## Chapter V

THE CRAFTSMEN AND THEIR CUSTOMERS

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Table
5.1 The male craftsman

The male output in the craft is prodigious. They take part in all the spheres relating to production and marketing of the craft. In a sense it can be said the major responsibility of applique craft is shouldered by the male folk. Although they are assisted by their wives, children and even elderly parents. But the bulk of responsibility lies with the male folk.

The male craftsmen move from place to place, village to village with the motive to collect orders and sale of craft. In the past when the villages were not open to vehicular communication then applique craftsmen used to move from place to place on foot or on bullock carts, they were treated as the guests of the villagers/kings/zamindars who gave them orders for the preparations of the craft. Since their craft were in use for the religious purpose their presence and hospitality were very much appreciated in terms of purity. After collecting orders they made the items either by residing in the customer’s house for a temporary period at a stretch or for a short period at regular intervals. In the later case the craftsmen were shuttling between their homes and the customers place of work because they used to take the help of family members and other artisans of their own village for their piece meal work.

The purchase of raw materials from different places keeping in view the requirements of the orders of the customers is another sphere of male activity. The craftsmen purchased the raw materials like cotton/cloth during earlier days from the local weavers or from the weavers of adjacent villages. For the
frame of articles as *chhati, trasa, alata, adheni* they depended on the local carpenters. The other items such as thread, needle were made by themselves after collecting cotton from the weavers and unfinished needle from the local blacksmith. There prevailed a relationship of patron and client with in the jajmani system among Darjis, carpenters, weavers, and blacksmith. But at present the finished raw materials are purchased from cities like Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Calcutta and even from Delhi, Bombay etc. While visiting their places during exhibition trips.

The colouring of white cloths in respect to the orders of the customers depending on the various colour combinations are another work performed by the male craftsmen. The colouring and the combination of colours are the main attraction of applique craft. They take utmost care and invest their maximum possible skill in these two areas. Because any negligence in these two sectors may spoil the craft as a whole. The colouring of white cloths involved a tedious and time consuming process. At present with the availability of coloured cloths from the mills has reduced the time and energy of the artisans immensely.

The preparations and lay out of the craft according to the requirement of the customer at the sametime maintaining the ritual sanctity of the craft is the next strenuous job for the male craftsmen. They prepare the sketch and placement of different motifs on the selected background of cloth with white coloured chalks. After preparing the layout on the base cloth they also draw out the different motifs on cloth which are subsequently stitched on the base cloth in their respective places. The
beginners at present cut the motifs on a piece of plain paper which subsequently is used for the main figure on the cloth. As a consequence these novices save the cloths from being wasted.

After preparing the design on the cloth the male craft persons cut the cloth according to the layout. Every precaution is taken in this category to prevent the distortion of the figures. The expertise of the craftsmen lies mainly in the perfection of cutting various motifs and designs. They use different sizes of scissors and scales for cutting different motifs of the craft.

After cutting the motifs into different sizes they perform the primary work of stitching in the base cloth as well as in the motifs. In the canopy the male artisans stitch the main central layer which enhances the durability of the canopy. They also supervise the stitching work which is mainly preferred by the women folk, children and the aged.

The mending of old religious applique articles of deities residing in various villages is another work of the male craftpersons. For this purpose they used to move from village to village during the lean periods. Apart from these they were also mending and preparing umbrellas of the villagers after the winter season and before the onset of summer. Those craftsmen who do not have adequate expertise and talent used to move to weekly markets for mending the clothes and umbrellas of the villagers. During their visit they mainly received their remuneration generally in terms of paddy. But the others who mended religious articles were paid in terms of cash, which was more lucrative and prestigious.
The male artisans being the master craftsmen of the craft render themselves as instructors in the family, in the village, in the state and also at the national level. The master craftsmen of the family shoulder the main responsibility in orienting their sons in the family trade. The selected male craftpersons are being employed as master craftsmen in the local applique training centers from which the non-darjis are acquiring the skills through the training. With the establishment of applique training societies in different parts of Orissa these craftpersons are being engaged as instructors in order to impart training to the trainees. At times some craftpersons are also invited by the training centers of other states with a view of popularising the applique craft in their respective states. It has been observed some craftpersons have patronised in developing co-operative societies for the spread of craft through the people and government of that state. They are shouldering main responsibilities for the promotion of the craft in the national and also in the inter-national field.

With the spread of communication network and development of co-operative societies the collection and sale of products have been institutionalised. The craft person by virtue of their membership of the co-operative societies are no longer directly related to the customer rather through the co-operative societies. These societies with the cooperation of the bonafide members are organising different exhibitions and opening sale counters in different parts of the nation for the promotion of craft and craftsmen.
5.2 The female craftperson

The female craftpersons occupy a prominent place in the applique craft. Besides managing the household affairs they contribute their high premium for the preparation of the craft. Their work involves with the stitching, embroidery and such other related responsibilities which are time consuming, fashionable and requires more patience at home. On the whole it can be said that women as craftpersons concentrate on such aspects of the craft which can be designed at home. Whereas their male counterparts are engaged more in the trade which is related to the activities outdoor. This is because the women are not exposed to the outer world rather they remain confined to indoor activities.

As female craftpersons they can receive orders preferably from the known customers in the absence of male counterparts in the family. Although the responsibilities of receiving the order and disbursing the finished products lies with the male folk, the females can act only when the male folks are absent. At times they also make necessary changes as per the requirement of the customer in consultation with the male craftpersons. But the pricing of the products is always the gents portfolio.

