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Jewellery – A Treasure of Symbolism in South Asia

SAARC Cultural Centre
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SAARC Culture is an annual research journal of the SAARC Cultural Centre, Colombo. It seeks to provide a platform to the academics, practitioners, policy makers and other stakeholders of various dimensions of culture of the South Asian region (including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) to present their research findings and to debate on issues of mutual and common interests.

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Message from the Director

A truly universal form of adornment, Jewellery has existed throughout history, from ancient times to the present and plays various roles within cultures. Cultures in the SAARC countries are truly unique in diversity and Jewellery can be seen as an important aspect of culture in the South Asian Region.

I am pleased to issue this message for **Volume 6** of “**SAARC Culture**”, which is an annual research Journal of the SAARC Cultural Centre, Colombo. Each volume of the Journal is thematic in nature focusing on an important area of research relevant to SAARC Culture. This Volume contains research papers on the theme of “**Jewellery – A Treasure of Symbolism in South Asia**”.

Jewellery indeed is a treasure of symbolism and predates modern humans reflecting a nation’s most precious heritage. In the ancient times, Jewellery was made out of found materials such as wood, stones, shells and feathers. Different cultures constructed these natural items in different ways to represent cultural beliefs and affiliations. Some of the common purposes of Jewellery include serving as a type of currency, representing status and wealth, fashion statement, religious purposes, protection, symbolizing relationships and rites of passage and heirlooms connecting families to their heritage.

As Jewellery has changed and progresses through time within cultures, its purposes and symbols remain important. Thus, it is clear that this is an important area of culture that warrants research.

This Volume contains ten research papers from researchers from the SAARC Member States focusing on materials, designs and significance of Jewellery from ancient to contemporary times. Beginning with crowns as special Jewellery, followed by papers on significant Jewellery symbolic of marriage, ancient Jewellery and floral patterns, the Journal turns its pages with new and interesting findings. These research papers reflect the diversity of the South Asian region that might be unknown to many.

I am confident that this Volume will be an interesting read, promoting intercultural dialogue and contribute towards preservation of South Asia's cultural heritage through research.

On behalf of the SAARC Cultural Centre, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the contributors for their valuable research papers and all others who assisted in numerous ways to ensure the successful publication of the SAARC Culture Journal.

Mrs. D.K.R. Ekanayake
Director, SAARC Cultural Centre
2018

From the Editor's Desk

Cultures of the South Asian Region are unique in its diversity. The variety of music, arts, dance, literature, language, clothing, food and the way of life is a beautiful kaliediscope, giving ample scope for thought and research. Amongst these many aspects of culture 'Jewellery' has important significance in terms of cultural identity due to its value as investment and the ability to readily exhibit the status and religion. It is sometimes used for protection as amulets and many other times they serve as fashion statements. From utility, decoration and aesthetics, jewellery has a high symbolic value. Consisting of small decorative items to large pieces, they range from rings, necklaces, earrings, bracelets, brooches to anklets, all of which accentuate the wearer and add a tone of shine to one's presence. Since many centuries precious metal in combination with gems forms the exclusive type of jewellery while other materials such as shells and beads are also equally popular. Used in a variety of occasions it is symbolic of marriage, auspiciousness and sanctity too. This journal explores the concept of, 'Jewellery – A Treasure of Symbolism in South Asia' with a compilation of papers from the South Asian Region.

These well researched papers on a variety of aspects of jewellery, shed new light on their designs, materials and significance from ancient to contemporary times. Beginning with the exuberant crowns as special jewellery adorning the head, followed by papers on significant jewellery symbolic of marriage, ancient jewellery and floral patterns the journal turns its pages with new enquiries and findings. The compilation brings forth papers from India, of which one is a dialogue on

archeometallurgy and early mining of gold elaborating the reviving of precious metal from the earth, while another paper embellishes the connotation of simplicity accompanied by sacredness of the green glass bangles made out of the dunes of sand, symbolic of the earth itself. An exclusively illustrated paper on the jewellery of Nepal and their association with the different stages of life is read with an unmatched comprehensiveness. Sparkling with the global theme of undiminishing brilliance is the paper from Sri Lanka, a country known as ‘Pearl in the Indian Ocean’ famous for its gemstones, this paper brings a wave of freshness to the reader, flooding one with an aesthetic experience. Reviews of two books *The History of Bangladesh: Early Bengal in Regional Perspectives (up to c. 1200 CE)* from Bangladesh and *Imagining Lahore* from Pakistan introduce to contemporary writings of the South Asian Region.

With trust to bring to light another issue of the journal with an interesting theme, here we are wishing the readers a motivating and thought embellishing journey through our present journal.

Dr. Soumya Manjunath Chavan

Editor

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SAARC Cultural Centre, Colombo

Review report

Jewellery is termed the ‘special find’ in archaeological evidences as it is one of the best indicators of economic, social and cultural developments of any period. The Indus Valley being the oldest Civilization in the South Asian Region gives many archaeological findings of objects and jewellery which clarifies that this region was rich with the art of making and adorning jewellery. The plastic arts and paintings of South Asia have exhibited an extreme mastery over the designs and popularity of jewellery. The use of metals and gems has seen a considerable artistry and uniqueness in each of the SAARC Member States. This uniqueness can be with respect to its material or metals, design, occasion of usage and gains a higher relevance than just its worth due to its symbolic aspects. The present journal has attempted to capture the exclusive aspect of material culture in its symbolic dimensions under a very interesting title ‘Jewellery – A Treasure of Symbolism in South Asia.’

The contributors from the different SAARC Member States have unfolded the significance of jewellery in a commendable manner. Prof. Choodamani Nandagopal’s, ‘*Significance of Ceremonial Crown in Temple Jewellery*’, brings with excellence the Indian crown of the deities as an exclusive ornament with details of its design, metal and the ritual significance in contemporary living traditions. Dr. Gomathi Gowda’s paper titled, ‘*Mangalasutra - The Sacred Pendant of Women, As Symbol of Marriage in India*’, spells clarity on the variety and symbolism of the marriage pendant worn by women at the time of marriage in India. Dr. Gitanjali Goswami and Dr. Mousumi Sarma in their paper ‘*Assamese Jewellery: The*

Shimmering facet of Assamese Culture’ bring to light the different patterns of jewellery along with their economic status in the present day market. Ms. Mansi Sathyanarayan and Ms. Mitraja Bais’s joint paper *‘Indian Martial jewellery and symbolism: contextual manifestations’*, focuses on the different jewels worn as symbolic of marriage. Dr. Mane G.K.’s *‘Ornaments in Ancient Maharashtra - Megalithic Culture, 1000 BCE to 300 AD’*, throws light on the archaeological excavations and original findings. Dr. Priya Thakur in her *‘Floral Jewellery in Ancient Indian Tradition’*, studies ethnographic and ethno historic accounts in India indicate that plants have been used more often for human adornment than other durable substances and flowers are used as ornaments in the contemporary times as well. Prof. Sharada Srinivasan in her *‘Early gold mining and jewellery - Some insights from the Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka’*, brings forth her findings and concludes with the skilled metallurgy of south India in early times. Ms. Vaishnaavi. M. Chavan’s *‘Green Glass Bangles – The Sacred Offering to Goddess Renuka - With special reference to a few temples in Bengaluru’*, take’s note of the sacred offering of green glass bangles as jewellery to Goddess Renuka with reference to four of her temples in the cosmopolitan city of Bengaluru in south India. Prof. Mala Malla in her *‘Newa Jewellery – New Insights on the Jewellery of Nepal’*, dwells upon the Newa tradition which has much traditional jewellery that are readily identified and associated with specific events and rituals and sacredness. Dr. Edwin Ariyadasa’s *‘Jewellery - A Sparkling Global Theme of Undiminishing Brilliance’*, upholds Sri Lanka as a land of gems and pearls and its popularity in the region. The review of the two volumes of books edited by professor Abdul Momin Chowdhury and professor Ranabir Chakravarti, *‘The History of*

Bangladesh: Early Bengal in Regional Perspectives (up to c. 1200 CE)’, gives a glimpse of the history of Bangladesh in a very comprehensive manner. Ms. Saadia Qamar in her review of the book *‘Imagining Lahore - the city that is, the city that was’*, gives a colourful and vibrant picture of Pakistan welcoming the reader to experience the land through words.

This journal presents the papers from the SAARC Region with great interest. Each paper is well researched and methodical in addressing the enquiries. Each of the authors have given appropriate references and exhaustive bibliography at the end of the paper. The images and photographs corresponding to the papers make the journal adequately supported with visuals. Reviewing this journal has left me intellectually stimulated and inspired, I would like to compliment the Mrs. Ekanayake, Director of SAARC Cultural Centre for her leadership. I am happy to congratulate the production team and Dr. Soumya Manjunath Chavan, Cultural Specialist, SAARC Cultural Centre for conceptualizing and editing this journal on Jewellery and its symbolism.



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Significance of Ceremonial Crown in Temple Jewellery

Choodamani Nandagopal

Abstract

India has a rich unbroken heritage of jewellery tradition since 5000 years. Indian jewellery, as a form of art created an aura of charm and grace. Major temples have a splendid collection of jewellery to adorn gods and goddesses during daily worship and special festivals. Iconographic texts prescribe the ornaments according to specification of form of gods and demi-gods. Among the ornaments, adorning head are particularly significant. The vimana, the ornate structure over the sanctum, which is comparatively lesser height than the entrance tower of the temple is the symbol of pre-eminence. The shikhara and vimana are of various sizes and shapes- conical, dome or crescent. These serve as models for designing the crowns, which adorn the images are significant in temple jewellery. Crowns offered as royal donations adorn the images of gods, goddesses and their retinues are the most valuable items of temple treasury. It is rare to find the images without a crown as headgear. These crowns are placed on the heads of the principal deity in the sanctuary and the metal images used in everyday worship and the images used in festivals as processional deities. (Nandagopal 1995: 39) Rituals and ceremonies are performed in the name of jewels, is unique to Indian temple tradition, needless to say that in India and South Asia, the use of jewellery pervades life in both sacred and profane spheres.

This paper throws light on the significance of ceremonial crowns gifted as royal regalia or handed over through legendary significance to the temple authority. Special festivals organized to place the ceremonial crowns on the deity. Some of the exclusive ceremonial crowns are portrayed here.

Introduction

The Temple is a symbolic micro-model of the macro-cosmos. The *garbhagriha*, central chamber of the temple houses the deity which could be a *Linga*, a Goddess, Vishnu, Lakshmi, Durga etc. This image of the principal deity is made of stone or metal following the textual sources of image making. Each of the deity has their own dedicated form, attributes and jewellery. India has a rich heritage of jewellery of an unbroken tradition of at least 5000 years. Indian jewellery as a form of art has created an aura of charm and grace throughout the world. Thus the temples in India are a perfect fusion of structure and its embellishments, with the one complementing the other which are widely appreciated at the same time fulfilling an inherent need to live and worship within an atmosphere of aesthetic experience. (Brunel 1972: 3)

Iconographic texts have prescribed the ornaments according to the specification of the form of gods and demi-gods, like the Navagraha – the nine planets, the *Ashtadikpalakas* – the guardian deities, *Rasidevatas* – the gods representing the zodiac signs, *Saptamatrikas* – the seven mothers, the various forms of goddesses, the sixty-four yoginis and many more Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina representations of imagery are portrayed with skill and virtue by the jewellers. Their involvement in designing the precious jewels suitable to the gods itself is an art

prevalent in India from historical times. Many temples have their principal deities adorned with specific jewellery dedicated to them and are carefully stored in the treasury of the temples. The temples have generous donations and gifts made by the rulers and royal family known as ‘*dana*’ which comprised of coins, ornaments, vessels, gold embroidered garments and other furnishings. (Nandagopal & Iyengar 1997: 31-58)

This paper throws light on the significance of ceremonial crowns gifted by the royal regalia or handed over through legendary significance to the temple authority, where special festivals organized to place the ceremonial crowns on the deity. Some of the exclusive ceremonial crowns from the southern Indian state of Karnataka as part of the temple collections are portrayed here.

Crowns of Gods

Among the ornaments that adorn the head are particularly significant. The *vimana*, the ornate structure over the sanctum, which is comparatively lower in height than the entrance tower of the temple is the symbol of pre-eminence. The *shikhara* and *vimana* (Figure 1) are of various sizes and shapes- conical, dome or crescent shaped and has tiers. These serve as models for designing the crowns, which occupy an important place in adorning the images and also significant in the collections of temple jewellery.

The Crowns offered as donations adorn the images of gods, goddesses and their retinues and are among the most valuable items of the temple treasury. It is rare to find the images without this headgear. Celestial beings of all kinds, including minor and major deities of both sexes, seldom appear in Hindu art without

a crown or some sort of jewel on their heads, and these may be of utmost importance in identifying them. The crowns adorning the Principal Deity, the *Moola devata*, and processional deity, the *utsava devata* and other images range from one inch in diameter (a miniature full sized crown) to those used for life size images. These are the crowns that are placed on the heads of the principal deity in the sanctuary of the temple, the metal images used in everyday worship and the images used in festivals as processional deities. (Nandagopal 1995: 39) Some temple ceremonies and festivals are mainly associated with the Ceremonial Crown known as *Mudi Utsava*, for instance *Vairamudi* (diamond crown) *Utsava* at the Cheluvanarayana Temple Melukote in Karnataka, south India. A special crown or *mudi* is made for the occasion and placed either on the processional deity or the principal deity worshipped in the temples. Rulers and kings donated a whole set of jewellery to the gods of their choice invariably paid special attention to the crown, and almost all temples that received royal patronage possess exquisite examples which are the highlights of their collection.

Across all cultures special days are observed with the unique celebrations that include precious donations of jewels and valuable silver articles. The Burmese, like the Hindus of India, make grants and donations in the form of jewellery and dedicate them as votive offerings to religious places. It is customary for the Burmese to throw large quantities of silver, gold and jewellery into the cauldrons when bells are cast at the *Pagodas* (Buddhist temples). This they consider as one of the ways of earning religious merit. (Nandagopal 1999: 126)

There are jewels dedicated specifically to certain deities. A 'sarvabharana bhushita devata' or fully adorned divinity will consist of the following jewellery; *shikamani* – the crest jewel in the form a crown; *kuramba* – the appendage of the crown, supporting the heavy crown; *kundala* – ear-ornament; *kanthi* – Choker; *hara* – long necklace; *yajnopavita* – sacred thread; *keyra* – elaborately designed armlet; *vakshabandha* – belt on the chest; *katisutra* – waist belt; *uttariya-bandha* – belt for fastening the part of the garment; *kadaga* – foot ornament; *kinkini* – jingled anklet; *makara kundala* - ear ornament; *chinnavira* – cross-belt for the chest; *malya* – chain made of beads; *magavalaya* – coiled armlet; *manibandha* – a bracelet adorning the lower arm; *kankaṇa* – a bracelet adorning the wrist. In some temples dedicated to Vishnu, Sharada, Chamundi and Shiva exclusive crowns draw the attention and the day of adorning with the crown is observed as a *utsava*, as a significant festival.

***Vairamudi* - Ceremonial Diamond Crown**

Vairamudi is the annual festival celebrated in the month of March/April when the *vairamudi* (diamond studded crown, figure 2) is brought from the treasury and adorned on the head of the processional deity of Cheluvanarayanasmami at the shrine of Melukote in Karnataka. It is a unique legendary crown with hundreds of diamonds studded in a vertical row, running around throughout. The fully decorated deity is placed in a palanquin and taken on a procession. The legend associated with this crown goes back to puranic¹ age with an interesting narrative,

...

¹ Ancient Hindu literature

.. the vairamudi is believed to have descended from Vaikuntha, the celestial abode of Lord Vishnu. Garuda, the mythical bird and the divine vehicle who carries Lord Vishnu acquired it in a combat with Vairochana (attendant of Vishnu) who had carried away the crown to patalaloka (the netherland). The victorious Garuda, while travelling back to Vaikunta met Krishna (the eighth incarnation of Vishnu) and submitted the crown to him. Krishna directed Garuda that the crown to be placed on the head of Sri Cheluvanarayanasmami of Melkote. Garuda placed the crown on the head of the deity and flew around the temple. To commemorate this incident the Srivaishnava saint Ramanujacharya introduced the Vairamudi festival. On the day of the festival the vairamudi placed on the head of the deity is bejeweled with various other ornaments is taken on a procession mounted on the vehicle of Garuda. (Nandagopal 2017:140)

This exquisite diamond crown has earned the admiration and reverence on other accounts too. Apart from its antique value and commercial value as a diamond crown, the *vairamudi* crown festival is a lifetime experience, a celebration conducted from dusk to dawn. People from all parts of the country gather at the temple site to experience the sacred festival of ceremonial crown. Tradition dictates that, this crown is not to be seen in the daylight. Before the dawn, the *vairamudi* is taken off with one more reason of security and another crown *Rajamudi* (Figure 2a), the kings's crown, beautifully designed and donated by Raja Wodeyar (The Royal family, Wodeyar dynasty of Mysore) in 16th century is replaced and the temple procession and festivities continues. Another Crown festival known as

Krishnaraja *Mudi Utsava* (Figure 2b) along with other splendid jewels, celebrated in the temple during two occasions in the year. This exclusive crown was donated by Krishnaraja Wodeyar III in mid 19th century. Thus the invaluable donations from Mysore Royal Family of Wodeyars made this temple explicit for obvious reasons.

Ceremonial Golden Crown

This is a huge spectacular Golden Crown with the face mask (Figure 3b) of the main *Shivalinga* of Virupaksha Temple Hampi, the UNESCO world heritage site in Karnataka, south India. A stone inscription set up in the quadrangle of the temple lists the items of jewellery donated by the emperor Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagar in the 16th century. The unique feature of the crown is that it is of very large size made of gold and weighs 4.5 kilograms. The highly expressive anthropomorphic face, which is part of the massive crown is decked with a ruby-studded sacred mark on the forehead with centrally placed third eye of Shiva and the crescent is set in flat diamond. (Nandagopal & Iyengar 1997: 69) The crown is the testimony of form, design and art of gold smith of 16th century. This impressionistic crown is brought from the Government Treasury and warmly received by the temple elephant and an elaborate *pooja* is performed before it is carried to the sanctuary of the temple. People throng to see the God Virupaksha adorned with this golden crown bestowed with auspiciousness.

Ceremonial Gems Studded Golden Crown

It is not an exaggeration, as India is the land of living tradition and even in the scientific age too the jewelers of each region

adapts age-old forms to suite the taste. In the realm of decorative art in India the techniques such as forging, granulation, filigree, repousse work, cutting and polishing hard gem stones and setting the stones in various designs and thematic compositions and ways are found suitably applied depending on the need, taste and the deity to be adorned (Nandagopal, 2000: 54). One such tastefully designed ornate gem-studded gold Ceremonial Crown is from Chamundi Hill Temple at Mysore and the Goddess Chamundeshvari (Figure 4) is the tutelary deity of the royal family of Mysore. This priceless crown known as Chamaraja mudi was offered to the Goddess by Chamaraja Wodeyar, the then ruler of Mysore. The crown is highly proportionate and studded with rubies, emeralds, small and large diamonds, a crystal clear emerald of high quality caps the crown. This Crown is considered as auspicious to royal family so as to adorn the head of the Goddess during *Navaratri* (9 day festival of *Dasara*, Mysore wears royal appeal in every way) celebrations. The Goddess Chamundi is presented before her devotees with this crown and choicest long necklaces and other jewels donated by the members of the royal family of Mysore through the ages.

Special Crown of the Pontiff

Indian Temples of any faith are open to the devotees of all sects. Votive offerings are made by the people irrespective of sectarian differences. One such Crown is preserved and used by the Pontiff Sri Sri Shankaracharya of Srhrungeri Sharada Peetha (Figure 5), Shrungeri in Karnataka, south India. This crown is 250 years old, and was presented to the pontiff of Sshrungeri Monastery by the then Nizam of Hyderabad. Soft, red velvet cloth is used as the base of the crown, over that intricately

patterned and designed pieces of ornaments are stitched. The mould of the crown is sported with strings of pearls, rows of rubies, clusters of emeralds, clear flat diamonds, deep *navaratnas* (nine varieties of gems) and golden tassels. Close view of the crown brings the picture of *Anna-pakshi* (symbolizing the rice grains), the emblem of Sri Sharada Temple. The Crown has a special appearance of gold *Zari* work in Hyderabad tradition. The sitting pontiff of the Monastery wears this crown on the *Navaratri Durbar*, conducting Royal Court activities before the Goddess Sharada sitting on the throne. This Ceremonial Crown with other pieces of jewels which the pontiff is entitled to wear only in *Navaratri* while observing the royal ceremony. The entire atmosphere is filled with royalty and divine perceptions.

Set in floral motif or a disc or in a bird form, the *navaratna*, the nine types of auspicious gems become an integral part of the jewellery and occupy the central position of the crown or a pendent and usually found in the jewellery collections of the temples. Such ornaments made of *navaratna* when offered to God are considered as sanctified. When worn by human beings they never become impure and the wearer is influenced to do good deeds and bestowed with good health, wealth and happiness. With this philosophical background, the jewels made of nine variety of gems are donated to temples as votive offerings.

Conclusion

Beautifully evocative metaphors describe precious stones in the early Sanskrit texts on gemmology; ruby may be the colour of the red lotus, of the morning sun, or of pomegranate juice; beryl

is the colour of blue lotus, and emerald the colour of the parrot wings; sapphire has the luster of a dark cloud, and pearl be born of the wind, air or the sea. In these treatises, each of the nine best known stones has astrological significance, combined in jewellery in the setting called *navaratna* (nine gems) (Stronge:1995: vii) Thus the collection of jewellery in Indian temples have specific function, design and endowed with auspiciousness when adorned by the respective deities in the temples. Rituals and ceremonies are performed in the name of jewels, so unique to Indian temple tradition. It is needless to say that in India and countries of south Asia, the use of jewellery pervades life in both sacred and profane spheres of life. The temple jewellery has special appeal and experience as it has the touch of sanctity, aesthetic delight with eminently set into the technique of stone setting by the *vishvakarma* community, the celestial jewelers respected far and wide.



