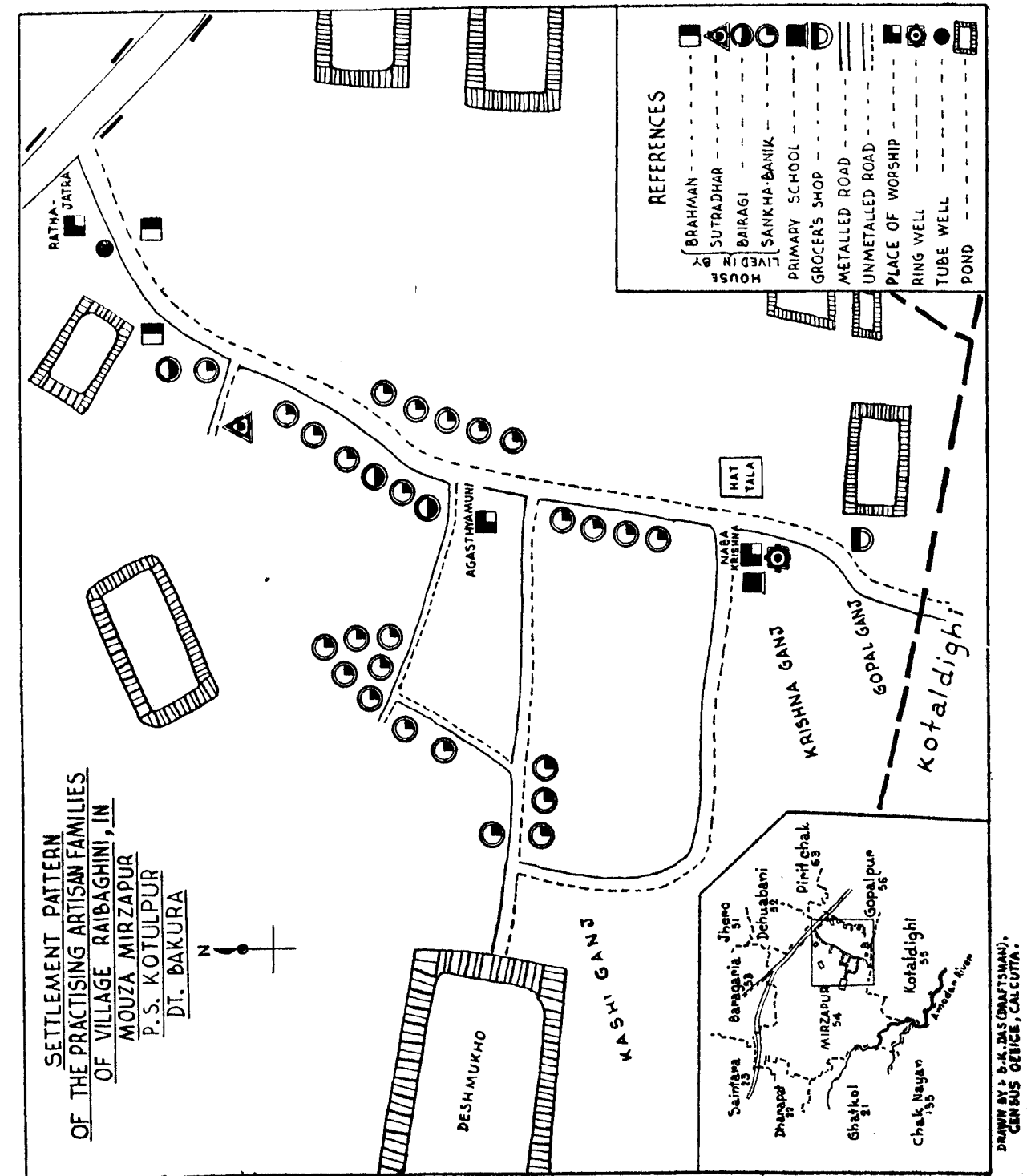
Due to the nature of the soil the area does not become water-logged during the monsoon. Even if there is a downpour, water flows towards the low areas and accumulate in different tanks and ponds.

Climate

From the middle of March to the beginning of June hot blasts blow over the village and the whole landscape assumes a parched look. Mercury shoots upto 110° F to 115° F even in shaded areas. Norwesters in the evening provide some temporary relief to the people. The monsoons set in during June and last upto September. From September onwards the climate becomes more or less pleasant till March.

Sources of water

Except the river of Amodar there is no other big river nor any canal flowing very near the village. There is a fairly large number of ponds, of which one or two are big tanks. The tanks and ponds are used for washing, bathing and cleaning purposes. There is only one tube-well and one ring-well for drinking purposes. Water of the ponds are sometimes used for irrigation purposes, when there is serious drought in the area. The level of water in the different wells and ring-wells of this area is generally very low. The villagers acutely feel the scarcity of drinking water in summer,



because of the limited number of wells and tube wells. The water of the river Amodar is seldom used by the people of the village.

Social Environment

The persons belonging to the Sankha Banik caste live in groups. They have a particular locality of their own, known as 'Sankharipara' or Sankharibazar. The term generally means a locality mainly inhabited by the persons belonging to the Sankha Banik caste. Most of the residents have been engaged in the manufacture of conch shell products for a pretty long time. It may, however, be mentioned here that in this particular locality most of the practising artisan households are concentrated, although they belong to different castes. The residential locality is, therefore, patterned on considerations of occupations and not of caste, as may be seen from the map showing the settlement pattern of the practising artisan families. Social set-up of this particular locality, where most of the artisan families of the area reside is, therefore, based principally on that consideration. The concentration of the artisan families in the locality has helped a great deal in the development of the craft but it is equally true that the craft attracted the artisans to the Sankha Banik locality. There are 25 Sankhabanik practising families and 6 practising artisan families consisting of 3 Bairagis, 2 Brahmans and one Sutradhar. A group of Sankhari households lives in 'Galipara' which is, in fact, an appendage of Sankharibazar. Here people of other castes and occupations also live. But if we take into consideration the mouza as a whole we will find that considerations of castes rather than of occupations have played a dominant role in forming the social set-up of the different localities. All but one of the inhabitants of the village are Hindus and Bengali is their mother tongue.

Residential pattern of the craftsman

The mouza Mirzapur is divided into six parts which are as follows :

(1) Mirzapur, (2) Jote Joyram, (3) Raibaghini, (4) Kashiganj, (5) Krishnaganj and (6) Gopalganj.

All the practising artisan families reside only in the village of Raibaghini but some of the different non-practising artisan families, who have left the craft reside in 'Kashiganj', 'Krishnaganj', 'Gopalganj', the three hamlets of Raibaghini.

As one enters into the village from the north along the main village road, which has taken off from the metalled road, one will not first come across any artisan family. But proceeding further south along the same road, the houses of two practising Brahmin families will be visible. Next

will come a Bairagi, a Sutradhar and a Sankha Banik family who are also engaged in the same craft. Excepting one Brahmin family, all the other artisan families reside on the western side of the road. Next comes on both sides of the road a cluster of houses occupied by the practising members of the Sankha Banik caste. The Bairagi artisan families also reside in this cluster.

The village pathway which has branched out from the main village road towards the western side will lead to some more houses of the Sankha Banik artisans, the area being known as 'Galipara'.

The main village road towards further south will take one to the houses of a few more Sankha Banik artisan families living on its western side.

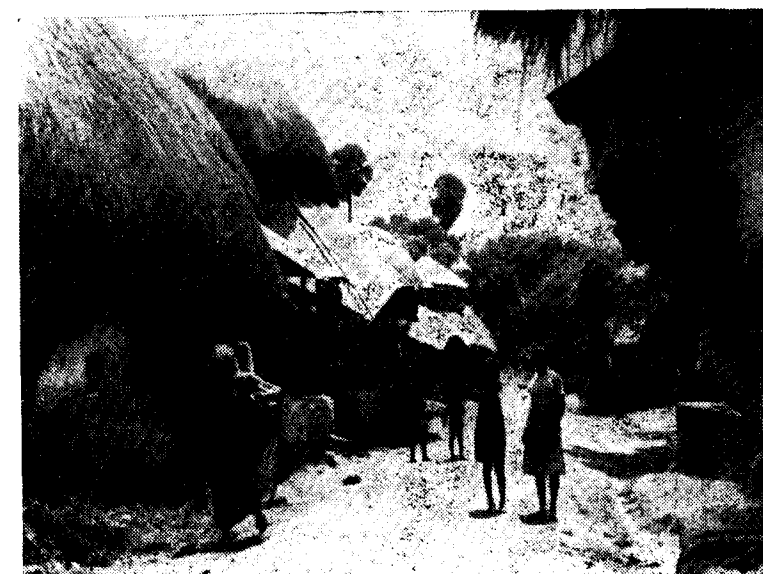
The SankhaBanik artisans live in kutchha houses. Twenty-five such households live in houses, walls of which are made of mud and the roofs built with either straw, tin or C.I. sheets. Altogether three Bairagi craftsmen families live in the village. Of these three, only one lives in a semi pucca house with partly brick-built and partly mud walls and tin roofs. The floor is cemented. The remaining two families live in 'kutchha' houses with mud walls and roofs made of C.I. sheets. The Brahmin artisan households live in 'kutchha' houses with mud walls and tin roofs. Two such houses are two storeyed but one of these has lost livableness on the first floor. Almost every house has an open verandah in front and a small compound. In some houses, a side roof slanting at the side of the bed rooms, serve as a protection against rain water. This type of roof has a local name, *Chit Chal*. The roof of the houses is convex in shape and each house possesses four slopes. The houses are all old and some of them need immediate repair. No recently-built house has been seen by the Investigator.

A Muslim mason of the village is employed generally in the work of construction and repair.

The Bauri and Bagdi people who otherwise work as agricultural labour and day labour work as helpers to the mason during masonry work.

Main characteristics of the village

The village of Raibaghini is neither a place of pilgrimage nor an abode of historical relic. It is not even a health resort inviting tourists. It is simply a small commercial centre for the inhabitants of the village as well as for the people of the neighbouring villages. Old villagers recount in a reminiscent mood the story about this village when it was a flourishing centre for conch shell production. The hum of the village has been hushed with the passage of time. Gone are the days of various conch shell products with artistic



A VIEW OF THE SANKHARIPARA

designs which were so meticulously produced by master craftsmen. The place once throbbed with life because many outsiders used to come here and participate in the manufacturing operations of the craft as workmen. The village pathways were trod frequently by visiting traders who would come here to place orders for new products and to take delivery of the finished goods. During the heyday the artisans would earn a good income without budging an inch from their native place. But now the trade has declined in volume. The Second World War and the Partition of Bengal have contributed more or less to the decay of the trade. The causes of the hand-to-mouth existence of the traders and manufacturers are many and need elaboration. They will be discussed in an appropriate chapter.

But even to a casual visitor Raibaghini gives an impression of a place, shorn off much of its past glory. Craftsmen have now no regular work and income has fallen considerably, while in the past, a craftsman could not ration his time for the different avocations of his life. Now an artisan can be seen sitting idle at home, with no work or little work at hand. Many craftsmen have been compelled to give up the craft in preference to other means of livelihood. Many have left the place in despair in quest of a better livelihood elsewhere. Shutters of many workshops are now pulled down. This craft no longer attracts a new entrant. The reason is very obvious. Nobody is now bold enough to play with an uncertain future, which this craft has foreboded to many. The language that a craftsman uses to point out the difference between the erstwhile craft and that which exists now is pathetic. According to an interviewee one could hardly spare any time previously for the discussion of the details to feed the questionnaire that an Investigator now presents, such was the heavy pressure of work then. He says that there was hardly any household where slicing and sizing operations were not done at home. The din produced by the moving operations of the saw was so loud that any casual chat in a subdued tone would have been well-nigh impossible. But, now silence prevails eternal in many houses. Slicing and cutting operations are now done mainly in Vishnupur with the help of machines. The only characteristic that is apparent is that the village is now all quiet and that serenity has sprung up on the ashes of an once flourishing and manufacturing conch shell centre.

Significant History of the village

When people's memory is too feeble to recall an event of a couple of years ago and when the yardstick of time is constituted by measures like “এক কুড়ি, দু কুড়ি” (a score or two), one is naturally perplexed to record the unrecorded history

of the village and its people. Even if a history is linked together from the loose annals of the simple village folk, one cannot guarantee its authenticity in absence of any written document, numismatic evidence, or archaeological finds. The history, that is built, borders more or less on village legends or myths.

On being asked why the village was named Raibaghini the village people were given to much deliberations and discussions and they furnished two accounts. According to one section, the village derived its name from Rani Bhabasankari, the widow of Birhambir, the King of Vishnupur. In the face of an attack of the (Pathan) Mussalmans on the Kingdom of Vishnupur the valiant queen appeared in the battle field herself and led the battle. The Muslims were vanquished. Akbar, the Great Moghul Emperor, having heard of this battle and of the ultimate defeat of the Muslims, did not hesitate to confer the glorious title of *Raibaghini*, meaning a woman having the prowess of a tigress, on the victorious queen. The villagers claim that this place was the battle ground between the queen and the great Pathans. So, to commemorate the memory of the deceased queen the village was named after her. But this account is uncorroborated by any available written material. In the two books—(১) “কিংবদন্তীর দেশে”—স্ববোধ ঘোষ, (২) “রায় বাঘিনী”—বিধুভূষণ ভট্টাচার্য্য the version of the villagers have not found favour with the writers. They have linked up this story with a place situated in the district of Hooghly.

According to another section of the people the village was named after ‘রায়গি নী’ meaning a lady belonging to the “Roy Family” of the area. She was a very courageous lady of the day. It so happened, that on being attacked by the dacoits she gallantly encountered the dacoits alone and ultimately drove them away. Fighting over, the villagers honoured her with the title of *Raibaghini* in appreciation of her heroic deed. From this version it is very difficult to trace out the family, which could be proud enough to have such a lady, and also to locate the exact area where the family had lived. The time is also uncertain. Though both the versions have acquired some romantic glow, because of the colourful description of a far too distant an event and of far too unknown a lady, the people have attached some sentimental value to the story that has developed round the village.

An attempt was made, in spite of the difficulties discussed before, to trace back the history of immigration about the people of the village. The artisan families belonging to the Sankha Banik caste are said to have migrated to this

village from Kamarpukur, situated in the district of Hooghly. Kamarpukur is famous as the birth place of Shri Ramkrishna Paramhansa, the great religious teacher of the 19th century Bengal and the preceptor of Swami Vivekananda. The Sankha Banik artisans say that their ancestors had left Kamarpukur some 150 or 200 years back because of the tyranny of a local zemindar of the area who was a Subarna Banik by caste with the title of 'Laha'. When the exploitation of the zemindar had reached disproportionate heights, the Sankha Banik households found it impossible to live any longer there and consequently left the place to settle and to live here in peaceful pursuit of their occupation. They selected this particular place because there was no conch shell production centre then in the neighbouring areas. They started practising the craft after they had settled themselves in this place. They invited their relatives and friends in course of time to settle here. Gradually the place developed into a flourishing conch shell production centre when members belonging to other castes were also attracted by the prospects the craft offered about 3 or 4 generations ago. That is why we find still some members of castes other than the Sankha Baniks practising this craft as their source of livelihood. Some of the Sankhari artisan families stated that their ancestors migrated from Patrasayer in the district of Bankura. Their relatives are still living in Patrasayer and the artisans of this village have not lost contact with their near ones living in Patrasayer.

The ancestral home of one Brahman family was at a place in Boradanga in Hooghly. But he could not say why his forefathers left their home and settled in this village.

Another Brahman household, one Sutradhar family and the three Bairagi families fail to recollect the place from where their ancestors have come. The reason of migration is also unknown.

Other crafts in the village and reason for clustering of different crafts in the same area

Handloom cotton weaving is another important craft of this village and of its hamlets. Many weavers' households are engaged in the production of cotton fabrics in this area. It may not be out of place to mention that it was also a centre for a flourishing bell metal industry. But unfortunately the industry has been abandoned by the artisans and not a single family is practising the craft at present. The reason for the decay of the bell metal industry is the loss of market, consequential upon the Partition of Bengal.

The other village industries that are characterised by almost every village in West Bengal are

blacksmithy and carpentry. The households practising these village crafts reside in Raibaghini proper.

It may be interesting to note that more than one craft is practised here in this village, excepting, of course, the common-place village crafts like blacksmithy and carpentry. Handloom weaving is as old, if not older, than the craft of conch shell product. The place is a traditional business and commercial centre, though it has lost much of its former glory.

The Co-operative Society and its bearing on the development of the craft

There is a Co-operative Society in the village known as "Sankha Banik Samabay Samiti Ltd.". The Society was formed in 1958 as an industrial co-operative with a view to developing the craft of conch shell production and improving the working conditions of the artisans. The Society started with much promise but failed to have the desired impact on either the craft or on the craftsmen. It had procured raw materials on two occasions and supplied them to the members. The raw materials were quite good in quality at the first instance, but second time it was not up to the mark. The Society incurred a heavy loss as a result, as it could not fulfil the contract made with the members. The heavy loss, that it suffered, made the Society inactive and disabled. It is reported that the Society has not received any grant or subsidy from the Government or from any other agency. Whatever be the reason of the Society's failure to work smoothly since its inception (the details of which will be discussed in a later chapter), the facts stand that the Society could not function properly so as to lend its help to the craftsmen. The restricted membership as laid down by the bye laws of the Society limited to a particular caste has constricted the activity to the Sankhari caste members only. Artisans belonging to other castes could neither benefit from the Society nor could they help the Society on their turn.

Institutions having any bearing on the development of the craft

Any other institution like training-cum-production centre is conspicuous by its absence. So the artisans do not get any training from any institution. Most of the artisans have learnt the craft from their parents and they possess a traditional knowledge in the techniques of production. Only one Sankhari artisan has learnt the craft from an artisan, belonging to the Bairagi community. Due to the absence of an institution there has not been any improvement in the techniques of production. The craft, as we know, is still now

a handicraft, though, of course, some machines are being used in some stages of production. The institution, if any, could not have introduced large scale production of conch shell articles, because most of the work consists of the minute designs engraved on the products. But it could have introduced new ideas about designs, could have trained the artisans in giving better finishing touches to the products and also in standardising the articles produced. The artisans hold that though they do not feel for its pressing need, its existence would have been properly utilised by them.

Settlement history of the Artisan families

To calculate the age of settlement and to analyse the history one will require two primary data of vital importance. One relates to generation and the other concerns years. The data available on these two points from the interviewees should be smoothed, if one has to come to a more or less correct conclusion. The question included in the schedule was (1) "Since when living in this area? (2) If immigrant, migrated from which

area and when?" The answer one gets from an interviewee is subject to gross error for the reason that the age of the interviewees will more or less determine the seniority of the settlers in terms of years. The average longevity of the members of one household varies from that of others in another. So, generation in one household varies from that of others in another. In the absence of any data on the average longevity of the members of each household, we may smooth the crude data from another angle. We may hold that a generation lasts at least 25 years on an average. If we start with this presumption then generation returned by the household may suffer some change depending, of course, on the age of the interviewee. We may divide the age by 25 and compute the age of the interviewee into generation and then add this to the number of generations returned and deduct 1 (as the return includes the present generation).

We prepared the settlement history table of the artisan families applying this principle.

The settlement table of the artisan families in terms of generations is given below :

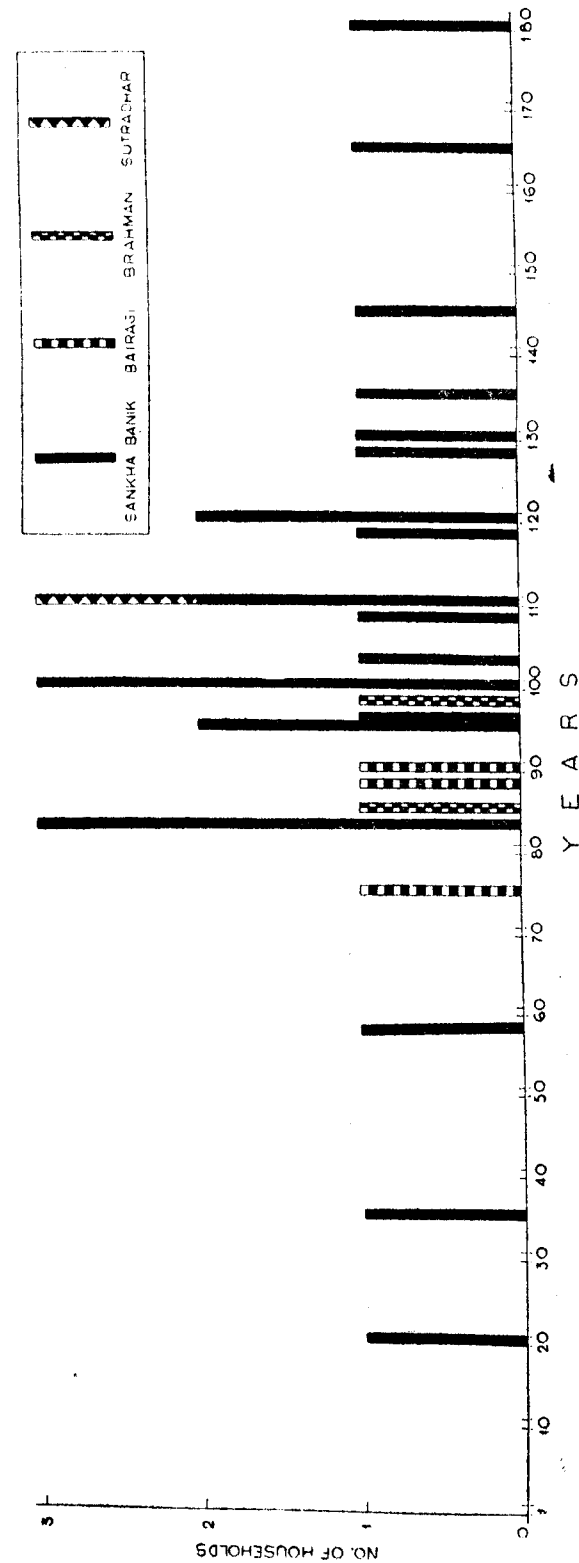
SETTLEMENT HISTORY OF THE PRACTISING ARTISAN HOUSEHOLD GENERATION-WISE										
Name of the Community	0-1 Genera-tion	1-2 Genera-tions	2-3 Genera-tions	3-4 Genera-tions	4-5 Genera-tions	5-6 Genera-tions	6-7 Genera-tions	7-8 Genera-tions	Total	.
Bairagi	.	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	3	
Brahman	.	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	2	
Sankha Banik	.	1	1	9	7	4	1	1	25	
Sutradhar	.	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	
Total	1	1	2	13	8	4	1	1	31	

From the table above it may be seen that the Sankha Baniks are the earliest settlers among the practising conch shell artisans in the village. From 4 to 8 generations 13 households belonging to this caste and 1 Sutradhar settled here. In the 3 to 4 generations 9 Sankha Banik, 2 Bairagi and 2 Brahman households came to this village. A solitary Bairagi came later. Immigration did not stop till the present generation when a solitary Sankha Banik family came to stay in the village.

Out of 31 practising artisan families as many as 21 households immigrated in this village between 3 and 5 generations, and the figure of arrivals reached its highest point during these generations.

The same question of settlement was viewed from the angle of years and the following table was prepared. The years were arrived at by multiplying the computed generations by 25 years.

BAR-DIAGRAM SHOWING THE SETTLEMENT HISTORY
OF PRACTISING ARTISAN HOUSEHOLDS (CASTEWISE)
RAIBAGHINI



SETTLEMENT HISTORY OF THE PRACTISING ARTISAN HOUSEHOLDS YEAR-WISE

Name of the Community	1—50 years	51—100 years	101—150 years	151—200 years	201—250 years
Bairagi	..	3	..	..	..
Brahman	..	2	..	..	..
Sankha Banik	2	10	11	2	..
Sutradhar	..	..	1	..	..
Total	2	15	12	2	..

The table above gives us a clearer picture than the generation table. We may generally speak that the settlement of two Sankha Banik families has lasted for at least 151-200 years, if not more. The Bairagi and Brahman artisan families are somewhat junior as settlers to some of the Sankha Banik households. The Sankha Baniks have been steadily coming to this mauza for the last 200 years or so. The maximum inflow of settlers is found to have been between 51-150 years,

which seem to have been a crucial period in the history of the craft.

Of the 31 households 14 households could not mention the place from where their forefathers had migrated. Of the remaining 17 families, 1 household hailed from a place called Borodanga in the district of Hooghly. Kamarpukur in the district of Hooghly accounts for 9 households and Patrasayar in the district of Bankura was the ancestral home of 7 families.

AGE OF SETTLEMENT OF THE
PRACTISING ARTISAN FAMILIES
- RAIBAGHINI -

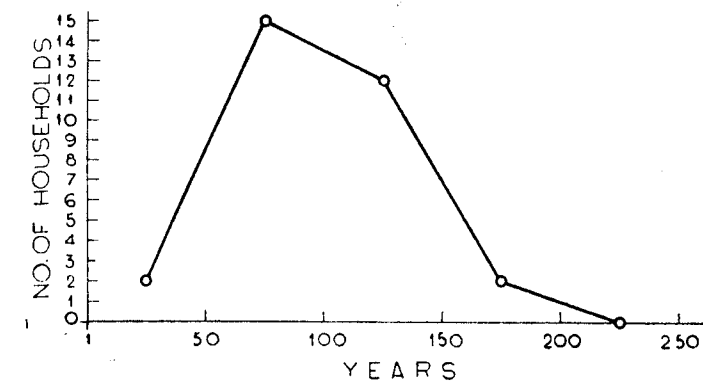


TABLE SHOWING THE AREA FROM WHERE THE PRACTISING ARTISAN HOUSEHOLDS MIGRATED

Names of the Community	Total No. of Household	Name of the places from where migrated			
		Borodanga District Hooghly	Kamarpukur District Hooghly	Patrasayar District Bankura	Place not known
		No. of Households	No. of Households	No. of Households	No. of Households
Bairagi	3	..	..	..	3
Brahman	2	1	..	..	1
Sankha Banik	25	..	9	7	9
Sutradhar	1	..	..	..	1
Total	31	1	9	7	14
					34

It is rather interesting to observe that of the 17 households, which could recollect the places from where their ancestors migrated, the ancestors of as many as 10 households were erstwhile residents of Hooghly district. Of these, there are 9 Sankha Banik families. Excepting for 1 Brahman family, we do not have any information about the ancestral homes of the Bairagi, Brahman and Sutradhar households.

On recapitulation of the history about migration we find that Sankha Baniks migrated from the place called Kamarpukur some 101-200 years back. The number of years stated might be hyperbolic but the time and place roughly fits in with the tables, prepared. None of the Sankha Baniks came from Borodanga in Hooghly and majority of them came between 100-200 years. It is also worthwhile to discuss the legend about the naming of the village in the light of the tables prepared. The story about the origin of Raibaghini revolves round the alleged victory of the Queen Bhaba Sankari over the Pathans. The place is known as *Raibaghini* Para 5 to 6 miles south west of Tarakeswar in Hooghly district according to Sri Bidhu Bhusan Bhattacharya in his book entitled *Raibaghini O Bhuri Srestha*

Kahini (pp-275). Even if we accept this version to be true it may be quite possible that the people from Kamarpukur, a place very near to Tarakeswar, might have carried the legend into the village of their settlement in Bankura district. The spell of the legend might have dominated their minds, so much so, that they named their new settlement as *Raibaghini*. It might again be so, that the story was conveyed by the early settlers to their successors. The story, thus relayed, finally lost its locale and became associated with the village of their settlement.

But, it would not perhaps be proper to reject the alternative story about an anonymous lady of the Roy Family, though we do not get any corroboration from any source, either literary or historical.

Lastly, one will possibly be convinced by the account of Sri Benoy Ghosh in the book *Paschim Banger Sanskriti* where the name Raibaghini appears to be the name of a village deity commonly associated with the villages in West Bengal. It may be so that this village was named after a village goddess by the persons who had migrated from either Hooghly district or Patrasayar police station in Bankura district.

CHAPTER III

Myth, legend, history connected with the craftsmen community

The ignorance of the practising artisans belonging to the Sankha Banik caste is colossal about the origin of their community. The question asked by the Investigator was—"Are you acquainted with any legend or myth connected with your community"? It received a negative answer from most of the people by an emphatic nod of the head sideways. But silence was not allowed to be eloquent and a frantic search could bring into limelight a couple of old Sankhari craftsmen, rich in experience but shy of unfolding any. They, however, assayed to mutter one or two mythological names in an inarticulate voice. According to one, the members belonging to his community regarded themselves as the disciples of the sage Agastya or *Muniraj* (a mythological saint) who, it is believed, initiated the Sankhakars into the craft. As such, the saint is regarded as *Guru* and primogenitor of their community. The other one differed materially from the essence of the earlier story. He pointed out that the Lord Siva and His consort Parvati were the originator of their community.

The primary informaton, culled in the village, in course of investigation is undoubtedly short and does not perhaps throw much light on the origin of the community to which the majority of the practising artisans belong. We may proceed to examine these in the light of the materials published, as a result of invaluable research conducted by master-minds in this field. The most indispensable guide that one finds handy to explore the otherwise unknown regions of social origin of the craftsmen community is the book entitled, "The Tribes and Castes of West Bengal" by Mr. A. Mitra, ICS. From the brief accounts strayed over different pages a coherent description can be knit together.

The Sankhakars or Sankha Baniks are in the fold of artisan castes which were stratified in different periods of history. They belong to the Naba Sayaka group. The earliest reference perhaps is to be found in the *VAIKHANASA-DHARMASUTRA* (বৈখানসধর্মসূত্র) III. 11.9, belonging to the 2nd or the 3rd century B. C. where we have the word—শঙ্খবলয় কারিন (Sankha-balayaKarina) meaning conch-bangle makers. According to the *Brahma Vaivarta Purana—Prakritikhanda XVIII* "শৃঙ্গগর্ভে বিশ্বকর্মণো জাতঃ" the Sankhakars along with nine other castes were

born of an illicit intercourse between Viswa Karman, the celestial architect and a Sudra maiden, Ghrtachi, a celestial nymph who was born as a Gopa girl by Indra's curse. In the ব্রহ্মবৈবর্ত পুরাণ—the শঙ্খবলয় কারিন s are otherwise named as শাখিক s, in শব্দ রত্নাবলী as কাষজক s and in জটাহর as শাখবিক s. But according to the *Brhad Dharma Purana Sankha Baniks* are the offsprings of a Brahman father and a Vaisya mother. "কংসকার শঙ্খকারেন ব্রাহ্মণাং সংবত্বভূঃ" *vide Brhad Dharma Purana III 13.34a.* The Vangabasi Press edition of *Brhad Dharma Purana III (i.e. Uttarakhanda) 13-14* contains the story of Vena who is said to have created 36 mixed castes by intercaste marriage. These include the Sankhakara or Sankhika caste. The manufacture of conch shell ornaments was allotted to the Sankhika or Sankhakara caste as a means of their livelihood—"শঙ্খভূষণং চ শাখিকে" *Brhad Dharma Purana III.14.61a.*

Mr. H. Risley in his book *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal* gives a different version about the origin of the Sankha Baniks. The Sankha Baniks are said to have been the descendants of Srikanta, the third son of one Dhanapati Sadagar of Karnatak. Mr. Risley does not, however, contradict that the Sankhakars claim to be Vaisyas. But, he points out that upto the time of Adisur, a great King of Bengal, the Sankhakars wore Brahmanical threads. The Sankhakars were degraded by a royal order during his reign, for the offence that they had cut to pieces a golden cow, he had presented as a gift to some Brahmins during the celebration of a special sacrifice. Mr. Risley holds that the Sankhakars have a Brahmanical origin for the reason that they "have the same Brahmanical gotras and observe the same taboo of prohibited degrees as the higher castes".

For a further reference of these Sankhakars in respect of their history and social position the *History of Bengal Vol. I* published by the Dacca University may be consulted.

But neither of these scholarly versions gains any support from the local artisans. They do not refute the versions either. Mr. Mitra, however, has incidentally associated the story about Lord Siva and Parvati with the origin of the Sankhakars.

Whatever their origin may be, the Sankharis claim themselves to be Vaisyas. Their traditional occupations consist of (1) cleaning the conch shell by filing, producing round rings by means of a specially prepared heavy half moon shaped blade known as *Sankher Karat* (conch shell saw), and (2) shaping the rough round slices of conch shell into bangles and engraving designs on the outer surface of those plain bangles, and (3) decorating intact conches used as blowing horns.

Next to the Sankha Baniks come the Bairagi, Brahman and Sutradhar artisans. The Bairagis could not trace any history or tradition about their origin. They pathetically retorted at the deplorable condition of the trade and said "our parents would have done well had they bequeathed to us begging bowls instead of the artisans' implements." Begging bowl has a twin significance from the point of their community. The Bairagis belong to the religious order which negates casteism. But in the caste-ridden society of West Bengal their position was not at all enviable. Risley has grouped the Baistams or Bairagis in a category whose water is not usually taken (*Jala hyabaharyya*). The Bairagis belong to a religious sect based on the worship of Vishnu under the incarnations of Rama and Krishna. In Bengal Vaishnavism owes its wide acceptance to the teaching of Chaitanya, a Vaidik Brahman of Nadia in the beginning of the 16th century. A Vaisnava or a Bairagi wears a small necklace of wooden beads round his neck and it is this necklace that marks him apart from other castes. A cocoanut shell or Karanga is a 'must' for those newly initiated in the order for collecting alms. The three Bairagi households have piteously referred to these Karangas for the reason that alms are easier to get than raw materials for the craft. They have also put forward an oblique reference to the system of distribution of raw materials among the Sankha Baniks who normally do not allow members of other castes to partake of the share of raw materials. It was felt by the Investigator that the Sankha Baniks had formed an *entente* among their caste not to allow any other member to derive any benefit from their co-operative. The members of other castes also co-operate among themselves in getting raw materials and distributing them among themselves. The Bairagis mentioned their difficulties and hinted that when they failed to get any raw material, they would have either to beg it from the Sankhabaniks or to beg alms instead of raw materials to keep the wolf from the door.

The two Brahman households have been practising the craft for three generations including the present. They do not precisely know what their forefathers did, prior to their professing the occupation of a Sankha Banik or Conch shell

cutter. But they could intelligently reply that the traditional occupation of a Brahman is the function of a priest. These Brahmans with the title of Mohantos also say that they hailed from Kanya-kubja and that they are Kanauji Brahmans. One of these Brahmans is said to be the follower of Ramananda and worship Vishnu as the household deity. Both the Brahmans admit that they are not indigenous people of Bengal but are non-Bengalees. From their statement we discern that the two Brahmans belong to that class known as Gauras in which the Kanya-kubjas (so called from the Kanyakubja or Kanauj country) are included. But, the Brahmans of Bengal are divided into five main sub-castes. It will be a pure conjecture if we classify them as Vaidik Brahmans, for we do not have adequate data to vouchsafe the infallibility of our presumption. We do treat them as Vaidiks because the Vaidik Brahmans have two main divisions, one of which known as Paschatya or Western, claims to have come from Kanauj. From the religious practices and adherence to rites we do not have any more clear picture than what we have about these households. One of the Brahmans is a Vaishnav and as such, the observance of the customs will be more in consonance with the precepts of the religious order to which he belongs. The other Brahman household has now diversified activities from which it will be hazardous to establish that it belongs to the Vaidik class.

The solitary Sutradhar artisan who is practising the craft is not a good source, well-informed of the traditions and legends of their community. The information that he caters to us is very meagre and is useful to the extent that we come to know that he and his father practised the craft of conch shell cutting. But we do not know if the same occupation was pursued by his forefathers. In the absence of any material from our Sutradhar interviewee we should not however stop discussing the traditional occupations or the position of the Sutradhars in the caste hierarchy. Here also is our learned guide, Mr. Mitra's book *The Castes and Tribes of West Bengal*. Sutradhar belongs to those castes whose touch did not pollute but who were denied access to the temples. Of course this inhibition has now been nullified by proper social legislations. They have been classified in the caste whose water is not taken (*Jalabyabaharyya*). Sutradhars traditionally produce commodities associated with dwellings (*Abash*)—(a) for human beings (*Manusyabaya*), (b) for Gods and Goddesses (*Debalaya*), from materials like wood (*Kastha*) stone (*Parbata*) and earth (*Mrittika*). They also produce agricultural implements (*Krishi*) from wood, domestic utensils (*Grihasthali*) from wood also. They build images or *Devabigrahas* from stone or

clay, dolls and toys for children (*Sishu manoranjan*) from wood and funerary equipments also from wood. Mr. Mitra holds that the Sutradhars among others do not like to be associated with the Sudras and that they claim to be Brahmanas.

A mythological anecdote was narrated by some members of the artisan households. The story relates to how a conch shell product came into existence and to the guised appearance of Lord Siva as a conch shell seller (hawker). The story is as follows :

Prajapati Daksha, the father of Goddess Durga (or Sati) observed one day that both the hands of his daughter were bare and without any ornament. Displeased as he was, he asked his daughter if Siva was too poor to afford a pair of bracelets to Durga. Durga felt insulted at the insinuations of her father at Siva and promptly returned to the house of her husband. She requested her husband to present her a pair of conch shell bangles. But Siva returned a coy smile and did say nothing. A few days later, a Sankhari came to Durga with a box of conch shell bangles and requested her to try any pair on her wrists. Durga was overjoyed and she accepted the offer without a word. But low, the bangles did not fit in her wrists and were broken one after another in course of her putting them on. The Sankhari observed that this might be due to the lack of fidelity of Durga to her husband. Enraged at this unceremonious remark she refused to wear any bangle. The Sankhari appreciated Durga's devotion to her husband. Lord Siva gave up his guise of a Sankhari and presented himself to Durga in his usual form.

The story has also been mentioned by Shri Ashis Basu in his book *Paschim Banger Silpa Chetana* published by the Cottage and Small-scale Industries Directorate, Government of West Bengal. The story was collected by the author from the Conch Shell traders of Baghbazar in Calcutta. It differs slightly from our story in so far as the place of occurrence is concerned. The author says that the incident took place in Daksha's palace.

In another story described in a publication entitled *Patua Sangit* by G. S. Dutt (Calcutta University Publication) we find a similar reference. The story as narrated in Mr. Mitra's book—*The Tribes and Castes of West Bengal* (pp.340-341) is reproduced below.

"One day the goddess Durga asked her husband, Siva, for a pair of Conch Shell bangles. But Siva was too poor to give her a pair. So she went away to her father's house in dismay. After a few days, a Sakhari came to Durga with a box

of Conch Shell bangles and she most gladly sat down to him, and the Sankhari tried them on her hands. But all the bangles unfortunately broke while being fitted on. Then the Sankhari remarked that the bangles were not going over her hands, perhaps she was not faithful to her husband. This made Durga very angry and she cast a look of fire at the man but the Sankhari survived her look. Durga was astonished but it did not take her long to discover her husband in the survivor. They were joyfully united ; Durga received a present of box full of Conch Shell bangles, and both returned home."

This is the traditional story of the origin of conch shell bangles told by the Sankharis. The story also explains why Hindu married women regard the bangles as sacred as wedding rings and treat them as traditional signs of marriage (Sabitri-Sankha). It has been observed by Mr. Mitra that as late as the 19th century sankhas bore higher value than karis (small special shells). It may be due to this reason that our women folk imbued with a sense of value based on tradition and folklore, treat bangles as sacred and valuable.