Now-a-days the females help in cutting the motifs of required sizes and shapes as per the design given by the males. Although this aspect of craftwork was previously and now within the domain of males. Females are working just as assistants to the male. But some of the female craftpersons have the skill of cutting as per the requirement at par with male folks.

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The stitching work which is used to be the life of applique craft is safely performed by the female folk. Although the male folks assist the females in this area but the choice, quality and durability of stitches are the domain of women workers. The selection of various threads, nature and types of embroidery work and also patch works show the technological feat of women workers. In this sector a lot of time and patience are required for which the women are more suitable than their counterparts. In earlier days when the stitching work was made by hand it was consuming a lot of time for the completion of the craft. But with the mechanisation of stitching through sewing machines it has reduced the work load of the females. Moreover, with the availability of the different types of lace and such other fashionable items, have reduced their strenuous responsibility to a spectacular extent. The preparation of varieties of strips which usually does not require any specific expertise are looked after mainly by the females. It is usually performed for the enlargement of the item.

The arrangement of different motifs according to the lay out, on the base cloth are stitched by the tag stitch or run stitch which is the hand work of women folk generally. Every care is taken for the arrangement of motifs otherwise a minor mistake may spoil the craft. The mogra flowers which are widely displayed in the applique craft are done exclusively by women. At present the stitching of sunflower which has been recently added to the applique craft is generally made by women. They shoulder all the responsibilities, starting from the selection of colours, cut-
ting, stitching till giving of a final shape. Now-a-days the applique craft is looking more colourful because of the addition of motifs like sunflower with varied creepers in different colours. Moreover the presence of small mirrors and sequins which dazzle the eye of the customer are stitched by the women more often. The use of their items in the applique craft is due to the culture contact with the Muslims who reside in close proximity.

In some cases the women act as distributors and collectors of half finished items used in the craft. In those cases when the orders are heavy a single household becomes unable to cater to the need of the customers, she usually sub-lets the works to different artisans providing them with the required raw material and collects them back when they are finished. Here the women act as collectors of the craft.

Exploiting this available opportunity it is seen the service relation of "women craft contractors" extends over to 10 to 15 km. Sometimes it is seen the house wives of the local government officials after learning the applique skill are depending on "Women craft contractors" for receiving orders and there by contributing to the family income.

Women also help in selling the products in the home, during the absence of their husbands. They generally sell to known customers because the women are not allowed to work outside their homes. It is seen that their area of work is confined within the four walls.

As instructors they impart training to their children. It is seen the brides who are from the non-practising applique
craft family but are from the darji caste are learning the skills from their mothers-in-law and husbands who are in the professions of applique craft in Pipili. It has been observed the applique craft is not restricted within the male folk rather it is the co-operation of male and female both.

5.3 Children as craftsmen.

In the Darji families practicing applique craft the children start learning the craft generally after the age of 8-10 years. Before taking admission, into schools, which usually is held at the age of 6-7 years, they work as "order carriers" in the family. During the absence of male craftperson, the head of the household, the female craftperson, the mother usually sends the children to the nearby shops for purchasing certain craft items on credit. The payment is made after the arrival of the male craftpersons. During the course of action they should be able to identify and differentiate between different types of items used in the craft. Subsequently he/she is assigned with the duty to give and collect some of the orders to the artisans, living in the periphery of the village, who are sub-letted with different items. In other words the children are primarily engaged with such work which does not require any skill but is time consuming.

When the children get admission in to the schools they try to learn the skilled aspect of the craft. After coming from school on the completion of homework assigned by teachers they remain engaged in learning the craft. The Darji families are the congenial institution for the learning of applique craft. In the
same institution it is seen that the grandfather/grandmother, father, mother, boys and girls learn and work under the same roof at the same time. Naturally the youngsters get attracted to the craft tradition. If they want to excel in the craft they prefer to be a good craftsman. On the other hand, if they do well in the school/college education they are attracted to jobs in the government sectors because it is more lucrative and ensures stability of income.

Besides learning the craft as caste occupation the children also earn certain amount of pocket money by selling their products to other families. In those families where in the skill and labour of the young children are utilised they help in augmenting the family income. It is evident the children try to become somewhat free from dependency on their parents.

Gradually the girls learn the skill of stitching which is an important aspect of applique craft for the female. The boys on the other hand become proficient in cutting of different motifs required in the applique craft which is the speciality of the male folk. The aesthetic sense of the craft is clearly expressed by the grandparents where as the parents educate their children in the glamorous and commercial aspect of the craft. So as it happens the youngsters become proficient at attaining the age of 16 to 20 years.

5.4 Aged as craftsmen.

The status of aged craftsmen is very high in the Darji society. Since there is meagre evidence in the books pertaining to the various skills available and utilised in the
applique craft, the old and experienced craftpersons are highly esteemed for their experience and contribution for the enhancement of the course of applique craft. They can well explain different pros and cons in the traditional and modern applique technique by citing suitable examples from their experiences. In a sense it can be said that the aged craftpersons are the guardians of applique craft.

Generally the old craftsmen are engaged with such skills which require perfecting the technique and at the same time is time consuming but having lasting value. Because of their patience and experience they are entrusted with the responsibility of master architect of the designs which are to be reflected in the applique craft. They perform the difficult part of the job like cutting and stitching of the designs but with a slow pace. Their technical hands are so much set with expertise that they do not depend on any primary design to implement on the final work. Their stitching is magnificent and durable. Some of the items which are not even practised today by the craftsmen of young generation are treasured with the old craftsmen. For instance the utha phula which is one of the important item of the applique craft is not widely seen at present because it involves a tedious and time consuming process. The artisans of modern generations do not prefer to craft such items rather they depend on the ready made designs/items which are eye catching and easy to stitch.

