

July 2017

Focus On -
Hanumangarh and Sri Ganganagar districts

OVERVIEW

- Places visited : 6
- Distance travelled : 2250 km
- Elements mapped : 42
- Scholars approached : 4
- Craftspeople approached : 1



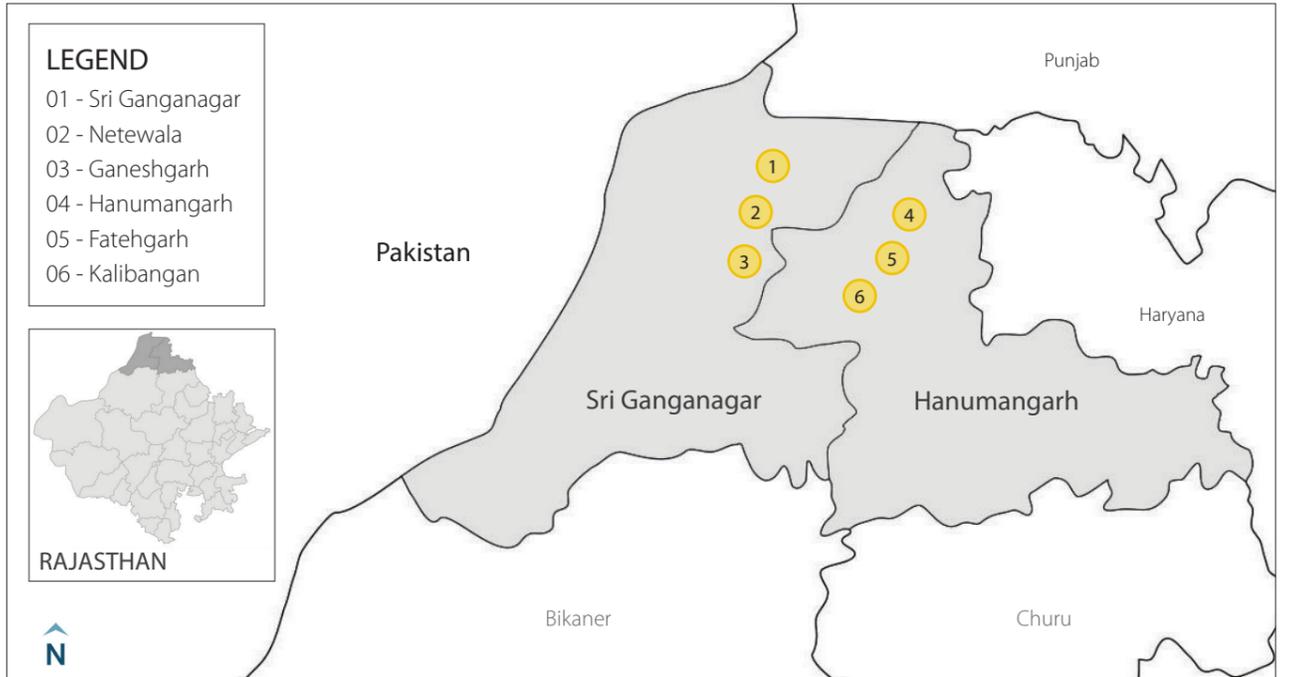
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Netewala, Sri Ganganagar



Ganeshgarh, Sri Ganganagar



Fatehgarh, Hanumangarh



Kalibangan, Hanumangarh

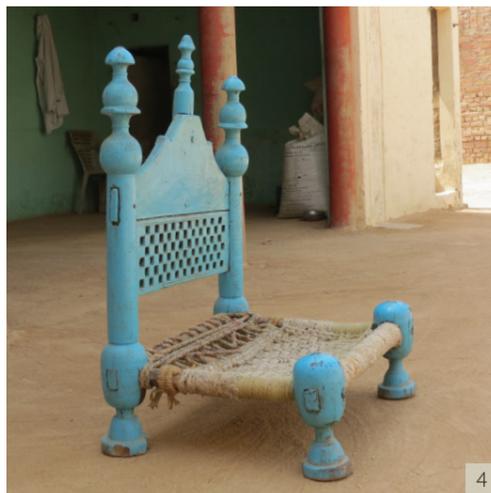
Sri Ganganagar and Hanumangarh are the northern districts of Rajasthan and share borders with Punjab. Sri Ganganagar shares an international border with Pakistan. These districts are arid regions with low rainfall. There is climatic variation for most part of the year. The advent of the Gang Canal in Sri Ganganagar facilitated agriculture to become a main occupation in the region. There are cultural and linguistic similarities with Punjab, owing to the close geographical proximity.

The field visit in Hanumangarh focussed on Fatehgarh and Kalibangan villages. Fatehgarh is divided into four baans (settlement); Purushottam baans, Khilleri baans, Godara baans and Shyam Singh baans. **Pidha** (low stool) is used for a diverse range of everyday activities by the women. It is the most common wooden seating furniture found. The low stool has a variant, with a backrest and is also called *pidha*. The backrest is carved or elaborately ornamented. On a regular day, this type of a *pidha* is used for seating guests or elders in the family. The seat of the *pidha* is woven similarly to a *macha*, which is a unique feature of the *pidha* in this region. **Macha** is a charpoy used as sleeping furniture. A **sandook** (chest), five feet in height was encountered in a Sikh household in Khilleri baans. Another similar *sandook* was found to have a

hidden compartment which can be accessed from inside. According to oral histories, the *sandook* and *charkha* (spinning wheel) were given as wedding gifts to the bride. The *sandook* in Khilleri baans are used to store mattresses and other household items. Mud is used in construction of houses and often to make objects of everyday use. *Chakki* (hand mill grinder), *bhatti* (barbeque), *chulha* (hearth) and *haara* (oven) are some of the vernacular objects found in these villages.

Similar vernacular furniture and objects are found in Sri Ganganagar. Sheesham (indian rosewood) is used to make most of the vernacular furniture in these districts. Sairamji Thakar in Ganeshgarh village of Sri Ganganagar is an award winning charpoy weaver. He depicts mythological stories through his weaving patterns. Sairamji's house is equipped with a room to store almost 30 charpoy which can be used by guests during special occasions.

This field trip gave us an insight into vernacular furniture of the northern-most part of Rajasthan. The similarities that these districts share with Punjab provide a background to the next phase of the project - Study of vernacular furniture of Punjab and Harayana.



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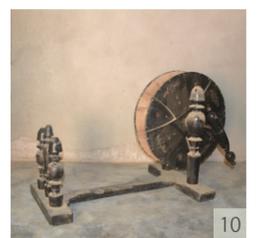
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A monthly report of field visits conducted as a part of study of Vernacular Furniture of North West India

1, 2. Sandook (Chest), 3. Macha (Charpoy), 4. Pidha (Chair), 5, 6 & 7. Pidha (Stool), 8. Haara (Oven), 9. Chakki (Hand mill grinder), 10. Charkha (Spinning wheel)

A collaborative research project by:



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South Asian Decorative Arts and Crafts Collection Trust (SADACC), Norwich, UK