We may now observe that both married and unmarried girls put on conch shell bangles in those days.

In days of yore unmarried girls used to wear of conch shell bracelets—ABAGHNANTYAAH PRAKOSTHASTHA SCHARUH SANKHAAHSWANANG MAHAT— 'অবগুণ্ঠা: প্রকোষ্ঠস্থাস্চক্রু: শর্খা: স্বনং মহৎ'—BHAGWAT 11-9-6

It is obligatory for married girls to put on conch shell bangles :

"POUSHNADHRUBASWIKARAPAN-CHAKA BASABEJYADITYE PRABALARADASANKHA SUWARNA-VASTRAM

DHARYAM BIRIKTASANICHANDRA-KUJEHNIRAKTAM BHOUMEDHRUBADITIYUGE SUBHAGA NA DADHY-AAT"

"পৌষদধ্রুবশুকরপঙ্কক বাস বেজ্যাদিতো
প্রবালরদশঙ্খ সুবর্ণবস্ত্রম্।
ধার্য্যং বিরক্ত শনিচক্রকুজেহিরক্তং ভৌমেধ্রবাদিতিযুগে
সুভগা ন দধ্যাৎ।"

MUHURTA CHINTAMONI p.57/17

By 'Sankha' the author here means 'Sankha valaya' or conch shell bangle and by 'Subhaga' he means a woman whose husband is living. In the Vedas and the Sanskrit grammar similar explanation may be found on the term 'Subhaga'.

The above explanation also finds support from the Dwipikagrantha (দ্বীপিকাগ্রন্থ) where the word 'Angana' has the same import as 'Subhaga.' Such ladies whose husbands are living must put on conch shell bangles for the well being of their husbands.

‘পুণ্ড্রেন্দো সময়ে শুভে প্রবন্ধবাচ্যাদিতাং শেখরা —
নো রত্নং বিভূষাং প্রবালকমণীন্ শখংহিতং স্বানিনে’ ।
PUSTENDAU SAMAYE SHUBHE DHRU-
BASURACHARYEDITANG-SHE' NGANE

NO RATNANG BIBHRIYAT PRABALA-
KAMANEEN SHANKHANG HITANG
SWAMINE.

The commentary known as PIYUSHATEEKA (পীযুষটীকা) on RAJAMARTTANDAVACHANA (রাজমর্ত্তবচন) holds the similar view which seeks to explain a young woman (যুবতি) as being a lady with a living husband. Such women are entitled to put on conch shell bangles.

‘.....রক্তেন্দু ভানু দিবসে ঋশংক বজিতে চ ।
শখাং রক্তপটিকং যুবতিঃ কথঞ্চিৎ.....’

...RAKTENDUBHANUDIBASE' NGSHAKA
BARJITE CHA SANKHANG-
CHA RAKTAPATAKANG YUBATIH
KATHANCHIT.

Elsewhere in Yyotisagarasagrantha (জ্যোতিসাগরসাগ্রন্থ) the above explanation holds good.

‘.....শখাবিক্রমমুক্তানং পরিধানং পুশাগাতে
ধারয়েনুচ রোহিণ্যাং ভর্ত্তু জীবিতকাঙ্ক্ষিনী.....’
i.e. to say, a woman desirous of a long life of her husband must put on conch shell bangles and other ornaments and this is the Shastric law. (laws laid down by the Scriptures).

It is stated in Devibhagavata (Vanga ed.) IX. 19.25 ‘শখং চ রুচিরং চিত্রং যদন্তং বিশুকর্মণা—’ SANKHANG CHA RUCHIRANG CHITRANG YADDATTANG VISWAKARMANA, that Viswakarma presented sankha (শঙ্খ বা ‘শাঁখা’) to Tulasi after her marriage with Sankhutuda.

In Varnaratnakara (বর্ণরত্নাকর) of Jyotirisvara Kavisekharacharya, on Vivahavarnana (বিবাহ-বর্ণনা—) pp. 64-65 in Kallola VIII the girl is to be offered (NIRBAHU—নির্বাহ) ornaments and dress (অলঙ্কার পরিচ্ছদ) after marriage. Nirbahu (নির্বাহ) consists of conch shell bangles, gold and vermillion, etc.

There is, however, a Shastric injunction against putting on conch shell bangles or any decoration by widows.

BRAHMAVAIVARTAPURANA (ব্রহ্মবৈবর্তপুরাণ)
Chapter 81-83 says “পতিহীনা.....ন ধত্তে.....
‘সুজং চ—চন্দনং চৈব শখং সিন্দুরভূষণম্’ ।
.....PATIHEENA.....NO DHHA-
TTE.....
SRAJANG CHA CHANDANANG
CHAIBA SANKHANG SINDURABHU-
SHANANG

Magical and Religious practices connected with the craft

The principal community worship of the practising artisan households of the village usually takes place on the 30th Bhadra (August-September) of the Bengali calendar year and continues for 3 days at a stretch. The artisans worship Agastya Muni or Muniraj on this day. It is believed that the mythological sage invented the design of the saw, which is an indispensable tool required for their craft. The legend goes that Viswakarma, the Engineer of the Gods, took the initiative to manufacture the saw. But on his failure the saint Agastya came to his rescue. The saint made the design of the saw with the help of the stem of a Kusha plant. The design struck the engineer God and he could manufacture the desired saw at last. It is a common knowledge that every artisan must work with this special saw in order to cut the conch shells to pieces. The Sankharis thence forward held the saint Agastya in high esteem and workshipped him as their guru or a preceptor for being the prime designer of the vital tool.

The Sankharis take the lead in organising the annual ceremony. They raise subscriptions at the rate of Re. 1/- per Sankhari artisan and Rs. 2/- per artisan belonging to other community. The rate of subscription is not fixed. But the principle laid down ensures that the rate of subscription of artisans belonging to other castes will be double the amount contributed by the Sankha Banik artisan. They worship the saint in the form of an image which is made by a Sutradhar of this village. The ceremony has been observed in the village for many generations and every Sankhari, whether he practises the craft or not, and every practising artisan participates in the observance. The non-practising Sankharis subscribe at the rate of Re. 1/- per family but the subscription is not raised from the non-practising families belonging to other castes.

The festival lasts for 3 days but the image is kept for 3 more days or so at the altar which is a pucca permanent structure on raised platform



TEMPLE OF AGASTYA MUNI OR MUNIRAJ

located at Sankharipara. During the 5 or 6 days, till the image is immersed in the local tank, known as 'Tantipukur', there is complete cessation of work. Conch shells or any tools or implements are not even touched during these days. The Sankharis offer *Naibedya* (offerings) of rice, sweetmeats and fruits to the image daily for the three days of ceremony. Other practising castes make individual offerings on the 2nd day which is locally known as 'Madhyam Puja' i.e. on the 31st Bhadra. A Brahman resident of the village, a young man of 35 years, whose family settled here for the specific purpose of functioning as priest of villagers, also officiates at this ceremony. He is assisted by another Brahman priest of the village. The Brahmans after making a formal *Puja* or worship take away a portion of the offerings themselves. They also get some *Dakshina* or remuneration the exact amount of which could not be ascertained from the artisans. The amount of *Dakshina* varies from year to year and is collected from all individuals willing to offer the same.

The worship over, the artisans allow the image to stay for a couple of days or so to enable devotees from adjoining areas to have a look at it. The devotees are mostly relatives of the artisans of this village staying elsewhere. And this festival provides the occasion for a get-together. Craftsmen come to the place of worship with their tools and touch their tools and implements on the foot of the image. They believe that the holy touch will make them do better work from the point of volume and quality both. This gesture is an expression of their desire to seek divine blessings from the sage. Immersion over, the artisans resume their work.

It will be worthwhile to remember that every other artisan community in West Bengal or members of other community engaged in manufacturing secede from work on the 31st of Bhadra of the Bengali calendar year. This auspicious day is observed in towns and villages, in cities and suburbs, in mills and factories, as the day for the worship of Viswakarma, the celestial engineer. This day is observed every year as a holiday which is celebrated with great eclat. But the *Raibaghini* artisans belonging to the Sankhari community hold a festival in a slightly different form and manner. That the divine engineer failed to manufacture the saw is perhaps the reason why the Sankharis and others engaged in manufacturing conch shell products desist from worshipping Viswakarma and adore Agastya Muni instead.

It is interesting to note that the practising artisans of the village desist from work on two days of the year which are in no way connected with any religious function or social observance. The 17th Bhadra and 29th Bhadra of the Bengali calendar year are the red letter days for the community, because they hold an annual general meeting of the *Barwari* Committee to discuss the ways and means on the 17th and also to make suitable arrangements for the observance of the annual ceremony on the 29th. The problems of the craft are not discussed in these meetings.

The Sankharis and also the other practising artisans have other religious functions and social ceremonies to observe. But as they do not have any relevant bearing on the pursuit of the craft, they will be discussed in a later chapter.

CHAPTER IV

No. of families/ persons belonging to Craftsmen
Caste and No. of families/ members
actually engaged in the craft

Though the production of Conch shell articles is the traditional monopoly of the Sankharis, *Raibaghini* has cut across the barriers of castes and community in the pursuit of this craft. It is a misfortune that the conch shell production centre in the village is now in the process of decay. The Bairagis, Brahmans, and Sutradhars only are now engaged in the craft, apart from the vast majority of the Sankharis. But the present day does not reflect the true picture of the erstwhile association of various castes with this craft. There were days when Karmakars, Malakars and Tambulis also participated in the production of conch shell articles. Many craftsmen whether a

Brahman, a Bairagi, a Sutradhar, a Malakar, or a Tambuli or a Sankhari have long ceased practising the craft and opted for other means of livelihood. A table is prepared for all artisan families, to whatever castes or communities they may belong. Another table prepared for the craftsmen families belonging to different communities will show the number of households who still pursue the craft. From these two tables we may compare and analyse the number of families who have left the craft for good. By a practising family we mean a family any member or members of which may be practising the craft now and by a non-practising family we shall mean a family any member or members of which might have practised the craft in the past but are now not associated with the craft in any way.

TABLE SHOWING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PRACTISING AND NON-PRACTISING
ARTISAN HOUSEHOLDS

Name of the Community	No. of Families	No. of Members		
		Male	Female	Total
Bairagi	3	6	9	15
Brahman	2	5	7	12
Karmakar	1	1	1	2
Malakar	1	1	..	1
Sankha Banik or Sankhakar or Sankhari . .	28	57	59	116
Sutradhar	5	6	9	15
Tambuli or Tamli	2	4	5	9
Total	42	80	90	170

From the table above it may be seen that the Sankharis form the majority of the artisans community, followed next by the Sutradhars. Another feature in all the households excepting the Karmakars and Malakars is that the females outnumber males. A particular information deserves mention in this connection. A Goala household was also connected with the craft but as none of the family is now living, it could not figure in the table. From the number of families belonging to different communities one should not infer that the village is inhabited by these 7 castes only. In fact, there are other castes

living in the village. But, as because, they were never associated with the craft, they have been left out. That members of seven castes were once connected with the craft is a very important feature indeed. In West Bengal where every caste would normally have pursued its caste occupation (excluding, of course, agriculture, trade, commerce and service) the association of higher castes like the Brahmans is a revealing feature.

We may now proceed to examine the table relating to the practising artisan households.

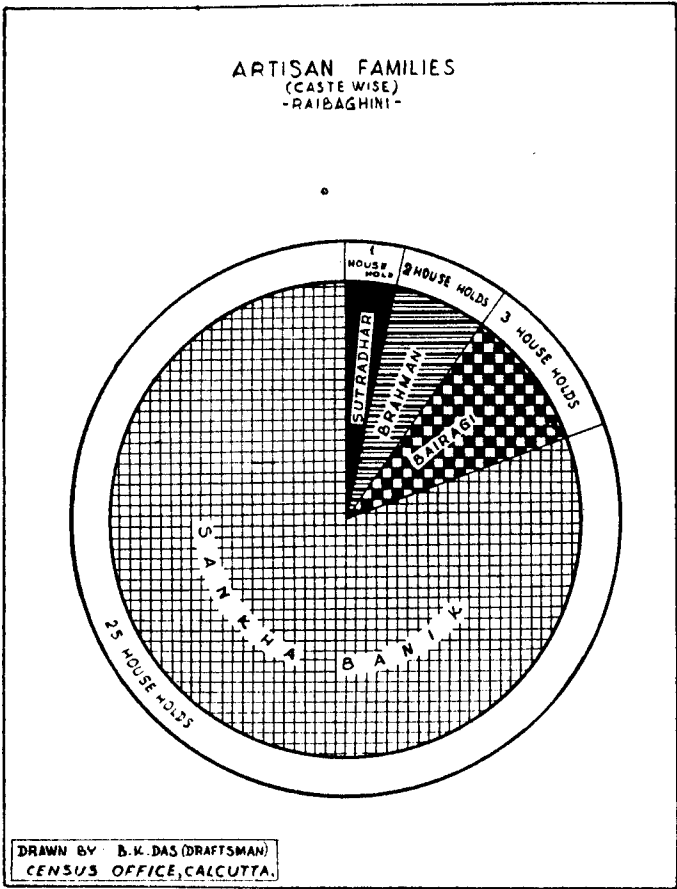
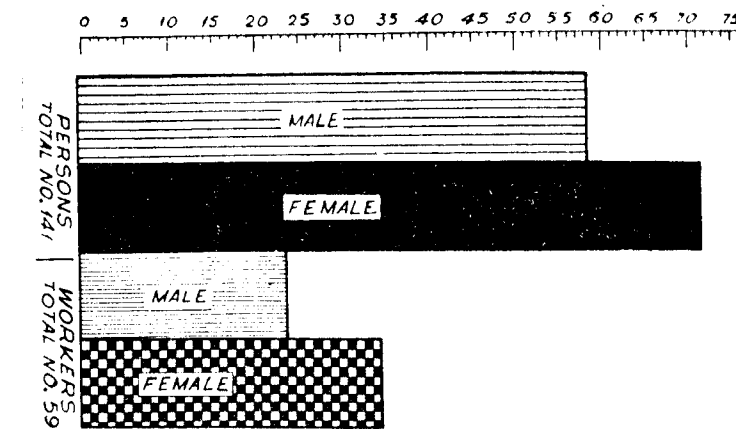


TABLE SHOWING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PRACTISING ARTISAN HOUSEHOLDS

Name of the Community	No. of Families	No. of Members		
		Male	Female	Total
Bairagi	3	6	9	15
Brahman	2	5	7	12
Sankhari	25	55	54	109
Sutradhar	1	3	2	5
Total	31	69	72	141

The table above shows that 31 out of 42 households are now engaged in the craft. The 11 households which ceased to practise this craft have a total population of 29 persons of which 11 are males and 18 are females. The households which have cut off all connections with the village

by migrating to some other mauza or the households which have left no living successors do not of course, come into the picture. The 11 non-practising households include 1 Karmakar, 1 Malakar, 3 Sankhabanik, 4 Sutradhar and 2 Tamli families. The desertion of other castes is pro-



portionately more than that of the Sankharis. As the Sankharis are traditionbound to follow their caste occupation, they did not stop practising the craft altogether, though the trade did not offer them suitable returns. Of the practising families, Sankharis are in the majority, followed

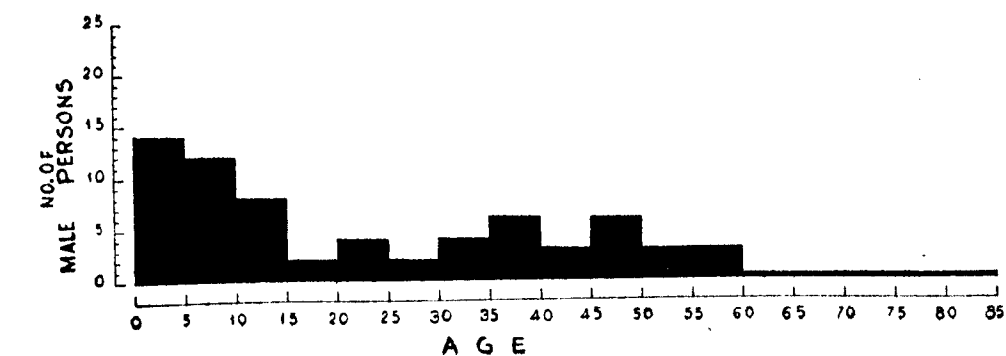
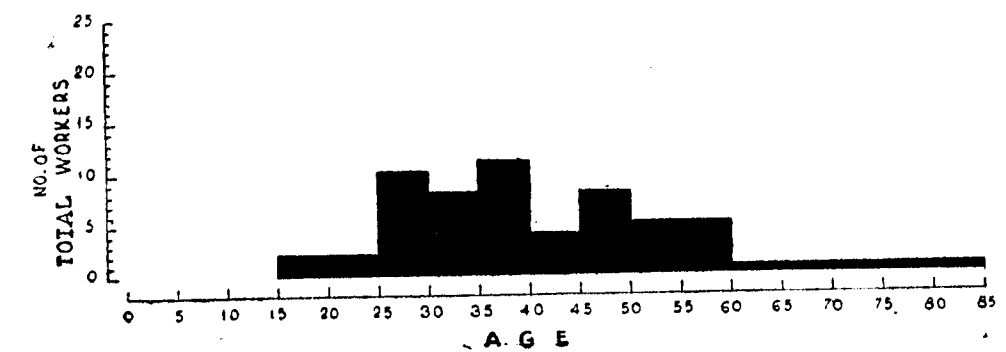
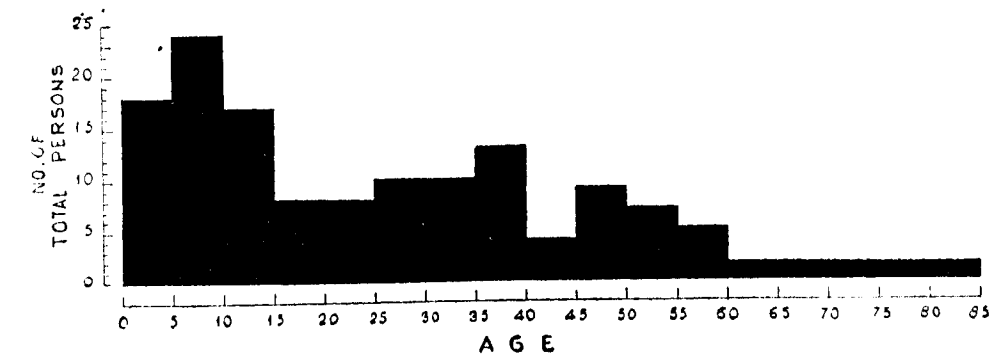
next by the Bairagis from the point of number. Except for the Sutradhar and Sankhari households females outnumber males. In the Sankhari families the sex ratio is more or less equal on an average.

TABLE SHOWING THE NUMBER OF WORKERS ENGAGED IN THE CRAFT

Name of the Community	Total No. of Workers			Percentage of Workers to the total No. of Members
	Male	Female	Total	
Bairagi	3	4	7	77.8
Brahman	2	1	3	25.0
Sankhari	18	30	48	44.0
Sutradhar	1	..	1	20.0
Total	24	35	59	41.8

Here again there is preponderance of female workers over the males. Female workers contribute 59.3 per cent to the total workers. The participation rate is strangely highest not among the Sankharis. Bairagis top the list from the point of participation rate and they send 77.8 per cent of their members to work on conch shell. The participation records the lowest mark in the Sutradhar family. While the male workers come from 34.8 per cent of the total number of male members in the different practising artisan

families, the total female workers in all these families account for 80.8 per cent of the total females. If we consider the participation rate sex-wise and caste-wise, we come to the observation that the male participation rate is highest in the Bairagi households, -66.6 per cent of the male members being engaged in the craft. The female participation is highest in the Sankhari families for 55.6 per cent of the total female members in the Sankhari households are workers.



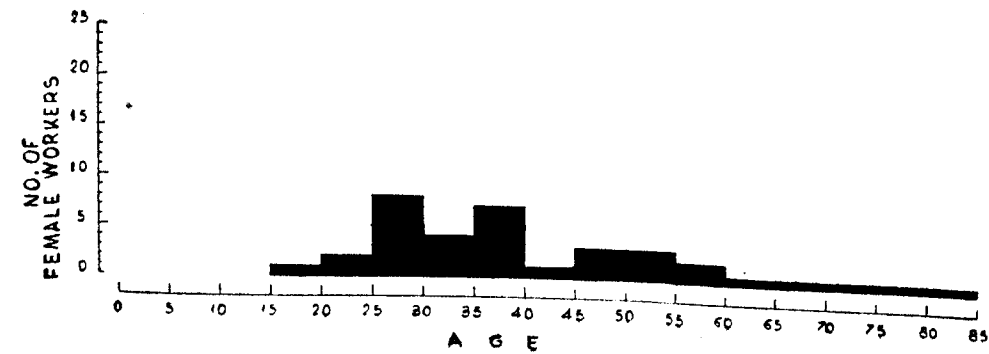
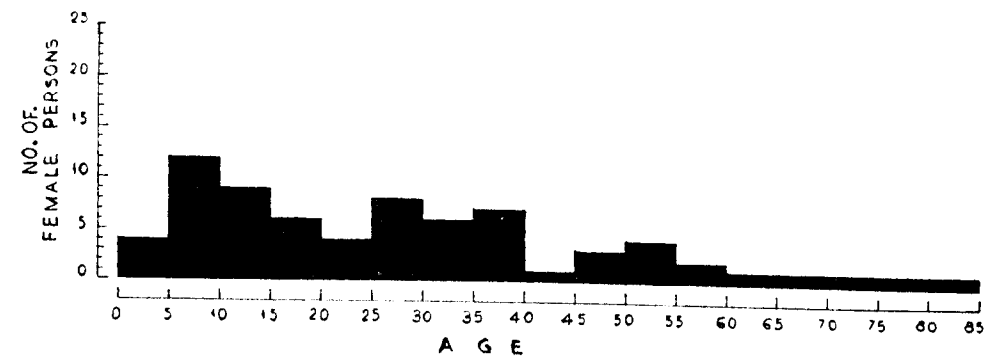
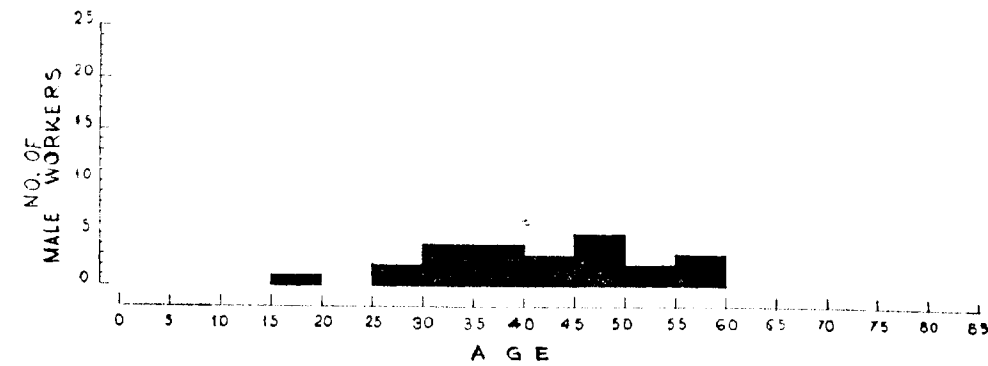


TABLE SHOWING AGE GROUP-WISE AND SEX-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ARTISAN HOUSEHOLDS AND ALSO OF THE WORKERS THEREOF

Age-group	No. of Members		No. of Workers		Percentage of Workers to Members
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
0-4	14	4	..	..	..
5-9	12	12	..	..	..
10-14	8	9	..	..	..
15-19	2	6	1	1	25.0
20-24	4	4	..	2	25.0
25-29	2	8	2	8	100.0
30-34	4	6	4	4	80.0
35-39	6	7	4	7	84.6
40-44	3	1	3	1	100.0
45-49	6	3	5	3	88.9
50-54	3	4	2	3	71.4
55-59	3	2	3	2	100.0
60 and above	2	6	..	4	50
Total	69	72	24	35	41.8

A scrutiny of the table above shows that 59 persons out of 141 are in the age-group 0-14, and roughly constitute 41.8 per cent of the total persons. We may treat this age-group as that of the children and may say on the basis of the table prepared from the schedules that children in the artisan households do not participate in the craft. While all the persons in the age-groups 25-29, 40-44 and 55-59 work on conch shell, the position is not the same in the age-groups 30-34, 35-49, 50-54 and 60 and above. The persons

of 60 years and above participate only to the extent of 44.4 per cent. Their advanced age and consequential infirmity may explain their detachment from actual work. Though the general participation rates in the age-groups 30-34 and 35-39 are below par, the male persons of the age-group 30-34 and female persons of the age-group 35-39 are all workers and record cent per cent participation.

A table is given below showing the marital status of the practising artisans.

Name of the Community	Unmarried			Married			Widowed			Separated or Divorced		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bairagi	..	..	..	3	2	5	..	2	2	..	..	..
Brahman	..	..	..	1	..	1	1	1	2	..	..	..
Sankhari	2	..	2	15	17	32	1	13	14	..	..	..
Sutradhar	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	2	..	2	20	19	39	2	16	18	..	..	..

Of the total workers the unmarried persons are in the minority and swamped by those who are either married or are widowed. A remarkable characteristic that comes to the fore is the absence of any worker separated or divorced in marital life. About 30.5 per cent of the workers are mostly widows. One may observe that the Brahman male is married but we do not find any married female worker there. The only explanation is that the wife of the Brahman is not a worker. Again in the Sankhari households the husbands of 2 female workers are not connected with the craft.

The craft of conchshell does not require the knowledge of the three R's to acquire proficiency as a worker. The skill is more or less gained by experience in years and constant guidance. The guidance afforded by the parents or other members of the households does not depend on the acquaintance of the workers with books. Still it will be interesting to inquire into the literacy and educational standards of the workers of the village. A table is given below to show the literacy standard and educational attainments of the workers.

Educational Level	WORKERS											
	Bairagi			Brahman			Sankhari			Sutradhar		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Illiterate . .	1	4	5	..	1	1	1	25	26	..	..	..
Literate (with-out educational level)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..
Literate upto Primary level	1	..	1	..	..	..	10	3	13	1	..	1
Above Primary but below Matriculation or School Final	1	..	1	2	..	2	6	11	17	..	..	..
School Final, Matriculation or above	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..

Before the table is analysed it will be better if the different standards of literacy and education are explained. Illiteracy perhaps needs no definition or explanation. A literate person without any educational standard is one who can read and write but has not received any formal education in any institution. A literate who has read upto class IV in any educational institution but has not passed the primary examination will be categorised as a literate upto the primary standard. In the group No. 4 we have included persons who have not passed the Matriculation or School Final or any other examination of the equivalent nature. In the last group come all persons who have passed Matriculation or School Final or any examination of the same standard.

About 54.2 per cent of the workers are illiterate. 30 female workers and 2 male workers do not know how to read and write. Sankharis form the bulk of the illiterate workers. The literates without any educational standard do not deserve

any special attention, for there are only 2 such workers. There are 15 workers who have read upto class IV in an educational institution ; of them 3 are only females. Of the 10 workers who have passed the primary examination but not the Matriculation or equivalent examination consist of 10 workers. They also include those who might have discontinued their studies in any class above class IV but below class X. The artisans may be reasonably proud of a solitary Matriculate Sankhari worker.

Particulars about the family/community connected with the craft in various capacities

The conch shell craft requires specialised knowledge and technical skill from beginning to the end. The different processes and techniques involved in the craft require skill. It is therefore very essential for a particular artisan to undergo some sort of training and acquire necessary experience before he establishes himself to be a full-fledged skilled worker.

It may be pointed out in this regard that hawking or pedlary of the product of the craft needs some professional proficiency, if the products are desired to be sold out. To try a bangle on the wrists of a woman is a very delicate and risky job. Conch shell bangles being very brittle, they stand the chance of breakage while being fitted on the feminine hands. The process of fitting a bangle on the wrists of a woman is part of the hawker's job and the sale is not complete and effective until the selected bangles are put on the wrists of a woman successfully. The handling has therefore to be very slow but deft at the same time. Therefore the job of a hawker or salesman is painstaking and trying on the nerves at the same time on both the sellers and the customers.

(a) *Manufacture of Tools*—The tools and implements are not manufactured by the village craftsmen. The tools are made for the village by artisans of the adjoining places as they are not locally available. Some of the tools are also brought from outside the boundaries of the police station, mainly from Bankura and Vishnupur and sometimes from Calcutta also. We shall discuss about these tools in later chapter. We can best say that none of the artisan households are associated with the manufacture of tools.

(b) *Production of Raw materials*—The most important and indispensable raw material for the craft is provided by the conch shells which are found in plenty in the Madras Coast. But in the past, about 10 years back, shells were also imported from Ceylon (Jaffna coast). But with the ban on the import of Ceylonese Conch shells by the Government of India in 1953 to prevent drain of Foreign Exchange the Madras Shells have been more in demand. They are procured by the local people of Madras either from leased or Government owned chank-fisheries. The raw materials are exported to the Calcutta market controlled mainly by monopolists belonging to the Sankha Banik caste who apart from running their establishment for the manufacture of conch shell products control the channels of distribution of raw materials to the craftsmen of the village. The roll of these procurers and suppliers of raw materials will be detailed out in a later chapter.

(c) *Collection of Raw materials*—Raw materials as stated earlier are collected in Madras either at private initiative or on Govt. efforts issuing mainly from the Government of Madras. The local people of the village or of West Bengal have very little say in matters of collection and remain far too distant from the areas of operation so as to produce a tangible effect on the *modus operandi* of the people of Madras.

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(d) *Sale of Raw materials*—Conch shells are procured by merchants of Calcutta from Madras through Madras agents and sold to the village artisans. Raw materials are also provided in the form of cut pieces of Conch shells by the Mahajans of Vishnupur in the district of Bankura.

It is therefore very obvious that the craftsmen of *Raibaghini* have to depend solely on the people outside the village for the supply of raw materials whether in the form of intact conch shells or in the form of cut pieces. They are more or less dependent on the tradesmen either of Calcutta or of Vishnupur who actually monopolise the supply of raw Materials.

(e) *Owners of Workshop*—The artisans generally work in their dwellings which serve the dual purpose of residence as well as workshop. Every artisan works at his own workshop, that is, his dwelling, even though he may have to work on piece rate basis. All the heads of the artisan households are the owners of their own workshops and none of them works as a paid employee at a workshop owned by others. Moreover, there is no such instance, where an artisan is found to be employed as a paid worker in a workshop owned by a Mahajan.

There are 31 workshops owned by the 31 households belonging to different castes. Excepting 3 cases the artisan households use their own houses as workshops that is, 28 houses are workshop-cum-dwellings. Of the 3 exceptions made by 3 Sankhari households in converting their dwellings as workshop one has shifted his workshop temporarily to the residence of a Modak family, as his own house is undergoing repairs. For this temporary arrangement no rent has to be paid and this arrangement has been borne out of a good Samaritan's gesture. One of the two other households uses his Baithakhana or the sitting room as a workshop and incidentally one structure is on the opposite side of his dwelling intervened by the village path way.

The third household has a workshop in a separate structure which, though within the same compound as the dwelling, is not used for habitation purpose.

(f) *Both Owner and Craftsman*—Out of 31 households engaged in the craft only 12 households have independent work and they can be regarded as owner craftsmen. There is another household which has independent work and contract work both.

(g) *Financier*—The craft is financed by the artisan himself by his own resources. None of the artisans ever plays the role of a financier to other craftsmen. If occasion so demands,

the artisans borrow money from nonartisan private persons on interest.

(h) *Skilled Craftsmen*—As it has already been pointed out that without the background of any skill and experience, nobody can work in the craft. Majority of the craftsmen are skilled workers in this village.

(i) *Unskilled Craftsmen*—Two persons work in the village as apprentices and they are under training in the craft. At present they have no specific job or income of their own. It is hoped that as soon as they will acquire certain skill and gather some experience they will turn full-fledged skilled workers. So, at present these two persons can be regarded as unskilled craftsmen. The different types of unskilled work in the form of import and distribution of raw materials in connection with the craft are done by persons living outside the village boundary.

(j) *Craft Supervisor*—In the village no artisan is styled such in any stage of operation in any workshop. The craft supervisors of this village are virtually the heads of the different artisan families who supervise various operations in connection with the craft. In case of single-membered households the craftsman himself/herself supervises everything.

(k) *Traders*—No middleman exists in this village in connection with the production and sale of products. The producer, who has independent work, himself procures raw materials, produces articles at home or gets the articles produced by *Bani* workers and then sells the products either in the market or to *Paikars* at his own initiative. But in regard to *Bani* or piece rate workers, the selling and marketing operations are not done by them. They work purely on order and as per contract. Responsibility, if any, lies entirely with the order suppliers, who are the owner-craftsmen. Traders are simply the Mahajans or order suppliers who procure raw material from Calcutta or Vishnupur and supply them to different contract labours against a payment on piece rate basis. The contract labourers produce finished products and deposit them to their order suppliers or Mahajans on the basis of the order. The Mahajans or order suppliers also produce articles at their own houses with the help of family members. At their own initiative they sell the products either manufactured at his house or collected from the *Bani* workers to different customers, when occasion arises.

In this particular village 7 persons are connected with this type of operation and 1 person is occasionally engaged in this work. Among the above mentioned persons as many as 6 belong to the Sankha Banik caste and 1 is a

Brahman. The irregular trader is a Bairagi by caste.

(l) *Salesman*—Out of 59 artisans only 6 are principally engaged in hawking operations of the finished products. 4 persons are specifically engaged in this type of work but the other 2 persons have part-time jobs relating to this craft.

The formerly mentioned 4 persons purchase products from other artisans and sell them to different customers but the last mentioned persons sell their own products to different customers. All of them sell their products while on errand.

(m) *Manager*—No large factory or workshop owned by any employer or Mahajan exists in the village and it has already been pointed out that the artisans work at their own workshops. In the absence of a large scale productive unit the role of a manager is practically unknown among the artisans. Every producer manages his own business and does not allow any outsider to look after the production.

(n) *Accounts Personnel*—The village artisans have no organisations of their own except a Cooperative Society which too is non-operative at present. The production is on such a small scale and of such a negligible volume that accounts are managed by the artisans themselves.

(o) *Transport*—Nobody among the craftsmen is specifically engaged in the business of road transport required by the craft. Different artisans themselves bear all responsibilities in this respect but the workers on piece rate basis have no responsibility in regard to this function. We have discussed about this aspect in a later chapter.

(p) *Packing*—In most cases packing is not an essential feature of the conch shell products. Only in case of storage of the finished products some sort of packing is essential and when such occasion arises, the artisans themselves pack the products. This will also not be applicable to the workers on piece rate basis. No artisan of the village is exclusively engaged in this type of operation.

(q) *Bani Worker or Workers on piece rate basis*—One of the most important features of this craft is the type of workers who are known as *Bani* workers. They can in no sense be treated as hired labour nor do they fall in the category of employed workers. They may at best be called contract labour who work on piece-rate basis. Contract labour among the craftsmen on the piece rate basis is employed by financially well-



HAWKERS ON ERRAND



HAWKER TRYING A BANGLE ON FEMINE HANDS

off owner-craftsmen families. A well-off craftsman is he who is capable of purchasing raw materials. The financially well-off families supply raw materials to the different workers on the job order basis, and when such raw materials are turned into finished products the workers deposit them with their order-suppliers. The responsibility of the contract labour in connection with the products ends here. The selling and marketing operations of such products are done entirely by the order suppliers.

So by *Bani* worker we mean that type of worker who receives raw materials from owner-craftsmen and supply the finished products to them against what may be called as *Bani* or wages. In this particular village as many as 25 persons work on contract basis and they can be regarded as *Bani workers* or workers on job order basis. Among such 25 persons, 18 are females and 7 are males and thus here also the female workers out-number the male workers. The reason for such difference in number may be explained by the fact that the female workers have adopted their source of livelihood in order to maintain their family.

Bani workers numbering 19 belong to the Sankha Banik caste, of whom 14 are females and 5 are males. 1 *Bani* worker belongs to the Sutradhar caste and he is a male. 1 *Bani* worker also belongs to the Brahman caste and she is a female. In all, 4 *Bani* workers belong to the Bairagi caste and among them 3 are females and 1 is a male.

(r) *Female Workers participation*—Last but not the least important point related to this craft is that in this household craft large number of females participate in the different operations of the craft. In this particular village, it is found that female workers participate in larger number than their male counterparts.

The artisans produce bangles of two varieties white and coloured and these two types of bangles are only used by the womenfolk. So female workers generally have an idea about the tastes of the different customers.

Moreover, *Sonamukhi* or coloured bangle is an article which only the females produce due to its peculiar colouring and simple and light techniques involved. The males prefer to leave these light jobs to be done by the females. In this village, *Sonamukhi* bangles are manufactured

only by female workers. Many widows have also started manufacturing this product in order to earn some livelihood.

In all, there are 59 craftsmen in the village engaged in the production of conch shell products and out of 59 workers 36 are females.

Type of production units

The craft is essentially a household craft in this village. Individual households have run the establishment with the help of the members of the family. The family-labour type of units are mainly located in the house itself, some portion of which is used as workshop and the remaining portions are utilised as residential quarter.

The production units are generally located either in the open verandah or in front of the residence at some open space.

It is reported that previously some artisans had separate workshops exclusively for the craft and those were set-up outside the limits of their house. At that time the artisans used to work there along with hired labourers. Most of such workshops are now closed. Some among them have been shifted now to the houses of the craftsmen.

At present only two artisans possess independent workshops situated at a place outside the residence. Among these two such workshops, one is located 10/12 feet from the craftsman's residential quarter and the other one is situated 30 feet from his house.

In this village production units are entirely based upon labour recruited from family members where the size of household exceeds one. All single member households work in their dwelling-cum-workshops.

Workshops or production units run by family members along with hired labour cannot be found in this village. Moreover there is no such production unit in the village where the artisans work as paid employees of an employer or Mahajan. In this village no production unit is run by the Co-operative Society, because the Society is at present more or less inactive.

Independent work and piece rate work (*Bani*) are done mainly in the artisan's dwelling-cum-workshops.

CHAPTER V

Particulars about the various articles produced

At the very outset, it may be pointed out that our discussion in regard to finished product will be divided into two parts such as : (1) articles produced in the past and (2) those being produced at present. Again, articles of the past will be divided into two periods such as : (a) Articles produced before 2nd World War and (b) Articles produced before 1947. Throughout these divisions of period Conch shell craft of this village was in a flourishing form.

In the Past :

(a) Before 2nd World War :

The statements made by different artisan families of this village pointedly attest to the fact that before the outbreak of the 2nd World War these families were engaged in the production of various types of articles from conch shell. Before 1939, articles like bangles, rings or ringlets, shell horns, medals and buttons were manufactured here.

Now, on analysis it is revealed that before the 2nd Great War only plain bangles were manufactured by 7 families. Coloured bangles and plain bangles both were produced by 9 families. Only coloured bangles were produced by 9 other households. In a single household coloured bangles were manufactured along with shell horns. One family was associated with the manufacture of plain bangles, coloured bangles and shell horns. Another household produced plain bangles along with shell horns and rings. Only one household was engaged in the production of plain bangles, coloured bangles, shell horns, rings and medals and in another household plain bangles, coloured bangles, rings and buttons were manufactured.

