JEWELLERY IN JAIN LITERATURE OF RAJASTHAN

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The origins of Indian Jewellery like those of others are shrouded in the mists of antiquity. The earliest references of Indian jewellery are contained in Hindu sacred scriptures, the Rgveda (circa 2000-1500 B.C.) and in the Indian epics, the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata (circa 1000-500 B.C.)

One of the oldest examples of ancient Indian jewellery is a small relic casket containing gold ornaments found in a Buddhist shrine in the Kābul valley near Jalālbād.

From the archaeological excavations of Rairh, Nalisar, Ahar, Madhymika, Kalibanga and Rangmahal in Rajasthan, it is known that women wore different kinds of ornaments such as bangles, bracelets, anklets, necklaces, ear-pendants, beads and girdles.

Haribhadra Śūri who lived in the seventh or eighth century A.D. supplies the names of various types of ornaments which were popular among the people in towns and cities in the Samarādiya Kathā. Their names are bāhūsarikā, an ornament for the the bāhamalā or arm-pits, a pearl dusurullaka for the neck, a plavaṅgabandha for the breasts, a retanachakralata for the ears, and a chāḍāratnā for the forehead and jewelled ring for the fingers.

The Hamīra-Mahākāvya describes Hamīra’s queens as decked with Kunḍalas in their ears, Kastūrtillakas on their foreheads, hanging pearl in their noses, pearl necklaces on their breasts, nūpuras for their ankles, champaka buds for their dhumillas, rings for the fingers of both the hands, alaktaka for the feet and blue dukāla on their hips.

They are referred to not merely in the Rajasthani Jain and other literature of the period but also depicted in sculptures of Kīrādu, Kūśa and Pallā.

An early description of Rajasthani ornaments comes from Paūṁśrī Cariū. At the time of Paūmaśri’s marriage, women put on their wrist the holy kaṅkana along with divine herbs and white mustard. They put jewelled nūpura (on her feet), kunḍalas (in her ears), mukuta (on her forehead), necklaces (round her neck) and a tinkling girdle (round her waist).
From the Kuvalaymālā we have the names of Maṇirasana, Markatamaṇikani-Kauṭhika, and ornaments of pearl and gold.

Poor village wives bedecked themselves with saṅkha bangles and ornaments set not with jewels but with shining glass pieces.

A good idea of the ornaments of Rajasthan can be had from the Pallu Saraswatis of which one is in the National Museum, Delhi and the other in Bikaner Museum. Their round Kuṇḍalas, with four pearl strings hanging from the top-end neck ornaments now known in Rajasthan as Haṅsaṁi and Jhālara four stringed necklace which hangs almost up to the navel, a purasūtra (a cord or chain worn round the chest) or perhaps stana-sūtra (a chain worn round the breasts). Keyūra and Bāhubandha yaṅkana and Valaya, aṅgullayakas, mekhalā and nūpura are among the ornaments that can be cognised easily.

Nor were men behind women in the use of ornaments. At one place the Upamiśha-vaprapāṇacakathā mentions mukuta, aṅgada kuṇḍala and pralamba without specifying who wore them. Elsewhere in the same book we find the description of a young man with a pearl ornament called mukta kalpa on his chest, and amulets (keyūra and kaṭaka) on his upper arm.

Chahamana, according to the PrithvirājaVijaya had a kirīṭa set with gems, a pearl necklace, kuṇḍalas with pearls and pair of Keyūras. That such an abundant use of ornaments by both sexes was nothing unusual can be seen also from the accounts of Alberuni and Abouzaid.

According to Jaina scriptures the Ahariants ornaments consisted largely of terracotta beads. Only a few of them could have had semi-precious stones such as jmicrocline, carnelian, shell and faience.

Jinaratna Sūri mentions names of several ornaments in his treatise on Udaipur Varṇana; a few of them are suwarmī (a necklace of gold beads), urvaśī (necklace), māṇikyamālā (a necklace of red beads or ruby stones), sovanpān (an ornament of betel-leaf shape worn on the back of plan and Ṣāṇījar (an anklet with tinkling sound).

The popular ornaments of ancient and medieval Rajasthan are:

**Head**
- Malaya, Garbhak, Lalamak, Hansa-tilak, Danḍak, Chura-Mandar, Churikā and Mukuṭa

**Ears**
- Mukta-Kaṇṭaka, Dwirājika, Trirājika, Kuṇḍala, Bajra-garbha, Karnapur, Karṇīka, Karendu and Srikhāla

**Neck**
- Pralambikā, Uraśūrtikā, Ekāvalī and Devachchanda

**Arms**
- Keyūra, Panchaka and Kaṭaka

**Rings**
- Dwi-Hṛaka, Nav-ratna; Sūkta and Mudrikā

**Girdles**
- Kaṇchi, Mekhalā, Rasava, Kalan and Kanchidam

**Feet**
- Padachara, Pada Raṅṭaka, Pada-padina, Kiṅkiṇi, Mudrikā and Nūpura