The Traditional Jewellery of Pabbar Valley
Hari Chauhan
Himachal State Museum, Shimla 171004, Himachal Pradesh
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Passion for jewellery is legendary. It is reflected in the numerous customary occasions where it is not only considered auspicious but mandatory to gift ornaments. The bride's trousseau is incomplete without the ornaments. Jewellery in India has drawn upon the many facets of its people, and has in turn been inspiration and solace to both wearer and beholder. Sculptors and painters transgressed boundaries between the real, the ideal and the imaginary, profusely embellishing their images with ornaments. Rulers used jewels as statements of power and prestige. To the Indian woman, gold holds special significance to her life. It is far more than the ultimate enhancer of beauty, it is that precious thing which stays and grows with her though the different stages in life. It is also her Stridhan, her security in the face of adversity, to be encashed in times of need or distress. The Indian woman has always been very creative in her expression of jewellery and design. In keeping with India's rich heritage of diversity, jewellery also takes on regional nuances. It is the ultimate and most-personal expression of region specific culture and art of lifestyles and heritage. It draws inspiration from architecture, dance and even religious customs.

Each part of India offers their own traditional ornaments with special significance and these typically traditional ornaments with slight variations remain trendy at all times. The paper describes the traditional jewellery worn by the women of Pabbar valley of Himachal Pradesh, one of the northern states of India.

Key words: Traditional Jewellery, Traditional ornaments, Pabbar Valley, Himachal Pradesh.

The story of Indian jewellery goes back over 5000 years to the prehistoric past. Different regions of India have jewellery making styles unique to them. In India ornaments are made for practically every part of the body. Such a variety of ornaments bear testimony to the excellent skill of the jewellers and crafts people of India.

The silver jewellery of Himachal Pradesh is one of the oldest handicrafts in the state. The silversmiths scattered in various parts of the State all recount how Sita, the wife of Lord Rama, wore silver jewellery designed and crafted by their ancestors in the days of yore. Silversmiths of Himachal Pradesh craft large ornaments, which have a very delicate and intricate appearance. Head dresses called Chak, long earrings and large nose rings with papal leaf or bird motifs are the specialties of the region.

Pabbar valley consists of the area drained by the river Pabbar and its tributaries in the upper Shimla hills of Himachal Pradesh. It extends from the South of Kinnaur to the Yamuna valley in Uttaranchal. The valley is connected with the plains of Uttar Pradesh with the highway road running along the right bank of Pabbar and Tons rivers. The road leading to Rohru from Shimla connects this valley with the state capital. This valley is at the distance of about 95 km from Shimla city (Fig. 1).

Jewellery must have originated from man's innate desire for self adornment that has kept the art of jewellery live in this country through the centuries. To fulfil this desire he adorned himself with ornaments fashioned from flowers, leaves, seeds and fruits, or pieces of bones and ivory and some times with beads and precious stones, etc. With the discovery of metal, ornaments entered in the man's life in their most crude form. He started preparing the ornaments and jewellery from the metals like copper, iron and silver in addition to archaic material. It is attested with the discovery of large number of ornaments found in the excavation of various sites of the Indus civilization. We find some information about different types of jewellery worn by people in our \textit{Vedic} literature. The necklace of round discs worn by Lokshma Devi, Shakti Devi and Nandi images (7th century AD) of Bharmour, Chamba are known as 'Dinar mala', which is termed as \textit{Nishka} in the \textit{Veda}.

There are large number of sculptures, paintings and carvings portraying men and women wearing different kind of jewellery. With the passage of time the jewellery comes out in its most refined form with...
its brilliance, designed and fashionable style. However, the people of the area still use some flower and leaves and bones for their adornment. The men adorn their caps with plumes of flower and ladies wear the necklace with a tiger’s nail or tooth as pendent embedded in gold or silver and provided with hooks through which the chain is passed, and also tuck flowers in their hair buns. We find stone sculptures, carvings and paintings in the valley which represent men and woman wearing elaborate ornaments and different types of jewellery. Every house keeps some jewellery according to its economic status. Man and woman of all ages have had a deep love for ornaments. These, by inference reveal the traditional design skill of the jeweler. These ornaments have different names and vary in shape and style. The jewellery of the area is full of designs and differs in shape and size. The jewellery of the area is full of designs and differs in shape and size. There are several fairs, festivals and marriages when women put on their richest ornaments, even sometimes these weigh about 8 Kg. All eyes are naturally attracted to the sound tinkling of ornaments, which adds a great deal to the charm of a woman.