From this analysis it appears that during the period under discussion bangles, both plain and coloured, formed the bulk of manufacture and the other varieties of articles were produced in a limited manner. In this period one particular household was always engaged in the hammering and sizing operations of the intact conch shells.

(b) Before 1947 :

The statements made by different artisan families show clearly that before the independence of our country the different artisans' families

were engaged in the production of various articles such as bangles, shell horns, rings, buttons etc. Only 5 families were exclusively associated with the making of plain bangles. Altogether 10 families were engaged in the production of plain bangles along with the manufacture of coloured bangles. In 2 households plain bangles and coloured bangles were produced along with shell horns. In a single household plain bangles were produced along with shell horns and rings. Another household produced coloured bangles, shell horns. Plain bangles, shell horns, rings and buttons were all produced by only one household.

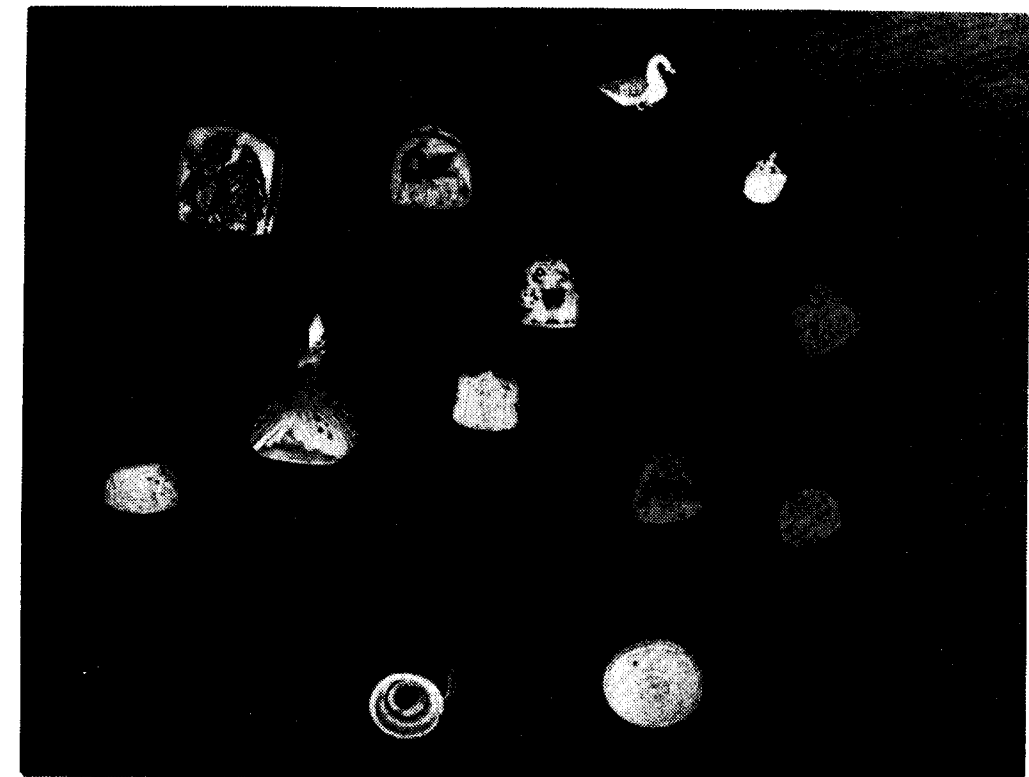
The number of families producing shell horns came down and the number of families exclusively engaged in the production of plain bangles also dwindled. Now, more families began to engage themselves in the production of only coloured bangles or the combined articles of coloured and plain bangles than before. The position in regard to the production of rings also changed and families in lesser number were engaged in it. Throughout this period a particular household was always engaged in the hammering and sizing operations of the intact conch shells.

Present condition :

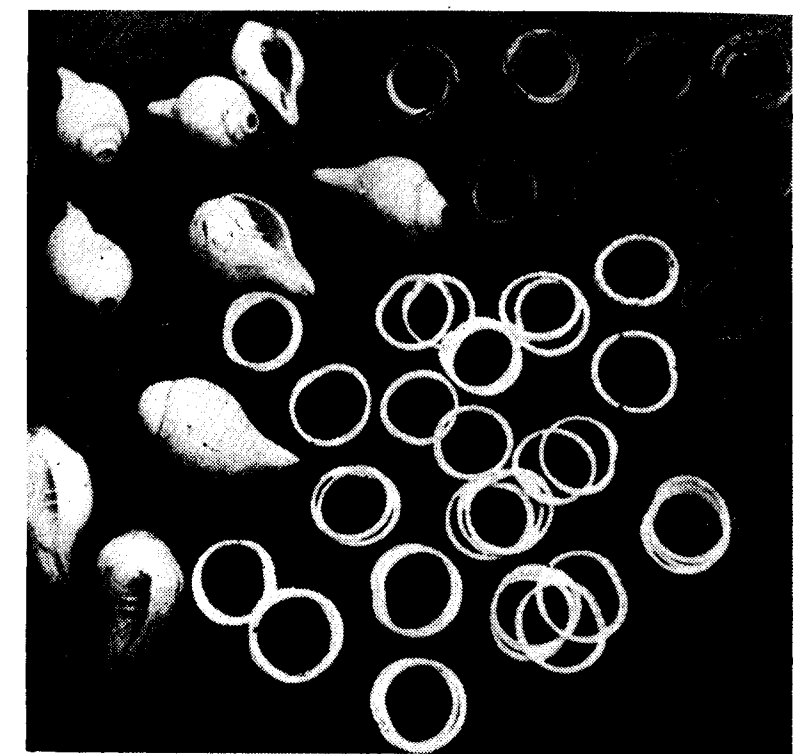
At present plain bangles, without any colour, form the bulk of manufacture, although other articles such as, coloured bangles and shell horns are also being manufactured by different craftsmen families of the village.

Now, altogether 13 households are exclusively engaged in the production of plain bangles. In all 9 families produce only coloured bangles and in only 5 families both plain and coloured bangles are made. A single household is associated with the production of plain bangles along with shell horns. Another household prepares shell horns along with plain and coloured forms of bangles. In one particular household, small red bangles for children are also manufactured.

From the statement we can assess that at present the articles like rings or ringlets, buttons and medals are not produced in any of the households and only 3 types of conch shell products are now being manufactured here by the different artisan households. Most of the artisans now have concentrated their labour mainly on the production of conch shell bangles. But the



SPECIMENS OF
SOME PAST
PRODUCTS



SPECIMENS OF
SOME
PRESENT PRODUCTS

number of families producing both types of bangles collectively has dwindled much more than before. At present the artisans are severely facing the problem of adequate supply of raw materials and as such the nature of production has undergone changes. Some of the articles have now disappeared entirely out of the village, so far as production is concerned.

As a result of these changes, only two types of bangles are now produced in the village : (1) Plain bangles and (2) Coloured bangles.

(1) *Plain Bangles* :

It is a ring shaped article vertically cut out of the intact conch shell. It is circular in form and brittle in nature. Hindu married womenfolk use this bangle as a custom. 2 pieces make a pair of bangles of this type. The mouth of each piece is tinged with 5 drops of colour. These 5 drops have symbolical value and it will be discussed in the relevant place.

(2) *Coloured Bangles* :

These bangles are produced here exclusively by the female members of the artisan families. Coloured bangles are generally of three kinds : (1) Sonamukhi, (2) Maja and (3) Red bangles both for marriage and puja purposes and for use by children. Majority of the female artisans who produce coloured bangles are engaged in the manufacture of *Sonamukhi* bangles and only a small number of artisans are engaged in the production of other varieties of coloured bangles. In one household two workers produce *Maja* bangles along with *Sonamukhi* bangles. In 2 other households 2 workers are engaged in the production of simple red bangles which are only used for marriage purposes. In another household a worker is manufacturing small red bangles for children. In the case of coloured bangles generally 3 fragments or cut pieces joined together make a complete piece of bangle. In some other cases 2 fragments and sometimes 4 fragments are joined together to make a complete bangle. In the case of the simple red bangles two pieces make a pair as in plain bangles. But in *Maja* kind of coloured bangles 6 pieces make a complete pair.

Sonamukhi bangles are of piebold type, diversified in colour. In such bangles, red, yellow and green colours are painted on the outer surface and in its mouth 5 drops are pasted.

The average diameter of a piece of bangle varies from 2" to 2½" and the circumference of such an article varies between 6" to 8."

From time immemorial the conch shell bangles have been used by the married womenfolk of Ben-

gal and its neighbouring areas as a social tradition. It signifies the sign of marriage of a Hindu lady. As long as her husband lives, she regards the pair of bangles as an indispensable part of her ornament but when the husband dies, the wife renounces the article for ever. We have discussed these points elaborately in the preceding chapters.

One villager belonging to the Sankha Banik caste made an interesting statement in order to indicate the decorative value of the conch shell bangles. He said, "The beauty of creation is women, and the beauty of women is in conchshell bangles on her wrists and the vermilion paint at the parting of the hair on her head".

It may not be out of place to mention here that some sort of religious sanctity is attached to conch shell bangles. The highest blessing of the parents and elderly persons to their married daughters is "May your shell bangles and vermilion mark last for ever". During marriage ceremonies conch shell bangle is a 'must' for a newly married bride. From this time she continues to wear this priceless article unless she is struck by the gratest misfortune that may happen to a female, that is her widowhood.

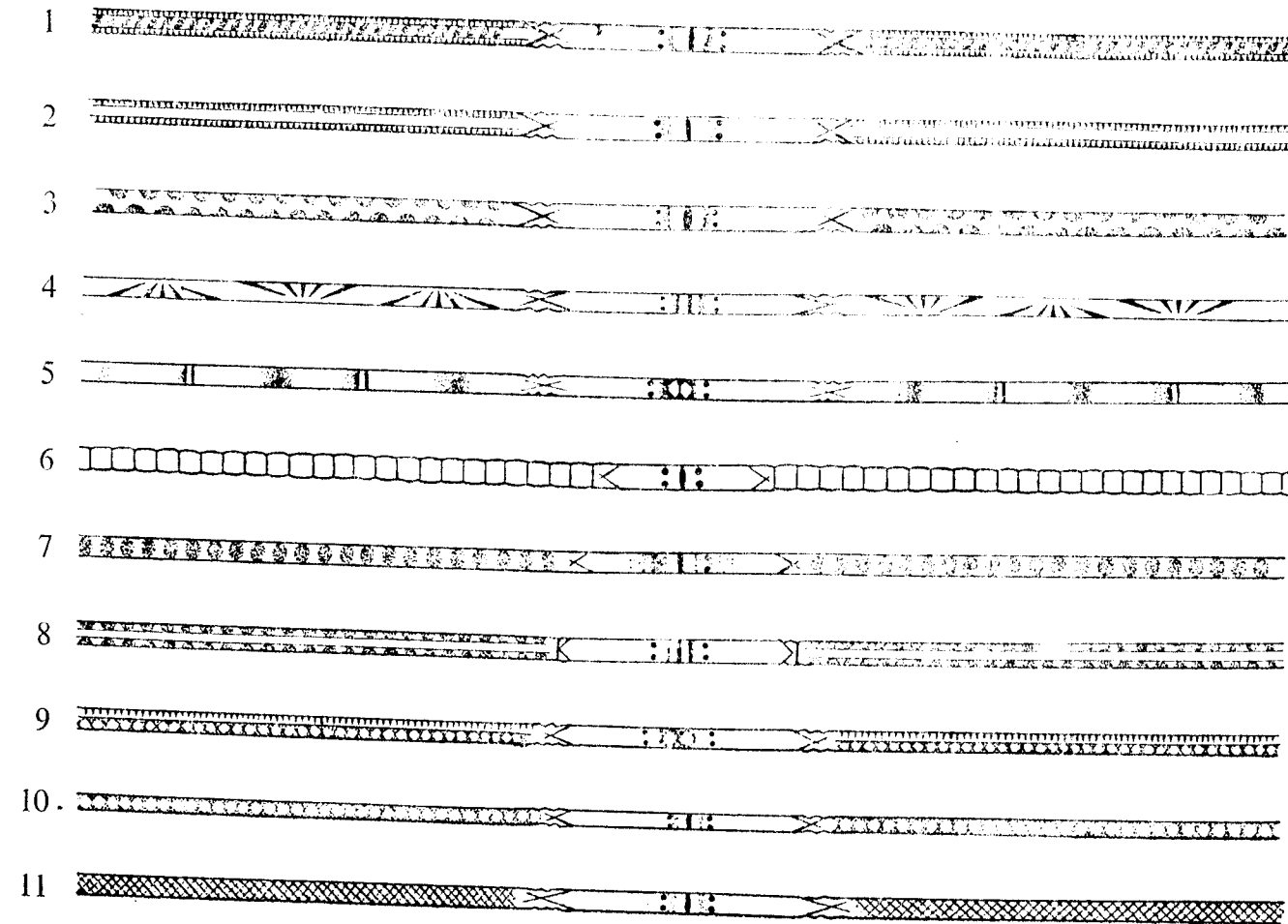
Occasionally, children also use small bangles or bracelets for decorative purposes. No religious or social custom is associated with the use of this article by the children. We have already discussed it in chapter III of this volume.

Designs and decorative motifs

In the past, conch shell bangles of various designs were made in this village but now-a-days only a limited number of designs is used on the outer surface of the bangles. Specially on the plain bangles the artisans use varieties of delicate designs to give them an ornamental look and value. The artisans in their own hands and with the help of files emboss designs on the periphery of the plain bangles. But in case of coloured bangles, excepting the red ones, different coloured designs are painted on the outer surface with the help of a bamboo-made pen.

The artisans claim that previously designs such as, *Matidana*, *Matardana*, *Mane Na Mana*, *Jaltaranga*, *Bansgit*, *Kathali-Kankan*, *Railway lines*, *Gogri*, and *Bhatia* were regularly worked out on the outer surface of the plain bangles. But use of such variety of designs has come to an end and at present mainly two designs—*Jaltaranga* and *Matardana* are regularly used. Both these designs are very popular to the customers because these designs absorb less dirt. The artisans also prefer to use these designs because they are easy to be embossed and need less labour.

DESIGNS



1. HOGLA PATA

2. MANENA MANA

3. JALTARANGA

4. KALKA

5. BANSGIT

6. MATAR DANA

7. CORROGATE

8. RAILWAY LINE

9. MOTIDANA KANKAN

10. MOTIDANA

11. KANTHALI KANKAN

It is a common practice to paint 5 coloured drops, 1 red and 4 green or blue on the mouth of the plain bangle and 5 drops or 'tops' of tinfoil are pasted on the face of 10 pieces of *Sonamukhi* and 6 pieces of *Maja* variety. It has already been pointed out that at present different artisans are mainly engaged in embossing or indenting two types of designs such as *Jaltaranga* and *Mataridana*.

Now we will discuss principally these two types of designs.

(a) *Jaltaranga* :

Wavelike decorations are engraved on the outer surface of the plain bangles with the help of a file. Here the decorative motif is the 'Wave'. In making such a design a raised line or portion is obtained by indenting the surface of the surrounding areas. No colour is used in this form of design.

(b) *Mataridana* :

'Pea'-like marks are engraved on the periphery of a plain bangle, with the help of a file. In this process, 'pea' or *matar* is the decorative motif. In this case also a raised portion is obtained by indenting the surface of the surrounding area. No colour is used in this type of design.

Now we will discuss in brief the other designs occasionally used by the artisans on the plain bangles. Such designs are done only in a limited number of houses and on a restricted volume.

(a) *Motidana* :

'Pearl'-like marks within a rectangular area are engraved on the outer surface of the plain bangles with a 'file'. Here pearl or *Moti* is the decorative motif. No colour is used in this type of design.

(b) *Railway Line* :

'Railway Line'-like decorations are indented on the periphery of the plain bangles with the help of a file. Two parallel lines cut by horizontal lines are features of this design.

(c) *Bansgit* :

'Bamboo nodes or knots' are engraved on the outer surface of the plain bangles with the help of a file.

(d) *Bhatia* :

It is a very intricate design. At first 3 slanting lines are engraved. Then an 'm' like figure is indented and afterwards 3 slanting lines are engraved on the periphery of the plain bangle.

(c) *Mane Na-Mana* :

It is also a very intricate design. Between different dots on both sides, one line is engraved on the outer surface of the plain bangles.

In case of coloured bangles mainly of *Sonamukhi* and *Maja* types certain coloured designs are used.

(1) *Sonamukhi* :

3 types of colour such as red, green and yellow are painted on the outer surface of the bangles. On its mouth 5 drops in the form of 'tops' are painted.

The painting is done by a pen, made from bamboo.

(2) *Maja* :

3 types of colour such as red, green and yellow are painted with the help of a *Kalam* or pen, made of bamboo. 5 dots in the form of 'tops' are also pasted on the face of the bangles.

(3) *Red Bangles* :

Only 3 households are engaged in the production of such bangles. In 2 households no design is used in case of these bangles but in a particular household a 'design' known as *kirkich* which means zigzag dots is embossed on the bangles by file and then red colour is painted on the outer surface of the bangles. In 2 households red colour is painted on the bangles by a pen. Red bangles are used only for puja and ceremonial purposes.

(4) *Gini Bala or small bangles for Children* :

In case of small bangles for children no design is used and only red colour is painted on its outer surface with a pen.

(5) *Shell Horns* :

It is reported that in the past floral designs like 'lotus' were engraved on the outer surface of the shell horns and at present also this design is in vogue. In such a design 'lotus' flower is the decorative motif. The design is engraved on the intact conch shells with the help of a file. This decoration is used on the shell horn only for ornamentation. No colour is used in this design.

In the past, some designs were made on bangles in order to satisfy the creative urge of the artisans and quite a limited number of designs was adopted because they required less or insignificant skill and labour. Moreover, the craft

previously was in a flourishing condition. There was the scope for making experiments with various designs. But at present the artisans are concerned only with such designs which are popular to their customers. They do not want to lose their market by new experiments with novel designs and thus to involve themselves in great risks in the current decaying condition of the craft.

The different designs are engraved on the conch shell articles only for the sake of decorative purpose and no legend is connected with any of the designs. The artisans have learnt the different types of currently-used designs mainly from their ancestors and only one or two among them have learnt certain designs from *private persons* belonging to the Sankhari community. The designs are purely traditional and the artisans have not learnt any design from any institution. No training-cum-production centre exists here and the Co-operative Society of the artisans has never shown any interest in this regard. For designs the artisans simply depend on the aged and experienced members of the family.

The five dots, such as 1 red and 4 blue/green, painted on the mouth of a plain bangle have symbolic value of their own. Red and green/blue

are the colours of purity because red signifies the colour of vermillion, a sacred mark for every married Hindu lady and blue indicates *Nilkantha* or Siva, a Hindu god. If blue colour is not available, green is used in its place. But it does not lose its symbolical meaning. This symbolic significance is known to the aged artisans only.

It is interesting to note that the symbolic interpretation of the three colours on bangles is quite Greek to the younger section of the artisans and they take these dots on the mouth of a plain bangle for ornamentation only.

If the raw materials are regularly and adequately supplied, the independent workers may engrave different designs on plain bangles or on other conch shell products throughout the year. Only in case of shell horns it is seen that the frequency of the use of designs is limited and restricted to few months only. In some cases the frequency of the use of various designs on conch shell products depends upon the orders made by customers.

In case of *Bani* workers the use of different designs on different conch shell products depends on the orders supplied by Mahajans or owner-craftsmen. But the use of different designs is not at all fixed.



INTACT CONCH SHELLS

CHAPTER VI

Particulars about raw materials, tools and equipments with reference to any particular article

In the present chapter we shall discuss about raw materials, and tools and equipments of the craft concerned from various angles.

In the first portion of this chapter information about raw materials and in the remaining portions particulars about tools and equipments will be covered.

Raw materials :

With reference to all types of finished products of the craft it should be pointed out here that conch shell is the basic raw material of all such products. It is a shell fish and inhabits in the sea water only. In fact conch shells are procured from the different coasts of the Gulf of Manner (between Ceylon and South India).

Name and variety used for I.—Plain Bangles

Raw materials for plain Bangles are of two kinds :—(1) Main and (2) Subsidiary. Main raw materials can also be divided into different groups—(a) Intact conch shell (b) cut pieces in ring-shaped form. The subsidiary raw materials are : (a) Lac or gala or Jau (b) Resin (c) Colour—Blue/green and red etc.

(1) Main Raw materials :

In fact, conch shells used in this village by different artisans are of two kinds :—(1) Titkutti and (2) Patti. Titkuttis are large sized conch shells of superior quality. Titkutti type of conch shell is generally free from any damage caused by pests or insects. It is found in plenty in the Coast of Tuticorin in the district of Tinnevely in the State of Madras. It is white in colour and very hard in nature. Different designs are easier to be engraved on this type of conch shell than on other types.

‘Patti’ is an inferior type of shell smaller in size and poorer in quality. It is somewhat reddish in colour. It is found in plenty in the district of Ramnad in the state of Madras. Pattis are susceptible to attacks from pests and consequential damages. It is very difficult to engrave a design on such conch shell, as it is not very hard.

The village artisans prefer the former type of conch shells to the latter ones.

(a) Intact conch shell :

Only the independent workers or owner-craftsmen of this village produce plain bangles from intact conch shells, purchased from Calcutta wholesalers who are themselves Sankha Baniks by caste. But this is not possible for other workers.

(b) Cut-pieces :

Sometimes, plain bangles are produced by different artisans directly from the ring-shaped pieces cut from the intact conch shells. Except in few cases the *Bani* workers or the workers on job order basis mainly produce plain bangles from this type of raw materials, namely the cut pieces supplied by different order suppliers or Mahajans. Intact conch shells are sawn into ring shaped pieces and such ring shaped pieces are supplied to the *Bani* workers.

(2) Subsidiary Raw materials :

Lac, resin, green/blue and red pigments are the subsidiary raw materials used by different artisans of this village for production of plain bangles.

Lac and resin are necessary for the repair work of the bangles and green/blue or red colours are used for the decoration of the plain bangles. These two subsidiary raw materials are purchased from outside. These materials are absolutely essential for the finished products of this category.

II.—Name and variety for Coloured Bangles

Raw materials required for producing coloured bangles are of two kinds :—(1) Main, (2) Subsidiary.

(1) The main raw materials are provided by the cut pieces of conch shells in the form of arc-shaped fragments. They are cut from the intact conch shells of inferior quality. The independent workers or owner-craftsmen mainly produce coloured bangles from intact conch shells procured from Calcutta. But this is not done by the *Bani* workers because they manufacture the finished products from fragments of the intact conch shells supplied by the Mahajans or order suppliers of the village.

(2) Subsidiary raw materials in the form of *Harital* or orpiment, *Hingal* or cinnabar, resin, lac etc. are also essential for the manufacture of this product. Resin and lac are used for

joining the ends of the different fragments to give it an unbroken round shape. For colouring and decorative purposes *Harital*, *Hingal* and green colours are used.

Harital or orpiment—A mineral, trisulphide of arsenic used as yellow dye.

Hingal—cinnabar or vermillion—The red mercuric sulphide, used as red dye.

These two articles and green colour are required essentially for *Sonamukhi* and *Maja* bangles. But in case of plain red bangles only Hingal, resin and lac are the essential materials. These raw materials are also required for the manufacture of small bangles for children coloured in red.

III.—Name and variety for Shell horns

Shell horn is another important finished product which is being manufactured at present from intact conch shell specially from the Tuticorin variety because only that variety is hard and thick in nature and white in colour. Due to its hardness designs can be easily engraved on this variety of conch shell.

Source : Plain Bangles

Intact conch shell :

With the Govt. of India's ban on import from Ceylon of conch shells during the later part of 1953 the artisans at present depend for their main raw material on South Indian Shells. These shells are found in plenty at Tinnevely and Ramnad districts of the Madras State near the Gulf of Manner. The different chank fisheries in which the intact conch shells inhabit are owned by the Govt. of Madras.

At 'Tuticorin' situated in the district of Tinnevely the Fishery Dept. of the Govt. of Madras procure raw materials in the form of intact conch shells with the help of divers against cash payment. For 1 piece of intact conch shell they generally pay a price which varies between Re.1 to Rs.1-50p. When a large amount of shells are collected, the stock is sold out on the call of tender. Every alternate year a tender call is given by the Directorate of Fisheries of the Madras Govt. when any private company or agency can take delivery of the entire stock by offering the maximum price. The price of the tender is determined by the competitive market. The Govt. of West Bengal obtain raw materials from the Govt. of Madras on a mutual agreement between the two. Each time a percentage of the total stock is kept reserved for the Govt. of West Bengal. At Rameswaram and its neighbouring areas situated in the district of Ramnad, the Govt. of Madras

do not take the responsibility of collection of raw materials. The chank fisheries are given to a lease holder for a term of 3 years. Any private company or agency can take the control of the fisheries on lease on a maximum bid. In this case also the maximum price is determined by the competitive market. The intact conch shells are procured by paid divers engaged by the lease-holder in these places. The divers get 50 paise to 62 paise per piece of an intact conch shell.

Now, it is clearly seen that South Indian shells are always raised on Govt. account in Tinnevely district of the State of Madras. Besides, shells are also collected by private agencies in Ramnad district of the same State.

Under the guidance and control of the tenderers and the lease-holders the intact conch shells are gathered together, sorted out and put into gunny bags for transportation to Calcutta. Through coastal waterways the raw materials are exported to Calcutta, which serves more or less as an emporium where the raw materials for this craft are gathered from different sources through different agencies.

The successful tenderers and the successful lease-holders now happen to be Madras Muslims who for business purposes reside in Calcutta. These Madras Muslims belong to two private companies viz.—(1) K.T.M. and (2) S.V.M. CO. Sultan and Abu Bakkar are the two persons who look after the business of these two concerns. These Madras Muslims are the only merchants or importers of the raw materials of intact conch shells. Besides them, the Govt. of West Bengal also bring or import raw materials to Calcutta from Tuticorin.

The different Sankha Banik wholesalers purchase raw materials from the merchants or importers against money paid in instalments and supply them to the artisans belonging to the different production centres of the craft.

In this connection some names of the wholesalers may be mentioned here :

- (1) Sagar Sur and Brothers
- (2) Kalibhusan Datta
- (3) Sontosh Kar
- (4) Biren Dhar
- (5) Nishikanta Sen
- (6) Adinath Sen
- (7) Traulakya Nath Dhar

All of them belong to the Sankha Banik community and are traditionally associated with this type of work for a long time.

The artisans of the different production centres procure basic raw materials through different agencies viz.—(1) Merchants or importer (2) Wholesalers and (3) Govt. controlled Co-operative Societies. Raw materials in the form of intact conch shells are distributed to the different artisans belonging to particular districts of West Bengal through these agencies. In West Bengal only at Bankura, Burdwan, Midnapore, Howrah, Nadia, Murshidabad and 24-Parganas districts, production centres for conch shell product are located in large numbers. The Central Store of the Small Industries Corporation, a Govt. of West Bengal undertaking supply raw materials to the artisans of the different production centres through co-operative societies.

The artisans of the village under study prefer to obtain conch shells supplied by the wholesalers of Calcutta because they believe that the raw materials supplied by this agency can more or less satisfy them. They have said that at the time of making a purchase from the Small-Industries Corporation of the Govt. of West Bengal they have faced some difficulties. They contend that they cannot have a full view of the contents of the gunny bags and are constrained to take what they are offered. The absence of any facility for the inspection of the raw material, before purchase, has made the artisans averse to this agency. This has an important bearing on the present inactivity of the co-operative society of the village.

Moreover, in the recent past the artisans used to obtain basic or main raw materials from the Madras merchants residing at Calcutta who have a direct link with the main production centres of conch shells. But due to their irregularity in supply of raw materials within the scheduled date the artisans of the village at present have abandoned this source.

The village artisans are procuring raw materials only from the Sankha Banik wholesalers of Calcutta and they are in close touch with them for this purpose. From this source the artisans face less difficulty in obtaining the raw materials. They can bargain and sort out the different gunny bags containing intact conch shells. They can thus minimise the damaged conch shells. The raw materials are also delivered promptly within the scheduled time by the wholesalers.

But the artisans belonging to other parts of West Bengal purchase raw materials directly from the Madras merchants against full cash payment or payment in instalment.

Cut-pieces :

At Vishnupur intact conch shells are cut with an electrically operated machine saw. The owner

of this machine saw is 'Santinath Nandi' who resides at "Sankhari Bazar" of the town of Vishnupur. From this place cut pieces are obtained by different artisans of the village for the production of conch shell bangles. The cut pieces used for the manufacture of plain bangles are in fact the ring shaped sliced portions of the intact conch shells. Generally, Vishnupur serves as the centre from where such cut pieces are distributed to various production centres of this craft within the subdivision, for processing them into finished plain bangles. Cut pieces are also obtained from intact conch shells by the artisans in their own household by sawing the shells into pieces.

Subsidiary Raw materials :

The subsidiary raw materials in the form of resin, lac and red, green/blue colours are purchased mainly from different traders living at Vishnupur or Kotulpur. Sometimes such materials are also obtained locally. In most cases they are purchased in retail form outside the village.

Coloured Bangles of all types

Cut-pieces of conch shell :

The owner-craftsmen of the village or the independent workers obtain their basic raw materials, if necessary, from private wholesalers of Calcutta the same source as that for the plain bangles. After obtaining intact conch shells from Calcutta, they either get them sliced at Vishnupur or they themselves slice them at home. These sliced pieces, joined together in the form of piece out system, produce coloured bangles of different types. These cut pieces are not ring-shaped but are in arc forms.

They are simply the fragments of intact conch shells which are inferior in quality.

The *Bani* workers obtain fragments from their Mahajan or order suppliers. After joining the cut pieces together by piece out system they produce coloured bangles. In some cases cut pieces or fragments from intact conch shells are purchased from Sankhari Bazar of Vishnupur.

Subsidiary Raw materials :

The subsidiary raw materials used in the manufacture of this product are many. They are detailed below :

(1) *Hingal*—cinnabar or vermillion. Red mercuric sulphide. An ore of mercury, used as red dye for ornamentation.

(2) *Harital*—orpiment. A mineral trisulphide of arsenic used as yellow dye for ornamentation.

(3) Green colour—used for ornamentation.

(4) Red colour—used for ornamentation.

(5) *Jau* or lac—A resinous substance secreted by the lac insect as a protective covering, used for combining different fragments to make a complete piece of bangle.

(6) Resin—used for repairing work.

(7) Incense—used for repairing work.

These objects are purchased from Vishnupur or Kotulpur and also from the local markets if available.

Shell Horns—Main—Raw materials provided by intact conch shells mainly of Tuticorin variety are purchased from Calcutta. After hammering and polishing, the intact conch shells are ornamented with a file.

Subsidiary—Acid is the only subsidiary raw material which is purchased from the local markets or outside, in order to make the horns white and bright. Incense, resin, lac or any other pigment are not necessary for the manufacture of these products.

Terms and Conditions

Intact conch shells—Intact conch shells are procured from traders of Calcutta on a wholesale basis. The artisans purchase more than 100 pieces at a time. They never purchase intact conch shells on a retail basis, they do neither buy such things on consideration of weight. The price is fixed on the basis of gunny bags containing intact conch shells. A gunny bag of intact conch shells consists of different sizes of conch shells. They are of assorted type. Generally 1 gunny bag now contains 150 pieces and its price varies between Rs. 250 to Rs. 330. The wholesaler's price of a bag also includes the sales tax and the coolie charges.

The artisans of this village principally obtain or procure such intact conch shells against payment of the total price in advance. They remit the amount in advance by money order. On receiving the order and the price of the commodity in advance, the wholesalers send the raw materials to the artisans by lorry. The artisans receive the delivery slip and take delivery of the product either from Vishnupur godown or from Kotulpur godown. The owners of the godown are private persons and they are not connected with the craft. The price of the raw materials cover freight and as such, the freight is also paid in advance. It is interesting to observe that the hard conch shells do not suffer any breakage during the transit. The artisans have not to bear any loss on this account.

Exceptions of this method of payment are made by only those artisans who have some good-will to the Calcutta wholesalers. In such a case, they are not liable to pay the total price in advance through money order but they may pay the total price in instalments during a fixed period of time. They will only have to pay the lorry fare in advance through money order.

But any new customer does not get such privileges, because no wholesaler can rely on a new customer. Everything depends on the confidence of the wholesaler in the customers.

It is reported that a sum of Rs. 10 as lorry charge is also added to the price of the raw materials, if they are sent by road by the wholesalers of Calcutta to the craftsmen. In case of purchase from the Co-operative Society it is enjoined on the artisans to make full payment beforehand to the Small Industries Corporation, Govt. of West Bengal by money order. On production of the acknowledgement slip the artisans can obtain the raw materials from the previously mentioned godowns.

Sometimes the artisans personally visit the different wholesalers' *arats* or godowns and take delivery of the raw materials themselves. The artisans of other centres personally visit the Madras merchants or wholesalers and obtain raw materials from them on cash payment.

Cut-pieces or fragments—Cut pieces or fragments of conch shell are obtained from Sankhari Patti of Vishnupur in the form of *Pan* or 80 pieces. The ownercraftsmen, after obtaining the raw materials, supply them to the *Bani* workers on the job order basis. The *Bani* workers do not purchase these things from any source.

They purchase *hingal* in the form of a *bhari*, *harital* in the form of a *seer*, *jau* or lac in the form of a *seer*, "top" like the tip of an "Alpin", of tinfoil also in the form of *bhari* and *Dhupa* or incense in the form of *chhatak*, red or green/blue pigments in retail forms and *Rajan* or Resin in the form of a *seer*.

The supply of raw materials is assured and smooth to the *Bani* workers. They have to fulfil no term or condition in this respect. Main raw materials are wholly supplied in the form of pieces by their Mahajans at the time of their job order. This is done in the interest of the Mahajans. But the subsidiary raw materials are purchased from different sources against cash payment.

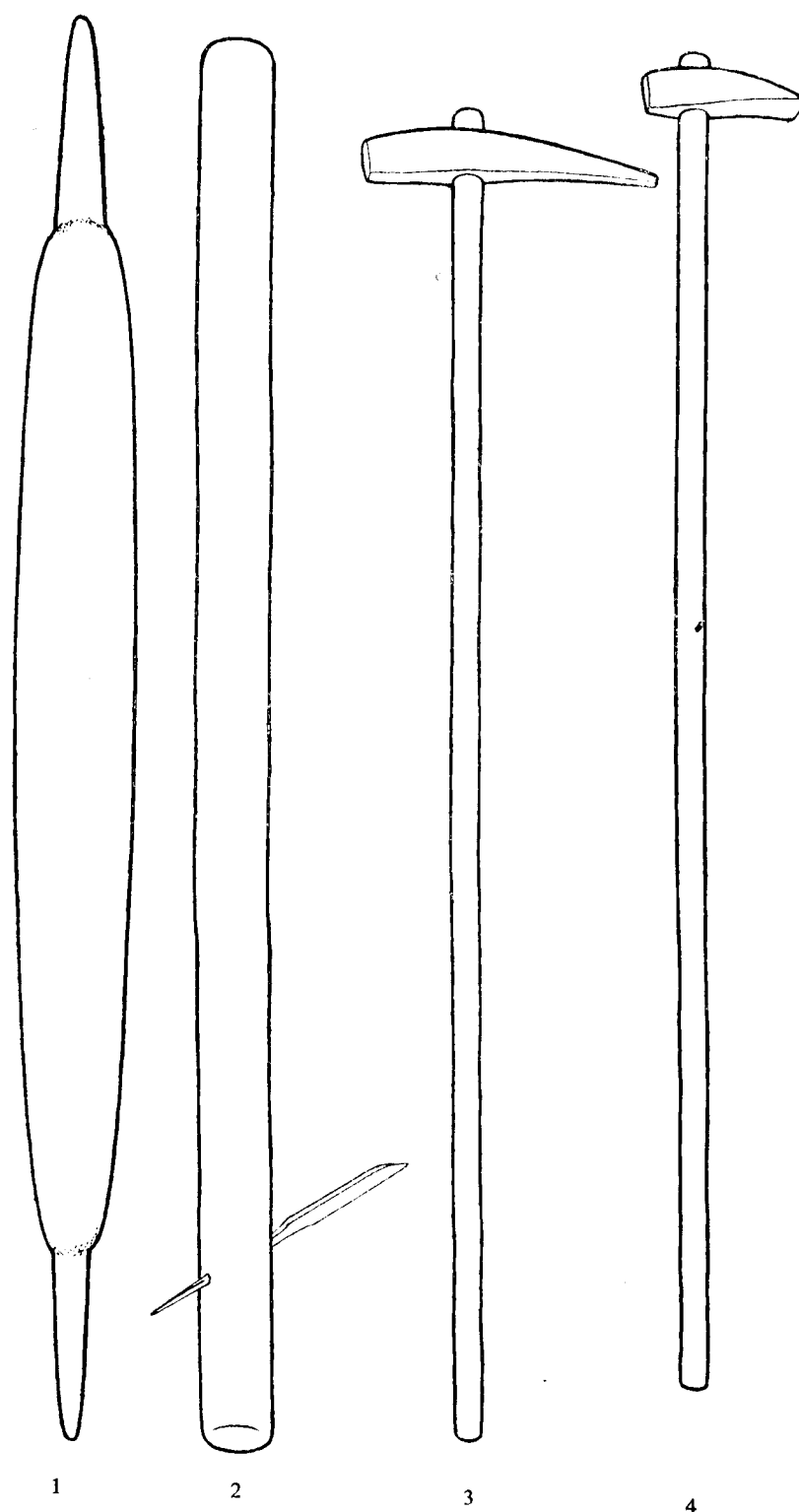
Price

As to *plain bangles* it has already been stated that there are two types of raw materials such as (1) Main raw materials and (2) Subsidiary raw materials.



TOOLS AND IMPLEMENTS FOR WHITE BANGLES

1. Sand stone for polishing
2. Tripod Stand
3. Files
4. Mandrel
5. Saw
6. Lac sticks for repairing
7. Hammer
8. Small saw used for line engraving
9. Acid for finishing
10. Oven
11. & 12. Two permanently fixed stakes on the seat
13. Gunny cloth



1. A MANDREL
2. A SAW SHARPENER
3. A SHARP EDGED HAMMER
4. A FLAT EDGED HAMMER

Main—(a) Intact conch shell—A gunny bag of intact conch shells contains shells of different size. It is of assorted type. Generally 1 gunny bag contains 150 pieces of intact conch shells and its price varies between Rs. 250 to Rs. 330. This price includes sales tax and the coolie charges.

(b) Cut-pieces—They are brought from Vishnupur in the form of *Pan* or 80 pieces which cost Rs. 2 at a time.

Subsidiary—Red, green/blue pigments are bought either at Vishnupur or at Kotulpur in retail form. These things are generally purchased in every small quantities generally on payment of 12 paise to 25 paise. The price of 1 *bhari* varies between 50 p. to 75 paise. The artisans purchase *jau* or lac at Rs. 2 per seer, *Dhupa* or incense at 12 p. per *chhatak*, *Rajan* or resin at Rs. 2 per seer.