Figure 1: The vimana of Tirupati Temple, Andhra Pradesh



Figure 2. Vairamudi - Ceremonial Diamond Crown



Figure 2a. Rajamudi



Figure 2b. Sri Krishna Rajamudi



Figure 3. Entrance tower of Virupaksha Temple, Hampi, south India

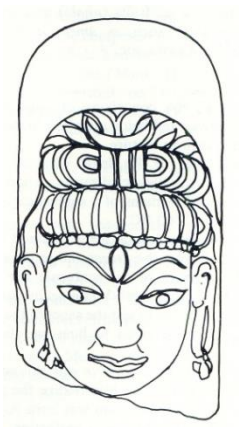


Figure 3a. Mukhalinga – line drawing



Figure 3b. Ceremonial Golden Crown

**Face mask of the main
Shivalinga of Virupaksha
Temple Hampi, South India**



Figure 4. Goddess Chamundeshvari with the ceremonial crown



Figure 5. Crown preserved and used by the Pontiff Sri Sri Shankaracharya of Srhrungeri Sharada Peetha, Shrungeri in Karnataka, south India

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Mangalasutra - The Sacred Pendant of Women As Symbol of Marriage in India

Gomathi Gowda

Abstract

In India the wearing of jewellery has a strong ritual significance; the ear and head ornaments of south and western India provide evidence of the worship of the sun, the moon and the serpent. Subjects from Hindu mythology, executed in relief on ornaments are popular all over the country. Ornaments were worn not only for adornment and value but for certain religious and superstitious reasons also. The marriage ornaments differ from place to place. Ornaments must be given to a girl at the time of her marriage and if many pieces are beyond the means of the parents there is one piece which must be given at least. This piece differs from state to state of India and is worn by the girl at the time of her marriage and to be removed only when she becomes a widow or at the time of her death. It is curious to note how some of those ornaments, considered necessary for a married woman, have persisted through the centuries. In most parts of the southern states of India, the mangalasutra also known as thaali which is the marriage insignia consists of oblong pieces of gold rounded at one end and strung by a thread. If the husband is seriously ill the wife may offer one of the pieces to the gods and replace it with another. This paper will explore the importance of the sacred pendant and also identify some unique designs of mangalasutra from the different states of India.

Introduction

The forms of ornamentation of jewellery described in the ancient Hindu epics is said to denote an unbroken continuity of tradition and variety from times immemorial to the present day. Love of beauty and adornment is inherent in nature, in man and in making of deities alike. Spiritual concepts of beauty have been intimately related with the physical and formal concepts in history and aesthetic symbols with a deep rooted origin in the beauty of the actuality and substance alike. In the case of the body, the charm of glitter and colour added to the element of order is a characteristic of beauty. (Bhushan 1964: 1)

First copper and iron, ivory and agate, later gold and silver, and gems became the medium of adornment. Religion and superstition played an important part in attributing additional qualities to these substances, and these metals and gems became symbolic of archaic beliefs and magical efficacy. The term '*ratna*' in Vedic age (1200-400 BC) denoted a treasure rather than a jewel, which it came to mean in post-Vedic India. In two early hymns of the Rigveda, the deity who is henotheistically the supreme God of the universe, Agni and Rudra are the possessors of the 'seven treasures'. (Bhushan 1964: 1) The love of jewellery is not confined to people of any religious sect or class though there may be special ornaments which are peculiar to a particular faith or tribe. (Holbein 1909: 14)

Ornaments were worn not only for adornment and value but for certain religious and superstitious reasons also. The code of Manu enjoins the wearing of ornaments on certain occasions. The use of ornaments is, by force of custom, almost a necessity even to the poorest. The marriage necklace of Coorg is made up

of tiny black beads connected by very small links of a gold chain. An identical necklace has been discovered at Mohenjo-Daro while the jewel worn by the Rajputana woman at the parting of her hair has its counterpart at Harappa. It is not known if these ornaments were used for the same purposes in those places also or whether their importance derives from the sanctity attaching to articles persisting in the same form through so many centuries. (Bhushan 1964: 6)

Etymology of *Mangalasutra*

Mangalsutra or “*mangalsutram*” evolved from a Sanskrit term ‘*mangal*’ means prosperous, blessed, happy, and successful and ‘*sutram*’ meaning cord. Ideally, a *mangalsutra* is made of 108 (an auspicious number) fine cotton threads twisted together and dyed yellow in saffron or turmeric. On the thread, a gold *thaali* which is the pendant is strung in the center. During the wedding ceremony, the priest recites *mantras* (chants) when the groom ties the *mangalsutra* around the bride’s neck, securing it with three knots. This act of tying a *mangalsutra* signifies the groom and the bride are united and have a responsibility of taking care of each other.

Some Literary references of *Mangalsutra*

Nannaya, the 11th century Telugu poet in his literary work, while describing Sahadeva’s ² southern campaign of conquest, mentions different gem studded ornaments (*nanavidharatnamaya-bhushanamulu*) presented to him by Yundakudu. At

² The last sibling of the five brothers in the legend Mahabharata

the time of Pandu's³ death, the poet presents Madri (Pandu's wife), decorated herself with pearl chains, *pagadamalas*⁴ and so on. While describing Visvakarma⁵ building the Indraprastha city, Nannaya refers to different types of gems. The poet also says that the widows of that period were not allowed to wear *mangalasutram* or *tali* and other sacred ornaments. (Maheshwari 1995: 30) According to the rites of Hindu culture, there are five signs of marital status of women. They are *mangalsutra*, toe rings, *kumkum*⁶, bangles and a nose ring. *Mangalsutra* is the most important as it means an auspicious thread or cord. *Mangalya dharanam*⁷ is the most important part of a Hindu marriage ceremony. The *mangalya* or *mangalsutra* is strung on a yellow thread prepared by using Turmeric paste. It is tied around the bride's neck with three knots means 'an auspicious thread which is knotted around the bride's neck'.

Symbolism of *Mangalasutra*

In India the wearing of jewellery has a strong ritual significance, the ear and head ornaments of south and western India provide evidence of the worship of sun, moon and serpent. The marriage ornament differs from area to area. In Bengal bracelets made of conch-shell are the symbolic of the purity of a Hindu wife. In parts of north India the *bichhwa* or the ring and glass bangle had, until recently, to be worn by woman whose husband is alive. In Tamil Nadu and parts of Karnataka, the *mangalasutra*

³ Pandu is the father of the five brothers in Mahabharata and Madri is his second wife

⁴ Type of Necklace

⁵ Celestial Architect

⁶ The crimson powder dot kept between the eyebrows

⁷ Wearing of the mangalasutra

also known as *thaali* or wedding necklace has oblong pieces rounded at one end strung on a thread. The Kashmir marriage symbol is a long string, drawn through a hole pierced in the cartilage of the ear, with an ornament at the end. (Retrieved 15/10/2018, <https://www.kuberbox.com/blog/mangalsutra-different-states-india>)

‘*Mangalya dharana*’ is one of the most essential part of Hindu weddings in India. A wedding can happen without any of the other rituals but cannot happen without the *mangalya*. In Sanskrit ‘*mangalya*’ means good things and ‘*dharanam*’ means wearing. The *mangalya* or the sacred thread symbolises commitment, safety and security offered to the bride by the groom as he asks her to share in a long and happy married life with him. The sacred thread is secured by three knots where each knot represents different aspects of the body, *sthula sharira* meaning the gross or physical body, *sukshma sharira* meaning the subtle or *pranic* body, *kaarana sharira* is the casual body. The three knots also signifies the three aspects of commitment, *manasa*, *vachaa* and *karmana*, meaning believing it, saying it and executing it. The bride and the bridegroom take vows that they remain loyal and support each other throughout their lives.

Designs of *Mangalasutra*

The *mangalsutra* comes in various patterns and designs and are unique to a particular region and community. Though the sacred character remains the same, there are variations in designs and patterns. In northern parts of India, the holy thread is adorned in a form of a black and gold beaded necklace. The gold represents Goddess Parvati and the black beads which hold the gold symbolises Lord Shiva. As gold is a symbol of prosperity and

well-being, a woman wearing a *mangalsutra* is believed to bring happiness and prosperity to the family. Furthermore, the black beads are believed to represent the many strands of emotions that goes into making up a husband and wife. The *mangalsutra* is also considered as a talisman to prevent the evil eye. Each black bead is believed to have divine powers; to absorb all the negative vibrations and protect the marriage of a couple, especially the life of the husband. (Retrieved 15/10/2018, <https://www.kuberbox.com/blog/mangalsutra-different-states-india>)

***Mangalsutra* of Maharashtra**

In North India, generally used by the Hindus, *mangalsutra* stands for a set of black beads chain attached to a gold pendant called *tanmaniya*. Traditionally made of plain gold, they come in varied designs. However, the design is independent of the caste/sub-caste of the bride or groom. In most of the Hindu north Indian weddings, *mangalsutra* plays an important part and has a separate ceremony where the groom ties *mangalsutra* around the neck of his bride. In Maharashtra, the *mangalsutras* have black beads with two bowl-shaped *vatis* on either side. The Maharashtrian *mangalsutra* has two gold and black beads strung together in a double line and joined by the central *vati* pendant in the form of two cups. This structure, with the two strands of gold and black bead chain, stands for Shiva & Shakti (the male and female cosmic principles), the gold *mangalsutra* in the middle that joins them symbolises the holy union of Lord Shiva and Shakti. The two strands of beads fused together are symbolic of the husband and wife, in perfect continuity creating a whole around the neck of his woman. Just like any other *mangalsutra* wearing community, Maharashtrians also

believe the black beads to ward off evil eye & help keep the marriage happy.

Mangalsutras of South India

In South India especially in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhrapradesh, they are called as *Thaali/ Thirumangalyam/ Mangalasutramu/ Pustelu/ Maangalyamu/* and they come in different shapes and designs and sizes and bear different importance depending on the caste or sub-caste of the bride and the groom. *Thaali* is generally worn with a gold chain or a yellow thread (thread smeared with turmeric). Ideally bought from the groom's side, sometimes the family also adds other items like gold coins, corals and gold roundels to the main *thaali*. A *thaali* generally weighs between 4 to 8 grams and is made of 22K or 18K gold (sometimes studded with diamonds or rubies).

In Karnataka, it is referred to as *maangalya-sutra* and is made of two round golden plates along with corals, freshwater pearls, semi-precious stones and black stones/beads. The *bandi thaali* is an exquisite piece of jewellery used only during the annual Girija Kalyana (marriage celebration of Shiva and Parvathi) festival. It is a very traditional type of *thaali*, the marriage pendant, particularly seen in the royal households of old Mysore area. The large ruby pendant in the shape of *thaali* is very closely clipped to the portion of the clasp which is beautifully designed and studded with diamonds. (Nandagopal & Iyengar 1997: 198)

Among the Nairs of Kerala, the term *thaali* retains its ancient connotation and is used synonymously with the '*mala*', referring to a necklace, there being no necessary connection

with marriage. The oldest and the most famous ornament of the Nair women is the *nagapada thaali* or the cobra hood necklace. Nair women believe that this was given to them by gods to instill them the virtues of patience and calmness. (Bala & Susheel 1999: 160) In Kerala, the Syrian Christians use *Minnuas* the auspicious wedding thread that is equivalent to *mangalsutras* of the north. The Kerala Hindus also use *thaali*, which in Kerala is also called *ela thaali* meaning the shape of a leaf or bearing the design of a leaf. The *ela thaali* generally also comprises of the Sanskrit syllable ‘Om’ embossed or cut-out on the leaf-shaped gold sheet.

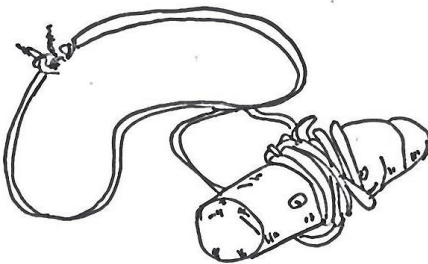
There is another tradition in Kerala related to *mangalsutras* that is unique to a particular sect called *Manthrakodi* (first gift of the groom to the bride). (Retrieved 15/10/2018, <https://www.kuberbox.com/blog/mangalsutra-different-states-india>) *Manthrakodi* is a tradition unique to Syro-Malabar weddings. *Manthrakodis* are sarees specially bought by the groom’s family and are richly embroidered with gold and silver threads. 21 threads carefully taken from this *manthrakodi* are intertwined in seven sets, 3 threads each and it is these threads that are tied around the bride’s neck as a ‘*thaali*’ and made into the *mangalasutra*.

Conclusion

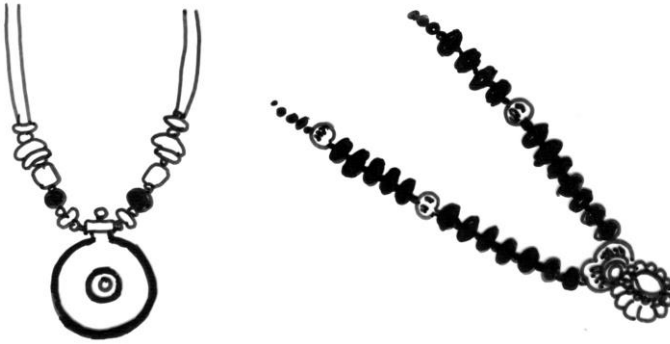
According to Indian tradition married women in India wear *mangalsutra* around their necks as a symbol of being married and it also signifies their belief that by wearing a *mangalsutra* they divert the energies of the universe in order to pray for a long life for their spouse. Women have different traditions according to different beliefs that they follow and hence wear a

mangalsutra to represent themselves as married women and show their deemed loyalty towards their husband. It is also considered very auspicious for many women. The black color of the beads is said to absorb all negativity before they can reach the bride and her family. The stringing together of the beads into one thread has its significance as well. Just as each bead contributes to making a beautiful necklace, so does the woman have to blend and integrate into the new family after marriage.

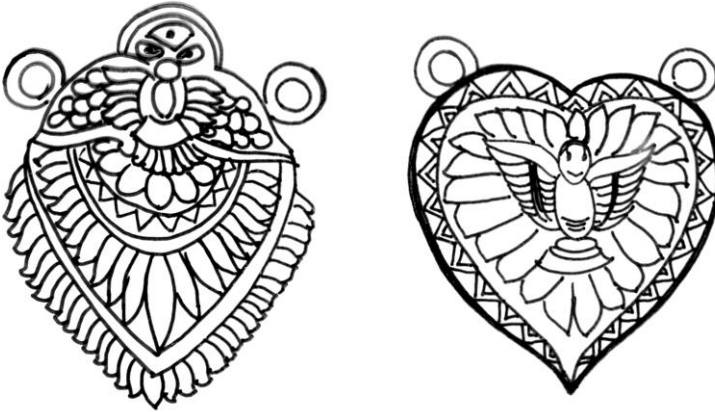
The *mangalsutra* is also the symbol of the inseparable bond of union between Shiva (husband) and Shakti (wife). Married women wear the *mangalsutra* throughout their lifetime as it is believed to enhance the well-being of her husband and family. With the changing times, the tradition of wearing the *mangalsutra* has changed. The modern working women prefer a sleek and subtle, designer *mangalsutra* to suit their professional persona. With the contemporary trends and changing mindsets, the designs and patterns have changed yet keeping the sacred symbolism intact and alive in India.



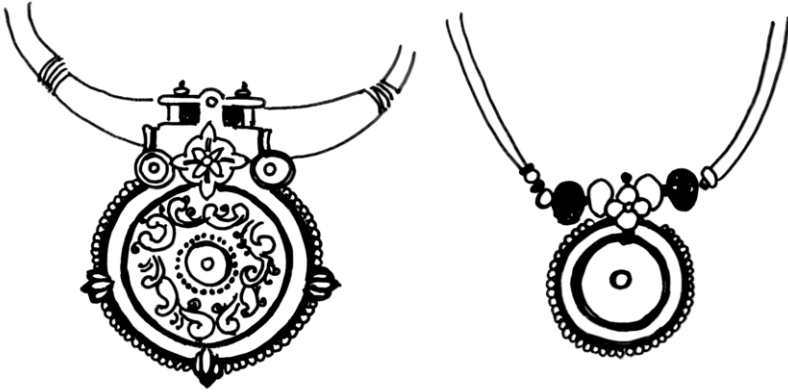
Turmeric tied to a thread (Thaali) Maangalya from Karnataka



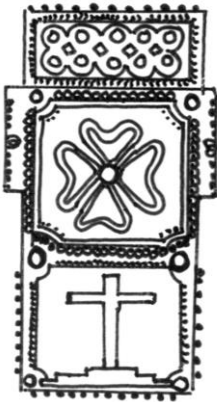
Mangalsutramu from Andhra Pradesh Mangalsutra from Maharashtra



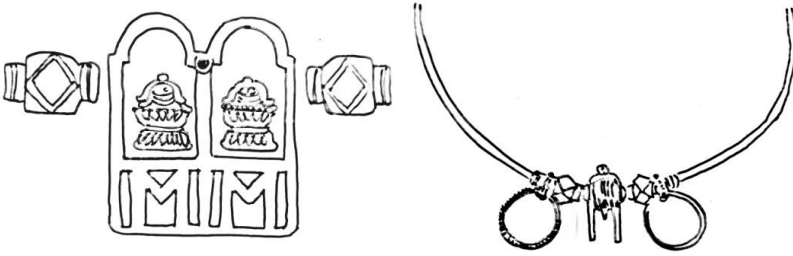
Thaali from Kerala



Thaali from Karnataka haali from Karnataka



Thaali from Kerala



Thaali from Tamil Nadu

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Assamese Jewellery: The Shimmering facet of Assamese Culture

Gitanjali Goswami and Mousumi Sarma

Abstract

Jewellery is worn to beautify the human body and also considered as a status symbol, mostly by women folk. The Indian subcontinent has an ancient lineage of jewellery making. The yellow metal of gold is extremely popular as it makes a person look special, elegant and attractive. Gemstones, ivory, pearls, precious metals, beads, shells etc. are used to make jewellery. Assamese jewellery is typically hand-made, and the designs mostly depict flora and fauna of the region. Designs of traditional musical instruments are also used. Assamese curios are one of the most important aspects of Assamese culture and have weaved itself as part and parcel of regular life. The Assamese craftsmen craft the jewellery manually and these craftsmen are called as 'Sonari'. Gold, silver and paat-xun (silver ornament with a thin coating of gold) are used to make the ornaments. Different types of instruments are used in the preparation of the Assamese jewellery. Barpeta, Jorhat and Nagaon district of Assam is recognized as the hub of traditional handcrafted jewellery or Axomiya gohona. Lokaparo, Keru, Thuriya, Dighal keru, Japi, Golpata, Satsori, Jonbiri, Bena, Gejra, Dholbiri, Doogdoogi, Senpata Horinsakua are some exclusive designs which are very popular and much in demand. Each piece of jewellery has a distinctive name and shape. The stunning designs and beautiful enameling done on the jewellery pieces have been able to attract both domestic and international customers. Assamese jewellery is reasonably priced and goes very well

with the local attire mekhala sador. Jewellers of this region have taken part in many exhibitions at local and national level. Young entrepreneurs of this region are taking up this profession which is a very good sign and will definitely boost the economy of the state. The present paper gives an overview of the Assamese jewellery with focus on the methods of making them and the income of the jewellers.

Introduction

The objects that are worn for personal adornment like earrings, necklace, nose-ring, bracelets, finger rings, toe-rings, anklet, armband or armband, waist- chain, pendants etc are called jewellery. The word jewellery itself is derived from the word jewel, which was anglicized from the Old French ‘*jouel*’, and beyond that, to the Latin word ‘*jocale*’, meaning plaything. (Dictionary.com)

In Asia, the Indian subcontinent has the longest continuous legacy of jewellery making with a history of over 5,000 years (Untracht, 1997: 15). Jewellery may be made from a wide range of resources like gemstones, ivory, pearls, precious metals, beads, shells etc. The yellow metal is worn to beautify every part of the body and is considered as a status symbol, mostly by women folk. The yellow metal is extremely popular as it makes a person look special, elegant and attractive.

was locally available flowing down with the water of several Himalayan rivers, of which Subansiri⁸ is the most important one. *Sonowal Kachari*, an indigenous tribe of Assam was engaged only for gold washing in the river. Different writers have elaborately discussed about gold in Assam in the early period and the process of gold washing in their works. References of gold in Assam in the early period are found in the writing of the classical writers like the earliest reference of gold in Assam is found in the Arthasastra. Here reference has been made to a place called *Suvarnakundya*. From the Silimpur inscription it is inferred that the kings of earlier Kamrupa used to mint gold coins though unfortunately no such gold coins have yet been discovered on 'Gold and Silver wares' of Assam writes,

Assam jewellery is by no means without merit. It incurs the stock reproach of being "unfinished". It is no doubt crude and precious stones used are not very precious or very well cut. But it is quaint and characteristic. The gold used is of a high degree of purity. The Assamese goldsmiths' customers would not be satisfied with 14 carot or even 18 carot of gold and many of the bracelets, necklaces etc are distinctly pleasing even to the critical eye and would attract notice in the midst of quite a good collection of Indian wares. (Henniker 1905:1)

W. Robinson also states that, the best gold is said to be found in the most winding streams having the strongest currents. In this connection he has mentioned three rivers, viz. Boroli (Modern Bharali, in the district of Darrang), Disni (Dichai, that is modern Bhogdai, in the Jorhat sub division) and Joglo (near Namchand

⁸ A river of Assam

in the modern Dibrugarh, Subdivision), the latter two, according to him contain the purest and best gold (Robinson, 1841: 35-36). References to silver in the early period are very scanty. Kalika Purana refers to ornaments made of silver and Yogini Tantra refers to utensils made of gold. In the Medieval period though the working on silver was prevalent yet the metal itself was not available within the jurisdiction of the country. (Bhattacharyya 310, & 344 - 372)

Barpeta, Jorhat and Nagaon district of Assam is recognized as the hub of traditional handcrafted jewellery or *Axomiya gohona*. In Ranthali village, located approximately 8 kms away from Nagaon town, almost 90 percent of the total families are engaged in Assamese jewellery business. Barpeta, a town in Barpeta district and Sonarigaon in Jorhat district are also two such places where almost one member of every family is involved in this profession.



Fig 2. Hub of the jewellery business in Assam namely Barpeta, Nagaon and Jorhat
(Source Google Maps 03-10-2018)

Methods employed to prepare Assamese Jewellery: The modus operandi employed by the craftsmen to craft the jewellery is manual. The craftsmen involved in this profession are called as '*Sonari*'. Gold and silver is used to make the ornaments. In case of gold metal, 99% pure gold (24 carat) is used. The process starts with smoothing the gold, cutting it into required sizes and packing it in white paper. The goldsmith then pounds the packed pieces of gold by the *haturi* (a small hammer) and two other types of small instruments. These pieces of smooth and fine plates of gold are ready for use for the preparation of ornaments. *Mina* (enamel) is used to boost the quality and beauty of the Assamese jewellery and some different types of colourful stones are used too. *Moni* (colourful small size ball beads) are also used in the Assamese jewellery items. *Bakharua moni*, *Pualmoni* and *Desimoni* are the different types of beads used in making the ornaments. The beads are named depending on the size, colour and quality of the balls. A very small plastic thread is used to stitch the balls and prepare the necklace.