Apart from designing the craft the aged craftsmen are also good managers of the shops and commercial establishments. They know pretty well the need and quality of the items which are
in demand at different places in India. Moreover they are in a comfortable position to satisfy the customers by explaining the evens and odds of the applique trade in lucid manner. The aged men are thus more capable to look after the shop/commercial establishments. They are the main spokesmen in the village meetings. Any problem arising in the caste or occupations are referred to and solved by the aged craftpersons at their meetings. They also keep the regular information about the changes to be made in the applique craft from the religious point of view. Previously the craft was based on plain designs but at present we find some designs are superimposed over the base cloth with variety of colours. The availability and demand of raw materials are strictly taken into account while making any changes in the applique craft for the religious purpose.

On the whole the aged craftsmen so long as they possess clear vision, they are highly respected in the house, in the occupations and also in the commercial sectors. Their advice and guidance are mostly welcomed for the development of craft and craftsmen.

5.5 Experienced and the best craftsmen.

The experienced and the best craftsmen of this craft enjoy comparatively higher status in the society. They are considered to be the guardian of applique craft in society. Any addition or alteration of the designs in the commercial craft are made generally through them. Because of their expertise and exposure they act as agents for the beautification of the craft.
They usually participate in different competitions organised by the government or non-government agencies. If they win in any of the events of the competitions it becomes not only prestigious to the concerned competitors but also earns pride to the village and the applique craft in general. The citations and reward which are won by the competitors are displayed and preserved properly for the future generations inorder to inspire them about the glorious traditions of the craft and the tremendous expertise of the craftpersons. For this purpose they visit places and enjoy the local hospitality and help to extend the network of relationship and forge new skills in the applique craft. They also come in contact with the craftpersons of other states and act as contact links for the change and development of applique craft and the craftsmen.

These persons apart from earning name and fame in craft are more suitable for appointments as instructors in different centres sponsored by the government or by the co-operative societies. The appointments as instructors is said to be rewarding as well as prestigious. The government officials usually consult these persons for the development of the craft in national and international field. Due to their involvement in government sectors their craft or any craft made by them fetches good reward.

They are esteemed as gurus (teachers) by the students who come for training in the applique craft. They also act as experts in selection of appointments of instructors in various societies.
The appointment in government sectors is considered to be a prized occupation because it maintains a sizable income, free from any competitive dangers.

Some of the craftpersons are better than others in explaining the skills, and glorious tradition hidden in the craft. The art of explanation is not a gift to all although most of the persons can learn almost equally.

The expert craftsmen do not take the aid of an intermediary design (of paper or cardboard) for the preparation of the craft. This shows their technical feat in the applique craft. The designs of different motifs, creepers etc. are also shaped in their mind and hand that with an immediate approach for the preparation of the design they instantly implement it on the cloth in free hand. They are well versed in geometrical shapes, and the combination of different motifs along with the colours. These craftpersons are not only proficient in cutting but also in the different types of stitching. They know pretty well how to stitch the motifs and do the base cloth so as to give it a colourful meaning. Hence in a word they can be said as all rounders in applique craft. The age group of such persons vary between 30-50 years. After the age of 50 generally the qualitative skill of the persons start deteriorating with the deterioration of the eye-sight and myriad health problems. These type of craftpersons are estimated as advisors to the other craftpersons who are younger in age. They also at times manage the shops of applique craft promoted by their sons or family members. Since their mobility is restricted with the advance of age they prefer
to work in a limited sphere by shouldering lesser amount of responsibility. But the traditional prestige and pride attached to these craftpersons are regarded as high as before. This shows their expertise and experience is to be treasured and valued.

So far as women expert craftpersons are concerned they can contribute more time to the qualitative development of the craft simply because they are very much occupied with the household work in the homes. During their youths after their marriage if the in-laws family does not prefer applique craft the skill of these women remain unnoticed. The incoming brides from non-applique to applique craft professing families are although learning the skill at a later age they are unable to achieve that perfection and expertise. Very rarely the quality of the women craftpersons are admired which is not much circulated due to social unchorage. Hence in the Darji society we rarely find the best female craftperson who can manage and promote the craft independently.

The position of best and experienced craftperson is very high as delineated above. Their presence is held in high esteem for their contribution and promotion of the applique craft which is regarded not only secured but also as a prestigious craft in the national as well as in the international field.

5.6 Daily life of the craftman's family members.

Before the sun rises in the distant horizon the women and grown-up girls of the household leave their beds. After completing their morning toilettes, they clean the rooms and courtyard and sometimes plaster the rooms with cow-dung. The cleaning
of utensils excepting those used for cooking and religious use is done on a co-operative basis. Then they go to the village pond near by to take their baths and wash the clothes.

After which they return home with pots full of water on their heads or on the arms. The rays of the morning sun which shine on the brass pot give a magnificent look to the outsider. On reaching home they offer morning prayer to the God by offering water to the tulsi plant which is a sacred possession of every household. By this time the male folks after leaving their beds go to the pond for their morning ablutions. They come back after taking their baths and offer morning prayer to the Sun God. At home they at first make offerings to the household deity and pray for the well being of the family members. The children are the last to get up after brushing their teeth and washing their faces they request their mothers for breakfast.