In old times, traditional ornaments were made of silver but with the change of time and social economic conditions, the silver is replaced with gold. The heavy jewellery of the silver is replaced with the light and designed gold jewellery. However, the traditional silver jewellery is still in use in the remote areas of the region. Women with ornaments in ear, nose and arms were considered to be the representative of marital felicity, *Suhagun*. To be devoid of ornaments signifies widowhood or formal renunciation of worldly life.
According to the Manusmriti, the oldest Hindu treatise on social law, a woman’s jewels are her Stridhan, the only property legally and irrevocably here. As their only insurance in a male oriented, unsupportive social structure, and against the vicissitudes of time and old age, a woman tends to hold on to much as possible and in earlier times safeguard it on her person. Woman weighed down with ornaments are still a common sight in the valley.

Ornaments were not only worn for adornment and for their intrinsic value but also for certain religious and superstitious reasons. Some ornaments are put on the girl at the time of her marriage on a Subh-muhurat by reciting hymn after which she said to attain the status of Suhagan. It is obligatory for every married woman whose husband is alive to wear ornaments in the nose, ear and bangles in her hand and removed them only when she becomes widow. Amulet (Jantar) of gold or silver containing piece of paper with certain mystical words written on it are worn in the neck by people to ward off effects of evil or black magic. Some corals and stones embedded in the rings and ornaments (Fig.2 j) are worn to minimise the evil effect of Grahas and Nakshstras. Gold is held precious and a sacred metal and is not worn in the feet.

With the change of tastes, designs are often gradually replaced. Apart from old traditional ornaments, new designs and fashion always creep in for bringing about the change. This is responsible for declining taste of the people for old jewellery design. The young folk have gradually developed a taste for light and newly designed ornaments as well as for fewer of them.

Whatever may happen to the fashion or shapes of designs of jewellery, it is certain, that a woman’s love of personal adornment will never completely fade in the years to come. It will remain forever. In this connection, K.de.B. Codrington’s remarks produced in The handicraft and Industrial Art of India seems to have justification. “The fact that jewellery is a traditional form of wealth and that a man will hang his ear ring round his wife’s neck and arms and anklets is not merely to be regarded as an unsocial antiquated form of hoarding. It is delightful and until the new word with its cooperative societies and school can give equivalent value in delight, it will certainly go on”.

The local goldsmiths known as the Sunar prepares the traditional jewellery. He works with a few instruments and tools. In spite of being equipped only with a set of old instruments, he produces fine jewellery. These instruments are very rough and seem crude but the art they produce are unique and magnificent. From fusing of metal to designing, enameling, engraving, molding and finishing of ornaments, the Sunar does every thing personally.

The technique followed by the goldsmith is much similar as described by earlier workers

The jewellery of the area is made of the purest and finest material whenever they can be affordable and fashioned with all delicacy and elaborateness with the reach of the jeweler art. Pure gold because of its softness, is rarely used. It is generally alloyed with copper, and silver with copper and zinc. The proportion of the alloy is not same at all places and in all types of ornaments. The tools used by the Sunar are similar types as used in the other part of the state. It consist of crucible (small clay dish), Angedi (furnace), Nal (blow pipe), Nihai (anvil), Hathouri (hammers), Sansi (tongs), Zambar (small pincer), Cheni (chisels), Reti (file) and Thappas (dies) of various kinds, shaped according to the nature of the ornaments (Fig.2 j). These Thappas are used in bringing out the desired pattern by hammering.

Sunar use only few chemicals for preparing and cleaning the ornaments. Suhaga (borax) is universally used as a flux in melting metal, Anchur, Nausadar (Sal ammoniac) and Imeli are used for cleaning and brightening and Manik-ret (red dust) is also used for brightening the ornaments.

Woman of the area wear jewellery from head to toe and during many occasions she remains laden with jewellery that produces the alluring effect on her personality and tinkling sound of the ornaments adds to grace in her movements. The ornaments worn by the women on their body is as under:

**Head ornaments**

Elaborate coiffeur has been the hallmark of women through every era. The preference for long black tresses still survives in the area. The head ornaments prevent the plait from unraveling. The ornaments worn on the hair plait, symbolizing the marital status of the women.

1. **Chak**—It is an ornament used on the hair plait on the back of the head. All married women wear it on their head symbolizing their Suhagan (married) status. Chak is prepared in both gold and silver. It is generally of convex shape and is about \( \frac{1}{2}'' \) to 1" (1" = 2.54 cm) high with a diameter of about 2" 3". Hooks
are soldered on the inner side, which help it to be tied to the hair plait. It is necessary to every woman to wear this ornament on her head but the tradition is fading day by day and now it remains as a custom only and is worn on the day of wedding ceremony only (Fig. 2q).

