



Indian Handloom Its Origin, evolution and varieties: A Critical Analysis

*Soumen Debnath

Assistant Professor and Head of the department, Political Science, Dwijendralal College, Krishnagar

Abstract

Perhaps India is the country which has maximum contribution in textile, especially in handloom textile to the world. India has the finest textile like muslin, brightest textile like silk, cheapest textile like jute and strongest textile like ramie. Even today Indian handloom and spinning wheel contributes maximum variation of designs and products. India mainly produces cotton textile products. Woollen handloom products are also produced in India.

Key Words: Evolution of Indian Handloom, Varieties, Influence of different countries.

The earliest records of the art of weaving are found in the Old Testament, where frequent hints are made to the loom and its products, of curtains of fine twined linen, and blue and purple and scarlet, with depiction of angel by skilled work. It is believed the earliest historical depiction to the art. The oldest remains of woven material that have hitherto been discovered were found some years ago in the ancient Swiss lake dwelling, which are believed to have belonged to the stone era. Abundant evidence of fishing-gear, consisting of cord, hooks were found. The remains of a kind of cloth, which appeared to be of flax, not woven but plaited, have been detected. Within the last few centuries nearly the whole surface of that portion of the earth which was unknown to our ancestors has been explored, and many races of men have been found that were not known even some decades ago. Nearly all of them were found to have more or less skill in weaving and spinning, mat-making, plaiting, netting, and the making of paper cloth. Since they have become acquainted with civilized nations, they have been able to obtain better and more suitable articles than they could possibly make for themselves, and, in consequence, they neglect their own mode of manufacture. But there are numerous specimens of their workmanship in various ethnographical museums, as well as the descriptions given by travellers the methods adopted for the production of such articles that

they were accustomed to their own use. There was a great resemblance in the method of working amongst the various tribes (Soundarapandian 2002: 4-5).

Historical Background of Handloom Textile Industry in India

Various types of textiles were produced in various parts of the world. Linen is produced from the fiber of linseed tree was developed in coastal Europe. Wool most probably developed in colder areas of the world. It is believed that woollen fibers were first developed in Middle East, Afghanistan and Kashmir valley. Cotton fibers were most developed in India and Peru, simultaneously. One of the oldest known specimens of spun cotton yarn was found in the ruins of Mohenjo-Daro, a city in the Indus Valley was deserted around 3000 B.C. The irony is that, the word “Cotton” is derived from the Arabic word “Qutun” or “Kutun,” but Arabian countries were not the origin of cotton. It might be because Arab was on the route when Indian cotton textiles were exported to Europe (Ghosh and Ghosh 2017: 1-8).

Silk, is considered as the most precious, and of all textiles were produced in and around China nearly 5000 years back. But this relates to Mulberry silk. On the other hand it seems all other varieties were developed in India. All the types of textiles were produced in and around Asian continent. India makes greatest contribution in textile sector in respect of quality, style, variety and so on. Indian handloom weaving has developed right from fishing nets to muslin, or baluchuri or benarasi or ikat or jamdani etc. Perhaps due to such route of development traditional reputed handloom textile are found flourishing either close to coastal belt or on banks of major rivers (Ghosh and Ghosh 2017: 49-54).

Before the discussion of gradual development of handloom textile industry in India, we should discuss the definition of handloom. A handloom is a loom that is used to weave cloth by hand. In other word handloom is a loom where weaving is done without the use of electric or automatic machine. Hand weaving is on pit looms, frame looms and stand looms generally located in weavers' houses. Weaving is primarily the interlacing of two sets of yarn- the warp (length) and the weft (width). The device that facilitates this interlacing is the loom. It important to mention that “handloom” is different from “power-loom”, is a type of loom that is powered mechanically by electric instead of using human power to weave thread into cloth. The power loom is a invention that combined threads to make cloth. Power loom are assembled in the weaving shed of mill and driven by electric motor by belts from overhead shafting. Power loom is a major advancement over the handloom (Development Commissioner Department of Small Scale Industries, Government of India 1995:11-13).

Indus Valley Civilization: During excavation work at Mohenjo-Daro, it was realized that an Urban Civilization, known as Indus Valley Civilization, was in existence in this area around 3000 B.C. Although there is no exact proof of dress of Indus people, however spindles and spindle whorls found during the excavations proves that spinning of cotton and wool was very common at that time. There was evidence to make us belief that the art of spinning of cotton and wool was known to Indus people. Some dyeing vessels

have been found in the debris of the Civilization, which proved that they also knew the art of Dyeing yarn (Soundarapandian 2002: 4-5).

Vedic Period: Spinning and weaving were highly advanced occupations in Rig-veda society. Their weavers were busy weaving cotton and woollen fabrics and there were others who did the work of dyeing and embroideries. There were female weavers called “Vayitris” and “Siris”. The term “Vasas, “Vasana” and “Vastra” refer to Gangetic Cotton manufacturers, woollen thread called “Verna Sutra” is mentioned in the later Samhita and Brahmanas. There are reference used by men and women, sandals made of boar-skin, cotton, woollen, and silk clothes, dyed and embroidered clothes (Nambiar 2013: 12-15).