Some popular designs of Assamese Jewellery

The most popular pattern used in Assam is black, green and red enameling which is done on gold jewellery. The different types of ear ornaments worn include *Lokaparo*, *Keru*, *Thuriya*, *Dighal Keru*, *Bakharna Keru*, *Uka Keru*, *Titakaria Keru*, *Karnaphul Sona* or *Makori*. A variety of necklaces namely *Golpata*, *Satsori*, *Jonbiri*, *Bena*, *Japi*, *Gejra*, *Dholbiri*, *Doogdoogi*, *Jethipoti*, *Birimoni*, *Chandrasahar*, *Galakantha*, *Rupadhar*, *Gajamati har*, *Mukutamoni*, *Poalmoni*, *Silikhamoni*, *Matarmoni* and *Magardana* are very popular and in demand. Different kinds of finger rings include the *Jethinejia Anguthi*, *Patia Anguthi*,

Babari phulia Anguthi, Senpata Horinsakua, Bakharpata etc. The jewellery pieces are named after the designs they are inspired from like *Lokaparo* is derived from ‘*paro*’ meaning pigeon; the pendant and the earrings depict two pigeons sitting with their back to each other; the *jethipoti* is drawn from *jethi* meaning a lizard in Assamese, and this pendant portrays a lizard’s tail and has a row of small medallions in the shape of V and a central pendant); *Dholbiri* finds its source in the word *Dhol* meaning the drum and *biri* means the surrounding designs of this ornament; *Jonbiri* originates from *Jon* which means half-moon or the crescent moon; *Doogdoogi* is a heart shaped locket with matching earrings the *Keru* is a round shaped ornament which is narrow on one side and wide on the other side with a hollow middle part; *Golpata* is neck jewellery with different floral designs; *Japi* is a conical shaped hat; Women adorn bracelets made of either gold or silver on their wrists known as *Gam-kharu* and *Muthi-kharu*, while *Gam-kharu* looks like a large clasp whereas the *Muthi-kharu* is a solid and sturdy gold bracelet which looks like a cuff bangle; *Citipoti*, is worn by women on their forehead just below the parting of the hair. The different types of designs based on the musical instruments used in the making of the Assamese jewellery are *haturi*, *bhati*, *niary*, *daish*, *phali*, *karsani*, *kati*, *nuoni*, *lap*, *thina laah-mari* and *bakhor*. Assamese jewellers use *lah* (lac) to fill the frame, *paat-xun* to entrench stones and a unique stone, called *kosoti khil*, is used to test the purity of gold.

Through case study method the present paper attempts to investigate the present-day designs and techniques of making jewellery in Assam. A family of jewelers were interviewed and data was collected and analysed to examine the contemporary Assamese Jewellery as the Shimmering facet of Assamese

Culture. The income pattern of Barpeta and the village of Ranthali of Assam are analysed further to establish their relevance with the present-day users of this type of jewellery.



Mr. Alakesh Das and Mr. Jatin Das belonging to the traditional jeweler family in Assam

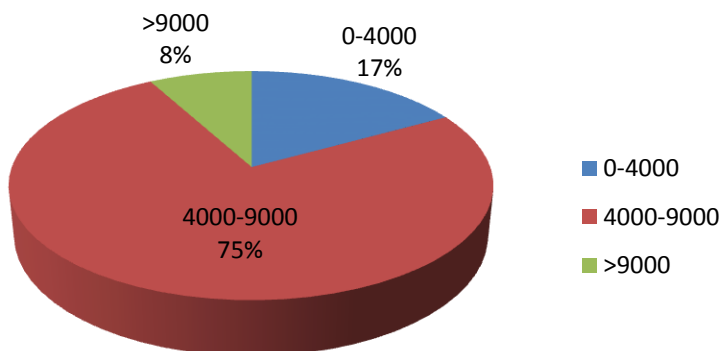
Mr. Jatin Das, aged 68 years is a reputed jeweller of Barpeta (a district in Assam) is into this family business of jewellery for the last 40 years. After graduation, instead of looking for a job, he preferred to join his family business and carry forward the legacy of jewellery making of his forefathers. He owns a jewellery shop and has eight persons working under him. *Bihu* (major festival of Assamese) and the marriage season are the busy times and during which he along with his employees work day and night to complete the orders placed by the customers. He has also exported his jewellery creations abroad and has participated in several jewellery exhibitions not only in Assam but all over the country. This tradition has been passed to his thirty-year-old son Alakesh, who is in the jewellery business for last eleven years. This legacy was started by the revered Mr. Hari Das Baniya during the times of the famous Vaishnavite Saint Srimanta Sankardeva and it has continued and passed over from generations to generations.



Jewellers at work

Income Pattern of the Craftsmen of Barpeta and Ranthali

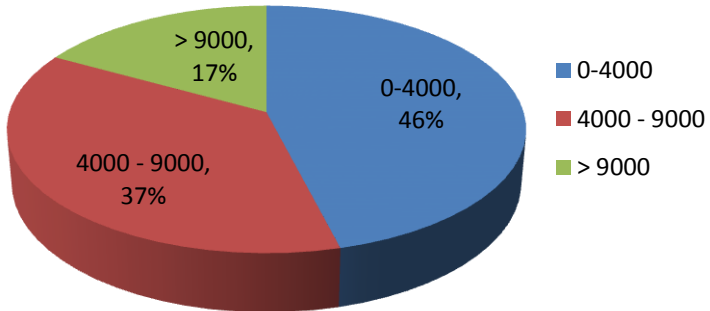
Split of Income pattern of the Craftsmen of Barpeta



1. Income Pattern of the Craftsmen of Barpeta from the field survey shows it has been found that 17% craftsmen earn below INR 4000 per month, 75% craftsmen earn between INR 4000 to 9000 per month and only 8% craftsmen earn their income above INR 9000 per month. The following table shows the income pattern of the craftsmen. Total 120 families of Barpeta town are involved in this profession.

2. Income Pattern of the Craftsmen in Ranthali village from the field survey conducted it has been found that 46% craftsmen earn below INR 4000 per month, 37% craftsmen earn between INR 4000 to 9000 per month and only 17 % craftsmen earn above INR 9000 per month. The following table shows the income pattern of the craftsmen.

**Split of Income pattern of the Craftsmen of Ranthali
Village, Nagaon**



Few designs of Assamese jewellery:



***Jonbiri* – Crescent shaped pendant *Doogdoogi* – Leaf shaped pendant**



Dholbiri – Drum Shaped pendant



Dhansira – Paddy shaped pendant



Prajapati haar – Jewel worn in Marriage



Keru & thukasun – Marriage ear ornaments



Balakharu - Bracelet



Citipoti – Lizard shaped designed head ornament



Gamkharu & Muthi kharu – Bracelet



Thuriya – Ear Ornament



Jonbiri – Crescent shaped pendant

Conclusion

The intricate designs of Assamese jewellery are an esteemed and worthy asset of Assamese people. Every piece of Assamese jewellery is eye-catching and unique. The price of the ornaments depends on the design and size. As each piece of Assamese jewellery is conspicuous and not too expensive, it has the ability to attract both domestic and international customers. Now-a-days the demand of traditional Assamese jewellery called as 'Axomiya *gohona*' is gradually increasing day by day. The craftsmen sell their products through whole-sellers or practice door to door selling. It has successfully occupied the market in national as well as at international levels and today gaining economic significance.

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Indian Marital jewellery and symbolism: contextual manifestations

Mansi Sathyanarayan and Mitraja Bais

Abstract

Marital jewellery and its significance vary across India. Based on the local customs within a region and/or community, it is worn on different parts of the body including the head, nose, ears, neck, wrists, toes and combination of these. No single ornament serves this purpose throughout India, as for instance the wedding ring does in the West. Jewellery in India is not just an economic marker, but also one of social, cultural, geographical, and aesthetic influences and scenarios. The diversity of the country is reflected in everyday life, various rituals and ceremonies, material culture and jewellery too. This paper aims to be a reflection of this diversity through the representation of specific pieces of marital jewellery and interpretation of their symbolism and significance in the local context. This is enabled by means of literature study, oral histories and a combination of anthropological and sociological research methods. The paper also attempts to investigate the relevance of symbolism and oral narrations from the past, present times and across different contexts.

Introduction

In traditional Indian culture, body adornment had a deep rooted significance. Both men and women adorned themselves with countless varieties of costumes, tattoos, hair do's, and ornaments that not only beautified, but also formed an integral part of an individual's cultural identity. So much so, that one could

decipher an individual's social, economic and marital status (of women in particular), as well as religious and regional/geographical identity, based on their costumes and ornaments without communicating a single word. The traditional attire and ornaments that were a part of everyday life in the past are now set aside, or especially bought to be adorned during festive seasons especially Marriage - which is one of the most significant passage of rite in an Indian individual's life. These could include a combination of a pair of earrings, a forehead head ornament, hair ornaments, necklace, bangles, a nose ring, toe rings, etc., depending on the social customs and traditions practiced by the families.

In traditional Indian culture, it was a common practice to begin accumulation of assets (trousseau, clothes, jewellery, utensils, bedding, etc) for a daughter's wedding, soon after she was born. The collection of these items was known as *stridhan* (woman's wealth). Presented to the bride by her family, it belonged explicitly to her. Each bride would receive at least a basic jewellery set, and might also receive particular pieces of jewellery from her in-law, the precise reason of the tradition varying from community to community (Balakrishnan and Kumar, 1999: 142). A bride could adorn multiple ornaments from head to toe. But distinct ornaments that symbolise matrimony differ from region to region and/or community to community.

Marital jewellery and its symbolism have received attention from scholars through time. The premise for the research is based on the idea that jewellery as objects are both valuable and portable in nature. Most jewellery is personally owned and remains in their respective personal collections (both individual

and family collections). However, through history, a lot of jewellery (either through archeological digs or through ideas of collecting) have ended up in museum collections and with the advent of the digital world, a large repository of jewellery (in the form of visual images) have ended up on the internet. This paper identifies one piece of jewellery from each type of collection - disparate as it may seem, tied together by their ceremonial use of that in marriages. The paper focuses to ask the following questions:

- i. How does symbolism of jewellery get affected by the nature of the collection it is part of?
- ii. Does the symbolism of jewellery meant for the same ceremonial use hold the same symbolism across geographical and cultural space?

The methodology used to answer these questions draws inspiration from a combination of research tools:

- i. The first premise for the research is that, jewellery essentially has its symbolic roots in socio-cultural traditions, sciences, and mythology. This knowledge through secondary resources is used as the primary information to study the selected pieces of jewellery.
- ii. To delve further into understanding each piece of jewellery, we draw upon the famous anthropological idea of ‘the social life of things’. Appadurai and Kopytoff have suggested that all objects (here the term is extended to include jewellery) have a social life and in the understanding of its biography, one can ask questions like:

“What, sociologically, are the biographical possibilities inherent in its "status" and in the period and culture, and how are these possibilities realized? Where does the thing come from and who made it? What has been its career so far, and what do people consider to be an ideal career for such things? What are the recognized "ages" or periods in the thing's "life," and what are the cultural markers for them? How does the thing's use change with its age, and what happens to it when it reaches the end of its usefulness?” (Kopytoff, 1986: 66-67)

This idea helps us unpack the symbolism of the identified jewellery pieces not just in their present contexts, but also to understand the past and future lives of the ornaments that situate it in a web of ever evolving symbolism.

- iii. We live in a digitally advanced world where our lives are increasingly populated with visual images. As Sarah Pink notes, images permeate our everyday life in diverse spheres and likewise in ethnographic research, any visuals used as tools or any images produced becomes part of the ethnographic knowledge generated (Pink, 2013: 17). The study of any jewellery is after all an ethnographic study that involves understanding the object and the people associated with it. As part of this research, we rely on the visual image as a tool to strengthen the narratives about the jewellery pieces.

Marital Jewellery and Symbolism

The first pieces of jewellery identified are a group of toe rings at The South Asia Collection Museum in the UK. Intrigued by its unique design, we initially set out to identify whether these were in fact toe rings, owing to such pieces not being part of popular adornment culture in present times. A close look at the making technique, records from the museum all indicate that these are perhaps from late 19th or early 20th century and made from metal alloys of zinc and brass. If one were to make a biographical analysis, it is hard to present the personal or social history of the pieces, from which it derives its symbolic value. The scope for symbolic analysis of museum collections is mostly with regard to its making and crafting, the exquisite nature of which is one of the primary reasons for it to end up in collections. The nature of this research limits us from sourcing primary data for establishing the provenance and other such details about the toe rings. Our only source to studying these pieces is Hendley's book on Indian jewellery which highlights similar toe rings to be from Uttar Pradesh. The second limitation is that these pieces are again from similar museum collections which present us a scenario of uncertainty when it comes to knowing an object's life history when it is part of collections.



Figure 1. Toe rings from Uttar Pradesh at The South Asia Collection, Norwich, UK.

Here is where we realise the strength of personal collections. Though difficult to access, they are the ones laden with a plethora of narratives associated with them. Oral narratives presented by owners and wearers of such jewellery most often result in stories that are subjective and may not be part of mainstream narratives. In the hope of discovering some such stories, we studied a few pairs of toe rings from a personal collection of a lady, whose ethnicity is from the state of Maharashtra but her family have lived in Karnataka for over eight generations. The toe rings that she brings out are placed on a layer of cotton inside a jewellery box. They are all made of silver and bought from their family jeweller over the last twenty five years. The first pair that was worn by her during wedding was bought by her maternal family, a tradition that continues to be followed. This is called '*jodvi*', meaning a pair. Pair of plain silver rings is worn on the second toe of each foot, which makes it a complete set of four rings. While this is the traditional toe ring presented to her during the wedding ceremony, she has a collection of toe rings, each pair with its own significance and

symbolism. In her collection, we see two more traditional pairs; *paanch pheri* (five turns) and *saath pheri* (seven turns). These are called so because of their design where a single silver wire is wound into five spirals or seven spirals to form the ring. The owner of these rings tells us, “these are the basic pairs I own. I also have a collection that I use for special occasions. These are made of silver with enamel work on it. The designs are often traditional Indian motifs like a mango, leaves, peacock etc, and the colours of the enamel work are also traditional ones of red, green or mustard.” For the owner of these toe rings, they hold diverse symbolism. At a socio-cultural level, they indicate her status as a married woman. At a personal level, on one hand, they are containers of memories of her wedded life, and on the other, they also symbolise her personal taste that materialises in these adornments.





Figure 2. (L-R) Top row - a pair of *jodvi*, a *paanch pheri* and *saath pheri*, bottom row - enamel work toe rings with traditional colours and mango motifs.

While showing us the toe rings, our host brings out a small circular jewellery box in which there are three Maharashtrian ‘*nath*’⁹ placed inside. She lays it out on a small cushion for us to see. It is known that in the Hindu culture, for all women, the nose ring is a symbol of being married. It is believed that a girl should only wear a *nath* on the day of the wedding and continue to wear it till the time she is married. Getting the nose pierced is also seen as paying respect to Goddess Parvati. While we know that this is generalised information known to us through previous research, what can a specific *nath*, that is part of a married woman’s collection tell us?

⁹ Elaborate nose ornament



Figure 3. The three *nath* in the private collection

The first *nath* was made specifically for the owner's wedding ceremony, which was given to her by her aunt. It is common practice to share certain pieces of jewellery within the family. She mentions that items like the *kamarband* (waist band) and *bajuband* (arm band) were also heirloom jewels and were often worn by several women in the family (when living in joint families was still a prevalent practice). Returning to our focus on the *nath*, we are told that the second one was made to order in Pune about twenty years ago. While the first one is made of silver, the second one was made from gold. A *nath* worn by Maharashtrian women is specifically designed to be worn on the left side of the nose. The typical features of it are its fish shaped design with pearls and the use of white and pink stones which also appear in other pieces of Maharashtrian jewellery. The third *nath* is visibly smaller than the first two and distinctly different with its 'press-type' design, which allows one to wear it without a piercing on the nose. This was bought for her daughter who

had chosen not to get her nose pierced. Changing lifestyles has resulted in an evolution of adornment practices as well. The *nath* is now used only on weddings within the family. Nose adornments used for everyday use are now in the form of simple studs or rings made from either gold or silver.

While showing us the *nath*, the lady describes how the *mangalsutra* is one of the most significant jewellery for a married woman. Typically, a marriage necklace tied around the neck of the bride as a symbol of their union, the *mangalsutra* takes on several names and forms across the geographical reach of India. In parts of South India (Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and TamilNadu), it is referred as a *tali*. One such unique marriage necklace is the *Kazhuththu Uru*, a marriage necklace of the Nattukottai Chettiars, a wealthy South-Indian community of traders, merchants and moneylenders. The necklace is made of gold and is given to the Chettiar bride by her parents; a portion of the gold for it comes from the groom's family thus symbolising the union. The pendant (*tali*) usually forms the central element of the *Kazhuththu Uru*. It is made of sheet gold and features claw-like pendants strung on a cord with round and tubular beads. The *tali* is further decorated with designs depicting Figureures (in the form of Shiva and Parvati), foliage and geometric designs.



Figure 4. Marriage Necklace (*Kazhuththu Uru / Thali*); Chettinad, South India; 19th century; Gold strung on black thread. Source: www.metmuseum.org. Figure 5. A closer look at the *thali* (pendant) shows Figureures of Shiva and Parvati. Marriage Necklace (*Kazhuththu Uru / Thali*); Chettinad, South India; 19th century; Gold strung on black thread. Source: www.metmuseum.org.

Kazhuththu Uru is considered to be an auspicious ornament and is tied by the groom around the bride's neck after they have exchanged their vows before a sacred fire. This marriage necklace is typically given to the Chettiar bride by her parents; a portion of the gold for it comes from the groom's family thus symbolising the union. Besides the wedding day, the ceremonial necklace is also worn on, a ceremony celebrating the husband's 60th birthday (*shashtiabdapurti*). According to a Hindu notion, the age of a man is 120 years. *Shashtiabdapurti* marks half point of his life, and is considered as a milestone among the Nattukottai Chettiars. It is celebrated by performing various religious ceremonies including a reenactment of the couple's

wedding ceremony during which, the woman wears the *Kazhuththu Uru*. The groom wears a *rudraksha* seed and *lingam* pendant necklace (*rudraksamalai*).

The idea of both families contributing to the making of a jewellery piece somehow is appealing in present times of gender discourses. In the quest for any more of such jewellery, we come across a jewel which Kashmiri Pandit women wear as a unique ear ornament known as *dejihoor* or *deji-hor* is symbolic of matrimony. *Dejihoor* are a pair of gold pendants with gold dangles (*athoor*) fitted at the bottom, each strung on a gold chain (*atah*) and pierced in the upper concha of each ear, and fall far below the shoulders. A bride's parents present her with a pair of *Dejihoor*, each strung with a *nirwan* (sacred red thread) during a ceremony called *Devegoan*, which usually takes place a day before the *Lagan* (wedding). *Devegoan* involves performing religious rituals to evoke the Gods to seek their blessings on the auspicious occasion of marriage. After the *Lagan* ceremony, when the bride goes to her husband's house, her parents-in law present her with *atah* and *athoor*. The *nirwan* is replaced by *atah*, and *athoor* are added to the *dejihoor*, completing the symbol of matrimony. Traditionally, *dejihoor* was made of gold as it is considered as the purest metal, and as a custom it is always worn first in the left ear and then the right. Its hexagonal design is inspired by *Shri-Yantra* and is a symbol of union of Shiv and Shakti.

The antiquity of this ornament is evident from a 10th century stone sculpture - Birth of Buddha at SPS Museum Srinagar - that shows the mother Mayadevi and another woman wearing *dehjoor* as it is worn even today (Saraf 1987: 152). In

present times, women have found a practical solution by reducing the size of the chain and the *dejihoor*, so that it hangs up to the ears/neck.

Conclusion

It is apparent that the jewellery studied in this paper personifies a woman's marital status. However, shared metaphors further anchor the symbolism and significance of these ornaments. For example, both the *dejihoor* and *kazhuththu uru* (two very different marital ornaments, from different geographical regions within India) resonate a powerful symbolism associated to Shiva and Shakti. In Hindu culture, Shiva symbolises consciousness, the masculine principle, whereas Shakti symbolises the feminine principle, the activating power and energy. The union of Shiva and Shakti symbolises life, both universal and individual, as an incessant interaction of co-operating opposites (Zimmer 1946: 147). In case of the *kazhuththu uru*, this symbolism is often depicted in the form of ornamental Figureures of Shiva and Parvati carved in the *thali*. Whereas in the *dejihoor*, this symbolism is personified through its the hexagonal shape that is inspired by *Shri-Yantra* - a symbolic portrayal of Shiva and Shakti in Tantric Yoga.

While the symbolism of the *dejihoor* and *kazhuththu uru* is metaphorical, the role of *nath* and toe rings as marital jewellery is primarily scientific. A variety of nose ornaments are worn by women in different regions of India. Depending on the local cultural traditions, they are worn on one nostril, both nostrils, the septum, or combinations of these. Similar varieties and cultural variants exist in case of the toe rings. The use and cultural traditions associated with these ornaments also differs

across ethnic groups, but they are united in their role in maintaining a healthy reproductive system. The ancient Ayurvedic text, *Sushruta Samhita*, suggests that piercing a particular nodule on the left nostril, and wearing a toe ring on the toe next to the thumb, strengthens a woman's womb and suppress menstrual and childbirth pain (Kshirsagar, 2015).

The above are a few examples of marital jewellery and their symbolism. A traditional Indian marriage ceremony is a hoard of numerous such symbolisms. Some of them find a physical expression in the form of body adornments and articles used during rituals, whereas others can be experienced as oral traditions performed by the priests as chants and rituals to unite a couple in the bond of marriage. Marital jewellery then, is perhaps a tangible manifestation of an intangible cultural tradition, or even a cherished treasure that celebrates a much significant rite of passage in the life of an Indian woman.

