

DHOKRA CRAFT: LORE'S AND KNOWLEDGE

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Introduction

Dhokra metal craft is a tribal art form of India. Bell metal is the basic metal for the craft, It is believed that the technique originated around 4,500 B.C.E. based on the evidences found from the Indus valley site in Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro; the “Dancing Girl” is one of the best examples identified with *Dhokra* metal craft¹.

Dhokra technique is recognized as “cire perdue” or “lost wax” process. Like many other indigenous crafts, it is one of the assortments of empirical craft, which is bestowed from one generation of artisans to another and with time evolving to novel forms and array. *Dhokra* being one of the ancient craft symbolizes culture and creative aspects of the human civilization. Artisans with their traditional practices are endeavoring to produce and explore diverse forms of tribal craft by maintaining its folkloric and intricate visual. Each of the elements of these craft exhibits physical and visual entreaties of tribal lives; through the expressive intrinsic tribal design and motif, which are performed by dexterous artisans of that region (though *Dhokra* artifacts are crafted in many parts of India. Also in many parts of Chhattisgarh but in Chhattisgarh majorities of Artisans are concentrated in Bastar, Kondgaon and Raigarh districts of the state).

Chhattisgarh is wide spread for crafting bell metal handicrafts using brass and bronze. Chhattisgarh is situated central region of India, majority of land is enclosed with beautiful vegetation and dense forest. Chhattisgarh share more than ten percentage of tribal population of country, and the majority of tribal belong to Gond community. There are two major communities who practice *Dhokra* craft in the region they are Ghadwa from Bastar region and Jharekha from Raigarh District. The majority of the artisans who practice *Dhokra* crafting belongs a tribe called Ghadwa (also known as Ghasiya in colloquial term. Other than metal crafting, agriculture, gathering of forest goods and cattle rearing are some of the other occupation that this community is engaged into but in recent times several artisans have left agriculture because they are opting *Dhokra* crafting as their full time profession and also few of the artisans have taken up government employments.

Besides Ghadwa and Jharekha many other communities have begun to take interest in *Dhokra*, These communities have involved in this occupation with the incentive of governmental and non-governmental organizations who have involved themselves in

¹ Mahawar, Niranjana. *Bastar Bronzes: Tribal Religion and Art*. 2011.

training to develop the crafting skills, providing equipment, studio and market for the artisans, to exhibit their work and trade it too. Despite of involvement of other communities members Ghadwa and Jharekha are the major force behind development and continuance of the *Dhokra*. This could also be because the craft is not only their source of sustenance but it is the reason of their existence as a crafting community. It is evident in folklore, as both the communities have a popular version of origin tale regarding the metal craft. Below given tales like: Jhareka's tale of 'farmer son' and Ghadwa's tale of 'Hunter' give an idea that the tales in due course of time affirmed the communities stake over the crafting tradition.

1) The craft origin tale from Jhareka community

“Once there was a farmer family in the small village, with twelve sons. Their father brought up his sons according to his will. As they grew, everyone learned the skill of cultivation from their father. They all followed the path of the father, but the youngest boy was not interested in agriculture. He was not willing to join with his father and brothers in the field. Instead, he used to roam around the nearby forest and village. The family got worried about his future, so they compelled him to join with them. They tried to convince him of the importance of hardworking as there were not many options to earn one's livelihood. Though he felt guilty, he was not able to think of going into the agriculture field. He was disappointed and could not find a way to get out of this pressure. He went to the forest and due to the tensed mental condition; he went deep into the forest and lost his way back home, so he started crying aloud. As he was crying, tears rolled out of his eyes and it fell down in the mud. The teardrops on the mud created some forms and he began to make that particular form with mud. Thus, with the help of water and clay, the boy created a beautiful artefact. Therefore he gradually learned the art of making sculpture. His brothers also appreciated and encouraged him.