Mauryan Period: Alexander the Great crossed the Indus river and moved on to the Indian Plains in 326 B.C. and died in 323 B.C. in Babylon. The Maurya Empire covered all of North India from Ganges to the Indus and into the Hindu Kush mountains. The Greek historian Herodotus, wrote about the India in 445 B.C. They process a kind of wild plant, instead of fruit produces a wool of a finer, better quality than that of sheep, and of this the Indians made clothes. He was obviously referring to cotton, and another Greek writer of the same century mentioned the bright colours of these printed fabrics and their popularity with the women of the eastern Mediterranean. It is believed that this period marks the stabilization of costume design in India. During this period, costumes became regional or zonal in character, royalty, soldiers, priests and other professions were given distinctive costumes (Soundarapandian 2002: 5).

Greek Influence: Bactrian, Greeks, Parthians, Kushans and Shakes influenced the Indian dress, as depicted on their coins. One of their goddesses is shown wearing a close-fitting long-sleeved bodice or tunic for the upper part of the body and trousers. A typical shari arrangement is found in the images of Greco-Buddhist, Heritage both from north-west and from Mathura. When Alexander invaded India in 327 B.C. he was impressed by our advancement. He took back with him some of our printed cottons as well as many of our finely woven silks, comparable to those of the master weavers of China, though the manner of decoration was similar to that of Persia (Soundarapandian 2002: 5-9).

When the Mohammedans invaded India in 711 A.D. they were intrigued by Indian painted and printed cotton fabrics. The famous ancient Indian fabrics include *mulmulhas* (king’s muslim), *jamdani* (figured muslin), *banarasi brocade*, *chand-tara*, *dhupchhaon*, *mapcher*, *morgala*, *manikar*, *jamaiwar*, *amilkar* (all *shawals*), *kashida*, *phulkar*, *bagh*, *makmal*, and other fabrics (Kumar and Ganesh 2014: 3-5).

Indian Brocades: Brocade is a king o weave and is also called embroidery made on a loom. The background may be taffeta, twill, stain or damask, usually of one colour or with a warp stripe to contrast with multi-coloured floral pattern. *Banarasi* brocade, the “fabric of dreams” is known as *kinknab*. These silk fabrics have coloured silk or gold threads interwoven to form the most attractive floral designs. The Indian brocades were made with gold and silver thread interwoven with silk threads or cotton silk blended yarns though they were earlier made entirely from fine gold or silver threads. *Himrus* are brocaded silk with cotton or wool blended with silk (Soundarapandian 2002: 5-9).

Handloom was set up in the houses or outhouses of weavers. Materials of weaving were generally produced by the artisans or with the assistance of neighbour with locally available goods. Weaving was often a subsidiary and seasonal profession and weavers used to move from plough to loom and vice-versa. With due course of time, it also gradually developed as market-oriented production to meet the needs of aristocracy, particularly the royal needs. Opening of the sea-borne trade route with countries of Asia and Europe provided a new avenue to the handloom weaving of India. The industry reached its excellence During Mughal period due to the royal patronage and supervision over production and quality (Das 2001: 14-15).

Variety of Indian Textile

Perhaps India is the country which has maximum contribution in textile, especially in handloom textile to the world. India has the finest textile like muslin, brightest textile like silk, cheapest textile like jute and strongest textile like ramie. Even today Indian handloom and spinning wheel contributes maximum variation of designs and products. We should discuss some varieties of Indian handloom.

Linen: Linen is a kind of textile given to us by an oil yielding plant called Linseed. In India, the plant is generally known as atasi in Sanskrit and most of the Indo-Aryan dialect. At present India is the second largest producer of linen. Although it is generally produced for its oil seeds and for the fibre. In India Linseed is rarely cultivated artificially. Although India has less yield in comparison to main producing countries, but Indian linen fiber has superior quality. This fiber is obviously coarse and hares. However they can be spun for being used for twins or for being woven into bags. It can also be woven into floor coverings, carpets, wall hangings and bed spreads. If appropriately designed value added items can be produced. Since oil seed is the target in India, we have no mother scope than to think about products from these coarser fibers from linseed since better fiber can be obtained before the seeds are matured. The spinnable quality of this flax are said to be lower than those of jute. It is highly lustrous, due to the wax which it contains. The wax imparts to it better spinning properties. The fiber is extremely strong twice or thrice as strong as cotton. It takes all dyes easily. It is a good absorbent and resists effects of mildew and moisture. Fabrics made from it lauder well.' India should give more importance to linen production. If proper planning is done we may cultivate linen flax in colder areas and oil seed in the hot areas and increase its production and export (Ghosh and Ghosh 2017: 1-9).

Ramie Textile: Ramie is indigenous to Japan, China and adjoining countries. We find its use in India from the ancient time. Ramie is known as *reha*, *pooah*, *puya*, *kawkura*, *kankura kurkunda* in different parts of India in different names. In early Sanskrit literature it is often mentioned as grass linen. Kalidas and Valmiki (writer of Indian epic Ramayana) had frequently mentioned the cloth made out of this fiber. The plant of ramie is neglected in India, because it grows wild in plenty particularly in North Eastern part of India, particularly in Assam but India has favourable soil and climate condition for its well production. The complicated processes and high price of production are responsible for its insufficient share in textile market. In Assam attempts are taken to blend ramie with eri silk. Attempts up to limited extent were also taken by a few textile producers in India to blend ramie with various kinds of fibers. Ramie and wool blended

blankets are found to be extremely good which gives a very soft feeling. Ramie or waste fibers can be very good raw material for the production of paper. If proper action is taken, at least in the area where it grows, it may be proved as an important fiber for textile producers (Ghosh and Ghosh 2017: 12-15).

