CHAPTER - III
MAJOR TRAITS OF FOLK ART AND CRAFTS
OF WEST BENGAL

The glorious history of handicrafts goes back to almost 5000 years from now in India. There are numerous examples of handicrafts from the excavated sites of Indus Valley Civilization. The tradition of crafts in Indian subcontinent has grown around religious values and needs of the ruling elites. Side by side the foreign and domestic trade have also played an important role in the evolution of different craft form in India. Going back to the Indus Valley Civilization we find a rich tradition and a high degree of technical excellence in the field of pottery, sculpture, jewellery, weaving etc. In the Vedic age, we found numerous references in the Vedas of artisans involved in pottery making, weaving, wood craft etc. The Rig Veda refers to a variety of pottery made from clay, wood and metal. In Mauryan age we find great development in the field of sculpture. In this period more than 84,000 stupas are said to be built in India. Numerous sculptures from Bharhut, Mathura, Amravati, Vaishali, Sanchi etc. show female figures adorned with a display of jewellery which continues to inspire contemporary jewellery making. During the Kushana period jewellery, sculpture, textile making, leather products, metal working etc. were the main handicrafts that assimilated foreign influences and used them in accordance with the Indian setting. The Guptas age saw rapid advancement in the field of handicrafts and art forms.

During the Medieval age of handicraft, the craftsmen flourished in the field of pottery, weaving, wood carving, metal working, jewellery etc. The contribution of the Cholas and the Vijaynagar Empire in the field of bronze sculpture, silk weaving, jewellery, temple curving is simply unparalleled. The Mughal period was the golden period in the history of art, craft and culture. The Mughals introduced methods like inlay work, glass engraving, carpet weaving, brocades, enameling etc.

The softness of river line soil had softened our minds, which gave the opportunity for the ancient artists of this most fertile delta of the world, comprised of approximately 700 rivers, to draw coarse lines over muddy surface and to mold any shape by fingers an hypothetical beginning of art in this land. In Bengal as well as India has a rich crafts tradition. Numerous Chalcolithic sites have been discovered in West Bengal. Through the excavation, a broad stratigraphic sequence of the pre historic and proto historic sites like Mangalkot, Pandu Rajar Dhibi, Banaswardanga and Bharatput in Bardwan District; Bahiri, Kotasur and Nanur in Birbhum District; Dihar and Pokhanna in Bankura; Tamluk and Natsal in Purba Midnapur; Panna & Tilda in Paschim Midnapur; Rajbaridanga & Farakka
in Mursidabad; Mahanad in Malda; Bangarh in Dakshin Dinajpur; Chandraketugarh in North 24 Parganas; Deulpota, Dhosa, Tilpi, Atghara, Gosaba and Harinarayanpur in South 24 Parganas were uncovered. These are the ancient terracotta yield sites exposed in West Bengal. Terracotta figurings in round consist of human figures both male and female figurings were found. Among the female figurings Mother Goddess, Mother & Child, lady with auspicious headpins commonly denoted as Panchachuda Yakshi or Apsara etc. and the Yaksha or Gana or Kubera etc were the important male figures. Different types of terracotta animal figurings, animal riders including toys, rattles, toy crafts, ornaments like head dress, pendants etc were exposed from the excavated sites in West Bengal.

After Pala period, synthesis of Islam and Hinduism in culture gave birth of Bengal's own artistic language during medieval period, where art was something inherent, instinct and intuitire. Folk art was not even still not iconoplastic but the study of nature is prior to them.

The word culture encompasses the customs, social behaviour of a particular person or society. It is the characteristics of particular group of people defined by everything from languages, religion, cuisine, social habits, music arts etc. It refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, attitude etc. It always affects every aspect of daily life. In West Bengal we possess varieties of cultural manifestation in the regions ranging from the delta of Sundaubas to the hilly terrains of North Bengal. All the districts in this state have some distinctiveness of their own which reflects in culture of those places. The Government of West Bengal has come forward to identify, uphold, encourage and promote culture and cultural activities in the state. West Bengal retains its foremost place in the cultural horizon of India. West Bengal has enough reasons to take pride and starting from its journey back in 1979-80 AD. The Directorate of Culture strives to propogate the finest of our cultural heritage, which is invariably enriched with secular ideals. Folk culture plays a pivotal role in the overall cultural scenario. The Directorate encourage different sections of people to blossom up their respective art forms. A new scheme has been launched for enlistment of folk artists for ensuring a steady means their livelihood. The Directorate of Culture executed its different pograms through different Academies, Board etc. These Folk and Tribal culture centres - play a vital role in the development and the upliftment of our cultural tradition. In accordance with the demand the artists and performers of the Folk Entertainment Section have been engaged in the propagation and dissemination of various policies & programmes of the Government throughout the year in almost all the districts of the state as well as in outside states. Rajya Charukala Parishad has been functioning in pursuit of excellence in different spheres of creative art. The Parishad has been able to reach both to rural and urban folk. The Parishad
works relentlessly for improvement of arts with active cooperation of artists and art critics alike.

In West Bengal art is like an energy booster. It is a mystical force, which gives shape to the vision of the artist. It speaks volumes of the quickness and expertness of craftsmanship. For the artists, these creations are not pulseless objects but full of life, carrying their passion & expertness. We can experience the variety, vibratory and discreetness of traditional. Bengal art and crafts as there are a myriad number of thing in terms of gems of Bengal metal craft, jewellery, pottery & clay object, bamboo & cane object, solapith object, conch shell, dokra, varieties of painting etc. Folk art may be divided into the following categories.

1) Painting - painted pot, mask, floor painting chalchitra, fancy dolls, chalchitra etc.

2) Embroidery - nakshi kantha, pillow, handkerchief etc.

3) Weaving - fancy mat, baskets, shika, vases etc.

4) Modelling - dolls & toys, masks, moulds for making sweets, ornaments etc.

5) Engraving - wooden product, terracotta, metal wars.

6) Inlaying - Ornaments inlaied with gems, decorating stone object with glass, separate stone etc.

In this chapter, we have taken some folk art objects like Dokra Metal Craft, Conch Shell object, Solapith object, Mask (wooden), Bamboo & Cane object, and Pottery to analyse them for proper understanding and interpretation.

MAIN CRAFT CENTRES IN WEST BENGAL

Coochbehar : Sitalpati, Mask, Solapith, Bamboo & Cane. (Map No. 2)


Jalpaiguri/Alipurduar : Cane, Bamboo works, Mask, Solapith.

West Dinajpur : Dhokra (Jute carpet), Mask, Tribal Jewellery, Solapith.

Malda : Brass and bell metal, Dokra, Mask, Solapith.

Murshidabad : Wood carvig, Shola, Brass and Bell Metal, Clay Dolls, Artstic
Weaving, Balaposh, Conch Shell, Silk.

Nadia : Clay Dolls, Shola, Brass and Bell metal, Conch shell, Solapith.

24 Parganas (N + S), Kolkata : Shola, Wood carving, Chikon, Conch & Sea Shell, Feather, Horn, Bamboo works, Coir, Folk painting, Dolls, Sara painting.

Howrah : Zari, Coir, Conch shell.

Hooghly : Chikon, Conch shell, Solapith.

Medinipur (E + W) : Clay dolls, Mat, Horn, Brass & Bell metal, Conch shell, Sholapith, Terracotta.

Burdwan : Dokra, Shola, Wood carving, Pottery.

Birbhum : Shola, Brass & Bell Metal, Terracotta, Clay products, Tribal Jewellery.

Bankura : Conch Shell, Dokra, Terracotta and Clay products, Brass & Bell Metal, Stone carving, Baluchari sarees, Constume Jewellery, Dashabatar Cards, Solapith.

Purulia : Mask, Lacquered products, Tribal Jewellery, Dokra, Pottery, Bamboo.

● SOLAPITH

Solapith work is traditional craft peculiar to West Bengal. Like many other traditional crafts, it had its origin in the ritual and religious requirements of old days. The etymological meaning of the word Sola is Salil > Salila > Sola > Shola, because it grows in water. In Pabna district of Bangladesh, jutestick is called Shola and in the western region of Bengal (Rarh), the low land is also called as 'shol'. Some people think that it is called sola as it grows in the 'Shol'. In the eastern India, two species of sola are found. One type grows profusely in Southern Bengal and another in North Bengal and Assam region. For geographical reason there are numerous waste land and sola grows naturally along with other plants. Generally little saplings germinate from seeds during summer and grows rapidly in monsoon. With the growth of the tree the middle part of the thin stems gets inflated and is ultimately recognized as sola. There are two types of sola - such as wood sola and flower sola. Wood sola is of long time stem and hard barked. On the other hand flower sola is used to lighten the sparks of the fire of matche stone. This type of plant's blossom become little in yellow colour and flowers (Plate No. 4) which ultimately become long fruits with thin seeds and in the later half of the winter new saplings grow from seeds dropping
from the ripening fruits. During youth it looks more like green coloured. After maturity it looks like a thin or thick stick. After deducting the roots and branches, the craftman tie the dried stems together. The craftsmen manufacture different things with the white part, obtained after peeling out the bank of the plant.

Malakar community, the torch bearers of Bengal sole crafts were also skilled in decorating flowers and garlands. The 'Rajbanshi Community' of North Bengal, engaged in sole crafts are known as 'Malakar or Mali'. The 'Poundra Kshatriya' community of South Bengal are engaged in sola crafts. (Plate No. 1) The Ghosh community of Bankapasi of Burdwan district and Bagdi community of Krishnanagar of Nadia district make crafts of sole. Again the muslim community are also engaged with the work. According to Maniklal Singh, a schola, the tribes of Chhottanagpur have been recognized gradually as Malakar community when they shifted to the western part of the Bengal.

In the fairy tales of Bengal we see them supplying flowers to the royal families. From Bharaat Chandra's poetry 'Vidyasunder' we know that Hira, a Malakar would send flower garland to the heroine in this poetry. Apart from this we have reference to Malakar community in the text Chaitanya Charitamita and the poetry Manasamangal of Vijayagupta. We have reference of sola crafts in districts like Nadia, Hooghly, Murshidabad, 24 Parganas, Bankura, Medinipur, Birbhum, Burdwan, Coochbihar, Maldah of West Bengal and also Barishal, Jashar etc. of East Bengal.

The sola grows so much in the swamp, Banksha Beel & Bhomra Beel of Nadia district, West Bengal that it is sufficient to meet the need of the whole province. Many artists in the surrounding region of Kolkata have gained fame for their work.

The only tool in making sola crafts is a flatten sheet like stick of ten inch long known as 'Kayit'. Besides a small knife, iron pin and cloth cutting scissor are also required. Equipments are bamboo stick, glue of flour, newspaper, colourful paper, colour and bursh. Sola are given various shapes with sharp knife according to need. The thin paper like sheet and round string like figure are known as cup and paturi respectively. The artists make different things by joining and painting these cup and paturi. The cup is a bunch of paper like sheets or flakes of solapith. The different pieces made of sola are known by various names, like kushi, guno, pati, charan. Those pieces are made by cutting the round cross section of the pith of plant. Guno is thin or lace like figure made out of long pieces from sola stem. (Plate No. 8) The designs are filled by arranging these parts. The white garland and kadamba flowers of sola are regarded as a symbol of holiness in rural
Bengal. So the craft makers do this work with much devotion. Generally in regard to folk-art industry, social culture always gets mingled with artistry. In this way religious thinking is formed. This arts and crafts was born in 'Malakar' community and is being regarded as holi thing, the religious thought of sola was born from the knot of Lord Shiva. For this reason in Bengali marriage ceremony tiara and crown get recognized. As idol (object of worship) is decorated with sola crafts, we have no way but to think them as pure.

Apart from West Bengal, in other provinces of India like Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar, Assam and Tripura; country like Bangladesh also sola crafts are done. In Bengal religious or social ceremonies are held throughout the whole year, so some sola crafts continues to be done according to ceremony. Let classified it according to need.

Those days are fast disappearing. The traditional items are not so much in demand as before. But the tradition of distinctive design and craftsmanship still persists and has found newer avenues of expression. Solapith dolls and toys are one of such items, with its novel design, immaculate finish and intricate craftsmanship. Sola decorations of older days have reappeared with slight modifications to lend brightness and elegance in interior decorations and social functions. Utility and decorative items like ornament boxes, tie cases, decorative hangings and wall panels etc. have added a new dimension to the craft. A healthy trend is discernible for going back to our old-age custom and the demand for floral decoration for the Goddesses (Dakar Saaj), Chandmalas, Sola flowers, etc. is gradually increasing.

The craftsmen are scattered and traditional items like chandmalas, torpar, etc. are their common line of production. Craftsmen of a particular area, however, have specialised in a particular line of production. Thus, the craftsmen of South 24 Parganas are noted for their beautiful chandmalas, torpar and other forms of floral decorations; those of Bankapasi area of Burdwan are noted for their skill in making beautiful sola decorations and ornaments (Daker Saaj) of unusual size and dimensions, while the Birbhum artisans specially in Kirnahar area have earned a name for making sola images. The Kaligunj area of Nadia district was once famous for its light and durable sola hats, but the use of this particular form of headgear is no longer in use now and the craftsmen have shifted to other avenues for earning their bread.

Firstly, the things made for religious purpose like sola garland - generally the sola strap is three feet height and of normal breadth, stiched with meandering string and the terminls of the string are tied together like a garland. In social ceremony, holy pot, canvas and holy tree etc. are given.
Among the different components of the ceremony, the white colour of the sola gets a different dimension as a symbol of holiness.

Sola flower:

A three inch piece of solapith gets the shape of a kadamba flower when it is cut with many vertical slices and tied at the middle. This kadamba flower is used solely or with other sola crafts. In some places different sola flowers are made during 'Rus Utsav'. (Plate No. 5)

Patikaur:

In the Sun God festival (Itu Puja) at Krishnanagar of Nadia district, Symbol made of sola is offerent in a plate. A bamboo pick is attached at the back to a small sheet of square sola and two or three pieces of sola are placed on the pick. And on the fore side of the sheet marks are drawn with lac-dye crosswise. This is known as Patikaur.

Umbrella of Darma or Dhamma:

Promise is made to the God Dharma by offering umbrella made out of round sola cup. circular marks are drawn with lac-dye on it. It seems the custom is to protect the God from the scorching Sun. Generally there are folk stories of offering umbrella during the 'Gajan' of Dharma at Krishnanagar area.

Laxmi Jhara:

Generally the inhabitants of Jashwar and Faridpur use this jhara during Laxmi Puja. The garlands of sola hang from a tied point and kadamba flowers of sola are joined together at the end of the garlands.

Chadmala (string of sola):

It is an essential part of the Puja. Small square cup pieces are attached with three pieces of strings. There are kadamba flowers at the lower part. There are designs or symbols of God-Goddess at the middle portion. Somewhere it is offered as a symbol of promise to the God or Goddess.

Tiara:

Marriage is one of the best festival in Bengali life. Tiara is a cone shaped figure of which one portion is empty and other ends to a point. The cone formed such way is levelled by wrapping up sola cup on it. Small pieces of sola designs are decorated on it from top to bottom. Kadamba flowers hang from tiara beside the ears and everything is made of white sola. (Plate No. 2)
Chali:

The circular object behind God and Goddess is known as chali. There are six types of chali according to shape like Round Chali, Pan Chali, Kuto Chali, Mandir Chali, Math Chari and Thak Chali. The main structure is made of bamboo and newspaper and then pieces of cloth are attached with glue on it. Different designs made of sola are arranged serially on the paper. The designs of this chali are based on different subjects. Again floral motives, flowers, fruits, birds, animals, geometrical designs and auspicious signs are also used. Chali is formed in accordance with the figures of the idol.

Idol Decoration:

From the crown to the ornaments of limbs of Goddess are decorated with sola. Sometimes dresses are also made of sola. The idol of Bengal, dressed with ornaments of sola (Daker Saaj), golden or silver thread, mica, rangta is famous.

It is pertinent to uphold that the dresses made of sola (Daker Saaj) of Goddess Jagadhatri of Chandannagar & Krishnanagar made by the Malakar community of Bardwan and Nadia district are very famous flowers, floral motives of sola are also made during Rus festival (Rus Utsav).

Pandel Decoration:

For decorating the pandel different spectacular arts are made with solapith piece on colourful paper or cloth attached to a wood board or other types of board. The designs made of sola are used both interior and exterior of the pandel.

