

## **CHAPTER : 7**

### **ORNAMENTS**

The aboriginal tribes of Gujarat are very fond of ornaments since early days. They used to decorate themselves using the materials available from nature. Flowers, tender stems of trees, bones etc. were utilized for ornaments. They might have started wearing ornaments with discovery of metal and contact with other people through weekly markets. The ornaments are usually made of bamboo, wood, beads, brass pewter (mixture of lead and tin), silver, gold and at present plastic materials. These ornaments are not very expensive. The purchase of ornaments depends upon their economic condition. (Photo) Men and women wear ornaments. (Photo) They also get tattoos irrespective of sex. A tattoo is considered as a sign of beauty. (Photo) The tribals get tattooed all over the face, hands and legs. Now, they go for scattered tattooing on face and hands. (Photo)

The Rathwas are equally very fond of ornaments. Men wear 'Bhoriyo' on hand, the 'Ponchi' on wrist, the 'Kandoro' on waist, a simple ring or Kadi with ordinary pearl in fingers, and 'Golden Kanta' or 'Khumpa' in their ears.

The Rathwa men wear fewer ornaments than women. 'Bhoriyo' is a wrist-band of pewter (mixture of lead and tin) and silver with the shape of a tiger-head. It is also called as 'Kalai'. The waist band (Kandoro) consists of thick chain with round or heart shape designs made in between. (Photo) It varies in sizes. 'Kitri' is a solid

round plate of pewter, silver or gold worn in the earlobes. It may weigh about three grams. It is worn in the Panchmahal, Sabarkantha and other places. Some men do not wear 'Kitri'. They prefer to wear ear-ring (Kadi). Rings are worn on fingers. Three buttons made of metal linked by chain is known as 'Sot', which is worn on the shirt. A kerchief made of silk with beads stitched in white, yellow and red string is worn around the neck. It is sometimes worn around the shoulder like a cartridge band or tied on the turban. They also use a tattoo to add further allure. Males tattoo from the corner of the eye to eye brow in the shape of crescent. Close to the crescent and on the face, there are dots called "Kanchavajiyō" tattooed. (Photo)

Young boys and men put small piece of cloth or rabbit motion on the wrist, and put it on fire till it burns. Some put burning charcoal on it and allow the wrist to burn. This process is called 'Gal' (burnt spot). In many cases, the burnt part develops pus formation and they suffer from many diseases. Be it as it may they do not go in for medical treatment. There is a belief behind this custom that if they do not have burnt spot of 'Gal' then God will throw them in the fire after death. Such a superstitious belief has roots in illiteracy. The 'Gal' process is mostly undergone the Rathwas of Shamlaji of Sabarkantha and Dungri. To sport a 'Gal' (spot) is considered to be an act of bravery and courage. The 'Gal' process is on the decline due to some awakening among the Rathwas.

The Rathwa women wear ornaments in hands, legs, neck, elbow, upper part of the elbow, head, forehead, hair, etc. The ornament craze seems to be greater among

the womenfolk. The 'Bindiya' is used on the forehead. (Photo) The nose ornaments is known as 'Jad'. It is a pin made of brass, silver or gold. The left side of the nose gets pierced and 'Jad' or 'Bharmiyo Kanto' is worn. It is also made of lac in which red or green coloured stone is encrusted. In the areas near Jetpur side, the 'Jad' is golden. The earning has a longer pendent attached to it with a chain or jingle bells. This is known as 'Loriyu'. The chain has a hook, which is to be pegged on to the hair. Though the 'Loriyu' is at present outdated, some womenfolk still wear it. (Photo) The earlobes may be umbrella like shape to which small jingle bells are attached, and this is called 'Tokery'. (Photo) This looks like a chandelier. The upper edge of the ear is pierced in three places and rings are worn. They are called 'Vitla'. (Photo) These are common in Bodli, Karnali, Chalamani, Jetpur, Kadwal, etc. In Kheda the 'Vitla' may have jingle bells attached to it. It is worn on happy occasions.

In Chhotaupdepur area, a berry like ornament called 'Bor', which is made of metal, generally, with a silver chain, is strung on the forehead. It is woven with the hair using a colored string. (Photo)

The Rathwa women beautify their buns and plaits with rings and braids. They are made of palm leaf, Kaliya and Bajra grass, wheat reeds etc. The material is woven into different geometrical and other designs. The woven part is tied round the bun and hung in case of plait with the help of clips. It is known as 'Veni', 'Gajro' or 'Har'. The other ornament used for plait is known as 'Chotlo'. This is prepared by

womenfolk from beads, string, metal rattles and rings. The plait is also called 'Chotlo'. (Photo)

The neck ornaments are chains, 'Hansadi', 'Tagli', etc. The idea of wearing 'Hansdi' is said to have taken shape from tethers. 'Hansdi' is a broad round, stiff and solid necklace, made of silver or the mixture of tin and lead. It is 500 to 625 grams in weight. In Kawant area, its size is slightly broader. The holes are made on the front side and coins (sibla) are fixed (Photo) The ends of it are thin and bent. To economize on the cost, the metal sheet is covered and used. Such a 'Hansdi' has hooks. It is also known as 'Vahndi'.