Cotton Textile: India's pride in textile is mostly on cotton, especially on handloom cotton. In Sanskrit cotton is often called Bharatwaj, Karpas, Tula, or Karpas etc. The English word "Cotton" is derived from Arabic word "Qutun" or "Kutun" though cotton was never cultivated in Arabian countries. At present handloom cotton centres in India are in a morbid condition. Even coarse cotton products by Indian handloom weavers were very excellent. The quilted fabric called *laisingphee*, produced by Manipuri women artisans are excellent in respect of design, warmth and strength. It cannot be imitated by most modern textile mills. Not only shari, Indian cotton handloom products varieties are of gamcha, curtain cloths, bed sheets, bed covers, dress materials, scarf etc. The cotton yarn spun by women and woven by male and female artisans are so excellent in style and design, as if each cloth is painted with care separately.

Handloom weaving unfolded the artistic genius of the Indian weavers not only in colour scheme, but also in formal designs, geometry, texture and in durability. The weaver not only weaves with yarn, but also weaves with intense feeling and emotion. In the pursuit, the weaver is more concerned in creating beauty rather than merely providing with the requirement of clothing. The weaver is primarily an artist and then a technician in the craft. His designs in the fabrics reveal all the development of folk art. Even with all his or her skills artistry with all technological development, the handloom industry in India has been constantly plagued by the twin problems of irregular employment and low wages, leaving the weaver and his dependents in dire distress with hand to mouth existence.' To resolve the problems faced by handloom weavers, Central Government and many state Governments have established various organizations and various measures has been taken by both central government and state governments (Ghosh and Ghosh 2017: 30).

Muslin: The word muslin came from the name of the city of Mosul, situated in Iraq. This city claimed as the home of muslin, because Aran traders exported muslin to Europe from Mosul. Dhaka in Bengal presidency (Now in Bangladesh) and Masulipatnam in Madras Presidency, were known as the production site of exotic muslins in the Muslim rule. Some scholars also argue that the term muslin might come from the word Masulipatnam. But there are historical proof that Pharaohs of ancient Egypt used muslins to cover mummies and the Roman historian Pliny, mentioned that jhanna muslins were used by higher rank Roman ladies in Imperial Rome. There were varieties of muslins during Mughal period in India. The product named as Sarkar-E-Ala was used for turbans of Mughal Emperors. Imperial Rome also liked and imported muslins with gold and silver embroideries. The varieties of Dhaka muslins were named as Kasidah, Qutun-E-Rumi, Nanbati, Yahudi, AlizolhaandSamandar-Lahar.

Although perhaps not so fine as legendary fabric a piece of muslin brought from India (to England) about the year 1786 AD, proved conclusively that the hand works of that country could produce a yarn and fabric of exquisite fineness. Comparing the yarn with modern standards the yarn number was 250. The length of one pound of 250 count yarn would approximately 119 miles just to give an idea about its extreme fineness'

(Ghosh and Ghosh 2017: 36). Indian muslin was very fine and costly. It is reported that fine muslin produced in and around Kendrapada and Jagatsingpur of Orissa was exported through Balasore port.

Woollen Textile: Wool is known as “Pasham” in India and develops in colder areas like Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, hills of West Bengal, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, and few places of Central and Western India. Generally, wool is spun from hair of various types of sheep and woven into various types of fabrics usually meant for winter season or cold climate. In India sheep wool is spun by drop spindle mostly in Kashmir, hills of Uttar Pradesh, foot hill of Himachal Pradesh and Eastern and North Eastern hills. The spinning is done by women as their subsidiary occupation. Wool of four ply was used for knitting purpose also by women with the help of knitting sticks. After independence, wool textile industry, especially handloom woollen weaving was developed with the active assistance of Khadi and Village Industries Commission. Bageswari Charka was first developed for hand spinning of wool in hill areas of Uttar Pradesh. New Charka developed then, and process of development still going on. (Ghosh and Ghosh 2017: 46).

Woollen carpet weaving was traditionally known in Kashmir and few places of Arunachal Pradesh. *Carpas* cotton of these areas is very popular. Carpet weaving is spreading in fastest speed in last few decades in Indian conventional and non-conventional regions. Non-traditional areas like Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, where carpet weaving was unknown became one of the important sources of employment to weavers. After Iran banned production of *carpas* in their country, India became principal carpet exporter in the World.

Silk Handloom Textile: India ranks third in silk production after China and Japan. All varieties of silk (Muga, Eri, Mulberry and Tassar) are produced in India. In the First to Fourth Century AD silk was used mainly by royal and elite people in India. Initially sericulture grew under royal patronage. Mogul Samrats encouraged silk weaving in North India. Tipu Sultan patronized silk in the state of Karnataka. Sericulture and silk weaving in undivided Bengal was developed under the patronise of Nawabs of Murshidabad. In North East and Assam silk grew naturally. British emperor encourages silk production in India since British were able to profit out of silk selling in European markets.