*Later he realized that the sculpture he had made out of clay and water was easily breakable. So he needed something to make it a more solid one. He searched for material to make his work into a permanent medium. He was trying to get it from nature. One day when he was sitting near his field, he saw the Gum of Babool tree (*Vachellia nilotica*). Then he imagined applying it on the surface of his sculpture. He applied the gum of Babool tree on his sculpture, but as the sunlight got hotter, the glue began to melt. He became restless and continued his search to find a solution. He used to make sculpture in the forest where Babool gum was easily available. He had stored all his sculpture in a tiny cave. One day a wildfire broke out in the jungle. Due to fire sculpture was burnt but the clay part was baked and Babool gum was melted in the fire. During a fire, some of the rocks slightly melted and fell into the sculpture. That melted rock stuck in the sculpture and took the shape and space of Babool gum design. Next day after the fire extinguished and the weather cooled, the boy*

went to the forest where he saw the sculpture. Finally, with the help of his experimentations for a solid and unbreakable product, he found out the technique of metal casting.”²

The above tale clearly shows it is been developed through the additions, appropriations in the retellings at different contexts. It also portrays the accidental evolution of the craft and ascribes it to one of the community member. In the story one can see the tribe’s aspiration to get in to another occupation for survival as well as their belief in the forest as the provider of all that is best for them. The tale legitimizes the authenticity of the craft by bringing in the materials like clay and the Gum of Babool tree and connects one to the lost wax technique ubiquitous to this crafting process.

2) Tale from Ghadwa community. As per the tale-

“Once, in prehistoric time, one hunter went for hunting to the forest, he went into the jungle. After a while, he started feeling thirsty, so he started searching for water. While searching, he reached nearby one rocky hill. There he could see fire on some dry branches of a tree. As he observed, he saw the melted rock ejected from the crack of a rock. He wondered with awe to see that and waited there for hours. And he saw that the melted rock gradually got cold and finally turned into a solid shining piece. He took the piece and brought it to his cave. He kept it in the corner of his cave and he was thrilled to watch it regularly. As it made him happy, he started searching for some shining object in the forest. He succeeded in his search. Out of curiosity, he sought the place and tried to find out the cause of this phenomenon. Thus he found out that the process of creating shining rock is the result of melted rock’s passage through the clay of termite nest and beehive.

He assumed that when the rock ejected the lava, it might get stick in the beehive and the termite clay. With this knowledge, he started to create a shining rock. He showed the shining object to his neighbors’ and they asked what that object was, so he introduced it as the mother Goddess.”³

Interestingly the above tales also take one to the forest and the idea of God’s presence in the material. It also reveals the intricate process of melting and the subjecting the melted rock through the wax and clay. This tale of Ghadwa community has foreseen one of the important functions of the artefact that is its use in the Idol making for worship and ritual. Both the narratives validates the communities involvement in the craft as well as the

² Dhanmati Jhareka, personal interview, November 5th, 2015, Ektal. Similar tale was told by the several Jhareka artisans from different villages of Raigarh district as well.

³ Suktaram Ghadwa, personal interview, March 19th, 2015, Sirmud. Similar tale was told by many Ghadwa artisans from Kondagaon and Jagdalpur district, thus it is confirmed that the tale is popularly known and orally shared among the artisan community.

gradual growth of the crafting process which needs specific skills and technical knowledge which is traditionally transferred within the community.⁴

Both these communities are engaged in *Dhokra* metal craft, but their products have a lot of differences. Each community produces unique products in terms of its usage and style. They obtained the raw material from nearby forest and hills. Brass is collected from scrap brass/bronze metals, old and broken utensils usually from villagers and scrap sellers. Below is brief description of *Dhokra* technique used by tribal artisan of Chhattisgarh.

Crafting Technique

Unavailability of forest goods and relentless escalation in the cost of raw material forced artisans to use inexpensive substitute to forest goods. Earlier they had nomadic life and limited number of equipment, whereas nowadays they have settled at nearby forest regions permanently so they have extended their supportive equipment like; usage of big furnace and machineries for polishing and buffing etc. when material and equipment changes, the process invariably gets altered. Before whirling towards folklore originated from crafting tradition, here is the brief note about technique of *Dhokra* metal craft which is a true example of the folk knowledge base behind this crafting tradition and practice. The various stages of the indigenous techniques practiced and adapted by the community shows how their committed, collaborative work is required to materialize the final piece of work which make them sustain the life and survive with the tradition.