The use of diverse collections/contexts and diverse methods of research leads us to similarly diverse narratives. While studying pieces in museums makes it evident that discovering an object's history and representing it accurately is a challenge, the idea of studying objects through personal narratives help us uncover the personal and user-centred symbolism of the jewellery.

In finding answers to the research questions, it becomes evident that while a generalised symbolism may be perceived to be representative of the type of jewellery, ideas of symbolism are actually layered with contextual, historical, personal narratives that make it a highly subjective component associated with any object. Each piece of jewellery has its own symbolism depending on the above mentioned factors. We conclude by

saying that this paper is an attempt to demonstrate the importance of research methodology in studying symbolism, while also ensuring an equal focus on generating knowledge about the jewellery itself.

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Ornaments in Ancient Maharashtra - Megalithic Culture, 1000 BCE to 300 AD

G.K. Mane

Abstract

The Megaliths in India are mostly concentrated in South India, though they have also been reported in other parts of India. In Maharashtra most of the Megalithic monuments have been recorded in Vidarbha region i.e. eastern part of Maharashtra. The number of Megalithic sites in Maharashtra are more than 150. Out of them only 5% are the habitational sites. The Megalithic people of Vidarbha have been placed from 1000 B.C. to 300 A.D. Research has been carried out on Megaliths in report of the metal objects, animal remains, food and economy but meager amount of work has been done on ornaments of Megalithic people hence, the present paper attempts to study the ornaments of this period. The Megalithic people seem to have been very particular about personal hygiene and ornamentation. As articles of toilet, they used mirror, combs and nail-paints as has been referred. They used various ornaments made of gold, silver, copper, shell, terracotta as well as semi precious stones. They knew the technology for making ornaments in different metals and stones. Excavations at Naikund, Khapa, Takalghat, Mahurjhari, Junapani, Naikund, Bhagimohari have revealed gold ornaments. Copper Bangles and different types of semi precious stone beads as well as terracotta, shells, glass beads also recorded in excavation. The Megalithic people utilized gold skillfully for the preparation of ornaments. A beautiful specimen of a bangle made of fine disc of gold threaded on copper wire with hooked ends, has

been recovered in a stone circle at Junapani. At Mahurjhari, a beautiful necklace with cabled golden strips having a regular gold leaf pendant mounted on a lacquer base is a noteworthy specimen of skilled craftsmanship. The Megalithic people knew the alloy technology of gold and silver, 40% to 50% of silver found in golden objects. If the percentage is 40% to 45% that is known as electron. The beads of semi-precious stone that the Megalithic taste for refinement is apparent. The beads represent the use of variety of materials i.e. jasper, agate, chalcedony, carnelian, coral crystal, garnet, lapis-lazuli, quartz, shell, steatite and terracotta. On the basis of ornament one can study the socio-economic status of the person as well as family.

Introduction

This paper confines itself to Megalithic ornaments as known from excavations. The Megalithic people seem to have very particular about personal hygiene and ornaments. They used variety of ornaments as well as toilet objects like mirrors, combs and nail-parers. The jeweler's art reached a high degree of perfection in ancient India. This is amply borne out by the earliest examples of ornaments from Harappa where a large hoard was found in the course of excavations. All the ornaments in this hoard are of gold and their discovery in association with a few pieces of charcoal is indicative of the find spot being a jeweler's workshop. Similar finds at Lothal in Gujrat were found thousands of the beads of gold. (Rao1957: 87)

Literary references mention the material used in preparing ornaments. Few texts give descriptions of different type of ornaments. Among those the most important is the Kautilya's

Arthasatra which not only mentions in detail different varieties of ornaments but also gives the various technical processes involved in their manufacture along with the materials required.

In Maharashtra¹⁰, the Megalithic settlements and burial sites are found in isolated regions and are not found in continuation of the preceding Chalcolithic culture of the region, whereas in South India, the Megalithic cultures are generally a continuation of the Neolithic and Chalcolithic culture. However the Chalcolithic phase of Inamgaon¹¹ may have had cultural contacts with Iron Age people.

In the earlier period ornaments are referred in Vedic literature but Megalithic period is only depending on the excavated materials from the various excavations. A variety of ornaments have been found from the burials very few objects are recorded from the habitation sites. The Megalithic people knew how to decorate their person. This is evidenced by various ornaments made of gold, silver, copper, terracotta as well as the beads of semi-precious stones, shell etc. It is quite clear that they knew how to work on these metals and the process of making ornaments.

Gold Ornaments - Gold ornaments are rarely found from Megalithic sites even though they utilized gold skillfully for the preparation of ornaments from places like Mahurjhari, Junapani and Naikund. Outside Maharashtra the gold ornaments recovered are at Adichanallum, Maski, Nagarjunkonda, Jammapeth near Mysore and a few other sites. (Gururaja 1972: 272) The gold objects consisted of beads, diadems or necklaces

¹⁰ Maharashtra, a state spanning west-central India

¹¹ Archaeological site located in Maharashtra

with cabled golden strips. The evidences have been occurred at Junapani, Mahurjhari and Naikund. Spiral rings of gold have been reported from Junapani and Mahurjhari (Figure - I(a)). Besides these, golden bangles have been recorded at Junapani and spiral ear-ring made of gold wire. A beautiful specimen of a bangle prepared from fine discs of gold threaded on a copper wire with hooked ends, has been recorded in a stone circle at Junapani. (*Indian Archeology - A Review* 1961-62; 32-34) At Mahurjhari gold ornament with punch decoration has been noticed. Another beautiful necklace with cabled golden strip having a rectangular gold leaf pendent mounted on a lacquer base is noteworthy specimen of skilled craftsmanship. (Deo 1973: 54) At Naikund gave only two objects of gold [Figure - I(b)]. They are a spiral ornament of gold wire with one end having conical knob and other broken. The diameter is about 2 centimeters and the second object is in three pieces of very thin strips of gold leaf [Figure - II].

Megalithic people knew the technique of making gold ornaments. On the basis of chemical analysis of Mahurjhari gold objects revealed 99.8% gold. Some of objects indicate 50% silver. (Deo 1973: 55) It is observed that the use of silver in the gold about 45% to 50% is known as electrum. They purposely mixed the silver in the gold. The continuous supply of gold may not be possible to the Maharashtrian Megalithic people from Kolar and Hutti mines. Due to limited supply of gold, the Megalithic people develop the new technology to mix the silver in the gold objects.

Megalithic people knew the technique of preparing an ornament from different metals. Silver studs and spacing beads have been reported from Junapani. These people knew the

technique of alloy of silver and gold. Specimens of Mahurjhari show as much as 40% silver in the makeup of ear ornaments. The use of silver in the gold is not common in South India. It occurs only in Maharashtra's gold objects. At Junapani buttons have been noticed with pure silver. At Kaudinyapur, the goldsmith used the small type of cup and iron forceps found in Phase I. (Dikshit 1964: 17, 112)

Copper Ornaments - The Megalithic people used copper on a restrictive scale because the metal was scarce. They used copper for bangles, bracelets and anklets. All these are exquisitely executed indicating mastery over copper, bronze and copper alloy technology. Of the twenty-two specimens of bangles, two were found in the horizons of Phase I B at Takalghat and the rest came from the stone circles at Khapa and Gangapur. Khapa gives sixteen and the latter four. These resolve into three categories: i) with open ends, ii) with ends meeting, and iii) with overlapping ends. All these bangles are solid and have a circular section. The size of the bangles show that they were used by adults as well as youngsters [Figure – III (a)]. Mahurjhari has given 48 copper bangles with open ends, which are decorated with the series of chevron decorations. These bangles are found to have been made by hammering copper bars with sharply cut ends. (Deo 1973: 31) Besides Mahurjhari excavations at Nagalwadi have been found four bangles. The diameter of bangles is in between 5 to 7 centimeters. Besides bangles, copper rings were found at Pavnar excavations. (Deo 1968: 97)

The repertoire of copper objects at Raipur includes rings, bangles and delicate necklaces for personal and ornamental use. The copper objects are entirely restricted to four out of eight

megaliths. The total number of 46 bangles occurs in these four stone circles. (Deglurkar & Lad 440) The majority are the larger and heavier type with diameter ranging between 4.5-5.5 centimeters and weighing around 80-130 grams [Figure – III (b)]. They are made by hammering out of thick copper bars, with invariably open terminals decorated with an etched chevron pattern. Their size and weight indicates that they were worn either in the forearms, the upper arms or the feet. The evidence of megalith 3 shows that the circle contained the fragmentary buried remains of a single adult, possibly the remains of female, found six small and thin bangles only. Very thin and delicate necklaces of tiny copper circlets and interlocked into each other were found in close association with human skeletal remains in megalith 1 and 3. The presence the copper necklace near the head-neck portion of the sub-adult in the megalith 1 is another positive indicator that the remains were probably those of the teen-aged girl.

Iron Bangles - Three circular bangles of iron were found, two from megalith 1 and one from No. 6. (Deo1968-69: 49) They resolve themselves into two groups : a) those with circular cross section; and b) that with a thin rectangular one. Generally these types to bangles used by the economically weaker section of the society.

Shell Ornaments - Shells also seem to have been used for the preparation of ornaments like ear-studs and bangles. These types of ornaments are not found in Maharashtra. Rea has reported the find of decorated shell ear ornaments in the sarcophagus at Perumbair. (*Annual Report* 1908-09: 92-93) Sanur also has given ear-studs of shell with incised decorations. The habitation site at

Brahmagiri has recorded the shell bangles. (*Ancient India* No. 4, 1984: 260-263)

Bead Ornaments - The antiquity of beads in India can be traced through two different channels of archaeology and literature. So far as the archaeological data is concerned it is well known that no evidence of beads has so far been reported from any prehistoric sites in India from the Mesolithic sites of Langhnaj. (Sankalia 1944-63) Neolithic period have the evidence of beads at Hallur and Tekkalkota in South India, while the Chalcolithic settlements give a good number of beads. Beads of various materials are frequently found from different types of Megalithic burials in south India. In Maharashtra, beads of semi-precious stones with the Megalithic taste for refinement is apparent. Semi-precious stones which abound in a remarkable variety of colour and structure were perhaps the most favourite material utilized by the Megalithic people. The beads represent the use of a variety of materials, as for instance chalcedony, agate, carnelian, coral, garnet, crystal, jasper, lapis-lazuli, quartz, magnesite, paste, shell, serpentine, steatite and terracotta. Metal like gold, copper were also used for making of beads.

The archaeological data provides the information regarding the various techniques adopted in the making of beads during the Megalithic period. Sites like Borgaon, Kaundinyapur [Figure – IV (a&b)] and Mahurjhari seem to have been bead-making centers as Mahurjhari continues to give hundreds of unfinished beads. The primary factor which governs the location of a stone-bead industry is the easy accessibility of the raw material and nearness to the market. Mahurjhari in olden times was ideally suited for both. The raw material is available within 5 kilometers from the Megalithic site.

The uniqueness of the evidence of megalithic 2 of Raipur is also borne out by the large hoard of beads recovered from it. Megaliths 2 and 3 with clusters of 135 and 80 beads respectively of varied material, cornelian, agate, jasper has a positive significance. The beads are of different shapes like circular, square, hexagonal, tubular and barrel, and cornelian is the predominant material. In megalith 2 though there are no human skeletal remains the beads are found in a large cluster of 135 in number in the western section. Megalith 3 is a much unique with etched carnelian beads with total number of 45 in all with shapes of small circular and tubular beads with geometrical patterns etched in white on a reddish brownish surface. (Deglurkar & Lad 442)

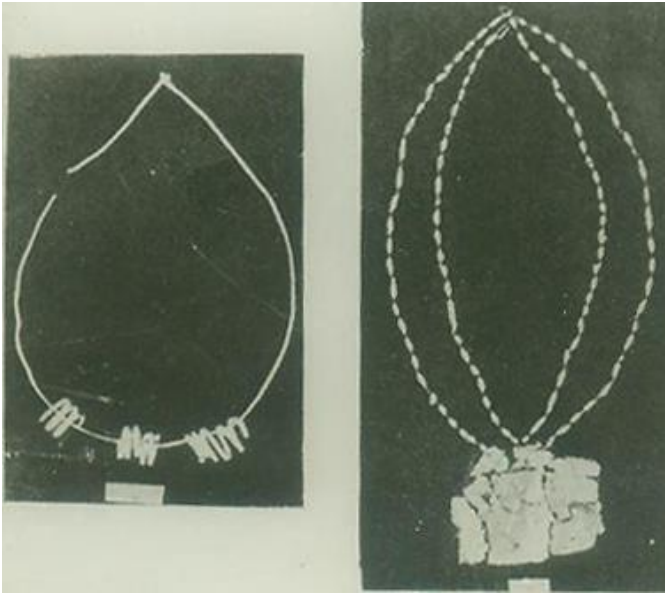
Glass beads - The artifact of glass goes back to 2000 B.C. The knowledge of glass can be possible only in Syria. The first evidence of glass bangles was found at Maski in Chalcolithic context. Glass-beads have been reported from a number of sites, whereas bangles of opaque glass have been found at Paiyampalli and Maski. Glass beads have also been found in the stone circles at Mahurjhari and Khapa. It appears that glass was known to the Megalithic people as far as 6th-7th century B.C. and Megalithic burials also show the use of gold beads, as at Raigir. Annular wire with beaten ends has been found at Maula Ali in Telangana state. Thin sheets are turned into cylindrical tubes at Brahmagiri. (Deo 2000: 25) Megalithic people also used beads of wood covered with gold Figure.

Besides the ornaments, the Megalithic people used comb is evidenced by the impression on an iron adze at Khapa. It indicates that the comb was kept over the adze near the dead body. In course of time the oxidized portion of the tool got

impression of the comb. It might be a wooden comb, which was completely disintegrated. A good number of nail-parers made of iron have been reported from Megalithic monuments. Vidarbha is very rich in this respect. (Deo 1973: Pl. xxv) The nail-parers are medium long rods of iron with cabled body, having one end broad, thin and convex and other tapering to a point also common in megalithic sites. The pointed end was possibly used for cleaning the ear and the broader one for nail trimming. This type of nail-parers is in use even today in Maharashtra.

Conclusion

The Megalithic people seem to have been very particular about their ornaments. They used a variety of beads and even exported them to the other people. Etched beads with set patterns play an important role in the burial equipment as also on the less explored habitation sites. The copper bangles are noticed in Maharashtra, having a good percentage of tin. The gold ornaments have been noticed in Maharashtra show as much as 40% to 50% silver. Hence the making of an alloy of silver and gold was common in Vidarbha region.



Mahurjhari

Junapani

Figure - I a : Gold Ornaments from Mahurjhari and Junapani.

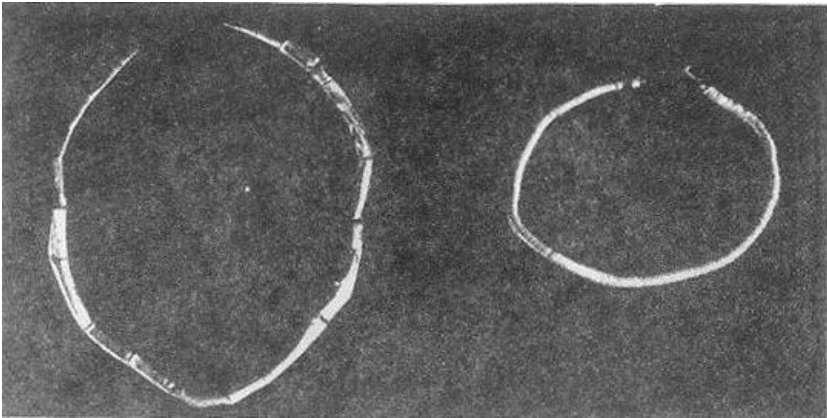


Figure - I b : Gold and Silver beads from Naikund, Maharashtra.

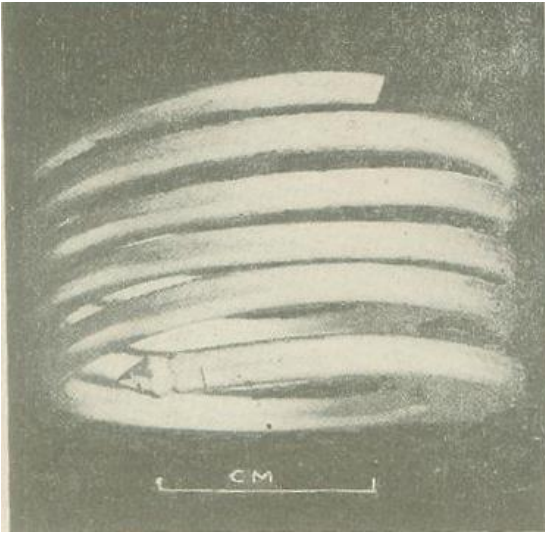


Figure - II a: Spiral ornament of gold with one end knobbed and pointed, Meg. No. 7, Loc. I.

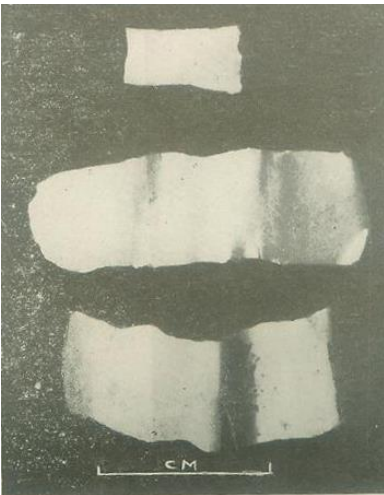


Figure - II b: Small strips of gold leaf, Meg. No. 3, Loc. I.



Figure - III a - Khapa : Copper Bangles from Khapa and Raipur (Hingana), Maharashtra.

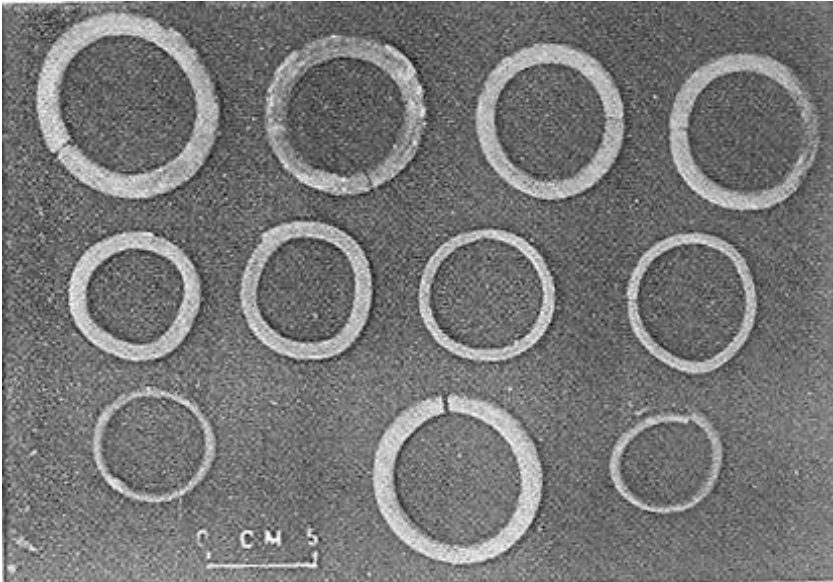


Figure – III b - Raipur: Copper Bangles from Khapa and Raipur (Hingana), Maharashtra.



Figure - IV(a) : Beads and material used for beads from Borgaon, Vidarbha Maharashtra State.

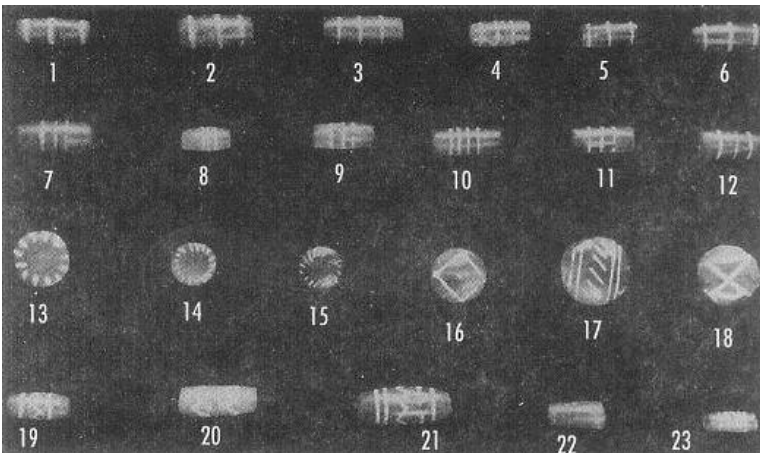


Figure - IV(b) : Beads and Amulets from Kaundinyapur, Maharashtra State.

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Floral Jewellery in Ancient Indian Tradition

Priya Thakur

Abstract

The general conversation around jewellery tends to focus only on the ornaments made of precious metals viz., gold and silver and precious stone. The present paper is an attempt to study the use of flowers as well foliage patterns as jewellery in the ancient Indian period. The archaeological as well as the literary references clearly corroborate that flower jewellery has been in use since ancient times. Jewellery was generally made of natural materials like feathers, seeds, leaves, flowers, stone beads, wood, ivory, animal bones and claws. The art of adornment goes back to primitive man who used, for decoration, flowers and beads, carved wood, shell, bone and stone. The material used changed in time to ivory, copper and semi-precious stones and then to silver, gold and precious stones, but our rich tribal heritage can be seen in the flower motif which is basic to Indian jewellery designs even today. (Jagannathan 2018) Thus, ethnographic and ethno historic accounts in India indicate that plants have been used more often for human adornment than other durable substance. (Francis 1984: 195)

Introduction

The Epics and early literature discuss about the ornamentation and different kinds of jewellery worn by people from every strata of the society. The *Vinaya Pitaka* even states that the Buddhist monks used to wear earrings, beads in the neck, bangles etc. (Sahay 1975: 145) While describing the beauty of

Damayanti in his work *Naisadhacarita* (VII. 1-109), *Sri Harṣa* mentions two blue lotus buds decorating her ears and jasmine flowers in her hair. (Handiqui 1934, 87-101) The kings and their queens usually decorated themselves with the flower garlands hanging down to the knees. (Dhar 1991: 212) In *Kadambari*, *Malati* is mentioned as wearing a pendant in her right ear that is in the shape of a string of leaves containing *ketaki* flowers and maids are wearing flower garlands. (Cowell and Thomas 1897: 12 and 262) In *Karpura-Manjari*, the heroine ornaments her hair with flowers. (Rockwell 1901:251) The courtesans in the employment of king *Harṣa* wore long garlands formed by their hair braids into which woven golden *ketaki* leaf ornaments. (Pandit 1935: 339-340, Canto VII, 928-31 and 945)

The works of *Kalidasa* and *Baṇa* mention great details of flowers worn in hair, braids, ear, arms and wrists, in waist as girdle and as garlands. (Donaldson 1998: 15) While discussing the female hair styles in the relief sculptures from various Buddhist sites, Murthy (1987: 20) discusses styles like *Kesapasha* decked with flower wreaths. The women placed *Kunda* blossoms and *Mandara* flowers in their hair, *Sirisa* flowers in the ears, the flowers blossoming in the rainy season on the parting of the hair, and they knit *Kurbaka* flowers in their tied hair. (Bhushan 1964: 67) The earrings are found in a variety of designs across sites of Indus-Saraswati civilization. Normally, a pair of similar earrings was worn by the females. Some discerning females supported differently styled ornaments in the two earlobes. Terracotta figurines support this observation. (Mohan 2005: 141) The terracotta figurines from Indus-Saraswati sites also show complicated coiffure traditions and one such interesting example shows the head part adorned with big flowers in appliqué style (Figure 1) – a trend seen in early

historic period from various sites in India. Such hairstyles could indicate women of distinction or deities.



