

# APPLICATION OF SPIRITUAL PATTERN AND DESIGN TO THE CONTEMPORARY INDIAN ORNAMENTS

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## ABSTRACT

The word jewellery is originated from the Latin word "jocale" which means plaything. It includes any decorative article made from any material which is intended to be worn as personal adornment whether hung, pinned or clipped or sewn on to body. (Peacock,2002). The purpose of the articles on the science of ornaments is to impress upon the mind the spiritual perspective that, an ornament is an object that facilitates the process of obtaining Divine grace. They are not merely objects for display or deriving pleasure, but are an important medium to provide Chaitanya (Divine Consciousness) and activate divinity in the woman. Wearing ornaments allows us to receive Shakti (Divine Energy), reduces the black (negative) energy in the body, protects from negative energy attacks, and the parts of the body where ornaments are worn are subjected to spiritual healing similar to acupressure.

It is not necessary to wear all the listed (in the text) ornaments for availing spiritual benefits. Depending on an individual's financial status, it is perfectly alright even if minimal ornaments are worn as advised by the scriptures. It is the bhav (Spiritual emotion) with which the ornaments are worn that matters and not which ornaments or how many ornaments are worn. Those who cannot afford ornaments made of gold can wear gold-plated ornaments or silver ornaments, or at least one such ornament as spiritual jewellery. When compared to spiritual practice for God-realisation, the gains from wearing ornaments are minimal. Yet, for those who are not doing any spiritual practice or for seekers in the preliminary stages, if they wear ornaments as spiritual jewellery then it is a boon from the point of view of increasing 'sattvikta'.

## KEYWORDS

Application of Spiritual Pattern and Design, Contemporary Indian Ornaments

## INTRODUCTION

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.

Indian jewellery is as old as Indian civilisation itself. The ruins of the Indus Valley civilisation, going back to 5000 years, have yielded examples of beaded jewellery. In the sculptures at Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati and the paintings at Ajanta can be seen the wide range of jewellery worn by man and woman, by king and commoner. The temples of South India, Bengal, Orissa and Central India present a veritable cornucopia of the jeweller's art.

Greek visitors to ancient India marvelled at the elaborate Indian jewels of the time. The epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, and the Arthasastra, a text 19 centuries old, mention the intricate arts of the jewellers of yore. The Silappadikaram, an ancient Tamil classic, talks of a society dealing in gold, pearls and precious stones. Paes, a Portuguese chronicler, writes of the Vijayanagar empire where visitors were dazzled by the jewellery worn.

Jewellery in ancient times was not only an adornment, but each stone was endowed with a mystical quality and used as a protection against evil forces. The navaratna or nine gems, each sacred to a planet, are worn in a particular order for the same reason to this day. The maniratna, called the serpent stone, was used as a talisman to protect the wearer. Rudraksha and Tulsi seeds and sandalwood beads are worn even today during Hindu worship.

The advent of Moghul rule further embellished Indian jewellery. The synthesis of Hindu and Muslim forms and patterns resulted in a great outburst of ornamentation, elegant and exquisite, and of a lush extravagance never seen before. Although traces of enamelling have been found in ancient Taxila, this art reached its zenith only under the Moghuls, when even the unseen reverse side of each jewel was covered with intricate enamel work (minakari).

Man's fascination for these beautiful ornaments may be attributed to the following reasons-

- Man had the instinct of beauty
- Feeling of sex.
- Self preservation/ Protection (in the form of amulets and magical wards)
- Ritual and ethnic association
- Desire to seek high social status
- Asset, Currency, wealth display and storage
- Health
- Symbol of happiness and marital status.
- Functional use (such as clasps, pins and buckles)

Jewellery later became a means of putting by savings, like a bank today, and of providing financial security to women who sold it in times of need.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study is based on secondary data. Materials of this article have been taken from relevant books, journals and articles. The methods used are descriptive and analytical. The prime focus of the present study is to analyze the significance of

metals used for jewelry along with spiritual, ethnic and traditional significance of religious jewelry. The materials used have at times been drawn from the website and extreme care has been taken to be objective in approach.

## DISCUSSIONS

Jewellery is one of the oldest forms of body adornment; recently found 100,000 year-old beads made from *Nassarius* shells, are thought to be the oldest known jewellery. Its origin is clearly not known but the tradition of wearing ornaments began earlier than wearing garments in prehistoric times. Indian jewellery had its origin in the cult of adornment, going back to primitive man, who took his cue from the birds and the animals (Jagannathan, 1878). In India, every State of India has its own special style of crafting and these styles have been adapted by the Goldsmiths and Workers of that region like Jadau Jewellery of Rajasthan and Gujarat, Minakari or Enamelling Jewellery of North India, Hollow ornaments of South India, Gold filigree jewellery of Gujarat, Diamond or Stone studded jewellery of West-Bengal, Thewa Jewellery of Rajasthan etc.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF JEWELRY METALS

Religious, ritual and traditional meaning or mystical significance is attached to the decorative design, patterns or meaningful symbols of the different types of jewellery.

