CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature focusing on three traditional woven textiles of Gujarat - the kinkhabs, brocade sarees and mashrus has been obtained mostly from books and museums. However direct researches on these fabrics have been few. Broadly the review has been cited to highlight the following aspects

2.1 Importance of Textile Craft.
2.2 History of Woven Textiles of India and Gujarat.
2.3 Brocades and Kinkhabs.
2.4 Mashrus.
2.5 Status and Revival of Textile Craft.

"As we glance at the tapestry of Indian design and craftsmanship, we find a fascinating picture - a picture that has grown out of the aesthetic, philosophical and social aspects of the traditional way of life through the centuries. In fact the traditions of many crafts in our country trace their origin back almost to about 5000 years ago, to the ancient Indus Valley and Mohenjo Daro Civilization and they have been created and developed through the ages against a background that is richly woven with the synthesis of many cultures, myths and imagery of sign and symbol"(23).

2.1 Importance of Textile Craft

'Craft' in India is more of a system than a product where aesthetics and function have been an integral part of
utility. Creation of any craft never takes place in isolation. It is part of a dense matrix of religions, cultural and social beliefs of historical factors, of a body of norms and values, hence it has been a basic activity in the human society as it answered the need of people and till they answer this need their existence will continue(66).

Pal (1978), writes that, according to the dictionary meaning the word craft denotes 'skill', 'art', 'trade', etc. In India, however, craft is always associated with art and that is why a craft example is usually considered to be a specimen of folk art or people's art.....The process of transmission of hereditary skill from generation to generation is a very important factor in the history of Indian craftsmanship. Of all the crafts of India, textiles are certainly the oldest and can be traced back to the Harappan period.

He further states, that in India, crafts have an importance of their own. They express great traditions and cultural heritage of our country. Their preservation and development lies in the fact that they are material symbols of India's unique cultural ethos.

Two channels of craft expression developed from the start. The one was concerned with the surface treatment reflecting as in a mirror the prevailing culture patterns of the patrons....the other was structural in concept, rooted to the earth and bound men with invisible chains to his ancestors(40).
India has made tremendous industrial progress. The crafts were overlooked because they seemed a hindrance to the development process. The industries have not provided work to the rural folk who engage themselves in agriculture or indigenous craft occupation (66).

India is rich in its folk traditions. The community at large had imagination, deep aesthetic values and a great feeling for beautiful things. Here, there was nothing like having to create markets for dumping surplus production, brain washing through propaganda, waste of energy and resources as seen in the modern industrial society of today, where life is fast and there is no leisure inspite of cutting down of 'working hours'. The crafts have a deep relation with the deities and shrines, nature (the peacock, the parrot, the snake, the tiger, etc) everyday life (churning, grazing cows) and festivals (35).

Chandra and Dhoshi (1980), comment that, "no other craft of India shows such perfection of variety of techniques as the making of fabrics for costumes and decorations for everyday use. And the risks taken by inventors often produced works of the most diversified textures and forms which have astonished the world".

Two factors responsible for India's traditional textile skills are - cheapness of raw material and caste system. The Indian caste conventions have survived for thousands of years. Even physique was changed by so many generations of
specialized craftsmanship. This was tragically shown in the 19th century when tens of thousands of Indian weavers were thrown out of work by the competition of the power-loom and found that their hands were unfit for any other manual occupation. As a result they starved and their deaths recorded in the famous minutes of governor general lord Bentinck which began "The bones of cotton weavers are bleaching the plains of India"(78).

A convenient classification of fabrics made in India for Indian use as (1) Skilled work of professional weavers and dyers who usually worked close to large market towns. (2) Articles of luxury made under court patronage or in court tradition (3) Folk embroidery (4) Fabrics of the aboriginal tribes(33).

The last fifty years have witnessed in India a tremendous change, which has resulted in the breakdown of the contours within which the textile craftsmen functioned. By the middle of the century the spirit of the industrial revolution and its approach to mass production of prototype had slowly started permeating and altering pre-loom techniques of yarn production and dyeing which has further accentuated the crisis(4).

2.2 History of Woven Textiles in India and Gujarat

In the absence of any record of known time to tell us when cloth was first woven or dyed in the Indian subcontinent, we have to fall back upon the evidences like that
of the madder dyed textiles found at Mohenjodaro taking us 5000 years back(15). Archaeologists also found during the digging from the ancient Sindh desert site, terracotta spindle whorls. These important revelations confirmed a knowledge of spinning, weaving and dyeing(39).

Over 2000 years ago the "Artha Shastra" refers to textile design workshops being established under the patronage of Maurya Kings. The "Ain-i Akbari" gives detailed accounts of the textiles in the royal wardrobe of the Emperor Akbar(38).

Mehta (1960), writes that, of all the art manufacturers of India, her beautiful textiles are certainly the oldest. Even in the Rig Veda there are references to weaving, and the language of one hymn to Agni, the god of fire, is the language of the craft of the loom: "Oh, I know not either warp or woof, I know not the webs of thy weave". Again in the Vedas we find references to Usha, the goddess of the Dawn "Clothed with radiance", and in another hymn we read, "Day and night spread light and darkness over the extended earth like two famous female weavers weaving a garment". In one of the oldest epithets of Vishnu is "Pitambara" - "clothed in yellow garments".

He further states that, by the time of the great Epics, the art of weaving had reached a high stage of perfection. Here we find references to the shining golden cloak, the "hiranya-drapi" and the "manichira", as far as we know a
fabric of south India with a woven fringe of pearls. In the
two great classics, the Mahabarata and the Ramayana woven
cotton, silk, and woollen fabrics are constantly mentioned.
The Code of Manu makes frequent mention of the art of weaving
and dyeing. The ancient temple sculptures represent women
dressed in embroidered or brocaded cloaks and in muslin.

Pal (1978), also records that, the earliest references
of weaving are found in the Vedic literature. In the 6th
Mandala of the Rig Veda we have a distinct reference to
weaving and occurrence of the words 'tantum', 'otum' and
'Vayanti' (Rig Veda VI 92). Moreover the Rig Veda contains
the word 'tasara' meaning a weaver's shuttle (Ibidx130.2).
In the Yajur Veda we find the word 'Veman', meaning a loom
(Vajasaneji Samhita, x 1 x 83).

