

Design Resource

Bhujodi Shawl Weaving - Kutch, Gujarat

Stole for Elegance

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral and Amulya S.

NID, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/bhujodi-shawl-weaving-kutch-gujarat>



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Introduction

Shawl is one of the clothing which is worn over the head or wrapped around the shoulder. They are usually in rectangular in shape. The shawls are generally worn in winters which covers the upper body that brings warmth to the body. They are also worn for complimenting the costume and it brings an elegant appearance together. For some of them it has become a compulsion to wear shawl as per their religion and community. There are several kinds of shawls woven in different fiber materials. Wool, silk, cotton are natural fibre materials and acrylic, synthetic threads are artificial fibre materials. There are also different forms of making a shawl like crochet, knitting and weaving.

In India shawls have been famous for their designs and patterns. There are several places in India where the shawls are manufactured like Kashmir which is very famous for shawl weaving, Kutch, Ludhiana, Srinagar, Amritsar, Kolkata, Jaipur, Udaipur, Sitarganj, Tilpat Village and Leh. Most of the designs are very indigenous to their own forms most of it is influenced by the Mughal designs. There are communities of people only for weaving carpets which later on transferred to shawls in India, they are called as Meghwal Wankars now they are called as Vankars.

Vankar Nanji bhimaji is one of the traditional woolen and silk shawl weavers of Bhujodi, Kutch, in Gujarat. The traditional shawl weavers of Bhujodi belong to the Vankar community (Meghwal Wankars) who migrated from western Rajasthan for about 500 years ago. Woolen shawl weaving, dhurrie, carpet, stole, kalinga crafts are been followed from his ancestral generations. In 2003 he has been given a national award for a shawl which was weaved with intricate designs and patterns for the period of 6 months. Shawls are weaved with lots of affection and happiness. Bhujodi is also tagged for its quality and purity by the Geographical Indication for all the 200 weavers in the craft city. Previously weavers used to earn their daily bread by barter system where they use to produce carpets, shawls and exchange them with farmers for their crops. Now a days the demand for shawl has become more hence a good business. Artisans sales his products to one of best company stores like Fab India, Nalli, Cottage and ten other big companies in Delhi. He also exports the products to other countries like France and Italy. His work is much in demand because of the purity and sustainability of naturalist way like using vegetable dye colors and completely crafting with hands. Artisan also represented India worldwide in textile field where he took up lectures on textile in abroad countries like America, London, Switzerland and Italy. Many textile students from reputed institutes go to him on project works and learn a lot about the subject. Women of the house contribute a large part in this craft by doing all the things required for the craft apart from weaving and dyeing like, spinning the yarn, making the warp, starch applying, fringes making and many more.

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Bhujodi is famous for handloom weaving.



Only the well refined sheep wool is used to make yarns.

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Artisans retail shop.



Senior skilled artisan involved in winding the yarn.

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One of the female artisan involved in shawl making.



Mr. Nanji Bhimaji Vanakar the master artisan and national award winner for shawl weaving.



One of the important parts of handloom called foot paddles.



Female artisan involved in yarn spinning.

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Tools and Raw Materials

- **Kanji:** Made out of boiled water with wheat flour and detergent for the sticky surface.
- **Wool:** Is an essential raw material for woolen shawl weaving.
- **Wool yarn:** Is spun out of wool used in weaving of the shawl.
- **Spinning wheel:** Is used in spinning and cabling the yarn.
- **Shed sticks:** Used in bifurcating the strands and warps of yarn.
- **Warp board:** Is used in winding and making warp yarns.
- **Handloom or pit loom (foot-over pedal):** A mechanized functioning program used in weaving.
- **Yarn swift:** Is a rotatory mechanism used for holding and winding the skein yarn.
- **Starch:** Is applied on the yarn to sustain strength.
- **Tasar silk:** Is one of the royal yarns brought from Bhagalpur Bihar.
- **Chemical dyes:** Are used in dyeing the yarn with bright colors.
- **Natural dyes:** Are used in dyeing the yarn.
- **Brushes made of cereal root fibre:** Is used for spreading of the starch.
- **Wood ash and mustard oil:** Are used in attaching the yarns to the old reeled yarns on loom.
- **Sulfuric acid:** Is used in chemical dyes to make the appearance of the color bright and strong.

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Sheep wool is one of the main raw material.



Yarn is warped in a frame for weaving process.