Dhokra metal craft making has some basic steps, which are followed as a procedure, they are:

Wax making/*Main Jhorna/ Dhoowan Churouta*- the wax which is taken from Jungle or market is first boiled and cleaned.

Wax threads making/ *Main Tigal*- wax thread is made with the help of *Jhaara* (equipment for making wax thread).

Clay making/*Mati Banaasot/ Mati Gharuta*- two to three types of Clay⁵ is prepared for different steps of craft making.

Core Preparation/*Mulaa/ Khunt*- core is the base form of the work on which craft work is made, they also make core in advance for further usage.

Wax modeling/*Matna / Dhoopan Kaaj*- with help of wax thread and some soft wax, modeling and designing is done on clay core.

⁴ Many of the god goddess in the artefacts like Mawali Mata, Thakur Dev, Jhitku-Mitku, Duma, and Clan god etc. have their own tales and narratives, lived by the respective communities and clans, which is widely popular in the region.

⁵ Black soil from the field, red soil from the pond side, sand mixed soil from river side etc.

Channel making/ *Kheela/ Dhari/ Nikas Nikalna-* a kind of wax pipe from which melted metal can pass to the work.

First layer of mold making/ *Baran Mati Chhabala* - cladding fine and smooth layers of clay on the surface of wax, which creates the mold.

Second and third or last layer of mold making/ *Mati Chhabala/ Uperi Mati Chhabana* - two to three layers of clay on the surface of wax, which creates the mold.

Mold Holder/ *Khuti Deto/ Khilaa* – for small and full covered works a wooden or iron nails are pierced from the outer layer of mold to core, this nail hold core and prevents it from moving when wax is vaporized.

Preparation of work for casting/ *Ghaili Jorna/ Peetar Jorna* - brass pieces are kept in a bowl, and attached to the place where channel has been made.

Firing of work or de waxing/ *Main Jharaatos/ Dhauwan Barna* - the work is first kept in less fire so the clay can be baked without breaking and wax can vaporized.

Melting of Brass/ *Peetar Galaun-* after vaporization of the wax, heat is increased so the brass can melt, in new process brass is melted separately on Crucible (granite bowl).

Casting of work/ *Peetar Udoltos-* when brass melts completely becomes like water, it is transferred into the mold, in old process brass bowl is attached to the work so it is turned upside down so it melted brass shift from bowl to the space left after wax vaporization. In new process it is poured from bowl to the work.

Breaking of mold/ *Mati Jhaarna* - once brass is transferred work is left for getting cold, when the clay layers gets completely cold mold is broken and work is taken out.

Cleaning & Finishing/ *Khar-Jhaar Kartos/ Saffa-Dhukka Karout* - damaged or air bubble or extra brass bubble etc. repaired and cleaned with the help to chisel and sand paper etc.

A quick look through the above procedures makes us understand that; the crafting communities have a great deal of knowledge about their natural environment. They know, how best to use and manage this knowledge to survive in the world by giving priority to their basic needs and sustain their beliefs that they evolved as part of their traditional practices. This folk knowledge becomes a procedural knowledge in the case of *Dhokra*, which is empirical and rooted to the local region, which is passed down orally and shared informally. This constantly changing largely uncodified knowledge always got perfected through their practice and community work. In due course of time an occupational folk got developed around this crafting tradition, brought in varied perceptions but they continued the lingo evolved over a period of time. These idioms are embedded in their lore's and analyzing verbal genres reveals the uniqueness of their ways of living and conception of life.

Folklore Genres connected with *Dhokra*

Dhokra crafting is a tradition, a practice of material culture which transfers from one generation to another. The knowledge of tradition passes orally. The folktales are one of the forms of oral folklore through which artisans teach the essential elements and process of technique to another generation. Both tales start to progress and end within the domain of the forest as Jhareka and Ghadwa both communities have their roots in the forest region. Artisans claim that their ancestors were forest dwellers. Even when they were nomadic, they lived mostly in the nearby villages of the forest region. Thus most of their design and motifs are inspired from forest element and tribal folklore.