Chattapadhyay (1985), mentions that, "textiles came to
be associated with social and ritualistic events from very
early times. In the ancient books, the universe is referred
to as a woven fabric. There is a very charming reference in
Buddhist literature of spreading a silk piece before the
child Buddha when he was going to take his first seven
steps."

Pali literature presents a rich picture of textile art
of the Buddhist period. In the Gupta period, Kalidasa
describes Parvati as weaving fine cloth with a beautiful
goose pattern. In the 7th century Bana refers to costly
textiles. During the Sultanate period until the 16th century Indian traditional textiles developed under the Mughal patronage (2).

With the establishment of Aryan supremacy and the splitting of the social structure into conqueror and conquered, the Aryans and the Dasys, there developed a craft tradition which flourished for over 3000 years. The conquerors introduced new art forms and concepts, new garments and symbols but as the taste of the master degenerated the vision of the craftsman dimmed and clarity of form disappeared. Techniques sometimes improved, but the living element that gave value to the technique died leaving a stagnant craft. Later we have records to indicate that there were exports of textiles to Rome in the west and to Malaysia in the east (40).

The great Mughal emperors, Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan particularly are known for their great patronage of the arts and crafts of India. The caste system imposed by the Code of Manu preserved the ancient traditions and prevented, or at least kept in check the degrading influence of foreign thought (51). Mulkraj (1980), writes that, it was assumed that with the high cultural achievements in fabrics came cultural formalities of court artists and percolated into the lowly huts of the weavers and dyers and spinners.

Excavations at Alamgirpur (Dist-Meerut, U.P.) have also yielded fascinating evidences regarding cloth. The evidence
was provided by impressions on a trough. The yarns seem to have been fairly fine. During the post Harppan period the evidence of textile weaving is found in the finds of Nevasa, in the district of Ahmednagar, Maharashtra of a necklace strung in thread as evidence of spinning in India(57).

In the earliest primitive civilization the threads used for weaving were very coarse (probably vines or creepers). In general therefore, the cloth produced was also crude, although there are references in even the oldest literature to fine fabrics(45).

Jayakar (1963), writes, Verrier Elwin in his 'The Art of the North East Frontier of India', who mentions a significant legend of the Kaman Minsmis, "Originally people did not wear clothes for they did not know how to weave. The first weaver was a girl called Himbrumai who was taught the art by the god Matai. She sat by the river and watched the waves and ripples on it's surface and imitated them in her designs.....".

Lord and Mohamed (1933), state that, human beings have clothed themselves with woven material since the dawn of history, and the history of civilization is also to some extent the history of weaving. Aitken says, "There is evidence that the Egyptians made woven fabrics some 6000 years ago and it is believed that in pre-historic times, lake dwellers in Europe made nets from twisted threads". Old mural paintings and carvings, china and other ancient
artifacts make it clear that providing himself with clothes was an important facet of man's early life.

They further write that, in China over 4000 years ago under Emperor Huang Ti, it is said that the Empress invented the loom. However, it is probable that the loom has been invented many times in many civilisations.

The term Gujarat seems to have been adopted in the period of Jaysinh Siddharaj. Prior to that the regions were known by different names like Anarta, Lat, Saurashtra and Kutch, Gurjaratra, Gurjaratri and Gurjjarashtra which were probably used to denote these areas.

The history of Gujarat can be traced to the Vedic times and the Puranas make mention of its tribes. For nearly 4000 years, various peoples have migrated to Gujarat by land and sea because of its long coastline and easy land routes, and settled down. Culturally and linguistically, Gujarat has been for centuries a distinct entity - although one can demarcate it's three principal regions (1) Gujarat proper from the foot of Mount Abu in the north near the port of Daman in the south (2) the peninsula previously known as Kathiawad and now called Saurashtra and (3) the desert peninsula of Kutch. Jain influence has been pre-dominant in Gujarat. It has played a vital role in the commercial, social and cultural life of the state, along with Parsis and Muslims.
Besides sea contacts with the outside world the land routes brought in groups of settlers and a large number of ethnic groups settled in Gujarat. This led to the development of a rich cultural tradition which can be seen even today in the range of folk cultures and artistic expressions. The ethnic landscape of Gujarat forms a remarkable homogeneous whole, made up of a great cultural diversity (21).

Berinstein (1989), writes that, Pfister's attribution of the Fustat textiles of India (Al Fustat situated in modern day Cairo's suburbs) are from Gujarat between the 12th century to 15th century. Subsequent studies by M. Gittinger, J. Irwin and M. Hall corroborated the fact that most, if not all the Fustat textiles actually came from Gujarat.

Indian textiles of Gujarat manufacture were carried by the Arab traders to Egypt: some valuable specimens of these bearing hunting scenes and a swan pattern have been discovered at Fostat in the old capital of Egypt (2).

Dhamija (1985), stated that, during 150 B.C. there was the invasion of India by the Sakas and the establishment of 'Satarapies', one of which was located in Saurashtra. During this period Peripielus of Erythrean Sea (50 A.D) was completed, which is the first record of organised trading of western traders with Gujarat. Many centres in Gujarat are mentioned, some of which still have flourishing craft traditions such as Khambhat etc.
She further writes that, the Moghul court's patronage and interest in trade led to the development of large manufacturing factories making a variety of commodities. Woven silks, fine gossamer cottons, sashes with intricate woven patterns, embroidered carpets, hangings, canopies and dresses were all prepared in Ahmedabad.

Pal (1978), traces the history of textiles in Gujarat as follows: Between the 2nd century B.C. and 3rd century A.D. Textile craft appears to have been practiced in a good number of places including Ariaca (Kathiawar and the adjoining inland country) and Gujarat.

The period falling between 4th century A.D. and 750 A.D. was also notable for the textile industry. From the contemporary, literary and epigraphic sources it appears that Gujarat, later Vishaya (central and southern Gujarat) were famous for cotton and silk weaving.