India's share is more than 7 per cent in world silk production. In general, production of Mulberry silk production in India has been increasing. Indian silk production was 900 metric Ton in 1951 and in 1981 the production reached 5000 Metric Ton. In respect of Mulberry silk in India, Karnataka's share is about 63 per cent and west Bengal's share is about 12 per cent. The remaining 25 per cent silk is produced in the rest of the country. In Karnataka main districts of silk production are Kolar, Bangalore, Mandya, Tumkar, and Mysore. Andhra Pradesh is fast increasing silk production. In Tamil Nadu sericulture was originally confined to Dharampuri and Coimbatore districts but later spreaded to Ramnadhampuram and other districts. In UP the main silk producing area is Doon Valley. Ganjam, Gajapati and Kalahandi districts are main silk producing area. In West Bengal main silk producing districts are Maldah, Murshidabad, Birbhum and Nadia. In Assam Mulberry cocoon rearing was traditionally grown in Shibsagar district. In Manipur silk producing areas are Laimran, Khur, Khul, Sekhmai Fayang etc (Ghosh and Ghosh 2017: 62-65).

Baluchuri: In 14th or 15th century, during Moghul rule a group of experienced handloom silk weavers from Banaras migrated to Bengal and settled in a villege named Baluchar near Jiaganj in Murshidabad District of Bengal. The term “char” means a land or delta created due to track change of a river. Here Baluchar village is created out of the track change of Bhagirathi River. These weavers were patronized by Nawabs and Nobles to manufacture dresses exclusively for them. The weavers used to produce special type of clothes for Nawabs throughout the year. The average productivity was two to three sharis per family per year (Chowdhury 2014: 9-10).

East India Company patronized the weavers as long as silk shari export to Europe was a high profitable business to them. With the introduction of British mill made cloth in India, gradually it was difficult for those famous weavers to survive. At the same time their village Baluchar was washed away by Bhagirathi river and they were forced to migrated to Jiaganj and other places of Murshidabad district. The lack of government patronage and natural calamities forced this group of handloom weavers to desert this famous profession and with the passage of time the famous art of Baluchuri weaving faced the prospect of abolition (Chowdhury 2014: 9-11).

After independence Central Government tried to revive this art in West Bengal and South India but could not achieve much success. Around 1956 AD Sri Akshay Kumar Das, a designer of Government of India's Textile Design Centre, Sri Hanuman Das Sarda, Chief Organiser, Silk Khadi Seva Mandal Vishnupur tried to revive Baluchurishari weaving at Vishnupur sub-division of Bankura district in the state of West Bengal. With the subsidy by the Design Centre of Government of India, Silk Khadi Seva Mandal of Vishnupur was able to produce first Baluchuri shari in the year 1957. Since ancient process of production of shari production was time consuming which caused escalation of cost of each shari, it became difficult for getting market. To overcome higher production cost Jacquard loom was introduced with punched designs which ensured higher production, higher wage with low production cost. There is a lot of difference in the quality of classical Baluchuri and modern Baluchuri. The modern Baluchuri produced with the help of Jacquard does not hot have reversible design with fineness (Chowdhury 2014: 14-18).

Ikat Art and Handloom Textile of Orissa: Weavers are generally called ‘Tanti’ in Oriya, a term derived from ‘Tant’, meaning handloom. This Oriya term has a similarity with Bengali term ‘Tanti’, means weaver and ‘Tant’ means handloom. In Orissa handloom are concentrated in the districts of Sambalpur, Bolangir, Phulbani, Puri, Cuttack, Balasore, Nuapatna, and coastal Orissa. Before British rule in India, handloom weaving of Orissa was flourished due to royal patronage. Coastal Orissa was famous for fine muslin cloth, Nuapatan and western Orissa for silk. The cloths of Orissa had international reputation and usually exported to Arab, Iran, Egypt, Pegu Malaya, Sumatra, Java and Europe.

The handloom weavers of Orissa are famous for their expertise and are capable of producing cloth of unique design locally known as ‘Bandha’, (tie and dye design). Along with Orissa Gujrat, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh are also famous for ikat shari production. Weavers of Orissa

mainly produce single ikat unlike double ikat of Gujarat. Ikat is the international name for tie and dye. The term originally derived from a Malayan word and tie and dye handloom weaving still continue in Malaysia and Indonesia. The first book on ikat or tie and dye was written by Marie-Louise a lady from Switzerland. In her book named “*Ikat weaving from Southern Europe*”, she said ‘*Ikat* is a Malayan word and refers to a technique for producing pattern in a fabric by partly – dyeing the thread before weaving. The textile consumer will be familiar with the art from the numerous example found among Indonesian woven fabrics, but it is not commonly known that this complicated rescue process is also practiced in some parts of Europe’ (Ghosh and Ghosh 2017: 165).