Their folklore helps in shaping their craft, which also provides the context of artefacts. As artisans make craft for regional consumer according to their socio, religious and mundane needs. Thus folklore of region becomes the major source of inspiration of *Dhokra* artisans. In order to understand the culture, the context of creation and influence of visual element of *Dhokra* craft tradition. Folkloric⁶ perspective helps in “identifying the cultural frame that inculcates certain values, beliefs, and practices but also to discover how people modify that cultural frame. The advantage of a folkloric perspective would be recognition of the complexity of cultural process.”⁷

Dhokra craft is part of folklore from Chhattisgarh region. Interestingly *Dhokra* craft reflects, in all genres of folklore from region. Even craft and crafting practice as well inspire other genres of folklore, folktales are one among them. Folktale is “a traditional narrative; more narrowly, a traditional fictional story in prose. Fictional folktales told as entertainment, can be distinguished from myths and legends, which are intended to convey information or at least a point of view.”⁸ *Dhokra* craft itself is an example of material culture, which has been inspired by oral traditions. And it is part of folk customs and folk performance of the region as well. Many genre of folklore contains the elements from *Dhokra* crafting tradition. Either have inspired the crafting tradition in creations or inspired from crafting tradition.

The various genres of folklore are connected to each other, and supplement the legitimacy of tradition. Artisans give reference of their folktales, myths, performances, and rituals for legitimacy of *Dhokra* artefacts (an element of material culture). Thus folklore is foundations for origin of craft, and craft as well becomes motives for origin of folklore. Further in the paper few genres of oral folklore have been described which has originated from *Dhokra* craft and crafting practice. Artisans told these proverbs, Idioms and riddles during conversations with them in their studio, which have been collected during the

⁶ Of, pertaining to, or having the character of folklore or relating to folklore.

⁷ Dolby, S. K. “Essential Contributions of a Folkloric Perspective to American Studies.” *Journal of Folklore Research: Indiana University Press*, vol. 33, 1996, pp. 58-64.

⁸ Goldberg, C. “Folktale.” *Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Beliefs, Customs, Tales, Music, and Art*, edited by Thomas A. Green, Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1997, pp. 356-366.

fieldwork from the artisans. In order to make the reading comprehensive the transliterations⁹ of oral folklore have been done, followed by translation of sentences in the English language. These are explained with context¹⁰ of given proverb, idiom and riddles in the day today conversations. It is important to mention here that though we have done the translation of text but texture¹¹ of these folklore elements could not possibly be perceive with the translation. As Dundes said “The text of an item of folklore is essentially a version or a single telling of a tale, a recitation of a proverb, a singing of a folksong. For purposes of analysis, the text may be considered independent of its texture. Whereas texture is, on the whole, untranslatable, text may be translated. The proverb text ‘Coffee boiled is coffee spoiled’ may in theory be translated into any language, but the chances that the textural features of rhyme will survive translation are virtually nil.”¹² There could be many contexts of these oral folklores but the one context most prominently and frequently used and collected during field work has been taken in to the note. Below are examples of oral folklores from artisan communities.

Proverbs

“Proverbs are short and witty traditional expressions that arise as the art of everyday discourse as well as in the more highly structured situations of education and judicial proceeding. Each proverb is a full statement of an approach to a recurrent problem. Proverb takes personal circumstances and embodies it in impersonal and witty form. Proverbs are merely always stated in the form of a single sentence.”¹³

The proverb is considered to be the source and essence of wisdom and the worldview of a particular culture. Proverbs are part of all formal and informal communications. It occurs in every part of the world in every language and dialects.

Artisan communities as well use several proverb in their day today communication, which are associated with their crafting techniques. Here are few examples.

“*Bhati pare petal, bazar me mol*” means “*brass is in the furnace and in the market price is getting fixed.*”¹⁴ When someone plans more than usual expenditure for the future, they use this phrase as casting is not predictable. Even master artisans cannot be a hundred percent sure, that, how will be casting or what will be the output after the firing. Same way

⁹ A transliteration only gives you an idea of how the word is pronounced, by putting it in a familiar alphabet. It changes the letters from the word's original alphabet to similar-sounding letters in a different one.

¹⁰ “The context of an item of folklore is the specific social situation in which that particular item is actually employed.” (Dundes, 1980. P.23-24)

¹¹ “The texture is the language, the specific phonemes and morphemes employed. Thus in verbal forms of folklore, textural features are linguistic features.” (Dundes, 1980. P.22)

¹² Dundes, Alan. *Interpreting Folklore*. Indiana UP, 1980. P.23.