For the next two periods falling between 751 A.D. and 1500 A.D., contemporary literature tells us that Gujarat was notable for cotton and silk weaving.

During the period between 1501 A.D. to 1800 A.D. textile craft existed in Surat, Ahmedabad, and Baroda. The textile craft seems to have reached its zenith during the 19th and 20th century throughout the country, the most important of them being brocades, muslins, patolas, etc.

Gujarat occupies a prominent place in India's economy. It accounts for nine percent of industrial employment and
gross value of output in the country. It's industrial structure was based on the cotton industry. Its beginning was made in the last century by Ranchhodlal Chhotalal of Ahmedabad who bought textile machinery by sea to Cambay and had it carried by bullock carts to the plant site. Gujarat for more than 2000 years has been a centre of trade and textile export (49).

At the beginning of the 17th century Gujarat was commanding first place in India's trade with the west ahead of Bengal and the Coromandal coast. This prosperity received a set back from the disastrous Gujarat famine of 1630-32 which depopulated Gujarat followed by a decline in the standards and in prices of Gujarat textiles (34).

Dalal (1986), recorded that, in 1980 about five lakh families of Gujarat were engaged in cottage industries out of which 2.1 lakhs accounted for rural artisans engaged in traditional cottage industries comprising of weavers, leather workers, etc.

The decline of the Indian traditional craft began with the invasion of the British trade in the colonial period. The railways enabled the British to reach and uproot the traditional industries in the remote villages of the country. Under Gandhiji's activities and thinking before independence the craftsman of India gained attention and it became part of our National Independence struggle.
Jayakar (1980), pointed out that, in the 20th century the movement in textile trade underwent a traumatic change with textiles from England and Japan flooding the markets of India. With independence there was a growing awareness of the importance of handloom weaving on the economic life of the country which had a large potential for employment next only to agriculture. The importance of textiles in the cultural life of the country and the danger of a break-down of the traditional pattern of life of producer and consumer due to the introduction of new raw materials, was recognised. It was at this stage that the government realised the need for research, training and servicing of this ancient craft.

2.3 Brocades and Kinkhabs

Brocades and Kinkhabs are synonymous to each other. The difference lies in the use of this fabric which is based on its quality, i.e., the finer variety is used for sarees and are called brocade sarees and the thicker variety with a narrower width is used to make garments and are called Kinkhabs.

The brocades of India are undoubtedly of very ancient lineage. Both the 'rupari' made with silver threads and the golden 'soneri', often ornamented with a richly coloured borders were chiefly produced in Ahmedabad, Aurangabad and Surat. Perhaps the earliest mention of them is to be found in the Yajur Veda, reference being to "pesaskaris" - female weavers of embroidered fabrics. There is also a mention of a
cloth of gold by Megasthenses constituting the costumes of Indian princes(51). Saraswathi (1961), writes that, the Rig Veda also refers to the existence of a shining golden cloak.

Mohantay (1984), writes that, according to Jayakar, from the memoirs of a Damasas traveller, Shahab-Ud-Din Abbas Ahmed who came from Egypt during the reign of Muhammad Tughlak (A.D. 1325-1350) says, "The Sultan keeps in his service 500 manufacturers of gold tissues, who weave gold brocades worn by the wives of the Sultan and given away as presents to the Amirs and their wives...."

Golden brocades were known under the name of 'hiryani' and 'hirivastra', 'pandukala' or cloth manufactured from the fibres of 'dukula', the silk and cotton cloth of Banaras, the Aparantaka cloth of Sindh, Gujarat and Konkan(54).

Many hangings scattered in the museums throughout the world, probably fragments of the same piece with a pattern of riders on a horse were woven in Gujarat, in heavy silk with an extra weft design in twill weave. It has been dated by different authorities from the 12th to the 16th century(20). Gillow and Barnard (1991), write that, until recent times, 'Kinkhab' brocades were produced in Surat, Ahmedabad, Jamnagar and other towns in Gujarat. The Gujarati Kinkhab was used as furnishing cloth or as skirt lengths.

During the Sultanate period until the 16th century under Mughal patronage Ahmedabad and Surat had large factories where fine gold brocades were woven(2). According
to Pal (1978), the Ain-i-Akbari refers to Ahmedabad as being famous for weaving of brocades, velvets and silks.

The 'naksha bands', the pattern makers who had migrated from central Asia had settled in Ahmedabad and made a range of patterns and the 'ashawli' sarees were famous in Western India. Later they simulated the designs of the 'Paithani' pallu and borders, but not the technique. In the 19th century Baluchar and the outlined framed patterns of miniatures were also woven(2).

Jayakar (1980), mentions that migration of silk weavers took place from Gujarat from the earliest times. This is established by an inscription of the 8th century, found at Mandasor, Rajasthan recording the building of a temple to the Sun by the silk weavers from Gujarat.

She further states that, the Ain-I-Akbari of Abul Fazl mentions Ghias - a 'naqshband' born in Yezdam and goes on to say that, the world had not seen a weaver like him. Besides he was reputed to be a great poet. Hafiz Ali Hasan who belonged to the most important hereditary Naqshband families in Varanasi, traced the introduction of silk weaving at Varanasi to silk weavers who, to escape the great fire which broke out in Gujarat in the 14th century, fled and set up workshops at Delhi, Agra, Varanasi, Madras and Ajmer.

Mohantay (1984), writes that, old weavers at Banaras indicate that a big Wali named Hazrat Khwaja Bahauddin invented the art of 'naksha' in the 13th century and today

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Banaras has become famous for its brocades, so much so that while tracing the history of the origin of brocades writers have presumably identified the fabrics as Banaras in origin. Mehta (1960), records that, Homer in his Odyssey, gives a description of the rich robe of Ulysses which closely resembles the Banarasi Shikargarh brocade. Sir George Birdwood adds, while reading Homer's passage, proof is added to proof of the traditional descent of the 'Kincobs' of Banaras, through the looms of Babylon, Tyre and Alexandria, from designs and technical methods which probably, in prehistoric times, originated in India itself, and were known by the Hindus already in the times of the Code of Manu, and before the date of the Ramayana and Mahabharata.