2. **Jutti**—It is a silver hair pendent hung by the back of the head on a plait of hair. *Jutti* has several shapes and sizes. In some cases it is long and attached with the long cloth pockets where the plait of hair is put inside and silver chains are stitched in three or four rows joined with hook at short intervals giving it a decorative effect. At the end these chains were provided with cluster of drops, which produce jingling sound on the movement. In other form of *Jutti* about six inches long hollow pipe thicker in the middle and conical towards the ends is prepared and is carved with some floral designs. In its middle and on the two ends oval hooks are soldered from which cluster of drops are hung. *Jutti* is generally prepared in silver and weighing about 350-500 gm. This ornament is generally worn during the festive occasion and on other days it is replaced with cotton *Jutti* (Fig. 2r).

3. **Hairpin**—The women use it just above the ears to tie her hairs. Hairpins are usually made of silver or gold with many geometrical and floral designs. It helps the women to unravel her tresses. It is about 3” long and 1.5” wide. On the back a pin and a hook is provided by which it is tied to the hair (Fig. 2p).

**Ear ornaments**

Ear ornaments are an important constituent of female attire. The range and variety of ear ornaments of the region are different than that of anywhere else in the state. An extraordinary range and variety of forms and designs could be seen wearing by the women. To the married woman the ear ornament is auspicious, whereas bare earlobes signaled widowhood. In addition a woman wealth conspicuously visible and the ear ornament became the statement of her status and power, elongated ear lobes were considered a sign of beauty and health. In ancient Indian text elongayed ear lobes were considered to be the one out of 36 lakshanas of mahaparasta. By appending ornaments to almost every part of ear, the woman also, ensures a continuous state of mental and physical well being. Some of the popular ear ornaments are as under:

1. **Bragar**—It is a large gold ear ring with two round pearls and a conical turquoise suspended in the center. The conical turquoise is called *Neelak*. Generally these are of red and green color. Some portion of the pearls and turquoise is encrusted with the fine trelliswork prepared from the grains of gold. From the central turquoise occasionally three or five small drops are hung. Just close to pearls about half an inch portion of the ring on both sides is covered with a coiled thin wire. Half the portion of the ear ring is a thick wire without any decoration. At one end a hook is fitted in an oval link provided at the other end of the ornament. *Bragar* are prepared of gold and silver and in size one-inch diameter to two inch and weigh between 15-40 gm a pair (Fig. 2n).

2. **Darotu**—A peculiar shaped ear ring prepared in gold and is worn on the lobe of the ear. It is made of single long wire. The half part of this wire is bent round to form a ring with a small closed hook at one end. The remaining part is turned outward to form a semi-circle. Here another inward bend is given. Now the wire is turned round and round to form three to five circles each shorter than the previous one. A pair weighs about 15-25 gm.

3. **Kante**—These are prepared in several geometrical designs and are about 1.5 to 3” long. The long kanta is provided with a thin long chain with a tiny oval link at one end. The ornament is prepared in gold and silver and each weighs between 5-15 gm (Fig. 2b, 20).

4. **Karaphul**—It is commonly used ornament and is prepared in gold and silver. It is either enameled or chased cone plaque, sometime fitted with turquoise in the center. Its outer edge resembles like a star or is sometime appliqued with a wire ring having impressions of jound knobs (Fig. 2i).

5. **Balian**—It is an ear ring with beautiful decoration work. A crescent shaped piece of embossed metal is fitted to the wire by a hinge at one end and hook on the other. The lower edge is extended with a wirework carrying flat or round piece of metal at a certain regular gap. Its pair normally weighs about 15-30 gm. It is normally worn on the lobe of the ear (Fig. 2c).

6. **Dandis**—It is an ear ring. The only decoration in it is the coiled thin wire, which encircles about half the portion of the ring. This is prepared in gold and silver and weigh from 5-10 gm. The *dandis* are worn on the upper lobe of the ears.
7. Marki—Small earrings, particularly worn by men in the lobes. It is prepared both in gold and silver and weigh in few grams.