'Jaglı' (necklace) is made of thin silver or metal rods, with metal wires wrapped round them. Its ends are towards the front side of neck. One of its ends has a hook to fit into the nose in the other.

The necklace has three or four rows of metal chains or a thin chain with pendants. (Photo) The pendant may be round and have a peacock painted over it. (Photo) This necklace is known as 'Sibru'. The Rathwa women prepare necklace from various kinds of beads such as 'para' (Oval shaped), 'Kidiya' (tiny round beads), 'Motiyan' (round colored beads made of grass) and, in recent times, plastic beads. The beads necklace is called a 'Haria', 'Gal patto', 'Para' necklace etc. A 'Haria' necklace is made of five to six chains of tiny round beads. The Rathwas and almost all tribal folk have craze for such a bead necklace. The women of Jetpur and Kadwal

areas wear more of this type of necklace. A 'Haria' necklace is also made from oval shaped beads. A cloth band to be worn on the neck is prepared with thread and belt on which tiny round and colored beads are stitched. It is called 'Gal-Patto' or 'Gal soon'. In the earlier times, a necklace called 'Galchvo' was worn in Sankheda and Mewas. It is similar to 'Galsoon'. Oval shaped beads are woven on a cloth belt and worn around the neck. This ornament is known as 'Para' necklace. Another necklace is made of mercury beads on cotton belt. The colored stones or felspar are worn by women since ancient times. They make holes in the stones, use a black string to make a necklace, and wear it on the neck to cover the breasts. (Photo)

The elbow ornament have different names such as 'Kadu', 'Aatak', 'Hatka', 'Amaliyu', etc. (Photo) A six-edged band weighing 500 grams is worn over the elbow. The designs are of many types. The metal or silver wires are made in a zigzag pattern like a ball. The zigzag ornament is to be worn on the top of 'Kadu'. The joint of curve is fixed with metal hooks. A six-edged 'Kadu' is worn on the elbow. The edges have the designs like butterfly. It is twisted. Its ends have the designs of coin. It is generally worn on one elbow. But in Chhotaudepur and Kwant, women wear it on both the elbows. A ball-shaped ornament of silver or pewter wire, is called 'Vank' or 'Vahatiya'. It is worn over the arm bend. (Photo) A nail made of wire is used to join both the ends of the 'Vank'.

Different types and metal bangles are worn by the Rathwa women. At present, glass and plastic bangles are also worn (Photo) Gold and silver metals are

becoming very expensive. Married women must wear bangles. When the woman becomes a widow, her bangles are broken. Bangles are called 'Polka', 'Tapro', 'Folihalu', 'Boriya', etc. In Chhotaudepur, hollow bangles are worn, and these are called 'Polka', 'Tapro', bangles are flat or round, worn around the wrists. The bangles having round bends have edges made of silver or bronze. 'Bhoriya' bangles are angular ring type bands, worn on the arms. (Photo)

Rings of different designs and shapes are worn on the fingers. The flowery-designed ring is known as 'Hath Phool'. The round coin fixed ring is called 'Vedha'. The finger ring has hole in it and jingle bells are attached to it. It is 'Bedi' ring. These rings are made of brass, aluminium, silver, and gold. (Photo)

The heaviest of all the ornaments, worn slightly above the ankles, are known as 'Kadals' or 'Kalla' or 'Wada'. (Photo) The silver made 'Kalla' are called 'Mundniya' in Chhotaudepur. These ornaments are worn in such a way that their ends face each other. They are of different sizes and shapes. Many young girls wear thin chains on the ankles, and these are made of pewter and silver. It is known as 'Chhada' or 'Jhanjhari'. Another ankle ornament is 'Sankada' or 'Toda'. These are worn on special occasions like marriages, fairs etc. Youngsters prefer to wear 'Jhanjhari'. They also wear ornaments on the toes which are fish-shaped rings. It is known as 'Ughta'. The Rathwas of Chhotaudepur are called 'Vichiyo' or 'Jodva'.

‘Kandoro’ is a waist band. It may consist of four or five chanins, and is also known as ‘Kahedo’. It is usually a mixture of tin and lead and of silver. It has an intermittent clasp to hold them together. The waist band is worn by male, female and children.

When a child is six months old, black string is tied on the waist. (Photo) There is a belief among them that by the tying of such a string, the child would get good waist figure. After ten years of age, a metal waist band is used to support lower garments that are ‘Dhoti’ or ‘Palvie’. Women wear a ‘Ghagharo’ (Skirt). The chains of waist band are joined with the plaque in different embossed designs such as leaf, elephant, floral, geometrical, and the sacred mark swastika at regular intervals. The ends of the chains are clasped with hooks. Two or three rows of beads are used to make waist band.

They also use a key-chain on the waist. It is called ‘Chapdo’. It is made of metal has a bunch of jingle bells attached to it at the end. Some tie a piece of metal, as per the instruction of priest, to the waist to keep away all evil.