The Orissa weavers in general and weavers of western Orissa in particular derive the design from their imagination without paper design except in case of complicated designs. We can say that Orissa’s *ikat* designs are more indigenous, in comparison to Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat. The uniqueness of any *ikat* design is that, it produces some prominent design on both sides of cloth. This is primarily because the design is on the base fabric and the yarn is dyed instead of cloth. The second advantage is, this design does not require any extra yarn for creation of design. The common pictures of Orissa’s *ikat shari* design are lotus and other flowers, fish, deer, creepers, elephant, lion, tiger etc.

There is also influence of Jagannath cult on ikat art of Orissa. Many of the designs are taken from the paintings and carvings of famous Jagannath temple of Puri. The difference dresses of Lord Jagannath like *Boirani, Baralagi, Pata, Geetgovinda, Khanduapata, Negpuri, Goda, Cheheli, Matha, Abakha, Tadap, Sasungapata* etc., are creation of weavers of Orissa. In *Geetgovinda, Khanduapata* the *Sanskrit sloke* are part of design which is unique feature of their talent. Notable varieties of Orissa’s *ikat shari* are *chariphulia, bhanumati, bichitrapuri, nakhatrabhusana, panchabati, manihare, muktamala, bijoymala, priyatama, madhumati, padmasana rajashree*, etc. Weavers of Orissa are also famous for another design of handloom weaving called *muktapunji*. This design is usually created with a higher count yarn on a lower count base cloth on entire cross section of the cloth. The design resembles bunch of pearls, *mukta* means pearls, *punji* means bunches. Each weaver communities of Orissa are experts to create new world of handloom weaving if proper support of technology, design, dyeing and marketing of products be given. (Soundarapandian 2002: 40-42).

Handloom Textile of Nagaland: There are sixteen recognized talented tribes in Nagaland. Generally, it is said that all these tribes have almost similar textile technology in respect of design and production process. Detail study shows that, although base of the technology is more or less same, there is difference in production process and design. Nagas were considered as primitive people until renowned anthropologists Hutton, Mills discovered that how rich the heritage of those tribes was. Naga weavers depict rainbow design on shawls with density of yarn much higher than any handloom cloth of not only in India, but also anywhere of the World (Soundarapandian 2002:12).

The first step of handloom cotton textile is ginning, which is done by old Naga women. In other parts of India handloom weavers mainly use fly shuttle or throw shuttle loom, but Naga weavers use lions loom which is known as Indonesian Tension loom. Tribes like Ao Naga, Rengmas, Changs use printing in

handloom cloth. Ao tribe also produce silk fiber. They produce silk cloth denser and superior in quality, suitable for cold areas. According to G.K. Ghosh and Shukla Ghosh, 'There was tradition of spinning and weaving using coarse wool too in some pockets. During yesteryears, Naga shawl woven out of wool having rainbow of colours and if we use one, we can not only full high standard of weaving but also comfort that reflects Naga hospitality. The spinning used to be done by *tuklee* (or spindle) and weaving by traditional lions loom, while the yarn was dyed by natural vegetable dye' (Ghosh and Ghosh 2017: 181).

Phee: The classical handloom textile of Manipur is phee. The land of gems, was known as Subarnabhumi in ancient India. Meithis (original inhabitant of Manipur) use hand-spun and hand-woven cotton fabric as part of their traditional ritual. There are few places like Khonjam, Kakching etc. which are famous for superior quality of hand spun yarn. Perhaps Manipur is the only state in India where *tarang* or *charka* is still being sold in many big markets. This is one of the main reasons why handloom and *khadi* have good market in Manipur. Handloom operation was believed to be inevitable for Manipuri people during ancient period. They used to produce short staple cotton, ginning them by hand picking or by simple hand operated gins, rolling them into sliver by hand over a thin stick or grass, spinning them into yarn either by *tarang* or *charka* and finally weave them into cloth by lions loom.

Silk was introduced in Manipur during the rule of the powerful king Khagenba about thousand years ago. There are varieties of handloom made dress material in Manipur. *Fanek* is a piece of cloth (made out of cotton or silk) to go one and half times round the body; this gives free space for legs during walking. The famous textile of Manipur is laishen phee (laishen= cotton, phee = cloth). In this variety, cotton sliver is used alternatively in weft on which the warp runs creating a thick stuffed fabric with wavy surface. G.K. Ghosh and Shukla Ghosh, describe varieties of Manipuri handloom textile; such as *kemang chapta*, a white cloth with purple patterns of scrolls stamped on it by means of wooden blocks, which are believed to have been introduced by Chinese merchants around 1630 AD. *Phee-ge-napu* is an orange-coloured cloth which was meant for person of higher class. Now it is open to common people. *Gulap machu* is a rose-coloured silk cloth, of pretty pink shade was worn by privileged person who hold office or enjoy the royal favour. Now it is also used by common public. Use of turban or *pugree* was discontinued since last few decades. It is now used occasionally (Ghosh and Ghosh 2017: 199).