Mask:

At Dinajpur region of North Bengal mask dance is held on the occasion of village festivals. Regional characteristics features are reflected on the masks. At first the structure of the masks is made of thick sheet of sola and is painted after being covered with thin sheet of cups of sola. The famous one among these mask is Mashan Kali. It has black face and red eyes. Cadamba flowers also hang from it.

The custom of mask dance prevalent among the mapharias of village Nafarchandrapur of Nadia district, is formed out of religious faith. The colour of the mask is chosen according to character. The mask is formed of thin sola sheet on thick sola structure. The masks are - Dakini-Jogini, Tiger, Monkey, Ravan, Ram-Laxman etc.
Dolls & Toys :

Different types of toys are manufactured. Occasionally dolls of solapith are sold in the fair of Rus Utsav, Ratha Yatra etc. This dolls are used for decorating the stage of Rus (Rusmancha). Besides sola is used for making fish, parrot, crocodile, elephant, bird, horse etc. through which a secular mind emerges.

Devoted things :

The things meant for the God are called devoted things. Various items of devoted things made of sola mean for the God according to their religious believes are seen in the various district of West Bengal. They are like - Chandmala (canopy), mask, chhata (umbrella), garland, masan etc. Masan is a devoted Kali mask. This devoted sola mask has been given to the temple of Goddess Kali throughout the year as a votive object. (Plate No. 3)

In the district of Howrah, sola boat is made by Malakar and sola horse are devoted to the inhabitant (Darga) of the ‘Peer’ as a vow. In Medinipur district, 'Choukhupi' (light) on raft are sailed for the peace of the dead soul. In Burdwan Chandmala is given as a vow. Again there is a tradition of devoting chariot made of sola on the obsquire occassion. At the temples of folk God and Goddess 'Fulsara' made of sola is also given.

Things for use :

Sometime objects made of sola are also used in our daily life. Such as - Cap of sola, sola is used for fishing, fan of sola etc. It is also used for watch repairing. Ornaments made of sola are used in the dance form of Odissi. Aborginal girls use flowers of sola for decoration. At present many new ornaments are made of sola, that are appriciated in urban areas.

House decorative objects :

At present, sola is also used for delicate work. As an element of house decoration sola is used to make 'Haoda' on the back of elephant, chivalry, boat with peacock feathered (Mayurpanckhi), chariot, flower vase, deity’s face etc. Even little idols are made full of sola, that are exported to abroad packed in little boxes. (Plate No. 6)

Puppet (Doll) Dance :

Puppet made of sola - puppet dance pulled by threads - Dolls are made of sola. At some villages of Nadia district these sola dolls are manufactured. Seeing these dills none can imagine that these are made of sola. After seperating the theads from the upper layer of the sola lant, a
bundle of about thirty solapith, is tied, shaping like a rectangle one. Before bundled them, they are poulticed with gum of flour. Then the bundles are dried. From this bundle, head of doll, again any one’s head, legs are made separately. To connect the organs, and cottons are tied at the fold of hands and legs are stiched them with their body. After that, a coating of fine soil is given on the body of the doll. And after drying they are coloured according to the character and upon them crown made of sola re placed.

There is a particular community who are engaged in sola craft. They are known as Malakar. In North Bengal, community of 'Rajbanshiya' are used to work with sola. They are Mali in community. In South Bengal 'Poundra' community is also used to work in it. At the Bankapasi in Burdwan district 'Ghosh' community and at Krishnanagar in Nadia district 'Bagdi' community are also engaged in sola craft. 'Acharya' brambhin, at Beernagar in Nadia and at Jayanagar in South 24 Parganas are engaged in sola craft. Muslim community of Krishnanagar is also engaged in it. It is also considered that after comming to the Rarh area Mal Pahariya are turned into Malakar community. Traditionally in Bengal, social reformations have mixed with craft again and again. In this way religions conciousness are developed. The thoughts of folk art that had developed among some people, secured a place among the people of later life. The trend of this craft is called folk craft. According to the law of time there is an impact of modernity on the field of this craft. As a result of this the old artists are also trying to give a touch of modernity on this work. For this, they are also to catch up the market of home as well as overseas a lot. The ancestral artists of Bankapasi are now engaged in innovative art. Now the artists of Kumurtuli are engaged in making little idols and models that are highly demanded in the industry of cinema and for this the artists are also able to show their talent.

In spite of all these thoughts, folk art is on the verge of end in the rural areas, at present. Most of the artists suffering a lot to lead their life. As it is an ancentral and group craft, the children of the families also spread their helping hand in it. The amount of money and labour invested here are not truely evaluated. Besides, a vast amount of solapith are not manufactured. New generation are not interested in this craft because of its low scope of earnings. No co-operative society is developed among the labour due to their lack of organizational awareness. Now some festivals and various workshops are organized by the present Government. Besides, an effort is taken to publicize the folk art through Museum. The Government has various steps for the improvement of these folk artist. At present, a vast amount of sola craft is replaced by tharmocal. In urban area tharmocal is seen widely used in place of sola.
India is that country in where there was a flow of the tradition of country culture from the Pre-Aryans Age. From that Pre-Aryans Age the society of this country bore the blood and culture of her Austric and Dravidian group. The own cultural tradition of Bengal was grown on the river bank of Bhagirathi, a tributary of Ganga from many years ago. But this tradition is totally the successor of Austic or dravidian nor the Aryan culture. Most of this tradition is influenced by Austric and Dravidian group of people. Due to this Bengal community is the mixed community and the Bengal culture is the mixed culture. From ancient times magic, mana and rituals, taboo of this occurrence was prevailed in the primitive tribal society. False face is the main article which was attached with their superstitious (blind) faith. The uses of false face is prevailed in every society of aborigines and people of India or Bangadesh is not exceptional. The importance of false face is focused in every side of Bengal.

The Greek and Latin word 'prosopon' and 'persona' mean face and false face respectively. But in the next age the modern English word 'Mask' is derived from the word 'Maschera' from Itali, 'Mask' from Germany, Mascus from French. But they are mainly originated from the Latin word 'masca', 'mascla' and 'mascus'. A covering for all or part of the fact. In 'the World Book Encyclopedia' it is said about Mask - Mask is a covering that disguises or protects the fact. Most Masks worn as a disguise have the features of a human being or an animal.

Man used mask from very ancient age. They used mask for various causes. The causes of using mask can be defined as:

a) Man tried to give a different look which is not like him.

b) Man uses mask to conceal his identity. Hiding him from enemy, man used mask.

c) Man knew that he is not God or not devil. But he can tried to make himself like a God. So he used the mask of God. Again devil harm people, so man tried to understand the real identity of the devil by using the mask of the devil and he also tried to destroy the devil by wearing one mask. The primitive man thought that when any person uses the mask of God or devil then good or evil power dominated him and he became an icon of that.

d) To cover ugliness of the face man uses mask.

e) Magic is working behind for using mask. All people of the world believed from the primitive age that mask has a magical power. The people who uses
the magical mask, he got magic power. On the other hand the man who watched the man with mask, he also rapted and gained courage, faith and self confidence from the behaviour of God. He take lessons from God to defend him from devil. Mask is used as:

1) Mask is also used to show courage self confidence etc.

2) To drive away the influence of devil at the time of woman's menstruation system and in the rituals of agriculture using of mask is prevailed in the group of primitive man.

3) To show respect the 'totem' the people also used mask.

4) To show fear to the evil power man also used mask.

5) Mask is also used in the belles letters.

6) Ashutosh Bhattacharya mentioned in his book 'Banglar Lokonritya' that when a man acted as a woman in the play or dance then he uses mask to cover his man's face although he wear the clothes like a woman.

It has been seen that mask is used for various causes from Primitive Age to Modern Age and there are some significances of every cause though there are some diversities. Mask is the main ancient article which is made by man. In the cave paintings of old Stone Age, the picture of the man with mask is also found in the cave paintings which were discovered in the many countries of the world. In the Pre-historic Cave Paintings of the Ariz area of Southern France, it is found that: A man, who had a horn of reindeer on his head, a mask of an owl on his face. Long beard, whose ears are like a deer, whose tail is like a wild horse, penis is like a lion, hands are like the paws of a bear and covered with something like gloves but his legs like a man and the statue is in the figure of dancing mood that is the man was dancing with various characteristics bears on his body for a special motive. This is the main motif of the picture. By the explanation of the Geologist and Zoologist the picture was most probably 25,000 years old. That, from the starting age of human culture, mask was used. From the view of a critic, this picture was the picture of a magician. From this point of view we came to know that there was an influence of magician. Sociologists believed that the faith of magic has a great importance in where magician was a religious priest. Magician became the saviour of all kinds of problems like from investigation, relief from illness, relief from fear, satisfaction of sex-urge to satisfied life after death. And the main article of the work of the magician was mask. That is, most probably these needs are staying behind for origination of the mask. And the man obeyed the religious rituals which is based on magical faith to fulfill their needs. Mask-dance was an essential
part of these rituals which is also prevailed now in the many groups of the aborigines.

From the discussion of Pre-history of mask art, we knew that the ingredients which are needed for making mask were head, skin, horn etc. of animals. To assume a disguise of a special animal, hunting became easy to hunt that type of animals because animals can not understand their disguise and they attract easily. Man thought that animals were their ancestor and so they use mask to feel themselves same as their ancestor. Mask was taken as a symbol in the changing of society. At first the face of man takes place instead of animals and after that the characteristics of the mask also changed. After that the face of man make dangerous and monstrous to grow fear in the mind of man and for this cause they made mask of ghost, demon etc. There is no other things except mask which has a great influence on man’s mind and which can make a character concrete or abstract.

Various articles are used to make mask from pre-historic age to modern age. The head of animals were used as a mask from ancient age. The head of Rain deer as a mask was used in the cave paintings of Palaeolithic Age in the Southern France. The primary ingredients which got nearly, man used them at first to make mask in the primitive society. The ingredients which were used by them were skin of gourd, grass, hay, leaves, feather of birds etc. Easy and famous ingredients of making mask are ivory, skin of tortoise or snail, bone and wood etc.

There are many diversities are shown in the uses of mask all over the world. Masks were created for practical needs, magical faiths and religious practices in the Stone Age. But now its practical value became changed though it has a valuable archaeological value.

1) When a man died then a mould of his face was kept in by using wax or plaster of paris. This is called 'Death Mask'. 'Death Mask' was prevailed in Egypt, France and many other countries. Egyptian people kept a special type of mask in the Mummy or on the box of Mummy. In Tibet the funeral work of a dead body was done by using a fearful wooden mask on his face. In this field it was used to drive away the fear of ghost from mind.

2) Famous Maya Kings of Mexico not only used crown as an ornament for the head : when the king became old then he decided his successor. At the time of ceremony of crowning the king gave his successor a mask of Jaguar. The new king took his responsibility by wearing that mask.

3) 'Bambara' group of people of Africa arranged their agriculture by wearing various types of mask of various deer and horn. They believed that deer are the pioneer of good agriculture and their step of dancing made the field fertile.
4) The aborigines 'Dak Dak' of New Britain the area of Oceania, imitate the behaviour of that animal whose mask he is wearing.

5) The aborigines who live on the bank of Sepic river in Melanesia Island and wear those mask whose beaks were like a bird’s beak.

6) The mask of Bull is famous in Senufo of Ivory Coast of Africa and in the 'Bapende' of Congo area.

7) The mask of the aborigines of Africa not only made for wearing on face, they made small masks of ivory which oba king of Benin hanged on the wall of his palace.

8) The people and King of 'Ebo' group of Africa wear another type of mask which is looked like the skull of man.

9) The judge of Liberia did their judgment and gave punishment in the Loke Aadalat by wearing the mask of bird.

10) 'Mask dance' is prevailed in the rural areas of Sri Lanka for the treatment of patients.

11) Masks in the previous age of Buddhist was famous by the name of 'Gigaku' in Japan. Those masks were used in mime in the festival time of Buddhists.

12) The fearful masks which are seen in Tibet, they are the masks of 'Devil’s dance.'

13) The mentality which is in the behind of every mask, most of them are taken from the circle of Loka Puranas. The programmes which are performed by using masks have an imaginative thinking of stories. Beautiful examples of those are the plays of 'Choou' dance of Bengal.

14) A typical type of dance is practiced by wearing the masks of animal-birds and God-Goddess in the vast area of North Bengal.

15) The people of Sundervan wore a special type of mask which are made by thin wood, plastic, baked clay, rubber or leather when they go to collect honey wax and wood.

The uses of mask is related with dance in the culture West Bengal. In this mask dance the uses of local musical instrument and tunes are shown. But every mask dance has its own speciality. Every mask dance is famous by their own name in their own area due to its own dancing style, uses of musical instruments and singing style using various tunes. Some examples of 'Mask dance' are 'chhou' in Purulia (Plate No. 12) & Bankura, 'Ravankata'
in Bankura, 'Gambhira' in Malda, 'Gameera' in North and South Dinajpur. Mask dance play an important role in the art of West Bengal. These masks became famous according to their dancing styles. They have no special familiarity.

Traditional masks are used in the different parts of the province. They are mainly prevail in eight districts: Purulia, Bankura, West Medinipur, Malda, North Dinajpur, Cooch Bihar, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling. In them all types of masks are mainly prevailed in Purulia, Maldah, North Dinajpur and Darjeeling. 'Chhou Mask Dance' is mainly prevailed in Jhargram, Chilkigarh, Dubra and Chandri in West Medinipur. Though the masks of 'mask dance' are bought from Baghmundi of Purulia by the artists. Prevailing of mask dance is limited in Bankura district. The uses of mask is prevailed in dance and folk drama in Jalpaiguri. But now this tradition is becoming extinct.

The masks of Bengal can be divided into two groups according the user groups. (1) The mask used by the group of aborignes. (2) The mask used by the people who are not belonged in the group of aborigines. Mask played an important role in the rituals and dance in the group of aborigines. The famous examples of that are the mask which are used in the 'chhou' dance by the Santhal people of Purulia. The masks which are used by the group of the people Rava and Mech of Jalpaiguri and Cooch Bihar, the masks used by the Tibetan, Nepalese, Bhutia and Lepcha of Darjeeling district are examples to these type of mask. Except the Santhal of Purulia, the other group of people made their mask by their own and the uses of masks are also limited in their group only. But the Santhals of Purulia did not make their masks of 'chhou' they bought that from local carpenters who made and designed those masks.

Many articles are used to make masks in West Bengal. The main ingredient which is used to make mask is wood except the mask of chhou dance in Purulia. When the mask artists choose the wood which is appropriate for making mask. They choose it to serve two type of aspects (1) religious purity, (2) benefits of engraving. Three primary ingredients of making mask of Purulia are soil, old white cloth and paper. Mud and sponge wood are also used with wood to make mask of Malda. Special uses of sponge wood are seen in the mask of Dinajpur except wood. The mask of Devil Dance of Darjeeling are very big in shape. So it is quite impossible to make the mask by wood and therefore they made mask by paper pulp. The coarse mat made up of cane is used to make mask of Rava and Mech people of North Bengal. But uses of wood is mainly prevailed in the aborigines or non-aborigines people.
The mask of 'chhou' dance of Purulia

'Chho' or 'Chhou' dance is the regional mask dance of the frontiers area of West Bengal (Purulia, Bankura and West Medinipur), traditional culture of Purulia. The mask is used only for dance and decorative purposes. The uses of mask and the subject of Puranas in 'chhou' dance only the assist the Brahmanya theory of regional cultural surroundings, so the mask of chhou dance has no religious importance. The carpenter who made mask do not obey any rituals for making. If any one obey some rituals it is only his personal matter. The dancers also do not obey any rituals about mask. So when any mask became worn then it thrown away. The 'chhou' dance is started at the end of Bengali month of Chaitra which is known as 'Gajan' or 'Gajan of Lord Shiva'. (Plate No. 11)

But it is hopeful that 'chhou' dance keep its attraction now also though it is the time only for media and the mask of chhou also fulfill the demands according present age. So the artists tried to attract chhou dance, they make ornamentation very much. The dance group of chhou not only shows their performance in Purulia, West Medinipur, they also performed outside of India, so the uses of mask also spread in abroad.

The Mask of Bankura District :

'Ravankata' dance is a special type of war dance and mask dance of Vishnupur of Bankura district. This mask was introduced at the reign of 51th King Raghunath Malladev of the Mallabhum. The idea of Ravankata dance most probably taken from the Ramlila of North India. This dance is observed according to hard rules of scripture though this dance always follows the local rules and tradition. At present the festival of Ravankata is observed in the temple of Raghunath Jew which is situated at the northern side of Bishnupur.