Dhamija and Jain (1989), report that, twenty years ago an attempt was again made by the All India Handicraft Board to revive the brocade weaving traditions in Ridrol and Surat. At that time ten looms were being used at Ridrol producing silk sarees. Today only one loom is working and an attempt is being made to revive the industry.

The term 'brocade' is commonly employed as a generic term virtually comprising all varieties of woven fabrics of simple textures. It consists of only one series each of warp and weft threads, and is distinct from compound types of fabrics of more complex construction (56).

Brocades refer to those textiles where patterns are created on the loom i.e., in the process of weaving by
transfixing or thrusting the pattern thread regularly. But when brocade design in gold, silver or cotton threads are to be used, special threads are transfixed between by skipping the passage of the regular weft over a certain number of warp threads depending upon the pattern. This is done by using a ‘naksha’ or design which regulates the patterning by means of pre-arranged headles.

An ancient and favourite method of decorating woven fabrics was by inserting in addition to the ordinary weft, secondary weft of rich threads, such as gold, silver, silk or rich coloured wools. These additional wefts were so arranged as to form spots or detached ornamental shapes, distributed, over the ground. This decoration is called ‘in-lay brocading’. A most primitive manner of brocading is described by D. J. Forbes Watson in his book on the textile manufacture of India, as follows: "Two weavers sit at a loom. They place the pattern drawn upon paper, below the warp and range along the track of the weft a number of cut threads equal to the flowers or parts of the design to be made..... Often continuous coloured thread is carried in its own small shuttle.

Mehta (1960), describes the technique of brocade weaving as given by Sir George Birdword, "A kind of inverted heddles called ‘naksh’ (picture or design) is hung above the warp immediately behind the heddles the other ends of the cords being fastened to a horizontal band running below the warp. Like the cords of a heddle the ‘naksh’ strings where
they cross the warp have loops through which certain of the warp threads are passed. But instead of getting an up-and-down motion from treddles pressed by the weaver's foot, the 'naksh' is worked, from above, by a child seated on a bench over it's father's head".

"Brocading techniques", as explained by Mohantay (1984), "are widely used for ornamentation of fabrics. The ornamentation is brought about by using extra weft threads to interlace with the warp threads, while the main weft thread interlaces with the warp threads to form the main or ground fabric. The extra weft thread or brocading threads limited to the width of the area where it is required or it may be used as pattern weft from one selvedge to the other. Where satin weave is used as the ground weave, very often extra figuring threads are also interlaced with the ground threads where they are not used for the figure, instead of allowing them to float at the back of the cloth."

He goes on to write that, the technique of weaving varies, the 'naksha' or 'jala' of Banaras, the 'adai' or 'jala' of Kanchipuram, the 'jungu' of the south are various contrivances which continue to be used in brocade weaving. However, jacquard and dobby machines are slowly penetrating in this field of traditional techniques. The preparatory process has not changed, but with advent of chemicals and synthetic dyes, bleaching and dyeing processes have altered.
The silk brocades of Banaras, Ahmedabad and Surat were all known in the 17th century. While Banaras continues to be the centre of silk brocade production, Ahmedabad and Surat have practically nothing left to show today. Techniques adopted in Surat were Fekwa, Kardhwan, with treadles and headles, Jala and Jacquard machine. In Fekwa the design yarn moves from selvedge to selvedge. In Kardhwan the extra weft is woven separately using small spools and jala/naksha contrivances used for lifting warp yarns for pattern weaving.

The most exquisite brocades in silk and gold are woven by weavers on simple pit looms. The designs are translated by 'naksha bandhas' on to frames or 'nakshas'. At times not less than six shuttles are used to multiple colours in the butas or ornament on the body of the cloth(38). (Plate 1,2,3).

Gujarat developed it's own style of Kinkhabs, (brocades) woven with extra weft patterns. Surat as the chief port carried them far off even to the Russian royalty. Kanbis or Patidar, Khatris and Mommin (particularly) women were excellent in this weave. There were dozens of designs like tara mandal a rather complicated constellation, animals, peacocks, women waving fans, lotuses in many shapes, etc. Ridrol in Mehasana district, Jamnagar and Dolka produced them. A special item was the famous Nathdwara pichwai in the brocade style(15). (Plate 4,5,6).

Indian Kinkhabs are known by names of peotic fancy - 'ripples of silver' (mazchar), 'sunshine and shade' (dhup
Plate 1: Brocade saree with 'jal' all over the body in gold with floral scroll border, paisleys in silk and gold on the pallu and on the two corners. (About 100 years old)

Plate 2: Brocade saree with 'jal' all over the field and border in gold. Pallu with floral scroll and stylised leaf motif in corners. (About 100 years old)
Plate 3: Brocade sari, with golden buties (asharfi) with the name of Maharana Shrimohan Devaji woven with green silk thread. Parrot and floral scroll in the border. (Courtsey Baroda Museum). (Date unknown)
Plate 4: Boy's coat (bagla) of crimson gold brocade (Kinkhab) in the late Mughal Style. Gujarat early 19th Century A.D. (Courtsey Baroda museum)

Plate 5: Silk Jama in the late mughal fashion (Hindu style) Baroda late 18th century. (Courtsey Baroda museum)
Plate 6: Vest of Kinkhabs cloth, green along the border with cross design. Baroda 19th century. (Baroda Museum)
chawa), 'nightingale's eyes' and 'pigeon's eyes' (bulbulchasm and holimtarakshi) and 'peacock's neck' (morgala). Other designs were 'shikarghar' i.e., hunting scenes, 'butidar' or sprigs, 'beldar' or scrolls, 'Kalka' or flame. The most traditional are seen in the Ajanta frescoes.

Mehta (1962), gives Sir George Watt's classification of kinkhabs as follows

1. Pure 'cloth of gold' or 'cloth of silver'.
2. True kinkhabs with greater part in gold and silver and a little silk here and there to emphasize a design - for furnishings.
3. The baftas or potthans - greater part of silk and selected parts in gold or silver.
4. Silk gauzes - fine silver and gold and silken fabrics called 'abrawans'.