Dua and Puna: Handloom Textile of Mizoram: Mizo women can be identified in a crowded area through her *puna*. *Puna* is normally about a meter wide and three to four meters long cloth. In the beginning it was only a thick white piece of cloth, now a days, it has many colours. There are varieties of *puna* like *puanhruih* or *negotekherh*, *puandum*: a dark black cloth, *tawlhloh-puna*: a cloth about two meters in length and about one and half metre in breadth with a white surface. Four black stripes made of four intertwined threads give a chain-like appearance to the stripes. *Disul* is another earliest known *puna* and is characterized by presence of number of triangular design with different colours. *Thangchhuah-puna* : a bigger *puna* in comparison to other *punas*, with surface background of various colours. It could be worn by those person who have achieved highly coveted position. *Puanchai* is by far, the most colourful of their *punas*. It is used in marriage and other ceremonies. There are other types *punas*, such as Thembupui-Chung, Par- Zam, Naya Swam Par,

Arsi Par, Senior Kikiau, Sawhthing Par, Fangham Mu, Semit, Siki par, Zawngdaikalh, Zawngdaikalh Leh lace par, ZawngdaikalhChhunga Lace par (Kumar and Ganesh 2014: 65).

G.K. Ghosh and Shukla Ghosh, described, '..... Lakher man's dress is a loin cloth known as Dua, which are of two types. The Dua-Kalpa is for everyday use which is 3.5 meter long and half a meter wide. Dua-ah used exclusively during special ceremonies and occasions. This cloth is about 3.5 meters long and half a metre wide and worn almost in similar fashion as dua-kalpa. The cloth is an ordinary white cloth but at each end is seen on a metre length of dark blue cloth richly embroidered with patterns with different coloured silk' (Ghosh and Ghosh 2017: 16).

Handloom Textile of Tripura: Tripura is a small state of North –East India. The state has not heritage of fine handloom cloth like most of the big state of India. The handloom weavers of Tripura use Lions loom. The women weave only a few kinds of cloths such as *rini*, *basei*, *risa*, *pandari*, *kutai*, *rikatu*, *baki* and *kamchai*. *Rini* is used by women to cover their waist and breasts. *Risa* is a narrow but long piece of beautifully decorated and thickly woven cloth used to cover the breasts only. What is *pandri* to a man, the same piece of cloth is *rini* to a women. *Kamchi* is a turban made of an ordinary piece of cloth (Soundarapandian 2002: 42-45).

Textile of Arunachal Pradesh: Various Buddhist tribe and other tribes live in Arunachal Pradesh. Although there are some variations in weaving pattern among different tribes, basically they manufacture their cloth by yarn from short staple cotton, dye them with the help of vegetable dyes and weave them by lions loom. G.K. Ghosh and Shukla Ghosh, quoted from the book of "the Art of NEFA", written by Elwin Verrier, 'The design of the Kaman and Mismis are of extra ordinary variety. In a tour of Khamlang valley where everyone of five hundred inhabitants was clothed from head to foot in hand woven cloth, I hardly ever saw a pattern exactly duplicated. Many of the people have now forgotten the meaning of the designs, but a few of the elder men and women still had them in mind though their interpretations sometimes varied from village to village' (Ghosh and Ghosh 2017: 236). It is necessary to mention that Kaman and Mismis are two tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Singpos is another tribe, they not only wear beautiful dresses but they are capable of producing them too. Singpos women have the expertise of weaving, spinning acid dyeing. They also learnt the technique of reeling silk cocoons from the state of Assam. In general weavers of Arunachal Pradesh express their artistic expertise in weaving (Bag 1989 :32).

Perhaps India is the country which has maximum contribution in textile, especially in handloom textile to the world. India has the finest textile like muslin, brightest textile like silk, cheapest textile like jute and strongest textile like ramie. Even today Indian handloom and spinning wheel contributes maximum variation of designs and products. India mainly produces cotton textile products. Woolen handloom products are also produced in India.

Different types of handloom products are produced in different regions of India. *Baluchuri Shari* is produced mainly in Murshidabad and Bishnupur areas. *Muslin* was mainly produced in Dhaka district of present Bangladesh. Now some other kind of *muslin* is also produced in Murshidabad and in Nadia districts.

Wool is known as *pasham* in India and develops in colder areas like Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, hills of West Bengal, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, and few places of Central and Western India. In Karnataka main districts of silk production are Kolar, Bangalore, Mandya, Tumkar, and Mysore. In Tamil Nadu sericulture was originally confined to Dharampuri and Coimbatore districts, but in recent times, spreads to Ramnadhampuram and other districts. In UP the main silk producing areas are Doon Valley, Ganjam, Gajapati and Kalahandi districts. In West Bengal main silk producing districts are Maldah, Murshidabad, Birbhum and Nadia. In Assam Mulberry cocoon rearing was traditionally grown in Shibsagar district. In Manipur silk producing areas are Laimran, Khur, Khul, Sekhmai and Fayang etc. Ikat *shari* is the unique product of Orissa. *Phee* is the classical product of the state of Manipur. *Dua* and *Puna* are handloom textile of Mizoram. Cloths such as *Rini*, *Basei*, *Risa*, *Pandari*, *Kutai*, *Rikatu*, *Baki* and *Kamchai* are produced in Tripura. There are also other varieties of handloom products in different corners of the country.