¹³ Dorson, Richard M. *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*. University of Chicago Press, 1972.

¹⁴ Sundarmati Jhareka, personal interview, May 22nd, 2016, Dadarpali.

without knowing the present situation someone plans about the future; in this context this proverb is used.¹⁵

“*Mati baila barse, petal dele purse*” means “**clay bull is for one year, but brass is for many years.**”¹⁶ The proverb is used in the context, while buying or investing in something. As artisans Gunjmati besra said “*clay bull which used for worship during the Pola festival, cannot be used for next year. But the brass bull can be used even for many generations means it's more durable.*”

“*Tamba na peetal, malar me thana thani*” means “**neither copper or brass and Malars are unnecessary fighting between each other.**”¹⁷ The phrase is used, when two people unnecessarily fight with each other. The proverb has come from the story of two Malars (Jherkha community are also known as malar; they call each other malar).¹⁸

“*Andhyari ke chhe, nou, tera. Devi fir ke aaye dera*” means “**six, nine and thirteen days of dark lunar fortnights, the Goddess comes back to her house.**”¹⁹ According to artisan, earlier the God-Goddess idols are not sold, if the six, nine or thirteen days of *Krishna Paksha* arrives (Dark lunar fortnight). And if the market takes place on these days, they do not sell the God-Goddess idols in the *Haat/Village-Market*.

“*Peetar ke baila*” means “**Bull made of brass.**”²⁰ The term “bull” is designated for a person, who is the fool or thick-headed. Brass bull means a person lack of sense and who is stuck, he is a useless fool. The phrase is also used for someone who is very hard working. Both phrases depend on the context. Brass is most important element in the *Dhokra* crafting, as it is craft tradition also recognized as brass or bell metal craft. More than that, the presence of *Peetal* unceremoniously occurs in all their conversations.

As Roger D. Abrahams says, “Proverbs are short and witty.” He continues, “Traditional expressions that arise as part of everyday discourse as well as in the more highly structured situations of education and judicial proceedings. Each proverb is a full statement of an approach to a recurrent problem. It presents a point of view and strategy that is self-sufficient, needing nothing more than an event of communication to bring it into play. Proverbs are the shortest form of traditional expression that calls attention to themselves as

¹⁵ Brass is the essential material, it is found in their folklore, and there are many proverbs, riddles and idioms which are related to Brass. This particular proverb was told by Sundarmati Jhareka from Dadarpali.

¹⁶ Gunjmati Jhareka, personal interview, April 10th, 2015, Kondagaon.

¹⁷ Sampuranchand Induwar, personal interview, November 9th, 2016, Ghoraghati.

¹⁸ As per the story told by sampuranchand induwar once two artisans started fight over which metal they should use for casting artefact copper or brass, though they didn't have any metal still fighting over metal casting.

¹⁹ Vedmati Induwar, personal interview, May 18th, 2016, Ghoraghati.

²⁰ Jamunabai Sagar, personal interview, May 26th, 2015, Chilkuti.

formal artistic entities”.²¹ The above said proverbs reveal the community’s life is surrounded by Brass upon which they relies their hope for future. They believe their financial uncertainty and future investment and day to day life has a reverend reliance upon Brass.

Though these proverbs are “cultural-specific” their meaning and importance are global. Artisans pass their traditional knowledge of the craft and crafting to another generation. Below few examples of idioms have been given, which not only the artisan but almost every member of the community in the regions use.

Idioms

Idioms are short sentences or words, which are used to denote the figurative meaning. And the meaning of sentences is not taken in a literal sense but with the context. According to Taylor “an idiom is an expression whose properties, whether syntactic, lexical or semantic, cannot be predicted by the rule.”²² Idioms are “colloquial metaphor” and it cannot be understood with knowing the social-cultural context. Culture and worldview reflect in the idioms.

The idioms are one of the sources to understand and comprehend the language and culture of any community. As idioms are attached with context, it does not signify the literal meaning of words. It needs to be interpreted with its socio-cultural context. The people of Chhattisgarh use many idioms in their day to day life. That showcases their world view and their understanding of their surroundings.