The women folk after reaching home and offering prayers to the deity, clean up cooking utensils and utensils for the household deity. Then they go to the kitchen for preparation of breakfast.

At present preparation of tea is a popular trend in the Darji families. But it is restricted within the adult males and females. The children are usually not allowed to have tea.

Breakfast generally comprises of puffed rice, beaten rice, banana, porridge of semolina, watered rice etc. This gets over by 7 to 7.30 a.m. after which the children take their baths and leave for school while non-school going grown-up girls clean the house and help their mothers to perform the household chores.
At this time school drop-out boys either settle down at home to work or go to a shop and start the days work at about 8 to 8.30 a.m.

The male folks after breakfast engage themselves for the daily routine jobs. By this time some customers might have approached their homes for giving orders, while some others for carrying back the given orders. While the women folk remain busy in preparing the mid-day meals.

The lunch usually gets ready by 10 A.M. when the grown-up children get ready for school. They are the first members to have the lunch after it is being offered to the household deity. The male folks usually have it around 11 A.M. after which they remain busy in their daily assignments. Some of them work in their homes while others in the business establishments. While others set out to the towns inorder to purchase the raw material or to sell their products to the shopkeepers. The females are last to have lunch. After cleaning the household utensils used for serving lunch they sit in a group with family members and neighbors to carry on the craft work.

At about 1.30 or 2 p.m. they take light amount of food and take rest for about half an hour. The shopkeepers do not close the shop while they come for lunch rather they take the help of their children or any workers in the shop to relieve them for a short period. Those artisans who work in their own homes usually start their work at about 3 p.m. The females also after cleaning their utensils take rest for a brief period after which they join their groups to resume the work.
The children who had been to school return back at about 3. to 4.30 p.m. The mothers serve them with food after the children wash their hands and feet. Then some of them play with their friends while others pay attention to the household work. The boys sometimes go to peripheral villages to give and collect orders to different craftsmen while at times they go to nearby shops to purchase articles may be of craft or household requirements. The females before the on-set of evening sweep the floor and courtyard and light the lamp after offering their evening prayer to their household deity. They also light the incense sticks in the rooms.

The women then go to the kitchen to prepare the family dinner. The children start reading at about 7 p.m. for one or two hours after which they join the family members inorder to assist them in their work. The male members who have been to other towns come back to their homes in the evening. After a bit of refreshment they sit down and chalk out the programmes for the next day as well as discuss the matter of importance with the members of the family. They give designs, type of raw material to be used depending on the orders of the customer, to the females. Those who run the shops come to their homes after closing them at about 9.30 p.m.

The children are the first to have their dinner and they go early to bed, followed by the male folk who usually have their dinner at about 10 p.m. The women are last to share dinner. After cleaning the most important utensils they go to bed. The males usually supervise the doors and windows which are properly
locked, after which they go to bed. Before retiring they offer prayer to the supreme deity for His kind blessing.

The aged members although require better attention by the family members try to adjust themselves with the daily routine of the family. They go early to bed and also get up earlier. If they are pretty aged enough they are not advised to go to the pond and clean and brush their teeth. They are served with water brought by the female folks in pots. They assist the family members in their work especially cutting of different designs which requires good expertise and stitching of mogra flowers which are time consuming and required in large members in applique craft.

The artisans even though they have landed property for agriculture they usually leave them out to the yearly agriculturist because they are preoccupied and unable to look after the landed property along with the profession of applique craft. Naturally they get rid of some of the responsibilities required for looking after the agriculture. As a consequence the cattle population of Darjis is very negligible even for the use of cow dung for the deity in the morning for plastering and to sanctify the house of most of the Darji families who are a few in number depend on neighbor’s cows for the purpose.

After the harvest season when the share-croppers give the paddy share to the landlords the duty of women begins. They boil the paddy at home and dry them in the sun. After which it is the duty of the male folks to mill them in the mills and bring rice which are stored carefully by the womenfolk. Usually the
rice is stored for the whole year and it is the duty of the women folk to manage the household and to see there is no shortage of foodstuff in the family. In a word it can be said that the women are the sole manager of the household.

5.7 Work and leisure

The applique craftsmen like all other peasants of rural Orissa feel to be proud of themselves for carrying on their activities as directed by God. According to the local saying work is said to be the life of the peasants which is divinely ordained. They rank their work as the most sacred one because it is mostly used in the ritual of the Lords and the kings hence their craft has both religious and royal value.

More specifically they rank their profession very high as the flag, which flies at the pinnacle of the temple, is prepared by the Darjis themselves. After leaving their bed early in the morning and at the completion of their daily morning work the artisan family sit for the applique work eagerly enough, not for the benefit of remuneration but for the religious use of the craft. They take every required precaution for the preparation. Negligence of the craft leads to the negligence of the deity. The male folk generally start working from 8 a.m. in the morning and continuously till 10 a.m. when they are called for the daily tiffin. During this period they mainly prepare the guidelines and sketches of the day's work which is done in collaboration with the female folks, children and even with the old craftpersons. At about 11 o'clock they remain engaged in the cutting of the different designs of items which are stitched to the background by
female folks later on. After taking rest for 1 hour or so they constantly remain engaged in the production of the craft till 9 o'clock in the night. It has been observed the male folk remain engaged for about 10 hours a day for the applique craft since the selling of the product is exclusively the duty of the male folk, they have to move out for selling and purchasing the raw materials for the craft. As a consequence they remain outside the house for the purpose and even spend more time in travelling.