Like brocades, Kinkhabs are woven on the loom with an additional shuttle or pencil which was carried in and out of the warp threads according to the needs of the pattern. The ladies of the Tripura court were known to have practiced the art of Kinkhab weaving as an amusement. The jara^garden of Dacca was also in fact Kinkhab both in conception and in purpose. Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, the Deccan, Western India and Southern India were all known to have once had important centres of Kinkhab weaving. Subsequently, however the art became localized and Banaras in the north, Ahmedabad and Surat in Western India, Hyderabad in the Deccan and Tanjore in the South grew into famous centres of Kinkhab weaving(62).
Great similarity is often noticed between the brocades of Surat and Tanjore, Baluchar fabrics for which Murshidabad has been famous were also produced in Ahmedabad as reported by George Watt. All this was due to the Gujarat weavers migrating during the 14th century. The contemporary silk brocade industry is mainly located in Banaras, Kanchipuram, Tanjore, Kumbakonam and Bangalore for large-scale manufacture and on a small scale at Bishnupur, Berhampur (Orissa), Aurangabad, Dharamavaram and nearby places(52).

Kusum Chatrapati mentions in the Handloom Journal, March’58, as reported by Mohanty (1984), that, the kinkhabs of Ahmedabad attracted the eye of Czar of Russia when he visited India as late as 1890. Also, as late as 1958, fifty families were engaged in brocade and kinkhab weaving in Ahmedabad, while 200 weavers were working in Ridrol and Dholka as wage earners. Surat too, was an important brocade weaving centre. Now-a-days brocade and Kinkhab weaving is practically non-existent in Ahmedabad and Surat.

Mohanty further records that, Ahmedabad produced best quality kinkhabs using Chinese silk and gold and silver locally produced, the gold threading costing Rs. 1 to 1.75 paisa per tola and silver thread costing about 88 paisa per tola. Silk piece goods woven with gold and silver threads costing Rs. 60 to 250 per piece having gold and silver threads 1/4th of the weight of the fabric. The gold and silver threads were called ‘Kor’, ‘Kinar’, ‘tas lappo’, ‘phit’ and ‘gota’.
In 1883, there were about 500 to 600 looms engaged in weaving kinkhabs. Edward's monograph indicates that "the brocades of Surat were generally accounted inferior to those of Ahmedabad, and sold in Rangoon, Peshawar and Bombay". Their manufacture was in the hands of 'Kanabi' capitalists and 'Gola' and 'Ghanchi' workmen. A piece measuring 30" x 54" could vary in price from Rs. 15 to Rs. 40.

Fabrics were named after the motifs used - 'chasam phul', 'keri', 'sitaphali kothod' (custard apple in square pattern), 'borgali' (berfruit), 'kaju phalio', 'mogris', 'chundali' (squares), 'lehu' (zig-zag lines), 'badam valo' (almond creeper), 'mohar' (round gold coins) and 'katari' (dagger). Silk piece goods were called "kasi" and used for sarees. Designs like 'vatana ni keri' (pea and mango), 'kotha' (fortress), 'kakni' (zig-zag), 'badam chodaniani' (diamonds woven in flattened wire), were woven. Gold, green, dark maroon, dark red, yellow were popular colours.

Jhala (1981), in her study on the 'Brocades of Ahmedabad' drew the following conclusions - Brocades in pure silk were called Amrus. Kinkhabs, the term means brocades woven with gilt thread in conjunction with cotton and silk.

As Gujarat does not rear Mulberry silk, it must have been imported by sea probably through the port of Surat by the agents of Dutch and British trading companies, and then also from Japan and China. Ahmedabad famed for brocades, exported through Cambay. Foreign bills of exchange were
available with the Vanias (weavers) of Ahmedabad. Brocade for royal use at Jaipur may have been produced in Gujarat.

Colours popular in Ahmedabad and Surat were green, dark maroon and gold. Cost of brocade sarees was Rs. 200 to Rs. 500/- at that time.

The floral designs were outlined with black and blue. Weave in the 18th and early 19th century was usually plain weave but in some cases twill was used. Parrots, peacock and lion were the other motifs characterising folk influence and not islamic influence as they do not permit animal motifs.

After the Marathas conquered Gujarat in 1753, and the second half of the 19th century when railways took over, Ahmedabad suffered greatly as the Marathas did not encourage the art and competition was too much from Bombay mills. The decreasing use of brocades by Gujarat royalty resulted in the gradual decline of the demand of Ahmedabad traditional textiles.

Jhala further recorded that brocade borders and pallu were woven in Ahmedabad, brocade sarees in Ridrol, Kinkhabs in Nardipore, Upera, Gojariya and Charada.

Main weaving communities were Khatris, Pateis who were warriors and land owners respectively. Thakurs and Rawals were their helpers who at a later stage started their own workshops and belonged to the labour class. Dyeing activities in Ahmedabad were done by the muslims. All family members
participated in the craft with the women and children engaged in winding.

**BROCADE SAREES OF RIDROL**

A pit loom with a jala mechanism was used. There were 12 shafts, eight for twill and four for tabby. The weft did not run along the entire width of the cloth. Costs was about Rs. 2500/- to 4500/- per saree with real gold or silver yarn.

**KINKHABS OF NANDIPORE**

Technique used was extra weft with twill binding, ground was satin or sateen weave. Sizes made were 27" x 27" square pieces, some were four 'Gaj' in length and some only 4" x 4". Designs were as before only count was lower. These were being made in Ahmedabad till twenty years ago, but now they are made in Nardipore, Upera, Gojhariya and Charada (Mehasana district). Most of the Jala looms were replaced by jacquard mechanism. Merchants supplied the raw material and paid on piece good bases and sold the cloth directly to the Rabaris. Cost was Rs. 30 to Rs. 40 per yard.

The major problems as listed by Jhala, of the brocade saree weavers were, getting labour, weak structure of fabric and lack of publicity. Whereas, the problems of the kinkhab weavers were - dependency on the merchants for their livelihood; the weavers did not have samples of the material they wove, hence getting orders directly was not easy. Weavers lacked the skill to make new designs and transfer them to jacquard cards.
2.4 Mashru

Mashru fabrics are also referred to, by the term 'misru' which is derived from the sanskrit word for 'mixed' (28).