Figure 1

Monumental, freestanding images of *Yakshas* and *Yakshinis*, are among the first representations in India of divine types in human form, and pass their rich symbolic and visual vocabulary to later anthropomorphic representations of the Buddha and Hindu divinities. *Yakshas* were taken into both Buddhist and Hindu pantheons as attendants and demigods. (Chandra 1985: 219) The same tradition is clearly seen in the sculptures at Sanci also. With Bharhut, too, we see the beginning of narrative relief sculpture, which was greatly favored by artists of this period and culminated in the superb Amaravati masterpieces of the next. We also find stated here for the first time, and with

comprehensive authority, the ornamental vocabulary of Indian art of all subsequent periods. (Chandra 1985: 24)

Cunningham (1879: 34) provided details about the various ornaments worn by the sculptures at Bharhut and lists various types of ear rings, using the nomenclature of *karnika*, *kundal* (a simple ring), *dehri* (circular Figure fixed outside the lobe), *karṇ-phul* (like a flower), *tri-ratna* pattern ear ring, *jhumka* (bell-like pendant) and the most common type spiral ear rings. (Cunningham 1879: 35) Agrawala (1965: 95-96) discusses these ear rings in details and calls them as *prakaravapra kuṇḍala*. It was common in the ears of the male and the female figures at Bharhut and Sanci. This ornament consists of a prominent plaque seen in front of the ear, to which a projection with two spiral turns is attached at the back and worn in the earlobe. Its front portion is adorned with the design of a four-petal flower. The earliest is the extraordinary *Bharhut earring* made in the size and shape of those seen on the Bharhut railings, indicating that they were really worn at the time in spite of their large size and twisted shape. (Postel 1989: 34) It appears that ancient Indian *earrings* were invariably voluminous and considerably distended the lobe. (Ganguly 2007: 24)

Various terracotta female heads discovered from archaeological sites across India, display gold flowers and rosettes, metal bands with embossed auspicious designs or other floral motifs. Agrawala (1948: 164) mentions the different ways in which flower ornament can be seen worn by the women as a coiffure style interwoven with the hair mass as seen in the terracotta from the archaeological site of Ahichchatra. He also mentions the use of mango spring (*amra-manjarī*) to adorn the hair above the ear. The similar pattern can be seen in a terracotta

female bust presently in Lucknow Museum from Sunga period (Figure 2). This bust shows a female with big flowers adorning her hair. Another exhibit from the same museum represents a sandstone head of Bodhisattva from Kusana period who is wearing an interesting turban arranged in a floral pattern with small flowers in the lower band of the head gear. (Figure 3)



Figure 2



Figure 3

The sacred iconographical tradition also mention different deities associated with specific flowers as part of their ornamentation. *Visṇu* wears a *vanamala* and in general his avatar forms are also shown with the same, except that of the sixth avatar – *Parashurama* and the ninth avatar, Buddha – owing to their ascetic nature. The first two being the *Matsya* and *Kurma* forms; these two forms are shown with the *vanamala* when they are represented in the zoo-anthromorphic forms with lower part of the animal and the upper part of human. A *Varaha*

sculpture from the Nalanda region of 10th century, presently in the Indian Museum, shows the *vanamala*. (Figure 4) Siva as *Naṭaraja* wears a *jaṭa-mukuṭa* decorated with flower garlands, *dhurdhura* and *arka* flowers and necklace of *bakula* flowers. In *Kalyaṇasundara Murti* form representing the marriage of Siva and *Parvati*, Siva wears a garland of *malati* flowers. *Karttikeya* is shown wearing a garland of cactus flowers as *Jnanashakti*. Goddess *Lakṣmi* is associated with lotus – as *Mahalakṣmi*, her hair is tied up with the flowers of the *parijata*. (Donaldson 1998: 26-35) In Bharhut, *Lakṣmi* is seen in early iconographical form of *Gajalakshmi* seated on a lotus and flanked with elephants. (Figure 5)



Figure 4



Figure 5

The presence of flowers or floral motifs was not limited to the ornamentation of human or deities only. Even in the architectural tradition, the floral motifs were quite visible and one can see the lotus as a dominant pattern in the early Buddhist monuments like Bharuhut and Sanci. In the aniconic reliefs of Sanci, the symbols representing Buddha, such as the Bodhi tree or the stupa are shown adorned with garlands, the same panels also represent celestial beings holding the garlands in their hands as they offer their obeisance to the Lord. (Figure 6)



Figure 6

Conclusion

The idea of nature as ornament was one of the earliest attempts by human society towards attaining physical beauty and sense of aesthetics. The flowers provided a wide range of options in terms of color, pattern and size as jewellery and the easy

availability for the users. With traditions and cultural development, some of the flowers became more significant and became associated with religious iconography as well as ritualistic traditions intermingling with almost every aspect of life and gaining a sacred status. The use of flowers as jewellery and ornamentation continues in India even in modern time, especially during ceremonies like marriages.

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Early gold mining and jewellery

Some insights from the Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka

Sharada Srinivasan

Abstract

The Indian subcontinent in the present day is one of the most spectacular repositories of traditional gold jewellery and heirlooms and surviving goldsmithing practices. Although there is an array of rich literary references to gold in antiquity, and numerous detailed portrayals of jewellery in Indian sculpture, in actual fact there are not many finds of ancient jewellery that have been uncovered. This may partly be due to the fact that gold underwent remelting as is seen even today with older pieces of jewellery. Gold finds from the Harappan period show a considerable degree of skill in terms of working in repousse and miniaturisation. Thereafter there seems to be a considerable hiatus until the early historic period in terms of finds of jewellery. The enigmatic finds of gold jewellery from the Nilgiri Cairns however, fill this hiatus to some extent. Though not very precisely dated as they were uncovered by in the early 19th century by Brecks and others, the Nilgiri assemblages are generally thought to go back to the Iron Age, ie at least the mid 5th century BCE if not earlier, with the finds being split between the British Museum, London and Government Museum, Chennai with the gold finds in the British Museum. In this paper, an attempt to contextualise the gold finds is made through preliminary archaeometallurgical explorations into the history of pre-industrial mining in southern India. Some of

the observations from fieldwork by the author in the Hutti-Maski region of Karnataka are touched upon which has been speculated as being one of the possible sources of Harappan gold. Intriguingly, from fieldwork in the Nilgiri hills, the author was able to identify some old gold workings with intact galleries and exposed veins of auriferous quartz. Some of the local Kurumba children were also documented undertaking gold panning and gold extraction. It is possible that there were longstanding traditions of mining for gold in the Nilgiris as indicated by such evidence. While it has been reasonable to postulate some connections with the Hellenistic World in the technological aspects related to the Nilgiri gold such as in the gold granulation, it is also pointed out in the paper that gold microbeads are also found from the Harappan period, though from a widely separated cultural horizon. In other papers the author has pointed to evidence for longstanding traditions in South India of high-tin bronze vessel making with reference to finds of skilled high-tin bronze vessels from the Nilgiris. Taking such aspects into consideration it is not possible to discount the possibility that the Nilgiri gold and material had its course of development within the Indian subcontinent rather being necessarily seen as evidence of import or exchange of metals, although there remains the possibility of influences from elsewhere.

Introduction - Gold in antiquity

Archaeometallurgy is becoming an increasingly important discipline of archaeology that attempts to trace the history of ancient metal production, distribution and usage in antiquity and the related socio-cultural and economic ramifications. The crucial role of metals in past societies can be traced right from

the post-Neolithic societies generally progressing through stages such as the Copper Ages, Bronze Ages and Iron Ages in different regions. The early metals to be exploited were those which were found in the native state, followed by those which could be smelted or reduced easily from ores, while those which were more difficult to smelt were discovered last. The commonly used metals in antiquity include gold, silver, copper, iron, tin, lead, zinc and mercury. The noble metal of gold is found in nature in the native state. Gold has been used to make jewelry not only due to its golden lustre but also due to its great ductility which facilitated forging it into sheet metal and a range of shapes. This paper particularly touches upon the heritage of early south Indian gold jewellery particularly from the Nilgiri cairns and with respect to evidence for gold mining and extraction in the regions of the Nilgiris and Karnataka.

Gold in Indus Valley Civilisation

Gold was found in the native state and the ductility of the metal made it easy to hammer into different shapes. The most spectacular early gold artefact is the Egyptian artefact of the enigmatic mask of the young Pharaoh Tutenkhamen (*c.* 1300 BCE) made by hammering sheet metal. Gold usage is reported right from Neolithic Merhgarh in Baluchistan, Pakistan (*c.* 6000 BCE). Early gold and silver ornaments from the Indian subcontinent are found from Indus Valley sites such as Mohenjodaro (*c.* 3000 BCE). Diadems and belts of ductile beaten gold are reported from Mohenjodaro. The mastery of the repousse technique of raising portions of the gold in designs are seen in the intricate belt with repousse fish motifs from Mohenjodaro (Fig 1, National Museum, New Delhi). Necklaces with spherical micro-beads are also found from Mohenjodaro

(Fig 1, National Museum, New Delhi) and Lothal. Agarwal (2000: 71) pointed to the Harappan primacy in developing certain types of instrumentation such as the needles with eyes on the pointed end, true saws, circular saws and drills. An outstanding aspect of the Indus repertoire is the skill in working in miniature in a highly standardized way. Apart from the micro-beads mentioned before at other Harappan sites, at Dholavira, miniscule faceted cylindrical gold beads were noted by the author. Some were tiny cylinders of diameters of no more than 1mm and others with octagonal facets no more than a centimeter long. All of this, taken together with the abundant evidence for lapidary working and beads exported to far of Oman and Mesopotamia, suggest that the Harappan sites functioned along the lines of thriving semi-industrial crafts outposts or hubs serving wider trading networks. The Mohenjodaro dancing girl, all of 10 centimetres with the armful of bangles points to the significance of ornamentation and uncannily resembles present Kutchi Rabari tribal women who wear shell bangles right along their arms.

The lighter colour of some gold artefacts from Mohenjodaro suggests that there could have been the use of naturally occurring gold with silver impurities (Fig 1). There has been speculation that gold from the Karnataka region collected from the surface by Neolithic cultures of the mid third millennium BC might even have supplied the Indus regions (Allchin and Allchin 1982: 337-8). On the other hand, there were other probable nearer mineral that may have been sourced for the Indus period (Law 2011). Nevertheless, this paper touches some insights from field visits to the mining areas in north Karnataka which may have also had significance.

Mining history in Karnataka

Gold mining had a long history in parts of southern India such as in Karnataka. The extent of gold working in antiquity all over South India is indicated by reports of British geologists in the Hutti Maski schist belt, the Kolar gold fields in Karnataka and the Wynad gold fields in Tamil Nadu. Malcolm Maclaren, in the 1900's acknowledged that a gold prospector was offered 'an uninviting field as the whole auriferous zones had been exploited anciently' (Allchin 1962). The author had made preliminary field surveys in north Karnataka in the Hutti-Maski region in 1991 where she noted extensive old workings for gold. The Hutti Maski schist belt in the Raichur doab, criss-crossed with veins of auriferous quartz, shows extensive evidence for surface and hard rock deep mining for gold. Preliminary field surveys that made by the author in north Karnataka in the Hutti-Maski region in 1991 indicated extensive old workings for gold. Nearly every outcrop visited by the author showed evidence of old mining galleries with large mullacker fragments indicating ore crushing activity in antiquity. Most ore outcrops had open cast mines with old mining galleries with large mullacker fragments scattered about indicating ore crushing activity in antiquity. The author had also identified large concave granite mullacker fragments near Neolithic ash mounds in Wandalli and Machnur which may have been related to such gold ore crushing activity.

Allchin (1962:121, 1982:195) postulated surface mining for gold in the region by the neolithic period (3rd millennium BC-1st half of the first millennium BC). The radiocarbon dates on timbers from an old mine over 200 m deep in Hutti indicate that deep hard rock mining for gold was carried out from pre-

Mauryan times (4th c. BC). These appear to be the deepest old gold mine in antiquity (Radhakrishna and Curtis 1991:23-4, Allchin and Allchin 1982:339). The carbon dates recorded from Hutti are 1945 ± 70 and 1865 ± 70 years B.P., while timbers from the Kolar Gold Fields gave dates of 1290 ± 90 and 1500 ± 115 years B.P. (Agrawal and Margabandhu 1976).

Tamil Sangam literature mentions a merchant who came from the gold bearing region or Tulunadu, the modern Tulu speaking region of Konkan in coastal Karnataka (Kuppuram 1986:17). In this region alluvial gold is found in the Dambal area of Gadag district and the Jalagarus were a traditional community in this Dambal region who undertook alluvial washing and panning for gold as observed by Bruce Foote (1874: 140). He mentions that the Jalagarus of the Dambal region worked on retrieving alluvial gold, after the rainy season when the heavier gold got washed downstream from the auriferous hills. The term *jala* implies water in Sanskrit.

Interestingly, the Kannada writings of the 12th century Bhakti poetess Akka Mahadevi indicate her keen sense of observance and metaphoric allusion to the mining of gold as indicated in the following translation by A.K. Ramanujan (1973: 115). The verse is as follows and suggests an awareness of the practical difficulty of extracting the slender veins of gold in the larger hard rock mass of auriferous quartz.

Like

treasure hidden in the ground

taste in the fruit

gold in the rock

oil in the seed
the Absolute hidden away in the heart
no one can know
the ways of our Lord
white as jasmine...

Gold jewellery and evidence for mining from Nilgiris

In Sangam literature references to the production of gemstones at Kodumanam are also found (Nagaswamy 1981:6). Indeed a megalithic gemstone production site has been excavated at Kodumanal, which is within the gemstone centre of Karur, Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu, with finished and unfinished beads of jasper, ruby, beryl, quartz and sapphire (corundum), agate and carnelian (Rajan 1990:97). The Sangam text, the *Pattinapalai* talks of gems, gold and pearls being amongst the articles of export from the city of Puhar which had a colony of foreign merchants (Nilakanta Sastri 1935:99). Descriptions of gemstones such as beryl embedded in gold ornaments are thought to be found in the Chola record (Kuppuram 1986: 88). Marco Polo and Nicolo Conti relate accounts of the collection of diamonds from the Kakatiya and Vijayanagara domains respectively which would have referred to the Golconda region of Andhra (Yule 1921: 362). Abandoned diamond mines are catalogued by the Bahmani Sultans who overran the Vijayanagara kingdom in Karnataka (Maclaren 1906).

The Nilgiri hills and Wynad bordering, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka host some sparse hard rock and alluvial gold deposits. It is possible that Roman Pliny's account (1st century) of 'gold from the country of Naris' refers to the land of the

Nairs, ie the region of the alluvial gold tracts of the Nilambur valley below the Wyand hills (Radhakrishna and Curtis 1991: 23). Francis (1908: 18) also mentions the interest in prospecting for gold in the Wynad area. Although these deposits were considered uneconomical in modern terms, it is interesting they have been mined/panned by local Kurumba tribes as observed by the author, although. In 1990 the author and Digvijay Mallah were able to identify some old gold workings in the region of Gudalur (Fig 2). Observations were made then of adults and children from the local Kurumba community engaging in hard rock mining for gold and panning for gold from the streams for alluvial gold using large wooden pans (Fig 3), whereby the heavier particles of gold would segregate into the pan while the lighter sand grains would wash away. It was impressive to see the great skill exhibited by the Kurumba children aged no more than nine to twelve in the panning and mercury amalgam extraction of gold. Large wooden pans were used to pan the alluvial sand and to concentrate fine specks of sand rich in gold. Then a blob of mercury was added to create an amalgam with the gold. Then the amalgam was placed on a small leaf and heated to sublimate the mercury, leaving behind a small globule of gold. In this way they were able to retrieve even very trace quantities of metal which commercial prospectors would find quite uneconomical to extract. The Kurumba tribe was traditionally believed to have had magical powers apart from knowledge of mining and metallurgy according to Thurston (1909).

Fairly large mining galleries in which adults could comfortably stand were observed by the author in the Gudalur area, with large auriferous quartz veins being discerned against the bedrock which had been followed by the miners. According

to hearsay the mines in the area of the Nilgiris were worked during the time of Tipu Sultan. There are also accounts that Hoysalas used to mine gold from the region. The Hoysala kings of the region of Karnataka were said to have ruled the Nilgiris from around the 1116 CE to the early 14th century and were said to have been mining for gold at Wyand under Vishnu Vardhan (1108 to 1152 CE) (Balasubramaniam 2009: 9). There is also a legend of the local Badaga community of Nilgiris who speak a dialect related to old Kannada or Halle Kannada. Kaala Raja, a Badaga ruler from Kookal and feudatory of the Adhiyaman rulers of Tagadur who were prospecting for gold in the region is said to have been defeated in battle by Vishnu Vardhan in 1116 CE (ibid. 10).

Gold finds from the Nilgiri Cairns

Conclusion and observations

The pre-history of the Nilgiris is intriguing, having yielded some of the earliest surviving specimens of gold jewellery from the subcontinent in the post-Indus period. The rich finds of gold jewellery from the Nilgiri cairns, now housed in the British Museum, London may date from the early or mid 1st millennium BC to AD according to some commentators such as Knox (1985). The gold granulation technique seen in some of the earrings, whereby tiny spheres of gold were formed due to surface tension, may relate to Hellenistic influences and is found for example in jewellery found at Taxila. However, the use of gold micro-beads was also noted at earlier Harappan sites such as Lothal and Mohenjo-daro as mentioned before.

Other early Tamil examples of gold jewellery include a ear-ring from Souttoukeny of the 2nd century BCE from Tamil Nadu depicting a prickly fruit, now in the Musee Guimet in Paris (Postel 1989: 130). These bring to mind the rich poetry of the classical Tamil Sangam era (c. 3rd century BC to AD) which evoke local fruits and flowers such as *kurinji*. Numerous nature motifs also found in the Nilgiri gold finds from the Nilgiri graves and cairns which are in the British Museum which include an intricate pendant with crescent moon motifs, a granulated flower motif (Fig 4) and a peepul leaf motif. There have been speculations that the sophisticated finds from the Nilgiri cairns were imports (Leshnik 1974). However, Knox (1985) surmises there is enough that is distinctive in them to suggest 'local' styles and that they could probably have been made of local gold. The author has previously investigated and drawn attention to the highly sophisticated and thin-rimmed bronze vessels from the megalithic cairns and burials of the Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu (c. 1000-500 BC), which metallurgical investigations by the author confirmed were made by a skilled process of hot forged and quenched binary unleaded high-tin beta (23% tin) bronze (Srinivasan 1994, Srinivasan and Glover 1995, Srinivasan 2010, Srinivasan 2017). Thus, against this background of skilled metallurgy and given the various types of evidence that gold might have been extracted around the area of the Nilgiris and Wynad as mentioned above, the prospects for a local origin for the rare Nilgiri gold finds from the cairns cannot be discounted.



Fig 1. Micro-beads from Harappan site, National Museum, Delhi (photo credit: Sharada Srinivasan)



Fig 2. Old gold working at Gudalur, Nilgiri district, Tamil Nadu, 1991 (photo credit: Sharada Srinivasan)



Fig 3. Panning of gold by Kurumba children at Gudalur, Nilgiris district (1991) (photo credit: Sharada Srinivasan)



Fig 4 Detail of granulation on gold ornament from Nilgiri Cairns, British Museum (Courtesy of Trustees of British Museum, Photograph credit: Sharada Srinivasan).

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Green Glass Bangles – Some Observations on the Sacred Offering to Goddess Renuka

With special reference to a few temples in Bengaluru

Vaishnaavi M Chavan

Abstract

Jewellery has many uses, the present paper proposes to initiate a discussion about the offering of green glass bangles to Goddess Renuka. Renuka was the wife of Sage Jamadagni who takes to celibacy and Renuka as an obedient wife accepts it and her penance of chastity gives her the power to fetch water in unbaked earthen pot for her husband's daily ritual oblations. Until an instance when her mind gets wavered after seeing a couple in an intimate act on the banks of the river, following which she fails to make a pot of unbaked earth and fill it with water. Jamadagni ordered Parasharama (one of his sons) to behead Renuka. He beheads her along with a woman she takes refuge in the village. On getting a boon to bring his mother back to life, Parashurama in a hurry to fix her head swaps the heads of Renuka and the woman. This gives Renuka the status of a village Goddess. She is seen installed in the villages and worshipped in the villages with many legends, myths, rituals and offerings made to her even today. The present paper attempts to take note of the sacred offering of green glass bangles as jewellery to Goddess Renuka with reference to four of her temples in the cosmopolitan city of Bengaluru or Bangalore in south India.