At present six types of masks are used in Ravankata Dance. Among them four masks have very much important, like Hanumana, Sugriva, Jambubanana and Vibhishana. In spite of them there are another two masks like the mask of Ravana and the mask of Indrajeeta which are used only at the time of ceremony. The masks were made at the time of Malla Kings of Vishnupur. They were most probably 200 years old. Among them the mask of Ravana and Indrajeeta were preserved in the temple of Raghunath Jew and they were only taken out at the time of Ravankata Dance once in a year. Ravankata Dance was arranged once in a year under the open sky, in the area near the temple of Raghunath Jew for three days from Dussehra.
The Mask of Gambhira of Malda District:

The worship of 'Gambhira' is preached and expanded in the all police station area of Maldah district. 'Gambhira' festival is introduced at the time of Gajan in the Bengali month of Chaitra for worshipping of Lord Shiva. 'Gambhira' festival is continued from the end of month Chaitra the end of the month Jaishtha that before starting of farming in the rainy season. Gambhira festival is divided into two parts according to their amusement aspects: (1) Gambhira play, (2) Gambhira dance. The mask is used in this dance. The influence of the mask of Kali and Narashima are very much in the Gambhira dance. (Plate No. 14) These two masks have religious importance and all the programmes have been rotated around these masks. In spite of these masks dance sometimes dance drama also performed to show the stories of Ramayana, Mahabharata, Puranas and other religious literatures. These dance are mainly group dance and there is no dialogue. To make attraction of the characters the uses of mask has been done. The masks which are mainly use in the Gambhira dance are:10 Raksha Kali, Shyama Kali, Masana Kali, Chamunda Kali, Narasimha, Basuli, Shiva-Parvati, Rama, Lakshmana, Hanumana, old man, old woman, Ghost, Cannibal, Demon, Jackal, Bear, Tiger etc. But the most famous mask of 'Gambhira' is the mask of Narashima whose nose is curved.

The village carpenters prepare those masks by engraving on the wood and they do that work hereditary. Mending of 'Gambhira's mask is very much laborious. Because the whole face of the mask is made by engraving on a piece of wood. In here no extra organs can used to make the fact. There are two types labour skill are needed to make the mask - engraving and painting. The artists who are engaged in mask they become careful. The mask can only made by skilled carpenter. The colour of the mask is done according Brahmanya religion. The beauty of the mask mainly depend on colour. The carpenters generally are not skilled painter, so they make the painting by local painters. But now some changes have been done in the mask of Gambhira. Now only three wooden masks of Gambhira are available. They are Kali, Chamunda and Narishima. In spite of wood-pitch board, sponge wood, tin and soil are also used to make mask. Some artists made mask by paper pulp also. But now demand of masks become less. So skilled carpenters also become less interested for making masks. So the idea of magical faith, idea of soul of the mask of Gambhira gradually extinct.

The Masks of West Dinajpur (North & South Dinajpur):

West Dinajpur (now divided as North and South Dinajpur) is an important district of North Bengal. The supremacy of mask art is found in the area between the river Kulik and Tangan of undivided West Dinajpur.
Because in here mainly Desi, Pali and Rajvanshi group of people live - who are mainly farmers. So spreading of masks are depend on their village and laborious life style. Upto now the Pali group of people are main carriers and bearer of mask art of Dinajpur. The masks of Dinajpur is famous in the local people by the name 'Mokha'. 'Mokha' is mainly used in the festivals which is depend on society and life. The uses of masks are essential in every festivals and rituals. The festivals which are mainly mask basic are 'Gamira', 'Chorchurnigan', dance programme for 'Jitua', sons for Chandi Manasha, dance of Lakshmiya, sons for 'Ba' khela, play of Halua-Haluan', play of Rama's vanabas', 'Khan' song etc. Not only in 'Gamira' dance, in many other dances which are depend on life, in many festivals, in many plays 'Mokha' is used. (Plate No. 13) Like in the songs of 'Chorchurani' of Dinajpur 'Mokha' is wearing by an armed man, the dance of karkun and Mokha dance of bear is an important part of the festivals. In the festivals of 'Jitua' the mask dance of tiger and bear is very important.

The mask dance is famous all the parts of East Dinajpur (now in Bangladesh), not only in North and South Dinajpur. Mainly 'Desi pali' and 'Rajvanshi' people are engaged in making mask art of Dinajpur. 'Thung' or 'Khuta' in local language of wood of 'Mango', Pakur, Chatim, Gamar, Kadam Neem etc. are needed for making mask. After making the mask it is rubbed by sand until it will be smooth. Now sand paper is used to make the mask smooth. For colouring the mask the colours are used which are get easily like lime-vermilion, white clay chalk, making red colour by soaking the bark of Gigao Basatbair tree etc. After that for making it glorious gum of wood apple is used on it. But now varnish is also used to make it glorious. But no special wooden skill can be seen in the mask of Dinajpur. The carpenter of Desi-Pali group only expressed the shape of the character of a mask by which the character of a mask can be recognized. The mask artists make the paint brush by obtaining fur from the neck of pig and they draw the mask by that paint brush. But the art of drawing on mask is not very skillful. Eyes, Eye brow, moustache-beard and the ornamentation of the design of mask is drawn by unskilled hand. So those masks has less demand for decoration of houses. Those are only use in the dance programme.

Mask of 'Kali dance' of North Bengal:

'Kalinach' or 'Kalidance' is a customized mask dance. It is performed at the time of Gajan festival which is celebrated in the month of Chaitra. It extends all over districts of North Bengal. It is started from the last day of Chaitra and continued till the end of the month Jaistha. But the performance of this dance can performed other times of the year also. The main theme of the 'Kali dance' is to destroy the demon. The mask of the Kali dance is made by wood. The skilled village artists made the mask of this dance. These
masks are made followed by the description of the beauty of Goddess Kali according Brahmanya religion. Engraving in the masks has been done so perfect and its colouring has been done by different colours. Some similarities can be seen between the mask of Kali dance of North Bengal with the mask of Samsan Kali of Gambheria of Malda. Local people has a faith that there is an influence of supernatural power in the mask of Kali. The priest arranged a programme to drive away evil power from the mask. So that the dancer would perform the dance properly and she would not get any harm. After performing the rituals the artists wear the mask.

These masks are made by the artists heriditory from which traditional skills are found. Standard of engraving of the village artists can be realized by the skill of wood engraving. The altituate of the fact of the mask is done according Brahmanya religious view. There are some skills also for making the painting of the mask. The mask of Kali dance is a valuable wealth of folk art.

Masks of the Jalpaiguri and Cooch Bihar districts:

The part of Darjeeling districts, Jalpaiguri and Cooch Bihar districts of North Bengal is included in Terai region. The mask played an important role in the social festivals. Some presentations which are included with mask are specially entertainmental and ritualistic. The presentations which are included with mask only presented by male artists. Because it is believed by the people that the power in the mask can be able to make bad effect mainly on women. The presentations which are attached with mask of the district of Jalpaiguri and Cooch Bihar are 'Mukhakheil' or 'Mokhakhela', Ravanpala', 'Dhai Chandi' etc. The most popular dance-drama in this area is 'Mukhakheil' in which the artists of play performed by wearing masks. Generally this play is played by following the stories of popular epics, puranas etc. In site of this the incidents which are occur in our daily life is also played in dramas. 'Mukhakheil' is generally the songs of 'Nabanna' festival. The group of 'Mukhakheil' move whole night from house to house and perform songs and dances in the day of 'Utthan Ekadashi' the month of Agrahayan. Another popular play of 'Terai' region is 'Ravanapala' which is performed by dance, songs and dialogue in the form of dance-drama. In this play the story from the birth of Rama to killing of Ravana is performed. In the district of Cooch Bihar and Jalpaiguri a ritualistic mask dance is forms named 'Dhai-chandi'. It has some unnatural presentation when it is compared with the dance of 'Dakshina Kali' and 'Smasan Kali'.

The masks of Jalpaiguri and Cooch Bihar in the area of Terai region in North Bengal are generally made by wood. The making and engraving of the masks are done by local artists. The making method of the mask of
Terai region has some similarities with the mask of the Desi Pali groups of West Dinajpur. The making method of this mask is very simple which can make to recognize this mask as a successor of the mask of ancient age.

But the uses of mask is now declined according the evolution of cultural surroundings. The main cause of this is the changing of regional cultural surroundings of ancients inhabitants in here. Due to this the play by using mask are also become less. In some plays the artists performed without mask.

**The Mask of 'Rava' and 'Mech' tribe of North Bengal**

The two special tribes of North Bengal are - Rava and Mech. These tribal people mainly live in Jalpaiguri district. But they also found in Cooch Bihar district also. The uses of mask in Rava tribes is very old like other tribes in the world. Uses of two types of masks are found in the religion festivals of Rava’s. They are - (1) 'Makpar Basini', (2) 'Chor-kheliye' or 'Charkhilaini'. The mask dance is arranged by Rava group after some days of Kalipuja in the month of Kartick. The main theme of this dance is the occupation of Rava's. It is mainly shown in the 'Makparbasini dance' or 'bear dance'. In the dance programme of 'Makparbasini' the Rava tribal people of North Bengal wear the mask like a bear. Some artists also wear the dress like a bear made up of jute, so that they look like a real bear. 'Charkhilaini' is the Goddess of aborigines people of North Bengal. The mask of this type of mask dance is made up of bamboo. This mask is famous by the name of the mask of 'Charkhilaini'. 'Charkhilaini is the Goddess of misfortune. So if they make her pleased then they became free from her evil effects. So they immersed the musk in the local river after completing the puja. Ravas made that mask according their ideas and rituals. The mask of Ravas are very simple and easy among all the masks which are popular in West Bengal. The wooden mask of Rava is shown their skill of engraving on the mask. The carpenter engrave one piece of wood to make mask. Ravas are expert in the work of bamboo and cane but they are not expert in the work of wood.

The 'Mech' that is 'Boro' group of people who live in Jalpaiguri district also use masks. At the time of Kali puja the Mech boys move from one house to another houses, wearing the mask of Kali for collecting donations. After completing Kali puja they immersed the mask in the river. The Mech people made these mask by local ingredients by their own. These masks were made by slim bamboo which was more labour to make but the expenditure is less. There are so much similarities with the mask of Ravas and Mech. Jalpaiguri is a frontiers district. So, it has Tibetan influence and influence of Bengal tradition in their making. When they used the skin of gourd, mat of bamboo for making mask then they follow the local making style.
Mask dance of the people of Darjeeling district:

The habitation of mountainous area of Darjeeling developed by combining various group of people. But a major part of habitation is occupied by the people of Mongoloid group. In the mask dance of Nepalese "Mahakali's mask dance" is a famous mask dance. The mask of Nepalese are made up of wood. The local Nepalese artists made those masks. Those masks have made by following two styles (1) own style of Nepalese and another is Tibetan style. At the time of amusement, masks have been used by Nepalese. They arranged various dance dramas like killing of Mahishasur, war between God and demon etc. by using mask.

The mask dance of Tibet is world famous. The Tibetan mask dance is practiced among the inhabitants of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong. Famous Tibetan dances are 'Devils Dance', 'Singicham', 'Chamricham' or 'Yacham' and 'Mepacham'. The religious dance is performed once a year in the place attached with the Tibetan Gumphas by the Lamas. This dance is called 'Devils Dance'. In this dance Lamas play both role as God and devil. Masks which are used in the dance are made up of wood.

Mask dance is practiced by Dukpas (Bhutia population). They believed very much in the Tantras of Mahayana Buddhism and they follows these tradition at the time of mask dance also. They use mask at the time of New Year and other religious festivals. The people of Mongoloid inhabitants who live in Darjeeling have faith in religious practice, magical effect etc. So an effort of these faith is shown in their mask dance. The tradition of mask dance which are followed by the inhabitants of mountainous people is a part of their religious believes. It does not effect on their economic life.

Now, the mask art of 'Chhou' is not a part of 'chhou' dance only. It is also used a decorative articles in the home of middle class and rich families. This mask is also famous in abroad for its attractive and gorgeous appearance. The masks of 'chhou' dance became popular with extension of 'chhou dance' as a folk dance of Bengal. So 'Chhou Mask Art' is now popular as a special art. Now dances are attracted in the cheap yet attractive masks because popularity of mask dance has been declined. So now they have an eagerness to buy the mask made up of paper-pulp instead of wood. So the village artists who made the mask of wood, once in a time now they made the masks of 'Narasinghi' in Gambhira, the mask of 'Kali' in Kali dance are also made up with paper-pulp. Acceptance of the masks of paper-pulp is now developed, though its durability is much less than wooden masks. In spite of that uses of masks in the dance programme also be stopped now in somewhere. Once upon a time the masks used in Gambhira is made up of woode, but now these masks are made up with paste board, sponge wood,
tin and clay. Only three masks which are used in Gambhira Dance also in present are Kali, Chamunda and Narasinghi (Narshima) are made up of wood.

With the evolution of human society believe of faith in magic, mana become drive away from human life. Mask was a cultural articles which is included with the idea of primary needs of food gathering and hunting. But now the ideas of man become changed. So now those primary needs are also become changing. In this changing socio-economical context, it is the right time to promote and up date the mask culture.

**DOKRA**

Man made things by stone, clay and wood by following the path of artistic mind. The metallic folk art was created at the first stage of using metal. Dokra Art is one of them.

Metal art is so old. Lost Wax Metal Casting or 'Cire Perdue' in French language is that type of art, which is a folk art. This folk art is known as Dokra Art in Bengal. It is an old Folk Art which is made by Lost Wax Metal Casting method. This metal art was developed in various groups of people in India as well as Malaysia, old Egypt, Africa, China and Middle America. There is a similarity in the method of making with Dokra Art and pottery. This tradition of art is developed from New Stone Age to Copper Stone Age. This sort of metal casting has been used over 4,000 years¹¹ in the 'Mound of Dade Man' in the Indus Valley Civilization. One of the earliest known lost wax artefacts is the dancing girl of Mohenjodaro. Many old nomadic people travelled in many places in our country for their non-Aryan occupation. They did metal works.

Socialist Vinay Ghosh says about Dokra Art, Metallic Art had been parallely developed in the various places of India at the time of pre-historic civilization. Some communities of Pre-Aryan group got their places at the lower stages of social stairs. Those people are famous by their name 'Dokra Kamar' at the stage of Hinduism." They lead their life in very difficulties and lead a nomadic life. They earn by making small metal figures and utensils. People suspect them for their nomadic life. People called them 'Dokra' for showing their disrespect.¹² Dokra is an indigenous word. The story of disrespect we found in the book 'Annanda Mangal' written by Bharat Chandra. The word 'Dokra' is famous by the meaning disrespect. Illiteracy is a curse of Dokra society. The people of this caste did not able to write their history for their illiteracy. Due to this reason, research workers depend on the older people of this caste to know their history and so the history of them totally known by the stories told by the older people of this caste.
first dwelling place of the Dokra Artists was in Nagpur or Chotanagpur. Some scholars said that they lived in Baster near Nagpur of Chhatisgarh not in Chotanagpur. Vinay Ghosh came to know about their dwelling place from an older artist Rajendra Karmakar (95 years in the year 1970) that Bastar of Madhya Pradesh was the first dwelling place of Dokras. We also came to know from older artists of Burdwan that Dokra artists moving forward to Eastern India from Bastar near Nagpur of Madhya Pradesh. After that most probably one century years ago a small group had came near Ayodhya pahar of Purulia. From here they spread in various areas of Rahra region. The Late Manohar Karmakar, father of Shambhu Karmakar was belonging to a small group which group came at Dariapur which is in Burdwan district. At present some artist are living in the Karuj village, near Burdwan city who came from Dumka. We came to know from the description which was told by artist Rajendra Karmakar that they came to Ranchi, Chaibasa and Hazaribagh of South Bihar six generation before. Now they live in Bikna village near Rampur of Bankura city. Nomadism is their speciality of their occupation. They are metal caster. Metal is not destroyed easily. It can not break easily. So demand is not created easily. So they have no work in their hand. They started to reside a new place for their new demand. By doing this they spread in many areas mainly Bankura, Purulia, Medinipur and Burdwan district. At present some artist are living in the Karuj village, near Burdwan city who came from Dumka.

A table is given in where metal caster (artist) is living in the areas of West Bengal.