“*Kaan me main pare he ka?*” means “*are your ears crammed with wax?*”²³ The sentence is employed once somebody doesn’t hear properly.

“*Kaccha mati*” means “*wet soil.*”²⁴ This is usually forenamed to someone who does not know anything like a beginner or child. As artisan Sunita Besra explains when asked- ‘how do you make children to learn the craft?’ She said- “*layka man kaccha mati kas hothe jisne sikhha usne sikh jaathe*” means “*children are like wet soil, they would learn whatever you make them learn.*”

“*Eke bhati ke aongra*” means “*cinder or ember of the same kiln.*”²⁵ The sentence is used to show the similarity between the people. Like from the same region or the same community or same workgroup. As craftsmen, Shibeshwar Kashyap from Dahikonga said that- “*I do not like to give my work in the handicraft office, because once I fought with an officer in Kondagaon Shabri office. That officer has been transferred now and another*

²¹ Abrahams, Roger D. "Proverbs and Proverbial Expressions." *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*, edited by Richard M. Dorson, University of Chicago Press, 1972.

²² Taylor, John R. *The Mental Corpus: How Language is Represented in the Mind*. Oxford UP, 2012.

²³ Mohan Netam, personal interview, April 7th, 2015, Kondagaon.

²⁴ Sunita Besra, personal interview, April 9th, 2015, Kondagaon.

²⁵ Shibeshwar Kashyap, personal interview, June 20th, 2015, Dahikonga.

officer has come. But still, I do not like to give.” When asked - ‘why he does not like, not all officers are corrupt?’ He answered- “*sab Sarkari eke bhati ke angara kas hothe, ye teer dekha ki wo teer*” means “*all government officers are the coal of the same kiln. Whether you see from this side or another side?*” Making of the kiln is a significant part of the work, there are folklore related to this can also be found among the craftsmen of both regions.

“*Bhati me parna*” (Raigarh) means “*falling in the kiln.*”²⁶ When something falls in the kiln gets burn and becomes into ashes, means complete waste, so they use this sentence. Without kiln casting cannot be done thus kiln becomes, an important elements in the crafting technique.

As we have seen the idioms centre’s around the words like: Wet Soil, Wax, Kiln and Fire, show how the craftsmen’s work always confront the question of uncertainty. Here the Fire and Kiln symbolically represent the insecurity because their works always depend upon the ups and downs in the craft sales and market.

Though to understand idioms, one needs to know the context. In the case of the above idioms, which are related to craft, a person does not necessarily need to know about the crafting process. These can be found in other cultures; it gets reflected and used in other context as well.

Riddles

Riddles are short and confusing questions, with funny and twisted words or sentences. It is to judge the wit of the person and also to teach the language and wordplay. “A riddle is a traditional verbal expression which contains one or more descriptive elements, a pair of which may be in opposition; the referent of the elements is to be guessed.”²⁷ Riddles are a popular form of oral teaching. Like proverbs and idioms, riddles as well as are part of tribal language, though may not be on an everyday basis but it is not occasional either. People of Chhattisgarh frequently use riddle in leisure times. The elder members of families mostly ask riddles to kids. In the evening and before the bedtime folktales and riddles are parts of their routine.

“*Nani asan peela, kori kori datun kare?*”²⁸ means “*A tiny child, uses many wooden tooth-brushes?*” the answer is “*Bhati*” means “**Kiln**”. The riddle is used for entertainment during the work and get together.²⁹ Kiln is the most important in the process of casting.

²⁶ Putri Bai, personal interview, May 23rd, 2016, Ghoraghati.

²⁷ Georges, Robert A., and Alan Dundes. “Toward a Structural Definition of the Riddle.” *The Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 76, no. 300, 1963, p. 111.

²⁸ *Kori* word is used for the amount of twenty. But when it is used as *kori-kori* means a lot or uncountable. *Datun* is the word used for a small piece of tree branch used for brushing teeth.

²⁹ Vedmati Induwar, personal interview, May 18th, 2016, Ghoraghati.