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Flying shuttle is used in handloom for weaving.



Handloom is for weaving the shawl.

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Required color and color mixing bowl for dyeing yarn.



Water is heated on a wood burning stove.

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Tasar silks are from Bhagalpur which are also used for making shawl.



White woolen yarn are used for weaving the Shawl.

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Acid is used in dyeing for long lasting color on the yarn. Yarn is winded on pirns and placed in flying shuttle.

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Coir brush is to separate the yarn from sticking.



A pair of scissors is used to cut the edges of the shawl.



Ash and oil is used in sticking the wool to handloom.

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Making Process

Shearing of the sheep for raw wool is taken place at local villages in and around Kutch. Then raw wool is dry cleaned and then it is sent to make a yarn. The wool is drafted, rove and spun on the traditional spinning wheel to make a yarn thread. The spinning of the yarn is made with the help of charka where an artisan is turning the spinning wheel in right hand and in left hand he is holding roving wool and twisting it to make a yarn which is rolling to a spinning wheel needle. Once the yarn is made it is segregated into two types one is weft yarn and other is warp yarn.

The taana (warp) is made with the help of warp frame and then street sizing is done where all the strands of the yarn is starched with the paste (kanji) made of wheat flour and water with little detergent added for sticky surface. Then it is stretched, separated and brushed in the open ground early morning before the sunrise with the help of shed sticks and stands. The starch is supposed to dry by cool wind breeze only thus this process is done early in the morning. Until the starch is not dried the yarns keep breaking. The broken strands are tangled once again. Drying the threads get stronger. It takes more than an hour to two hours for this process to happen.

600 yarn strands are used on the warp beam of the loom for woolen shawl whereas for silk it is 1000 yarn strands on the warp beam of the loom. The warp threads are attached to the old warp yarns in the loom by fastening the yarns with the help of ash and water. The threads are joined in an alternate pattern one on the upper warp and other on the lower warp. Thus the loom beam is loaded with the warp. The next process is baana (weft) process.

Weft yarns are also starched and dyed with required colors and wound into the pirns and spindles which is loaded to fly shuttle and it becomes a weft process where weaving is obtained. The handloom contains multiple processes for a successful weaving. An artisan should do multiple chores like paddling the shafts, moving the flying shuttle through and fro in one hand, moving the reed beater in tightening the previous weave and eyes are cautiously seeing the process in order to avoid errors. Dyeing is done with either chemical colors in vat dyes method or vegetable dyes.

Handloom contains many internal mechanism equipment like heddles, shafts, shed, reed or beaters. Heddles are the tiny metal cord or wire with an eye opening where every yarn of the warp threads are passed through it individually and shaft (paddles) are interconnected below the heddles where both work simultaneously to produce a warp shift according to the designs and patterns which results in weft process. Shed is a wooden stick used in bifurcating the two layers of warp upper layer and lower layer. Once the warps are bifurcated the weft yarn is weaved with the help of bobbin of yarn in fly shuttle. Traditional Kutchi designs and motifs are weaved separately with other colored yarns which is called eccentric wefts. After a complete row of eccentric weft a normal single weft is made in order to lock the previously weaved weft. Once the shawl is completely weaved it is then sent to finishing like making fringes and tassels with the extra warp yarns in it. Usually women of the house takes up this work of making beautiful fringes to the shawl.