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<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Village</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bankura</td>
<td>Bikna (Bankura city)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lakshmi Sayar Khatra)</td>
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<td>Vindyajam (Shaltora)</td>
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<td>Net Kamla (Shaltora)</td>
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<td>Patrasayer</td>
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<td>Burdwan</td>
<td>Dariyapur (Guskara)</td>
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<td>Eklakshmi (Khanda Ghosh)</td>
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<td>Dumka</td>
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<td>Purulia</td>
<td>Nadiha (Purulia)</td>
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<td>Akra (Bandoan)</td>
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<td>Narkali (Manbazar)</td>
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The work of Dokra is known as 'Dhalai' or casting by artistry term. In western terms, this art is called "Lost Wax Metal Casting". It is a brass
casting. It can also said "Wax Mould Brass Casting". Two types of metal castings were prevailed in ancient Age. They are solid casting and hollow casting. Dokra Art is included in hollow casting.

Raw Materials

Raw materials needed for Dokra Art are soil (two types of soils are needed: [1] sticky soil and [2] loose soil, resin, wax, brass, mustard oil, colour, zinc and lead. The machines and utensils which are needed for Dokra Art is the utensils in which brass can be melt, hammer, chisel, file, tongs, brush, then stick and furnace. This art is made by water, soil and fire.

Manufacturing Technique

Now we will discuss about the technique of manufacturing of the Dokra Art. The raw materials which are needed for making art are bought from market. At first a pulp is made up with resin and mustard oil by heating. It is solid but flexible and its colour is black. After that it is mixing with wax in proportionately very carefully. At first a model of artistry was made by soil mixing with sand. The model of mould was made as proper as possible the thing. Then it is dried in the Sun. After that the pulp of wax, resin and mustard oil which was made before was coated over the model, then various types of fine decoration has been done. The model of wax must be made faultless. When the work of the pulp of wax resin and mustard oil was finished then it is covered fully with soft soil covering. But there are small holes on the outer covering. After that the wax model made burnt with the covering of soil in the oven of coal. Then the mould of wax, resin and mustard oil became melt and came out by the holes. Due to the wax came out by melting so the method is called "Lost Wax Casting". After that the hole is closed by coating of soil. Only one hole is left.

After that metal is used. Brass is melted in another pot. Then it poured into the hole through a funnel. The melted brass is going to the hollow place (in where wax model was there) and started to become solid. The last inner mould of soil make to come outside by breaking it their point. The Dokra Artists melt their old and broken pots as could as possible. Due to this they also buy old and broken pots. The melt brass is known in the language of Dokra is 'Ghaira'. Sometimes the first mould of soil remains in the artistry. After that acid, and files are used to make the model bright, and spotless. The model became fine by cutting out extra part and rubling. The skill of the artists is shown only to make the model of sand soil and next to make the mould of wax-resin and mustard oil and designing. They have no scope of engraving on brass. The artists do not make any designing on metal.

Lost Wax Casting is developed from pottery of New Stone Age to
Chalcolithic Age. It was proved from the specimens of metal casting of Indus Valley Civilization and Egyptian Civilization. It was also agreed by archaeologists and anthropologists.

The artistry which are made by Dokra Artists are divided into some divisions.

1) The artistry of animals and nature: (Plate No. 15)

Elephants, horse, goat, frog and sometimes elephant on the back of frog, elephant with five heads, crocodile, fish, bull, tortoise, owl, various statues of bird, design of flower and leaves etc.

2) Artistry of the statue of God and Goddess and religious rituals:

Radha-Krishna, Durga, Ganesha, Parvati with Karticka, Pitcher of Manasha, Nataraja, the statue of Ravana with ten heads and Goddess Durga with ten hands. (Plate No. 21)

3) Ornaments:

Bangle, nose pin, ear rings, armlet, ankle bells, amulet etc.

4) Artistry which are needed for daily uses:

Pie, a vessel for measuring rice, dal etc. lamp shed, paise container, incensor, bells of cow, bucket, flower vase, lamp stand, key ring etc.

5) Artistry of house decoration:

Lamp shed which is hanging from the wall, heads of various God and Goddesses, various type of figures which are beautiful and funny like Kumbhakarana, shoes, various type of figures which are used as a decorative articles, group of Dhamsa Dance, (Plate No. 18) Mother and baby, dances, family of aborigines etc. Different types of artistry are made according demands of the market. Reflection of artistic mind of aborigines are found in the shape and design of Dokra Art. Figures are not depended on the proper arrangement of organs which are habituated with the style of art of Ancient Age. (Plate No. 17)

The aesthetic value of Dokra Art is highest. In this artistry there is a mixing of the weight and density of folk art Primitive Age with fine ornamentation of latter Age. There is also a reflection of reality. With that there is also a reflection of abstract beauty on its beautiful shape. Due to this art lovers and general people both amazed to see the Dokra Art. At first the demand of Dokra Art was limited within village stage. But now it is developed as a household beauty in the middle class and rich families (Plate No. 20) house as an articles of home decoration. Pie, vessels uses for
measuring rice, anklet and the idols of God and Goddess like Lakshmi, Ganesh (Plate No. 19) and Radha-Krishna were made in before. But now some changes has been included in Dokra Art. So, rich people is now interested to buy the articles of Dokra Art as a house decorative articles and as a gift. Due to this, Dokra Artists make various types of lamp shed, incense stand, various types of animals, small ornaments etc. Generally the market of outside India is great for Dokra Art. But export is not possible without Governmental aid. Government try to make demand for Dokra Art in abroad. India Government arranged International Trade Fair in which specimen of Dokra Art is displayed and also tried to create interest of Dokra Art to the foreigners by showing the method of making articles directly. Due to this, Dokra Artists also travelled abroad. At present Government decorated governmental workshop, trade centre, rail station by the articles of Dokra Art. Due to this the demand of Dokra Art also increased.

Government has planned to expand familiarity of Dokra Art at greater stage. So government arranged programme for travelling Dokra Artists, also arranged prize distribution for Dokra Artists. By doing this he demand and interest of Dokra articles also increased and it will go to the non-governmental trade institution. The artists actually will to the profit. Dokra Artists get the benefit of world tour and they also get admiration although most of the artists do not able to read and write mainly whose age is over than twenty five. This scene is true both in Bikna of Bankura and Dariyapur of Burdwan. Now the artists send their children at primary school but after some days they will stopped to send their children at school. Because they have lack of knowledge about learning. To spread education among them government also have taken no interest and care. Dokra Artists have lack of consciousness. They can’t think that they are one of the famous artist groups of India. Their artistry sold in the market at a very high price than their cost price. Sometimes profit may be three or four times excess than production price. But they remains poor. They spend their small earnings by drinking wine. Due to this they have no improvement of their financial conditions. So they are not able to invest capital for improvement of their artistry. They lend money at a high interest from money lenders. Now co-operative has been set up to make then free from money lenders. It has been set up to save this art from decline and to arrange a good market for selling Dokra articles. Due to this arrangement their earnings also increased. In spite of that they remains illiterate and they have scarcity of money.

Dokra artists show their skills and sense of elegance in their art. Due to this they rewarded in abroad and also travelled outside India. We known about some artists who got reward. Late Sambhu Karmakar, Haradhan Karmakar, Mator Karmakar, Yudha Karmakar etc. got award from Govt. of India.
Lost was metal casting is a very old and bulky system. It is not only a time bound but also an expensive method. The artisans of Bikna tried to cut costs by replacing the dhuna and wax with the action research in Bikna led to the extension of new technology at Dariapur. NISTADS has built two furnaces at Dariapur.

They have no interest to take another occupation for their faith is casteism. But now some Dokra Artists try to change their own profession for financial difficulties. But they have no interest in agriculture. Some of them try to earn money by doing casting work. The woman of their family do not go to another house as a maid-servant though they have scarcity of money. They try to engage in any sorts of artistry. Because they have a relation with metal work. To day Dokra Arts stay alive though they face many social oppositions and poverty. Dokra Artists now try to adjust with changing of time. So many arrangements must be taken to some Dokra Art. To arrange loan for the Dokra Artists from Co-operative to save then from exploitation and cheating by money lenders. With that to arrange a good marketing system for produced goods. Co-operative must supply raw materials to the worker of Dokra Art. Not only that co-operative must make conscious the Dokra Artists about the demand of market, and they must arrange a plan of new artistry. With that they must send brilliant and intelligent artists to Fine Arts University for higher education. Co-operative must arrange bank loan for the artists when they need money. If co-operative can arrange monthly pension for senior artists then they can be free from their future thinking and they can give attention in their work very much.

Dokra Artists are illiterate. So government must be inspire them for education. Government must be arrange adult education, child education and literacy campaigning for Dokra Artists. To save folk art, the important method is to campaigning by mass media. People came to know about this art if radio, television and newspapers can display the beautiful specimens of this art.

Now Dokra Art is only produced in the Rarh area. But it is praised all over the world. So, to preserve this artistry government and all Indians must be concern. Then Dokra Art can be reached its great height.

- CONCH SHELL

In the period of the Pallogoic type of living being called 'conch' was created about 140 crores years ago. In the order of evolution it lies between Arthropoda and Echirodermata. In nature it is an aquatic and invertebrate animal. It is included in the node of Mollusca. The very animal is of different sizes. The word, 'Mollusca' which is derivated from Latin, means tender and
soft body, that is, the body of which animal is soft and tender, is called Mollusca. On the basis of different parts visible in the body of Conch, the scientists have divided it into five - the leg, head, the body part, hide covering and shell. Out of that parts which we call the conch is the solid shell which is created by mantle. The shell of the conch is its slough. It is a means of protecting itself. The zoologists says that calcium ion which is secreted from the blood of the conch is mixed with the liquid lying in the mantle and builds calcium carbonate compound (Caco3) and then it is purified by the 'conkiolin', a protein that lies in the mantle. Then the calcium enriched 'conkiolin' is crystallized and creates the shell of the conch.

Conch which is known to us, is really included in class of Gastropoda which is the crust of a kind of animal. It is constituted with the calcium carbonate is nothing but a secreted thing from the particular shells of the body. The particular shape is determined for the genetic peculiarities of the animal of the particular species. In the most cases as the shell is built up after being revolved around a central orbit and this revolving occurs in different ways, there are different shapes and orders of the conch. It is also remembered that the living being that hides itself in the conch shell. The more living being gradually grows, the more its outer shell grows the reason of increase the shell is not only the growth of the living being lying in it, but also the live from the sea-water helps it grow. As a result it is more hardened after gathering of the lime and its shape also grows more. Then when the living being inside it dies, it floats and glides away to the shore. The conch is one of the oldest animals in the world. (Plate No. 24) It had to survive after the continuous struggle. So it had obtained the hard shell for protecting itself. Again it is also found that there are different shapes of the conch such as there are several adversity in colour of it. (Plate No. 25) There are the colours of brown, pink, reddish or orange. So the question may be arisen what the reason is. The colour is the reason of adversity, in the course of formation of the conch. The tinged particles are secreted by its mantle and it creates the different forms of style after being included in different forms of crystallized, 'conchiolin' protein in which the brown, yellow, violet, reddish, orange, whitish, pinkish colour is visible in uniformity. It may be contextually to discuss about the method and time of collecting conch from the sea. The ideal time of collecting conch is the period of night as at that time the animals move out towards the beach or coastal areas for collecting food after coming out from the shells. Moreover the species that live in deep water, may be collected with the help of drezzing. But the conches should not be collected in open hand. There is the possibility of wounds by the scrashing with the skin as the marginal part of the conches is sharpen. Moreover, the conch secrets a kind of poisonous substance named 'Chonotskin' which is very detrimental to human body. So the catching of conch should not be in open hand.
Some conches are sounded to be grave and some are to be sharp and sweet while blowing. It depends on the ability of the person who blows the conch. While blowing the air inside the conch is trembled and the conch is sounded. The character of resonance depends mainly on the three subjects - the intensity, sharpness of sound and quality. The rate of flowing the sound is per unit of area to the vertical of the wave of sound is called the intensity of sound wave. The intensity means how the sound is so highly sounded. The intensity depends on some subjects as the form of sound, the amplitude and the distance between the source of sound and the audience etc. The conch which is big in size, is naturally sounded high. The more the inside dimension of the conch be, the more the amplitude of he intensity will be. Then there is discussion of its sharp. The sharpness depends on the source of frequency. With the help of sharpness it is distinguished between the low and high sound. The movement of the air inside the conch is so much, the sharpness of the sound will be more high. Again, with the quality, the difference of sound created from the different sources is understood.

After the deliberation of the meaning of the word it is seen that the conjugation 'sham' is in its roots. The lexicographical meaning of the conjugation of 'sham' is well being or good. The evil is turned into tranquility by the sound of conch. It is able to remove the evil power. In Purana, or in the Mahabharata the conquest is announced by the sound of conch. The subject that the auspicious sound removes the evil power is inherited from the pre-Aryan Society. Apart from the conch we are familiar with the word 'Shanko', Shanka, Shank etc. In the folk rhymes we get the word 'Shanka'. (Plate No. 22)

The origin of the conch art is very old. Many mythological tales about the conch art is found out. The same story is depicted in other mythology in different forms as the tale of Shankhachura may be cited. In Devi Bhagabat the tale is that Shankhachura was a monster. He was killed Lord Shiva. The conch, was originated with the bones of Sankhachura.

In the Mahavaratha we get the different kinds of conches which took the important role to regulate the peace of the war at Kurukshestra. Each of their sound is different from other. The heart of the enemy is shievened by the sound of the particular conches. The name of the conch that the Lord Krishna used was Panchajanya, Arjun's Debadutta, Nakul's Sughosh, Sahadev's Manipuspak, Bhim's Paundra. Moreover, there were the conches of the great archer, Kashiray, the great warrior Shikhandi, Dristadumna, Viratraja, Satyaki, Drupad, the sons of Droupadi. So it is presumed that each conch was different due to their quality. The name of the Panchajanya was far reaching. It has been said about the origin of that conch that way. Panchajan was the name of a Demon. He was the grand son of
Hiranyakashipu and the son of Prahallad. He lived in the sea in a form of a conch. Once the son of the sage, Sandipani, the preceptor of the Lord Krishna, went to bath in Pravash pilgrimage, the Panchajan robbed and hide him in the conch. As the honorarium to the perception, the Lord Krishna knew the demon with the help of Barun and rescued the son of preceptor. He made a conch with the bones of the demon, Panchajan. So the Panchayannya concern was well known in the universe. We get the story of origin of this conch in both the sacred books, 'Devibhagabat' and 'Haribansha'.

Moreover, the various conch oriented episodes are found in various mythologies. In the episode of Visma we get the words of the conch from the son of the King Virat, from the narrative of bringing of the Ganges by Bhagirath, from the narrative of drinking the venom by Mahadev, the god of gods while churnning the sea. We also get the context of conch in the 'Markendaya Purana', the Brahmabaibaarta Purana etc. In 'Markendaya Purana' we get that while killing the Asura Dashabhuj was offered the conch by Varuna, when she was adorned with various weapons. In that Purana it has been narrated that there is a learning named 'Padminibidya' and there it has eight treasures and out of these conch is the unique - lotus, the great lotus, shark, turtle, Mukunda, Nanda, Neel and Conch.

Many things are made from the conch. The bangle made of conch is one of the greatest. (Plate No. 23) There are various tale about the origin of the conch. In the book titled 'Bangiyos Loko Sanskriti Kosh' written by Prof. Barun Kumar Chakraborty, we see that there is a rumour that the Lord Shiva got the white coloured ornament of conch made for the new bride Parbati on the occasion of marriage and since then it is the period of origin of the conch craft. There is another rumour in the book entitled, 'Bangalasmin Jhanpi' written by Amiya Kumar Bandopadhya where Shiva and Durga were invited to the assembly of god, faced a problem. There would be held a fair, the greatest in the universe. How would the wife of Shiva go without wearing any ornaments. The Lord Shiva was worried and remembered the God Viswakarma. He told that the various jewels of the world had been already used and other wives of the good would attend the fair wearing those ornaments. But the conch beneath the sea was not still used. The Viswakarma built the ornaments for the goddess, Parbati from those unique thing of conch. The brighter jewels in the assembly of gods were felt blurred in the appearance of gentle glow of white ornaments made of the conch. Since then the greatest ornament of the Hindu bride is a pair of bangle made of Conch.

Moreover, we get some tales about the conch which were written for the propagation of greatness about the conch but not for the origin of the conch. Such a tale is obtained in the book entitled 'Patua Sangeet' by
Gurusaday Dutta. There is reference of this tale in the Bangalakshmir Ghapi written by Amiya Kumar Bandyapadhya also. One day Mata Parvati deserves to wear bangles made by conch to her husband Shiva. But he failed to fulfill her desire due to his poorness. Then Parvati became angry and went to her father’s house. Latter Shiva came there in disguise of conch trader. But Parvati recognizing her husband she went back with her house. That is why it may say that the history of conch shell craft or chank bangle has a very glorious past.