It is reported that previously intact conch shells were imported from Ceylon and the price per gunny bag was quite low then. The quality of the conch shells was also quite good. In the past the supply of goods was very regular in nature. For all these reasons the artisans did not face any difficulty. But, at present, they are to remain content with the poor quality of basic raw materials supplied at irregular intervals and at a much higher price than before.

It is said that before independence one gunny bag of intact conch shells would cost them only Rs. 25. But now the things have taken a trend towards higher price and deteriorating quality.

In regard to *coloured bangles*, it has already been pointed out that the raw materials for such products also are mainly of two kinds—(1) *Main* and (2) *Subsidiary*.

Main—Intact conch shells are at first obtained from Calcutta wholesalers and a gunny bag containing 150 pieces of intact conch shells costs Rs. 250 to Rs. 330.

Cut-pieces in the form of fragments when purchased from Vishnupur cost Rs. 2 for a *Pan* or 80 pieces.

The independent workers generally purchase these two raw materials. But the *Bani* workers have no responsibility in regard to this aspect. Main raw materials in these two forms are supplied to the different *Bani* workers by different owner-craftsmen at the time of job order.

Subsidiary—The subsidiary raw materials for coloured bangles are more or less the same as those required for plain bangles. The additional materials required are 'top' which costs Re. 1 per *bhari*, *harital* one seer Rs. 12 and *hingal* one *bhari* Rs. 2.

Shell horns—It has also been pointed out before that the raw materials for this product are of two types—(1) *Main* and (2) *Subsidiary*

Main—Intact conch shell—Same as in the case of other products described earlier.

Subsidiary—Subsidiary raw materials in the form of 'nitric acid' is the only material used in the manufacture of this product. Nitric acid is bought from the market in the form of a bottle and each bottle costs Rs. 2 only.

It is found that due to high price of basic raw materials the artisans at present are not in a position to earn any profit from this craft. So many among them are now thinking in terms of leaving the traditional craft practised by their ancestors.

Tools and Equipments

The artisans of this village are following the traditional method of manufacturing conch shell products and have not felt the necessity of changing the technique. Nor have they given thought on resorting to new tools. The tools and equipments used by them are generally very simple except in one or two cases.

Names and description of the tools

Plain bangles—For the production of a plain bangle the following tools or instruments are necessary—

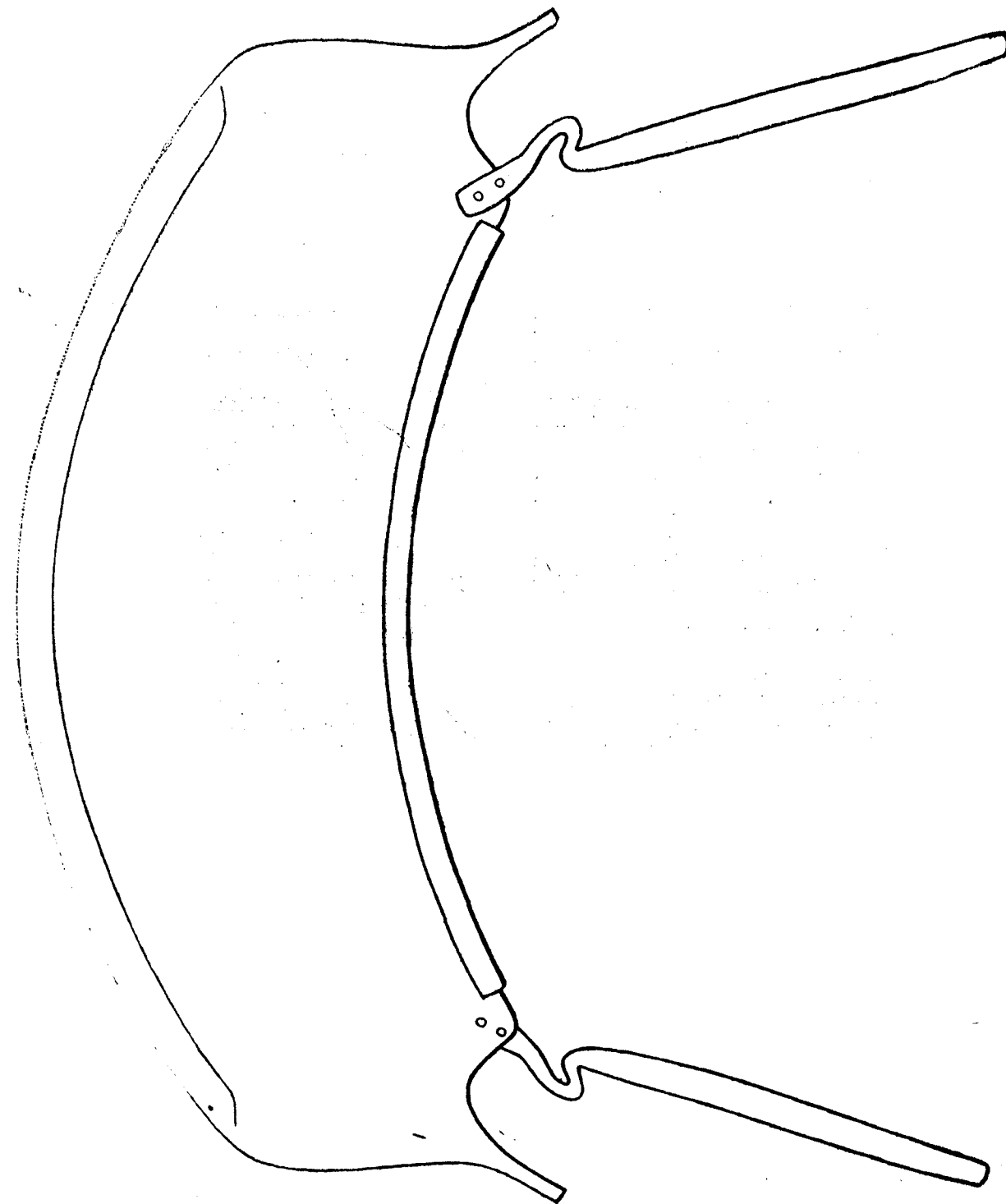
(1) **Hammer**—A small instrument, sharp-edged on one side and square on the other. It is used to extract the columella from the conch shell and to open it from one end to another to have a mouth. By it, the apex and the lip are cut off. The head of this instrument is made of iron and the rod on which its head is fixed is made of bamboo.

Another hammer flat at one end and square shaped on the other is also used for the same purpose.

(2) **Saw or Karat**—A half-moon shaped or concave-convex steel plate, double-edged in nature. It has two handles at its two ends. It weighs 11 pounds. It is about 20 inches long with a varying breadth between 6 & 7 inches. With the help of this instrument intact conchshells are sized. *Malui* is made by cutting off the base or *Gnera* of the shell. From this *malui* (or main body) and also from *gnera* different ring shaped pieces are obtained.

At present the use of this instrument (hand saws) is slowly going out of use due to heavy competition from the mechanical saws operated by power.

The hand saw's edge is minutely dented. It therefore requires occasional re-sharpening and such re-sharpening is done by small instrument known as *Arun*. It consists of a wooden rod, 15" in length and a steelplate attached to



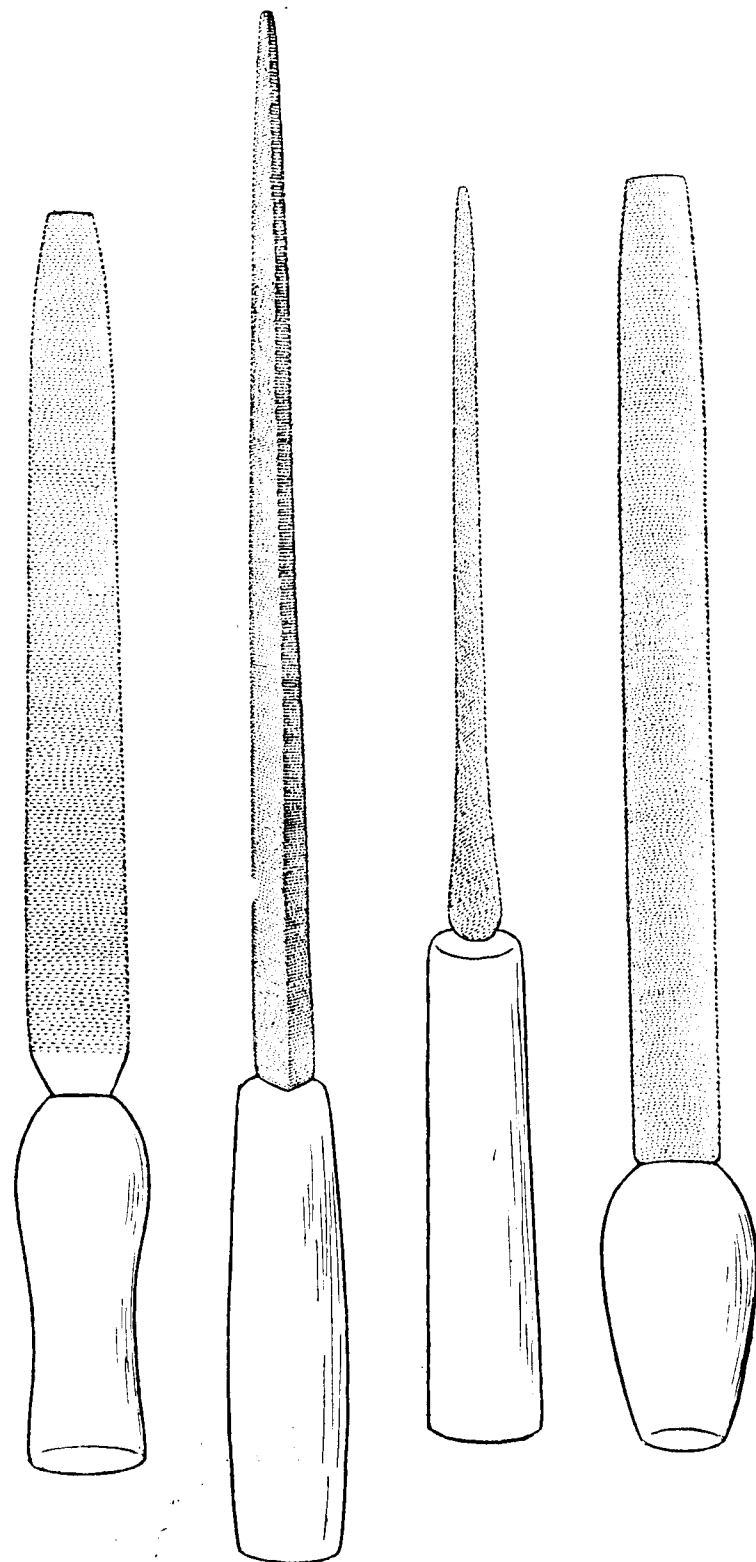
A HAND SAW



TOOLS AND IMPLEMENTS FOR COLOURED BANGLES

1. Small saw used for engraving lines
2. Container of colour sticks, colour threads and lac sticks made of bamboo
3. Tripod stand, used for colouring and designing purpose
4. Sand stone for polishing
5. Gunny cloth used as a seat
6. & 7. Wooden disc and its stand made of clay
8. Earthen oven
9. Blow pipe
10. Mandrel for polishing
11. Lac sticks for joining fragments to make complete bangle
12. Colour sticks
13. & 14. Tin plate and wooden plank used for keeping fragments and the finished bangle

FILES



1
1. A FLAT FILE
3. A ROUND FILE

2
2. A SQUARE FILE
4. A HALF-ROUND FILE

it. This steel plate is 4" in length and 1 inch in breadth.

It is like a chisel like hammer.

(3) *Sil*—A flat sandstone upon which bangles are polished. The outer portion of the bangles in cut piece form is rubbed on this sand stone. Its length varies between 10" & 12" and its breadth varies between 6" & 8".

(4) *Dara*—A sandcovered mandrel which is used for polishing. It is an iron stick on the body of which sand embedded with rough lac is plastered. Rough lac is, first of all, heated and when it melts it is mixed with the river sand and then their mixture is plastered over the iron stick. The inner portion of the cut piece is rubbed with the help of this instrument. An intact conch shell may also be rubbed upon it, when a shell horn is going to be made from it. It is 15 to 16 inches in length.

(5) *Kath or small saw*—A type of small saw used to engrave incised patterns, composed of straight lines, on the body of the cut piece. It consists of two portions; the upper portion is made of steel and the lower portion is made of wood. The steel plate at the upper portion is sharpened.

(6) *File or Uga*—An instrument, made of steel, used for engraving designs on the outer surface of the bangles. In this village the artisans use four types of files all of which are used for design-making. One file known as *kirkich* which is flat in shape with a projected point at its end at the lower portion. Another is known as *choupal* which is square in shape. The other two are known as *gol* due to its roundness. Of these two round shaped files, one is very thin and the other is comparatively thick.

The lower portion of the different files is used as handle which is broader than the blade, except in case of *kirkich*. The blades of the different files are all serrated.

The length of such files is generally 10 inches. In this village nowhere is to be seen any artisan working with tools, which are at variance with the tools of others.

(7) *Fukan*—It is a blow-pipe made either of bamboo or of iron. It is used for blowing the fire when any heating operation related to the craft is done.

It is manufactured by the local carpenter and blacksmith and costs only 25 paise.

Coloured bangles—For the production of coloured bangles the following tools are used—

The tools, described at (1) to (4) before, are also used here.

(5) *Katti or small saw*—It is a small saw. A steel plate is fixed to a wooden piece to make this saw. The steel plate is sharp edged on one side. This tool is used to make *suth* or to incise straight lines on the outer surface of the cut piece. It is used mainly in case of *Sonamukhi* bangles.

(6) *Files*—They are not used for the production of these bangles.

(7) *Pen or kalam*—It is a very simple tool of the shape of a quill pen made from bamboo. It is used to lacquer the outer surface of the coloured bangles. This tool is mainly used for painting purposes.

(8) *Lac stick or jau kathi*—It is also a very simple tool of the shape of thin stick made from bamboo. This tool is used to piece the fragments of conch shell and also to repair the damages.

Shell Horns—Tools described at (1), (3) and (6) are used.

How, when and where obtained

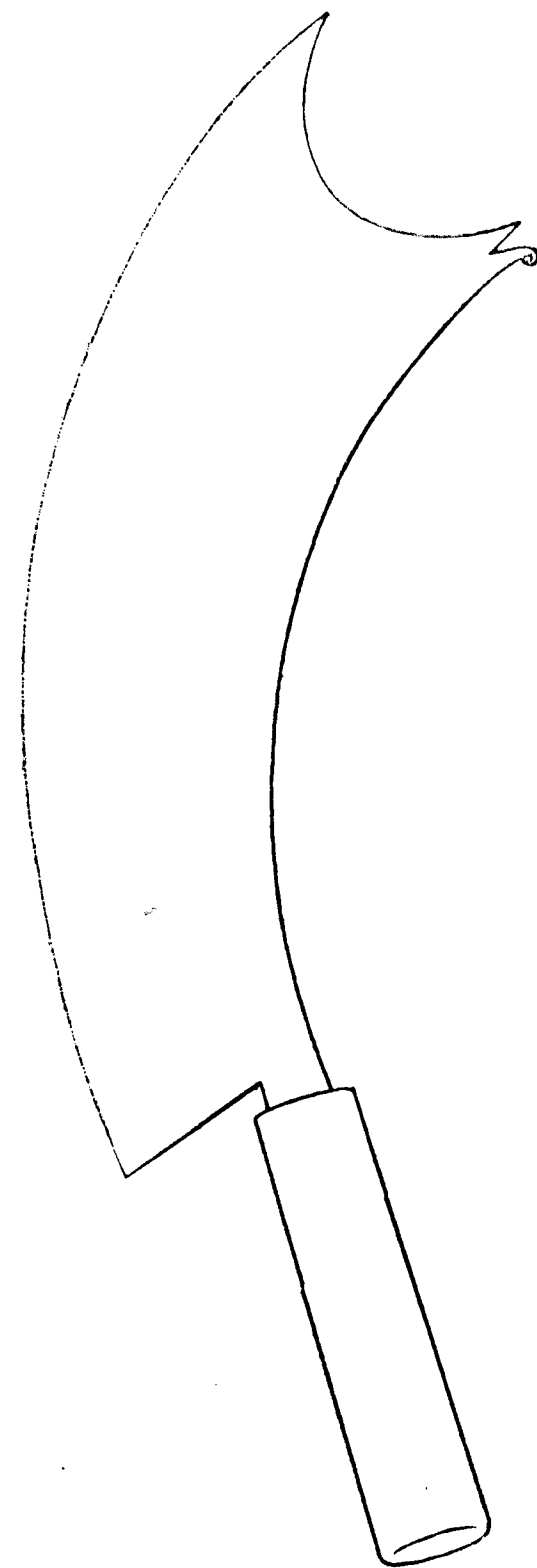
The different tools mentioned above are procured by different artisans at their own initiative. When necessary, they purchase the tools against cash payment. Both the independent and *Bani* workers make different products with their own tools. In no case, tools are supplied to the contract labours by their order suppliers. No body gets any tool from other artisans on hire or on loan.

In this village no artisan is found working with tools on co-operative basis. Everybody works in his own house with his own tools.

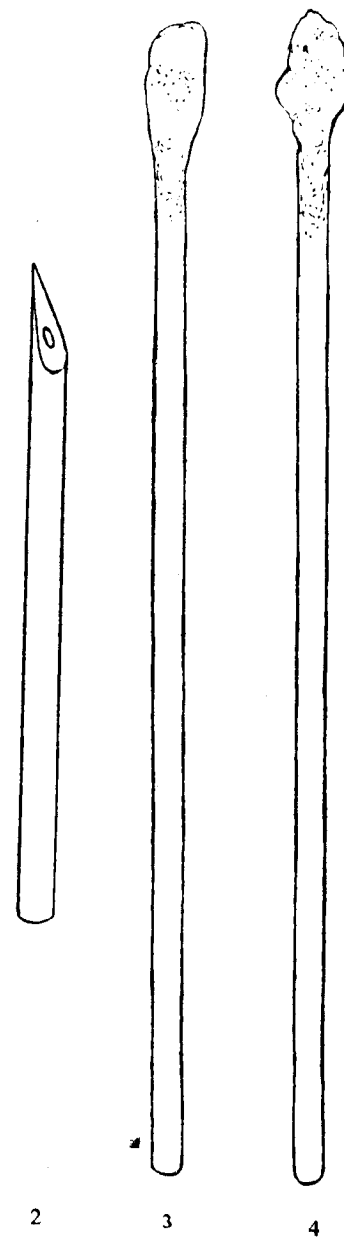
Tools are generally bought by the artisans at the time of necessity. They use traditional tools inherited from their ancestors.

Hammers are obtained from the different blacksmiths residing in neighbouring places of the village. *Gour*, *Kali* and *Rasamoy* Karmakars are the blacksmiths who manufacture these hammers along with other articles. The artisans procure hammers from them against cash payment. Sometimes, hammers are also purchased from Vishnupur. The two manufacturing centres of saw are located at Dinanathpur in the district of Burdwan and at Batul in the district of Begun police station in the district of Burdwan.

From these two places the artisans procure their saws against cash payment. The flat sand stones are manufactured at Mirzapur in the State of U. P. This implement is imported from U.P. to Vishnupur.



1

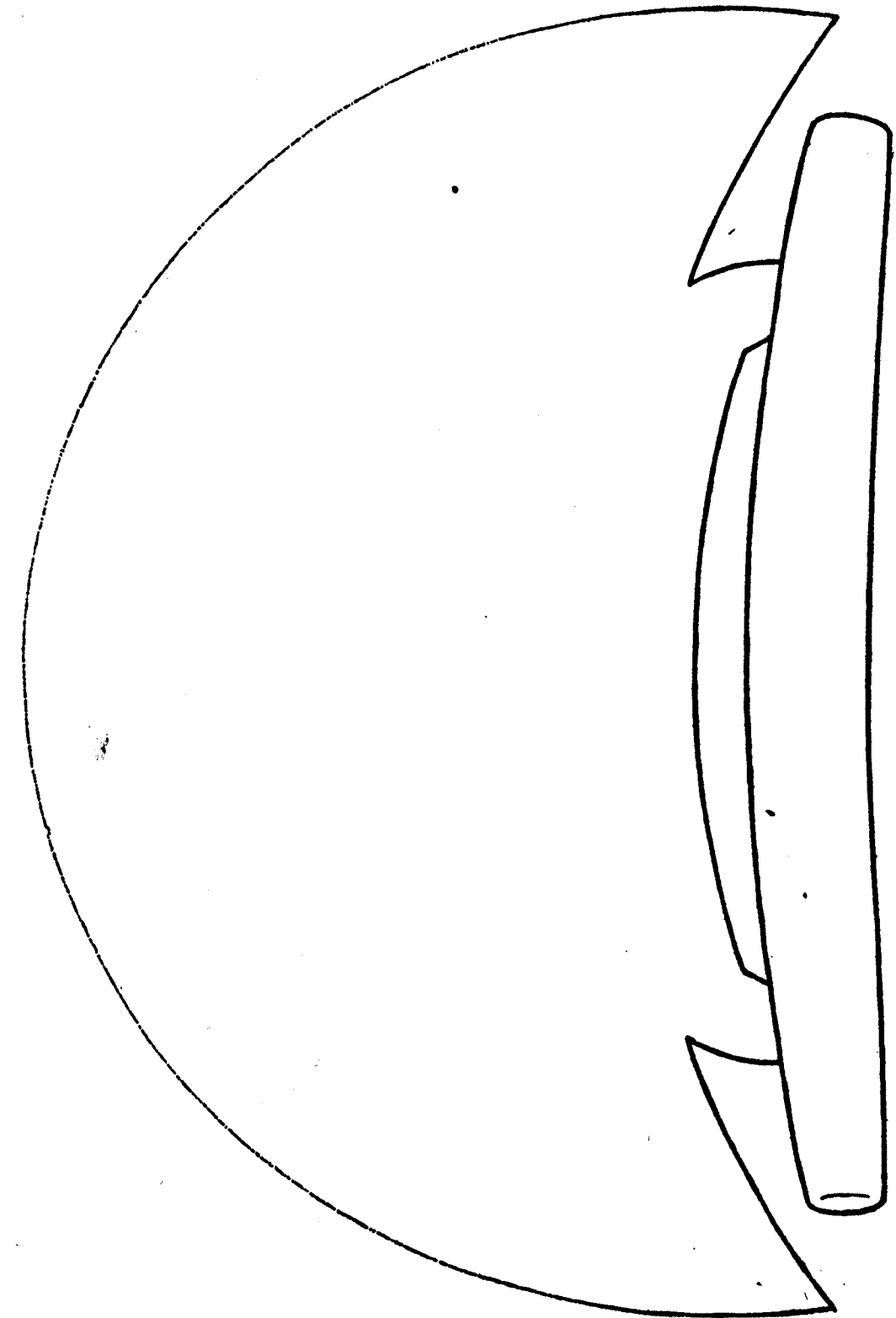


2

3

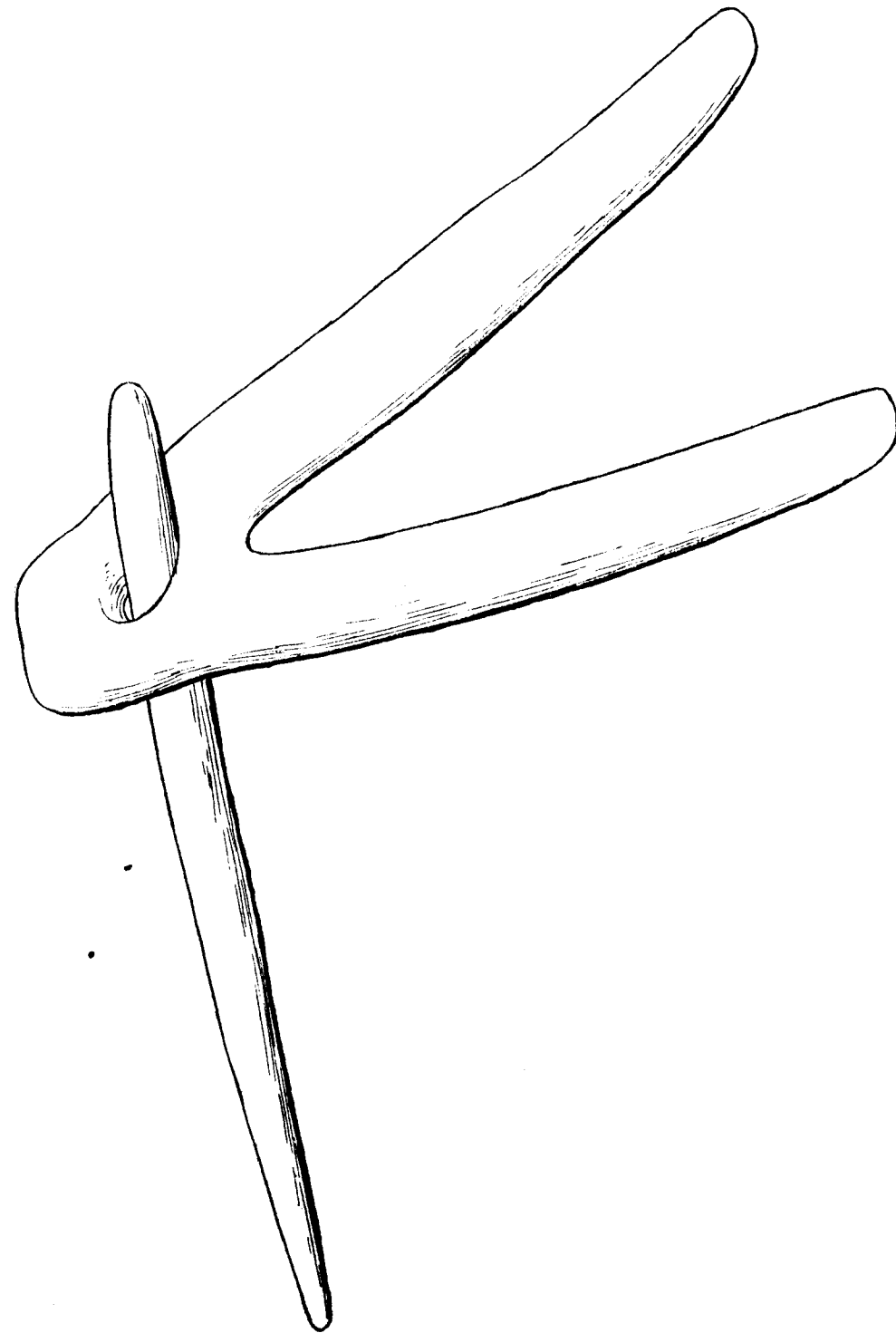
4

1. A SMALL HAND SAW
2. PEN FOR COLOURING
3. PEN FOR COLOURING (with colour)
4. LAC STICK



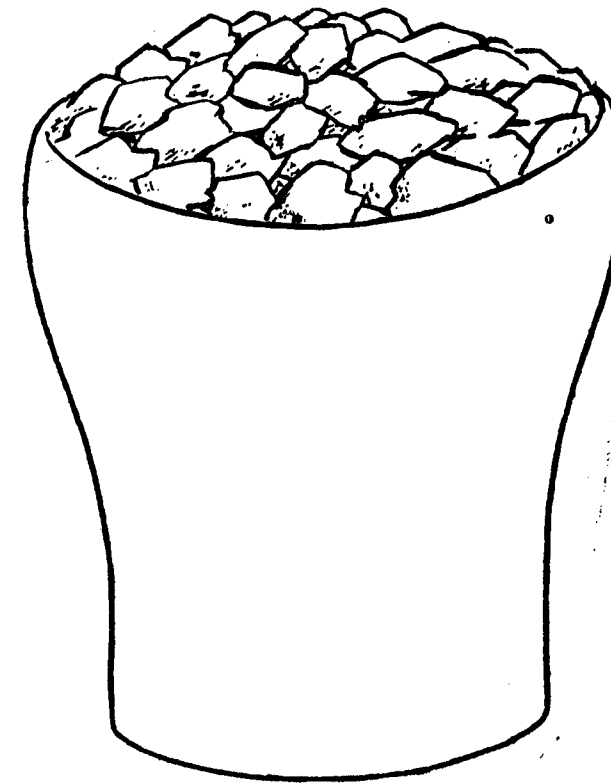
A SMALL HAND SAW

54



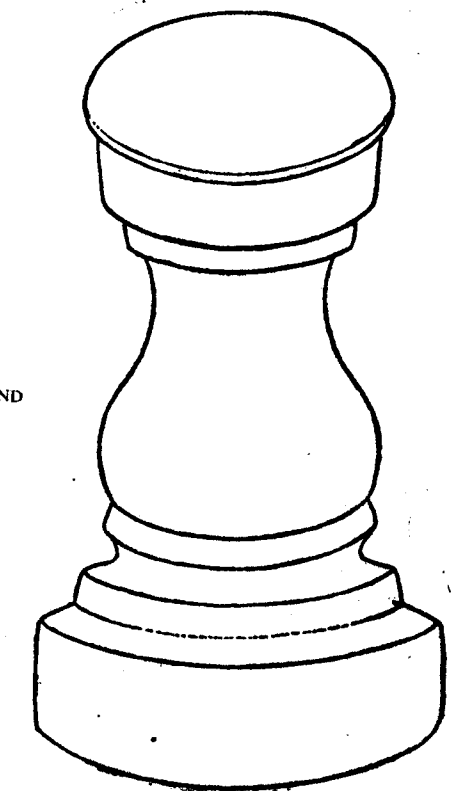
A STAND FOR ENGRAVING OF DESIGNS

55



AN OVEN

A WOODEN DISH WITH STAND



and the artisans purchase these implements from Vishnupur. The sand, embedded with rough lac—covered mandrels are made by the artisans themselves. The iron rods and rough lac are purchased either from Kotulpur or from Vishnupur. River sand is obtained in the village free of cost.

Kath or small saws are manufactured at Batul situated in the district of Howrah. From there they are imported to Vishnupur from where the artisans purchase these tools.

Price

Files are manufactured by the blacksmiths living outside the village. Approximate present cost price and the approximate past cost price of the various tools relating to the craft in this area may be given below :

Present cost price Approx. (per piece)	Approx. Past cost price (Before Partition) (per piece)
(1) Hammer—Rs. 4 . . .	Rs. 2
(2) Saw or <i>Karat</i> Rs. 85 to Rs. 120	Rs. 150—Rs. 200
(3) <i>Sil</i> or Sand stone Rs. 12 to Rs. 18	Rs. 80
(4) <i>Dara</i> or Sand covered mandrel—50 p.	50 p.
(5) <i>Kath</i> or small saw Rs. 2-50 p. to Rs. 3	Re. 1
(6) <i>Katti</i> or small saw Rs. 5 to Rs. 6	Rs. 4
(7) Files or <i>Uga</i> —Rs. 2 to Rs. 2-25 p.	Re. 1-25 p.— Re. 1-37 p.
(8) <i>Jau kathi</i> or lac stick—50 p.	25 p.
(9) Pen or <i>Kalam</i> —25 p. . .	1-06 p.

Now on analysis, we find that the present cost price of almost all the tools has increased than before except in case of 'Saw' and *Dara*. The price of 'Saw' has fallen down due to the introduction of machine saw and the price of *Dara* has remained the same, as because it is mainly made by the artisan himself.

Name and description of the equipments

The different equipments used for the manufacture of different products of the craft are quite simple in nature. The names and descriptions of such equipments may be discussed now.

(1) *Dakhna Bari*—A tripod stand of three sticks, two short and the third long. The two former ones are joined together in an inverted V

form in such a way that they connect themselves together at the apex. There is an opening at the joined portion at the apex. Through this opening from one side a long stick is inserted to the extent desired. With the aid of this equipment the artisan, who sits at one side of the long stick, has all the support he requires, while engraving designs upon the bangles inserted between the long stick. All sticks of the tripod stand are made of wood.

(2) *Deogo or Deuki*—It is in the form of a round shaped stand made of clay. It is used as a support for holding the *chaki-pati* upon it. It is used at the time of lacquering bangles.

(3) *Chaki-pati*—This implement or equipment is also used for lacquering bangles. It is a disc-shaped wooden piece which is placed upon the *Deogo* and over it bangles are placed for painting with the help of *kalam* or pen-shaped coloured stick.

(4) *Mete*—It is a cylindrical implement with wide mouth used for heating of rough lac, different pigments and the bangles. Upon this, charcoal is put and over the charcoal the different objects are placed for heating.

(5) *Sarashi or tongs*—It is used for holding different objects in connection with different processes relating to this craft.

(6) *Bhramar*—An equipment used for drilling of coloured bangles. With the help of this small tool drills are made for fixing together different pieces of coloured bangles (Sonamukhi or Maja) through a thread inserted through these drills. This equipment is made of wood.

(7) *Chonga*—It is a cylindrical hollow piece of bamboo used for keeping the subsidiary raw materials, coloured sticks and lac sticks.

It is also manufactured by the local carpenters and its price varies between 25 to 37 paise per piece.

How and when and from where obtained

All these equipments are traditional ones and are inherited by the artisans after the demise of their father or practising members. But when such equipment becomes obsolete, the artisans bring in new equipments against cash payment. Every artisan possesses the equipments of his own. Implements are not given either on lease or on loan basis.

It is found that in many cases where the artisans have left the craft they have sold the implements to other artisans.

The independent workers do not supply any equipment to the worker on job order basis. The *Bani* workers possess implements of their own. Each artisan whether he is an independent or a *Bani* worker works with his own equipments in his own house. In no case, articles are produced with the help of different equipments on a co-operative basis.

It is needless to say that worn out implements are replaced by new ones.

The different equipments are manufactured by carpenters and blacksmiths who live in the neighbouring areas of the village. The village artisans procure them from these places. In some cases such implements are obtained either from Vishnupur or from Kotulpur.

Price

Approximate present cost price of the different equipments used in connection with different processing of the craft is given in the next column :

	Present cost price (approx.)	Past cost price (approx.) (Before Partition).
(1) <i>Dakhna Bari</i> . . .	50 P. to Re. 1	25 P. to 37 P.
(2) <i>Deogo or Deuki</i> . . .	25 P.	12 P.
(3) <i>Chak-pati</i> . . .	50 P.	25 P.
(4) <i>Mete</i> . . .	37 P.	25 P.
(5) <i>Sarashi or tong</i> . . .	75 P.	50 P.
(6) <i>Bhramar</i> . . .	50 P.	37 P.

Now if we compare the prices it is clear to us that the price of different implements in all cases has showed an upward tendency. The present cost price of all the implements used in connection with the different processes of the craft has gone up than before.

CHAPTER VII

Physical structure, environment and hygienic condition of workshop

In most of the cases the workshop is of dwelling-cum-workshop type. Majority of the workers have their places of work located in open sheds or verandahs or raised portions of the house in front open to the road; but in some cases, mainly in case of female workers the different processes of the craft are carried on usually in open sheds or verandahs inside the house. Only 2 households have a separate place of work at some distance from their residential house. Light and ventilation being the prime consideration, it is obvious that workshops are located in open space.

The physical structure of the workshop or place of work of the village artisan reveals that the space on which the different processes of the craft are carried on covers an area—12 ft x 8 ft. Within such a space the worker squatting either on a gunny cloth or on a low stool performs manifold activities with the help of various tools and equipments.

Physical condition of the workshop

It has already been mentioned that the artisans operate either in an open verandah or in an open shed. These places of work are located mainly in the front facing the road and sometimes in the interior of their dwellings. Such open sheds

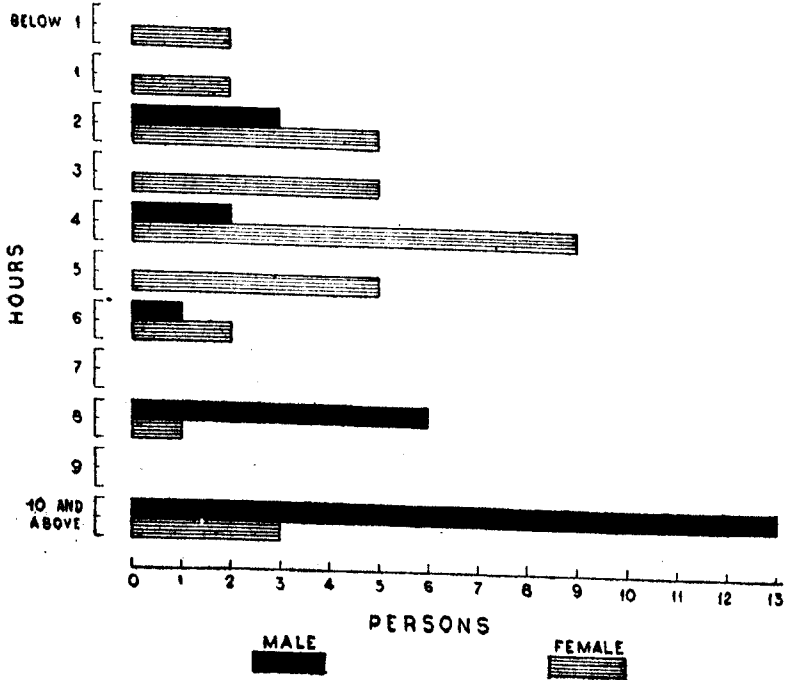
or verandahs are closed at one side and open on three other sides.

The floor of these places of work is made of earth and the roofs are built either with tin or straw/hay.

During work the artisans squat upon a gunny cloth or a low stool placed on the floor. They generally sit facing that particular direction from which they get sufficient light. For this reason the craftsmen sit on the floor either facing the road or the open side of the place of work.

Hours of work

The craft, under study, being a household industry, we should know how much time the artisans spare for the craft. As it calls for very strenuous work, the artisans have to be very industrious. They begin their work in the morning soon after their breakfast and continue their work till the time for bathing and taking mid-day meal, which usually takes place between 1 and 2 O'clock. After meal they take some rest and again resume their work and continue till the dusk sets in. The nature of work is such that the workers have to utilise the daylight and give up their work as soon as the daylight is insufficient. It is particularly observed that none of the craftsmen works at night. Now, in order to indicate the hours of work of the different artisans of the village, a table is given in the next page.



WORKSHOP-CUM-DWELLING OF A SANKHA BANIK



WORKSHOP-CUM-DWELLING OF A BAIRAGI

Caste/Tribe	Below 1 Hour		1 Hour		2 Hours		3 Hours		4 Hours		5 Hours	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Sankha Banik	..	2	..	2	3	3	..	5	1	7	..	5
Brahman	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bairagi	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	1	2	..	..
Sutradhar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	..	2	..	2	3	5	..	5	2	9	..	5

Caste/Tribe	6 Hours		7 Hours		8 Hours		9 Hours		10 Hours and above		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Sankha Banik	1	2	..	..	4	1	..	..	9	3	48
Brahman	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	1	3
Bairagi	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	7
Sutradhar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
Total	1	2	..	..	6	1	..	..	12	4	59

From this table we find that the artisans are engaged in work for 10 hours or above in the maximum and less than 1 hour in the minimum. It is interesting to note that the workers belonging to Bairagi, Sutradhar and Brahman castes, although this craft is not their traditional occupation, are engaged in work for the maximum hours along with their Sankha Banik brethren, of whom this craft is the traditional occupation.