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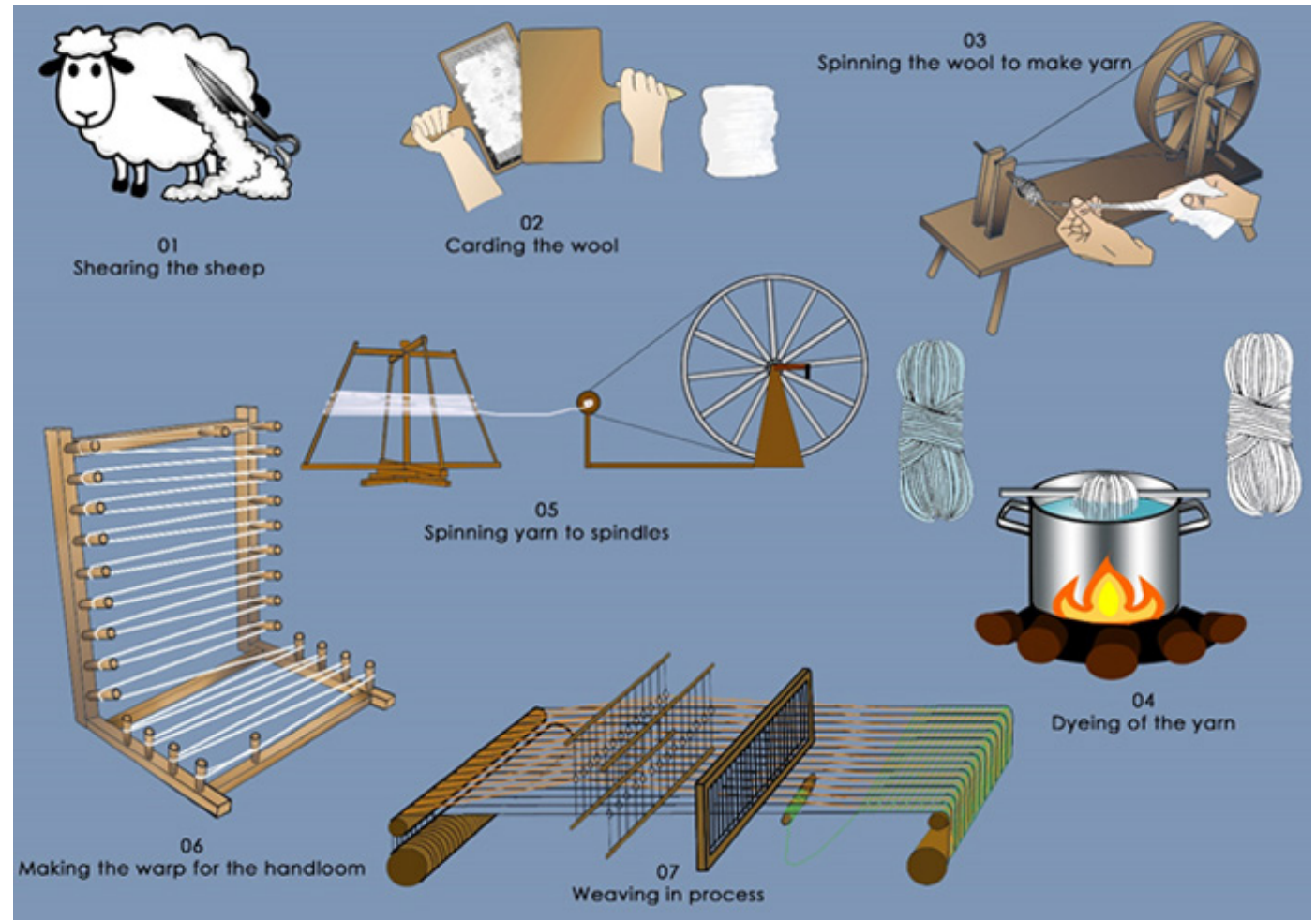
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Flow Chart:



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Well refined wool is selected for making yarn.



The yarn is extracted from wool using a spinning wheel.

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The yarn is winded appropriately on a yarn swift.



Yarn is tied between two sticks for starching.

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Using wheat powder the starch is prepared.



Yarn is soaked into the starch.



Starched yarn is placed under sun light to dry.

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Sticks are placed in between the yarn for warping them easily.



Required color is mixed with water in a bowl.

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Coir brush is used to separate the yarn without sticking to each other.



Mixed color is added to the boiling water for dyeing the yarn.

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Yarn is washed before dyeing.



Yarn is dipped into the dye to attain its color.



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Acid is mixed with water for dyeing process.



The mixture of acid and water is added to the dye.

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Yarn is again dipped into the dye.

The yarn is washed in plain water to remove the acid and extra color.

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Yarn is winded in a pirns for weaving.

Yarns are warped in a frame before weaving process.

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Weaving of shawl is done in a handloom.



The edges of the shawl is decorated with different color wool yarn.



The edges are cut in required length using a scissors.



Beautifully finished shawls.

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Products

Different varieties of shawls and stoles which can be worn around the neck for men and wrapped around the shoulder for women. Size may vary from standard to customized based on orders.



Shawl with small mirror placed on flower design.

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Different designs and patterns of shawls.



Plain and strips designed shawls.

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Various types of shawls stacked for marketing.



Shawl with decorative ends.

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Shawls are exported to the different parts of the world from Bhujodi.



Detailed designed on the borders of the shawl.

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Video



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