James Harnet, a British Zoologiist, in his book said that it was first century A.D. in Tamilnadu, there was a strong evidence of conch shell craft tradition. He wrote that "Reference to ancient Tamil classics furnishes evidence scanty but indubitable of the existence of the important chank cutting industry in the ancient Pandyan Kingdom in the early centuries of the Christian era. Similar evidence is also extant of a widespread use of curved and or namented chank bangles in former days by the women of the Pandyan country which may be considered as roughly coextensive with the modern districts of Tinnevelly, Madura and Ramnad, forming the eastern section of the extreme south of the Madras Presidency. He also firmly announced that, "The evidence furnished by the Tamil classics of the existence of an extensive chank bangle industry in the extreme south of India during the height of ancient tamil civilization, 1200 to 2000 years ago." After the discovery of 'Harappan' civilization, the historian have found a large number of conch shell artifacts from Harappan sites, like Kalibangle. So the history of craft culture has extended about 5000 years back. It may say that the conch shell craft originated in Decan region in around 2000 years ago in Tamilnadu. During the excavation at the ancient capital of Tamil region, Korkai and Koyl, have found large number of conch bangles from the remanent. From very ancient period Mahisur, Baleri, Hyderabad, Anandpur, Karnal, Kathiyar, Gujrat etc. were very rich site in India. Side by side Bengal has also a rich culture of this crafts. Dhaka, Rangpur, Khulna etc. in Bangladesh and Bardhman, Bankura, North 24 Parganas, Medinipur, Hoogli, Mursidhabad in West Bengal are very rich site of conch shell crafts.

Some theories are introduced about the origin of the conch shell artists. One view is that the origin of the conch shell artists from Hara-Parvati and the other view is that their ancestor was Viswakarma. The famous conch shell dealer group of Dhaka worshipped Viswakarma for their faith on the vast view about their origin. Amiya Kumar Bandopadhya also viewed that conch shell dealer is one of the son of the ninth son who were born in the womb of Grhitachari who was in the disguise of the daughter of Milkman by the legitimate of Viswakarma. He tried to prove his view true from the proof of Brahmabaibarta Purana. On the other side there is a social support for the view of that conch shell dealer are originated from Hara Parvati. It is
also heard that the ancestor of conch shell dealer was Agastya sage. When Viswakarma failed to make conch shell cutter then Agastya sage had come to help him and he made a design of conch cutter with a kush tree and showed it to Viswakarma. After that Viswakarma made the saw of conch shell means conch shell cutter. After that Agastya sage became deserving to be worshipped to the conch shell dealer. In Bengal some where he was worshipped by the people by making his idol in the end of Bengali month Bhadra. But work was stopped three days before. It is believed that he bent down the head of Vindhya and said to him that he must stayed in this posture until his return. But he did not return. From the example of Brahmabaibarta Purana it was known that conch shell dealers are lived in India from thirteenth century BC. After that Sankhari Para of Dhaka became famous. The conch shell dealer of Dhaka had come in the reign of Ballal Sen. Though there is a rich evidence of conch shell or bangale culture during "Harappan Civilization".

After Independence many conch shell dealer came to West Bengal from Bangladesh. Conch Shell dealer Bijay Dhar arrange rehabilitation those conch shell dealer in the Ashok Nagar of Habra in 1953 with the help of refugee rehabilitation centre of Aukland Place of Kolkata. Before that the conch shell dealer of Sankhari Bagan of Dhaka lived in the area of Bagbazar, Rajabazar etc. as a refugee. After that it was fixed to give six cottahs of land and 2000 rupees to every family of conch shell dealer. There were 250-300 families. But then Ashok Nagar was an isolated place. Many money lenders did not went there. Due to that conch shell art become declined. Most of them returned Kolkata within two years and started to live in the slum area at the monthly rent of 10-25 rupees. The family of six-seven conch shell dealer was staying there and now their descendants are staying there. In 1956 conch shell dealer Hrishikesh Dhar arranged land for them in Barrackpore with the help of rehabilitation centre and then a system of lottery has been arranged among 500-700 conch shell dealers and who won the lottery they got two cottahs of land and 2000 rupees. Their numbers were 250-300. Some money lenders were also went there with their artisans. Gradually their business become prosperous. In spite of that under a conch shell dealer Bholanath Sur works of making conch shell was started in Barrackpore Bengal Enamel Factory in Barrackpore the workers got salary 70-80 rupees per month. Now everybody knows about conch shell art of Barrackpore.

It is not correct that all the conch shell artists came from Bangladesh. A tradition of conch shell art is also present in West Bengal and we took both tradition to make conch shell art. We took an interview of both artists. They are known by various names in various areas. They are known 'Paroa' in Deccan. They are known by the name of Sankhari Baoar, Sankhari,
Sankhakar, Sankhari Bhat or Bhatta in both Bengal. It is perfectly true that the castes of conch shell dealer are very much neglected now in society. The girl of that society did not get their respect as a bride in higher class society. They could only marriage between their own castes. The titles of their castes mainly Sur, Nandi, Dutta, Chawda, Dhar, Sen, Nag, Rakshit, Bhadra, Mandal, Kundu etc. and their castes are known by Moudagalya, Sandilya, Parasar, Bringa etc. The people of the caste Moudagalya do not break beehive. The people of the caste Parasar do not cut down Palash trees because beehive and Palash tree are the totem of the caste of Moudagalya and Parashar respectively. Many types of totem and tabue are seen in the caste of conch shell dealer.

The number of conch shell dealer who live in West Bengal is more than one lakh. The artists are included in the group of conch shell dealer and the group of conch shell dealers are engaged in the business of conch shell. But many artisans who were engaged with this art changed their occupation because this art has no future. Now the condition of this art is very miserable. So, now we discussed how to improve their condition. We only say that this art has need the help of the Government.

Various types of machines and articles are used to make conch shell. Foreg Jesna, Cheeker Board, Kunna, Athari, Bindhuni, file, grind stone, hammer, spine (Danra), stone slab, their chisel, chisel file, torn cloth, electrical saw, grinder machine using for polish, many types of acid, powder, generator etc.

Various articles are made from conch shell. But conch shell bangle is the main article. The process of making of conch shell and conch shell bangle is same in everywhere. The first step of making conch shell art is to collect conch shell. After that is sharp mouth is cutting down and throw it into the water. After some days the internal objects (gara) of the conch shell is taken out by Kura or a kind of a hammer. Although it becomes soft due to staying in the water. After that it keep in the Sun for drying. After that conch shell dealer decided which one is used to make conch shell and which one is used to make conch shell bangla. Although which is the best quality and not eaten by worm is selected for making conch shell bangla. Which are selected for making bangle, then Majhar has been given to it. Given 'Majhur' means to cut down the portion of the mouth of the conch shell or make a hole in it. A half circle saw is used to make of that hole in before but now it is not use. Because now electrical saw is used instead of that type of saw. After that the perfect cutting portion of the conch shell is taken out and measurement of it is done by using Pata. Then conch shell dealer takes decisions how many conch shell bangles are made from that. They told that 2-4 broad bangles or 8 slim bangles can be made from one conch shell. Now
the demand of slim bangles are vast. Before times 'Danra' is used to smooth in the inner portion of the bangles and 'sil' is used to smooth the outer portion of the bangles. But now 'san' machine is used to do both works. After that the works of decoration is started. This work has been done now by 'san' machine. But in the past this work had been done by the file of Tesi and Chepil file. It is mentioned that the artist made the design of the bangle by his own thought or to copy from the design of another things. After that 'Muritic Acid', Zinc powder are used to make it bright. By this process conch shell bangles are made.

Various articles are made from conch shell. Dinesh Chandra Sen defined about various types of conch shell in the second part of his 'Brihat Banga' book. The types of the conch shells are gara, Satkana, Panchdana, Tindana, Bacckadar, Sadabala, Aulakeshi, Tali, Linesod, Panboat, Morano, Sati Lakshmi, Bhera Sankha, Darjiling, Joy Sankha, Bansger, Nagri Boiyla etc. In spite of those there are many types of conch shell bangles like Ruli Sankha, Chur, Mini Chur, Hi Chur, Bauli, Mantasa, Mini Mantasa, Bracelet, Makarmukhi, Sabetri Sankhas etc. are found in the various districts of West Bengal. every conch shell bangle has different characteristics. Not only conch shell bangles are made from conch shell, ring, clip, button, flower vase, paper weight, garland, ear rings etc. are also made from conch shell. Engraved conch shells are very much valuable. Its aesthetic value is united.

MEDINIPUR

Medinipur is famous in West Bengal for conch shell artistry. Now Medinipur is divided into two parts - East Medinipur and West Medinipur. Mainly the artists of Medinipur are not migrated. They are original inhabitance of West Bengal. But all of they are neither not conch shell dealer by their caste and they are not nor heriditary artists. Some artists left their ancester's occupation and some people also joined in their occupation. But the number of heriditary artists are much among them. The women of the artists and conch shell dealer family are also engaged in this profession.

In Medinipur the conch shell artists whose titles like Nandy, Das, Mondal, Nayak, Dutttta, Chanda etc. are mainly found. The decoration on conch shell are done by thinking of the artists. Various types of characteristics of conch shell like 'Pati' Titputi, G.D.P., Kanachana Kanyakumari, Allabila, Red Doyani, White Doyani, Kelakar, Khaga, Dhala, Rameshwari, Keepi are found in the different areas of Medinipur. Among them the best quality of conch shell are Titpuli, Kanachana and G.D.P.

BANKURA

The tradition of conch shell art of Bankura is famous from a long
time. The two famous artists of this area were Late Aswini Dutta and Gopal Nandy. Various methods like making hole in the mouth of conch shell, taken out bangles from conch shell, making round inner and outer portion of the conch shell by rubbing on stone, making designs, polishing, colouring etc. are done by the members of the conch shell dealer family. Once upon a time main occupation of Vishnupur was making conch shell and five hundred families depend on this art. Among them 250 persons are real artists. Except Vishnupur a large number of artisans are engaged in this art who lived in Hatpur Roy Baghini, Sashpur of Patrasayar etc. Their main occupation was conch shell art. The conch shell had been brought from Tamilnadu, Jafna, Tuticorin, Sylan Ramnad, Rameshar etc. because conch shell is not found in here and it has brought in Kolkata by the rich Muslim merchants who lived in Kelakar in Pondicherry. The merchants of Kolkata supply 20-30 bags of conch shell for their own interest to Bishnupur 100 bags of full conch shell is needed in Bishnupur for conch shell artistry. There were 250 conch shells in one bag and their cost was 100-150\textdollar per bag in before. But now the cost is increased from Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 20,000 or more and it is quite impossible to buy the conch shell by the poor conch shell dealer. In here an institution is established named 'Karu Uddyan' for revival of conch shell. Late Aswini Dutta was its founder. He got many awards and certificates. In spite of that he also got President Award in 1988 from Delhi. The art of his third son Ravi Nandy went to the exhibition of London, America, Japan, France etc. Now he managed the 'Karu Uddyan' institution.

The conch shell dealers had came here in the reign of the King of Mallabhum. Then there was a rule is prevailed that which King had many group of people, he got much respect, so, the Kings of Mallabhum brought the conch shell dealers from a village of the coast area. Six families had came from there. Their titles were Nandy, Dutta, Bhadra, Nayek, Mondal and Kundu. Some of them started to live in the Supur village and some of them went to Rajhat village of Bankura. There was a proverb prevailed that the landlord of the Supur village gave punishment to the conch shell dealer because they stole fish from his pond. Due to this the conch shell dealers became angry and they started to walk for living in the estate of the landlord of Kashipur in Purulia district. On the way the landlord of Bankura got their familiarity and made an arrangement them to live in his kingdom. Now 300 families of conch shell dealer live in the Hatgram village. On the other side the conch shell dealer of Supur faced some troubles when they started to move to go to Hatgram. From then some families of conch shell dealer went to Bishnupur town. After some days some conch shell dealer started to live in these three areas of Bankura. This is the main view of the origin of the conch shell dealer in Bankura.

When the conch shell dealers lived in the coast of the sea, then their
main work is to collect snail, cowrie oyster, conch shell. The boys and girls of their family made garlands with conch shell, colouring oyster, cowrie and they also made musical instrument by rubbing the conch shell on the floor and after that they sold those things to the house of the people. It was sold in the time of Gajan celebration. Now nearly 300 families of conch shell dealers live in the Hatgram of Bankura, 50 families in Bankura, 30 families in Roy Baghini, 129 families in Bishnupur and 10-12 families in Paltarshah. But now the condition of this artistry become slumped. There were many causes behind that. Firstly many wicked persons engaged with this artistry due to their evil works the real artists got lead reputation. Secondly, 'Manjusha' was established to help the conch shell dealer. But now it was closed for sometime. Thirdly, now the artistan who are engaged in this art became impatient. They did not want to learn fine work. They only try to make profit by using less labour. Due to this the art of the conch shell lost its glory with that there is an exploitation of rich also.

From the investigation of the village it is known that sage Agastya was worshipped in here as the God of the artists. In some places idols are made and the artisans stopped their work for three days before Viswakarma Puja upto 31st Bhadra. It is also known that marriage ceremony was held only between conch shell dealers. But now it is changed.

MURSHIDABAD

Jitpur is special for conch shell art although there are many conch shell art area in the Murshidabad District like Domkol, Bajitpur, Jitpur etc. Approximately 900 families of the conch shell dealers are lived in Math Para, Madhya Para, Natun Para, Choya Para, Purba Para, Bag Para of Jitpur. Indrajit Pal was a famous conch shell artist. Writer Santanu Thakur wrote about him in the paper 'Ganakantha' - Artist Indrajit Pal become famous as a conch shell artist. Most of the people in here engaged with conch shell art and they are not illiterate. Most of them are Madhyamik passed. In spite of that there are many conch shell artists who came to this occupation by their generations but not according their castes. The raw materials for the craft in here came from Kolkata. Approximately 1500 bags conch shell are brought here per month but it is not sufficient. They told that they need 2000 conch shell per month. They also told that twenty five conch shells are there in one bag and its price is approximately Rs. 5000. It is also known that various articles of conch shells are made here as before. Many instruments are needed for the conch shell art, like grinder machines, file, hammer, drill machine, setting saw, muriatic acid, zinc, wax, thread, sirish paper, blade etc. The labour cost of the artists of conch shell is different. They draw 'Motif' on the body of the conch shell like, stories of Puranas, paintings of great man, flower, leaves, creepers etc.
The artists faced many problems. Their main problems can be solved by these process:-

1) distribution of raw materials need to be fair.
2) decreasing the price of raw materials.
3) raw materials must be distributed by Zila Parishad.
4) by preserving the raw materials by the Government for future when raw materials are not available.
5) need to renovate the Jitpur conch shell workers multi purpose, Consumer Society Limited.

NADIA

Shankha Nagar, Baliadanga, Mathpara, Nababweep, Machhdiya in Nadia are famous for conch shell art. The art remains here before independent. Most probably 240 families of the conch shell artists re lived in Sankha Nagar. 120 families lived in Baliadanga. 25 families lived in Nabadweep and 118 families lived in Mathpara. But hundred percent artists of Shankha Nagar came from Bangladesh. The raw materials of this area mainly come from Kolkata. The articles of conch shell which are made here for sale at Nabadweep, Asansol, Birbhum, Bankura, Kolkata, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Assam, Tripura, Siliguri etc. and the price of them depend on their quality. Though the artists are engaged with this occupation, some of them are also engaged with farming also. Because the earnings from that art do not fulfill all of their needs. Some people who live in outside help their son, brother and relatives. Again, in some other places many people engaged with this art hereditary, although their caste is not included in conch shell dealer. But the conditions of the artists are not good. Although they get loan from the Gramin Bank of Marutia Branch and the State Bank of India Karimpur, problems remain. The main problems are inadequate supply of raw materials, marketing problems, excessive price of raw materials etc.