References

- Abdul, N. (1996), "Handloom and Distress", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 31(23): 1384-1386. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Anubhai, P. (1988), "Sickness in Indian Textile Industry: Causes and Remedies", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 23(48): M147-M157. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Bag, Sailendra Kumar (1989), *The Changing Fortunes of the Bengal Silk Industry 1757-1833*, Calcutta: Manasi Press.
- Baines, Edward (1835), *History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain, With an Early History in the East and All the Quarters of the Globe*, London: H. Fisher and P. Jack.
- Banarjee, Atulya (1388 Bangabdo), *Banglar Rachdel*, Fulia: tangail Tantujiabi unnayan Samabai Samiti Ltd.
- Bandhopadhyay, Debashis (2020), "Antorjatic Shrikritir Laria namlo Banglar Tangail, Karial, Garad: TantSharir GI Pata Abadan Rajyar", *Bartaman Patrika*, Kolkata, October 09 2020, (in Bengali) Dakshinbango, p.09.
- Bhattacharya, Bitan (2020), "Karimpura Bandho Tantshilpo, Dinmujoree Bharva Tantider", *Bartaman Patrika*, Kolkata, October 13 2020. (in bengali) Dakshinbango, p.10.
- Bhattacharya, Sukumar. (1967), *The East India Company and the Economy of Bengal from 1707-1740*, Calcutta: farma KLM Private Ltd.
- Biswas, Pradip Kumar (2003), *Rural Industrialisation in West Bengal*, New Delhi: Manak.
- Chakraborty Subhasis (2017), "The Cotton Industry of West Bengal", *Proceeding of the Indian History Congress*, 78 (2017) :1217-1235. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Chakraborty, Subhasis (2014), *Banglar Tant Shilpa Nadia Jaler Ekti Samiksha 1947-2013*, Kolkata: Setu. (in bengali).
- Chakraborty, P. K. (1983), *Problems of Co-operative Development in India With Special Reference to West Bengal*, New Delhi: S Chand and Co. Ltd.
- Chatterjee, R. (1987), "Cotton Handloom Manufactures of Bengla, 1870-1921", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 22(25): 988-997. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.

- Chattopadhyay, A. (2001), *Bardhaman Jaler Itishas O Lok Sanskriti*, Kolkata: radical Impression.
- Choudhury T. (2015), *The Decay of handloom Industry in the Cachar District of Assam an Analysis of the Causal Factors and Socio-Economic Impacts*, Ph.D. Thesis, Silchar: Assam University. Retrieved from, URL: <https://sg.inflibnet.ac.in.pdf>. Accessed on June 12, 2021.
- Chowdhury, Sushil. (2014), *Prithibir Tantghar Banglar Bashrashilpo O Banyajya 1600-1800*, Kolkata: Ananda Publisher.(in Bengali).
- Das, Ganesh. (2020), “ Antorjatic Shrikritir Laria namlo Banglar Tangail, Karial, Garad :TinSharir GI Pata Abadan Rajyar” , (Bengali) *Bartaman Patrika*, Kolkata , October 9 2020, Dakshinbango,p.09.
- Das, Sujit Kumar (2001), *The Warp and Woof: An Enquiry into the Handloom Industry in West Bengal*, Calcutta: K.P.Bagchi &Co.
- Datta, B.D. (2018), “An In-depth Study on Jamdani and Tangail weavers of Purba Bardhaman District, West Benga; India”, *Journal of Textile Engineering & Fashion Technology*, 4 (3): 263-270.
- Dekshit, Jayanta. (2020), “ Handloom weavers staring bleak future following COVID-19 lockdown”, *Indo-Asian News Service*, New Delhi, May 19, 2020.
- Desai, A.V. (1983), “Technology and Market Structure under Government Regulation: A case Study of Indian Textile Industry”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 18(5): 150-160. Retrieved from URL://WWW.jstore.org. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Desai, P. (2020), “Handloom weavers staring bleak future following COVID-19 lockdown”, *Indo-Asian News Service*, New Delhi, November 20 2020 Retrieved from URL:<https://www.onmanorama.com/lifestyle/news/2020/04/19/mpact-covid-19-on-indian-handloom-sector.html>.
- Dharma, R.P. (2002), “ Hank Yarn and Handloom” , *Economic and Political Weekly*, 37(47): 4654. Retrieved from URL://WWW.jstore.org. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Dogra, Bharat (2010), *Struggle of Handloom Weavers to Save Livelihoods and Silk*, New Delhi: Kulshrestha Printers.
- Dutta , A.k. and Streefkerk , H. (1985), “Weavers Traders and the state: Handloom Weaving in Bangladesh” , *Economic and political Weekly*, 20(37): 1571-1578. Retrieved from URL://WWW.jstore.org. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Dutta, Prabhat and Dipankar Sinha (2008), *Self Help Groups in West Bengal Challenges of Development and Empowerment*, Kolkata: Dasgupta and Co.Pvt.Ltd.
- Ghosh, G K and Sukla. Ghosh (2017), *Indian Textile Past and Present*, New Delhi: APH Publishing Corporation.
- Goswami, O. (1990), “Sickness and Growth of Indian’s Textile Industry: Analysis and Policy options”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 25(44): 2429-2439. Retrieved from URL://WWW.jstore.org. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Jain, L.C. (1983), “handlooms Face Liquidation: Powerlooms Mock at Yojana Bhavan”, *Economic and political weekly*, 18(35): 1517-1526. Retrieved from URL://WWW.jstore.org. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Kumar, K Mahendra (2010), *An Analysis of Production and Marketing of Handloom Fabrics in Andhra Pradesh (A Study of Prakasam District)*, Ph.D. Thesis, Guntur: Acharya Nagarjuna University. Retrieved from, URL: <https://sg.inflibnet.ac.in.pdf>.
- Kumar, Suresh K S and C. Ganesh (2014), *Handloom Industry in India An Over View*, New Delhi: Abhijit Publications.