The females usually assist their husbands from about 10 a.m. after completion of morning chores (mainly household work). Normally the females are given the responsibility of housework and cooking. But participation and contribution to the applique craft is done over and above the household work. The females because of their divergent nature of work are able to contribute about 5 hours per day for the craft. During this period the husbands mainly stitch the motifs in the required design frame. The time varies when there are grown-up daughters or daughters-in-law along with the mother and mother-in-law running the home. If the daughter-in-law looked after the kitchen and household work usually the mother-in-law devotes more time for the benefit of the craft.

The old craftpersons take the profession leisurely. Because of the old age and deterioration of eye sight they are engaged in such skills which does not require any technique but are beautiful to look at. The working period of these old persons is relatively flexible. Similarly the school going children who work in the applique craft for 2-3 hours per day on an average is 243
for their learning and generation of pocket money.

Although there is no stipulated time for the working hours of the artisans the hours of work varies from person to person depending upon the works in hand. Today with the growth of individualism and the loss of traditional artisan-customer-relationship the craftsmen have adopted the principle of more the work the more the reward, without taking into account the quality, durability and religious sanctity of the craft. As a consequence the applique craft is not restricted among the Darjis rather, some other caste and religious members have intruded into the applique craft profession, who do not have social and psychological attachment to the craft.

The leisure on the other hand makes the working environment more conducive to work. Working in groups is the main agent of leisure. Participation and sharing of daily life, the use of jokes and camaraderie in the work reduces the strain of the work. The females work more in number and in groups than the males. The members in the women group are generally the neighbors. Even today at the time of preparation of an applique craft for non-religious use women of different religions inhabiting Pipili, work together. The males on the other hand while working in the shops also share such group life with their fellow beings.

The markets which sit twice in a week is the meeting place for friends and relatives. Apart from selling and purchasing items the news and views of friends and relatives pertaining to different occasions and incidents are carried on, which help in mental and psychological distress of the artisans.
The associations in different religious and festive activities is another source of leisure. It was a convention in the past to go to the temple in the village and to listen to religion discourses in the evenings. When the male folks listen to these religious discourses by sitting in the temple premises the women after completion of household work at night join in groups and listen to them by sitting inside the room adjacent to the temple. References from the religious epics purify the religious thinking of the craftsmen which help them to start the next days work in a sacred manner.

The participation in different types of indoor games like playing cards, dice in groups are the pleasant moments. The participation and appreciation of dramas, operas, folk dances in different festivals enhance the leisure period.

The celebration of different festivals, visit of friends and relatives and also visit to different religious places helps in reducing the mental and physical strain in the work. At present listening to radios and watching T.V. sets, visiting different movies are the mode of recreation. Leisure in work life enhances the working spirit. The availability and proper utilisation of these leisure periods make the working environment more colourful and rewarding. The unity and group life both in family and caste are reflected in both work and leisure hours.

5.8 Feast and festivities:-

There is a famous saying in Orissa that is "baro maasa ray teera parba" (in twelve months there are thirteen festivals)
which is true rather the number of festivals are more. The festi­
vals which are celebrated by the Darjis are given below:-

Table No. 5.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Festival</th>
<th>Month in which observed</th>
<th>English equivalent</th>
<th>God/ Goddess worshipped</th>
<th>Purpose of Celebration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sambaro</td>
<td>Baisakha</td>
<td>April-May</td>
<td>Shiva</td>
<td>This is observed for the health of children and self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Chitau Amabasya</td>
<td>Srabana</td>
<td>July-August</td>
<td>Lord Jagannath</td>
<td>Chita(sacred marks) are put on Lord Jagannath.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Gaamha Purnima</td>
<td>Srabana</td>
<td>July-August</td>
<td>Lord Balabhadra</td>
<td>Birthday of Lord Balabhadra it is observed for the purpose of cattle wealth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Khudrikuni</td>
<td>Bhadra</td>
<td>August-September</td>
<td>Durga &amp; Mangala</td>
<td>For the welfare of the family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Saathi Usha</td>
<td>Bhadra</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Mangala</td>
<td>For the welfare of the children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Budhai Usha</td>
<td>Bhadra</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Lord Buddha</td>
<td>For the well being of children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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1. Baisakha Sambaro :

The procedure to observe this occasion is to take bath early in the morning and offer prayer in the Shiva Temple. The
women fast in the morning and after offering prayer in the Shiva Temple, they take lunch made of rice and they do not take regular meals at regular intervals as in ordinary days.

2. Asadha Maana Jaou:

On this festival a type of porridge comprising of rice, milk and sugar is prepared only by the married women. This is the rice which had been offered to Goddess Lakshmi during the month of Margasira. The married daughters and sisters are barred by local customs from sharing it since they are no more members of the family of orientation.

3. Rath Yatra:

On this day they prepare jaou (a kind of porridge) of jaggery, coconut, saaga (green leaves) and dalma (pulses cooked with vegetables), and consumed by men and children while ladies fast during the morning hours. This jaou is only taken by family members. While the husband’s sister’s children can eat this jaou if unmarried. They dig a hole in which their hands are washed after the meal along with the utensils and the attire with which they had their food. They change their clothing after the meal.

4. Chitau Amabasya:

The month of Srabana witnesses Chitau Amabasya which is celebrated in honour of Issta Devi (Household Deity), Isana for the Darjis. They worship the Devi at home and offer pitha (Indian cake) made out of aaruya rice (raw rice) and coconut. They throw one cake in the pond for the snails and snakes residing there for such aquatic animals will not harm them in the water.
5. Gamha or Rakhi Purnima:

On this day sisters tie rakhi on the wrist of their brothers, which has a symbolic meaning. They are supposed to act as their saviour and ensure security during the time of need. Those owning cattle bathe them and decorate these animals with vermilion, flowers and to pray to God for the prosperity of the cattle population. They offer Indian cakes (pitha) to these cattle. Afterwards such cakes are shared by the entire family members.