HOOGHLY

The main centre of conch shell art in Hooghly is Parambar Sa-Bazar. It was heard that a devastating epidemic was occurred in here about 90 years before and due to this the conch shell artists of here gradually went to Chandannagar. Their next generations also engaged with this profession. It was also known that the centre of the conch shell art also located in Saptagram of Hooghly. When the river Saraswati was navigable then conch shell has been brought from Maldweep to Saptagram. But now there is nothing. Conch shell art is only remain in Chandannagar in Hooghly. There are two traditions in the conch shell art of Chandannagar - one is the tradition of West Bengal here and other is the tradition of East Bengal on
other side. The tradition of Bengal on the other side means the tradition of Dhaka. This tradition is remain now. It was known that 30 families of conch shell dealer lived here. But about 15 families are engaged with this art. Other changed their occupation for keeping themselves in safe financial conditions.

The caste of Kashyapa group of conch shell dealer is maximum in number. But caste of Parashar and Gautama are also here. Again the people of the titles of Adhikari, Chanda also live in here. Although they are conch shell dealer according their castes but they are not true artists. They run their business by buying the articles of conch shell from others. One or two families of conch shell dealer is remain in Seorafuli also. All of them faced the problems of flow of raw materials. If the problems of raw materials can be solved then selling of these articles can be increased and new generation also get interest to take this job. The artists of this area also asked for perfect help that is to get raw materials at proper rate and aid of the government. Government aid is very much necessary for this art.

NORTH 24 PARGANAS

Barrackpore in North 24 Parganas is a main centre of conch shell art. Here more than 600 families of conch shell dealers lived. Their ancestors were the artists of East Bengal. The raw materials are coming in here mainly from Madras (Chennai) and Columbo. Mainly the big merchants imported the raw materials and the artists under them do this art. They imported the raw materials from Tamilnadu, Kerala, Cochin, Trivandrum and from Sri Lanka which is located outside of India. The people who obtained the raw materials from sea, mainly are Muslims, the Hindus are less in numbers. They know that in where conch shell is found. There they go by boat and they are four to five men in number. A big rope is attached with the boat, and a stone is tied up with the rope on the head. They throw the stone in there where they thought that conch shells are found. After that they get down into the sea with the rope and collect the conch shell. They maintained a time for collection, if required time is over than another man went there because they thought that person faced same danger. By this process conch shell is collected. But now conch shell is collected by using net.

This raw material is the main ingredients of conch shell art. But problems are same and that is the artists did not get raw materials at fair rate. They bought those from black market or from merchant prince at a high rate because they did not get help from Manjusha. Due to this everybody need the Governmental help. They also told that in spite of that there are no other problems because now they produce the articles by machines and so the production must be increased .Eight artisans are needed for making
conch shell bangles. Sometimes the numbers become less or more.

They divided their work like that -

1) Break the conch shell by hammer according their size.
2) To remove the internal objects (Gara) from the conch shell.
3) To remove the round portion of the conch shell which is need for conch shell bangles by Majhar.
4) To give Jhapani.
5) To cut conch shell according the shape of the bangles.
6) To smoothens inner and outer portion of the bangles.
7) Make design.
8) Do acid polish.

The conch shell bangles of here go to the different areas like Kolkata, Bihar, Assam, Tripura, Odisha etc. and when the foreigners came to here they also buy various conch shell products from here. But they do not get any help from the women members of their family. Their women members do household works only.

KOLKATA

Many people of the conch shell dealers are lived in the area of Amherst Street and Bagbazar and there are many shops of conch shell also. But we can find conch shell artists only in Bagbazar. All the artists from here mainly coming from East Bengal. After the division of Bengal rehabilitated conch shell artists spread in Kolkata and other various areas. They are the main among them. The raw materials are coming from the Madras (Chennai) and Kolkata areas of Kolkata. The persons who imported the raw materials in Kolkata, they are mainly Muslims and they imported the conch shell from South India and Sri Lanka. In spite of Bagbazar in Kolkata it must be mentioned the conch shell dealers of Ashok Nagar, Dum Dum etc. They are also coming from East Bengal. Another information we knew from them that every Sunday in the month of Agrahayan they worshipped Illattaparameshuari in day and Nataichandi in night by using paddy banana, radish, oranges kept on the small pitches.

Their life styles become changed in the time of Left Front Government but now their conditions become worse. Because they got aid from West Bengal Handicraft Development Corporation or Manjusha or Bangashree at before but now they did not get any help from them to import raw materials.

One of the artists told us how their conditions become progressive. They told us raw materials are the main problem of this art. If these are
distributed by the government then they will be benefited. Because the cost will be increased if they buy that from open market. Due to this they become looser. Secondly, they told us there is so much demands of conch shell art. If higher authority stand beside them then they would be befitted. Thirdly, if the Co-operative Society also started to work again with them then their thinking become decreases. An artisan and member of 'Sankha Silpa Banchao Committee' told us that their demands mainly of eight types:-

1) To lift the conch shell from the oceans by the effort of the Government by a regulating method.

2) Need Governmental regulation or control in the distribution of the raw materials.

3) To take appropriate Governmental methods for improving the conditions of the conch shell dealers.

4) To give priority in the self appointing process according their educational qualification and ages.

5) Remove the obstructions for the bank loan.

6) Arrange pension for the old artists.

7) Take them under insurance.

8) Arrange Provident Fund for all conch shell artists.

HOWRAH

There were some proofs of existence about conch shell dealers in Howrah. Bantul in Bagnan Police Station of Howrah is the main centre of conch shell art. But the artists of here now are not conch shell dealers in their castes. But all of them are the people of West Bengal. The existence of this art remains here from approximately hundred years. Gosto Karmakar is the inventor of electrical conch shell cutter. The work of the stockist is to supply raw materials and running the business by the local workers. Local artists work mainly under them. Again sometimes some artists of other places buy raw materials from them. But local artists also bought raw materials from Kolkata also. Their art became disturbed due to the problems of raw materials. So rich merchants did not give them abundant work, though the artists want to do work.

PURULIA - BURDWAN - BIRBHUM

The conch shell art of Purulia, Burdwan and Birbhum are not so famous. But there are some conch shell shops and conch shell dealers. The
conch shell dealers who have shops there they all are not conch shell dealers according their castes. Yet they are engaged with this business, they all are not conch shell artists. They are seller. They run their business by buying conch shell articles from various places of Murshidabad and Bankura. But there are some old artists who lived in Purulia, Burdwan and Bribhum made red conch shell bangles. Red conch shell bangles mainly made by fine conch shell, lac, string etc. Red conch shell bangles are made in Ghooranash, Baghasan of Burdwan, Suiri, Karidhya Baram, Rampurhat of Birbhum. But most of the red conch shell bangles of West Bengal are brought from Ghutghutia of Bankura. These are used mainly in rituals and marriage ceremony of Hindus. But there are very few shops in Purulia, Burdwan and Birbhum. The conch shell dealers who have shops in Burdwan they are not conch shell dealers by their castes.

The relation of economy is very much important with the origin and development of the art. We can see the changes also occur in the conch shell art also. In the past a half circle saw is used to cut conch shell which is known as conch shell saw. But now it is not in use. In that place electrical saw is used now. In spite of that the artists of both Bengal are engaged with this art. The artists also agreed that the demand of conch shell art is now developed in many places. The demand of conch shell is very much outside of Bengal like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha etc. Not only in India conch shell has demand in abroad also. Earnings of many people is also attached with this art. So the artists has a hope of the revival of conch shell art:

1) The main problem of the conch shell art is the raw materials. If it is possible to distribute the raw materials by the Government in a democratic way then this art becomes flourished very much.

2) There is an arrangement of Governmental loan but its method is so much complex. So illiterate person do not apply loan for their need and they have a feeling about that they may be cheated.

3) It must be needed to stop taken the excess price of the raw materials. Government should take the necessary action.

4) To make attraction of the Government for all artists besides award winner artists.

5) To renovate those organization by which the raw materials are brought. Some artists told to bring raw materials by Zilla Parishad. So, it must be think.

6) To arrange to give award, and inspiration for the conch shell artists and to arrange most art exhibitions for improving the conditions of conch shell artists.
7) When raw materials are not obtained from the sea, then make an arrange of raw materials by preserving them when those are obtained from the sea in a large quantity.

8) To arrange various improving programme for the conch shell dealers and to give advantages according their age and qualifications.

9) Some persons said for arrangement of the insurance, pension and provident fund for the conch shell artists.

10) To think how artists can get aid from non-governmental organizations. Otherwise we lost a chapter of glorious history.

The main motive for the origin of conduct beliefs and reforms is to fulfill the aim of the man. The conch shell is attached with Indian culture from many years. Its auspicious appearance is agreed in the field of art, literature and sculpture. The conch shell has played a great role in two stages of our life styles - in the time of birth and marriage when a male child (now female child also) born in the family, then family members welcomed him by playing conch shell. In spite of that in various rituals like worshipping of Mother Sashthi, Annaprasan (taking rice for the first time in mouths), holy thread ceremony, birth day celebration conch shell and playing of conch shell is must. Conch shell is also attached with various female rituals at the time of marriage. Conch shell is kept in the wicker tray with other articles and used this tray when new bride has come to his husband’s house for the first time to welcome her. One conch shell is played in the bride's house before the moment of coming bridegroom. After coming of the bridegroom two conch shells are played. In here conch shell played an important role for the two lives. Again white conch shell bangles and red conch shell bangles lac-dye and mercuric sulphide are used for the bride. This rituals are attached with our fertility cult. Due to the colour of our blood is red, so red colour is in the form of sexual love. Again conch shell bangles are very pious and valuable for every Hindu women. It is a sign of married woman. They wear these bangles for husband’s fortune. There is a reform famous for conch shell bangle that it is used always and do not remove it because it is agreed to be attached with husband's fortune. Not only that if it is broken, it must be said "conch shell bangle becomes big". Not said that it is broken. Not only that when it is removed from hands for cleaning, then it is said that "looseness of hands" because there is a fear for widowness. This prohibition is prevailed to protect her husband. If one of the bangle is broken then other is removed by her husband. But when a woman becomes pregnant then conch shell bangles are not in use. This is the Tabu. In the primitive society if the rules are not followed then punishment had been given.

It is said that conch shell do not keep on the bare ground because it
is kept on the bare ground, then it would be damaged. For this it is said that conch shell must be kept on anything. This reforms must be grown from 'Devipurana'. Because we can found in the ninth part of the book in where it is written that conch shell, tools, salgramsila, flower, basil leaf, the rosary, shivalinga, pearl and holy there and never kept on the bare ground. If anyone do this he will go to the hell. The story of Devibhagabat is - one day the earth went to the God and said that she will not able to keep the weight of some things. These things were the above things. From here it is cleared that the main origin of our reforms is the Puranas. In spite of that conch shell is the main ornaments of Narayana. Not only that conch shell is an ornament of Mahakali, Durga, Jagatdhati, Maha Lakshmi, Joy Durga, Maha Saraswati, Matangi etc. Holy Salgram Shila is used to bath by the water of water conch shell. Not only that it is also said that every holy place is located in the conch shell. For this cause conch shell must be worshipped. The people who worship conch shell he get very much wealth. The role of conch shell is described very much in the chapter Prabodhini of the book "Varaha Purana". It is also said that the man who use the water of the conch shell, the ghost has driven away when they saw him. Expect Shiva the water of the conch shell is like the water of the holy place. Only Shiva has enimity with conch. So Shiva used the water of copper pot for his bath. There are a famous reforms that Hari always stays in the conch shell. So its another name is Haripriya.

The conch shell has a great importance to the Santhal, Munda, Ho, Harin etc. The conch shell is like the symbol of female reproductive organ to them. They use both red and white conch shell bangles. They thought that if they played the conch shell by raising their mouth, then God can listen the sound and get all the news of them. Again the aborigins society of West Bengal burnt the small conch shell and used the dust as a lime. They used the lime with dried tobacco leaves as an intoxicating drug. They also used it as a medicine when any part of the body becomes injured. They also thought that conch shell has also a good power which can destroy evil power.

- **BAMBOO & CANE**

Bamboo & Cane work, specially basketry, is one of the oldest crafts known to man and is universally practised wherever necessary raw materials are available. Bengal had a rich fund of these materials, and the artisans had a tradition of producing beautiful utility articles from bamboo and cane for household uses. Baskets of different kinds - from they day labourer’s ordinary work basket to very finely woven and decorated travel basket - had been a major item of production of the bamboo artisans. T.N. Mukherjee, writing about Indian Art Manufactures for Glasgow International Exhibition, 1888 said "In Bengal, oval boxes called Petaras are made of ratten cane,
which are sometimes covered with leather, and are used to keep clothing and all sorts of family valuable. They are light, strong and well-fitted for travelling purpose. These boxes are now going out of fashion and leather protmanteau and steel boxes imported from Europe are now taking their place. Formerly oblong boxes, called Jhampis were made of thinly sliced bamboo in which valuable documents were kept. Tin & Wooden boxes have now taken their place. Baskets of rattan and bamboo & canes are made all over the country and form an important feature in the domestic economy of a Bengal household.  

Bamboo and Cane crafts of West Bengal have roots mainly in Cooch Behar, which is the production house of a special kind of cane known as 'Maranta dichotoma'. Besides Cooch Behar, Bankura is also wellknown for bamboo crafts. West Bengal the land of art and craft, has skilled craftsmen for creating delicate items out of bamboo and cane. West Bengal has more than 35000 artisans who practice this craft in different districts of rural Bengal.  

Man has known basket weaving and mat making crafts since the dawn of history. (Plate No. 28) It is thus one of the oldest craft forms. The tribals do most of the basketry and mat making work in India. Today, it adorns the homes of the rich and elite and mud houses alike. Many useful as well as decorative items are made out of it. Fishing contraptions, bamboo and leaf headgear for tea garden workers etc. are used as handicraft items.  

Bamboo, botanically known as bambusa, belongs paradoxically enough to the family of humble grass, everywhere either in its useful role in a frugal household or rather uselessly as showpiece in exhibitions and in the abode of the rich art lovers.  

In West Bengal varieties of bamboos are available. Each type of bamboo has its own characteristics. The gonda, goda and genthe bamboos are thick, heavy and knotty while the beseni, muli and talta bamboos are light, thin and hollow. The uses of different types of bamboos vary according to their durability, characteristics and appearance. The thick and knotty bamboos are mainly used for structural purposes for making furniture and fencings.  

The thin, straight and hollow bamboos are commonly used for making containers fish traps, baskets etc. Bamboo is always susceptible to the attacks of germs and fungi. So it calls for chemical treatment. Generally the matured bamboo poles, after collection from bushes, are first cut into pieces and then boiled in large vat in 2% boric acid solution and 2% borax in water. Then pieces are dried under the Sun on the bed of sand. In this process the bamboo pieces are made immune of the possible attacks of germs and fungi. Some bamboo pieces are found to have been attacks of germs and fungi. Despite all this some bamboo places are found to have
been attacked by green and orange fungi during the monsoon, in that case they are treated in a saturated solution of 1% sodium pentachloroplenete in alcohol, which is applied by brush. (Plate No. 29)

Instrument used - Billhook drill, chisel, planer, hacksaw, scissors, sand paper, adhesive, brush.

Technique :
1) The bamboo is first cut into suitable pieces with the billhook.
2) The skinned and cut into fine strips.
3) These are cut into further fine strips.
4) The strips are then wetted in water then weaving or construction is started.\textsuperscript{21}

A unique and beatiful manifestation of the magnificent artistry of West Bengal is Sitalpati which are mats made out of Mutra cane. Great skill and artistry are required to join and interlace thin stripe of Mutra cane to prepare these mats. These are also known as ‘cool mats’ owing to their property of imparting coolness. These mats are fine and glossy, having a remarkable smoothness. The process of preparing these mats includes dying the strips of cane with striking colours to form beautiful patterns. The craftsmen of North Bengal make attractive motifs of different shapes including diamonds, zigzags etc. and many more on the Sitalpati. (Plate No. 27)

Basketry is another extensively practiced and well admired craft of West Bengal. Cane baskets are made of special kind of cane found in North Bengal. These particular canes are long lasting and the baskets made up of bamboo are also exquisite creations. Special variety of these baskets is made for marriage purposes with auspicious paintings on them. Additionally flower baskets, oblong caskets and oval boxes also deserve a special mention in this artistry.\textsuperscript{22}

A kind of unique well panels for Indian village huts are also crafted by the local craftsmen in West Bengal. These panels are formed by the thick and the hollow variety of cane. Apart from this cane containers also enlist themselves among the specialities of Bamboo & Cane crafts of West Bengal. These containers are firstly smoked to bring about a brown shade and then traditional poker work is conferred on them. The artisans of West Bengal also create articles that are used as home decors. (Plate No. 26) A huge variety of exclusively designed furniture that catches the fancy of rural as well as urban people is crafted with bamboo and cane. Besides this elite handicrafts that are displayed in the exhibitions are also examples of elegant
and stylish crafts of bamboo and cane. A famous musical instruments flute is also crafted from bamboo.