“*Bigar pani, bigar dhan, mahal banaye than than?*” Means “*without water and money, what make places in various places?*” The answer is “*Dimak*” means “**Termite**”. It is not possible to make the home, without water and money. But termite makes the house, not with the water but with saliva. Such riddles are asked for entertainment as well as for the information.³⁰ Termite clay is widely used by *Dhokra* artisans as it is very smooth and fine quality clay.

“*Raja ghare kasela kasma kare, Raja aato bera dal dal kare?*” Means “*King house’s pot, moves slowly-slowly, when the king comes it runs like a storm?*” The answer is “*Ghadwa ke dhukni*”, means “**craftsmen’s air blower**.” The old air blower used to be like pot, which moves slowly-slowly, and when craftsmen move blowers faster, air comes out like a storm.³¹ Earlier artisans used blower made of leathers during casting thus this proverb emerged.

“*Du bahini ke gotke khiliya?*” means “*two sisters are on one nail?*” the answer is “*Chimta*” means “**pincher**”.³² For moving the work or crucible during casting artisans use pincher.

“*Pit pit khaye, lam-lam hage?*” means “*piece-piece eats, and long-long shits?*” The answer is “*Dhuwoon Jhari*” means “**the wax or resin thread maker**”.³³ This manual machine is used by *Dhokra* artisans, across the east, central and southern region of country for making wax thread. Wax thread making machine is essential most crucial machinery which is known as “*Pichki*”. Earlier this was the only machinery which was part of their crafting process. The knowledge about machine is given to younger generation in the form of riddles.

“*Ek ghar cho budgi gay, baraghat wo pani khay?*” Means “*one house’s old cow, who drinks a lot of water?*” The answer is “*Aagi*”, means “**fire**”, as to blow out fire need a lot of water.³⁴ Without fire the crafting cannot be done, from wax making to casting fire is fundamental necessity for *Dhokra* artisans.

These riddles might have come later in to their life, when their profession completely became *Dhokra* crafting. Through the riddles education and upbringing of young ones into the profession is envisaged. The old furnace required more water metaphorically means the master craftsmen are the old furnaces with fire and they need more money to quench their thirst.

³⁰ Fagnuram Sagar, personal interview, June 14th, 2015, Chilkuti.

³¹ Suktaram Soni, personal interview, March 19th, 2015, Sirmud.

³² Sampuranchand Induwar, personal interview, May 18th, 2016, Ghoraghati.

³³ Sampurnachand Induwar, personal interview, March 2nd, 2015, Ghoraghati.

³⁴ Govindram Jhareka, personal interview, November 4th, 2016, Ektal.

Almost all the aspects of crafting process and instruments are used in the riddling they are; Kiln, Termite, Pichki, Pincher, Blower and Fire .These riddles demonstrate that craft materials and process have influenced the origin of riddles. The craft making is not just an occupation but part of their way of life, craft reflects in their world view and folklore. Their riddling practice show even in their leisure time is filled with the presence of Crafting. This reaffirms the fact that, at the age of several electronic and digital mode of entertainment, riddle is still a popular oral form of entertainment among artisan in their workshops or studios.

Even though artisan communities have shifted from hereditary artisans group to occupational artisans, majority of artisan have incorporated these in their everyday communication in their workshops or studios.

Conclusion

Above mentioned proverbs, idioms and riddles are parts of everyday communications of artisans community, though these proverbs are “cultural-specific” their meaning and importance are global. Through these genres of folklore, artisans pass their traditional knowledge of the craft and crafting to another generation. These genres of folklore demonstrate that craft materials and process have influenced the origin of riddles in use. The craft making is not just an occupation but part of their way of life, craft reflects in their world view and folklore. Dealing with the Brass is the essence of their life and the Clay is contrasted with the metal and in a way it shows their present status where they left their agriculture and completely got in to *Dhokra* crafting as their sole livelihood practice.

Above-given descriptions of various folklore genres related to *Dhokra* is evident that folklore is the essential aspect of *Dhokra* craft. The various genres of folklore are connected to each other, and supplement the legitimacy of tradition. Artisans give reference of their folktales, myths, performances, and rituals for the legitimacy of *Dhokra* artefacts (an element of material culture). Thus folklore is foundation for the origin of the craft and craft as well becomes motives for the origin and sustenance of folklore and vice versa.

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