6. Khudurukuni:

Deity Maa Mangala is worshipped for the well being of brothers by unmarried girls and newly married ladies. Married ladies perform the puja only for 1 year which may continue if they so want.

The girls go to the gadia (pond) and make stupa (small mounds) of 7 handful of sand and offer prayers. These girls fast and sometimes take lunch of raw rice. Again in the evening they perform puja for Maa Mangala and later have snacks, comprising of paratha and dalma for dinner.

7. Saathi Usha:

After child birth they paste a cowrie (ancient currency) at the birth spot on the wall and offer prayer there. On this day they collect saru plant (Colocasia antiquorum), branch of bamboo from the field, kohl, sila pua (grindstone & pestle). The grindstone is covered by a cloth dipped in haldi (turmeric) and decorated as a bride seated on a wooden platform. Then mango branch or leaves are put on the kalasa (earthen pitcher).
is offered near the *sila pua* where all the children of the family sit together.

On the *Saathi Usha* day they break all the *saathis* (ancient currency held on the wall) and put them all on a particular place and pray. Then cooked food is offered, even fish along with *chakuli pitha* (a variety of Indian cake) can be given but not meat.

8. *Budhrei Usha* :

Till evening they work as usual but those performing the puja fast from morning. The daughter decorates the *sila* as *Ma* mother and *Pua* as *child* with grinded turmeric. Then they pray and offer *ukaada* (puffed rice mixed in jaggery) and banana to the deities.

9. *Dasahara* :

It is the most important festival celebrated by Darjis for ten days at a stretch. During this period all the members irrespective of sex, age and relationship remain in festive mood. They worship Goddess Durga incarnated on the earth to kill the demon *Mahisa* for the benefit of the people on earth. The festival is not restricted among the Darjis rather it is celebrated almost by all Hindus of India. The last four days of the festival end in exuberance. They wear new clothes prepare varieties of sweet dishes, visit friends and relatives and try to forget the grief and sorrows pertaining to the life and living, temporarily. They worship the Goddess, working equipments and refrain from undertaking any craft work. This is the only festival in which the
artisans do not perform any work and remain in festive mood till the festival comes to an end.

10 Maana Basa Usha:

This festival commences in the month of Margasira. On the last Wednesday of this month they clean the house and themselves by shampooing their hair at the sametime giving the clothes to the dhoba (washer man). Since offering is made to Goddess Lakshmi, deity responsible for prosperity, which is held on thurs day, they start preparing from the day before by cleaning the house and collecting newly cleaned clothes.

They wash the mana (paddy container) and decorate it by chitra (painting). Then they prepare different types of Indian cakes, for the offering to the deity.

On thursday morning the dhana (paddy is put in the mana which is decorated as a bride with the arrangement of flowers, chandan (sandal wood) paste and incense sticks are put near the mana wearing new white clothes. Then they pray. At around 1 O' clock aaruya rice, dalma, saaga (green leaves) ground coconut, fried black gram, jaggery and milk are offered after the prayer. Later they take it as prasad (food offered to God)

In the evening banana is offered in banana leaves to the deity.

Then they put the paddy in peetala gara (brass vessel) to be stored in a secluded place where no one would touch it. After which they keep the mana peedi (container where mana was kept) and utensils required for worship, khatuli (miniature wooden seat) in a protected place. Later the prasadas are dis-
tributed among the dhoba (washerman), bhandari (barbars) and the
relatives. They do not eat things from outside. They would re­
frain from washing black utensils, clothes, stitching and going
out of the house on this day.

5.9 Taboos and Proscriptions.

The taboo and proscriptions help in maintaining social
order in the society there by protecting the weaker against the
stronger one through the references to individual and social
powers. Even in every day to day life people come across differ­
ent taboos and proscriptions which sanctify the kinship and
socio-religious bonds of society.

The kinship system is primary to any social relation­
ship in the human society. The incest taboo regulates the social
and sexual behavior of the human beings in society. The tradi­
tional avoidance between daughter-in-law and her husband’s elder
brother is also seen in Darji society. The other relations of
avoidance is between daughter-in-law and her mother-in-law’s
brother and the relationship between female’s younger sister’s
husband. The kinsmen of these three categories are not only to
avoid sexual relations but also avoidance in behavior and in food
sharing. The other relations such as the relationship between
mother-in-law and son-in-law and between father-in-law and daugh­
ter-in-law are said to be incestuous but at the sametime the
affection between them pacify the degree of avoidance and pro­
motes the affectionate relationship. As a consequence the
father-in-law treats the daughter-in-law of the family as his own
daughter and the mother-in-law affectionately respects the son-in-law as the son of the family.