It is also reported by the artisans that non-availability of raw materials affects the volume of work as well as working hours. It was further stated by the artisans that in the recent past the volume of work was large and they had to work longer hours than they are required to at present. Now with lesser volume of work they have to work for lesser number of hours.

Stages of production

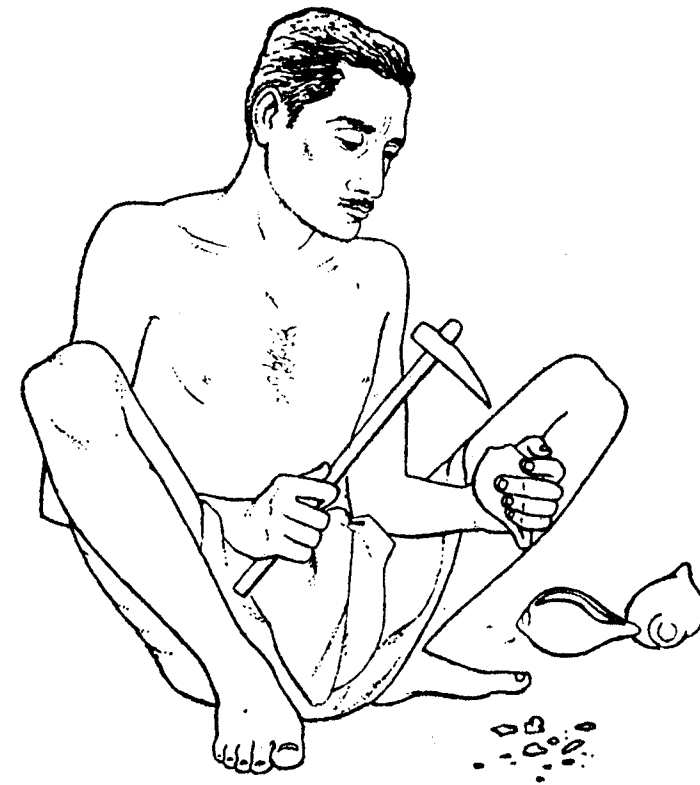
It is mainly a household craft confined to the family and carried on by the head of household with the help of his family members. As there has been no change in techniques pertaining to this craft the artisans have been following them unchanged up to this day in the craft's different stages of production. Whatever technical knowledge the craft requires, father communicates it to his son and this process of transmission goes on from generation to generation. Different stages of production in relation to the craft can be indicated in a step by step analysis.

White bangles —

(1) Hammering—The intact conch shells are poured from the gunny bag. The artisans squat on the floor of the place of work on gunny cloth, choose one shell and then begin to hammer it with the small hammer which has already been described. With this small hammer the artisan makes the conch shell's shape almost circular by breaking the edges or extracting the columella from it. Then the lip is broken and a small hole is made at the apex from where the inner dusts are cleared out. This stage of production is locally known as *Bindh*.

(2) Sizing—Then the artisan squats on a gunny cloth tightly wedged between two bamboo stakes fixed on the ground and press the shell between the right leg's toe and the left leg's heel. At first the *gnera* or base of the shell is cut off from the body by the saw. The remaining portion is known as *malui* and from the *malui* the different slices in ring shaped forms are obtained. This process is locally known as *Majar*. Sometimes pieces are obtained from *gnera* also.

(3) Cutting or slicing—The *Malui* is then sliced with the curved saw to obtain different ring shaped slices. The sitting position of the cutter is same as before. Before the slicing operation begins, a disc of hard wood is placed



HAMMERING INTACT CONCH SHELLS

SIZING INTACT CONCH SHELLS



CUTTING INTO PIECES

POLISHING INNER PORTION OF A
BANGLE ON A MANDREL



DESIGNING

POLISHING IN ACID SOLUTION

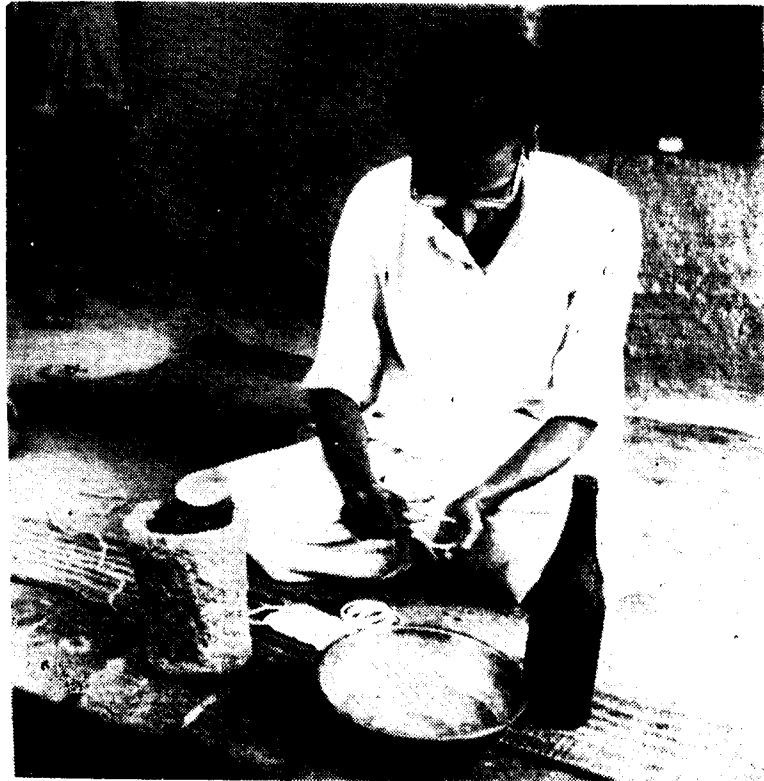


POLISHING OUTER PORTION
OF A BANGLE ON A SAND STONE

LINE ENGRAVING



THE WHITE BANGLE IN DIFFERENT STAGES OF PRODUCTION



FINISHING WITH WAX

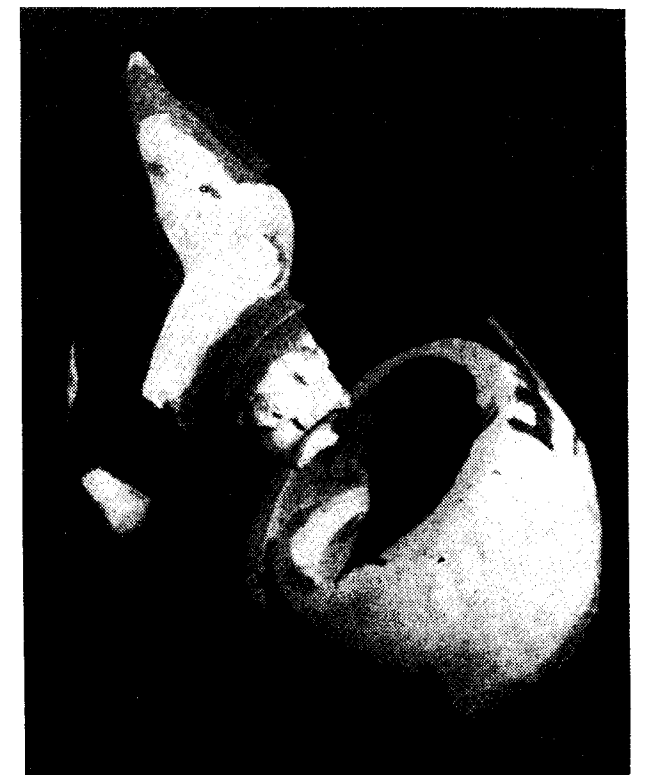


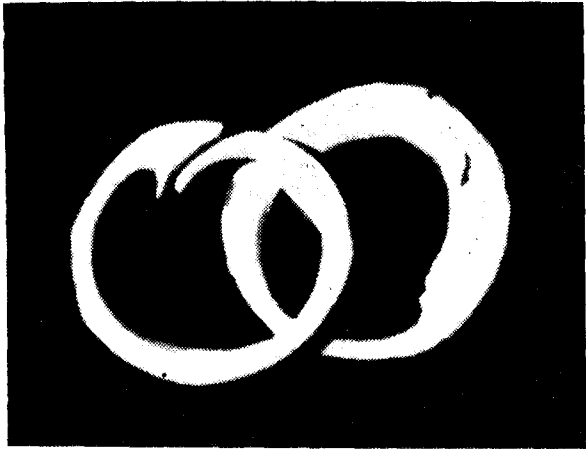
THE CONCH SHELL WITH ITS BROKEN APEX AND COLUMELLA EXTRACTED

PAINTING COLOURED DROPS



TWO SECTIONS OF THE CONCH SHELL AFTER SIZING
THE UPPER AND THE LOWER PORTIONS ARE
CALLED MALUI AND GNERA.

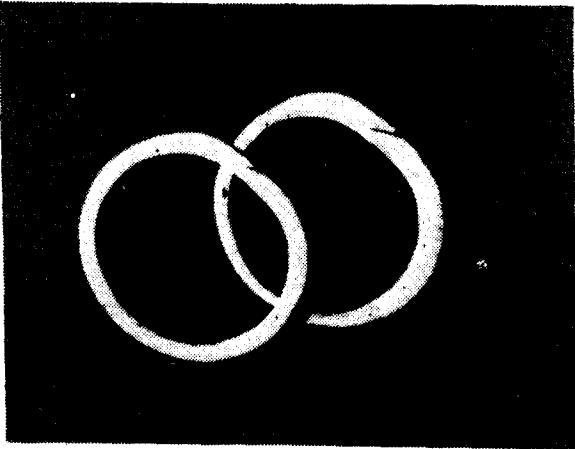




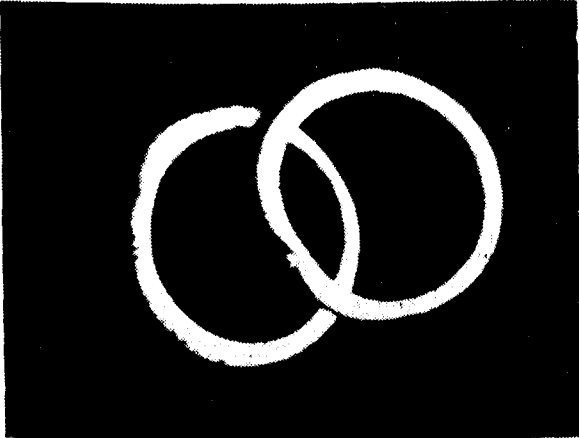
A SLICED PIECE



THE PIECE WITH ITS INNER PORTION POLISHED

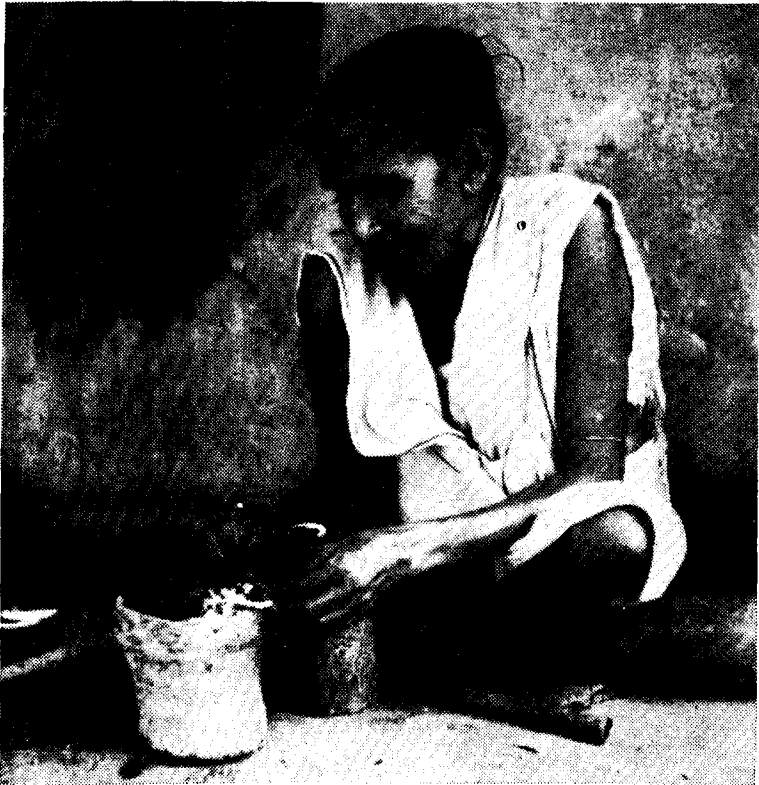


THE PIECE WITH ITS INNER AS WELL AS OUTER PORTIONS POLISHED



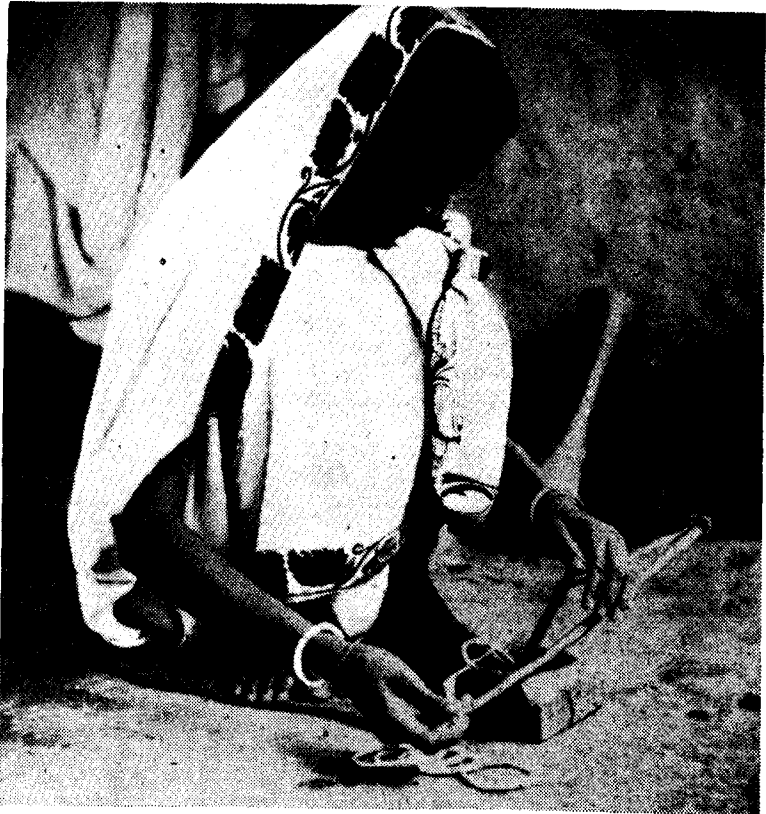
A FINISHED BANGLE WITH ENGRAVED DESIGNS

COLOURED BANGLE



JOINING CUT PIECES WITH LAC

DRILLING





POLISHING BANGLES ON
A MANDREL

(Dara)—an iron stick plastered with
sand and rough lac. The inner
portion of the bangles are polished
on it by rubbing them up and
down the mandrel.



POLISHING OUTER SURFACE OF A BANGLE
ON A SANDSTONE

LINE ENGRAVING



over the mouth of the *malui* and charcoal marks are made on the *malui*. From a full sized intact conch shell 8 to 10 pieces of ring-shaped pieces are obtained generally.

In this village at present this operation is restricted to a limited number of households due to the introduction of machine saws in Vishnupur.

(4) Rubbing or Polishing—The sliced portions are then polished or rubbed. By this operation the outer portion of the sliced pieces are rubbed or polished on the sand stone or *sil* and the inner portion of the sliced pieces are rubbed or polished on sand-covered mandrel or *dara*.

(5) Engraving or Design-making—The polished cut-pieces are then incised and engraved with the help of small saws and files. Different lines are incised by small saws and various designs are engraved or embossed on the bangles by means of files of different sizes.

(6) Finishing—The holes are sealed with wax. Five coloured drops are painted on the joint. The bangles are then bleached in Nitric Acid solution and finally polished by a dry cloth.

Coloured bangles —

The previously mentioned stages of production from (1) to (4) are also used in the manufacture of this product.

(5) Joining of fragments—Conch shell fragments of the inferior or damaged conch shells are produced by cutting or slicing operations done by the saw. Now in order to obtain coloured bangles the fragments are joined together by piece out system on *Jau Kathi* or lac stick with the help of a gum prepared from rough lac, resin, shell powder, etc. By the piece out system fragments of coloured bangles are joined together with the help of 'lac stick' and a gum of rough lac, resin and shell powder. The pieces are tightened by a small tin coil. With the colouring the coil and the joined marks are invisible to the eye, thanks to the craftsmanship of the artisans.

Three separate fragments, joined together, generally make a piece of bangle. The fragments are fixed together by a small tin coil very minute and almost invisible to the naked eye after lacquering. Plain red bangles may be made also from a single piece but this process is essential for other coloured bangles.

(5a) Drilling—A small hole on each piece is drilled with the *bhramar* or *turpun*.

(6) Incision—With the help of small saws straight lines are incised on the body of the bangles. Files are not used ordinarily. Only

in case of the production of plain red bangles in a single household the *Kirkich* file is used to engrave design on it.

(7) Lacquering—Various pigments are painted on the body of the bangles for decorative purposes with the help of a pen shaped stick locally known as *Kalam*.

In case of *Sonamukhi* and *Maja* the colours like red, yellow and green are painted on the body of the bangles. When such painting is over, 'top's made of metal and of the size of a pin, are pasted on such bangles. Generally 5 'top's are pasted on each bangle. In other coloured bangles red colour is painted both inside and outside the body of the bangles.

Obtaining red and yellow colours—A stick, made of bamboo is at first placed above 'burning charcoal' contained in *Mete* (the small oven) and when it is heated it is touched on the crystals of rough lac. The rough lac gets stuck to the stick. Then the stick is again heated and touched again to the crystals of lac. After sometime, the lac is pasted round the stick. Prepared *hingal* is dipped in water in a pot or cup, when it becomes effervescent. Water is then poured off. The stick is now pressed to the water mixture of *hingal* and thus some *hingal* adheres to the stick which is warmed again. A reddish paste is, thus, obtained on the stick.

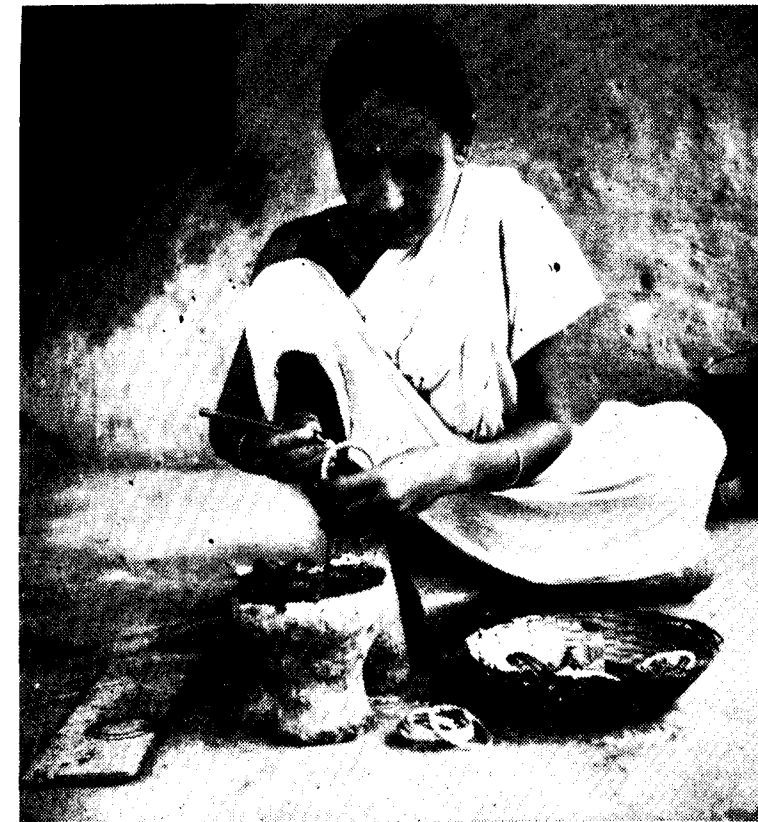
The above process is now substituted by another method. *Hingal* is pounded on a mortar with slight amount of water. Mercury is washed out with water. The process is repeated two or three times. The red residue is mixed with warmed lac, being stirred with two sticks. The mixed paste is allowed to solidify and cut to small square pieces. The small piece is heated again and pasted on the bangles with the help of a *kalam*.

From this stick which is locally known as *kalam*, the red colour is used on the body of the bangles.

Yellow colour is obtained almost in the same way and the colour is painted on the body of the bangles.

Both red colour and yellow colour are painted on the bangles with the combination of some quantity of lac.

It appears that such colouring is done mainly for purpose of covering the poor quality and damaged condition of the conch shells. The string, which joins the different fragments, is not taken off from the bangles and after colouring it becomes ordinarily invisible to the eye.



COLOURING



DROP-PAINTING
'TOP'



TYING WITH A THREAD

In case of coloured bangles sometimes it is found that *Guna* or yellow-coloured threads are prepared from the aforesaid coloured stick for using them on such bangles. For this purpose, such coloured stick is heated first. The coloured threads are pulled out slowly and gently from the heated soft stick with the help of the nails of the artisans. They are set or fixed over the outer surface of the bangles with the help of a *kalam* while they remain hot.

(8) *Tying*—Five pieces of coloured bangles are tied together with a thread to form one bangle of the pair.

Shell hours

(1) *Hammering*—From the intact conch shell the apex is cut off with a hammer and the inner dusts are cleared off.

(2) *Polishing*—The shell is then rubbed or polished on the sand stone to make the conch shell smooth.

(3) *Engraving*—Designs are then engraved on the body of the shells with the help of files. Floral designs are generally engraved on the body of the conch shell. No colour is used in connection with the making of the designs. Designs add to the decorative value of the horns.

Descriptions of operations involving manipulation of tools, and processing of raw materials stage by stage

(1) *Hammering*—This work is done in open sheds or in open verandahs of the artisan's houses. The artisan sits on a gunny cloth and holds the intact conch shells on the palm of his left hand and the tool (small hammer) in his right hand. In this position, the apex, lip and columella or edges are struck off, from the main body of the shell and inner dust is cleaned off through the broken apex.

(2) *Sizing*—At the time of this work the artisan sits on a gunny cloth between two short bamboo stakes of usual length fixed to ground. Against the longer one, measuring some 15 inches above the ground, the worker's back is supported; while against the shorter one, only 4 to 5 inches high, his toes are pressed. The space between these two stakes varies between 18 inches and 20 inches; so, although the worker sits with his knees wide apart, he sits in a very uncomfortable position. Seated in this position the artisan cuts off the base or *gnera* of the shell and make *malui* from the shells. From the *malui* different sections are sawn. At the time of sizing, the shell is placed between the right heel and left toe of the artisan. For this operation he uses the saw, sideways with both the hands.

The artisan holds the handles of the saw in his two hands; the left handle in his left hand and the right one in his right hand.

(3) *Cutting or slicing*—The workman squats on a gunny cloth wedged between the two stakes already mentioned. He places the *malui* between his right heel and the left toe and fixes a wooden disc in the mouth of the *malui*, so that it may be fixed to the former stake pressed between the right heel and left toe of the artisan. Then he holds the two handles of the saw balancing the saw in his hands, places the edges of the saw over the shell and begins to move this saw sideways, from left to right. Several times he stops to adjust the shell during this operation. The number of working sections given by a single shell is determined according to the shape and size of the shell and the thickness of the pieces desired.

(4) *Rubbing or polishing* (Inner portion)—It is done by means of a sand embedded with rough lac covered mandrel. Several sections of cut pieces are placed together in the form of a garland supported by a low stool whereupon the artisan sits and the second support is given by a bamboo pole or a wooden pole of the open shed or open verandah. Between these two supports the mandrel surrounded by different sections is placed above the ground in a slanting position. Polishing is done by rubbing the pieces up and down on the mandrel till the desired effect is obtained.

(5) *Rubbing or polishing* (Outer portion)—It is done by means of a sand stone locally known as *sil*. This operation is done to obtain the smoothness of the outer sections of the cut-piece.

The artisan holds the piece in his grip by the side of the article and then rubs it on a sand-stone which is placed on the ground. The sand-stone is placed just in front of the artisan, near his feet, so that sitting on a low stool or on a gunny bag he can carry on his work. By movement in all the direction the outer sections of the cut pieces are polished.

(6) *Engraving or-design making*—The tools used in the operation are either a small saw or files of various types.

The worker sits on a low stool, places the plain bangle on one end of the longer stick of the tripod stand, locally known as *Dakhna Bari* and then begins to engrave or emboss designs on the body of the bangles either by a small saw or by various files. With the help of small saws incised patterns in the form of straight lines are made but with the help of files various designs are engraved on the body of the bangle. The artisan holds handles of either the small

saw or the files in his right hand and leaning over the article, he engraves the designs.

(7) *Lacquering or colouring*—It is done by a pen-shaped stick known as *kalam* by the local artisans. By it, colours like red or yellow with a combination of rough lac and simple green colour are painted on the body of the bangles.

At the time of colouring the artisan holds the 'pen' in his right hand and keeps the article on the *chaki-pati* placed above *deuki* or *deogo*.

(8) *Joining different fragments*—The different fragments are joined together by piece out system and such piece out system is made with the help of an implement locally known as *jau kathi* or lac stick.

The artisan at the time of this operation holds the stick in his right hand and keeps the fragment on *chaki-pati* placed above the *Deuki* or

deogo. When the occasion arises the artisan puts the *jau kathi* over the joints of the different fragments and pastes the gum of resin and shell powder. The *jau kathi* is used as a pasting implement.

(9) *Repairing (on special occasion)*—If any crack or damage is found on the body of the bangles, the artisans use a solution as a remedy. The solution is pasted on the crack or damage of the bangles by a simple stick.

The paste or solution consists of the following materials—

- (1) Lac (Rough)
- (2) Wax
- (3) Zinc oxide

CHAPTER VIII

Particulars about storage, marketing and transport with reference to important object

If the artisans feel the necessity for keeping the finished products in store for some time, they generally store them in their habitational rooms and not in any other place. It is done so mainly due to the fact that their places of work are located either in an open shed or in the open verandah of their residential quarters. So from the point of both safety and protection the artisans think it prudent to keep their products in their habitational rooms. Storage is essential and indispensable only when there is a time gap between the production and disposal of products.

A small tin box is used as the container. When production is over the artisans pack the products with either a white paper or a brown paper, whichever is available and stock them in a tin box. The hawkers find it easy to travel from place to place with the handy box.

The standard tin box used as the container is 14" in length and 11" in breadth purchased from the local markets.

It may, however, be noted that as far as storage is concerned only independent workers are engaged in this operation and not others. *Bani* workers or workers on job order basis on the other hand, do not face the problem of storage. As soon as they finish their contract work, the finished products are deposited with their order suppliers. No time gap is allowed by them to intervene between the production and delivery of products. The delay in delivering the goods will imply delay in getting payment, much to the sufferance of the workers.

Local Markets

The artisans sometimes sell their products to the villages belonging to non-artisan families of different castes in their own premises. The pedlars or hawkers sell these wares in the neighbouring villages within a radius of 5 to 10 miles. They hawk either their own products or products purchased from independent workers. In any case, the products, whatever be their source, are disposed within the village in the first hand. The products are also sold in the *hat* of the village twice a week.

Sonamukhi and *Maja* bangles are not sold in any of the places.

Outside Markets

Finished products are sold to different big shops at Bankura, Vishnupur, Mayurbhanj and Purulia. Some artisans have also link with the markets in Hooghly and Midnapore districts. In some cases, articles are also disposed of in Calcutta. But *Sonamuhi* and *Maja* bangles are not sold at these places. *Sonamukhi* and *Maja* bangles have no local market and they are used by the Adibasis or tribal people of Bihar, viz., the Santals, Kols and Mahatos. The Santals of Bankura and Mahatos of Purulia do not however use the bangles produced here. The markets in Bandu, Sonahatu and Raheer all situated in Ranchi district have demand for the coloured bangles of this place. Sometimes, *paikars* or wholesalers, two of whom are males and one is a female, come to the village and purchase the products from the different artisan households at a time and take them to their respective villages in Bihar.

Fairs and Festivals

The artisans of the village also sell their wares at the centres where fairs or festivals take place. Plain bangles of various designs are sold in the following places :

Hooghly—

Raghubati	.	10/12	miles from the village
Kamarpukur	.	12	" "
Arambagh	.	16	" "

Bankura—

Baital	.	8	" "
Shior	.	9	" "
Larche	.	13	" "
Sambro	.	5	" "

A fair is held at Raghubati on *Maghi Purnima* for 4 days. On *Paus Sankranti* day fairs are held at Baital and Shior. Immediately after 'Holi' on the *Ambaruni* day, a fair begins at Arambagh and continues for 2 days. After *Sivaratri* a fair is held at Kamarpukur on the occasion of the

birthday of Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa. This festival continues for 4 days. On the *Paus Sankranti* day a fair is held at Larche. A fair is also held on the 1st Magh of the Bengali Calendar year at Sambro.

Terms and Conditions

The different products are sold to the customers, both *paikars* and hawkers, by the independent workers against cash payment. No artisan sells his product either on credit or on payment in instalments.

No barter system is in vogue in the village. The artisans practising other crafts purchase conch shell products from the conch shell craftsmen against cash payment. At present the conch shell bangle producers are facing a competition from the local market. The problem is posed by synthetic bangles, i.e. plastic bangles. The poorer section of the people have now begun to use plastic bangles for ornaments owing to their cheaper price and durability.

Sale and Utilisation

It is observed that only the independent workers are engaged in the sale and utilisation of their products. In 13 such households the heads take the responsibility of sale or utilisation of their own products. But the 13 households who work on contract basis are not concerned with the sale and utilisation of the products. Their products are delivered to their order suppliers. Four artisans, exclusively engaged in hawking are, of course, concerned with the sale. One household, engaged in the hammering and sizing operations, is not at all connected with production, sale and utilisation of any product.

Coloured bangles

It is reported by the independent workers, belonging to these 13 households, that the products which they also obtain on contract-labour are sold in retail or in wholesale. But *Sonamukhi* and *Maja* bangles are always sold on a wholesale basis. The hawkers, however, sell the products in retail. As the *Sonamukhi* and *Maja* bangles have no local market, they have got to be sold to the *paikars* wholesale. Its market is localised in Ranchi district and they are not used at all for family consumption.

But the plain red bangles used for marriage or ceremonial purposes and the small red bangles (*Ginibala*) used by children are always sold in retail form cent per cent.

White bangles

As to the plain (white) bangles it is found that approximately 55 per cent of the products are sold in retail and approximately 41 per cent of the finished products are sold in wholesale, the rest being used for household consumption in the different households. Only in 8 households an insignificant quantity of products is consumed at home.

Shell horns

75 per cent of the shell horns produced are sold in retail form and 25 per cent of them are sold in wholesale form.

Fluctuations in demand and cause for sale

No fluctuation in the general demand has been observed. But in rainy seasons, there is a slight depression in the disposal of the products. The *paikars* from Bihar cannot come here to purchase the coloured bangles and the different artisans also are not able to go outside to sell their products.

On the other hand, in winter the disposal of the products has a spurt. During that time different fairs and festivals take place at certain centres. The artisans have a brisk business with their finished wares in those places.

During the major part of the year the sale and utilisation pattern of the different artisans' households always remain the same.

Undisposed stock

At present, the volume of work is such that the artisans do not hoard any product or keep any stock at home. Nothing remains at home at the end of the year. They always try to clear off what they produce.

Transport

The artisans obtain the intact conch shell from the Calcutta wholesalers, who send the raw materials to the artisans by private lorry, for which a hire charge of Rs. 10 per trip is paid by the artisan to the lorry owners.

When the artisans personally visit the godowns of the different wholesalers, they bring their raw materials themselves to the village by private lorry along the road route. In this case also a charge of Rs. 10 per trip is paid to the lorry-owner.

The different transport agencies which take the responsibility of such operations are :

- (1) Prabhat Transport Co.
- (2) New Vishnupur Transport Co.
- (3) Hazra Transport Co.

All these transport companies have their head-quarter at Calcutta and godowns at Vishnupur and Kotulpur. These companies unload the bags of raw materials either at Vishnupur or at Kotulpur godowns. The artisans have to take delivery of the materials from these godowns. The goods are carried home by bus, rickshaw or bullock carts. But the Prabhat Transport Co. carries the goods to the village proper. The subsidiary raw materials, tools and implements are sometimes purchased from different places outside the village and for this purpose the artisans use private buses or the available rickshaws as means of transport. For sale of the finished

products the artisans also make use of them. The different private buses which ply along the Vishnupur-Kalipur metalled road are owned by four persons :

- (1) Sri Kalipada Raha
- (2) Sri Sukumar Banerjee
- (3) Sri Bamondas Bhattacharjee
- (4) Sri Ghosal

Except Sri Banerjee who lives at Kotulpur, all other persons reside at Vishnupur.

The owner of the rickshaw is Sri Gopi Modak, a resident of the village and the rickshaw puller is Sri Siddheswar Bauri, also a native of the village. The rickshaw puller pays 1 rupee daily as hire charge to the owner of the rickshaw.

CHAPTER IX

Particulars about cost of production

In this chapter a study has been made on the cost of production under various heads of accounts, with reference to important products of the craft.

Before we proceed with our discussion we may point out at the very outset that to estimate or to ascertain the true cost of production is a very difficult and complicated job. In this village handicraft various factors make the matter complicated and difficult and the factors are stated as under—

1. In case of owner-craftsmen families, it is not very easy to ascertain the unproductive or productive labour imparted by the head of household and his family members.

2. There is no continuity of work. The volume of work depends entirely on the availability or supply of raw material.

3. Some processes of production are done outside the premises of the workers.

4. The size and variety and the price of the main raw material often vary.

But, inspite of all the limitations an attempt has been made to give a rough estimate about the cost of production under various heads of account with reference to the different articles.

Name and size of products

To recapitulate the previous discussion it may be stated here again that in this village the artisans manufacture the following products—

- (1) Plain bangles—2 inches or $2\frac{1}{2}$ of an inch,
- (2) Coloured bangles—2 inches. (*Sonamukhi* and *Maja*)
- (3) Shell horn—5 inches.
- (4) Red bangles (Plain)—2 inches or $2\frac{1}{2}$ of an inch.
- (5) Ginibala (red bangles for children)—(small—1 inch to $1\frac{1}{2}$ of an inch).

Quality and price of raw material

With regard to plain bangles it has already been stated that they are prepared from cut pieces of an intact conch shell and from such an object 6 to 8 pieces may be obtained. For an artisan an intact conch shell costs approximately Rs. 5. Raw material is sometimes purchased

by the artisans and sometimes received by them on job order basis from the Mahajans.

It has also been pointed out earlier that coloured bangles in the form of *Sonamukhi* or *Maja* are manufactured from fragments obtained from an intact conch shell which produces about 20 to 24 fragments generally. For the production of these bangles raw materials are in some cases purchased by the artisans and sometimes the materials are supplied to them by their Mahajans or order suppliers. A single fragement costs approximately .07p.

It is also known that one shell horn is manufactured from an intact shell which costs Rs. 5. It is produced in only two households and the raw material is purchased by these artisans. Plain red bangles are made from pieces obtained from intact conch shell and intact shells are supplied by the Mahajans to the manufacturers.

Small bangles for children are also produced from pieces obtained from intact conch shells supplied by the Mahajans.

In connection with subsidiary or minor raw materials it may be said that in respect of all products the artisans purchase them at a time and use them in the production of the respective products till they exhaust the stock. The artisans, except in few cases, have no idea about the quality and price of the materials, used for the production of a particular unit of the product.

Cost of transport

The artisans incur the lorry hire charge of Rs. 10 per trip for bringing the raw materials from the wholesalers of Calcutta. They also spend Rs. 2 for the to and fro journey between the village and Vishnupur by bus and 37p for that between the village and Kotulpur. They make these journeys towards Kotulpur and Vishnupur in connection with business relating to the craft. Some artisans also bring the raw materials direct from Calcutta personally. They spend Rs. 10 as transport cost on such trips.

For pedlary of their wares the hawkers spend Rs. 30 to Rs. 50 on transport every year.

Rent for workshop

The artisans generally work at their own place of work and consequently they do not have to pay any rent to anybody. None among the artisans, except one, works at a place owned by

another person who is in no way connected with the craft. But this artisan works in this place because his own place of work is undergoing repair. The arrangement is purely temporary and he does not pay any rent to the owner of the place.

Rent for tools

It has already been stated that the artisans work with their own tools and nobody pays any rent for the tools to any body.

Wages

The artisans who work on job order or contract basis obtain wages for the piece rate work from their Mahajans or order suppliers.

Wages of the artisans are determined by two factors.

- (1) Efficiency of the worker
- (2) Nature of work

Wages of the artisans may be discussed from two angles—operation-wise and product-wise.

Name of operation	Unit	Wage Rate
Hammering	1 intact conch shell	.03p.
Sizing	1 intact conch shell	.03p.
Cutting	1 piece	.19p.
		(Hand saw)
	1 piece	.03p.
		(Machine saw)
Polishing	1 pair	.06p.
Design making	1 pair	.06p.
Combining, polishing and colouring	10 pieces	.05p.

Now we shall discuss the wage rate product-wise in the following manner—

Name of Product	Unit	Wage Rate
(1) Plain bangles (polishing and designing)	1 pair	.12p.
(2) Coloured bangles <i>Sonamukhi</i> (Combining, polishing and colouring)	1 pair (10 pieces)	.50p. to .75p.

Name of Product	Unit	Wage Rate
(3) Shell trumpet or horn (Polishing and designing)	1 piece	Re. 1
(4) Red bangles (plain) (Polishing and colouring)	1 pair	.02p.
•		
(5) Ginibala (Polishing and colouring), (small red bangles for children)	1 pair	.06p.

In a complete day's work a *Bani* worker can finish generally 8 pairs to 10 pairs of white bangles and thus he can earn Re. 1 to Rs. 1.12 p. a day. But, it depends on the supply of raw material by his Mahajan. In regard to coloured bangles of *Sonamukhi* it is found that an artisan in a complete day's work can finish only one pair (10 pieces) and thus he can only earn .50p. to .75p. a day.

The question of unpaid wages arises only when family workers (Non-Bani-worker) work under different heads of households and help them in the production of various articles. This is very difficult to determine. But still the wages of the unpaid type has been roughly computed by gathering information from the different heads of households. The unpaid wages for 17 family workers can be computed. Unpaid wages for the two apprentices cannot be specified in any-way. The 17 family workers include 12 females and 5 males. It is presented in the following :

FEMALE WORKERS

(1) Rs. 10	.	.	2 workers	per year
(2) Rs. 20	.	.	1 worker	"
(3) Rs. 30	.	.	1	"
(4) Rs. 40	.	.	2 workers	"
(5) Rs. 60	.	.	1 worker	"
(6) Rs. 150	.	.	1	"
(7) Rs. 180	.	.	1	"
(8) Rs. 200	.	.	1	"
(9) Rs. 300	.	.	1	"
(10) Rs. 340	.	.	1	"
Total	.	.	12 workers	

MALE WORKERS

(1) Rs. 50	1 worker	per year
(2) Rs. 60	2 workers	"
(3) Rs. 300	1 worker	"
(4) Rs. 360	1	"
Total	5 workers	

If the owner craftsmen have to engage outsiders on contract basis, they would have to pay above wages to their contract labourers.