Bamboo and Cane crafts of West Bengal are great contributors in the economic growth of the state of exploited in the right manner. The State Government is making considerable effort to develop and promote this industry. The National Bamboo Mission Programme is an effective initiative taken in this regard. This Mission funded programm aims at encouraging bamboo plantation, production and increasing employment opportunities in this field.

Bamboo and cane crafts of West Bengal are highly acclaimed due to its designs and intricate weaving techniques. The artisans of this state have received great admirations from the entire country through exhibitions and trading of their creations. But in spite of having immense potential in Bamboo and Cane artistry West Bengal is still lagging behind in the international market. Lack of infrastructure including distribution channel, packaging and marketing support is the main cause behind this. Presently the handicraft department of West Bengal is concentrating on upgrading these crafts and achieving a firm grip in the international market.

**CLAY AND TERRACOTTRA**

Many ancient clay pots are discovered from the famous settlement areas of the Indian subcontinent. Clay pots are mentioned in the Rig Veda. Not only the pots, the other artistry of baked-clay like, dolls, toys etc. are used from the ancient age. In the specimen of Indus Valley Civilization the clay art is very famous. So the potter's (Pottery) art is started in Indian subcontinent about five thousand years ago. There are many proofs of potter's (Pottery) art are found in the areas of various places in where ancient culture was found. Various Potter's (Pottery) art that is clay pots are discovered by the archaeological investigations of the age of Maurya, Sunga, Kushana, Pala, Sena etc. Before and after the age of the Jesus Christ people become interested about the method and the artists of Potter's art. The pottery industry is very ancient. It is confined to a particular class of people who are called Kumbhakars or Kumars or the potter community in English.

We can know about the Kumbhakar or the potter's community from the ‘Tripitaka’ the sacred book of Buddhists and ‘Bidadgda Mukhomandal’ by Dharmadas from which we can understand the ancientness of the Rarh Potters. There are some stages in the Rarh Potters like Sinhajari, Barahajari, Ganaganya and Rajahati. In spite of this other some stages are present in the potters. They are Magya, Garaha, Gaburah etc. Beside the regional stage there are two other stages like Bhera (bearer) and Bajarya (who goes to the
There are many stories about the origination of the Potters. The scio1ologists revealed their views about flourishing of pottery that it is depend on the socio-economic surroundings. In this way a different tradition are created and flourished.

The main dictionary of the history of the people's life of the middle ages of Bengal are clay pot and clay sculpture of Potter's Art. We can get very few specimens of clay sculpture in undivided Bengal of the Pre-historic Age. Some broken statues were discovered by the excavation from the mound of Pandu King of Burdwan which were the symbol of hand made statues of women and Mother Goddess. Archaeologists Paresh Chandra Dasgupta has said that there were some foreign influences. Many specimen of tarracota sculpture of the historic ages were found in scattered condition in various places of Bengal and many specimens were discovered now by the excavation. These collections of the sculpture may regard as of two parallel traditional Art. (Plate No. 33) First, the devotional idols of God and Goddess of folk religion, birds and animals figures, (Plate No. 32) and playing dolls and toys which are made from village articles. Second, various beautiful designed which were used in the decoration of temples and houses in the learned society. The first type of articles are generally made up of hands and the other articles are made by mould. In some places the head of idols are made by mould but the body is made up by hand.

The main characteristics of the village art are very flat, simple and stout. Technically these are also very simple. Sometimes these stout form of the statues are not normal, they are only as a symbol. This type of art is very conservative. Stella Cramrish called these status are very past art, because it is not possible to classify the statues according their time in the method of the art. This art roughly flowed from past to the modern age continuously the statues of terracotta which got from the Chandraketugarh, Tamluk, Bangarh of West Bengal and Mahastangarh of Bangladesh are made by the same way of art.

The position of the potter's community and need of the potter's art in the society of the village are discussed from many days. The story of the potter's art and the potters are revealed in the Bengal literature. The archaeological specimen of the potter's art are seen in everywhere, so it is also come in the discussion of the literature. The various laws (clues) are mentioned about it in the social mirror of ancient India. Various occupations are mentioned in Yajurveda. In which we can know about the potter's community by the word 'Kulal'. Potter's art were also practiced in ancient India before the Christian era, it was known from the Buddhist literature 'Jatakas'. From the ancient flow of the literature we can know about the pottery and the Potter's Art.
Clay is the main ingredients in pottery. The variety of the subject matter of the pottery means the matter of the art which is made up of clay. We can see various articles of daily needs like pitcher, urn-shaped pot, plate, bowl, glass, an incenser, shallow earthen plate, small earthen basin, earthen barrel, small earthen pot, lamp stand, lamp etc. Again the characteristics of the art which is seen in the articles of daily use in various areas are an important discussion in potter industry. (Plate No. 35)

Diversity in the Subject Matter

The potter’s community is present all over West Bengal. The lexicographical meanings of the Potter is the person who make pitcher or pots. It is a traditional occupation. But not only the potter is attached with pottery paints and carpenters are also attached with pottery. At first clay is soaked by water and clay is prepared. After that articles are made by the clay. Then it is kept in the Sun for dry. After that it was burnt to give its permanent shape. This characteristics of clay inspire the people to making various articles. By doing this the pottery is not united its scope to make only household things. Mainly the things which we get from pottery are: (Plate No. 31)

1) Various ingredients made up of clay for the need of household.
2) The articles needed in worships and rituals like small pitcher, elephant, horses which is needed for dedication.
3) Clay pots for special needs - special 'Tandoor' for making 'Tandoori Roti', 'Big vessels' for preserving water for boat journey etc.
4) Toys - various toys according the areas.
5) The structure of various musical instruments like Mridangam, Tabla musical instruments of Bhuang dance.
6) Various house decorative objects can also be seen. Tiles are also included here.

In spite of these idols are also included though it is not burnt, it is made colourful by drying. It looks beautiful when it is decorated by different colours. Various articles of the pottery are essential for needs and they are glorious in their shape and the characteristics of the different areas. They are found in the every field of West Bengal. Their names vary according their founding areas and their shape also become different according their founding area. The shape of the pottery becomes different according their founding areas. Therefore it is difficult to draw a border line. Here it is mentioned that the pottery which are found in the different parts of West Bengal.
Bengal and the articles which are used in various rituals and dolls:26

1) Handi: It is a famous clay pot of different shape and size.

2) Pitcher: Its shape like a handi but it is big in size.

3) Shallow earthen Pot: It is round and its lower portion is oval. It is used to cover something. It is made for other uses also.

4) Malsa (a small earthen basin): It is made by mould and its shape like a half circle.

5) Ghot (a small pitcher): It is like a pitcher but it is small in size and it is used in Marriage devotion etc many rituals.

6) Jala (big earthen pitcher): Its look like a big pitcher and it is used to store many food items, water etc.

7) A small pot of Lakshmi: It is made in mould and it is used to store coins and its upper portion is narrow and its top is closed.

8) An incenser: It is used for worship and in household needs.

9) Lamp: It is made by mould or hand. Its one side is narrow for the uses of slender wick.

10) Tusu Khola: Its middle portion is made by mould and look likes shallow earthen plate, but there are some articles like lamps are presented in its edge.

11) Tulsi Mancha: Tulsi Mancha with basil plants attracts us prominently.

12) Minarate: To install Minarate on the top of the temples and mosque. Minarates are made in the Kanthalia in Murshidabad District.

13) Manashachali: Manaschachali is like a chalchitra which is decorated. Numbers of heads of snake make its very beautiful.

14) Dolls and Toys: Like (a) idols of God and Goddess, (b) various shape of human figure, (c) joker doll, (d) the figure of birds and animals.

TECHNIQUE

The antiquity of making pottery dates back to the time of new stone age. So the technique of making pottery is about ten thousand years old. The technique is varied from place to place but it is an ancient cultural stage of man. Like the uses of potter’s wheel is not practiced by the Nagas Kukis of North Eastern India, or in the Nicobar Islands. Again after the
collection of clay and making the clay properly, the pottery is made and after that various types of colours are used in it. For this the pottery becomes very much attractive. The ancient method of making baked clay articles are present in the various areas and they are prominent by their special characteristics. Now the old method has been changed. In the ancient age the making of clay pot was an amazing fact. There are different types of pottery according the differences in their geographical location. Various types of potteries are found according the speciality of the characteristics of the different places of West Bengal. The shape of the pottery varies though their uses are same. Their names are different according their founding areas. Not only for the clay pots the differences of the shapes of the toys or other things are also becomes different. If we try to do comparative study of the clay pots, toys etc., then we see a lot of differences between them. Although they have some same characteristics. The ingredients which are needed for pottery are:

1) Clay : Clay is the main ingredients of pottery. So the primary work is to collect the clay. Collection of perfect clay fulfill the needs of the pottery. In many places clay are collected from the depth of 10-12 feet of the ground. The power of the heat resistance of the clay pot, its durability that is quality and external shape is mainly depended on the chemical properties of the clay. In many places clay is collected from the nearby areas of the rivers and beside canals or from the field.

2) Sand : Clay is made up by the mixing of sand. Pottery that is the uses and shape of the clay pot is depended on the proportion of sand. This sand is mainly collected from the bank of the river.

3) Colour : Different colours which are seen in the pottery (baked clay) and other things, they are made from the clay. A special colourful clay is used to make the colour. This type of colourful clay is found in special places. This colour is famous by its name 'Beluti', 'Banak' etc. Banak colour is made by the time spending method. In spite of this to colouring the clay pot, toys etc. the colour which is used in them is bought from the market. Water : Water is used as a primary ingredients for making clay and colour both. The nature of the useful clay is made up by the differences of water by which the articles of baked clay is made up of. Not only making of clay, water is needed for making articles by hand or mould to make it fire.

Tools use : The tools which are used by the potter during their work are as follows:

1) Mecha : The small and low sitting place which is used by the potter is known as 'Mecha'.

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2) Chak (Potter's Wheel) : To give the perfect shape of the clay this wheel is used. It is placed horizontally. This rounded part of the outside of the chak (Potter's Wheel) is known as 'Bata'. This 'bata' is made up of sand stone as well as it is also made up with the help of clay and bamboo. The small rounded platform of the potter's wheel which is placed in the middle is called 'plate' or 'head'. 'Place' and 'Bata' is connected with a small piece of wood. These small pieces of wood is known as 'Dasa' or 'Bego'. The number of 'Dasa' generally 'four' in number. In some places mechanical wheel like platform is also seen. The name of the wheel is different according the areas.

Beating : 28

3) Pitna : This beater with wooden handle is help to give proper shape the partly soft clay pot. It is about one feet tall.

8) Bole : This rounded thing made of by cement or sand stone is used to give proper shape of the pottery soft clay pot. Mainly when pitna is used to strike then the clay pot is placed its opposite side to give its proper shape.

9) Peta : It is a narrow piece, made up of bamboo, its measurement is one feet breadth and width one inch.

10) Thread : Thread is used to separate the things from the wheel.

11) Stick : To revolve the wheel a long stick is used. The wheel is revolved by sitting or standing with a stick is depend on the nature of the clay.

12) Chanchni : Chanchni is used to make clay.

13) Mould : Different articles are made up of wheel as well as hand or pitna by pressing.

14) Fuel : After drying on the Sun the clay pot is burn in the Pan or Kiln. Straw, cowdong, wood, leaf, coal etc. are used to burn Sun baked clay pottery.

15) Kiln : The last stage of making pottery is baking or burning. The clay articles are burnt in the kiln. It is of different shape and size.

Making of Colours :

After making the articles it is place in the Sun for drying. After that it is ready for to paint. In some places colour is not used. The making of perfect colour is also a special stage of making clay. (Plate No. 34)
The Handmade Articles:

The clay is made properly according the type of the pottery is to make. This type of pottery is prepared by pressing of hand and fingers. In the Evolution of the "Domesic Arts" it is observed: "In Asia the wheel is predominant, but the earlier methods are not entirely extinct; relatively little is known of the ancient pottery of Asia, except in parts of the West." Some dolls, globular vessels are prepared this way.

The articles made by Wheel:

The wheel is the symbol of pottery. After preparing the clay it placed in the rounded part of the wheel for its final shape. The founded shape part is known as head which is connected the rounded outside part with a wooden stick for making in firm.

Decoration:

After the making by hand or wheel the articles is needed for decoration. It is decorated when the clay is soft. It is made either plastic or pictorial. The plastic ornament consist of indentations, incisions, stamping,. It may be decorated with interlocking circles, wavy lines, zig-zag, cross lines etc.

Burnt in the Kiln:

The clay pot is drying at first in the shade and after that in the Sun. After colouring it is prepared for burning. It becomes hard and get its permanent shape for burning.30

A different culture is grown up in South 24 Parganas due to this geographical location and its surroundings which is bounded by river lakes and forests. Its special characteristics we can see in the Bara Idol (statue) we can see different types of clay pots in here.

In the end of nineteenth century E.W. Collins gave the some informations from which we knew that the things made from baked clay attract people very much which are made in the areas which are located on the bank of the river Bhagirathi in Burdwan district, though clay pots are made all over undivided Bengal. The potters of Rupnarayanpur done this job to fulfill the demand of the people of coaliery. Almost six hundreds people were engaged to make clay pots by the effort of Ms. Barn & Company in 1890. Although another works like decoration by bricks tiles, water pipe also done in there. The potters of the village had no idea to make the things glorious but they use a clay named Belutti which was found near Kalna. Although various clay pots were found in that area but no centre of making large elephants, horses are found here like Bankura, Medinipur or Purulia.
of Rarh Bengal. Some centres of making pottery was found in the area of Police Station Katwa of Ketugram, Mangalkot, Galsi etc.

The burnt clay works which had done in the various areas of Birbhum were the clay pots of daily use as well as the dolls of God and Goddess and toy dolls. Once upon a time Rajnagar of this district was a famous centre of making dolls.

The famous clay pots like pitcher, urn-shaped pots, frying pan were made in Purulia district. In spite of that the pots for drinking water for the animals and the pots uses to keep jaggery are also made in some areas of Purulia.

The pottery of Bankura is not only famous in West Bengal, it also famous all over the world. We feel proud for the terracotta horses which are made in Panchmura. Not only horses there are many potteries like elephants, manashachali, manaqshapitcher are also made in here. The big horses and elephants have special characteristics which are not only made in Panchmura of Taldangra police station, it also made in the areas of Sonamukhi, Raniband, Khatra, Onda, Sendara, Uliara, Vishnupur, Kalapathar etc. (Plate No. 30)

West Medinipur District has a special characteristic due to diversing of its geographical location and cultural variety. Lakshmi pitcher and the dolls of Dewali are famous with other things. The villages which are located nearly in police station of the district of East Medinipur are Raghunath Bari, Khasarvan Fakirganj. In Raghunath Bari weekly market was held on Sunday and Wednesday afternoon in where there are many shops of the potters of those three villages. Gokul Pal of Raghunath Bari was the famous artist of making burnt clay basil platform.

Four families of the village of Tantiberia of Howrah district make the things of baked clay like toys, dolls, the playing cars of four wheels, boat palanquin, black urn shaped pot etc. In here zinc is use for the decoration of clay dolls after burning. Not only the potters of West Bengal are engaged with baked clay, the other people also engaged with this job. The women painter of Bengal make tepa dolls. Wheels are not used in this work.

Not only painter of the clay many Muslims are also engaged with the job of baked clay. Though the little of many of the potters are Pal but there are many people whose titles are different. Mainly different titles are found in the district of East and West Medinipur and Bankura. The main titles which are found in the Bangalee potters are (1) Pal, (2) Das, (3) Bera, (4) Sakait, (5) Khan, (6) Pramanick, (7) Patra, (8) Kundu, (9) Barick, (10) Sannyasi, (11) Mondal, (12) Kumar,
Economy is the main subject in the bigger social structure. In the field of pottery the economy and demand of many things are very much important. The pottery becomes effortless due to import and production of many other things. The playing dolls are famous in the village fair and the time of festival before two or three decades. On that time there are no alternate dolls are made, so there are no space to choose other dolls beside of clay dolls. So the demand of clay dolls are linked with socio-cultural events, cultural relations changes of village conditions, changes of demands etc. In the field of socio-cultural events the development of pottery is so much important.