Introduction

The Devi-Mahatmya describes the goddess with eighteen arms and adorned with heavenly jewels, with all her limbs shining

because of her necklace, ornamented with flames from her diadem. (Coburn 1984: 286) She is also hailed as shining by wearing bracelets made of peacocks' tails, while the goddess Maheshvari is attributed with serpents for bracelet and the crescent adorned on her head. (Coburn 1984: 144) The goddess is described as wearing brilliant bangles or bracelets symbolic of womanhood and as having the auspicious status of a wife. The rain fall satisfies the earth-goddess, warm with desire, giving it the power to germinate the seeds. When tender shoots emerge from the soil women in Maharashtra celebrate Gauri Puja, the festival of the mother. Images of the goddess are adorned with green saris and green bangles as farmers acknowledge the visual manifestation of earth's renewed fertility. (Pattanaik 2000: 53) Offering bangles is seen in the shrine of Jari-Mari, the fiery goddess of fever, with gifts of bridal finery-vermilion and turmeric powder, bangles, flowers, a red sari and some sweets along with songs to appease the goddess requesting her to turn into Shitala, the cool goddess of health. (Pattanaik 2000:129) Bangles are offered to married women who are also considered as symbolic of the goddess and invoke Her blessings in festivities and rituals. (Flueckiger 2013:71) One such popular deity to whom people offer the bangles is the Goddess Renuka. The present paper attempts to explore the significance of this jewel made of glass which is considered as a sacred offering to the Goddess Renuka as observed in four temples of Bengaluru.

Renuka – Her life and legend

Jamadagni, Renuka's husband, came to suspect her chastity when he saw, through his supernatural power of vision, that she sympathized for a moment with the love play between a king and queen when they came to the river where she was fetching

water in a mud pot. Parashurama, her son on being ordered by his father to behead her, severed her head with his *parashu* the axe. Pleased by his obedience Jamadagni offers three boons through which Parashurama brings back his mother and brothers to life. Renuka is identified as a classical (puranic) goddess and is popularly referred as Renukayellamma. Her iconography is a stone or mud figure of an auspicious woman (i.e., not a widow, the prominent insignia of the unwidowed with a glaringly big nose-ring and big round mark of vermilion (*kumkum*) and turmeric powder. (Claus Et al. 2003:175)

Some Temples of Renuka in India – An overview

Renuka temple and lake in Sirmur in the State of Himachal Pradesh is one of the prime temples. (Singh, 1999: 24) The Renuka temple of Mahur in southern Maharashtra, close to the borders of Andhra Pradesh, is such an important shrine of the Renukayellamma cult that, throughout the cult region, Ellamma is often referred as Mahuryellamma. The village of Soundatti in Karnataka is where the biggest annual congregation of the Ellamma worshippers takes place and there are many Ellamma temples found in almost all the villages of the region. (Claus Et al. 2003:176) The motif of the termite mound worship is found in worship of other mother goddesses, such as Putt(a)lamma and Mariamma. And the worship of snakes in relation to mother goddesses as seen in Jayamma of Karnataka and Maanasa Devi of Bengal. As Devdutt Pattanaik puts it the quest for taming nature and cresting society is expressed in rituals that offer the Goddess clothing, cosmetics, and ornaments such as bangles and nose rings as the devotee wants to see her in a benevolent form. (Pattanaik, 2003: 41) It is observed that one of the sacred offerings made to Goddess Renuka are the green bangles and

present paper proposes to investigate the significance of this sacred offering with special reference to four Renuka temples in Bengaluru.

Glass Bangles and Making of the glass bangles

Though bangles are popular throughout the world, in the south Asia it has a specific symbol of socioritual status of ethnic identity. The earliest bangles date to the Neolithic period (7000 B.C.E.) at the site of Mehgarh in Pakistan. During the Indus Valley Civilization (2600-1900 B.C.E) a dramatic increase in the styles of bangles along with varieties and materials like terracotta, stoneware, copper/bronze etc. existed. The green and blue-green glazed faience bangles were first made in the Indus cities and continued to be made in later periods until the development of glass technology during the Painted Grey Ware period (1100-800 B.C.E.). One of the main raw materials for making glass is sand and quartz sand. (Bansal & Doremus 2013:9) The early glass bangles were dark blue-green to black or yellowish brown. By the Early Historical period (600 B.C.E.) a wide variety of glass bangles were being produced. During the subsequent historical periods, bangles came to play an important role in ornamentation and for ritual purposes. (Claus Et al. 2003:51) India has been familiar with the techniques of making glass bangles. The use of glass bangles at Hastinapur and Rupar is noteworthy, as these are the earliest glass specimens and glass beads (800-500 B.C.) from regular excavations in various sites of Rajghat, Taxila, Sravasti, Kausambi etc. Glass sticking to earthen ware glazed pottery is found in the fifth century A.D. (Bhardwaj 1979: 35 & 44)

The word ‘bangle’ is derived from the Hindi word *bangri*, meaning ‘glass bracelet’, over the ages bangles has come to be closely associated with the institution of marriage throughout India. The nation buys an estimated 50 million bangles each day, and all these bangles are made by units in the small-scale glass industry cluster at Firozabad (or ‘suhag nagri’ as it is popularly called), located about 40 km from Agra, the city of Taj Mahal. The glass bangle-making is a complex chain of independent processes, carried out by skilled workers who transfer the molten glass from furnace to furnace at around 500 degree centigrade and spiral lengths of glass which is still hot are cut and tied into bunches of raw bangles. These raw bangles are straightened ‘*sedhai*’ and joined under a flame known as ‘*judai*’ which is done mostly by women in households, following which they are coloured and designs are made. A popular saying in Firozabad: ‘*A bangle passes through 50 hands before it finally adorns a lady’s wrist*’ (Ed. Sethi, & Ghosh, 2008 : 1, 28)

Significance of the Sacred offering of Green bangles in a few Renuka Temples in Bengaluru

A city of gardens and lakes, and the capital of Indian scientific research and more recently, it has been the hub of India’s information technology boom, giving rise to Brand Bengaluru or Bengaluru, a south Indian city whose name is recognized globally. Hidden beneath these layers, lies a cosmopolitan city of sub-cultures, engaging artists and writers, young geeks and students. People from every corner of India and beyond now call it home. In this collection of writings about a multi-layered city, there are stories from its history, translations from Kannada (The regional language) literature, personal responses to the

city's mindscape, portraits of special citizens, accounts of searches for lost communities and traditions, among much more. (Ed. De 2008) Bengaluru is a house for many ancient and new temples like the Dharmaraya Temple, Someshwara Temple, Annamma Temple, Kote Anjaneya Temple etc. There are many Renuka Temples in Bengaluru like the Sri Sri Savadatti Renuka Yellamma Temple on the Bannerghatta Main Rd, Sri Renuka Yellamma Pratyangira Devi Sarabeshwara Temple, Amrutahalli, Sri Renuka Yellamma Temple JP Nagar, Shree Renuka Yallamma Shree Maha Ganapathi Temple in Banashankari, Sri Renuka Yellamma Temple in Vidyaranyapura, Shri Renuka Yellamma Temple in Padarayana Pura, Sri Renuka Yellamma Devi Temple Koramangala, Sri Sri Savadatti Renuka Yellamma Temple in Bilekahalli, Sri Renuka Yellama Devi Sanidhi in Jayanagar, Kadabagere Shri Renuka Yellamma Devi Temple in Kadabagere, Sri Renuka Yellamma Devi Temple in Koramangala, Sri Renuka Yellamma devi Temple in Sampangi Rama Nagar etc as shown in the google map (figure 1). The present paper documents the sacred offering of green glass bangles in four of south Bengaluru's Renuka temples like:

1. Sri Renuka Temple, Bugle Rock Park, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru
2. Sri Renuka Yellamma Temple in Krishna Rao Park, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru
3. Renuka Temple – Jayaprakash Nagar, Bengaluru
4. Sri Sri Savadatti Renuka Yellamma Temple – Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru

Grounded in strong feminine beauty, Renuka is not only dressed traditionally, but often is also kept to a bare minimum of decoration. She is worshipped as the epitome of the “perfect” wife – unconditional love, chastity and devotion towards her husband. The Goddess is simply seen as an example for Bhakti to many young women in these temples. One most common tradition is to worship her head placed on Prithvi or reddish brown soil. Although she’s believed to be the village Goddess of the city, temples have been constructed rather recently some of which are the focus of this paper. The paper attempts to document four temples in Bengaluru with relevance to the offering the simple jewel of green bangles.

This is an old temple built around the time the city developed. The temple is situated behind the most important temple in town – Dodda Ganapathi temple in Basavanagudi. The name ‘Basavanagudi’ was developed upon Basava’s temple about a few meters away from

Dodda Ganapathi (Big Ganesha) temple. Basava is Lord Shiva's *vahana*, or vehicle and '*gudi*' meaning temple. Therefore, Basavanagudi is one of the oldest areas of Bengaluru and is the center for a variety of worshippers of Gods both minor and major, and Goddesses both the Vedic and Village alike. Renuka, in this temple is a simple deity made of black stone, placed on red soil as shown in the figure 2. As the legend has it, Renuka has a supernatural power to build a connection with soil. Cut off at her throat, the Goddess is wearing her *mangalasutra**, a symbol of sanctity and devotion to her husband Jamadagni and symbolic of the soil the green glass bangles are offered to her.



Figure 2. Sri Renuka Temple, Bugle Rock Park, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru

*Marriage necklace with pendant

2. Sri Renuka Yellamma Temple in Krishna Rao Park, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru

Built in 1932, this temple situated in the heart of the city of Bengaluru and is a place of significant worship. Men and women throng this temple for daily prayers as well as for occasions of special importance. Though many types of rituals and offerings of flowers, lemon garlands, neem leaf garlands, sarees and jewels, the offering of green bangles remains popular here. Women devotees choose the auspicious days of Tuesdays and Fridays for offering the green bangles to the goddess after their prayers. The figures 2a, 2b, 2c and 2d give the details of this temple and the offering of green bangles to the goddess Renuka.



Figure 2a. Entrance of the Sri Renuka Yellamma Temple in Krishna Rao Park, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru



Figure 2b. The principal deity Renuka in the sanctum of Sri Renuka Yellamma Temple in Krishna Rao Park, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru



Figure 2 c. the offering of green bangles at Sri Renuka Yellamma Temple in Krishna Rao Park, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru



Figure 2d. The utsava (procession) idol of Renuka seen with bangles at Sri Renuka Yellamma Temple in Krishna Rao Park, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru

3. Renuka Temple – Jayaprakash Nagar, Bengaluru

This thirty seven year old temple looks like an unassuming hidden house and is a very special place of worship in the north of Bengaluru. The temple has multiple idols of the goddess placed around the main idol in sanctum. Seen sitting, She holds a short sword in her right hand onto which the bangles are placed in many rows. The glass bangles are either of red or green and figures 3a, 3b, 3c and 3d show details of the temple and the bangles in the hand of the goddess Renuka.



Figure 3a. The general view of the Renuka Temple – Jayaprakash Nagar, Bengaluru



Figure 3b. The principal deity Renuka in the sanctum of Renuka Temple – Jayaprakash Nagar, Bengaluru



Figure 3c. Other idols of the goddess in Renuka Temple – Jayaprakash Nagar, Bengaluru



Figure 3d. Other idols of the goddess in Renuka Temple – Jayaprakash Nagar, Bengaluru

4. Sri Sri Savadatti Renuka Yellamma Temple – Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru

Situated towards the south of Bengaluru, this temple is three years old and attracts devotees from far and near. Representing the Renuka temple at Savadatti in the northern Karnataka this temple has a main arch entrance with a long open space leading to the temple's main hall and subsequently to the sanctum. Here the goddess is offered with fragrant flowers, saffron and mustard powder along with green and red bangles. The glass

bangles are offered to her and symbolically adorn the trident placed in the hall which is one of her attributes and to the small sword she holds in her right hand as clarified in the Figure 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 4e, & 4f.



Figure 4a. Entrance of Sri Sri Savadatti Renuka Yellamma Temple – Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru



Figure 4b. The inner hall with a trident at Sri Sri Savadatti Renuka Yellamma Temple – Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru



Figure 4c. The trident with offerings of green bangles at Sri Sri Savadatti Renuka Yellamma Temple – Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru



Figure 4d. The goddess Renuka in the sanctum of Sri Sri Savadatti Renuka Yellamma Temple – Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru



Figure 4e. Green bangles offered to the utsava (procession) idol of Renuka at Sri Sri Savadatti Renuka Yellamma Temple – Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru



Figure 4f. Front view of the utsava idol of Renuka with green glass bangles at Sri Sri Savadatti Renuka Yellamma Temple – Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru

Conclusion and Observations

The four temples of Bengaluru chosen for the present study are all built in the last one hundred years. The temples follow the traditional architecture with the sanctum housing the Goddess as the Renuka – Yellamma or Renuka's head with Yellamma's body. The Goddess is jeweled with the *Mangalasutra* being her most explicit jewel, along with a *Kasinasara* (a chain made of small golden coins), and a conventional nose ring. She is adorned with fresh fragrant flowers and *chandana* or sandalwood paste. The most significant offering is the green bangles made of glass is common in the all these temples by Her female devotees. This is mainly symbolic of the auspiciousness of married status. Among the Hindu communities, women must remove or break their bangles at the death of their husbands, while woman whose husband is alive wear some jewelery like the bangles, a sacred necklace called the *mangalasutra* and toe rings. Bangles are worn as a mark of important festivals, special social events, mark of luck for childbirth and longevity of husband. (Claus Et al. 2003:51) The present paper makes observations of the symbolism of the glass bangles and the offering made to Goddess Renuka. Renuka in her lifetime as a married woman becomes a widow once but, regains her status of a married woman when her husband reclaims life. She is killed once and she comes back to life and gains her status of a Goddess while her husband Jamadagni ensures a long life to the husband's of Her female devotees. The common factor between Renuka and glass bangles is that, Renuka used to make a pot out of sand and the raw material for making glass bangle is also sand. The source of both is the element of Earth which when transforms into a pot or bangle stands as a mystic symbol of

chastity, commitment towards the marriage and logetivity of husband. Thus the green glass bangles become a matchless jewel offered to Goddess Renuka.

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Google Maps

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Newa Jewellery – New Insights on the Jewellery of Nepal

Mala Malla

Abstract

In every community of the world, jewellery is considered as the identity of the community. Since the civilization of the human, jewellery is being a part of our life. Every country, community or ethnic group have specific jewellery that specifies their identity. It is mainly popular among the women folk though men also wear some jewellery. Jewellery is made of different metals like iron, silver, gold, platinum, copper, etc. Women wear rings, necklace, bracelet, anklets, etc. In the Asian countries especially in Nepal, India and Tibet various types of jewellery are made of gold, silver, pearl, iron, etc. In Nepal specially since medieval period jewellery became famous among Newa communities. These Newas are the historical inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley and the surrounding areas of Nepal. They are regarded as the historic heritage and the civilization of the Valley. Scholars have also described Newas as being a nation.

One of the practices of Newa community is of wearing Newari traditional jewellery. The Newari traditional jewellery are worn by the Newa women, which have specific names purpose and value. Newas celebrate numerous events and feasts associated with important milestones in their lives like the rice feeding ceremony, weddings and old age ceremonies etc. The jewellery of the women are associated with these specific events. These Newas have taken the various ornaments with the symbolic

value. Its culture comprises of ancient traditions, norms, values, beliefs and superstitions that hold a special place in our daily activities and life. The ornaments are significant and have symbolic values attached to them. The present paper dwells upon the Newa tradition which has much traditional jewellery that are readily identified and associated with specific events, rituals and sacredness.

Introduction

Nepal is a home of numerous ethnic communities. Scholars point to Scythians as the ancestors of the Khasa dynasty of Western Nepal. The Scythians (Shakas), Bactrians, Sumerians, Assyrians and many other ancient western and Central Asian people could have brought the tradition of jewellery to Nepal. In this 'jewellery trans-migration' context it perhaps reached Nepal through India (Hannelore 1999: 29). The first authentic written records of the Kathmandu Valley are found only from the middle of the fifth century AD - that is from Manadeva I of the Lichchhavi dynasty who ruled from c. 460-505 AD (Vajracharya 1973: 9-13). An assessment of the position with regard to his predecessors can be made on the basis of facts provided in the chronicles. Likewise, the beginning of the art form of sculpture in Nepal can be dated to the middle of fifth century AD. But its history prior to this period is represented by a few specimens, such as the stone sculptures of Shakta Ardhanariswara of Changunarayana which is dated to pre-Kirata period, and Rajpurusha of Mrigasthali of Pashupatinath, the latter now is exhibited in the National Museum (Pal 1974: 62). Among the many sculptures of Nepal, some are of pre- Mauryan and Mauryan periods and some are Sunga and Kushana Periods which are influenced by the style of Mathura School and are the

products of Kirata period of Nepal (Sharma 1968: 75; Bangdel 1982: 17). As scholars assumed that the tradition of wearing ornaments might have entered Nepal during the time of Scythians (Shakas), this is proved by these sculptures.

Historically, the rise of jewellery in Nepal is during the rule of The Licchavi Dynasty (4th – 8/9th century) and The Malla Dynasty (12th – 18th century). Ninety percent of all jewelers belong to those ethnic groups that traditionally pass their craft from generation to generation. This tradition of wearing ornaments was popular from very ancient times not only among women but also among the men, also as proved by the sculptures of deities found in Nepal like Maheswara, Vishnu or Solar Divinity etc. Coming to the medieval period laymen are also depicted with various ornaments as evidenced by the image of so-called Malla King Bhupatindra Malla of Bhaktapur displayed in National Museum, Kathmandu. Likewise the devotees are displayed in National Museum, and erected in and around the temples of Kathmandu Valley. But medieval sculptures are heavily ornamented in comparison to Lichchhavi sculptures. This shows that the ornaments were highly popular among the people during medieval period. Coming to 20th century it can be noted that a spectacular change in the designs of ethnic ornaments, as well as wearing habits underwent a change. And these precious ornaments are worn only on special occasions.

Jewellery and its Symbolic Values in Nepal

Nepal is a religion oriented nation. Its culture comprises of ancient traditions, norms, values, beliefs and superstitions that hold a special place in our daily activities and life. The

ornaments are no exceptions and they also denote symbolic values behind their presentation and the present paper explores jewels from its different perspectives of symbolism. Red Bead Necklace, containing white beads in Buddhist iconography representing the colour of Vairochana, provides sacredness and purity; Shells are worn for protection, when little pieces of white glass are added. It imbues the spirit of the divine; Jewellery with Ganesh (Elephant God) embossed on necklaces or rings, pendants and bracelets which is said to remove all forms of obstacles as Lord Ganesh is believed to be a Vignaharta. Thus Red Coral stones with Ganesh embossed on it are considered extremely auspicious and lucky; If a jewellery piece with Bhimsen (God of prosperity/Business), is engraved on it is worn, it is believed to promote success in business; Surya and Chandra (Sun and Moon) are embossed on jewellery it is said to symbolize wisdom and compassion. Fish symbol on jewellery denotes fertility and it signifies the Hindu deity Kamadeva – the God of Love; Butterfly embossed jewellery denotes good luck and is said to bring prosperity for the newlywed couples (Hannelore 1999: 33-40); Flower symbolizes fertility, delicacy and femininity; Swastik symbolizes the Goddesses of Wealth – Lakshmi and it is worshipped for the purpose of wealth. Any locket or ornament with it is considered auspicious for the purpose of monetary matters; Peacock is the symbol of good-luck and prosperity, any ornaments with it is not only decorative and attractive but also has great symbolic values; White Parasol is said to keep away heat and evil desires; Two fishes symbolize fertility and happiness; Sea-Shells symbolize blessedness; Lotus symbolizes divine origin; Vessels (Kumbha) signify fruitfulness and treasury of desires; Wheels symbolize the time circle of

Lord Vishnu and also signify the eight-fold path of Lord Buddha. (Rana 2017: 2-3)

Symbols of Zodiac signs and Gems in human life

The zodiac signs being 12 in number hold a great significance in jewellery along with the five primordial Elements like the Earth is represented by the gems agate, onyx, emerald, etc; Air represented by topaz, opal, diamond, zircon; Fire is given the ruby, opal, carnelian and garnet; Water is symbolised by moonstone, lapis lazuli, aquamarine and azurite (Knight 2000: 34). The zodiac signs play an important role in the lives of people all over the world. There are different gemstones associated with different signs. Such as: Aries is represented by ruby, bloodstone, jasper, diamond, sapphire, garnet; Taurus takes emerald, carnelian, agate, golden topaz, lapis-lazuli; aquamarine, rock quartz, agate stand for Gemini; Cancer is symbolically represented by emerald and moonstone; ruby, cat's eye, carnelian, onyx, citron and heliodor denote Leo; Virgo is represented by zircon, sapphire, pink jasper, rose, quartz, peridot; Libra stand for opal, diamond, tourmaline and malachite; Scorpio – garnet, rubellite, agate, imperial topaz, topaz, obsidian, bloodstone; Sagittarius is denoted by amethyst, blue topaz, hematite, turquoise, blue-zircon, lapis-lazuli; Capricorn is symbolized by beryl, onyx, garnet; Aquarius is represented by blue-sapphire, amethyst and aquamarine; Pisces has bloodstone, jasper, jade, diamond, and aquamarine as its symbol. (Knight 2000: 39-40) All these gems associated with Zodiac signs are said to bring luck, fortune, health, happiness and prosperity.

Metals used for jewellery and their symbolism

The various metals used in the jewellery settings amplify the energy of the gems and crystals. Gold is the best metal because it is said to strengthen ones energy just as the Sun vitalizes earthly elements. Other metals also have healing and beneficial qualities such as, copper has the energy of the setting sun of healing and it is used in wands. If it is used in jewellery, there should be no content of lead in it; Gold is powerful sun energy, the higher the carat the more powerful the energy. It is an excellent magnetic conductor for building personal life patterns, promoting growth and transcendence; Silver comprises of the Moon-Energy it is regarded as feminine energy. (Knight 2000: 50-51).

Jewellery (Tisha) in Newa Communities

Medieval period is the period of Newas who are said to be the indigenous community of the country. They are the creators of the historical civilization of Nepal's Kathmandu Valley. Scholars have also described Newas as being a nation. The name Nepal is said to be derived from *Newar* – *Newara*- *Nevāra* – *Newala* – *Nepala* - *Nepal*. The term ‘Newar’ referring to ‘inhabitant of Nepal’ appeared for the first time in an inscription dated 1654 AD in Kathmandu. Father Desideri (1684–1733) who traveled to Nepal in 1721 has written that the natives of Nepal are called Newārs (Desideri and Sweet 2010: 463). It has been suggested that ‘Nepal’ may be a Sanskritization of ‘Newar’, or ‘Newara’ may be a later form of ‘Nepal’. According to another explanation, the words ‘Newar’ and ‘Newari’ are words arising from the mutation of P to V, and L to R (Hodgson 1874: 51). As a result of the phonological process of dropping

the last consonant and lengthening the vowel, 'Newa' for Newara or Newala, and 'Nepa' for Nepal are used in ordinary speech (Shakya 1998/99: 40; Joshi 2003: 26).