Other payment for processing

This has already been stated in connection with operation-wise and product-wise discussion on wages. The question of payment for processing arises only where a process in connection with the production of any article is done outside the premises of the artisan.

Interest on loans

The artisans obtain loans from two sources—Government (through the office of the Block Development Officer) and private persons. The rate of interest charged against loans received from private persons varies but the average rate is 36 per cent per annum. On the other hand the rate of interest charged against Government loan is 6½ per cent per annum.

Cost of production

White bangles are the most important items of the conch shell products. Coloured bangles in the form of *Sonamukhi* comes next in importance. On the otherhand, shell horn is produced only in two households and its production is restricted to a particular time of the year (during or before the Pujas). Red bangles (plain) and small bangles for children are produced in two households on a contract basis. So, except in case of the two previously mentioned articles, other products are not so important. A comprehensive picture, therefore, about cost of production for the less important articles is very difficult to get.

Now, we will discuss about the cost of production of white and Sonamukhi bangles both as a piece and as a pair. The different items covering the cost of production of white and Sonamukhi bangles are stated in the next column.

White bangles—Intact conch shell costs Rs. 5. 8 pieces are available from an intact conch shell. The cost of production of 8 pieces will cover the following :

(1) Price of raw material	Rs. 5 (Intact conch shell)
(2) Cost of transport (Basic and subsidiary)	.45 p.
(3) Hammering	.03 p.
(4) Sizing	.03 p.
(5) Cutting	.24 p.
(6) Colouring	.02 p.
(7) Polishing	.25 p.
(8) Designing	.25 p.
Total	Rs. 6.27 p.

A piece of white bangle costs .78 p. and a pair of such bangles will cost Rs. 1.56 p.

Sonamukhi—Fragments are generally obtained in the form of a *pan* or 80 pieces. 25 bangles are obtained from 80 pieces and the cost per piece is .07 p. So, the cost of production of this bangle may be arrived at in the following way :

(1) Price of raw material	.07 p. (per piece of bangle)
(2) Cost of transport	.07 p.
(3) Colour, top, thread	.04 p.
(4) Rajan and Jau, tin-foil	.02 p.
Total	.20 p.

A piece of Sonamukhi bangle costs .20p. and it is already known that 10 such pieces make a complete pair of bangles. So, for a pair of such bangle, Rs. 2 is the cost incurred by the different Mahajans in the production.

Particulars about input and output

It will be our endeavour to present certain information concerning input and output aspects of the craft.

Investment

It may be said that investment is the most important factor with regard to the input aspect of the craft. In any craft investment means laying out of money for production. Production in such a case cannot be carried on without it. In the craft with which we are now concerned investment is the most important agent of production.

It is found that investment in this craft made by different artisans of this village has taken two forms, (1) Investment expended on fixed assets, and (2) Investment spent to meet working expenses.

Investment expended for the purpose of fixed assets implies that part of investment which is made in connection with land, plant, equipment and factory or workshop.

In this village the majority of artisans work in their own dwelling-cum-workshops or in workshops owned by them. So on land and workshop they do not have any investment whatsoever. They have investment only in such fixed assets which are confined simply to their tools and equipments/implements. Investment on tools and implements process-wise is detailed in the following :

INVESTMENT ON TOOLS AND IMPLEMENTS (APPROX.)

(1) Hammering—			
(a) Hammer (Flat)	Rs. 2	} Rs. 4	
(b) Hammer	Rs. 2		
(2) Sizing—			
(a) Saw (Hand)	Rs. 115		
(3) Cutting—			
(a) Hand saw	Rs. 115		
(4) Polishing—			
(a) Dara	Rs. 0.50p.	} Rs. 12.50 p.	
(b) Sil	Rs. 12		
(5) Design making—			
(a) 4 Files	@ Rs. 2.25 per file	} Rs. 19	
(b) Kath	Rs. 9		
(c) Dakhna-Bari	Rs. 3		
(d) Katti	Rs. 1		
	Rs. 6		

(6) Colouring—

(a) Pen	.25 p.	} Rs. 1.62 p.
(b) Deogo	.25 p.	
(c) Chaki-Pati	.25 p.	
(d) Mete	.37 p.	
(e) Bhramar	.50 p.	

(7) Combining cut pieces—

(a) Jaukathi or lac stick	.50 p.
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From the above account it appears that the only process where a substantial amount of investment is required is that which relates to sizing and cutting operations and the tool required for such operations is the hand saw. For this reason perhaps the artisans in some cases now prefer to obtain the help of machine saw now being operated at Vishnupur. Examination of information on investment for the purpose of working expenses reveals that part of investment is also made on raw material, workers and management.

In the previous chapters reference in details has been made to expenses incurred for the purpose of raw materials and workers. It will therefore be a repetition of the same information to discuss about those points in this chapter. In regard to investment made in connection with management the head of the household supervises all work relating to production. Moreover, there is no such factory where an investment has been made in very large amount. Therefore, investment covers neither the workshops nor the management, so far working expenses are concerned.

It is stated by an aged and experienced person belonging to the Sankha Banik community that in this village approximately Rs. 8,000 were spent as total working expense in the year 1963.

Sources for finance

In most cases this craft is financed by artisans with their own capital. It is reported that they get the capital either by sale of assets or from money obtained from other sources of income. If occasion so demands, the artisans take loan either from money-lenders or from private persons against high rate of interest. The artisans always prefer private persons. In some cases in the past they also obtained loan from the Government.

Banks do not come to the aid of the artisans working here. Moreover, the Co-operative Society have not supplied any loan to the workers of this village. As there is no Credit Society, the artisans are denied the services of Rural Credit Co-operatives.

Total produce during last year

An accurate figure about total quantity produced last year is very difficult to obtain because a large number of artisans work as *Bani* workers under piece work system and the majority of them are females, some of whom are also aged. No statistical information could be gathered from them.

According to some senior artisans 36,000 pairs of different varieties of bangles and 150 pieces of conch shell trumpets were produced last year (1963). 36,000 pairs of bangles of different varieties are valued at approximately Rs. 36,000 and 150 pairs of intact conch shells are worth Rs. 300 roughly. The total output comes to about Rs. 36,300 per annum.

Particulars about Co-operative Society

Some members belonging to the Sankha Banik caste formed a Co-operative Society named "Sankha-Banik Samabaya Samiti Ltd." with a view to improving the working conditions of the craftsmen.

It was founded and registered on 7-4-58 in the office of the Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Society in Bankura. Established as an Industrial Co-operative with 20 members, the Board of Directors was constituted by 6 elected members. The qualification to enroll oneself as its member was that one should be a Sankha Banik and should purchase at least one share of Rs. 5 each with an admission fee of Re. 1 for each member.

A person could purchase more than one share at a time. The method for realisation of the value of such share was that a member would purchase the required number of share or shares at a time and pay the price in full.

It started its function with a working capital of Rs. 206.50p. Rs. 200 were obtained from share-holders in the form of subscribed capital and an account of Rs. 6.50p. was opened at the Reserve Bank as a reserve.

It is reported by the different respondents that Sri Khudiram Dutta, the present Secretary, was the sponsor of this organisation.

It is necessary to point out in this connection that no loan or subsidy was received from the Government or from any other institution as loan capital, as the capital of the Society fell short of Rs. 500 which is the optimum for getting any loan from the Government.

The Society started its work with a great promise. It procured raw materials from the Central Store of Small Industries Corporation, Government of West Bengal, located at Calcutta through the latter's storage in Bankura and distributed them among its members on several occasions. The cost of the raw materials was Rs. 325 per gunny bag consisting of assorted intact conch shells.

The procured raw materials were quite good in quality in the first instance but later it was just the reverse. The poor quality of raw materials later supplied annoyed the members and they lost all confidence in the Society. As the raw materials supplied by this Society were of inferior quality to those supplied by the wholesalers, the members discontinued getting the materials through the Society. As a result the Society faced deficiency in fund and any further activity by the Society was impossible. It had not gone into any transaction for the last 2/3 years and is at present more or less defunct. Its only function is now limited to an annual audit by an Auditor of the Government.

According to the last audit report the Co-operative Society has at present Rs. 222.48p. as credit balance and has 25 members on its roll. It has not paid any dividend to its members even once and as there has not been any transaction, worth of name, the question of drawing the balance sheet does not arise at all.

Due to its restricted membership limited within the Sankha Banik caste the Society has failed to impart any benefit to the persons belonging to other castes. It has rendered very insignificant help to its members and that too only on one occasion.

The Society has not yet lost all hope for its revival. It is hoped that it can increase its Fund upto Rs. 500, when it will be able to obtain a loan or subsidy from the Government or from any other agency. The Society will then be able to renew its function.

The Co-operative Society, if well managed, can yet render very good service to the members and help in the development of the craft.

CHAPTER X

Particulars about economic behaviour of the craftsmen

The term 'economic behaviour' implies various factors connected with the economic activities of a person. So, the relevant factors behind the economic activities of the village craftsmen are analysed below :

Occupational pattern

Now, in order to find out the distribution of the 59 craftsmen who are exclusively engaged in this particular craft, it is found that as many as 55 of them have adopted this craft as their sole occupation.

Again, regarding the distribution of workers who have adopted this craft as the main occupation and also have facilities to pursue a secondary occupation, we find that there are only 2 such persons among the craftsmen of the village. As subsidiary occupation both the artisans undertake the jobs, which come under the category of "Other Services" according to the Industrial Classification adopted in 1961 Census.

Out of 59 practising artisans, again, only 2 persons have undertaken this craft as their secondary occupation and both of them have "Cultivation" as their primary one. In this connection, we may now present particulars about the 4 artisans who are engaged in other occupations in addition to the craft under study.

Two persons primarily engaged in the craft and secondarily engaged in "Other Service" devote 2 hours and 8 hours a day respectively to their subsidiary occupation. Their earnings from these secondary sources are Rs. 40/- and Rs. 90/- per annum. The former one is associated with a *Jatra* party, his activities being limited to the playing of *Khol*. The other one works as a day-labourer.

Two other persons who are secondarily engaged in this craft and are primarily engaged in "Cultivation" work for 12 hours a day and 10 hours a day respectively in connection with their primary occupations. They earn Rs. 1,500/- and Rs. 500/- per annum from these sources.

Purpose of production and the use of products

In this village no household mainly produces the articles for ceremonial purpose or for

domestic use. Neither does any household produce the articles primarily for its permanent clients.

Here, every household having independent work produces finished articles at home or get them produced by contract labours outside, mainly for the purpose of selling them in the open market or in the fairs.

For recapitulation it may be stated here that only in 13 households, having independent work, the different items of conch shell articles are produced mainly for sale, whereas in other households different items of articles are manufactured on contract basis and are deposited on completion of the work with their order suppliers or Mahajans who generally belong to these 13 households. The heads of these households take all the responsibility and decision about the disposal of the products. All these households produce articles mainly for sale. In only 8 out of the 13 households a small and insignificant portion of the finished articles is used either for ceremonial purpose or for domestic consumption, but the major portion of them is sold. In 2 households a small portion of the total products is sold to their permanent customers in the village. Again, in 7 households a considerable portion of the products is sold in the different fairs held in different parts of this district and in the adjacent district of Hooghly. All the 13 households prefer selling the products in the open market.

Employment

The nature of the craft is such that its finished products have a demand throughout the year. It is therefore natural that this craft is not a seasonal one and if everything goes well it is carried on throughout the year without any break. But it may be pointed out that during the rainy season the tempo of work is rather slack. Two factors are responsible for the slackened pace.

(1) During the rains the communication system between the different areas deteriorates and as a result, the artisans cannot have any link with some of their customers. The *paikars* of the far-off places cannot come to this village regularly.

(2) The majority of the *paikars* are generally engaged in agricultural operations this time. So, the frequency of their deal with the artisans

comes down during this period of the year, thereby affecting the volume of work or transaction. But it certainly does not dislocate the total work, so that the craftsmen are thrown out of work.

Due to the non-availability of raw materials the volume of work sometimes falls down considerably and some workers are forced to stop work for a number of days.

Unemployed

Unemployed persons are those adult members who belong to different artisan households and are both able as well as capable of doing any kind of work but are for the present in search of a job.

It was found that only two adult male members regarded themselves as unemployed, as at the time of survey they were not connected either with the craft or any other economic pursuit and both of them were searching for any kind of job for earning their bread. The two unemployed persons belong to the Sankhari caste.

One of them is in his teens and has read up to class IV standard. He has no experience of any work before, except, of course, some elementary knowledge in the craft. Though he is on the look-out for a job, he has not registered himself with the Employment Exchange.

The other one is a young man who has just crossed his teens. He has passed the Upper Primary Examination and has a scanty knowledge in conch shell craft. But not being a trained worker, he has no employment in the craft. He is rather proficient in playing on *Tabla* and spends most of his time in playing on this instrument. Unregistered unemployed, as he is, he will accept any job, that may be offered to him.

Non-workers

A classification of the total persons into workers and non-workers is quite meaningful in interpreting the level of economic activity attained by the artisan community.

A worker, referred to, is one who is economically active or is engaged in productive labour. On the other hand, by a non-worker we mean a person who is in no way connected with any economic activity and is not searching for a job at present. It is found that there are altogether 76 persons belonging to 31 practising artisan households, who can be regarded as non-workers.

Out of these 76 non-workers there are 38 students in the village at present, reading in different educational institutions. In addition to those, there are 27 dependants, and 9 housewives,

engaged in customary household duties. Only 2 persons can be regarded as rentiers, both of whom depend on the produce of the agricultural land.

It has been mentioned earlier that at present 59 persons are actively engaged in the craft and there are 2 unemployed persons searching for jobs. Of the 141 members belonging to 31 practising artisan families 4 persons are engaged in economic activities other than this craft. One earns his livelihood by playing on instruments in a *Jatra* party. One is a deed-writer in the office of the Sub-Registrar at Kotulpur. One person is working in a sweet meat shop outside the village and another serves as a cook in a hotel at Kotulpur.

Among non-workers, students are in the majority, closely followed by dependants (aged, children and physically handicapped) and the housewives as well as rentiers.

Income/Remuneration of the craftsmen

Excluding workers who work in the family workshops and the two apprentices whose independent income cannot be either specified or computed, we here take into account only those artisans who have an independent income or remuneration.

The table showing the income/remuneration earned by the different artisans is given below :

DISTRIBUTION OF WORKERS ACCORDING TO INCOME/REMUNERATION PER ANNUM FROM THE CRAFT

Income/Remuneration Range	Number of workers
Upto Rs. 50	1
Rs. 51—100	3
101—150	3
151—200	8
201—250	2
251—300	1
301—350	1
351—400	11
401—450	1
451—500	3
551—600	..
601—650	1
651—700	..
701—750	2
750 and above	3
Income unspecified	19
Total	59

The table stated above brings into prominence the fact that the majority is within the range of Rs. 351 to Rs. 400.

CHAPTER XI

Social and personal characters, aspirations, and motivations

The dissection of the economy of the craft has showed us how the craft has been able to pulsate still through its constant struggle against the heavy odds staring the craft and its waning followers in the face. It would be equally revealing if we probe into the social aspect of the lives

of the craftsmen in order to bring into lime-light their motivations and aspirations with which their joys and sorrows of the present and hopes and fears of the future are intermingled. The table about the period of association of members of different communities with the craft may give us an idea about the years that have trickled out while the craftsmen were over too busy with their saw and hammer, file and drill.

Duration of engagement in the craft

Duration of association	Sankha Banik		Brahman		Bairagi		Sutradhar		Total	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
1—5 years	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3
6—10 years	2	7	..	..	1	..	..	..	3	7
11—15 years	3	6	..	..	..	2	..	..	3	8
16—20 years	3	4	..	..	1	..	1	..	5	4
21—25 years	2	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	4	1
26—30 years	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	2	1
31—35 years	2	4	..	..	..	1	..	..	2	5
36—40 years	3	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	3	2
41—45 years	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
46—50 years	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
51—60 years	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	2
60 years and above	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	18	30	2	1	3	4	1	..	24	35

A scrutiny of the table shows that only 14 persons including 10 females have been pursuing the craft for a period not exceeding 10 years. Compared to the two female workers who witnessed many craftsmen coming in and finally passing away during the last 60 years, these craftsmen are unquestionably younger and have many things of life to learn. We do not, of course, have in the table those persons who gave up practising the craft for good. Still, it is not very much encouraging to find so few craftsmen practising the craft for a period of a decade only. The present trend speaks of the lack of confidence of the craftsmen in the future of the trade. In fact, a feeling of despondency has eaten up the robust optimism of the artisans who do not like to take any major risk by initiating the younger section into the craft. The elderly artisans do not want their children to take up the craft and if they persist in their decision the craft of the village will languish slowly and silently and eventually die out in no time. The death of the present generation will perhaps ring the death knell of the village craft also.

Traditional occupation and hereditary occupation

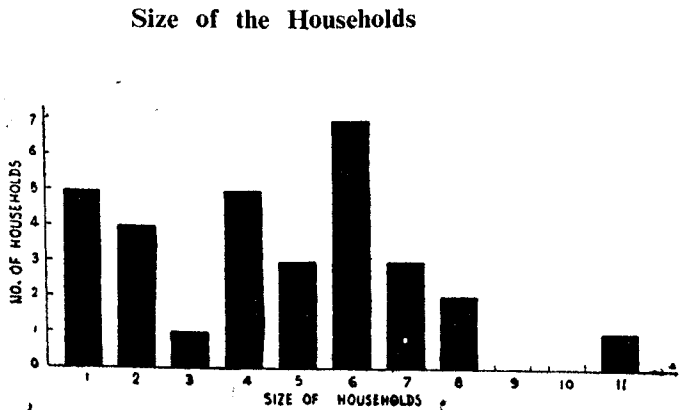
It has already been discussed elsewhere that the Sankha Baniks or Sankharis claim this craft as their traditional occupation. That this is not the traditional occupation of the Brahmans, Bairagis and Sutradhars require no emphatic repetition. Still three Brahmans, seven Bairagis and one Sutradhar deviated from their caste occupation.

It will be a point of interest to know whether these persons adopted practising the craft in their generation or simply followed the footsteps of their fathers or grandfathers. The question of hereditary occupation, therefore, comes up. It has been ascertained that the parents of the two Brahman, five Bairagi and one Sutradhar artisans had also practised the same craft. But, the father of one Bairagi female worker had a retail grocery shop and the father of another Bairagi female worker was engaged in cultivation. The father of the Brahman artisan who is incidentally an aged widow was engaged in the occupation of cultivation. The deviation in the

hereditary occupation of the Non Sankhari female craftsmen is explained by the fact that they belonged to another place before their marriage. As such, it is but quite natural that the people of these castes had other occupation. It could not, of course, be gathered for how many generations these artisans have followed the craft. Even if we do not have the information, we may reasonably conjecture that the people who had come to stay here were influenced by the affluent condition of the Sankha Baniks and decided to take up their occupation as means of livelihood. Otherwise we cannot explain why a Brahman started preparing bangles or a carpenter gave up the tools of carpentry and started hammering and sawing conch shells. This craft is indisputably the hereditary occupation of the 47 practising Sankharis. The father of one Sankhari male artisan had a business of retail shop.

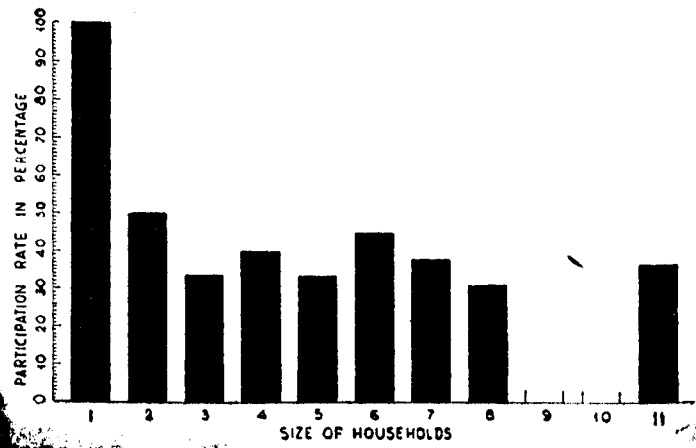
Physical and mental qualities

A guiding principle of the modern employers is right man for the right job. It is interesting to note that the conch shell craftsmen had been following this principle for a long time. To be a good craftsman one will require some basic qualities and must have an aptitude for the work. Otherwise, one will be a square peg in a round hole. To establish oneself as a good artisan one should possess highly trained eyes, perfectly steady movements of the limbs and the patience to sit in totally uncomfortable position for a long stretch of time and also perfect eye sight. Handling of the saw can be done efficiently by a person who is physically fit, preferably sturdy, to stand the strain and fatigue of the work. A constant vigil will ensure the steady movement of the saw and the sizing of shells into round bangles. Unfortunately, very few people, specially the younger folk, possess the desirable qualities of a good craftsman. Those lacking in the qualities will not turn into good artisans.



The table showing the households according to size is given below :

Size of the Households	No. of Households	Total No. of Persons
1	5	5
2	4	8
3	1	3
4	5	20
5	3	15
6	7	42
7	3	21
8	2	16
9	..	..
10	..	..
11	1	11
Total	31	141



The table showing the distribution of the house- holds according to participation and size :

Size of the Households	No. of Practising Members	Participation Rate in Percentage
1	5	100
2	4	50
3	1	33.3
4	8	40
5	5	33.3
6	19	45.2
7	8	38
8	5	31
9	..	..
10	..	..
11	4	36.4

The mean average size of the households is 4.5. The single membered households are mostly constituted by widows. The members of the average households are husband, wife and children and most of the households, as such, are of simple type, irrespective of size. From the point of size, six-membered households account for about 22.6 per cent of the total practising households. The participation rate is higher in single membered and double membered households than that in others.

Health hazards

Bacillary dysentery is one of the most common complaints of the adult members, artisans and non-artisans of the village. Lack of precaution in taking drinking water explains for this disease. The houses are mostly congested and filthy. The persons engaged in cutting and sizing operations look pale and complain of their susceptibility to hernia and hydrocele, which in fact are the occupational hazards in the true sense of the term. The children suffer from under-nourishment and look rickety. A considerable number of the artisans looks lean and lanky. Only 35 practising artisans outwardly look moderately healthy.

Hobbies and recreational activities

There is a library known as Netaji Library with a few limited number of popular novels with dirty, soiled pages. Located in a dark room, full

of musty smell, it caters to the literary interests of the villagers. But, busy as they are throughout the day with the conch shells, the craftsmen are naturally tired when they retire in evening. They do not like to overstrain the already strained eyes on the books. Gossip over a cup of hot tea served by the village tea stall owner is more welcome than the library. A play ground is attached to the village. The village youths do justice to the play-ground by participating in various outdoor games. The village children frisk about in the narrow lanes and alleys of the village, occasionally playing marbles. Some craftsmen are, however, interested in music and drama. Some members get together and sing devotional songs in a full throated voice accompanied by a *khol*. Comparatively younger sections of the community profuse their histrionic ability in rehearsing dramas for the village *Jatra*. The artisan women are, however, left to loneliness and have very little recreation at home except meeting some other women in the same age-group and discussing the local topics. Their pre-occupation with various domestic duties snatches almost all the hours, they have at their disposal. The cinema at Kotulpur, is an attraction. The manager of the cinema sends a rickshaw fitted with amplifier running in every nook and corner of the village to announce the picture under exhibition and inviting the people luringly to spend the evening in the same house. A table showing the recreation and hobbies of the practising artisans is given below :

Caste and Community	Indoor Games		Outdoor Games		Reading of Books or News paper		Radio listening		Music		Drama		Cinema		Trav elling		Gossip in a Tea Stall	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Sankha-Banik	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	2	1	..	..	2	1	1	..	1	..
Brahman	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bairagi	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sutradhar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..

Note:—M=Male ; F=Female

Only 11 Sankhari artisans including two females spell out their hobbies and recreations while others fail to detail any. Most of the persons who failed to answer to our questions on pastime are apathetic to spending the leisure hours in a planned fashion. They are disturbed by their worries and anxieties of the day to day life and have little time left to spend either on hobbies or on recreation. Of the Brahman artisans, one aged widow did not state how she spent her hours of leisure. She is stricken with poverty. She has not the purse nor the age to spend any time on any recreation. The six Bairagi artisans are indifferent about their leisure hours. They could not specifically state how they exactly spend their spare time, especially in the evening.

The artisans of the village are more or less God-fearing Hindus. Majority of them are Vaisnabs. They regard themselves as follower of Vishnu. The Sankha Banik artisans daily worship Lord Vishnu enshrined in a pucca temple in the form of *Sila* or stone. The temple is owned by the Sankha Banik community but responsibility of offering daily puja devolves on individual households by rotation. About two hundred grams of rice are offered to the deity at noon and some *murki* is offered at dusk. Two Brahman priests representing the *Jojmans*, accredited to each, perform the daily worship. There is another temple in a kutchha building where the deity of Raghunathji is worshipped. The image of it is represented by a *Sila*. Raghunathji is

one of the names of Lord Vishnu. This temple is owned by the villagers of all communities and responsibility of daily worship is shared by all in turns. Here also the Brahman priests officiate. The daily worship of Lord Vishnu takes place in a particular Brahman artisan's household. An image of *Nrisingha Avatar* made of *Asta Dhatu* and a *Sila* representing Bhagawanji or God are kept here. The head of the household who is a craftsman himself officiates in the daily worship, limited to offering *Naivedya* in the form of rice and sweets to the deity.

The annual worship of Agastya Muni or Muni-raj is one of the greatest community festivals held in the village in general and worshipped by the artisans in particular. The details of the festival have been discussed previously. The artisans also participate in the worship of Durga, held during the month of September and October. There is a festival of *Rath Jatra*, the chariot of which is locally known as 'Ravan Kata Rath'. It is held on the 'Bijoya Dashmai' day. *Dol Jatra* or the festival of colour is observed in full gaiety in welcoming the advent of spring. The artisans worship the image of Radha and Krishna during the *Dol Jatra* in the month of Falgoon.

Daily life of Artisans

The artisans live in penury generally but are unusually industrious to eke out their existence. They work hard and earn their bread with the sweat of their brow, in the literal sense of the term. Perspiration is the price and hard toil is their capital. For ten hours a day they neither

know leisure nor take rest. They work in two shifts, once in the morning after a short breakfast and once more in the after-noon. They rise very early and after morning ablutions and hurried breakfast consisting of *Muri*, *Telebhaja*, and tea they set to work. They have their breakfast either in a tea stall or at home. For the delicate work on conch shells the craftsmen depend entirely on day light. So, they make use of the better part of the day, working long hours at a stretch. The work continues till the sun reaches the meridian point. They have a brief respite at midday for lunch. The midday meal is of a very simple menu rice, pulses and vegetables, occasionally changed by fish curry and milk and very rarely by meat. Lunch over, they resume their work. The hammering, sawing and sizing operations continue till dusk, when the light is failing. The members of the households get together and gossip, till it is time for dinner and rest.

As for the artisans' children, they play out most of the day in the courtyard and run about in the village alleys till they are hungry. They do not care for the worries of their parents nor do they care for the future of the craft. In the evening some of the households join together at the temple of Agastya Muni and sing with full gamut. Some artisans also get together at the *ex-union* President's house and discuss village affairs. Life in the village among the artisans ebbs in and flows out monotonously without any remarkable change. Still, an event of joy like the birth of the first baby to the recently wed couple smooths the wrinkled faces on these special occasions. The death of any member equally causes tears to trickle down the faces of the artisans.

SOURCES OF INCOME OF THE PRACTISING--ARTISAN HOUSEHOLDS

Caste	Heads of Income	No. of Households Earning											
		Percent 0—9	Percent 10—19	Percent 20—29	Percent 30—39	Percent 40—49	Percent 50—59	Percent 60—69	Percent 70—79	Percent 80—89	Percent 90—99	Percent 100	
Bairagi	Cultivation	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	
	Arts and Crafts	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	
	Services	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Borrowing	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Brahman	Cultivation	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Arts and Crafts	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	
	Services	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Borrowing	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Sale of Assets	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	

SOURCES OF INCOME OF THE PRACTISING--ARTISAN HOUSEHOLDS--contd.

Caste	Heads of Income	No. of House holds Earning											
		Percent 0—9	Percent 10—19	Percent 20—29	Percent 30—39	Percent 40—49	Percent 50—59	Percent 60—69	Percent 70—79	Percent 80—89	Percent 90—99	Percent 100	
Sutradhar	Cultivation	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Arts and Crafts	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Services	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Sankha Banik	Cultivation	1	6	5	..	1	2	..	..	..	1	..	
	Arts and Crafts	1	..	2	5	4	3	2	3	3	2	..	
	Forestry	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Services	1	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	
	Remittance	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	
	Borrowing	5	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Sale of Assets	6	4	1	2	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	

ANNUAL FAMILY BUDGET PARTICULARS OF A SANKHA BANIK HOUSEHOLD

(HIGHER INCOME GROUP)

INCOME	Amount		EXPENDITURE	Amount	
	Rs.	P.		Rs.	P.
(a) Cultivation	1,040	00	(a) Food (1) cereal (2) non- cereal	920	00
(b) Livestock and products			(b) Drinks	94	00
(c) Wages			(c) Fuel and lighting	130	00
(d) Arts and crafts	1,070	00	(d) House rent and repair		
(e) Fishery			(e) Clothing	100	00
(f) Forestry			(f) Travelling	150	00
(g) Trade			(g) Recreation		
(h) Transport			(h) Education	100	00
(i) Profession			(i) Other Services		
(j) Service			(j) Interest	216	00
(k) Rent			(k) Remittances		
(l) Investments			(l) Hired labour	100	00
(m) Remittances			(m) Purchase for Production	370	00
(n) Others			(n) Others	200	00
(o) Borrowing			(o) Purchase of assets		
(p) Principal received back			(p) Construction and improvement of building and other structure		
(q) Sale of assets	270	00	(q) Land development		
Total	2,380	00	Total	2,380	00

ANNUAL FAMILY BUDGET PARTICULARS OF A SANKHA BANIK HOUSEHOLD

(LOWER INCOME GROUP)

INCOME	Amount		EXPENDITURE	Amount	
	Rs.	P.		Rs.	P.
(a) Cultivation			(a) Food (1) cereal (2) non-cereal	120	00
(b) Livestock and products			(b) Drinks		
(c) Wages	100	00	(c) Fuel and lighting	10	00
(d) Arts and crafts			(d) House rent and repair		
(e) Fishery			(e) Clothing	50	00
(f) Forestry			(f) Travelling	10	00
(g) Trade			(g) Recreation		
(h) Transport			(h) Education		
(i) Profession			(i) Other Services		
(j) Service			(j) Interest		
(k) Rent			(k) Remittances		
(l) Investments			(l) Hired labour		
(m) Remittances			(m) Purchase for production	10	00
(n) Others			(n) Others		
(o) Borrowing			(o) Purchase of assets		
(p) Principal received back			(p) Construction and improvement of building and other structure		
(q) Sale of assets	100	00	(q) Land development		
Total	200	00	Total	200	00

ANNUAL FAMILY BUDGET PARTICULARS OF A BRAHMAN HOUSEHOLD

INCOME	Amount		EXPENDITURE	Amount	
	Rs.	P.		Rs.	P.
(a) Cultivation	1,000	00	(a) Food—(1) cereal (2) non-cereal	1,200	00
(b) Livestock and products			(b) Drinks	130	00
(c) Wages			(c) Fuel and lighting	100	00
(d) Arts and crafts	2,060	00	(d) House rent and repair		
(e) Fishery			(e) Clothing	130	00
(f) Forestry			(f) Travelling	300	00
(g) Trade			(g) Recreation	10	00
(h) Transport			(h) Education	50	00
(i) Profession			(i) Other Services	300	00
(j) Service			(j) Interest	82	25
Carried Over	3,060	00	Carried Over	2,302	00

ANNUAL FAMILY BUDGET PARTICULARS OF A BRAHMAN HOUSEHOLD—contd.

INCOME	Amount		EXPENDITURE	Amount	
	Rs.	P.		Rs.	P.
Brought Forward	3,060	00	Brought Forward	2,302	25
(k) Rent			(k) Remittances		
(l) Investments			(l) Hired labour		
(m) Remittances			(m) Purchase for production	1,000	00
(n) Others			(n) Others	131	75
(o) Borrowing	600	00	(o) Purchase of assets	226	00
(p) Principal received back			(p) Construction and improvement of building and other structure		
(q) Sale of assets			(q) Land development		
Total	3,660	00	Total	3,660	00

ANNUAL FAMILY BUDGET PARTICULARS OF A BAIRAGI HOUSEHOLD

INCOME	Amount		EXPENDITURE	Amount	
	Rs.	P.		Rs.	P.
(a) Cultivation	1,500	00	(a) Food—(1) cereal (2) non-cereal	1,500	00
(b) Livestock and products			(b) Drinks	200	00
(c) Wages	540	00	(c) Fuel and lighting	45	00
(d) Arts and crafts			(d) House rent and repair		
(e) Fishery			(e) Clothing	200	00
(f) Forestry			(f) Travelling	25	00
(g) Trade			(g) Recreation		
(h) Transport			(h) Education	40	00
(i) Profession			(i) Other Services		
(j) Service			(j) Interest	3	12
(k) Rent			(k) Remittances		
(l) Investments			(l) Hired labour		
(m) Remittances			(m) Purchase for production	25	00
(n) Others			(n) Others	1	88
(o) Borrowing			(o) Purchase of assets		
(p) Principal received back			(p) Construction and improvement of building and other structure		
(q) Sale of assets			(q) Land development		
Total	2,040	00	Total	2,040	00

ANNUAL FAMILY BUDGET PARTICULARS OF A SUTRADHAR HOUSEHOLD

INCOME	Amount		EXPENDITURE	Amount	
	Rs.	P.		Rs.	P.
(a) Cultivation	28	00	(a) Food—(1) cereal (2) non-cereal	330	00
(b) Livestock and products			(b) Drinks		
(c) Wages			(c) Fuel and lighting	30	00
(d) Arts and crafts	120	00	(d) House rent and repair		
(e) Fishery			(e) Clothing	40	00
(f) Forestry			(f) Travelling		
(g) Trade			(g) Recreation		
(h) Transport			(h) Education	10	00
(i) Profession			(i) Other Services		
(j) Service	90	00	(i) Interest	3	00
(k) Rent			(k) Remittances		
(l) Investments			(l) Hired labour		
(m) Remittances			(m) Purchase for production		
(n) Others			(n) Others		
(o) Borrowing	25	00	(o) Purchase of assets		
(p) Principal received back			(p) Construction and improvement of building and other structure		
(q) Sale of assets	150	00	(q) Land development		
Total	413	00	Total	413	30 ●

CHAPTER XII

Non-practising artisan households

The study of the craft will be incomplete, if we do not take into account the artisan households which have left the craft for some reason or other. These households were in the past engaged in producing different conch shell articles but gradually gave up their connections with it due to the intervention of various factors. It will, therefore, be better to detail the reasons which went against the households continuing their practice.

Irregularity in the supply of raw materials caused annoyance to many. But, some were forced to stop work when supply was not at all assured. Added to this difficulty, insufficiency of work made the lot of the craftsmen quite hard

and the poor became poorer gradually. Some of the households complain that low productivity and fall in demand of the articles made them think and re-think about their utility in associating themselves with the craft. Judgement ultimately got the better of sentiments and they finally stopped producing any article. Plastic bangles being cheap in price and also more durable than the conch shell ones, the competition from this source posed an insuperable problem to the craftsmen. Some were physically unfit to take up the work of so arduous nature and some complain that they were not given proper training by their parents.

It will be quite interesting to examine these households, their castes and also the number of persons belonging to them.

Community	No. of Families	Total No. of Members			Average size of a Household
		Male	Female	Total	
Sankha Banik . . .	3	2	5	7	2.3
Sutradhar . . .	4	3	7	10	2.5
Karmakar . . .	1	1	1	2	2.0
Malakar . . .	1	1	..	1	1.0
Tambuli . . .	2	4	5	9	4.5
Total . . .	11	11	18	29	2.6

The Sutradhars are numerically in the majority. Females outnumber the males in all the households excepting the Karmakar. Taken as a whole the mean average sex ratio for the eleven households is 1,636 females per thousand males. And the mean average size of the households is 2.5.

The Tambuli households are bigger in size than others. Eight households comprising three Sankha Baniks, three Sutradhars, one Karmakar and one Tambuli have ceased practising the craft within the last five years.

Age Structure

Age-groups	Males	Females	Total Persons
0—4	..	2	2
5—9	2	2	4
10—14	2	1	3
15—19	2	1	3
20—24	1	3	4
25—29	1	..	1
30—34	2	1	3

Age Structure contd.				
Age-groups	Males	Females	Total Persons	
35-39	..	1	1	
40-44	..	2	2	
45-49	..	2	2	
50-54	..	..	..	
55-59	..	1	1	
60 and above	1	2	3	
Total	11	18	29	

About 31 per cent of the members in the non-practising artisan households are children and about 10.3 per cent of them are in the age-group 60 and above. The working population, therefore, is formed by the rest.

Marital Status

Eleven persons including six males and five females are unmarried. Three males and three females are married. One male is a widower and another lives separated. There are in all ten widows in these households.

Literacy

Of the 11 males, one is acquainted with the three R's. Four persons have read upto the Class III standard and another four upto Class VI. There is only one person who has read upto Class IX. There is only one Matriculate in these households and he is a Sankha Banik.

The standard of literacy among the females is very poor. Fourteen women are illiterate. Three females have read upto Class VI and one upto Class IX.

Religion

All the non-practising households are Hindus and Bengali is their mothertongue.

FAMILY INCOME

Distribution of Non-practising Families According to Income (Annual)

Rupees	Income range	Caste/Tribe	No. of Households
Below 100	..	Sutradhar	2
100-200	..	Karmakar	1
200-500	..	Tambuli	2 } 4
		Sutradhar	
		Malakar	
501-800	..	Sutradhar	1
801-1,000	..	..	..
1,000 and above	..	Sankha Banik	1
Income unspecified	..	Sankha Banik	2

Occupational pattern

Of the 29 persons, only 11 persons including five females are workers. Of the six male workers, one is a school teacher in a basic training school outside the village, one serves as a tea boy in a local tea-stall and one is an apprentice to a newspaper hawker. Of the rest, one is a tailor in the village, another is a carpenter and another produces solapith oranaments for ceremonial purposes.

Of the female workers, three women husk paddy and prepare *chira*, one is a nominee to the village Postmaster and runs the post office on behalf of her husband, who is a school teacher and another woman serves in different households as a maid servant. The non-workers include four dependent children not attending school, five students having school education in different classes, four housewives engaged in domestic duties, two rentiers depending on the produce of the land and on house-rent and three aged persons. Two of these aged persons are physically invalid and depend entirely on the gratuitous relief received from the Government.

From the table we find that only one non-practising Sankha Banik household has an annual income exceeding Rs. 1,000. The other two Sankha Banik households are less fortunate because they depend on relief given by the Government. They do not, therefore, figure in the table. The Sutradhar household comes next from the point of income. It earns more than Rs. 500/- per year. There is another Sutra-

dhara family which has an annual income of less than Rs. 500/- but more than Rs. 200/-. But the two other Sutradhar households, whose income is less than Rs. 100/- per year, are perhaps the weakest members of all the non-practising families. The Malakar and the two Tambuli households have an annual income of more than Rs. 250/- but less than Rs. 500/-. The Karmakar has an average income of Rs. 10/- per month.