The word 'mashru' in Arabic means "permitted" and refers to prohibition in muslim ceremonial law (Fatwa) of the use of pure silk by man except in war or in the form of narrow borders of dresses (77). Though nowhere in the Koran is this injunction stated, yet both Sunnis and Shia muslims recognize the ban (11). Mukharji (1974), writes that, the word 'mashru' comes from Persian and means 'cleverly woven' a name applied to show the dexterity with which the cotton warp is completely covered with the silk weft.

Mashru was woven all over India and may have been derived from the weaving traditions of the Tiraz factories of the Caliphates in the countries having islamic influences. These manufactures were also introduced into India during the sultanate period (20).

In Bengal the cotton warp and silk weft, mixed fabric was called 'garabhasuti'. In north west province, cotton and tassar mixed fabrics were called 'sangi' and cotton 'gutter'. In Punjab again the warp was cotton and weft silk and fabric was known, as 'shuja khani' or 'sufi'. 'Illaicha' was made at Surat of cotton and silk mixed and worn as 'burkas' by the Bhora muslims (55).
Mashru has a shiny, satin surface, is usually striped in pattern and woven in bright colours. Mashru is a mixed fabric with a warp-faced textile made with a silk warp, now usually artificial silk, and a cotton weft. It has a satin weave that makes the cotton weft lie almost invisibly beneath the surface of the fabric. Thereby only the cotton yarn lies next to the skin and as such the fabric is allowed by Muslim religious law. (28)

Jain and Aggarwala (1989), record that, the traditional designs on mashru included the 'panch patta' or five stripes, 'Kala - Laher' or black wave, ‘patta-patti’ or criss-cross pattern and ‘joda-patti’ or pairs of stripes.

In mashru cloth the peculiar wavy pattern called 'khanjari' was obtained by dyeing portions of the warp threads of different colours. The warp threads were tied up in bundles of 10 to 14 together at intervals to form wavy lines or arrow-head patterns. (28, 79)

Sometimes wavy lines are produced not by tying but by special weaving of different coloured weft threads. Such fabrics are called 'sangi' and are cheaper. The warp is also of two colours. (51) According to Yusuf (1979), 'sangi' is woven with two warps of different colours together, hence the name 'sangi' i.e. together. Mehta (1960), records that, the 'gulbadan' is a cross between 'mashru' and 'shangi' as the warp threads are partially tie-dyed, the weft never. Whereas, Buhler and Fischer (1980), state that 'sangi' when worn by
hindus was called 'gulbadan' and when worn by muslims it was called 'mashru'. Whereas, the ikat mashru fabrics were called 'chhada' by their manufacturers in Gujarat. Ikat, probably warp ikat, was produced in India even in the 12th century, is proved by a reference in a text called the Manasollasa. This text mentions textiles from Karnataka and from other parts of India which says (according to Moti Chandra 1960 : 21.f), "The yarns were tie-dyed (tantubandha), since 'can' means 'warp' the expression might stand for warp - ikat. There was the all over dotted effect created by raising the white weft thread to produce a grid-like pattern(20).

During the 19th century centres of Mashru weaving were in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Agra and Varanasi, Aurangabad, Murshidabad, Hyderabad, Trichinappali, Mysore and Madras. They are now concentrated between Bhuj and Mandvi in Kutch and Patan in north Gujarat and also at Ajamgadh in Uttar Pradesh. Mashru was a traditional export item, and was at one time sent to the Middle East in large quantities. In India, however it is now no longer worn by rich Muslims but is produced in specific patterns mainly for Hindu villagers in Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh(28).

Trivedi (1961), writes that, Sir George Watts', mentions about Mashru in the 'Indian Art' at Delhi 1903, showing its popularity throughout India till the beginning of the 20th century.
Recently pieces of Chinese mashru carrying Chinese stamps identifying the cloth makers, have turned up in private collections. It is not known whether these were influenced by Indian or Middle Eastern traditions.

Mashru fabrics were also sold according to their usage: 'kamkhi' meaning "for a blouse", 'gaji' literally of a simple length or yard. So coveted was the textile as an export item to Islamic countries that the trade name was 'saudagiri', an Arabic word for 'merchant'.

Mashru fabrics were also used as lining material, pyjama trousers by men, petticoats for ladies, pillow covers, umbrellas, borders for embroidery, etc. Because they look like silk they are used in place of pure silk textiles in villages by orthodox Hindu communities. Red silk warp and cotton weft has been mentioned in Varnaka texts from Gujarat (according to Moti chandra 1961: 24).

Trivedi (1961), in the census of India, on the Mashrus of Patan writes that, the traditional mashru weavers at Patan were - Khatris and Shaikhs. Khatris were hereditary silk and cotton weavers. The Shaikhs belonged strictly to the Prophet himself. About 200 households, 100 muslims and 100 khatris were engaged in the craft traditionally. Both men and women of the household worked. There were thirteen master weavers i.e., mashru trader cum weavers who belonged to the khatri community, besides six traders-one Patel and five Jains. There was also a co-operative society named 'Shri Patan
Mashru Hath Vanat Kamdar Sahkari Mandli limited', engaged in the business of mashru on a co-operative basis.

There were five establishments engaged in warp making, four in dyeing, fifteen in repairing the warp threads damaged during dyeing, six in sizing, ten in making 'rach', and two in making new 'fani'. There were 200 households of weavers having about 400 throw-shuttle looms. There were two workshops for finishing the mashru cloth and eight for calendering it. Mashru weaving was a household industry entirely dependent on family labour. All the artisans worked either for the master weaver or trader or co-operative society.

There were thirteen master weavers, six traders and 100 Cooperative societies who supplied the required raw materials and got various processes done through the artisans and sold the finished products.