Now various articles are exported in various areas from West Bengal. Like that the articles of clay were also exported from undivided Bengal to the various areas. From that we came to know that there was a demand of pottery. Though the figure, shape, colour and names are different according the areas, there were a special tradition was therein which we can find the tradition of Bengal culture.

From the discussion about pottery of the western edge of Bengal we can know that there was a relation among Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha with West Bengal as well as Bangladesh. This Bengal is the part of undivided Bengal. We can know about that from the culture and pottery of both part of Bengal. There was also a relation between them.

Potter has made a special place in the village. The social character of undivided Bengal became change due to the division of Bengal, people’s migratory appearance.

**SMALL PITCHER**

The small clay pots which are used in festivals or religious service are known as 'Ghot' - small pitcher. Sometimes people worship popular God and Goddess in pitcher. Not only that some people complete their worship for Kali, Durga in 'Ghat'. Various types of 'Ghat' (small pitcher) can be seen in various areas of Bengal. At present Small Pitcher used in the decoration of house. But mainly 'Ghat' is used in the religious rituals. This was mentioned in the theory of origin of potter caste which was mentioned in before. The 'Ghat' (Small Pitcher) which is used for invitation of God is known as 'Consecrated Pitcher'. Pitcher is made up of various materials. Pitcher is made up by gold, silver, brass and other materials according the condition of family men but the uses of pitcher made up of clay has much importance. The pitcher which is placed with thinking and religious rules is meaningful
and with philosophical thinking. Like Pitcher must be fulfilled with water because water is life. To invest with life is done in the water. The pitcher with full water is placed on soil in where five types of crops are also installed and five gems are must be kept in the pitcher and five leaves, flowers and undivided fruits are also placed on the pitcher and then it is covered by new clothes in which mercuric sulphide is used for drawing the sign God is wealthy. He gives us wealth and peace. He is the cause of success. So we invite ‘him’ in the pitcher which is fulfilled by water and gems.

The word pitcher is mentioned in the Kalikapurana, Devipurana etc. as well as the book named ‘Kadambari’ written by Banabhatta in which there is a picture consecrated pitcher in the King’s palace. The philosophical thinking which is in the behind of the worshiping of Gods, this thinking also present in the worshipping of pitcher like ‘water’. In spite of that pitcher is the symbol of God power. Pitcher is called by various names according rituals and worshipping - Gate Pitcher’, ‘Consecrated Pitcher’, ‘Goddess Pitcher’, ‘Water Pitcher’, ‘Dabra Bara’, ‘Nagghat’, ‘Kaituri Ghat’, ‘Itu Ghat’, ‘Sitala Ghat’, ‘Ghat of Kartick’ etc. The painting by mercuric sulphide is also various types.

It is mentioned that the Snake Pitcher (Nag Ghat) of Manasha is bigger than other pitcher and there are numbers of Snakes (Plate No. 38) (1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 13, 42) according the customs of family. Again the pitcher of Tiger God Dakshin Roy is known as ‘Bara’. There are some pictures of snake hood is decorated on the body Manasha Bara. In some pitchers there are the pictures of Manasha whose face is like a woman which is new fashioned and supreme according its beauty, colour and nature. Colour is used in the idol of the Goddess. (Plate No. 39) It is an anthropomorphic form of Goddess Manasha. Manasha for evolution of her. There is a fertility cult which is included in the worshipping of Manasha as a mother Goddess. But the fertility cult is not present here as a crops, it is present in here as a symbol of breeding. Other Goddess are worshipped as a pitcher but in the Manasha’s Ghat. Manasha is present as a pregnancy woman. The idea of some people is that there is an unification occurred with Manasha in Puranas. In where the other Goddesses are abstract symbol, the symbol of Manasha is much ‘Real’. So the uses of pitcher in the society has come from practical to unpractical way with beauty, colour and diversity.

SARA (SHALLOW EARTHEN POT)

Earthen Pot of Bengal is not only used as a household articles, idols are also drawn on it. Mainly in Hindu society earthen pots of Lakshmi and Durga are agreed as an inevitable appearance of religious faith. In before its use is limited in Dhaka and Faridpur of East Bengal. But now before full
moon day of the month of Ashwin-Kartik Lakshmi’s earthen pot, Durga’s earthen pot and Radha Krishna’s earthen pots are found in Kolkata and 24 Parganas of West Bengal. Mainly earthen pot painting is similar with canvas painting. Mainly worshipping of Lakshmi is done in pitcher, canvas and wicker backed as well as in earthen pot. Durga earthen pot or sura, Radha Krishna Sara are also used as an artistry of house decoration. When the worshipping of Lakshmi in earthen pot was completed then it is kept in house as a religious articles and decorated artistry.

Goddess Lakshmi’s earthen pot is an article of artistry. (Plate No. 37) The first think which are discussed by us in a shallow earthen pot which is rounded, convex and concave. It is made by less money and less labour but it is accepted as a religious articles. Drawing has been done on its convex side for managing on the wall. The design is made on nature on its convex side. So it has a hint of symbol of nature. Again sometimes painting is done not only by copying natural beauty; it is made according faith or symbol of daily life. Goddess Lakshmi sits in the middle of the circular lines which lines are mainly blackish green, blue or red in colour. Her riding animal owl is sitting under her feet. The colours are used in here are blackish green, red, yellow, blue, black and white.

In Durga Sara sometimes there is a figure of Mahishasura Mardini (Plate No. 36) of Durga is painted by in Lakshmi Sara only same Lakshmi’s figure is painted all time. Two companions are seen on the both sides of Lakshmi Sara as well as in Durga Sara. Karticka, Ganesha, Lakshmi, Saraswati and Shiva’s figure on upper side can be seen as a companion.

They are drawn by coarse brush. The main figure is done in the rounded field occupying the area of 4/5th part but one 1/5th part of pedestal is drawn separately. There are some half circle bands on upper side in which there are motif of flower is drawn. The uses of colour in this painting is very much importance. Because in here the uses of Sambadi badi and bibadi is known by the artists. The uses of colour is under mentioned.

1) Sambadi - Two colours are completing.
2) Badi - One colouring is very much bright than other.
3) Bibadi - There is very much collision between the colours.

It is mentioned in here that in Indian Art Sambadi and Badi are used very much. It also mentioned that the two castes who are attached with the art of Sara (earthen pot) are (1) Potter and (2) Idol maker. Again some potters are also idol maker. When any potter became idol maker then there position in the society are also raising. Then they did not make clay pot, sara, thala etc. But in the beginning making of Sara and drawing on the Sara are done by some person.
The space in the Sara is limited. So there are small spaces to draw many thinking images. The paintings of reformation of tradition, religious thinking, geographical character are limited by using colours lines etc. So, the first condition of this folk art is glory of geometrical simplicity and straightness and Sara is gets its place in the folk art by obeying this condition.34

It is said that the main colours are mainly three: (1) Red, (2) Yellow and (3) Blue. The mixing colour is made by mixing those three colours. Like -

1) Orange (Red + Yellow)
2) Green (Yellow + Blue)
3) Violet (Red + Blue)

Another six colours are made by mixing with main colours and mixing colours.

1) Nasturtium (Orange + Red)
2) Garnet (Red + Violet)
3) Campanula (Violet + Blue)
4) Tarquoise (Green + Blue)
5) Sulphur (Yellow + Green)
6) Saffron (Yellow + Orange)

But in canvas painting mainly 3 main colours and first two colours of mixing colours are used. It is mentioned that using of mixing colour is absent in many places. So the paintings became attractive due to its arrangement diversity and method of mixing. Shade light and cast shadow are absent in folk art. Folk artist made this art by his own imagination, thinking and intuition.

● ORNAMENTS

Ornaments means decoration. Man has keen desire to decorated themselves. They wanted themselves to make beautiful in the eye of other people with fulfillment of their own also. This desire is very much effective on woman. They dressed themselves following nature, so they make their ornaments with things like flowers, fruits, leaves and feathers. Now in the society of aborigines people make their ornaments with feather, seed, cowries and the feather of insects.35 The words 'Arongkrit', 'Arangkriti' are found in Vedas which means Alankar (ornaments). But there are no concrete evidence
that from when people tried to make them beautiful. It was guessed that when cave people made their agricultural society, then their life became settled and from then eagerness of beauty arose in their mind and they started to reflect beauty.

It must be mentioned that the uses of ornaments are prevailed in the pre-Historic Age or Harappan Age, also necklace of man and woman, rings hair ribbons are found in the arcaeo logical remains of Mohen-jo-Daro. Not only that the uses of Mekhla, ear rings, anklets are also prevailed which are used by woman that time. There are some garlands like long pipe strings are attached with Mekhla. These strings make entered in the spacer of copper and bronze and two terminal are present on the two edges then the ornaments of rich people are made up with gold, silver, ivory and valuable gems and the ornaments of poor people are made up with conch shell, bone, copper, bronze and baked clay rings are also discovered.

It is also mentioned that the coverings of body are mainly classified into four class in the Drama of Bharata:36 (Plate No. 40)

1) Abedya - Kundal etc. the ornaments of ear.
2) Bandhariya - Katisutra, angada etc.
3) Khepya - Anklet, clothes.
4) Aropya - Gold string and various types of garlands.

But some shapes of ornament of that Age are now quite impossible to know. Various valuable ornaments were prevailed in the Ancient Age. The description of various ornaments are recorded in some Sanskrit texts.

1) The ornaments of Head : garland, yarbhak lalamak, apri, balpashya, paritathya, hanstilak, dandak, churamandan, churika lamban, mukut.

2) Coverings of forehead : patrapashya, lalatika.

3) The ornaments of ear : mukta kantak, dwirajik (use by both men and women). Now it is known as virbouli, trirajik, swarnamadhyha, bajragarbha, bhurimandal, kundal, karnapur karnika, talpatra, srinkhal, karnendu, utkhiptika balika, trikantak, joblolkundal, mukta kanta kundal (used by both men and women), bajragarbha now is known as ear rings and kanika kantarka.

4) Ornaments of neck : pralambika, urasutrika, devachhanda, guchha, guchhardha, gostan, ardhohar, manbak, ardha manbak, gutsardha, devachhandak, ekabali, nakshtramala, surika bhramar, nilalbonika, induchhanda, varnasar, vajrasankalika, vaikakika, manisopan, mandor, chotukar, sasthi, vaijayanti.
5) Ornaments of chest : padak and bandhuk.

6) Ornaments of arm : keyur, panchka katak, balay, chur, kankan.

7) Ornaments of fingers : rings, angulimudra. Rings have various name also according the uses of different diamonds like -

(a) Dwihirak, (b) Bajra, (c) Ravimondal, (d) Nandyavarta, (e) Navaratna, (f) Bajrabestak, (g) Trihirak, (i) Suktimudrika.

8) Ornaments of waist : kanchi, mekhla, rashna kalap, kanchidam, srinkhal, sarsan.

9) Ornaments of feet : pada chur, pada kantak, padapadma, kinkini, padakatak, mudrika, padangad, tulukoti, manjir, hansak, nupur. It is mentioned that 'Padakantak' is now familiar with name Painjor and Kinkini is 'Gunghur' in Bengal. But Kinkini is made up with gold.

It is remarkable that Indian ornaments is most famous and interesting matter in the world. There is an environment of wearing ornaments all over the body in our country. The cause is that our country has a tropical climate so there is no need of covering whole body by clothes, so, they wear ornaments. The examples ancient archaeological remains likes 'bead' or small garlands are found. The garlands are made by baked clay, stone, conch shell, covering of oyster, ivory small beads etc. The poor and middle class people use low cost stone, the stone which can found easily. The main stones are Aget, Karnelian, Quartz, Jaspar, Crystal, Feldsper Malatite, Steatite, Lapis, Layuli, Amethesit Garnet etc.

It is mentioned that gold-silver or gems are not occupied wealth of primitive man. Sometimes those stones were found but they were totally unknown of their uses. So, at first they used the ornaments of bones and baked clay. It is guessed that at first the ornaments of conch shell and iron were used. So, today also the ornaments of iron and conch shell get a special regard. Some aboriginal society the man who wore ornaments of those articles got special respect and those ornaments have magical power also. They tried to save them from black magic by wearing amulet as an ornaments. Again uses of photos of God and Goddesses in pendant, locket, garland have some motives. It is not only used in our country, it is used all over the world also. This type of magical faith is practiced in Bengal today. People believe that wearing amulet in neck, amulet in hand, ring in finger etc. can prevent them from illness, family strife, ghost fear etc. Sometimes it was seen that people wear nail of crocodile in waist by binding in with gold to recover from some illness. It is also seen that wearing a ring made up with gold, silver and copper, iron anklet on left leg wearing nails of tiger and crocodile on neck etc.

But the ornaments of head of the people was practiced from recent
Age. It is guessed that it was started from the starting of nineteenth century. In the Ancient Age people were armlet, seven string necklace etc.

In the nineteenth century Bengali women wore gold or silver ‘gingir’ in sinthi to wrap hair ponytel, gunji kathi of hanging bun, star pointed ends instrument uses of tied hair, comb, tiara, jhapti betle ends, many stars, flower, butterfly etc. In spite of those they also use nose ring, besar nose ring set with pendant for nose, dheri, makri pasa, jhumka, karnaphool, karbala, kar, kanphool kanakbouli, virboulior ear, choudani, champa by men, necklace, panchnali necklace, satnali necklace, dana, matardana champakali, chisue, hansuli, bichenecklace, helenecklace, tenri, kanthamala, jhilmil necklace, muktamala, sitahar, amulet, peart necklace for neck. Not only that some ornaments get its new name as kanthavaran kandi, gulbandh, mohoron, hauldil, kamranga necklace, dara necklace, mohanmala etc. There are some ornaments also which are worn in hands like bajubandh, jausan, ananta, bhaota, jasambank, mantasa, matardana, jalidana, murki amulet, palakanti, bautti, bangles, painche, gajra, tarh, baju, rasno, bangle for wrist, hand amulet, jasam, karan, amulet, ratanchur, narikal phool rings, ananta, karapadma etc. Ananda and Karan are also worn by men also.

There are many types of nose rings also like - makki, nose ring set with pendant nose ring, labanga, sateswari, besar, piplipat daibali, chamkibali, jhilkibali, annibali, chunnibali, dalbolak, chanbolak, hirakat etc. There are some nose pin also like dalim phool, labanga, baraiphool, chaltaphool, damalkat etc.

It is remembered that the uses of ornaments on nose is the result of Muslim influence. After that it spreads all over India. Generally nose ring is worn by unmarried girl.

The ornaments which are worn on waist are chandrahar, suryahar, got, biche, bang, bor, komorpata, kinkini, mekhla, nimphal etc. Got, bor, komorpata, bang are used by men of lower class and nimphal is worn by babies. Famous ornaments of feet are anklet, curve anklet, round anklet, ghumur attached anklet, hirakata anklet, keryur, pasuli, neur, manjir, tora, anatbicha, chara-angat, ghutki, gujripancham, tora, painjor, paora, charanpadma, benki, charancheand etc. The rich women who lived in Kolkata or area nearby Kolkata wore round anklet and charanchand. The uses of rounded anklet is worn by the women of Burdwan, Birbhum, Manbhum but Hindu women of Bengal not wear golden ornaments on their feet. Al-Beruni mentioned that men also used ornaments like women. They dressed wore karnakundal and used golden ornaments on their hands and feet. They wore angat, kara and chutki on their feet and rings, mudri in their fingers.
It must be mentioned that various types of ornaments of women are mentioned in Mangal Kabyas of Bengal of middle age. Gold ornaments are worn in Muslim society of India though the rich women of Bengalee Muslims wore gems jewellery and pearl instead to wear ornaments like Hindu women. According the description of Begum Rokea Sakhawat Hossain about wearing gold ornaments by a newly bride of Bihar was very interesting. She told that the newly bride wore 40 grains of gold ornaments on her head, 25 grains in her ear, 12 grains (bhari) in her neck, 150 grains on her hand, 65 grains on her waist and 240 grains on her feet. Skill of goldsmith of Kolkata and Murshidabad is very famous.

Most famous ornaments of nineteenth century are chandrahar, got and chain of waist, bangles, dum dum michri, jaroa, painche, chaldana, matardana, labangaphool gold rounded bangles, mantasa, baju, jagen jhamp, bilwapatra baju, pari kharu, diamond kata, jaroa chique, gonphhar, darihar chapkali, armlet of hands adn neck etc.37

After Independence goldsmith and gems jewellers get respect all over the world. The design of gold ornaments or gems jewellers attract people very much. Now the work of chelapat and panch work which are made by light gold also get respect among people.

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