CHAPTER XIII

Consumer's Preference

The term 'Consumer's Preference' in relation to the craft signifies the religious and cultural background which induces a consumer to choose white conch shell bangles or 'Sankhas' in preference to other forms of bangles. The question of 'Consumer's Preference' does not come into the picture in connection with other important conch shell products because they do not face any competition from any substitutes. Moreover *Sonamukhi* has no local market and one conch shell trumpet lasts for more than one generation in a household.

In order to study the reasons for the preference of consumers for white conch shell bangles, 10 consumer households residing either in the village proper or in its hamlets had been selected. Relevant schedules were canvassed to them.

The 10 different castes from whom the households were selected are indicated below :

- (1) Bairagi, (2) Brahman, (3) Karmakar,
- (4) Modak, (5) Metey, (6) Subarna Banik,
- (7) Suri, (8) Tambuli, (9) Tantubaya,
- (10) Teli. Among them Metey and Suri are members of the Scheduled castes.

In response to our inquiry it has been stated by majority of the households that they use white conch shell bangles manufactured by village artisans only on occasions. The married women exclusively use white conch shell bangles mainly on religious ground. They believe that wearing of *Sankha* is the symbol of wifehood. Hindu married woman should wear a pair of white conch shell bangles on her wrists, as long as her husband is alive.

The occupations of the heads of the households belonging to the different consumer families are manifold and varied. The head of the family belonging to the 'Bairagi' caste is engaged in 'Weaving' along with the heads of the households of the 'Brahman' and of the 'Tantubaya' castes. The 'Karmakar' head of household is connected with 'goldsmithy'. 'Cultivation' is the occupation practised by both the 'Teli' and the 'Suri' heads of households. The 'Subarna Banik' head of the family is engaged in 'Cycle-repairing' as his source of livelihood. The 'Tambuli' head of the family owns a small grocery shop and as such, his occupation is 'Retail Trade'. The 'Metey' head of household has adopted 'Agricultural Labour' as his economic pursuit and the 'Modak' head of the family is the owner of a sweetmeat shop where he

himself prepares various kinds of sweetmeats. Two heads of households belong to the age group 30-39 and 3 belong to the age group 40-49. In the age group 50-59 fall three heads of the families and the remaining two heads of households come under the age group 60-69.

During 1962 three pairs of white bangles were purchased only by 2 households and consumed by the married female members from the village artisans at the cost of Rs. 2 per pair. No transaction was made in these households last year (1963). During 1963, the consumption pattern was in the following order among 8 households :

2 pairs were purchased and consumed in each of the 4 households, 3 pairs in only 1 household, 3 pieces in another household, 4 pairs in a single household and lastly 1 pair only in one household.

In comparison with the factory made synthetic bangles (plastic), or in other words the imitation 'Sankha', the genuine conch shell bangles or 'Sankha' are more costly. But they are always preferred by the married females because they consider 'Conch Shell' as a sacred thing. They also think that they are so accustomed that even if it becomes too much costly, they will have no other alternative but to use it. It is the view cherished by every Caste Hindu married women. They will always prefer the genuine 'Sankha' or conch shell bangles, although the imitation 'Sankha' of synthetic form is cheaper and more durable than the former. As the conch shell bangle is genuine, it is thought to be superior to the factory made imitation 'Plastic Sankha'. It is used not as a fashion but on religious ground.

The consumers generally prefer *Jaltaranga* and *Matardana* designs.

The 'Sankha' is a must for every marriage ceremony. In a marriage ceremony it must be put on the wrists of the newly married bride. On such ritual occasion she will wear the bangle for the first time and continue to wear it till she becomes a widow.

The imitation 'Sankha' made from plastic is available at the village *hat* and in different fairs held in the village. They are more durable and also cheaper in price than the genuine conch shell bangles. But, in spite of these advantages, its use is restricted among the few Scheduled Castes namely 'Metey's' and 'Bagdis' whose economic condition generally does not permit the purchase of shell bangles. The imitation 'Sankha' costs

only 12 paise per pair and the genuine 'Sankha' costs Rs. 2 per pair. It is, therefore, natural that the poor families cannot consume a pair of white conch shell bangles with their small purchasing power.

Among the 10 consumer households, only in the 'Metey' household the use of imitation 'Sankha' is found. It is reported by the household that it desires to use genuine 'Sankha' but cannot afford to use it. But, on the other hand, the female members of the 9 consumer households do not wear

imitation 'Sankha' because they do not bother about the price of genuine 'Sankha' due to their affluent condition. Moreover, they will never break away from their religious and cultural association with conch shell bangles.

It may be interesting to note here that the married female members of the 'Bauri' and 'Muchi' castes do not wear either the genuine 'Sankha' or the imitation 'Sankha', because they are not traditionally bound to wear any such thing.

CHAPTER XIV

Conclusion

One will perhaps be struck by a note of pessimism that pervaded the dissertations of the previous chapters on the craft of conch shell products. The present state of the craft is such that one will hardly dare to establish that the craft is now in a state of prosperity. In course of our visit to the village we saw how worries of the future have furrowed wrinkles on the artisans' faces, how the paltry income of the artisans made them emaciated and how fatalists the artisans have now become because of their hard struggle against enormous odds.

Symptoms of decay

The symtoms of decay have already appeared on the surface and conversations with a few households will fail to reveal how disturbed the craftsmen are at present about the very question of their existence. Altogether eleven families have severed their ties with the craft and many are thinking of following suit. We do not know the account of those families who have not only left the craft for good but also the village for a new land which have held the promise of a better future. Even in the practising households we have seen many workers engaged in other pursuits in preference to the manufacture of conch shell products. Many young people have gone outside the village to earn their livelihood in other spheres and the younger people are allured by the prospect of better income elsewhere. That the volume of production has declined is apparent from the fact that previously 13 households used to bring bags of intact conch shells for production and now only 7 households do the same and that too in small quantities. Articles are no longer varied and designs are now very limited. In the existing workshop there is no din and bustle of a thriving manufacturing industry. Instead, we find the sweating widows and gasping old men trying hard to earn a few rupees somehow to maintain their daily existence. Young apprentices are conspicuous by their absence ; so also are the hired labourers.

Causes of decay

From what has been stated above one will hardly doubt that the village craft is in the process of decay and ultimate death. It would be per-

haps better if we analyse the causes that led to the gradual decline of an age-old craft which flourished once in the hoary past in lands, far away from Bengal. Our analysis perhaps will be *Postmortem* (to use the expression of an old artisan) in nature and the remedies will not be very easy to implement. One of the stumbling factors behind the gradual decline of the industry is the difficulty in getting raw-materials. The raw-materials which are available have deteriorated in quality. The price of raw materials has gone up fantastically and is now beyond the reach of lesser artisans. Synthetic bangles in the nature of imitation Sankhas have brought in their wake hard competition for the village craftsmen, resulting in the consequential shrinkage in the market among the low-caste Hindus. The supply of raw materials is being controlled by big merchants in Calcutta. The resultant non-availability of raw materials has dislocated continuous work and led to competition among the artisans for cheaper articles. Damaged conch shells have grown in numbers without any reduction in price. Artisans have faced shortage of capital and met the shortage by selling assets. But, very rarely are they able to provide for sustained supply of capital, due to the inadequacy of their assets and often they turn paupers.

Prospect

It is true that the people have now lost their belief in the religious sanction behind customary practices and ceremonies. Still, there are people in the countryside who will follow the precepts of *Lokayata 'Dharma'* or popular religion, as devotedly as before. The ladies in the urban areas may stop wearing bangles, out of prejudice against a time old practice, but the women in the countryside will still regard the bangle as a symbol of marriage and as a symbol of the well being and prosperity of their husbands. The temples that are scattered through the expanse of our country will continue to blow the shell horns in the morning and in the evening, the *Panisankhas* will be equally in demand by the priests and Brahmans for our countless festivals and social ceremonies, and the demand for the conch shell products will always be there. Still it is very doubtful if the craft in the village will survive the present crisis.

It will not perhaps be out of place to take into account the export possibility of the products which are duly attested by the figures given over-leaf.

INDIA'S EXPORTS BY COMMODITIES-COUNTRIES THROUGH CALCUTTA CUSTOM ZONE

Commodities	Countries	Quality	Value
		K.G.	Rs.
April 1960—March 1961			
Chank and other forms of shells	Germany—East	20,419	62,625
	Germany—West °	26,620	81,045
	Netherland	205	1,003
	Pakistan—East	4,608	17,970
	Iraq	2,048	5,646
	Others (small value)	1,047	2,613
	Total	54,947	170,902
April 1961—March 1962			
Chank and other forms of shells	Burma	746	1,360
	Germany—East	10,100	25,600
	Germany—West	11,000	26,496
	Japan	2,568	3,034
	U.S.A.	771	1,667
	Others (small value)	1,577	4,177
	Total	26,762	62,324
April 1962—March 1963			
Chank	Ceylon	13	112
April 1963—March 1964			
Chank	British Guinea	18	574
April—June 1964			
Chank	Singapore	1	22

It would be well for the Government to consider the potentiality of the craft and to train the artisans in new methods and designs and explore the ways and means of training them in manufacturing some other items of consumer articles like table lamps, incense burners, paper weights etc. The supply position may be improved by the Fishery Department after a study of resources in our coastal Bay and to see if the conch shells that abound in this region are fit for the use of the artisans. One will only wish that the tradition of this craft which

started in the pre-historic era does not die out in the present when the methods and techniques have made considerable improvement than in the paleolithic age. It will be a misfortune if after two or three decades research workers swarm to the village to enquire about an erstwhile craft that existed here in the sixties of the 20th century. But, who knows if some day some frail memorials of these poor artisans and their dwindling craft will be imploring "the passing tribute of a sigh."

APPENDIX I

TABLES BASED ON THE SHORT SCHEDULES

OTHER CENTRES FOR CONCH SHELL PRODUCTION IN WEST BENGAL

TABLE I—NAME OF RURAL CRAFT AND NUMBER OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN PRODUCTION

Name of Craft	District	Police Station	Number of Villages	Number of persons employed in Production		
				Persons	Males	Females
				5	6	7
Conch Shell Production	(1) Murshidabad	Domkal	1 (Lakshmikantapur)	128	124	4
	(2) 24-Parganas	Swarupnagar	1 (Gopalpur)	19	19	..
	(3) Howrah	Bagnan	1 (Batul)	53	35	18
	(4) Nadia	Tehatta	1 (Chilakhali)	13	13	..
	(5) Bankura	Barjora	1 (Ghutguria)	142	140	2
	(6) Midnapur	Panskura	1 (Yogiber)	38	24	14
	(7) Burdwan	Ketugram	1 (Sri Gopalpur)	36	36	..
Total				429	391	38

TABLE II—DISTRIBUTION OF ARTISAN COMMUNITY

Name of Craft	District	Police Station	Caste/Community	Name and No. of Villages	No. of Artisan families	Total No. of worker			No. of families working under Co-operation	No. of families working in own houses or in workshops set up by their employees		
						Person	Male	Female				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
Conch Shell Production	Murshidabad	Domkal	(1) Kumbhakar-92	1 (Lakshmikantapur)	94	128	124	4	..	94		
			(2) Modak-2									
		24-Parganas	Swarupnagar	(1) Mahisya-19	1 (Gopalpur)	19	19	19	..	..	19	
	Howrah	Bagnan	(1) Sankha Banik-19	1 (Batul)	25	53	35	18	..	..	25	
			(2) Vaisnaba-5									
			(3) Kumbhakar-1									
	Nadia	Tehatta	(1) Kumbhakar-13	1 (Chilakhali)	13	13	13	..	..	..	13	
		Midnapur	Panskura	(1)Sankha Banik-16	1 (Yogiber)	17	38	24	14	..	17	
	Burdwan	Ketugram	(1) Sankha Banik-25	1 (Sri Gopalpur)	25	25	25	..	..	..	25	
			(1) Vaisnaba-25	1 (Ghutguria)	90	142	140	2	..	..	90	
		Bankura	(2) Gandha Banik-4									
			(3) Karmakar-15									
			(4) Napit-5									
			(5) Brahman-12									
			(6) Mahisya-8									
			(7) Subarna Banik-7									
			(8) Kumbhakar-4									
			(9) Tantubaya-10									
	Total					283	418	380	38	..	283	

TABLE III—DISTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES BY MATERIALS USED

Name of the Article	Main Material		Subsidiary Material		Raw material imported	
	Name of material	No. of villages engaged in manufacture	Name of material	No. of villages engaged in manufacture	Place from which imported	No. of villages engaged in manufacture
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(1) White Bangles	Conch shell	Lakshmikantapur	Gala,	Lakshmikantapur	Calcutta and Jipur (Murshidabad)	Lakshmikantapur
(2) Red Bangles			Hingul, Acid Powder, Wax			
(1) Coloured Bangles	Conch shell	Batul	Hingul, Gala, Harital	Batul	Calcutta	Batul
(1) White Bangles	Conch shell	Chilakhali	Hingul, Gala,	Chilakhali	Jipur, Madpur, Beldanga Ali in (Murshidabad)	Chilakhali
(2) Red Bangles			Wax, Acid			
(4) Khilan Sankha						
(1) White Bangles	Conch shell	Gopalpur	Nitric Acid,	Gopalpur	Calcutta and Jipur	Gopalpur
(2) Coloured Bangles			Muteric Acid, Gala, Hingul, Harital			
(1) Coloured Bangles	Conch shell	Sri Gopalpur	Gala, Hingul, Belgian, wire, green, yellow colour	Sri Gopalpur	Calcutta and Jipur	Sri Gopalpur
(1) White Bangles	Conch shell	Yogiber	Gala, red and green colours	Yogiber	Calcutta	Yogiber
(2) Map			Hingul,			
(3) Sumap Coloured Bangles			Gala, Wire,			
(4) Maja			Colour,		Ghuturia	Ghuturia
(5) Saja			Harital, Laha			
(1) Coloured bangles	Conch shell	Ghuturia			Calcutta	

APPENDIX II

TABLE IV—DESIGNS

Name of the Articles	Name of Designs	Sources from which the villages receive designs				Co-operative Sales Societies	Other Sources
		Traditional	Self-designed	Middlemen who undertake marketing	Design centres		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
(1) White Bangle	1 Matidana	.	.	Yes			
	2 Fulpata	.	.	"			
	3 Pata Ful	.	.	"			
(2) Coloured Bangle	4 Matar	.	.	"			
	5 Elpati	.	.	"			
	6 Jali	.	.	"			
	7 Ruli	.	.	"			
	8 Triple Matidana	.	.	"			
	9 Dhansis	.	.	"			
	10 Darjeeling	.	.	"			
	11 Kata Darjeeling	.	.	"			
	12 Bhatia	.	.	"			
	13 Dhap	.	.	"			
	14 Mane-na-mana	.	.	"			
	15 Janapati	.	.	"			
	16 Joy-hind	.	.	"			
	17 Jaltaranga	.	.	"			
	18 Pass Kankan	.	.	"			
	19 Bansgit	.	.	"			
	20 Hoglapata	.	.	"			
	21 Kar	.	.	"			
	22 Fancy	.	.	"			
	23 Thin	.	.	"			
	24 Khejuri	.	.	"			
	25 Bhenki	.	.	"			
	26 Deri	.	.	"			
	27 Trisurti	.	.	"			
	28 Jhim	.	.	"			
	29 Necklace	.	.	"			
	30 Prajapati	.	.	"			
	31 Daripak	.	.	"			
	32 Maja	.	.	"			
	33 Chakkata	.	.	"			
	34 Chak	.	.	"			
	35 Bahi-sankha	.	.	"			
	36 Khilan	.	.	"			

Census of India 1961 Handicraft Survey Scheme

Sl. No.

FAMILY SCHEDULE

(For practising artisan families)

State : WEST BENGAL

District _____ Subdivision _____
 Police Station _____ N.E.S. Block (if any) _____
 Village/Town _____ Mauza _____
 Locality _____ J. L. No. _____

1. Name of the head of the family _____

2. (a) Postal address _____

(b) Since when living in this area _____

(c) If immigrant, migrated from which area and when _____

3. Particulars About The Members of the Household Including the Head :

(Use separate sheet for each individual)

Sl. No. _____

(a) Name _____

(b) Sex Male/Female _____

(c) Age in completed years _____

(d) Relationship with head of family _____

(e) Place of birth (i) Name _____

(ii) Distance from here _____

(f) Religion _____

(g) Caste/Tribe _____

(h) Language _____

(i) Education _____

(j) (i) Training in craft or crafts as home apprentice _____

(ii) Other private sources _____

(k) Training in craft or crafts in institutions _____

(l) Father's occupation _____

(m) Occupation (i) Main _____

(ii) Subsidiary _____

(n) Hours of work for each occupation (i) Main _____

(ii) Subsidiary _____

(o) Place of work for each occupation (i) Main _____

(ii) Subsidiary _____

(p) Remuneration for different occupations (i) Main _____

(ii) Subsidiary _____

(q) If engaged in any craft, since when _____

(r) Physical conditions _____

(s) Marital status _____

(t) Age at marriage _____

(u) Marriage payments (i) Received by Head of the Household _____

(ii) Made by Head of the Household _____

(v) If occupation is not the traditional one, state :

(i) Whether ever engaged in the traditional occupation ? Yes/No

(ii) If yes, when given up _____

(iii) And why ? _____

(w) Hobbies and recreational activities _____

4. Additional Questions to be Asked for Members of the Family Living Away from it :

(a) Present postal address _____

(b) Since when living away from the family _____

(c) Why living away from family ? _____

(d) How many times did he visit home/village in a year and why ? _____

(e) Remittance (i) Sent by him _____

(ii) Received by him _____

(f) Remarks _____

5(a). Particulars About Articles Produced :

Local names and English equivalents for the types of articles produced by the family : (put in serial order in terms of importance with reference to the value to produce)

(i) Before second World War :

Local Names

English equivalents

1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.

(ii) Before 1947 :

Local Names

English equivalents

1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.

(iii) At present :

Local Names	English equivalents
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.

5(b). Details of Articles Produced at Present

(Use separate sheet for each article)

- (a) Name of article _____
- (b) (i) Total number of articles produced during last year _____
- (ii) Price of the same _____
- (iii) Percentage of the value of all the produces during last year _____
- (c) Describe the approximate size, height, form of each part of the article as well as the article as a whole _____
- (d) Describe the functions (uses) of each part of the article as well as the article as a whole _____
- (e) Discuss how during use the different parts and/or the object as a whole is manipulated _____
- (f) Whether there is preference for production of a particular variety of the article ? If so why ? _____
- (g) Whether there is a preference for any particular article or group of articles ? If so, why ? _____
- (h) (i) Has there been any attempt to standardise any aspect of the craft ? _____
- (ii) If yes, by whom and how ? _____
- (iii) To what extent has it been successful ? _____
- (iv) What has been its impact on the volume of production ? _____
- (v) What has been its impact on the economy of the craftsmen _____
- (vi) Has it involved any shift in the position of any particular craftsman or craftsman family ? _____
- (i) (i) If there has been no attempt of standardisation, do you think that any aspect of the craft requires to be standardised ? _____
- (ii) If so, why ? _____
- (iii) How and by whom it should be standardised ? _____
- (j) (i) Do all the craftsmen families have necessary tools, equipments, skill and capital to fall in line in case of standardi-
sation ? _____
- (ii) If not, what has been/should be done in case of such families _____
- (k) Remarks _____

6. Particulars About Raw Materials :

(Use separate sheet for each article produced at present)

(a) Name of the article with its parts (both local & English equivalents) _____

(b) Main raw materials :

Names	From where obtaining and or obtained	Form	Price
-------	---	------	-------

(c) Subsidiary raw materials :

Names	From where obtaining and or obtained	Form	Price
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- (d) Privileges enjoyed, if any, in obtaining raw materials _____
- (e) Difficulties, if any, in obtaining raw materials _____
- (f) Terms and conditions on which raw materials were obtained from different sources during last year _____
- (g) Remarks _____

7. Particulars About Designs and Decorative Motifs :

(Use separate sheet for each article)

- (a) Name of article _____
- (b) Date of Manufacture _____
- (c) Base material _____
- (d) Name of design _____
- (e) Decorative motif and other elements of the design and how they are combined in _____
- (i) the article under study ; _____
- (ii) and according to the craftsman, whether there are or were other combinations _____
- (f) Brief description of design including colour schemes and aspects which are considered to be purely decorative and which are considered to be of ritual significance _____
- (g) Symbolic aspects associated with the design _____
- (h) Legends connected with the designs _____
- (i) Source of design _____
- (j) Whether, according to the craftsman, the design is a traditional one/or whether it is a result of an innovation ? _____
- (k) How frequently he makes use of the particular design ? _____
- (l) Is there any section of the population among whom the design is more in demand ? If yes, give details _____
- (m) According to the craftsman, whether similar design are found in other types of crafts of the region _____
- (n) Is any design confined to certain families or certain recognised section of the population ? Is there any taboo against adoption of other designs ? Is there any sanction against copying of designs by others ? If so, what is the nature of sanction _____

(o) Whether the craftsman is acquainted with other designs which he wants to adopt ?

Yes/No

If yes, _____

- (i) Name of the designs _____
- (ii) Brief descriptions of designs _____
- (iii) Sources of designs _____
- (iv) Why he wants to adopt ? _____
- (v) Why he does not adopt ? _____
- (p) Remarks _____

8. Particulars of Tools :

- (a) Name of articles produced _____
- (b) Base material _____

(c) Name of the tool (local and English equivalent)	Functions of the tool	Price	
		At the time it was obtained	Present market price

- (d) Brief description of each tool (pencil sketches, photographs, etc., are to be supplemented) _____
- (e) Who makes the tools, names, when and from where obtained ? _____
- (f) (i) Whether the tools are used to the full capacity _____
- (ii) If not, why not ? _____
- (g) (i) Is the craftsman satisfied with the tools ? _____
- (ii) If not, why not ? _____
- (iii) (a) What other tools he desires ? _____
- (b) Why is he not having those tools ? _____
- (h) Remarks (including whether the tool is imported from outside India) _____

9. General Description of Workshop and Organisation of Work :

- (a) Location _____
- (b) Distance from household _____
- (c) Physical structure (size and description) _____
- (d) In addition to place of work, whether used for any other purpose ; if yes, state the purpose _____
- (e) Environment and hygienic condition _____
- (f) Number of persons working in the workshop _____
- (g) Hours of work _____
- (h) Types of operations :

Type of operation	Names of tools used	Whether working individually	Whether working in groups
-------------------	---------------------	------------------------------	---------------------------

(i) (i) Number of persons engaged in each operation :

Type of operation	Members of family				Employed members				Remrks. (Including whether there is general division of labour)
	Skilled		Unskilled		Skilled		Unskilled		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	

(ii) Wage rate for each type of operation and availability of labour :

Type of operation	Wage Rate								Whether competent hands are available	Remarks
	Skilled				Unskilled					
	Male		Female		Male		Female			
	Adult	Minor	Adult	Minor	Adult	Minor	Adult	Minor		

- (j) Nature of utilization of space in the workshop in respect of each operation and work group _____
- (k) Nature of supervision _____
- (l) Formation of work groups _____

(i) Operation wise :

Name of operation	No. of persons	Basis of grouping
-------------------	----------------	-------------------

(ii) Object wise :

Name of object	No. of persons	Basis of grouping
----------------	----------------	-------------------

(iii) Otherwise :

Name	No. of persons	Basis of grouping
------	----------------	-------------------

- (m) Observations of the investigator about the general atmosphere ; relation between individual workers, groups, supervisors and workers etc. _____

- (n) Remarks _____
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(e) Distribution of work in different stages : (outside the household or the workshop of the establishment under survey)

Name of article	Stage of work	If not done in the household or workshop					Remarks
		Particulars of persons by whom done		Where done	Reasons for the particular type of distribution	Agency through which distributoin and supervision is effected	
		Category	Number				

10. Particulars about Production :

(Use separate sheet for each article)

- (a) Name of article _____
- (b) Seasons of production and approximate percentage of produce during each season _____
- (c) If more than one technique of production prevails to produce the same article :
- How and when different techniques have been introduced ? _____
 - Whether the different members of family follow the same technique or different techniques ? _____
 - Whether there is preference for a particular technique ? If so, why ? _____
 - Stages of production beginning from preparation of raw materials to the finished product _____
 - Describe operations involving manipulation of tools and processing of raw material stage by stage _____
 - Describe magic-religious performances and taboo associated with different techniques, tools and different stages of production or different aspects of the craft _____
 - If particular tool, technique, type of production or any aspect of the craft is considered to be distinctive of the community or group or to have symbolic significance in any manner, give particulars of the same _____

11. Particulars about storage, marketing and transport :

(Use separate sheet for each article)

- (a) Name of article _____
- (b) Time gap between production and disposal _____
- (c) In case of long duration, measures, if any, taken for preservation _____
- (d) Storage :
- Place _____
 - Distance from workshop _____
 - Container _____
- (e) Percentage of total sale and disposal during 1961 :

Retails			Wholesale			On terms of processing raw materials supplied by		
From workshop	Outside		From workshop	Outside		Co-op.	Emporium	Businessman
	To co-operatives	Others		To co-operatives	Others			

(f) Sale Price as on.....

Retail			Wholesale		
From workshop	Outside		From workshop	Outside	
	Co-operative	Others		Co-operative	Others

(g) Terms and conditions of work in processing of raw material (operation-wise) :

Name of operation	Co-operative	Emporium	Others
-------------------	--------------	----------	--------

(h) Transport :

Purpose	Place	Distance from workshop	Means	Costs
---------	-------	------------------------	-------	-------

12. How disposed : (as per statement of the craftsman)

(Use separate sheet for each article)

- (a) Name of article _____
- (b) Percentage of the total used produce, in the family during 1961 : for
- Ceremonial
 - Domestic
- (c) Percentage used in the community during 1961 :
- Percentage of the total produce
 - On what terms
- (d) Percentage used by patron clients during 1961 :
- Percentage of the total produce
 - On what terms
- (e) Sold in local market :
- Percentage of the total produce
 - Name of market

(f) Sold in fairs and festivals :

Name of fair/festival	Time of occasion	Percentage of the total produce
-----------------------	------------------	---------------------------------

(g) Exported :

Place of export	Percentage of the total produce
-----------------	---------------------------------

(h) Statement of the craftsman about :

- (i) Who are main clients ;
- (ii) What is the main use (ceremonial, domestic etc.);
- (iii) Whether any change is taking place in the relative importance of different means of disposal and the nature of use
- (i) (i) If the craft is a new one in the family, why they have adopted it ?
- (ii) Is the craftsman satisfied with his/her job?
- (iii) What are his/her main problems?
- (iv) What he wants his/her son/daughter to be ?
- (j) (i) If the craft is a traditional one in the family, has any member of the family taken to any other occupation?
- (ii) If yes, why?
- (iii) Is the craftsman satisfied with his job?
- (iv) If not, why not?
- (v) If yes, what is the specific nature of the satisfaction?
- (vi) Does he think that he is rendering a useful service to the society?
- (vii) If yes, in what manner?
- (viii) Do the neighbours think that he is rendering a useful service to the society?
- (ix) If not, why not?
- (x) Does he think that the society is doing all that should be done for him?
- (xi) If not, why not?
- (xii) Does he want his son/daughter to be in the same occupation?

(xiii) If not, why not?

(xiv) If he does not want his son/daughter to be in the same occupation, what he wants his son/daughter to be ?

(xv) (1) If he wants his son/daughter in the same occupation does the son/daughter reciprocate his feeling

(2) How is he training up his son/daughter for the purpose

(xvi) According to him, in addition to specific skill for the craft, what are the

(1) mental qualities required for successful pursuit of the craft

(2) physical qualities required for successful pursuit of the craft

13. Estimated cost of production per unit :

Name of article	Description	Quality of raw material	Price of raw material	Cost of transport	Rent of workshop	Wages paid	Other payment for processing	Interest on loan	Unpaid wages for the family members at market rates

14. Who does the co-ordination of work in case of division of labour and work done on labour rate basis at different places?

15. Particulars of the various sources from where the craftsman of the village have received, funds :

Source	When received	Approximate amount	Terms and conditions (including rate of interest, security, mortgage, etc. manner of realisation, etc.)	Form (Cash/ kind)	Purpose	Remarks
(a) Grant-in-aid						
(b) Loan						
(c) Advance						
(d) Sale of assets (including land, jeweller, livestock, etc.)						
(e) Diversion of funds from other productive activities						
(f) Family savings						
(g) Other (specify)						

16. Family budget particulars (income and expenditure) :

Income			Expenditure		
Major head	Amount	Source in or outside village	Major head	Amount	Source in or outside village
(a) Cultivation			(a) Food (i) Cereal		
(b) Livestock and products			(ii) Non-cereal		
(c) Wages			(b) Drinks		
(d) Art & Crafts—			(c) Fuel and lighting		
(i) Craft understudy			(d) House rent and repairs		
(ii) Other crafts			(e) Clothing		
(e) Fishery			(f) Travelling		
(f) Forestry			(g) Recreation		
(g) Trade			(h) Education		
(h) Transport			(i) Other services (Misc.)		
(i) Profession			(j) Interest		
(j) Service			(k) Remittance:		
(k) Rent			(l) Hired labour		
(l) Investments			(m) Purchases for production		
(m) Remittances			(n) Others		
(n) Others			(o) Purchase of assets		
(o) Borrowing			(p) Construction & Improvement of building & other structure		
(p) Principal received back			(q) Land development		
(q) Sale of assets					
TOTAL			TOTAL		

17. Unemployment (Use separate sheet for each unemployed member) :

Is there any member of household searching for a job?	Yes/No
If yes, give following details :	
(a) Name	
(b) Age	
(c) Other proficiency	
(d) Nature of previous employment, if any	
(e) Academic qualifications	
(f) Date of cessation of previous employment	
(g) Reasons for cessation	
(h) Any subsidiary work at present	
(i) Whether registered with any employment exchange?	Yes/No
(j) Nature of job sought	
(k) Remarks	

18. Sale and purchase of valuable assets during last three years :

Type of assets	Time of sale	Buyer's address	Occupation of buyer	Area No.	Sale price
(i) Land					
(ii) Livestock					
(iii) Machinery, tools equipment					
(iv) Building etc.					
(v) Jewellery & valuable					
(iv) Investments					
(vii) Other assets					
Total					
(b) Purchase :					
Type of assets	Date of purchase	Seller's address	Seller's occupation	Area No.	Sale price
(a) Land					
(b) Livestock					
(c) Machinery, tools equipment					
(d) Building, etc.					
(e) Jewellery & valuable					
(f) Investments					
(g) Other assets					
Total					

CENSUS OF INDIA 1961

Handicraft Survey Scheme

FAMILY SCHEDULE

(For non-practising artisan families)

State : WEST BENGAL

District Sub-division
 Police Station N.E.S. Block (if any)
 Village/Town Mauza
 Locality J.L.No.

Sl. No.

1. Name of the Head of the family

2. Postal address

3. Particulars About the Members of the Household Including the head :

(Use separate sheet for each individual)

(a) Name Sl. No.

(c) Sex : Male/Female

(b) Age in completed years

(d) Relation with head of family

(e) Place of birth (i) Name

(ii) Distance from here

(f) Religion

(g) Caste/Tribe

(h) Language

(i) Education

(j) Training in craft or crafts as home apprentice

(k) Training in craft or crafts in institutions

(l) Father's occupation

(m) Occupation (i) Main
(ii) Subsidiary(n) Hours of work for (i) Main
each occupation (ii) Subsidiary(o) Place of work for (i) Main
each occupation (ii) Subsidiary(p) Remuneration for (i) Main
different occupa- (ii) Subsidiary
tions

(q) If engaged in any craft since when .

(r) Physical conditions

(s) Marital status

(t) Age at marriage

(u) Marriage payments (i) Received by Head of the Household

(ii) Made by Head of the Household

4. When exactly you have given up this craft ?

5. At the time of giving up this craft, was it your main source
of livelihood, or subsidiary means of livelihood ?6. What was your income from various sources ? (Source-
wise)

7. Why you have given up the trade ?

8. What is your present occupation ?

9. What is your present income from various sources ?

10. Is there any member of your family who still possesses
skill in this craft ?

11. Do you want to resume the craft occupation ?

12. If yes, what are the practical difficulties ?

13. Do you consider yourself to be fully rehabilitated econo-
mically after you gave up your craft ?

Yes/No

14. If not, why not ?

15. What was the price of the tools when you gave up the
craft ?

16. What did you do the tools when you gave up the craft ?

17. Did you have some permanent clients when you gave
up the craft ?

Yes/No

18. Did you play any active part in arranging business connec-
tion of your erstwhile clients with other craftsmen ?19. Is there any formal or informal body to look after the
professional interests of this craft artisans ?

20. If yes, did you continue to play any role in such body ?

21. Is there any caste association ?

CRAFT

Sl. No. _____

CENSUS OF INDIA 1961

Handicraft Survey Scheme

VILLAGE/TOWN SCHEDULE OF INDUSTRIES AND CRAFTS

State : WEST BENGAL

District _____ Sub-division _____
 Police Station _____ N.E.S. Block (If any) _____
 Village/Town _____ Mauza _____
 Locality _____ J.L.No. _____

A. General Description of Village/Locality

Describe briefly village/town/locality with particular reference to :

- (a) Distance from, nearest railway station _____
 _____, nearest main road _____
 _____, P. S. _____, Tehsil/Taluk/
 Head/Quarters _____, B.D.O's Office _____
 _____, Marketing Officer _____
 _____, District Court _____
 Registrar Co-operative Societies' Office _____
 _____, Main Marketing Centre _____
 Master Craftsman's House _____

- (b) Topography and physical environment
 (c) Industrial training/Design Centre, if any, which has influenced on the traditional craft

- B. (a) Residential pattern including manner of concentration and dispersion and distance from the place where the main production processes are carried on by the craftsman or others involved in the craft in its different stages
 (b) Social environment (immediate or primary and wider or secondary set up) with reference to caste/language/religion/nationality/characteristics which ever may have any role in regard to the development and/or persistence of the craft
 (c) Approximate number of families belonging to each group
 (d) Main characteristic of the village/town (commercial centre, pilgrimage centre, tourist or health resort centre, historical centre, etc.)
 (e) Significant history of the village/town/locality which may have any bearing on the history of the craft concerned
 (f) (i) Whether there are any other crafts in the same village/town/locality
 (ii) If yes, is there any casual link for clustering of the different crafts in the same area (record the views of the leading craftsman, Local Industrial officer, and 3 or 4 key persons separately)

- (g) Institutions having any bearing on the development of the craft
 (h) Whether the craft has any bearing on any aspect of the life of the non-craftsman neighbours. (Economic, social, cultural, hygienic etc.) (Record the views of five leading craftsmen, local Industrial Officers ; Village headman ; Local Co-operative officials ; or 4 leading persons belonging to different occupations)

C. Particulars about the communities concerned with the craft in its various stages :

(Use separate sheet for each caste/community)

- (a) Name of caste/community
 (b) Traditionally connected with which aspect of the craft
 (c) Approximate number of families :
 (i) Total
 (ii) Actually engaged in the craft
 (d) Workers actually engaged in the craft
 Adult { Male
 Female
 Minor { Male
 Female
 (e) Number of persons mainly working in own houses
 (i) Independently
 (ii) Under co-operation
 (iii) Sponsored
 (iv) Others
 (f) Number of persons mainly working in workshops set up by private employers
 (g) Number of persons mainly working in workshops set up by co-operative societies or Government
 (h) Number of families producing for own consumption only
 (i) Number of families producing for sale to outsiders only
 (j) Number of families producing both for consumption and sale

D. Are there any village/town/other areas in town where families practising this craft live ? If so, give the names of the villages/towns/other areas, approximate number of families and the communities concerned

E. When did the community/oldest practising family came to this village/locality ? Who was the patron ? How old is the craft in this village/town/area

F. (i) Legends or myths connected with the origin and history of the community

- (ii) Status of the community in the local social structure

- (iii) Status of the family in the local social structure
- (iv) Particulars about Panchayet of the community
- G. Legends or myths or history connected with the origin and development of the craft as a whole or different techniques, tools, processes, designs etc., relating to the craft
- H. Particulars about guild of the craftsmen
- I. Local markets/agencies from where raw materials are procured
- Name
 - Distance from village
 - Nature of establishments and number of each
 - Terms and conditions under which raw materials are obtained by the artisans from each category of establishment
 - Which category of establishment is preferred by the artisans?
 - Nature of transport
 - Availability of raw materials during different seasons
 - Special problems
- J. Local markets/fairs/other agencies for disposal of products
- Name
 - Distance from the village
 - Nature of establishments and number of each
 - Terms and conditions under which the finished products are disposed off by the artisans through each of the above categories and establishments
 - Which category is preferred by the artisans and why?
 - Nature of transport
 - Fluctuations of demand in different seasons, state causes and extent
 - Special problems
- K. If there is a co-operative society, when it was started? What is its area of operation? What are the qualifications for membership? How many members of different categories (e.g., artisans, business members etc.) are there? What are the different functions under taken by the society? What aid the society received from the Government or the Statutory Bodies for different operations? What is the extent of business according to last audit report? What is the loss or profit according to last audit report? Divident, if any, given to the members? To what extent the interest of the artisans is represented in the management of the society? General note on its role in regard to development of the craft and whether all sections of the population are equally attracted by it, what are its problems etc.