## SPRITUAL JEWELLERY

Religious, ethnic and traditional jewellery symbolizes the faith of a person in the particular religion enhancing their individual style. The primitive motive for wearing all sorts of jewellery might have been to guard the extremities and apertures of the body from the attacks of harmful spirits. The simple wooden ornaments like strings of rudraksha beads and tulsi beads still provide adornment for ascetics and holy men. The ring becomes a talisman, the charm a touchstone and the pin a remembrance of all that their religion means to them. Religious jewellery is a silent message and an old friend, a way to declare one's personhood and to remind oneself of one's origins.

a) **Necklace with Pendant:** People wear religious neck jewellery symbolic of their faith in their respective religions, as protective talisman, keeping them away from dangers and evil spirits and provide strength and humility.

i. **Christian** wear pendants having the chi-rho monogram, the dove (symbolic of the Holy Spirit), the sacrificial lamb (symbolic of Christ's sacrifice), the vine (symbolizing the necessary connectedness of the Christian with Christ), cross against a heart (symbolic of both the love and sacrifice of Jesus or the love bestowed by the giver in union with that of Jesus), crucifix (symbolic of Jesus

crucifixion), cross (symbolic of the Christian religion) and medal of Jesus Christ/a picture or medal of a Saint and sometimes a thread may be worn around the neck.

ii. **Hindus** wear rudraksha beads necklace. pendants of Om, Cross, Swastika, Lord Ganesh, Hanuman, Kali yantra, Lakshmi Lotus Pendant, Mayur Svelte Intricut Pendant, Shri Talisman Pendant etc symbolizing feminine energy at its utmost strength, power and perseverance.

iii. **Muslims** wears a locket containing religious writing is worn around the neck for protection and strength and is never be removed. Pendants of Allah calligraphy or featuring the Kaaba, Ayat-ul-Qursi, Bismillah, Kalma etc are symbolic of one's Muslim faith, beliefs and ideas and evoked feelings of joy, sadness, devotion. Wearing Hamsa Hand of Fatima Charm Pendant wards off evil spirits and brings luck. The hand as a symbol of luck and protection from evil is a Middle Eastern custom shared by the Jews. Mecca, Kaaba Building Pendant symbolizes the main event in the life of any Muslim i.e. the trip to Mecca hence is inspiring and a great reminder of that religious duty. Silver coins inscribed with Ayatul Kursi, the Throne verse from the Quran worn as necklaces is basically homage to the One God, Allah, who is the ruler and benefactor of everything that lives. It invokes Allah as protector of your life. Reciting this verse is said to guarantee entry into paradise after death. Muslims don't use pictures to inspire religious devotion. The reason is that in the Old Testament and the Koran both the injunction is 'You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.' (Deuteronomy 5:8). Evil eye bracelets are also worn.

iv. **Sikhs** wear necklaces having pendants in the shape of sword (kirpan) symbolizing the readiness to self defend and to protect the oppressed/needy and is sometimes worn as a symbolic dagger. Khanda pendant symbolizes God's Universal and Creative Power.

**b) Religious Earrings:** *Christian* wears dangling crosses or the sacred heart to reaffirm their faith in their religion or sect. *Hindu* wears Swastik Diamond Drops, Trio Coin Earrings, Lakshmi Coin Drops, Lakshmi Lotus Earrings, Mayur Earrings etc.

**c) Religious bracelets:** *Christians* wears rosary or charm bracelets symbolic of their respective faiths and attract lucky fortunes to them. *Hindus* wear brahmanical sacred thread /black & tricoloured thread on their wrist as an Amulet or preservative against disease or misfortune invariably consecrated with knots and also a religious sign. All Baptized *Sikhs* wear Kara (a steel bangle worn by all) worn on their right hand and is never removed which is not a piece of jewellery, but a sign of faith and a constant reminder that one should only do good work, and never do anything bad, with ones hands" .It is one of the Five K's five articles of faith which

are a part of the Sikhs promise to the Guru – “Sikhs who commit to their faith honour the sacrifices made by Guru Gobind Singh for the freedom and survival of their ancestors. As Sikhs, we make a promise to carry his symbols with us until the day we die”. It is worn to clearly outwardly display to the world a person's faith and commitment to the Sikh religion.

**d) Religious Rings:** Rosary ring, Star and crescent rings, Sukhmani sahib simranee ring, annular shaped talismanic bands are worn by people of various religions and serve as spiritual fetter.

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