The art of tattooing, though agonizing, is considered to be a pleasure and a sign of beauty among the Rathwas and all the other tribes of Gujarat. Some do it so as to keep the memory of their totem alive. It remains in place until the death of a person. Male and females both have tattoos. The craze for it seems to be greater among the women folk. Like men, women also use ‘Kanchavaniyo’, or a tattoo made

from the corner of the eye to eyebrow in the shape of a half moon with dots scattered all over the face.

A tattoo on the forehead is considered to be a spot of beauty among youngsters. There is a belief that a woman without a tattoo would not go to heaven. Tattoos are made on ankles, chin, cheeks, wrists, palm, etc. Girls get it done before marriage. There are separate practitioners specializing in tattoos for men and women. A female tattoo practitioner generally caters to the need of women and young girls. It is mostly done in childhood. A needle, safety pin and such other pointed materials are used with acid for tattoo making. They use electric current to pierce the needle into the skin. The marks are filled with soot or some mixture of earthen colors. The making of the design with needle creates wounds. These take a few days to heal. The tattoo maker gives an oily substance to apply on them so that there is no pus formation taking place at all as per their belief. But pus formation develops often. Tattoos are made in the weekly market. The tattoo-maker belongs to the Gondhari tribe. A chart of the various designs is kept for people to select from. These are, for example, a crescent moon, cluster or scattered dots, double circles, flowers, trees, leaves, animals, names etc. There is a proverb about the tattoos that the son, wife and husband would remain with the dead body upto cremation ground, once a person was dead, whereas tattoo would remain with him/her even his/her after death up to heaven.



## ✧ ORNAMENTS



Purchasing ornament







Men Ornament

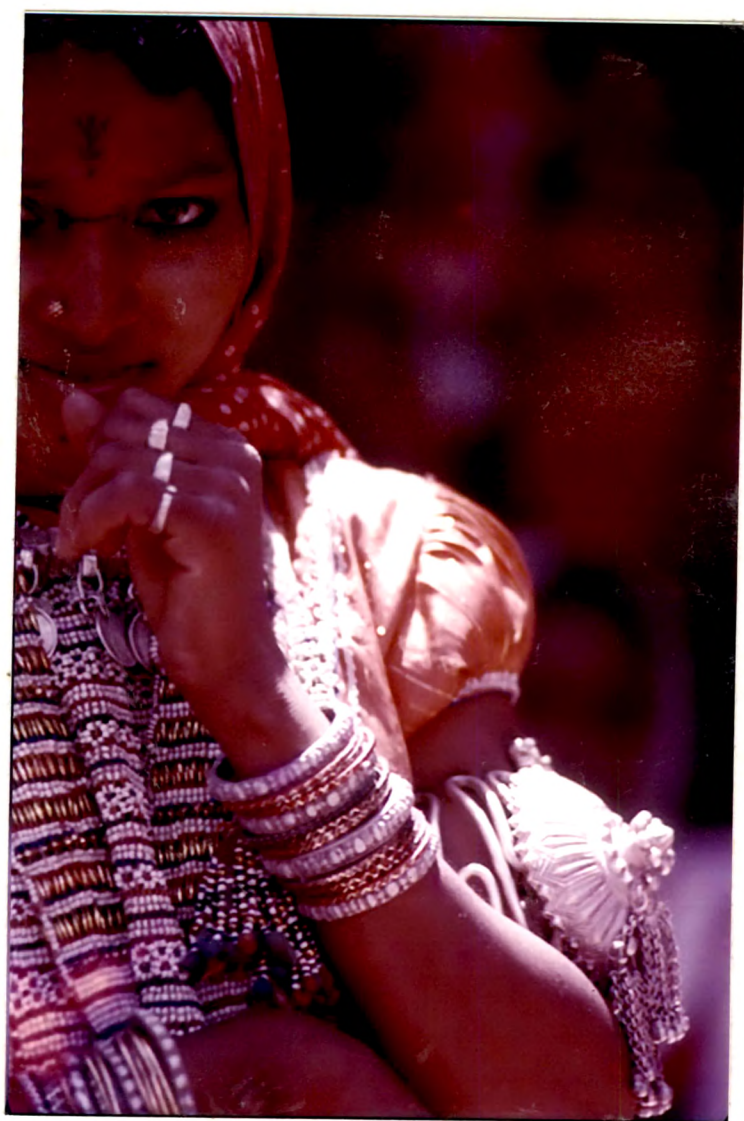


Women Ornament





A tattoo as a sign of beauty



A tattoo on face







A tattoo on face



A tattoo on hands





A tattoo on legs



A tattoo on men face



‘Kandoro’



Black string tied on the waist





‘Bindiya’ and ‘Jad’



‘Loriyu’



‘Tokery’



‘Vitla’





Hasdi ornate with design on edge



‘Bor’



‘Chotlo’



Hasdi with coin





Four rows of Chain necklace



Pendant with Peacock motif



Bead neckless cover the brest





Glass and plastic bangles



‘Bhoriya’





Elbow Ornament



Elbow Ornament



Bead necklace



Bead Aramlet





Finger rings



Ankles