L. Particulars about the families connected with the craft in various capacities

Aspect of the craft	Number of families belonging to			Number of families living at a distance from the main centre of			
	Com- munity I	Com- munity II	etc.	0—1 Miles	1—3 Miles	3—5 Miles	above 5 Miles
1. Manufacture of tools for the craft							
2. Production of raw material							
3. Collection of raw material							
4. Sale of raw material							
5. Owner of workshop							
6. Both owner and craftsman							
7. Financier							
8. Skilled craftsman							
9. Unskilled Labourers							
10. Craft supervisor							
11. Trader							
12. Salesman							
13. Managerial and account personnel							
14. Transport							
15. Packing							
16. Others							
M. Approximate price of the tools relating to the craft in the area, (based on opinion of 4 or 5 key persons viz. officer of Industry Deptt; officials of co-operative society; leading craftsmen)							
N. Approximate circulating capital in the area in connection with the craft (based on opinion of 4 or 5 key persons)							
O. Approximate annual output of the craft in the area (based on opinion of 4 or 5 key persons)							
(a) Quantity of produce							
(b) Price of produce							
P. (i) According to the key informants what are the relative positions of the various types of establishments in terms of their capacity to produce more in proportion to Investment. (Types of establishments—Co-operatives, Private workshop with paid workers, self-employed households, Govt. Production Centre, Others.)							
(ii) What are factors determining the relative position in the above matter							

- Q. (i) According to the key informants what are the relative positions of the various types of establishments in terms of their capacity to earn more profit in proportion to investment
- (ii) What are the factors determining relative position in the above matter
- R. (i) According to the key informants what are the relative positions of the various types of establishments in terms of their capacity to produce more in porportion to the number of skilled craftsmen
- (ii) What are the factors determining the relative position in the above matter
- S. Particulars of five very reputed craftsmen of the centre (ascertained through discussion with Local Industry Officer, officials of Panchayet, 3-4 craftsmen of the area, 2-3 traders in the craft)

Name	Community	Age	Academic qualifica-tions	Nature of training in the craft	Since when in the craft	Specialities in which the reputation is based	Approximate income	Other significant data
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

- T. Unstructured biography of 2-3 master craftsmen, 1-2 very old craftsmen, 1-2, new entracts in the craft

CENSUS OF INDIA 1961
Handicraft Survey Scheme

SCHEDULE FOR THE STUDY OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

[These are additional points to be covered, after administering the Family Schedule (for practising craftsman) to the Co-operative Society, considering it to be a unit, leaving the portion not relevant]

PART--A

1. Name of Society
2. Year of Registration
3. Year of commencement
4. Area and scope of operation
5. Registered Headquarter
6. Note on the history of development of the society including the sponsoring agency, leadership etc.
7. (a) Crafts dealt with
(b) Particulars of castes and communities in the locality traditionally connected with the craft (name, number)
8. Categories of membership (ordinary member, business members etc.) and qualifications for each category of members
9. Composition of membership :

Category of member	No. of from tradi-tional craftsman families	No. of members from a distance of				Total
		Below 3 Miles	4-6 Miles	7-10 Miles	Above 10 Miles	

10. (a) Value of each share
(b) Method of realisation (whether to be realised at a time in cash or by instalments or by labour so on)
(c) Total number of shares sold
(d) Amount of share value realised
11. (a) Rate of admission fee
(b) Total amount realised as admission fee
12. Particulars of working capital loan received from Government or Semi-Government agencies :
(a) (i) Name of Source

- (ii) Amount received (if a part or whole was received in kind, particulars of the same along with cash value are to be recorded)
- (iii) When received
- (iv) Rate of interest
- (v) Other terms and conditions
- (b) (i) Amount repaid Rs.
- (ii) When repaid
13. Working capital loan received from other sources :
- (a) (i) Name of source
- (ii) Amount received (if a part or whole was received in kind, particulars of the same along with cash value are to be recorded)
- (iii) When received
- (iv) Rate of interest
- (v) Other terms and conditions
- (b) (i) Amount repaid Rs.
- (ii) When repaid
14. Subsidy received from Government or Semi-Government agencies :
- (i) Name of source
- (ii) Amount received (if a part or whole was received in kind, particulars of the same along with cash value are to be recorded)
- (iii) When received
- (iv) Purpose for which received
- (v) Terms and conditions on which received
- (vi) How much has been utilised & in what manner
- (vii) Remarks
15. Subsidy, gift and donation received from other sources :
- (i) Name of source
- (ii) Amount received (if a part or whole was received in kind, particulars of the same along with cash value are to be recorded)
16. Net profit or loss :
- (a) According to latest audit report
- (b) During, 1959-60
- 1960-61
17. Dividend given during three years
- 1958-59
- 1959-60
- 1960-61

18. Assistance given during 1960-61 to the members :

	No. of members	Total value	Range		Purpose	Terms and conditions	Realisation	Remarks including adequate credit
			Maximum	Minimum				
Finance								
Tools								
Workshop facilities								
Raw materials								
Technical Assistance								
Servicing								
Marketing								
Training								
Other benefits in respect of the craft								
Welfare activities (education, health)								

19. Composition of the board of management and office bearers :

Name of the office	No. of Official in ex-officio capacity	Number of Non-Official members belonging to				Remarks
		Traditional craftsman families	Business man concerned with the craft	Social workers and others sponsoring agent	Non-traditional craftsmen families	

PART—B (To be administered to various categories of the members)

1. Particulars of the members :

Name	Age	Community	Main Occupation	Subsidiary Occupation	Office if any held in the co-operative
------	-----	-----------	-----------------	-----------------------	--

2. (a) Has he been benefited by the co-operative society ?

(b) If yes, how ?

(c) If not, why not ?

3. Are all his needs in connection with the craft satisfied through the co-operative ? If not,

(a) What per cent of the various needs are satisfied through the co-operative ?

(b) Particulars of the other agencies through which the various needs are satisfied ?

Name of agency	Nature of need	Extent of fulfilment	Remarks
----------------	----------------	----------------------	---------

(c) Why all the needs cannot be satisfied through the co-operative ?

(d) What according to him are the main problems of the co-operative society and what should be done to solve the same ?

PART—C (To be administered to the non-member practising artisan in the area covered by the society)

1. (a) Do you know that there is a co-operative society in your area, dealing with your craft ?

Yes/No

(b) If yes, since when it is in existence ?

(c) Who run the co-operative ?

(d) What are its activities ?

(e) How is it functioning ?

2. (a) Why you have not become a member of the co-operative ?

3. (a) Do you think that the members of the co-operative can attract all the craftsmen of the locality with certain adjustments ?

(b) If so, what are those adjustments ?

4. (a) Do you think that the members of the co-operative have some advantage conferred to the non-members ?

(b) If yes, what are they ?

5. (a) Even though you are not a member of the co-operative, have you been benefited by it in any manner ?

(b) If so, how ?

6. (a) Do you think that establishment of the co-operative has been beneficial/harmful to the craft in any manner ?

(b) If so, how ?

7. What are the problems of the co-operative and what are your suggestions ?

CENSUS OF INDIA 1961

Handicraft Survey Scheme

SCHEDULE FOR THE STUDY OF CONSUMER'S PREFERENCE

1. Particulars of consumer :

(a) Name

(b) Age

Years

(c) Address

(d) Occupation

(e) Community

2. Particulars of articles in the family :

Name of article	Number	When purchased	From	Value	How and by whom used	No. and value of mill made or factory made identical articles used in family	Remarks
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3. If mill or factory made articles of identical used available in the market ?

(a) If so, compared to the handicraft goods which is more costly

(b) If the handicraft goods is more costly why the same has been purchased ?

(c) (i) If it is cheaper whether the consumer would like to have it more ?

(ii) What are the limiting factors ?

4. (a) Are there some special advantages of the particular type of handicraft goods ?

(b) If so, what are they ?

5. (a) Are there some special advantage of the particular type of mill made/factory made goods ?

(b) If so, what are they ?

6. Whether the particular type of handicraft article is superior to the mill made or factory made article ?

7. (a) Is it considered to be more fashionable to have handicraft products ?

(b) If so, since when ?

8. Is there any particular aspect of the craft which the consumer prefers more ? (form, design, size etc.)

9. (a) What are the various articles produced by the craftsman of the particular craft ?

(b) Which of the above he wants to use more and why ?

(c) Is this available in adequate number ?

10. Suggestions if any regarding improvement of any aspect of the craft

11. (a) Are there some ritual or social occasions when any of these craft products are more in use ?

(b) If so, what are these occasions and how the craft has come to be related to the occasion ?

CENSUS OF INDIA 1961
Handicraft Survey Scheme
SCHEDULE FOR PRODUCTION-cum-TRAINING CENTRE STUDY

Date of study

Name of Investigator

1. Location

2. Name of craft

3. Name and area of operation of the centre

4. General note on the centre including its objective, management, sponsoring agencies, affiliation, branches, etc.

5. Brief description of the scheme (if there is more than one unit, fill up the particulars in respect of each unit separately)

6. Training :

Nature of training	Period of training	Number of trainees		Nature of facilities given to trainees		Remarks
		Sanctioned	Actual	Stipend and its particulars	Others	

7. Production :

Duration of production phase	Main items	On what consideration the items are selected	Produce		Stipend/wage and other facilities	Remarks
			Whether all items included in training phase are included in production phase	Whether production programme in the centre is related to the future production pattern of the trainees		

8. Follow-up. Particulars of assistance to *ex*-trainees in :

- (a) Securing employment
- (b) Setting up co-operative enterprise
- (c) Starting business at Household
- (d) Obtaining tools & Implements
- (e) Having regular supply of raw material
- (f) Having technical guidance and supervision in production
- (g) Marketing
- (h) Others

9. Expenditure for the scheme :

- (a) Recurring
- (b) Non-recurring

10. Supervisory and teaching staff :

Name of the post	Qualifications	Background in the traditional craft	Remarks
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11. Recruitment of trainees :

- (a) Agency for selection of trainees
- (b) Criteria for selection of trainees
- (c) Problems faced in selection of trainees due to :
 - (i) Case prejudice
 - (ii) Sex division of labour
 - (iii) Level of technology
 - (iv) Conservatism against innovation
 - (v) Location of the centre
 - (vi) Other factors
- (d) Terms and conditions of recruitment

12. Number of trainees who actually completed :

- (i) Year of starting
- (ii) 1960-61
- (iii) 1961-62

Name	Permanent address and distance of the same from training centre	Caste, Tribe	Age	Academic qualifications	Previous experience in the craft	Occupation and annual income of father or guardian of the trainee	Record of progress in training	Remarks
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14. (a) How the price of the finished product is fixed ?

(b) Who fixes it ?

(c) Is it lower than market price or higher ?

15. Particulars about *ex*-trainees (to be administered to *ex*-trainees)

Name	Address	Year of completion of training	Nature of assistance received from the training centre or any Govt. or semi-Govt. agency to carry on work in the craft	Whether continuing in the line			Remarks
				Under	An employee	An Independent worker	

RURAL HANDICRAFTS SURVEY—WEST BENGAL

Name of District-----

CENSUS 1961

PART I

Artisan Household Schedule

Name of Police Station

Name of Mauza

1. Name of the Head of Household

2. Caste

3. Age

4. Name of Craft practised

5. Composition of Household including the Head

[illegible]

Artisan Household in the Mauza (Tribal & Non-Tribal)

[illegible]

Artisan Household in the Mauza (Tribal & Non-Tribal)

[illegible]

Artisan Household in the Mauza (Tribal & Non-Tribal)—contd.

[illegible]

Artisan Household in the Mauza (Tribal & Non-Tribal)—concl'd.

15. Do the Households produce for their own use entirely ?
Describe whether for domestic or ceremonial purposes
16. Whether they produce entirely for others in exchange for money or kind ? If so, who are the customers and to which communities do they belong ?
 - (i) Are they for domestic use ?
 - (ii) Are they for ceremonial or ritualistic purposes ?
If so, for which ceremony or ritual ?
17. Whether the Household produce for themselves and for sale ?
 - (i) Describe types of objects for own domestic or ceremonial use. Mention heights of objects
 - (ii) Describe types of objects for sale. Mention heights of objects
18. Does the Household produce for sale in open markets, hats and melas ? Mention the markets, hats or melas and the occasions
 - (i) Do they make to the order of middle men who advance money and undertake marketing facilities ?
19. If there is co-operative society, are there members in it who belong to different castes ?
20. Give the names of the designs and myths or stories behind the names, *i.e.* explanation of what the design stands for and the shape or decoration of objects
21. Describe Production
(Please describe stage by stage and take photographs, wherever possible. Photographs should be supplemented by pencil sketches of surface forms, designs, shapes, colours and processes of paper if necessary for sketches of stages)
 - (i) First Stage
 - (ii) Second Stage
 - (iii) Third Stage
 - (iv) Final and finishing Stage

22. Is this a tribe where every Hou ehhold produces thing, for its own use or the use of the community ?

23. Is this a tribe of which only particular sections produce particular things? If so, which sections produce which things? Mention name:

Name of section of
Tribe

Name of articles
produced

24. Is this a semi-tribal community and does it produce articles for neighbouring tribes? If so mention the names of the tribes for which they produce and the names of articles

Name of neighbouring Tribes

Name of articles produced
for them

25. Does this tribe produce articles for non-tribal or advanced communities? If so, mention names of these communities and the names of articles

Name of non-tribal or advanced communities

Name of articles produced
for them

District

Sub-division

Police Station

NES Block (if any)

Mauza

No.

PART A

General Description of Mauza

Describe briefly :

- (i) Area of village in acres

- (ii) Population

- (iii) Approximate number of families

- (iv) Various sections in the mauza corresponding to communities and their names

Name of community

Name of community

(iv) a

c

b

f

c

g

d

h

- (v) Distance from nearest railway station (miles)

- (vi) Distance from nearest main road

- (vii) Distance from Police Station headquarters

PART B

Artisan Communities in the Mauza (Tribal & Non-Tribal)

[illegible]

PART B

Artisan Communities in the Mauza (Tribal & Non-Tribal) - *contd.*

8. Subsidiary material	9. Whether raw material is imported and if so from where ? What are the main ingredients ?	10. Who gives the designs ?	11. Give the names of the designs

12. Describe colours used. How are the colours obtained ?	13. Tools used (describe tools. Give pencil sketches and photographs separately)	14. Who make these tools and from where are they imported ?	15. General description of workshop (use separate sheet of paper if necessary)	16. When did the community come to this mauza ? Who were the patrons ? How old is this craft in this mauza ?	17. Describe legends or myths current on the origin of the community

PART B

Artisan Communities in the Mauza (Tribal & Non-Tribal) - *concl.*

18. Are there any mauza in the neighbourhood where branches of these communities live ? If so, give name of mauza(s) and community

19. Do the communities produce for their own use entirely ? Describe whether for domestic or ceremonial purposes.

20. Whether they produce entirely for others in exchange for money or kind. If so, who are the customers and to which communities do they belong ?

(i) Are they for domestic use ?

(ii) Are they for ceremonial or ritualistic purposes ? If so, for which ceremony or ritual

21. Whether the communities produce for themselves and for sale ?

(i) Describe types of objects for own domestic or ceremonial use. Mention heights of objects

(ii) Describe types of objects for sale. Mention heights of objects

22. Do the communities produce for sale in open markets, hats and melas ? Mention the markets, hats or melas and the occasions

(i) Do they make to the order of middlemen who advance money and undertake marketing facilities ?

23. If there is a co-operative society are there members in it who belong to different castes ?

24. Give the names of the designs and myths or stories behind the names, i.e. explanation of what the design stands for and the shape or decoration of objects

25. Describe Production

(Please describe stage by stage and take photographs wherever possible. Photographs should be supplemented by pencil sketches of surface forms, designs, shapes, colours and processes of paper if necessary for sketches of stages)

(i) First Stage

(ii) Second Stage

(iii) Third Stage

(iv) Final and finishing Stage

26. Give a list of very skilled craftsmen of each community

PART C

For Tribal Communities Specially

27. Is this a tribe where every Household produces things for its own use or the use of the community ?

28. Is this a tribe of which only particular sections produce particular things ? If so, which sections produce which things. Mention names

29. Is this a semitribal community and does it produce articles for neighbour- ing tribes ? If so, mention the names of the tribes they pro- for which duce and the names of articles

30. Does this tribe produce articles for non-tribal or advanced communities ? If so, mention names of these communities and the names of articles

Name of section of
Tribe

Name of articles
produced

Name of neighbouring
Tribes

Name of articles
produced for
them

Name of non-tribal
or advanced
communities

Name of articles
produced for
them

LIST OF AGENTS FOR THE SALE OF GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PUBLICATIONS

(as on 17 February 1964)

AGARTALA —Laxmi Bhandar Books & Scientific Sales . . . (Rest.)		BHOPAL —	
AGRA —		1 Superintendent, State Government Press . . . (Reg.)	
1 National Book House, Jeoni Mandi . . . (Reg.)		2 Lyall Book Depot, Mohd. Din Bldg., Sultanla Road . . . (Reg.)	
2 Wadhawa & Co., 45, Civil Lines . . . (Reg.)		3 Delhi Books, Opp. Bhopal Talkies . . . (Rest.)	
3 Banwari Lal Jain, Publishers, Moti Katra . . . (Rest.)		BHUBANESWAR —Ekamra Vidyabhaban, Eastern Tower, Room No. 3 . . . (Rest.)	
4 English Book Depot, Sadar Bazar, Agra Cantt. . . (Rest.)		BIJAPUR —Shri D.V. Deshpande, Recognised Law Booksellers, Prop., Vinod Book Depot, Near Shiralshetti Chowk . . . (Rest.)	
AHMADNAGAR —V.T. Jorakar, Prop., Rama General Stores, Navi Path . . . (Rest.)		BIKANER —Bhandani Bros. . . . (Rest.)	
AHMEDABAD —		BILASPUR —Sharma Book Stall, Sadar Bazar . . . (Rest.)	
1 Balgovind Kuber Dass & Co., Gandhi Road . . . (Reg.)		BOMBAY —	
2 Chandra Kant Chitman Lal Vora, Gandhi Road . . . (Reg.)		1 Supdt. Printing and Stationery, Queens Road . . . (Reg.)	
3 New Order Book Co., Ellis Bridge . . . (Reg.)		2 Charles Lambert and Co., 101, Mahatma Gandhi Road . . . (Reg.)	
4 Mahajan Bros., Opp. Khadia Police Gate . . . (Rest.)		3 Co-operator's Book Depot, 5/32 Ahmed Sallor Bldg., Dadar . . . (Reg.)	
5 Sastu Kitab Ghar, Near Relief Talkies, Patthar Kuva, Relief Road . . . (Reg.)		4 Current Book House, Maruti Lane, Raghunath Dadaji St. . . (Reg.)	
AJMER —		5 Current Technical Literature Co. P. Ltd., India House, 1st Floor . . . (Reg.)	
1 Book-Land, 663, Madar Gate (Reg.)		6 International Book House Ltd., 9, Ash Lane, M.G. Road . . . (Reg.)	
2 Rajputana Book House, Station Road (Reg.)		7 Lakkami Book Depot, Girgaum (Reg.)	
3 Law Book House, 271, Bathi Bhata (Reg.)		8 Elpees Agencies, 24, Bhangwadi, Kalbadevi (Reg.)	
4 Vijaya Bros., Kutchery Road (Rest.)		9 P.P.H. Book Stall, 190-B, Khetwadi Main Road (Reg.)	
5 Krishna Bros., Kutchery Road (Rest.)		10 New Book Co., 188-190, Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji Road . . . (Reg.)	
ALIGARH —Friends' Book House, Muslim University Market . . (Reg.)		11 Popular Book Depot, Lamington Road (Reg.)	
ALLAHABAD		12 Sunder Das Gian Chand, 601, Girgaum Road, Near Princess Street . . . (Reg.)	
1 Superintendent, Printing & Stationery, U.P. (Reg.)		13 D. B. Taraporewala Sons and Co. (P) Ltd., 210, Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji Road (Reg.)	
2 Kitabistan, 17-A, Kamla Nehru Road (Reg.)		14 Thacker and Co., Rampart Row (Reg.)	
3 Law Book Co., Sardar Patel Marg, P. Box 4 (Reg.)		15 N.M. Tripathi Private Ltd., Princess Street (Reg.)	
4 Ram Narain Lal Beni Modho, 2-A, Katra Road (Reg.)		16 The Kothari Book Depot, King Edward Road (Reg.)	
5 Universal Book Co., 20, M.G. Road (Reg.)		17 P.H. Rama Krishna and Sons, 147, Rajaram Bhuvan, Shivaji Park Road No. 5 (Rest.)	
6 The University Book Agency (of Lahore), Elgin Road . . . (Reg.)		18 C. Jannadas and Co., Booksellers, 146-C, Princess St. . . (Reg.)	
7 Wadhawa & Co., 23, M.G. Marg (Rest.)		19 Indo Nath and Co., A-6, Daulat Nagar Borivli (Reg.)	
8 Bharat Law House, 15, Mahatma Gandhi Marg (Rest.)		20 Minerva Book Shop, Shop No. 1/80, N. Subhas Road . . . (Reg.)	
9 Ram Narain Lal Beni Prashad, 2-A, Katra Road (Rest.)		21 Academic Book Co., Association Building, Girgaum Road . . (Reg.)	
AMBALA —		22 Dominion Publishers, 23, Bell Building, Sir P.M. Road . . (Rest.)	
1 English Book Depot, Ambala Cantt. (Reg.)		23 Bombay National History Society, 91, Walkeshwar Road . . (Rest.)	
2 Seth Law House, 8719, Railway Road, Ambala Cantt. . . (Rest.)		24 Dowamadeo and Co., 16, Naziria Building, Ballard Estate . (Rest.)	
AMRITSAR —		25 Asian Trading Co., 310, the Miraball, P.B. 1505 (Rest.)	
1 The Law Book Agency, G. T. Road, Putligarh (Reg.)		CALCUTTA —	
2 S. Gupta, Agent, Government Publications, Near P.O. Majith Mandi (Reg.)		1 Chatterjee and Co., 3/1, Bacharam Chatterjee Lane (Reg.)	
3 Amar Nath & Sons, Near P.O. Majith Mandi (Reg.)		2 Dase Gupta and Co. Ltd., 54/3, College Street (Reg.)	
ANAND —		3 Hindu Library, 69-A, Bolaram De Street (Reg.)	
1 Vijaya Stores, Station Road (Rest.)		4 S.K. Lahiri and Co. Private Ltd., College Street (Reg.)	
2 Charto Book Stall, Tulsi Sadan, Stn. Road (Rest.)		5 M.C. Sarkar and Sons Private Ltd., 14, Bankim Chatterjee Street (Reg.)	
ASANSOL —D.N. Roy & R. K. Roy, Booksellers, Atwal Building (Rest.)		6 W. Newman and Co. Ltd., 3, Old Court House Street . . . (Reg.)	
BANGALORE —		7 Oxford Book and Stationery Co., 17, Park Street (Reg.)	
1 The Bangalore Legal Practitioner Co-op. Society Ltd., Bar Association Building (Reg.)		8 R. Chambray and Co. Ltd., Kent House, P. 33, Mission Road Extension (Reg.)	
2 S.S. Book Emporium, 118, Mount Joy Road (Reg.)		9 S.C. Sarkar and Sons Private Ltd., 1C, College Square . . . (Reg.)	
3 The Bangalore Press, Lake View, Mysore Road, P.O. Box 507 (Reg.)		10 Thacker Spink and Co. (1933) P. Ltd., 3, Esplanade East . . (Reg.)	
4 The Standard Book Depot, Avenue Road (Reg.)		11 Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyaya, 6/1A, Banchha Ram Akkur Lane (Reg.)	
5 Vichara Sahitya Private Ltd., Balepet (Reg.)		12 K.K. Roy, P. Box No. 10210, Calcutta-19 (Rest.)	
6 Makkala Pustaka Press, Balamandira, Gandhinagar (Reg.)		13 Sm. P.D. Upadhyay, 77, Mukhtaram Babu Street (Rest.)	
7 Maruthi Book Depot, Avenue Road (Rest.)		14 Universal Book Dist., 8/2, Hastings Street (Rest.)	
8 International Book House P. Ltd., 4-F, Mahatma Gandhi Road (Reg.)		15 Modern Book Depot, 9, Chowringhee Centre (Rest.)	
9 Navakarnataka Pubns. Private Ltd., Majestic Circle . . (Rest.)		16 Soor and Co., 125, Canning Street (Reg.)	
BAREILLY —Agarwal Brothers, Bara Bazar (Reg.)		17 S. Bhattacharjee, 49, Dharamtala Street (Rest.)	
BARODA —		18 Mukherjee Library, 10, Sarba Khan Road (Reg.)	
1 Shri Chandrakant Mohan Lal Shah, Raopura (Rest.)		19 Current Literature Co., 208, Mahatma Gandhi Road . . . (Reg.)	
2 Good Companions Booksellers, Publishers & Sub-Agent . . (Rest.)		20 The Book Depository, 4/1, Madan Street (1st Floor) . . . (Rest.)	
3 New Medical Book House, 540, Madan Zampa Road (Rest.)		21 Scientific Book Agency, Netaji Subhas Road (Rest.)	
BEAWAR —The Secretary, S.D. College, Co-operative Stores Ltd. (Rest.)		22 Reliance Trading Co., 17/1 Banku Bihari Ghose Lane, District Howrah (Rest.)	
BELGHARIA —Granthlok, Antiquarian Booksellers & Publishers (24-Parganas), 5/1 Ambica Mukherjee Road (Reg.)		23 Indian Book Dist. Co., 6512, Mahatma Gandhi Road . . . (Rest.)	
BHAGALPUR —Paper Stationery Stores, D. N. Singh Road . . (Reg.)		CALICUT —Touring Book Stall (Rest.)	



CHANDIGARH—

1. Supdt. Govt. Printing and Stationery, Punjab (Reg.)
2. Jain Law Agency, Flat No. 8, Sector No. 22 (Reg.)
3. Rama News Agency Booksellers, Sector No. 22 (Reg.)
4. Universal Book Store, Booth 25, Sector 22 D (Reg.)
5. English Book Shop, 34, Sector 22 D (Rest.)
6. Mehta Bros., 15-Z, Sector 22 B (Rest.)
7. Tandau Book Depot, Shopping Centre, Sector 16 (Rest.)
8. Kailash Law Publishers, Sector 22 B (Rest.)

CHHIN DWARA—The Verma Book Depot (Rest.)

COCHIN—Saraswat Corporation Ltd., Palliarakay Road (Reg.)

CUTTACK—

1. Press Officer Orissa Sectt. (Reg.)
2. Cuttack Law Times (Reg.)
3. Prabhat K. Mahapatra, Mangalabag, P.B. 35 (Reg.)
4. D.P. Sur & Sons, Mangalabag (Rest.)
5. Utkal Stores, Bahu Bazar (Rest.)

DEHRA DUN—

1. Jugal Kishore & Co., Rajpur Road (Reg.)
2. National News Agency, Paltan Bazar (Reg.)
3. Bishan Singh and Mahendra Pal Singh, 318, Chukhuwala (Reg.)
4. Utani Pustak Bhandar, Paltan Pazar (Rest.)

DELHI—

1. J. M. Jalua & Brothers, Mori Gate (Reg.)
2. Atma Ram & Sons, Kashmere Gate (Reg.)
3. Federal Law Book Depot, Kashmere Gate (Reg.)
4. Bahri Bros., 188, Lajpat Rai Market (Reg.)
5. Bawa Harkishan Dass Bedi (Vijaya General Agencies) P.B. 2027, Ahata Kedara, Chamallian Road (Reg.)
6. Book-Well, 4, Sant Narankari Colony, P.B. 1665 (Reg.)
7. Imperial Publishing Co., 3, Faiz Bazar, Daryaganj (Reg.)
8. Metropolitan Book Co., 1, Faiz Bazar (Reg.)
9. Publication Centre, Subzimandi (Reg.)
10. Youngman & Co., Nai Sarak (Reg.)
11. Indian Army Book Depot, 3, Daryaganj (Reg.)
12. All India Educational Supply Co., Shri Ram Buildings, Jawahar Nagar (Rest.)
13. Dhauwant Medical & Law Book House, 1522, Lajpat Rai Market (Rest.)
14. University Book House, 15, U.B. Bangalore Road, Jawahar Nagar (Rest.)
15. Law Literature House, 2646, Balimaran (Rest.)
16. Summer Brothers, P.O. Birla Lines (Rest.)
17. Universal Book & Stationery Co., 16 Netaji Subhash Marg (Reg.)
18. B. Nath & Bros., 3808, Charakhawalan (Chowri Bazar) (Rest.)
19. Rajkamal Prakashan P. Ltd., 8, Faiz Bazar (Reg.)
20. Premier Book Co., Printers, Publishers & Booksellers, Nai Sarak (Rest.)
21. Universal Book Traders, 80, Gokhale Market (Reg.)
22. Tech. & Commercial Book Coy., 75, Gokhale Market (Rest.)
23. Salni Law Publishing Co., 1416, Chabiganj, Kashmere Gate (Rest.)
24. G.M. Ahuja, Booksellers & Stationers, 309, Nehru Bazar (Rest.)
25. Sat Narain & Sons, 3141, Mohd. Ali Bazar, Mori Gate (Reg.)
26. Kitab Mahal (Wholesale Div.) P. Ltd., 28, Faiz Bazar (Reg.)
27. Hindu Sahitya Sansar, Nai Sarak (Rest.)
28. Munshi Ram Manohar Lal, Oriental Booksellers & Publishers, P.B. 1165, Nai Sarak (Rest.)
29. K.L. Seth, Suppliers of Law, Commercial & Tech. Books, Shanti Nagar, Ganeshpura (Rest.)
30. Adarsh Publishing Service, 5 A/10 Anseri Road (Rest.)

DHANBAD—

1. Ismag Co-operative Stores Ltd., P.O. Indian School of Mines (Reg.)
2. New Sketch Press, Post Box 26 (Rest.)

DHARWAR—

1. The Agricultural College Consumers Co-op. Society (Rest.)
2. Rameshraya Book Depot, Subhas Road (Rest.)
3. Karnataka Sahitya Mandira of Publishers and Booksellers (Rest.)

ERNAKULAM—

1. Pal & Co., Cloth Bazar Road (Rest.)
2. South India Traders C/o Constitutional Journal (Reg.)

FEROZEPUR—English Book Depot, 78, Jhoke Road (Reg.)

GAUHATI—Mokshada Pustakalaya (Reg.)

GAYA—Sahitya Sadan, Gautami Budha Marg (Reg.)

GHAZIABAD—Jayana Book Agency (Rest.)

GORAKHPUR—Vishwa Vidyalyaya Prakashan, Nakhes Road (Reg.)

GUDUR—The General Manager, The N.D.C. Publishing & Ptg. Society Ltd. (Rest.)

GUNTUR—Book Lovers Private Ltd., Kadriguda, Chowrasta (Reg.)

GWALIOR—

1. Supdt., Printing & Stationery, M.B. (Reg.)
2. Loyal Book Depot, Patankar Bazar, Lashkar (Reg.)
3. M.C. Dastari, Prop. M.B. Jain & Bros., Booksellers, Farafa, Lashkar (Rest.)

HUBLI—Pervaje's Book House, Koppikar Road (Reg.)

HYDERABAD—

1. Director, Govt. Press (Reg.)
2. The Swaraj Book Depot, Lakdikapul (Rest.)
3. Book Lovers Private Ltd. (Rest.)
4. Labour Law Publications, 873, Sultan Bazar (Rest.)

IMPHAL—Tikendra & Sons, Booksellers (Rest.)

INDORE—

1. Wadhawa & Co., 56, M.G. Road (Reg.)
2. Swarup Brother's Khajuri Bazar (Rest.)
3. Madhya Pradesh Book Centre, 41, Ahilya Pura (Rest.)
4. Modern Book House, Shiv Vilas Palace (Rest.)
5. Navyug Sahitya Sadan, Publishers & Booksellers 10, Khajuri Bazar (Rest.)

JABALPUR—

1. Modern Book House, 236, Jawaharganj (Reg.)
2. National Book House, 155, Jai Prakash Narain Marg (R.)

JAIPUR—

1. Government Printing and Stationery Department, Rajasthan (Reg.)
2. Bharat Law House, Booksellers & Publishers, Opp. Prem Prakash Cinema (Reg.)
3. Garg Book Co., Tripolia Bazar (Reg.)
4. Vani Mandir, Sawai Man Singh Highway (Rest.)
5. Kalyan Mal & Sons., Tripolia Bazar (Rest.)
6. Popular Book Depot, Chaura Rasta (Reg.)
7. Krishna Book Depot, Chaura Rasta (Rest.)
8. Dominion Law Depot, Shah Building, P.B. No. 23 (Rest.)

JAMNAGAR—Swadeshi Vastu Bhandar (Reg.)

JAMSHEDPUR—

1. Anar Kitab Ghar, Diagonal Road, P.B. 78 (Reg.)
2. Gupta Stores, Dhakidih (Reg.)
3. Sanyal Bros., Booksellers & News Agents, Distapur Market (Rest.)

JAWALAPUR—Sahyog Book Depot (Rest.)

JHUNJHUNU—

1. Shashi Kumar Sarat Chand (Rest.)
2. Kapram Prakashan Prasarana, 1/90 Numdha Niwas, Azad Marg (R.)

JODHPUR—

1. Dwarka Das Rathil, Wholesale Books and News Agents (Reg.)
2. Kitab-Ghar, Sojati Gate (Reg.)
3. Chopra Brothers, Tripolia Bazar (Reg.)

JULLUNDUR—

1. Hazooria Bros., Mai Hiran Gate (Rest.)
2. Jain General House, Bazar Bansanwala (Reg.)
3. University Publishers, Railway Road (Rest.)

KANPUR—

1. Advani & Co., P. Box. 100, The Mall (Reg.)
2. Sahitya Niketan, Shradhanand Park (Reg.)
3. The Universal Book Stall, The Mall (Reg.)
4. Raj Corporation, Raj House, P.P. 200, Chowk (Rest.)

KARUR—Shri V. Nagaraja Rao, 26, Srinivasapuram (Rest.)

KODARMA—The Bhagwati Press, P.O. Jhamri Tilaiya, Dt. Hazaribagh (Reg.)

KOLHAPUR—Maharashtra Granth Bhandar, Mahadwar Road (Rest.)

KOTA—Kota Book Depot (Rest.)

KUMTA—S.V. Kamat, Booksellers & Stationers (N. Kanara) (Reg.)

LUCKNOW—

1. Boochna Sahitya Depot (State Book Depot) (Reg.)
2. Balkrishna Book Co. Ltd., Hazratganj (Reg.)

3. British Book Depot, 84, Hazratganj (Reg.)
4. Ram Advani, Hazratganj, P.B. 154 (Reg.)
5. Universal Publishers (P.) Ltd., Hazratganj (Reg.)
6. Eastern Book Co., Lalbagh Road (Reg.)
7. Civil & Military Educational Stores, 106/B, Sadar Bazar (Rest.)
8. Aquarium Supply Co., 213, Faizabad Road (Rest.)
9. Law Book Mart, Amin-Ud-Daula Park (Rest.)

UDHIANA—

1. Lyall Book Depot, Chaura Bazar (Reg.)
2. Mohindra Brothers, Katcheri Road (Rest.)
3. Nanda Stationery Bhandar, Pustak Bazar (Rest.)
4. The Pharmacy News, Pindi Street (Rest.)

MADRAS—

1. Supdt., Govt. Press, Mount Road (Reg.)
2. Account Test Institute, P.O. 760 Egmore (Reg.)
3. C. Subbiah Chetty & Co., Triplicane (Reg.)
4. K. Krishnamurthy, Post Box 384 (Reg.)
5. Presidency Book Supplies, 8, Pycrofts Road, Triplicane (Reg.)
6. P. Vardachary & Co., 8, Linghi Chetty Street (Reg.)
7. Palani Parthuram, 3, Pycrofts Road, Triplicane (Rest.)
8. NCBH Private Ltd., 199, Mount Road (Rest.)
9. V. Sadanand, The Personal Bookshop, 10, Congress Building, 111, Mount Road (Rest.)

MADURAI—

1. Oriental Book House, 258, West Masi Street (Reg.)
2. Vivekananda Press, 48, West Masi Street (Reg.)

MANDYA SUGAR TOWN—K. N. Narimhe Gowda & Sons (Rest.)

MANGALORE—U.R. Shenoye Sons, Car Street, P. Box 128 (Reg.)

MANJESHWAR—Mukunda Krishna Nayak (Rest.)

MATHURA—Rath & Co., Tilohi Building, Bengali Ghat (Rest.)

MEERUT—

1. Prakash Educational Stores, Subhas Bazar (Reg.)
2. Hind Chitra Press, West Kutchery Road (Reg.)
3. Loyal Book Depot, Chhpl Tank (Reg.)
4. Bharat Educational Stores, Chhpl Tank (Rest.)
5. Universal Book Depot, Booksellers & News Agents (Rest.)

MONGHYR—Anusandhan, Minerva Press Building (Rest.)

MUSSOORIE—

1. Cambridge Book Depot, The Mall (Rest.)
2. Hind Traders (Rest.)

MUZAFFARNAGAR—

1. Mittal & Co., 85-C, New Mandi (Rest.)
2. B.S. Jain & Co., 71, Abupura (Rest.)

MUZAFFARPUR—

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2. Legal Corner, Tikmanio House, Amgola Road (Rest.)
3. Tirhut Book Depot (Rest.)

MYSORE—

1. H. Venkataraniiah & Sons, New Statue Circle (Reg.)
2. Peoples Book House, Opp. Jagan Mohan Palace (Reg.)
3. Geeta Book House, Booksellers & Publishers, Krishnamurthipuram (Rest.)
4. News Papers House, Lansdown Building (Rest.)
5. Indian Mercantile Corporation, Toy Palace Ramvilas (Rest.)

NADIAD—R.S. Desay, Station Road (Rest.)

NAGPUR—

1. Supdt., Govt. Press & Book Depot (Reg.)
2. Western Book Depot, Residency Road (Reg.)
3. The Asstt. Secretary, Mineral Industry Association, Mineral House (Rest.)

NAINITAL—Conral Book Depot, Bara Bazar (Rest.)

NANDED—

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2. Hindustan General Stores, Paper & Stationery Merchants P. B. No. 51 (Rest.)
3. Sanjoy Book Agency, Vazirabad (Rest.)

NEW DELHI—

1. Amrit Book Co., Connaught Circus (Reg.)
2. Bhawani & Sons, 8 F, Connaught Place (Reg.)
3. Central News Agency, 23/90, Connaught Circle (Reg.)

4. Empire Book Depot, 278, Allganj (Reg.)
5. English Book Stores, 7-L, Connaught Circus P.O.B. 328 (Reg.)
6. Faqir Chand & Sons, 15-A Khan Market (Reg.)
7. Jain Book Agency, C-9, Prem House, Connaught Place (Reg.)
8. Oxford Book & Stationery Co., Scindia House (Reg.)
9. Ramkrishna & Sons (of Lahore), 16/B, Connaught Place (Reg.)
10. Sikh Publishing House, 7-C, Connaught Place (Reg.)
11. Suneja Book Centre, 24/90, Connaught Circus (Reg.)
12. United Book Agency, 31, Municipal Market, Connaught Circus (Reg.)

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14. Navayug Traders, Desh Bandhu Gupta Road, Dev Nagar (Reg.)
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27. The Secretary, Federation of Association of Small Industry of India, 23-B/2, Rohtak Road (Rest.)
28. Standard Booksellers & Stationers, Palam Enclave (Rest.)
29. Lakshmi Book Depot, 57, Regarpura (Rest.)
30. Sant Ram, Booksellers, 16, New Municipal Market Lody Colony (Rest.)

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29. Lakshmi Book Depot, 57, Regarpura (Rest.)
30. Sant Ram, Booksellers, 16, New Municipal Market Lody Colony (Rest.)

PANJIM—

1. Singhs Book House, P.O.B. 70, Near the Church (Rest.)
2. Sagoon Gaydev Dhoud, Booksellers, 5-7 Rua, 31 de Jameria (Rest.)

PATANKOT—The Krishna Book Depot, Main Bazar (Rest.)

PATIALA—

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PATNA—

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3. Luxmi Trading Co., Padri-KI-Haveli (Reg.)
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PITHORAGARH—Maniram Punetha & Sons (Rest.)

PONDICHERY—M/s. Honesty Book House, 9 Rue Duplex (R.)

POONA—

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RANCHI—

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- 3 High Commissioner for India in London, India House, London, W.C.2.

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- 1 S/S. Education Enterprise Private Ltd., Kathmandu (Nepal)
- 2 S/S. Aktie Bologat, C.E. Fritzes Kungl. Hovbokhandel, Fredsgation-2, Box 1656, Stockholm-16 (Sweden).
- 3 Reise-und Verkehrsverlag Stuttgart, Post 730, Gutenbergstra 21 Stuttgart No. 11245, Stuttgart den (Germany West).

- 4 Shri Bwar Subramanyam 452, Reverseite I riv. Apt. 6, New York 27, N.W.Y.
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