

COMMUNITIES: SODHA, JADEJA
EMBROIDERIES: PAKKO, NERAN

The **Sodha** and **Jadeja** communities share the same embroidery tradition. A senior craftswoman explains how this came about:

There is an age-old tradition of intermarriage between Sodha and Jadeja families.

The Jadeja community has lived in Kutch ever since we can remember. Some say they did a little *Huramjee bharat*, but as far as I know, the Jadejas did not have an extensive embroidery tradition.

The Sodha community lived in Sindh. From there many Sodha families also migrated to Kutch. Our ancestors speak of three waves of migration. The last one was in 1971 during the Indo-Pakistan war.

When Sodha girls from Sindh came to Kutch after marriage, they brought with them a lot of their embroidery as well as their embroidery skills. This is especially true of those who came to Kutch in 1971.

I too came during that time with my Sodha family. Then when I got married into a Jadeja family, I taught embroidery to the women in my new family and in the neighbourhood. That is how Jadeja girls and women have generally learnt embroidery. Also, when a Jadeja girl who did not know much embroidery married into a Sodha family, her mother-in-law would teach her Sodha embroidery.

It does not matter who taught whom. Nor does it matter to whom the embroidery belongs. I like to think that the embroidery belongs to both our communities.

We do mainly two styles of embroidery - Pakko and Neran. Sometimes we add also add a touch of the embroidery style called Huramjee to embellish our Pakko bharat.

The women of the Sodha and Jadeja communities are mostly house-bound. They do not have the sanction to leave their village.

The men are engaged in farming. But the land is not fertile enough to provide enough income to support their families.