The majority of the mashru weavers had switched to fly shuttle looms. The traditional colours were red, yellow, green. Popular designs were 'katario', 'chundadi', 'lili and lal kankani', 'kamkhi', 'asli and nakli sodagari', 'arbi', 'tran kankani' and fancy butti. 'Katario' and 'sodagiri' patterns were in demand in Rajasthan. The 'arbi' and 'kamkhi' in Madhya Pradesh, 'chundadi' in Rajasthan and Gujarat, while 'lila', 'lal kankani' and fancy butti in all the three above regions. Mashru fabrics were used for blouses and petticoats by the rural folks and Adivasis of Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.
Mashru was in heavy demand during the marriage season as it was used for making 'chania' (skirt) for the bride. Thus during the months of Kartik, to Vashakh i.e., November to May and Jyeshthe to Ashvin i.e., June to October, demand was highest. Earlier mashru was exported to Aden, Kuwait, Syria, Africa and Arab countries.

The main competitor of mashru trade in Patan was Ajamgadh, a village in Uttar Pradesh where mashru weaving was done on a large scale. Quality of Ajamgadh mashru was inferior and all the processes were carried out by the weaver himself in his place.

In 1965-66 the labour charges paid to weavers were Rs.14 for ordinary designs to Rs. 21 per meter for complicated designs. Later, it increased to Rs. 22 to Rs. 32 per meter respectively 20 to 25 years ago.

In 1966 cost of manufacturing twenty meters of mashru cloth was Rs. 37.50 i.e. Rs. 1.88 per meter, which was sold at Rs. 2.15/meter. Thus the trader got 25 paisa per meter.

It was assessed that annually about 400,000 yards of mashru cloth worth Rs. 8 to 10 lakhs was manufactured at Patan of which about 70 percent was sent to Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, while the remaining 30 percent was consumed in Gujarat itself.

The main reasons for the decline of the craft as given by Trivedi were:
- Change in taste of buyer.
- Poor quality due to use of artificial silk and 'kacha' dyes.
- Cheap availability of mashru from Ajamgadh at lower rates.
- Increase in excise duty on artificial silk. This resulted in cutting down of labour charges by traders.
- The weavers do not find the craft remunerative and hence divert their children to other occupations.

Balgopal (1992), in her study on the mashrus of Mandvi, which she conducted in the village of Dhone (Don) stated that, mashru fabrics were known as 'seraja' in Murshidabad and 'alatches' in Agra, 'tapseil' in Ajamgad (all three places in Uttar Pradesh), 'alachies' in Berampur, 'chadda' (i.e. ikat pattern) and 'ilaicha' in Surat.

Regarding the history of the mashru fabric, she wrote that, Abul Fazal lists these fabrics with silk stuff in Jaipur records, and were probably woven in India during the reign of Sultan Ahmed Shah (1411-1443) founder of Ahmedabad. (Textile Costumes from Maharaja Sawai Man Sing II Museum by Chandra Man Singh).

She explained that, the shedding operation - called 'dandy' was operated by four pullies which were connected to the handle shafts and were controlled by the treadles to form the shed.
Another operation was, joining the new warp ends to the corresponding ends of the previous warps. This operation was termed as 'piecing' and was done by taking ash inbetween the thumb and finger (used for twisting) to have a firmer grip of the yarn while twisting them together.

Names of some designs given by her were -

'Tangadu' - warp ikat stripes
'Kela phali' - thin stripes.
'Bana shahi' - dot designs.

Yarns used in Mandvi according to her were 2/40s staple viscose, 20s cotton; Reed count 52, length of fabric - 64 meters, weave was 7 warp faced satin 91x48. 8 kg of yarn was required for 64 meters of cloth.

Number of treadles were 7,10,11,12 or 16.

The weft appeared on the warp face of the fabric and for the design extra weft or extra warp was used. Staple viscose costed Rs. 80/- kg, cotton Rs. 35/- kg. The fabric was also marketed to Bhuj.

Use of Mashru fabric, as given by Balgopal were - for the bride, worn by widows, used as blouses and skirts by the Ahiri, Rabari, Muslim and Anavil Brahmin community.

In another study by Desai (1986), on "Design Innovation in Mashru - Traditional Fabrics of Gujarat", work had been done on the ikat mashru fabrics produced on power looms at
Surat. The study was done evolving new designs in various colours for the promotion of the fabric.

Weavers were paid Rs. 227/- for weaving about 60 meters of fabric of 36 inch width. For smaller width of 27" charges were Rs. 180/- for about 60 meters. Selling price was Rs. 20/- to Rs. 24/- per meter.

The weavers were the Khavadas, Anjars and Vaghars. The fabric was used by the Adivasi tribe.

Designs were the 'bundal' or 'kafki' i.e., dots in various placement, 'bunki' or 'chundadi', 'kakania' or alaicho'. The 'V' shaped pattern was called 'khadi katar', the 'tangadu' was in black and red ikat stripes.

Weave was warp satin with 8 harness, the fabric count was 160x64 per inch.

2.5 Status and Revival of Textile Craft

Handloom fabrics are a major handicraft item. The importance of handicrafts in a traditional economy has been well established and the rational of promoting it is to - (i) generate employment at local level, (ii) utilize local resources, (iii) reduce pressure on agriculture, (iv) diversify income generating activities in rural areas, (v) to reduce migration to cities and (vi) finally to increase rural income and improve the quality of life(9).
For the above reasons it was necessary to put crafts on a firm footing. Various steps have been suggested by Pal (1978) and Angira (1988), (1) documentation (2) state patronage to craftsmen (3) spot demonstration to improve traditional designs and evolving new ones (4) imparting regular training and inducing them to adopt improved techniques of production (5) adequate marketing facilities (6) improving working and living conditions of the craftsmen (7) produce pictorial documentation of the processes of the manufacture of artifacts and thus record the rich craft tradition before they become extinct under the impact of modernization.

The Draft Report of the 8th five year plan (1991), gives the following information. The government of India too made an indepth study to understand the scenario of handicrafts of which handlooms in an important part. The result was a report in a draft for the 8th five year plan 1991, called the SWOT Study (Strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) which presented a holistic picture.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<td>1. Large employment in the sector.</td>
<td>1. Unorganised and dispersed production base.</td>
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<td>2. High value addition.</td>
<td>2. Lack of working capital at producer’s end.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Low capital investment.</td>
<td>3. Largely decorative and non-essential nature of product.</td>
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4. Creativity/skill of crafts-persons largely inherited-providing a strong resource base.

