

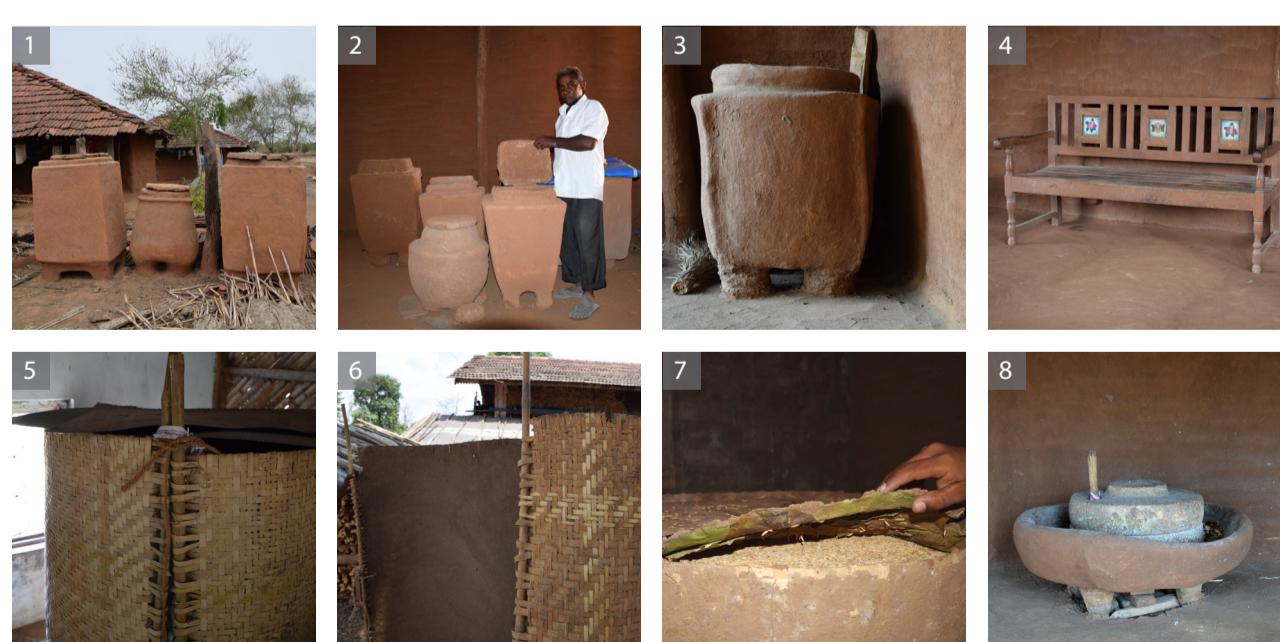
Tapi and Dang districts are located on the south-east end of Gujarat in the Western Ghats mountain range. Field visits for the month of July were spread across seven villages in these districts - Dholara, Moti Pipal Limbi, Patharda, Serulla, Singalkhach, Bheskatri and Moti Dabas. Both districts are rich in natural resources; the Ukai Dam across River Tapi is the largest reservoir in Gujarat and Purna Wildlife Sanctuary in Dang district has a thick forest cover of teak and bamboo.

Predominant population in these villages comprises of Adivasis or tribal communities and agriculture is largely the only economic activity. Most farmers have small landholding and traditional form of cultivation is practiced. The houses are built from indigenous techniques using bamboo and mud. As the region receives heavy rainfall, hipped roof with low clearance and stone plinth are commonly found. Owing to the geographical conditions, termites, pests and high humidity are constant threats for the dwellers. A plaster of mud and cow dung mix is used extensively for flooring and on bamboo walls to keep the house cool and resistant from termites. A new layer of plastering is done twice a year during the summer and before the monsoon. This technique is not only used in the built form but also in the furniture. A framework with bamboo or wood covered with plaster of cowdung, mud and husk can be seen in **kothis** (granaries) and in **ghanti** (hand mill) and **thalo** (hand mill stand).

There are two types of **kothis** found in this region - one is made of mud plaster and can be shaped into various organic forms of storage; while the other is

foldable, made from woven bamboo mat, cow dung and sal leaves. The mud plastered organic **kothis** vary in shape and size depending on the amount of harvest the farmer wants to store; upon storing the grains, these **kothis** are sealed completely to keep pests at bay and can store grains for up to two years without any treatment. The seal is broken in the shape of a lid on the top, when the grains are to be used or sold. Generally these **kothis** are not reused, but demolished to make space for new ones. The foldable **kothis** are used for storing grains for everyday use. These **kothis** have a thin layer of dung plaster from both the sides. The bamboo mat is mostly square in shape and has two cane sticks, one on each of the two ends. To make the granary, the mat is rolled to form a cylinder and the cane sticks are tied together. Dry sal leaves are stitched and used as an inner lining to avoid grains seeping out. These **kothis** last for 3-4 seasons and are replaced after that.

Mud being primary material in the houses, water in every form needs to be regulated. The tribals store drinking water in earthen pots kept on slanted, carved half wood log called **Paniyara**. This log acts like a gutter and drains excess water out of the house keeping the inside clean and dry. Other common furniture elements found in this area are **khatlo**, charpoys with tapering crude legs and wooden benches - fitted with handmade ceramic tiles - locally called as **bannk**. The use of **Paat** (swing without backrest) is also found in few traditional houses. The **bannk** along with **paat** and **khatlo** kept besides each other is a common sight in the houses.



1, 2. & 3. **Kothi** (Mud Granary), 4. **Bannk** (Bench), 5, 6 & 7. **Kothi** (Foldable Bamboo Granary with sal leaves).  
8. **Ghanti** and **thalo** (Hand mill and stand).

A monthly report of field visits conducted as part of a Project: **Study of Vernacular Furniture of North West India**

A collaborative research project by: Design Innovation and Craft Resource Centre (DICRC), CEPT University, India ([www.dicrc.in](http://www.dicrc.in)) & South Asian Decorative Arts and Craft Collection Trust (SADACC), UK ([www.southasiandecorativeartsandcrafts.co.uk](http://www.southasiandecorativeartsandcrafts.co.uk))

# VERNACULAR FURNITURE OF GUJARAT

**Focus On : South Gujarat  
(Dang & Tapi Districts)**

ISSUE 05, July 2016

## Overview

Places Visited: 07

Distance travelled: 980 km

Elements Mapped: 38

Scholars approached: 3

Craftspeople approached: 2



Paniyara (Water Pot Stand)



Kothi (Mud Granary)