- Kundu , Pramananda (1950), *Refugees and the Handloom Industry of West Bengal in Textile India*, Delhi: oriental Books Reprint Corporation.
- Kundu, A. (1980), “Pattern of Organization of the Handloom Industry in West Bengal: Part Two”, *Social Scientist*, 9 (2/3): 41-52. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar.10,2021.
- Kundu, A. (1980), “Pattern of Organization of the Handloom Industry in West Bengal: Part One”, *Social Scientist*, 9 (1): 18-32. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar.10, 2021.
- Liebl, M. and Roy, T.(2004), “Handmade in India: Preliminary Analysis of Crafts Producuers and Crafts production” , *Economic and Political Weekly*, 38(51/52). Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Mallick, kumodnath. (1986), *Nadia kanini*, Shantipur: Shantipur Lok Sanskriti Parishad.
- Mitra, Debendra Bijoy (1978), *The Cotton Weavers of Bengal 1757-1833*, Calcutta: L Frame and Co.
- Mukunda, K. and Syamsundari, B. (1998), “ Doomend to Fail? ‘Handloom Weavers’ co-operatives in Andhra Pradesh”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 33(52): 3323-3332. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Nambiar, A K C. (2013), *Handloom Industry in India*, New Delhi: A.P.H. Publishing Corporation.
- Nardinelli, C. (1986), “Technology and Unemployment: The Case Study of Handloom Weavers”, *Southern Economic Journal*, 53 (1): 87-94. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Nath, P and Mrinalini, N. and Sandhya, G.D. (2001), “National Textile Policy and Textile Research”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 36(5/6): 489-496 . Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Nath, Purnendunath. (1388 bangabda), *Shantipur Samaj, Sanskriti O Itihas*, Shantipur: Shantipur Lok Sanskriti Parishad.
- Nayae, Rahul. (2020), “ Handloom weavers staring bleak future following COVID-19 lockdown” ,*Indo-Asian News Service*, New Delhi, April 19 2020, Retrieved from <URL:https://www.onmanorama.com/lifestyle/news/2020/04/19/mpact-covid-19-on-indian-handloom-sector.html>.
- Neogi , Alakavo (2020), “ Karanakala Rajyar Tantshilpider kach Thaka 8 koti takar Shari Kinlo Tantujo”, *Bartaman Patrika* ,Kolkata, October 14 2020,(in bengali) Dakshinbango, p. 09.
- Poddar, S (2015), *The Handloom Industry and its Impact on the economy of Nadia District in West Bengal*, Ph.D. Thesis, Kolkata: University of Calcutta. Retrieved from, <URL: https://sg.inflibnet.ac.in.pdf>. Accessed on june 12,2020.
- Raman, R (2017), *Marketing Practices of Tamilnadu Handlom weavers’ Co-operative Society LTD, (COPTEx), Chennai- A Study on Silk Products*, Ph.D. Thesis, Annamalai Nagar: Annamalai University. Retrieved from, <URL: https://sg.inflibnet.ac.in.pdf>. Accessed on June 12,2021
- Roy, T. (1989), “Relation of Production in Handloom Weaving in the Mid-1930s” , *Economic and Political weekly*, 24(4): PE21-PE25+PE28-PE34. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Roy, T. (1998), “Economic Reforms and Textile Insdustry in India” , *Economic and Political Weekly*, 33(32): 2173-2182. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.
- Roy, T. (2002), “Acceptance of Innovations in Early Twentieth-Century Indian Weaving”, *Economic History Review*, 55 (3): 507-532. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar. 10 , 2021.
- Roy, T. (2007), “Out of Tradition: Master Artisans and Economic Changes in Colonial India”, *journal of Economic Studies*, 66 (4): 963-91.

Sarkar, S. (2017), “A Detailed Analysis of cotton Textile Industry at Bardhaman Cluster of West Bengal”, *The International Journal of Engineering and Science*, 6 (1): 33-39. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.

Sen, Manab (2005), *Study of Self Help Group and Micro Finance in West Bengal*, Kalyani: State Institute of Panchayat and Rural Development.

Sinha, Monami (2019), “The Effects of GST on the Handloom sector”, *Social Scientist*, 47(5/6):63-70. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on Mar. 10, 2021.

Soundarapandian, M. (2002), *Growth and Prospects of Handloom Sector in India*, Mumbai: National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development.

Srinivasulu, K. (1997), “High – Powered Committee, Low Voltage Report: Mira Seth Report on Handlooms”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 32(24): 1381-1384. Retrieved from <URL://WWW.jstore.org>. Accessed on May 10, 2021.