5. Association with people’s culture and lifestyles.

6. Artistic beauty of the products.

**Opportunities**

1. Growing export market especially in developed countries, often with preferential treatment for handicrafts.

2. Growing urban taste for handicrafts in dress and decor.

3. Growing number of social workers, VAS, evincing interest in the sector.

4. Technological possibilities for reducing drudgery and improving quality.

**Threats**

1. Growing competition in the world market from other Asian countries.

2. Continued low returns weaning craftsmen away from his traditional occupation.

3. Scarcity of raw material both due to depletion of natural mediums and preservation measures.

4. Competition from machine made products and mediums.

Many studies have blamed government support. While this is to be expected, Allal and Chuta (1984), look at the government’s major constrain in making programmes effective which is, widely dispersed small units constituting a major problem whenever government undertake to design programmes that could effectively reach the target group at reasonable costs. They further add that, traditional items will find an outlet in exports though it would be extremely difficult for very small producers because it requires high quality
products, large capital, regular supplies of large quantities of material and sophisticated marketing channels. Thus, exports have to be limited to goods which may be easily produced by small units without the need for extensive marketing channels.

Other studies have also come to similar conclusions. Dulal (1986), states that, the position on pre-industrialization, was such that, "the traditional occupation in rural society were so interwoven with agriculture, caste and barter system that there was no difficulty about raw materials, skills and markets." He further writes, that experiments in educational innovation of the Rural University in Jawaja block of Rajasthan - (Mathai 1905), shows that, "financial maintenance given by the government agency as working capital - half of the amount was spent on immediate needs and consumer items. Financial institution like bank facilities instead of working against exploitation, work in favour of it." Also, Government supporting agencies for villagers were found to be ineffective. Lack of information on raw material and marketing is found to be exceptionally notable hinderence for development of rural industry.

Dulal further pointed out that, the two approaches - Gandhian model and western model have been tried to fit the national development strategy, especially from the 2nd plan onwards. But in reality the entire development pattern was dominated by the western pattern which did not fuse with Indian economic reality.
The major areas of weakness were:

- too scattered and unorganised.
- low productivity - resultant of inability to adopt skills required by market, out dated tools - equipments and inability to replace them; lack of capital dependence on middlemen.
- Problem of marketing of the product, quality control and fair prices.
- Flow of credit or investment in this sector was negligible.

The government did show its concern which was indicated in the Industrial Policy resolution of 1948. It also set up major agencies to look after the small scale and cottage industries sector like the, All India Khadi and Village Industries Board (1953), All India Handloom Board (1952), All India Handicraft Board (1950). The special schemes under the plan were Rural Industries Project (RIP) 1962; Rural Artisan Programme (RAD) 1972, Integrated Rural Development (IRD) 1970.

At the state level, the government of Gujarat has given emphasis on this sector in Draft Fourth Five Year Plan, Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85). Inspite of that, government in 1972 drafted out a 10 year Perspective Plan of Gujarat 1974-84.

The Indian Express dated 19th April, 1993 reported that the Textile Minister had announced a Rs. 1321 crore package
scheme for handloom weavers. The scheme to be executed during the 8th plan period would cover the 3.27 lakh "loomless weavers" in the country. In the Indian Express dated 12th May, 1993, Mr. L. C. Jain pointed out in an article titled "Mid-Summer Madness" on the package that the government had laid down for the "loomless weavers". He wrote, that "the package unleashed for removing the pain of the handloom weaver's is grossly misconceived". "The national census of handlooms (1987-88) had brought out the fact that 2.79 lakh existing looms were idle". "The Hussain Committee" had observed that the majority of the handloom weavers are continuing their precarious existence while facing difficulties in the procurement of yarn,...". "The committee had stressed that the weavers had lost their livelihood, not their looms". He further stated that, (i) "it can be guaranteed that looms worth Rs. 532 crore will be purchased on paper in the name of loomless weavers. (ii) A number of non-existent (benami) manufacturers and suppliers of these looms will spring up to help the government to achieve the expenditure target of Rs. 523 crore with profit to all and sundry except the handloom weavers. (iii) Promise of a 100 percent pay-back by the government will only destroy the links the weavers have established in the rural market and accumulate a mountain of unsold stocks on its head".

He further added, "When lakhs of handloom weavers already possessing looms are without work for want of raw materials or due to unrestricted encroachment on their market
by powerlooms and mills, it is a cruel joke to spend an enormous sum for more loom".

In another letter to the editor of Indian Express dated 25th May, 1993, Shri S.S. Narayana Swamy of New Delhi has pointed out that the problems afflicting the handloom industry are: "(a) supply of raw materials of desired quality and quantity at reasonable prices to the handloom weavers, (b) provision of working capital, (c) support for marketing of finished goods". Suggestion given by him were, to spend the package in the following manner - "(a) a revolving fund of Rs. 500 crores for procurement, stocking and stabilisation of yarn prices as suggested by the weaver's convention, b) revival of the implementation of machinery for enforcing the Handloom Reservation Act. The provision of this Act which has recently been upheld by the Supreme Court, should be strictly enforced by all the state governments, if handlooms have to survive in the competitive market, (c) provision of marketing support to the handloom sector and strengthening of the Handloom Co-operative Societies and Corporations".

Jayakar and Irwin (1956), have also expressed their concern in the following words, "Within the last generation there has been a rapid transformation in the social structure of India. The building of roads, the introduction of machines, the breakdown of caste barriers, the carrying of urban civilization through radio and cinema, to the doorsteps
of rural communities has led to a rapid breakdown of the norms that had directed craft traditions. The snapping of the link between the creative impulse and livelihood is the inevitable outcome of mechanization. To go back to the past is impossible, for the past has no longer any meaning in the new social order. The mere absorption of western forms equally has no meaning, for they are alien. What then is possible? It may well be that the very laying bare of the problem with all its intricacies, conflicts and tensions will in itself project the answer which will discern and create a new tradition of textile design for the India of today and of the future."