The taboos and proscriptions in preparation of food and food habits varies from day to day. The days of the week are earmarked for prayer to the different deities and naturally the pattern of food also varies. Monday which is traditionally devoted to worship of Lord Shiva, both males and females including children offer prayer to the Lord. They also take raw rice instead of boiled rice and use ghee instead of traditional mustard oil. On tuesday both male and female worship Goddess Mangala for the well being of the family. The members take only vegetarian diet. There family members can take both vegetarian and non-vegetarian diet if they so desire. But only on the occasion of "Buddha Purnima" or fullmoon day dedicated to Lord Buddha is usually celebrated in the month of Baisakha and they do not take any non-vegetarian diet. Apart from this the festival of "Budhai Usha" is celebrated during the month of August-September by the married women, and the taking of non-vegetarian food is prohibited. Hence there are only two wednesdays in a year which are specifically earmarked for the vegetarian diet. Thursday is dedicated for the worship of Goddess Lakshmi the deity of wealth and prosperity. Every married women along with her husband worships the deity for the prosperity of the family. They maintain possible sanctity and take due care in worshiping the deity since the deity can only be appeased by devotion. There is no specific God or Goddess worshipped on friday and generally this is the only day when non-vegetarian dishes can be prepared round the
year. Saturday is dedicated for the worship of Nabagraha (nine planets of Hindu Mythology) in general and Lord of all Evils. Hence utmost care is taken to appease the Lord by observing fast and taking only vegetarian diet after worship. Both males and females in the household worship the Lord. Sunday is dedicated for Sun worship, the Lord of (Dharma). It is believed that all the good and evil nature of work which the persons preferred doing, the activities are witnessed by the Sun God. Worshipping Sun God makes a person gain his psychological strength to act in a righteous way.

Apart from these days during the observation of different festivals, the life cycle rituals and important events of Hindu monthly calendar facilitates the preparation of different types of foods irrespectively of days concerned. In a sense it can be said these occasions are more respected than the normal occasions of the days. There is also restriction of certain items for different clan members of the Darjis. The Darjis of Bombisa gotra do not take Bombisa (a type of fish) locally available in any of the occasions. Because eating of such fish is regarded as profane. In the ritual field it is customary the priest should offer prayer to the God in the village temple, where the Lord is installed. The offerings are made by the devotees to the deity through the priest. During the month of Kartika (October-November) the most sacred month of the Hindus, the members of the household visit the temple early in the morning and offer prayers. In the evening they congregate in the temple premises to
listen to the Kartika Mahatma (sacred religious text). None of them take non-vegetarian diet during this whole month.

During birth and death rituals the pollution period is for twelve days. In this period members of the concerned household are not allowed to visit the temples and even refrain from giving alms to the beggars. The kutumbas of the same household also observe such pollution and restriction.

During menstruation females do not offer prayer or water to the household Isana and refrain from visiting temples for seven days. They even keep away from applique work and giving alms to the beggars. The married ladies sleep separately from their respective husbands during this period. Only after taking bath and cleaning clothes on the seventh day normal work is resumed.

5.10 Traditional Customers:

In the olden days the applique craft had a religious tradition. The presence of applique craft was marked in the temples and other religious institutions. Every temple had a flag at its pinnacle and a canopy is present in the sanctum santorum. Besides these during the religious festivals bigger size canopies are hung where people congregate. The canopy and flags mark the presence of deities. When the deities set out the applique craft items like trasa and chhati were being accompanied in the procession. So the applique craft was very much developed to preserve the sacred aesthetic belief of the people in the form of art.

Traditionally the customers of applique craft were temple and priests of different institutions. The possession of
applique craft by the common individual was not possible because of paucity of religious sanctity and was too expensive for them to afford. As a result the craft was restricted within certain religious places. The craftsmen were then divided into different groups (badas) in order to serve different deities of the same temple.

The spread and development of applique craft became possible with the royal patronage. The kings are believed to be the moving image of the God. Hence the items of applique craft which were used in the temples were also utilised in the royal courts, similarly while the king set out for a journey the chhati and trasa were also accompanied in the procession just like the procession of deities. So apart from the religious heads or temple administrators the kings were also the customers of the applique craft. The applique craftsmen were specifically engaged to prepare the applique items for the requirement of the king and his royal courts. The craftsmen were getting high reward in terms of cash and kind or both for their work, by the kings. Those craftsmen who were serving the king were enjoying higher status than those who were serving the common people.

The pilgrims who came to worship Lord Jagannath were beholding the applique craft traditions of Orissa. They purchased some items of applique craft for presentation to the deity as a religious gesture. While they returned back they carried small pieces of applique items with them for presentation to the household/village deity. Due to lack of adequate communication facilities particularly on road, it was not possible on the part
of pilgrims to buy big articles, they preferred small items of applique craft because it were easier on their part to carry them back to their native place. Usually the pilgrims came in groups by means of bullock-carts or even on foot. The risk of being victims of epidemics and falling prey to the wild animals and above all the menace of road robbery were the problems of carriage of big items of applique craft. In those days the craftsmen had divided the villages and areas among themselves to cater to the need of the pilgrims of respective areas or villages. In a sense the artisans were addressing the pilgrims of their respective areas of villages as jajmans. The artisans in turn were helped by the jajmans in the offering of the flags, canopies etc. to the deities through the priests. The pilgrims purchased the applique articles by cash or kind but such transaction was subsidiary than the social relationship. The artisans were proud of themselves for the visit of their jajmans. They also used to ask about the well being not only of the customers but also of the villagers as a whole. So the artisan and the customer were not only related by economic bond but also there existed a social bond between them too. The other traditional customers who were related individually to the craftpersons were zamindars, small landlords and some common people. The zamindars and small landlords of the villages purchased phataei umbrellas, mattresses and such other applique items for their use. Some of the artisans rendered services to the well-to-do people of the society on hereditary basis. Since the common people were unable to afford to purchase such items the craftpersons did not render them any
service excepting those immediately required. Hence there was a formal social relationship between the artisans family and the well-to-do families like the zamindars and such landlords. At the time of marriage of the daughters of the zamindars the mattress and pillow covers which were presented to the bride and the bridegroom were prepared by the artisans. Those articles when carried on the groom's village, were evidence of the artistic feat of the craftsmen. Apart from the mattresses the umbrellas were another item made by the craftpersons and were presented to the groom. The use of umbrellas was restricted with the well-to-do people and was a status symbol. The items which were used by the common people are tilakokothali, batua and such other items. Tilakokothali was generally used by the people of Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra varnas having a religious value as the name shows it is a container made of cloth to store tilako (item of religious marking on the body). It is a must for every household since people used to worship God, soon after their bath in the morning. The batua, another item which was in use by the people while they were travelling from one place to another in search of work or visiting relatives or attending social and religious functions. It is said to be the symbol of Orissan culture used to store the items of daily use. The customers are generally the common mass and it is seen that some old people still have this container. Even though the people cannot offered to purchase the new ones they used to mend the old container with the help of applique craftsmen. Moreover the customer expected he would be helped by the artisan at the time of his need even though he was
penniless at that moment is another conducive feature for the promotion and survival of applique craft in the international market.