The different divisions of Newas had different historical developments. The common identity of Newa was formed in the Kathmandu Valley. Until the conquest of the Valley by the Gorkha Kingdom in 1769 AD, all the people who had inhabited the Valley at any point of time were either Newa or progenitors of Newa. So, the history of Newa correlates to the history of the Kathmandu Valley prior to the establishment of the modern state of Nepal.

One of the practices of Newa community is that of wearing traditional jewellery. The Newari traditional jewellery worn mostly by Newa women have specific names and purpose. Newas celebrate numerous events and feasts associated with important milestones in their lives like the rice feeding ceremony of a baby, weddings, special events of old people and so on. The jewellery are specially associated with these specific events.

Traditional Newa jewellery had adapted Indian and western influences to its own cultural values, not just as ornaments but also as a cultural tool and a medium for human relations. When babies are born they are given a gold and silver ring by the mother's brother and his wife. It is for protection and a way for the uncle and aunt to affirm the family relation.

The rites and customs of *Ihi* performed for Newa girls, when they reach at the odd age of 5/7/9 years, they are married to *Bel* fruit (wood apple tree). The daughters of Newa should be married with a *Bel* before they are actually married to a boy.

This customary marriage with a *Bel* is known as *Ihi*. From spiritual and religious point of view *Bel* is considered to be the vegetative form of God Shrivana Kumara who is also one of the forms of Lord Vishnu. The ritualistic performance of *Ihi* is exactly the same as a real marriage. Maidens, whose marriages are to be solemnized, are kept in pairs and are given *sindur* and portray the items considered sacred and inevitable in a Hindu marriage, along with other gifts and presents. During this time girls are beautified like a bride. They are adorned with the head ornaments like *sirbandi*, *lunswan* and *nhyapusikha* etc.; necklaces like *tayo*, *teekhma*, *tilhari*, etc. and special ring called *phyakhan angu*. They are adorned with the earrings, *bayi* (a broad shaped bangles specially worn by the divinities) and many other ornaments.

The ceremony that follows only for Newa girl is *Barha* (*Gupha* in Nepali), is when a girl child approaches puberty. Because menstruation is considered ritually impure, Newa girls undergo ritual confinement for 12 days. Girls are separated from all males and from sunlight during these 12 days while they are doted upon by female relatives. During these days she is generally taught domestic sciences. On 12th day the girl must pay homage to the Sun God. So it is also called 'Surya Darshana' in Nepali. On the last day of this ceremony the girl is dressed as a bride adorning with all those ornaments that are worn by a bride during marriage like *tayo*, *teekhma*, *tilhari*, *sirbandi*, *nhyapu shikhah*, *pyakhan angu*, etc. *Bahra* is a second and third marriage ceremonies for the Newa girls. In this ceremony they are married to the Lord Surya Narayana.

Another rite *Janku* or *Jamko* is performed when Newa people are 77 years 7 months, 7 days old, by which time most

are of the women become widows, and that point they shed their ornaments. But for the *Janku*, the elder is given special kinds of earrings called *Punacha*. As explained by Sushila Manandhar (2009: 262) "It's really a way to give them a higher social status, which they have lost after the death of their spouse."

Some of the types of Newa ethnic jewellery

There are many ethnic jewellery of the Newa and some of them find a description here.

Rakchyamah – is a type of necklace to adorn the baby on the day of his first rice feeding ceremony (figure 1). This ornament is believed to be a protector of a baby from the bad and evil spirits and dangers existing around. According to Vajracharya (1083 NS: 6) and Shakya (1111NS: 8) the necklace should be composed of those materials which are believed to protect the child against evil effects of *navagrahas* ‘nine planets.’ According to them it should consists of *luligu* meaning gold (mineral) for *Aditya* the Sun, *hiular* the plant (plant) for *Soma* meaning Moon, *kuta* the horn (animal’s horn/bone) for *Mangala* i.e. Mars, *sovayaphala* the fruits for Buddha the Mercury, *patak* the banner (tissue) for *Brihaspati* the Jupiter, *jatamasi* meaning plant for *Sukra* the Venus, *na* meaning iron (mineral) for *Sanischara* the Saturn, *harle* the soap nut (fruit) for *Rahu* the eclipse and *sijah* meaning copper (mineral) for *Ketu* the Comet. Millot (1970: 293-296) remarked that this *Rakchyamah* consists of twenty one different materials made of objects produced by men, animals, plants, minerals and ocean. The observation of this composition shows that the necklace has double utilization. On one hand it protects the child and on the other it makes him/her aware of some minerals existing in the

world where he/she is born as well as the cosmic power and dangers. All these materials are sewn to the fabric on the periphery.

Sirbandi – a head ornament is popular among Newa women. The name that literally means "to bind the head." Three bands, one following the hair part, and two curving around the temples, are connected at the forehead where they support a pendant, usually in a shape of a crescent with additional red or green glass stones (figure 2).

Tayo – Tayo is one of the largest Newa ethnic jewelry piece of Nepal. It is a gold amulet necklace with the multi-headed serpent called *Sesh Naga*. It has symbolic meanings and religious values. It is believed that the pointed pendent part of the necklace symbolizes the Kathmandu Valley, while the facets of the pendent for the directions of the Valley, and a central jewel under the hood of the snake-heads stands for the Swayambhu Stupa of the Kathmandu valley. Traditionally it should be made of high carat gold. The main element of the *tayo* is a hollow lozenge-shaped pendant connected to the necklace with two mirror-image comma like shapes, often set with turquoise or coral.

This necklace is worn by Newar girls, brides, and women as well as adorned by deities like Lokeswors, Yognis, Dipankers and living virgin Goddess Kumaris on the special ceremonies. (Slusser 1982: 521). The Swayambhu Stupa stands for the Pancha Buddhas. The places for the five Buddhas (*Pancha Buddha*) in the Stupa are in a Mandala position. Vairochan in the center, Akshwovya in the east, Amitabh in the west, Amoghasidhi in the north and Rana-Sambhava in the South. The Mandala symbolizes the Universe of the World related with the

Mahayana Buddhism. Such is the importance of *Tayo* in the cultural heritage of Nepal. (figure 3 and 3a)

Some motifs adorning this necklace were selected not simply for aesthetic reasons but also for their symbolic significance. The mango a favourite fruit is a symbol of fertility is particularly appropriate motif for a bridal necklace. The dragon and the *nagas* are also symbols of fertility and good fortune. The peacock is a bird sacred to Kumara and also to Kumari or Kaumari, one of the eight mothers, who are collectively worshipped for safe childbirth and the protection of children. Thus Pratapaditya Pal (1985: 140) remarks, "One example of gold jewelry (*Tayo*), its quality is eloquent testimony of the Newar craftsmen's skill and its aesthetics."

Ghau – Ghau is originally Tibetan traditional jewellery. But it has been adopted in Newari culture by Newas from hilly region. Ghau is an amulet box pendant embedded with precious and semi-precious stones. The box is attached to coral beads, and Buddhist women in the hilly regions of Nepal wear it. But now this is also adopted by the Newas of the valley. It is a symbolic jewellery piece related with the Mahayan Buddhism. The stones at the corners and at the center signify the Pancha Dhyani Buddhas of Swayambhu Stupa like that of a *Tayo*, a traditional necklace worn by the Newar women of the Valley (figure 4).

Lunswan – It is a circular disk type ornament made of gold. It is popular among almost all tribes of Nepal. It is worn on the top or back of the head. It has big coral in the center with image of Ganesh on coral with superb designs all over and distinctive peacocks at the top. *Lunswan* is usually worn by Newa bride on the wedding. To make a Lunswan, first a sheet of gold is prepared in circular shape and a cluster of flowers and leaves are

carved around the coral. It is usually used in weddings and festivals. A normal Lunsuan is about 12-cm.in diameter and about 100g in weight.

Tikhma - *Tikhma* is the necklace usually worn by Newa girls and brides during marriage. Girls wear this *Tikhma* during the occasion of *Ihi* and *Bahra* ceremony when they are decorated as a bridal girl. It consists of a number of repousse worked metal plaques sewn on fabric. The fabric is usually red, either cotton or velvet. The plaques are made of gold or gold-plated copper. The most common motifs that the plaques are embellished with are flowers or peacocks. This necklace is decorated by a row of teardrop-shaped glass beads. They are sewn to the fabric on the periphery. *Tikhma* is mostly used in the various ceremonies like in the weddings and in traditional dances.

Kilip – *Kilip* is a gold head ornament with fine workmanship. The word probably came from the English word 'clip.' It is oval shaped with a cluster of flower motifs and usually a peacock or moon-shape on the top. It is used as a hair clip on the back of the head. The back of the *kilip* is made of silver with a lock on it. Usually Newa women wear this *kilip* for decorating their head (figure 5).

Nyapu Shikha – Another interesting Newa head ornament called *nyapu sikha* is a pair of sets of five chains, one set attached to the hair on each side of the head. The five chains attached to interconnecting chains create a fan shape. Each main chain ends in a pendant (figure 6).

Patachingu Shikha – One of the commonly worn ornaments is '*Patachingu shikha*' or a simple gold necklace.

Company Shikha – *Company shikha* is a necklace made of coins. It is popular among other ethnic communities from hills but also accepted by the Newas. Newas started wearing this ornament after they came into contact with Anglo- Indians (figure 7).

Bhimpuma – *Bhimpuma* is a necklace made of coral. This necklace is famous among Newa women too.

Makansi – This is an earring made of silver or gold specially worn with *Haku patasi* (an black saree with red border). The earrings are u-shaped and are called "*makansi*." This is usually worn by Jyapus – one of the castes of Newa community (figure 8).

Pyakhan Angu – The hands are adorned with gold rings and special kind of silver ring called *pyakhan angu*. It is of simple oval shaped ring without any decoration designed on it. This ring is specially worn by the deities but Newa women and girls also wear this ring during *Ihi*, *Bahra* and *Ihipa* (marriage) ceremonies when they are decorated as a bride (figure 9)

Bayi – On the fourth day after wedding ceremony, on the day of *Mukh Herne* of their married daughter, the head of the family from bride side will offer bride to wear special kind of broad bangle *bayi*. It is the bangle specially worn by the deities only but in Newa communities it is believe that if this *bayi* is worn by their daughters, god will protect them from every evil (figure 10).

Kalli – *Kalli* is worn around the ankles. It is usually made of silver and u-shaped (figure. 11). There is a belief in Newa community that this ornament works as the protector of the baby and also that this will balance the baby's legs.

Tuki – *Tuki* is double studs jewellery inserted in the helix of the ear. These are worn by elder women after their ritual procession called *Janku*. Most of tuki are plain in design but some are in floral design.

Pyucha – This ornament is usually made of gold and offered to newly born baby by father's sister on the sixth day of the baby's birth. The ceremony is thus called Chhaithi.

Tilhari – The old and very popular jewelry made of gold is *tilhari* (figure 12). This jewelry is worn by the only married woman of, especially Hindu community. In other communities the unmarried women do not wear *tilhari*. Married women are allowed to wear it. But in Newa community, unmarried or widowed women or girls also allowed to wear this ornament as they are already married first to Shravan Kumar and secondly to Surya Narayana. Thus they are always considered as married women only. Even after their actual husband's death Newa women are never deemed as widows.

The *tilhari* is made of gold and is found in different sizes. The *tilhari* of a big size known as *chadke tilahari* are attached with green *pote* which are a special kind of glass beads. It is attached with *pote* of different color and is worn in the neck as a mala. It is also taken as a symbol of married women and is believed to bring good luck and prolong their husband's life. It is also a very important ornament for a Nepali wedding ceremony.

Tilhari is found in many different designs and different sizes like the very long one which can be worn across are called *chadke tilhari*, whereas the small one is used for regular basis. Whatever the shape and sizes are, *tilhari* are very important in

Hindu society in the group of married women. It is considered as if the married women wear *tilhari* regularly will ensure longevity of husband. Newa women wear *tilhari* with beads of different color especially with red, green or yellow. Some of the women also wear with mixed color bead too. That is why *tilhari* is considered as one of the very old and very traditional jewellery not only in Newa society but the whole Nepali society which has both social and religious value.

Punhacha – This is a special kind of religious and sacred ear ornament called *punacha*. This ornament is basically presented to them who are celebrating age old ceremony *janku* or *jamkoo* (figures 13 & 14). It is made of gold attached along with coral and pearls. In first *Janku Bhimratharohana* only coral is attached on that ornament and in second *Janku Chandraratharohana* pearl is also attached in that ear pendent. It is believed that this special ornament will prevent the aged person from every evil thing.

Lun Sinha – A tika made of gold in which vermillion pot ‘*kalasha*’ design with flower motif is decorated. This *tika* is specially worn on special occasions like in big family *puja* (ritual), weddings, etc. (figure 15).

Motiya Angu – the Newas wear a finger ring made of silver and pearl called as *motiya angu* to pacify any kinds of danger associated with the evil disposition of the Moon and also to get success while travelling. Similarly to make a journey smooth, they put on silver rings made of objects which have power to protect against any accident or injury.

Conclusion

Newas use body decorations to enhancing health and wealth as well as physical protection. Through such adorning, they try to process the capacity to fight against the malevolent circumstances and misfortunes. For example, an ornament made of iron and sapphire could be beneficiary for a person who needs to pacify probable dangers creating the evil diposition of the planet Saturn and correct it in his/her favour. Wearing a finger ring made of these metals and gems in the middle finger of left hand helps in the physical protection of the wearer. But some ornaments can bring baleful situation and instability in the life of the wearer, if it is made with wrong combinations of the materials or worn on unsuitable part or on the wrong or inauspicious day. Each ornament has its own significance in having good or evil aspects by its nature and power.

Thus it is believed that to the Newas, jewellery is a form of amulet, worn to strengthen their health and fate. Sushila Manandhar (2009: 269) writes “Newars utilize amulets *jantara* or *yantra* (energy diagram) for relief from sickness to protect oneself against evil spirits or to accumulate divine power. Those amulets contain either an image of a deity or it’s ‘charms’ the mantras. *Pyucha*, a pair of gold bracelets, worn by Newar children is believed to fortify and protect the soul of the child.” Also, gold itself is supposed to work as an antiseptic. Furthermore, Manandhar explains (2009: 269), “Newars use a tiny cylindrical locket, called *Tayo* for relief from mental and physical illness. A cylindrical shaped gold locket called the *Pragyaparamita jantar* is very popular among the Buddhist Newars. It is believed that the person who wears it gains knowledge and wisdom. Most of the material used in making

ornaments and jewelry is supposed to possess divine power and represent the deities or planets. Sometimes the motifs depicted on them play a vital role in providing such power. These adornments look good on one hand and also provide strength, health and protection against evil spirits on the other. It is believed that by wearing them, people can accumulate extra energy. Dr. Ram Dayal Rakesh (2008: 90) also writes, “The link between ornaments and religion is strong. Hindus associate gold with Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and others perceive it as a symbol of the Sun. Like the Sun, gold too is held to be immortal and sacred.” *Thus gold not only represents prosperity, but also a way of life and continuity of family traditions for the Newas of the Kathmandu Valley.*



Figure 1 Rakshyamala - Bracelet



Figure 2 Sirbandi – Head ornament



Figure 3 Tayo



Figure 3a Present day Tayo

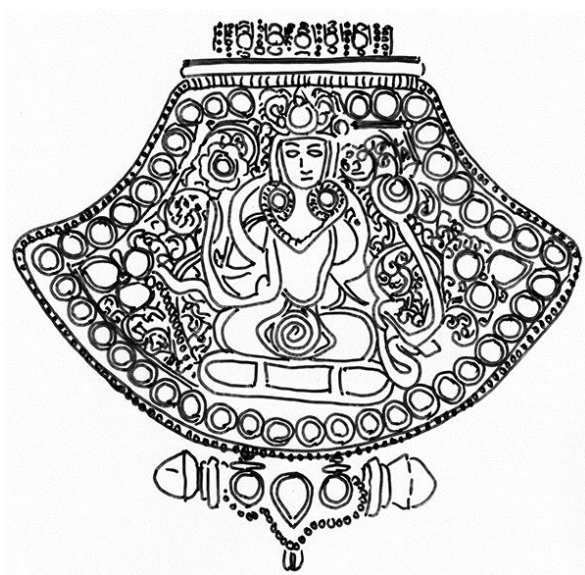


Figure 4 Ghau – A pendant

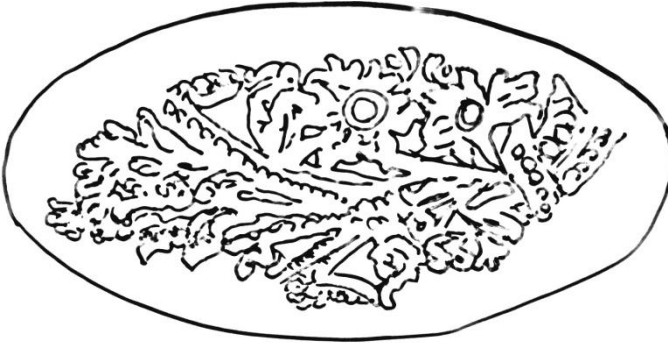


Figure 5 Kilip – Head ornament



Figure 6 Nyapu Shikha – Head ornament



Figure 7 Campani Shikha - Necklace

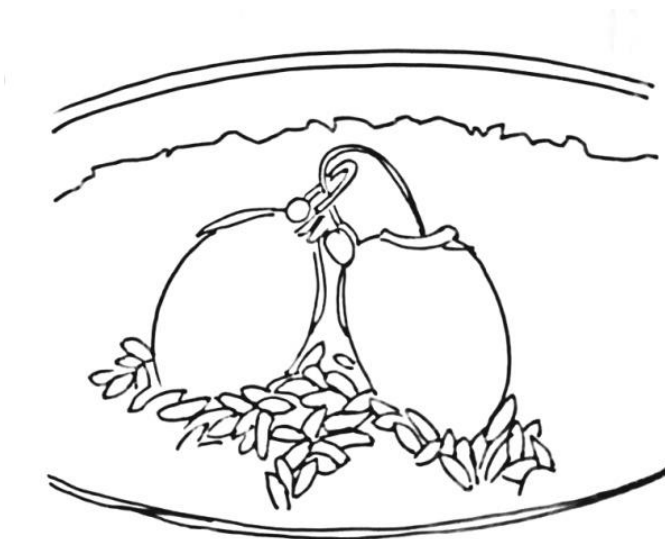


Figure 8 Makansi – Ear ornaments



Figure 9 Lady wearing Pyakhan Angu



Figure 10 Lady adorned with broad bangle like band Bayi

Mala Malla



Figure 11 Kalli - Bracelet



Figure 12 Tilhari



Figure 13 Punacha

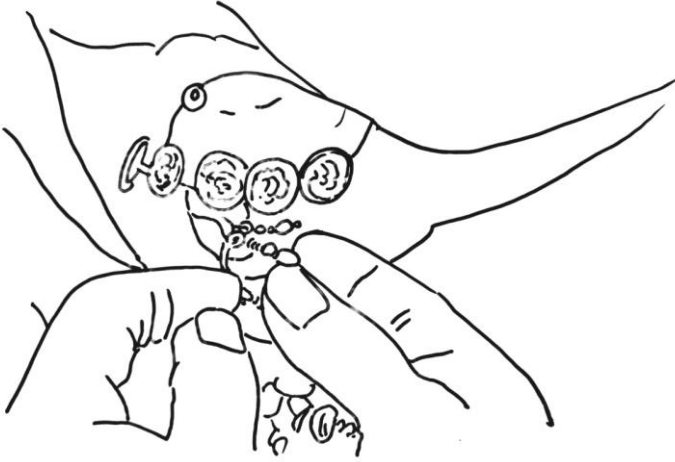


Figure 14 Wearing Punancha in the occasion of old age Ratharohan Ceremony



Figure 15 Lun Shinha

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Jewellery - A Sparkling Global Theme of Undiminishing Brilliance

Edwin Ariyadasa

“The urge to deck one’s body, with ornaments, is one of the earliest impulses that stirred within the formative souls of the proto-humans. According to paleontologists, the first instances of ornamentation have been recorded in cave drawings, that date back to an era as far past as 20,000 years”

In this ultra-sophisticated 21st century, that we inhabit, Jewellery has risen to such an acme, that, authoritative persons feel that it has earned the sobriquet. “The industry without a recession.” Ever-evolving, advanced technologies, non-stop exploration of inspirational sources and astonishing concepts that give rise to dazzling designs, have all cumulative made jewellery a highly significant topic of public discourse all over the world.

Over and above that kind of development in recent times jewellery occupied an exceptionally prominent place in news media of our world. When print and electronic media celebrated the recent royal wedding in Britain at which Prince Harry married Miss Meghan Markle from US, the royal bride’s jewellery provided substantial material to avid media.

There is hardly any country in the world today that has not made a contribution towards the evolving of the jewellery lore of the millennials. Age Old jewellery traditions from fairly unknown places, such as some communities in Africa, achieved global recognition, as they can enrich the process of generating

new concepts and designs for the jewellery enthusiasts in all parts of the world.

I deem this to be unassailable reality. All the SAARC countries without an exception have their specific jewellery habits and preferences. As far as I can observe, in the glittering ‘mine’ of global jewellery traditions, the Sri Lankan jewellery sophisticated could be described as a ‘gem’ with a charming gleam of its own. I am not at all prompted in this instance to bring in a streak of patriotism to this dialogue on jewellery. But, this of course is the stark truth objectively presented. In the modern world jewellery is extensively used by men-folk too, although women-folk are generally considered to be the major patrons, throughout history of jewellery of a variety of forms. In ancient Sri Lanka, a privileged class of males was associated with super-sophisticated jewellery.

I deem it proper at this stage to make a reference to an extensively popular Sinhala message poem. In this specific message poem, the bearer of the message is a *Selalilini* bird. The author of the poem, instructs the bird to pay homage to the king, before he began his mission. What matters in the present context, is the poet’s description of the Royal attire.

The poet says (in Sinhala of course) ‘*Unu nowa barana siv sata votunuth pelanda venu men pasak un sanda see-asuna meda*’ (when His Majesty, decked with all the traditional 64 ornaments, and in addition wears his crown, he looks as if God Vishnu has appeared before our eyes, god has ascended the throne.’) The sixty-four ornaments, indicate the traditionally decreed decorations for a King. They were all in gold some items being gem-studded.

