

Name of the Element: Thatheras of Jandiala Guru: Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making, Punjab, India.

Community/ies: The Thatheras of Jandiala Guru are Khatris, a clearly defined community who work on the family business with their own hands.

Region: The craftsmen occupy a specific settlement, Bazar Thatherian (market of the Thatheras), Gali Kashmirian, in the small town of Jandiala Guru about 10 km from Amritsar on the Grand Trunk Road in the state of Punjab.

Brief Description: The craft of the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru represents the traditional technique of manufacturing brass and copper utensils in Punjab. The technique itself, along with the mud-brick kiln, traditional implements, specific type of wood chips, and the specialized process of hammering the metal sheets, constitutes the traditional skills and knowledge systems of the community. The Thatheras are a specific caste group within Punjab, and as a community, have a common identity based on a shared history, geographic location and ethnic beliefs. The current craftsmen's community consists of 400 families that migrated here from Gujranwala in Pakistan, while the Muslim craftsmen of Jandiala Guru moved there simultaneously. The utensils manufactured by the Thatheras are of a traditional type not commonly found in modern markets. The metals used, copper, brass and certain alloys, are believed to be beneficial for health. The Thatheras use traditional materials for processing and polishing, such as sand and tamarind juice. The revitalization of this traditional craft should be done in a holistic manner, taking into account that it is not simply a technical process, but an entire knowledge system, linked with the identity and way of life of the community.

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