The traditional customers of applique craft were mainly religious minded. There existed a socio-religious bond between the artisans and customer. Applique items which are items of worship and respect possessed high ritual value.

5.11 Modern customers:

With the spread of modernisation and the development of communication network particularly during post independence era the traditional artisans of applique craft were able to attract a wide range of customers. These customers include people with commercial mind and people with fashionable attitude. Inspite of stiff competition among different crafts and craftpersons the applique craft is still being considered as a lucrative item with the combination of religious as well as fashionable meaning.

With the loss of kingship and merger of states into the Indian union in general and with the constitution of Orissa province in particular the craft lost the traditional patronage of the Kings. Today the Gajapati king of Puri who was previously a strong patroniser of applique craft is provided with the items of applique by the temple trust. Hence the use and supply of applique items are now fused with a symbolical meaning. The place of different religious institutions are more or less appreciating the applique items just because it is a customary process. The use of flags, the canopy and such other religious articles of applique craft have been priced at a lower rate by using inferior
quality of raw material which has enabled even the poor to purchase them with a view of presenting them to the deities. This means the inherent religious sanctity attached to this preparation and purchase of applique items have been decreasing. Because earlier even precaution was taken by the craftsmen for the preparation of the craft which was being used for the purpose of the deity. The growing, individualisation although has constituted a substantial increase in the customer of applique craft who generally come from lower to lower middle class, at the same time have helped in diminishing the sanctity of the craft.

On the other hand the fashion conscious customers who visit Puri, Konark and spend some of their holidays in the beach have accepted applique craft as a decorative item to be displayed in their houses. The items include cushion covers, table cloths, different types of wall hangings, letter bags and such other interior decorative items. The customers of this category are generally from upper middle to high class society. Such customers are said to be the boon for the artisans because they pay a good amount for the craft which they purchase. Sometimes they pay much higher price than the expectation of the artisans. Such changing dimension in the class of customers has lured a number of applique craft persons to give up the preparations of religious items which are more rewarding and heavily priced. The customers of such category are not restricted to India only rather a good number of foreigners who come as tourists purchase the applique items.
The use of applique craft in preparation of dress materials, sarees and side bags have attracted another category of customers. It has became here a fashionable item for the women who were not allowed to use any of the items of the craft. Previously the women were not allowed to move out of the home and they were living on the decision of the male folks. It is seen the female tourists show more interest in purchasing the applique craft in comparison to their male counterparts and take more responsibility in maintenance of those purchased items.

The application of applique craft in form of file cover, side bag, file bags and such other office stationeries has attracted the customers in the educated mass. Both government and public sector offices feel it prestigious to use and present the office stationery in applique craft. Besides the young educationists are more interested to use such items in their conferences, workshops, seminars etc. The use of sewing machines in the place of hand stitch has reduced both time and energy in preparation of applique craft. This has lead to the maximisation of production with institutionalisation of artisan customer relationship. Some of the artisans are related to the institutions which purchase the applique items which are subsequently presented to different participants. Hence the artisans are related to the institutions but not to the customers who use it.

The growing appreciation of handicraft in general and applique craft in particular has facilitated the export of applique items. Different commercial institutions in various countries have attempted to purchase applique craft from the co-
operative societies in Orissa. The growing demand of such crafts particularly in European market has helped in furtherance of exports. The artisans after receiving the orders from the co-operative societies which have export value and sell these products to the same societies which in turn sell their customer institution across the country. Here neither the artisans nor the customers are known to each other but they are only related, through the respective institutions which sell and purchase the commodities. The institutions only guarantees about the quality and the product which are produced by the artisans and purchased by the customers. Such co-operative societies have recruited persons with certain academic qualifications to look at the accounts management of the society. These personnel are the service holders of the society who are paid out of the constitution and profit of the members of the society.

They share the responsibility in promotion and marketing of applique products. Hence there is no direct relationships between the artisan and the customer.

The preparations of certain commodities like garden umbrellas and ladies umbrellas do not have local marketability rather they find their customers mainly outside the state and country. The purchaser and user of such commodities and the manufacturer of such commodities is in no way related to each other.

The modern customers can be said to be as independent without any obligation or sharing with the life and living of the artisans. They purchase the commodities from the market which is
a place of trade and commerce. They do not know the artisans who prepare the product but are known to the shopkeeper who sells the products. Hence the quality of service environment has deteriorated in the place of individual profit.