Incidentally, the poet states that the King gave the impression, that he seemed God Vishnu, appearing before our eyes. Obliquely, the poet indicates that the King was a dark person. Vishnu is said to be blue a sacred euphemism for black. The jewellery of the King brings us to yet another aspect of this discussion. In the early eras, the jewellery decked the human body. Today even certain items of furniture or utensils are designed like sophisticated jewellery. Kings in most countries, had their thrones built with gold-decked segments. Some, areas of the throne were gem studded.

In the modern world, the designing of certain domestic utensils and household items, with the care and sophisticate lavishes on the jewellery for the body, can be extensively seen. But I am not too sure, whether we in Sri Lanka have travelled that path, to a significant extent. The range of Jewellery utilized by the Sri Lankans, is fairly extensive. The traditional necklaces, earrings, hair-pins etc, have on most occasions a styling that harks back to the traditions of the past.

In Sri Lanka, the extensively popular jewellery items-the Ring has a fascinating lore associate with it. The Kings utilized a highly valued ring as their identity symbol. Generally known as the 'signet ring' this particular piece of jewellery figures in poet Kalidasa's highly esteemed drama 'Sakuntala'.

In Sri Lanka a series of rings is used to ward if the evil influences of planets. Each planet is assigned a particular precious gem. The ring has the specific gem set in for general welfare and sustainable good fortune, some people wear rings studded with nine-varieties of gem. It is named '*navaratna*' ring (ring with nine-gem set). Some sophisticate jewellery specialists in Sri Lanka, desire their jewellery motifs from ancient

traditions. These inspired by the past eras of Sri Lanka, give them an unparalleled uniqueness.

Jewellery is favoured extensively as family heirlooms. Anyone who is keen about, sophisticated and detail descriptions of some ancient jewellery items of Sri Lanka could do well to study the '*apsaras*' in the fresco-paintings at Sigiriya. These ladies form the welcoming group, that receives the visitors to Sigiriya. 'The comely' reception committee is attired lavishly with an amplitude of jewellery decking their body and head. I am quite certain that this must be one of a handful of depiction of Jewellery of that era.

These are frescoes which were done during the reign of King Kassapa (478-496 AD), the builder of this astonishing divine-fortress castle. When we discuss jewellery there is a highly significant sub-culture, associated with it. For all I know, this must be the only instance of this aspect of jewellery lore, anywhere. As is quite well known, jewellery has as its core-soul, the extensive variety of gems and precious stones.

In Sri Lanka's folk culture, we possess poem and song recitals to provide relief from the strenuous tasks people are assigned. They protect paddy fields in the night from marauders, both human and animal. To be alert and awake they recite poems, those who drive bullock carts, provide relief both of themselves and cart-bulls by their recitals. Sri Lanka possesses an extensive range of such 'professional' recitals.

But, many are not aware, that folk recitals are part of Sri Lanka's gem-mining. In most of these gem-mining folk recitals, the mine-workers moan their privations and daily sufferings these litanies are a rare form of folk literature associate with

gem-mining. Over and above all that, the JEWELLERY lore of Sri Lanka extends to the far past. It is said that world renowned King Solomon of Israel (10th Century BC) sent his ships to the port of Tarsis in Sri Lanka, to get precious gems for the jewellery of his queen Sheba. Authorities tend to believe that the ancient port in King Solomon's story is modern Sri Lanka.

SAARC Countries will have fabulous tales relating to their jewellery sophistication. Sri Lanka, has a substantial Jewellery lore, that may perhaps be one of the world's most astonishing. As for gems and precious stones, we have gems from the land, pearl from the bigger land animals the Elephants, and top of all pearl from our oyster for which Sri Lanka has been long known. I am happy I was requested to contribute this note to the collective discourse on jewellery. As for SAARC, it is jewel among regional organizations that the world cherishes.

Book Review

The History of Bangladesh: Early Bengal in Regional Perspectives (up to c. 1200 CE)

Two volumes edited by Professor Abdul Momin Chowdhury and Professor Ranabir Chakravarti

Asiatic Society of Bangladesh proudly announces the publication of *The History of Bangladesh: Early Bengal in Regional Perspectives (up to c. 1200 CE)* in two volumes edited by Professor Abdul Momin Chowdhury and Professor Ranabir Chakravarti under the project titled 'History of Bangladesh: Ancient and Medieval'. Vol. 1 is on Archaeology, Political History and Polity and Vol. 2 is on Society, Economy and Culture. In these two volumes the remote past of the region called Bengal (Bengal before 1947) has been explored and studied by going beyond the boundaries of modern nation states. Professor Emeritus Romila Thapar (of Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi), internationally acclaimed authority on early Indian history, has graced the volumes by writing the Foreword. The chapters in the two volumes have been penned by established experts who belong not only to Bangladesh and India, but to various parts of the globe.

The first volume looks into the historical geography of the ancient region and its inhabitants by combining perspectives of historical geography and anthropology; it also pays meticulous attention to the pre-literate phase in the early history of Bengal. One of the salient features of this volume is the thrust on field archaeological materials which offer the most reliable window to grasp the transition from the pre-literate to the early historic

times (up to c. 300 CE). Elaborate discussions on political history have been also accommodated as new epigraphic and numismatic sources have led to the considerable rewriting of the political history of the regions and sub-regions (especially of the Pala period and of Southeastern Bangladesh). The understanding of the polity and nature of the state forms another important aspect of discussion in the first volume.

Volume 2 takes a close look at economic life, circulation of money and different media of exchange, social life (including the relevance of the *varna-jati* norms and the question of gender), everyday life, religious beliefs and practices (Brahmanical, Buddhist, Jaina and Ajivika), art activities (terracotta art, sculpture, iconography, painting and architecture) and language and literature. The last point is of crucial significance as the language Bangla is the quintessential marker of identity of the inhabitants of Bengal; it is from the ninth-tenth centuries that the earliest traces of the vernacular, Bangla, are traceable in historical sources. Each chapter combines the state of the art of the subject concerned with the specific researches of the contributor(s) who have meticulously highlighted the regional features and the sub-regional diversities. Rich in empirical details, the chapters offer critical analyses of available data in view of the current historiographical issues and debates.

The two volumes are expected to fill a long-felt gap in the historiography of early Bengal and will possibly serve as a standard reference work for both the specialist scholars and the general readers.

**Excerpts of the foreword to the books by Romila Thapar,
Professor Emeritus, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India**

Reading the manuscript has been a source of my discovering occasional new information and the fresh interpretation of known information: both of which enhance one's understanding of the region. Although the main title describes the volumes as the history of Bangladesh, the contents cover much beyond that. The sub-title is the more appropriate description. The volumes cover the history of the region that was called Bengal - in its variant versions - and which in earlier times was more extensive as a single region, than that which lies within either of the current demarcations associated with the name, Bengal.

These volumes cover the evolution of the societies that went into the making of the region of Bengal. There were initially simple social and economic forms. Gradually they changed into more complex polities accompanied by developments in the patterns of living. This is illustrated for instance, in the economic forms arising from agriculture and commerce. in the social stratification that incorporated the variations in the status and occupations of castes, in the temples and shrines dedicated to older deities as well as the new deities arising from the inter-mixing of belief systems, in the new forms of devotional worship, and in the slow transformation of a popularly used language into a sophisticated literary idiom. Stages of these processes come into the discussion in these volumes. In the context of the history of the sub-continent, regional histories are beginning to play a significant role. The historical importance of new sources, both texts and artifacts, is being recognized. In charting the evolution of regional cultures, we have to recognize the plurality of cultural patterns, as well as

the inter-face of the regional pattern with the larger trans-regional pattern. These volumes help us to see these complex phenomena in the history of Bengal.

Book Review

Imagining Lahore - The city that is, the city that was

by Haroon Khalid, Published by Penguin Viking in 2018

Review by Saadia Qamar

In 258 pages, a complex, categorized and clear smitten with words images fall on your mind's screen as you take into account what is and what was the city of Lahore. "Imagining Lahore - the city that is, the city that was" written by Haroon Khalid. The author dearly takes Lahore as his hometown, so close to his heart that for him intricate details regarding relics, places, vicinities inside and around the old Mughal city stands true to itself, when he gets to describe the settlement of Chauburji or even the Kalma chock. He even gives a flavour of old Lahore, from Mughal times to colonial times, to coming in the foreground of Hindu mythology to being a political playground where Lahore Resolution was passed which gave birth to Pakistan.

But in recent times how he gives a sheer glimpse of Sharifs' losing in their hometown became the long tirade where Imran Khan took over. But it is also a city marred by violence, in the very heart of Punjab, where eons ago people and different communities lived in harmony, today one sees the stronghold of extremist tendencies springing up from here be it denouncing the Ahmaddiya sect or brawl against the Christian minority. The splendours of life lost to it. True to the core, Lahore would not have been there without River Ravi flowing within it's remits. It would have succumbed long ago. However, it reckons on the

drum of being a place where all communities still live near or afar, nor in complete harmony neither in total chaos.

The colors, the vibrancy, the reality, the picturesque tapestry, that is the real Lahore, portrayed by Haroon Khalid is a vehemently strong chorus of words. For the native of Pakistan, a read, which takes you in the alley of the tiny lanes, however for an outsider it portrays a more welcoming gesture to see, what Lahore really is and what it really means.

Our Contributors

Prof. Choodamani Nandagopal

Prof. Choodamani Nandagopal, a renowned Art Historian of International repute. with Doctorate from Mysore University. She is awarded four International and two National Research Fellowships, including the first scholar to receive the UK Visiting Nehru Fellowship at Victoria & Albert Museum London, UNESCO Silk Road Fellowship at Paris, UNSW Senior International Fellowship Sydney and Exeter Visiting Professor Research Fellowship UK. Her first National Fellowship was from ICHR.

Dr Choodamani is an academician of high repute in Visual Arts, Art History and Cultural Studies, served as Academic Head and established Art History and Research Department at Chitrakala Parishath. She was. Academic Head of IGNCA Southern Regional Centre Bangalore, set up Dept of Cultural Studies at Manipal University and Jain University. She is an author of 10 International publications and five Kannada publications. She has published 70 research papers to her credit and invited as key-note speaker in International conferences. Guided 15 PhD scholars, and 20 M Phil candidates. She is associated with Gallery G and Raja Ravi Varma Foundation as Consultant and with several museums and art galleries in India and abroad. Her research on dance sculptures is a seminal work. Her books 'Dance and Music in Temple Architecture' and 'Classical Dance Heritage of Karnataka' are in great demand.

Dr. Gomathi Gowda

Presently working as Head of the Department of Fine Arts, KL University, Andhra Pradesh, India and also is an Art Practitioner, educator, researcher and curator. She has served many Art Institutions in India as an Art History faculty. Her research interests are varied that includes Indian Classical Art and Folk Art. She specialises in teaching Indian Art and Philosophy of art. She actively takes part in art summits, art workshops and interacts with all sorts of artists, which according to her widens the perspective in the field. She is a regular participant in national and international Seminars and had national and international publications to her credit. She is also the recipient of Senior Research Fellowship from the Ministry of Culture, India.

Dr. Gitanjali Goswami and Dr. Mousumi Sarma

Dr. Gitanjali Goswami is an independent researcher from Guwahati, Assam, India. She completed her M.Sc in Anthropology from Guwahati University in Assam. Subsequently she completed her Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology from Guwahati University, on the topic of 'Role of Auniati Sattras of Majuli as a Centre of Neo Vaishnavism in Assam' with Junior Research Fellowship from Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi. The researcher was earlier involved in various research works like, Reproductive and Child Health, a Project by TALEEM Research Foundation under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt of India, New Delhi; 2nd National Leprosy Elimination Project under Indian Institute of Health Management Research, Jaipur; sponsored by World Health Organization and Human Resource in Call Centres of Bangalore, a research conducted by National Institute

of Mental Health (NIMHANS) and Department of Psychology, Bangalore University which was sponsored by NASSCOM. Dr Goswami was also in charge of administration at Magnum Intergrafiks Pvt. Ltd, Chennai.

Dr. Mousumi Sarma, completed her M.A in Anthropology from Guwahati University, Guwahati. Her doctoral thesis was on 'Uttar Kamalabari Sattrra of Majuli, Assam'. She was awarded the UGC Research Fellowship for meritorious students for completing her Ph.D programme. She has also presented research paper in 1st Biennial Conference of I.A.A.H, 2011, held at Sri Lanka. She has also presented research paper in UGC and I.C.S.S.R sponsored National seminars held in different states of India.

She is presently working as a teacher in Army Public School Narangi, Assam, India.

Ms. Mansi Sathyanarayan and Ms. Mitraja Bais

Mansi is a heritage and craft researcher by profession. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Architecture and an MA in Museums, Heritage and Material Culture Studies from SOAS, University of London. She works as a research associate at Design Innovation and Craft Resource Centre, CEPT University in Ahmedabad, where she is involved in a project on Vernacular furniture of North-West India. Her areas of research interest are heritage, crafts, museology, particularly within aspects of everyday life. She has previously received a Chevening Scholarship (2017-18) and a Charles Wallace India Trust and Simon Digby Charitable Trust Scholarship (2017-18) Scholarship to study and conduct research in the UK.

Mitraja is a trained architect and design researcher with a major in Craft and Technology. Her research interests lie in the field of cultural heritage and disciplines that harness indigenous crafts at their core. She works as a research associate at DICRC, CEPT University, and is currently involved in a project on Vernacular Furniture of North-West India. She is a co-author of *Sahaj: Vernacular Furniture of Gujarat*, published by CEPT University Press, which is an outcome of the research conducted in Phase I of the Vernacular Furniture of North-West India project. She is a recipient of Charles Wallace India Trust and Simon Digby Charitable Trust Scholarship (2016-17).

Dr. Ganpatrao Kashinath Mane

Dr. Ganpatrao Kashinath Mane born in 1953 at Palasgaon in Gadchiroli District (M.S.). With his M.A. degree in 1975 from Nagpur University, Nagpur, he worked as Registering Officer (Antiquities) in State Archaeology & Museums, Government of Maharashtra 1977-78 and as Technical Assistant and Sr. Technical Assistant in Archaeological Survey of India, Western Circle Aurangabad and Frontier Circle Srinagar in 1978 to 1982. In 1981-82 he completed Diploma in Archaeology in Archaeological Institute, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi. He worked as a Lecturer (Ancient Indian History) in Marathi Mahavidyalaya, Hyderabad during 1983 to 1992. He was awarded Ph.D. in 1986 for his research on the Megalithic Culture of Deccan. He worked as Lecturer, Sr. Lecturer and Associate Professor in different colleges of Vidarbha. He has numerous research papers and books in the field to his credit. Dr. Mane is known for his contribution to the studies and research in Rock-Cut Architecture. He has also explored

numerous Megalithic sites and Prehistoric Rock Shelters. He participated in excavations at Mandhal, Bhokardhan, Pauni, Naikund, Dhamana Linga (Maharashtra) and Ramapuram in Andra Pradesh. He worked as a Incharge of Daimabad Excavations (Maharashtra) during 1977 to 1979.

Dr. Priya Thakur

Dr. Priya Thakur is an Assistant Professor at the Postgraduate Department of History and Archaeology at Tumkur University in Karnataka. She obtained her Ph. D from the University of Mysore in Ancient History and Archaeology. Her research interests are mainly in ancient sciences, archaeology, art history and epigraphy. She has published more than forty research papers in national and international journals. Priya is associated with the Indian Society for Prehistoric and Quaternary Studies, the Epigraphical Society of India, Society for South Asian Archaeology and the Indian Art History Congress.

Prof. Sharada Srinivasan

Prof. Sharada Srinivasan is Dean and Professor, School of Humanities, National Institute of Advanced Studies with special interests in technical art history, archaeomaterials and archaeometallurgy, and significant contributions in the study of South Indian metal icons and bronzes and iron and steel traditions. She is a Fellow of Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland and the World Academy of Arts and Sciences. She is a recipient of the Dr Kalpana Chawla Young Women Scientists Award, Indian Institute of Metals Certificate

of Excellence award, Materials Research Society of India Medal and Flinders Petrie Award. She has a PhD from Institute of Archaeology, UCL, London, MA from SOAS and B.Tech from IIT-Mumbai in Engineering Physics. She is a Member, Advisory Board, Centre for South Asian Studies, University of Exeter. She has held international research grants under the UKIERI-I and UKIERI-II schemes and from AHRC, UK.

Ms. Vaishnaavi M Chavan

Vaishnaavi M Chavan is a student, currently pursuing her bachelor's in psychology, literature and journalism at Jain University, Bangalore. With a passion for reading, travelling and culture, she has written and presented papers in national and international conferences mostly based on the mythic goddess – Renuka. Her keen interest in culture and psychology has inspired her to study cultural psychology, and bodily oriented, movement therapies – such as yoga. Her first publication was in the year 2015 – a novel named “Stuck in the Moment”.

Dr. Mala Malla

Dr. Mala Malla has received her doctoral degree from Deccan College, Post Graduate and Research Institute (Deemed to be University), Pune, India, under the SAARC Scholarship scheme. She is a Professor at Central Department of Nepalese History, Culture and Archaeology (NeHCA), Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Nepal. Besides her academic performance at the Department, she is in constantly working with other institutions like Nepal Government's Department of Archaeology, Durahm

University in London and other foreign agencies, related to history, religion, culture and excavations of the inspectional nature. She is also a life members of Indian Archaeological Society, Indian Society for Prehistoric and Quaternary Studies and Society, Society for South Asian Archaeology, Culture Teachers' Association of Nepal (CUTSON), Numismatic Society of Nepal, South and Southeast Asian Association for Culture and Religion (SSEASR), International Federation of Teaching Archaeologists and Historians (IFTAH), International Association for Asian Heritage (IAAH) and Bhaktapur Vikas Sahayog Sangh. Her two books have been published in Art and Iconography, viz., 'Archaeology, Art and Ethnography of Bronzes of Nepal,' published by BAR International Series 2208, London and 'Lord Vishnu and Iconology,' published from home. She is also the Board member of Standing and Subject Committees of Central Department of NeHCA, T.U. She is a regular participant in National and International Conferences and presented papers in many of the conferences. With numerous national and international publications published, her research including Art, Archaeology, Iconography, etc. and received national awards including Mahendra Vidya Bhushan, Education awards, etc.

Kalakeerthi Dr. Edwin Ariyadasa

Recipient of the prestigious State Honour 'Kalakeethi', Dr. Edwin Ariyadasa is one of the most respected elderly scholars of Sri Lanka. To his credit are many awards and to mention a few here are the 'Sarvodaya Award' for serving in the fields of Communication and Education; 'Gold Medal Award' by the Editors Guild of Sri Lanka; the title 'Rohana Pradeepa' was

conferred by the Ruhunu University and ‘Golden Lion Medal’ recieved from Ska Gakkai, Singapore. His contribution in the academic field is extensive; he was instrumental in introducing teaching of Mass Communication in Sri Lanka in 1969 and at the same time creating syllabus for Univeristies like the Kelaniya Univeristy. He has held important positions in leading news papers as Sub-Editor of the Daily News, Lead-writer in Dinamina, Feature-Editor in Janata and Editor-in-Chief of the Navayugaya. He has published many papers at national and international platforms and has been an interesting key-note speaker. To his credit are many books published and presently he actively participates in seminars and conducts courses in mass communication training programs. He is a sought after jury for cinema and he participates in children’s programmes on television. His comments on international affairs both in print and electronic media are considered very influencial. An enthusiast for life and one who radiates love and cordial relations with young and old alike, Professor Ariyadasa is a pride to the country of Sri Lanka.

Professor Abdul Momin Chowdhury and Professor Ranabir Chakravarti

Prof. Abdul Momin Chowdhury studied at the University of Dhaka (1956-1960) and the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (1962-1965). He taught at the University of Dhaka (1960-2005) and retired as Professor of History. He spent an academic year (2013-2014) at the Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, U.S.A., as a visiting scholar with a Senior Fulbright Fellowship. In 2014 he was made a Fellow of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh. His

Dynastic History of Bengal c. 750-1200 A.D. (Dhaka, 1967) was acclaimed as an authentic work for the period covered. Among his other publications mention may be made of *Bangladeser Itihas* (Dhaka, 1973) and *Pracin Banglar Itihas O Sanskriti* (Dhaka, 2002). He has a number of contributions to edited volumes, and himself edited many volumes including *Bangladesh in the Threshold of Twenty First Century* (Dhaka, 2004), *A Revered Offering to Nalini Kanta Bhattasali, A Versatile Scholar* (Dhaka, 2016).

Prof. Ranabir Chakravarti has just retired as Professor of Ancient History, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He specializes in the socio-economic history of early India with a particular interest in the Indian Ocean maritime history. A regular contributor to international peer-reviewed journals, Chakravarti has authored/edited *A Sourcebook of Indian Civilization* (Hyderabad, 2000), *Trade in Early India* (New Delhi, 2001), *Trade and Traders in Early Indian Society* (New Delhi, 2007), *Indo-Judaic Studies in the Twenty First Century: A View from the Margins* (New York, 2007) and *Exploring Early India up to c. AD 1300* (New Delhi, 2016). He has annotated the English translation (by Giles Constable) of a 14th century Latin Crusade text (*How to Defeat the Saracens*, Washington DC, 2012).

Ms. Saadia Qamar

Ms. Saadia Qamar holds a Bachelor and Master's degree in International Relations, from the University of Karachi, Pakistan. A prolific writer and a reader, by coincidence she

became a journalist and has worked for The Nation and The Express Tribune; two newspapers based within Pakistan. Only recently she has opted to move away from journalism and into wild waters of diplomacy, which she is testing for now. Presently she is working as the Economic Advisor in the Consulate General of Japan in Karachi, Pakistan. She loves to read, write and enjoys great food and company, besides listening to good music.

Anura Manatunga - Reviewer

Anura Manatunga is a Senior Professor in Archaeology and the Director of the Centre for Heritage Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka. He is a founder member and Fellow of the Sri Lanka Council of Archaeologists and served as the Joint Secretary and Vice President of the Council. He is a member of the Advisory Board of the Department of Archaeology, Government of Sri Lanka. He was the Archaeological Director of the Polonnaruwa Project of the Central Cultural Fund of Sri Lanka. Professor Manatunga is the founder of the International Association for Asian Heritage (IAAH) and being the General Secretary of the IAAH from its inception. He was an Assistant Director of the UNESCO-Sri Lanka Cultural Triangle Project at Sigiriya. He served as a member of the Cultural Property Board of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Sri Lanka. He was a member of the Senate and Higher Degree's Committee of the Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka.

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