Nose ornaments
There are no early sculptures and paintings showing the women either wearing anything in the nose or with pierced nose. However there are many nose rings found in the excavations in various part of the country. Perhaps the custom gained universal popularity in the later period. Now it is impossible to find a girl with an unpierced nose. Dr P K Gode is of the view that use of nose ornament begins in 10th century AD and it is a foreign importation into Indian Culture\(^1\). While A.S. Altekar establishes that the nose ornament comes in fashion with the Muslim but K. Krishnamurthy in his book "Mirror of Indian Culture" argues that terracotta figurine discovered at Chagtur reveals a nose ornament and figurine dated to Satvahana period of 1st–2nd century AD. A female figure from Nagarjunakonda which dates back to 3rd century AD is shown wearing a nose ornament. In some mithuna couple of Nagarjunakonda, male lover is shown adjusting the nose ornament of his beloved while she is shown looking at the mirror\(^2\). Amongst many jewels with which the woman adorns herself, the nose ornament is perhaps the most seductive. Ornaments for the nose take on a variety of shapes ranging from tiny jeweled stud to the large gold hoops that encircled the cheek with graceful pendent pearls dangling provocatively just above the upper lip. It is mandatory for married woman to wear the nose ornament every time.

1. Tili—It is common ornament worn by the woman on her nose. It is generally of gold and weighs hardly a few grams. It is produced in varying designs. Some have plain surfaces and a decorated edge. Some are appliqued with three or more imitation stones. Some are decorated with grain works. Others are fitted with simple turquoise or red stones in the center having grain work all around. It is round and slightly conical with a long hollow pin provided at the back. The hollow pin is inserted inside the nose and fitted with sliver pin known as kalī.

2. Phul—It is worn in the nose like tili. It is a star shaped small stud with five corners and small jewels or nug fitted in the center and some time all around, as well. The hollow pin is inserted inside the nose and fitted with sliver pin known as kalī.

3. Karolu—It is suspended from the nose and loops like a decorated disc of small grains of gold. At the upper portion hinge and hook is provided, wherein a curved wire is fixed by which it is hung to the septum. Sizes, shapes and weights of this ornament are varying. It is also known as bulāk (Fig. 2 a).

4. Balu—It is a large ring worn on the nose. This is ornamented with a belt of jewel or pearls. Some of the jewels are encased into grain worked semi-circular balls, through which the ring wire passes. Another design is prepared by fitting flat round plaque to the half portion of wire ring with one or two pearls in the center. The ornament is quite heavy and weighs about 20 - 60 gm. Due to its heavy weight and big size it now its shorter form called Nath replaces this ornament (Fig. 2 m).

5. Koka—It is a substitute of a Tili weighing less than a gram. This is a gold knob with a hollow pin to which another pin is fitted from inside the nose. Generally a small red stone known as Thewa is fixed on the knob.

Ornaments for neck
Ladies are so fond of neck ornaments. The variety and range of neck ornaments are very vast. The traditional neck ornaments were of silver and the weight of these ornaments is very heavy. Now these ornaments are prepared in gold with lightweights and the traditional shapes are changed by the modern designs. The traditional neck ornaments are as under:

1. Khagali—It is a large silver collar made of solid metal. It is worn around the neck. It is prepared from half an inch square or a round bar and its circumference may be about 15” - 20”. Its central half is comparatively thick. Its two ends are shaped to the form of a round knob, which are some times given an outward turn. It is decorated with geometrical designs in the central portion and weighs about 150 - 350 gm. In the other part of the state it is also known as Hansli (Fig. 2 g).

2. Satlari har—It is a silver necklace usually worn by the women during the old time but in some part of the area this ornament is still popular among the women. This traditional ornament is now replaced with the gold necklace of the modern designs. The Satlari har\(^3\) contains seven chains or some time more or less is added. Chains are prepared from several star shaped units with a flat round surface in the center. These units are linked each other with an oval link. The ends of these chains are linked to a triangular plaque with a fine trelliswork. One side of both the plaque is provided with as many oval hooks as many may be required according...
to the number of chains. At the opposite corner facing oval hook side of the plaque another oval link is soldered. These two oval links are connected with long chains, which help to suspend the necklace from the neck. This type of necklace is prepared in a number of designs also. The fall of the seven chains comes one above the other on the breast (Fig. 2 d).

3. Chander har—This necklace is worn through out the area. The ornament consists of several silver chains linked together by a pendant and plaques which are enameled or consist of simple silver bands. The chains are strands of tiny silver rosettes. The plaques are generally enameled in blue and green. Sometimes one to five plaques with fine enamel work are in set in between the chains. Its weight varies from 400 gm - 2.5 kg. Now this type of necklace is replaced with light and designed gold necklace (Fig. 2 e).

4. Trimani—The ornament contains three hollow gold beads of big size in the center and is applied with grain work. A copper sheet is fixed inside for strengthening of beads. These beads are threaded in the center and the sides are added with seven or more strings of small beads and provided with joint screw at the end (Fig. 2 k).

5. Jantar—It is a silver necklace prepared in rectangular or square shape. It is outer surface is encrusted with fine trelliswork of grains. On the lower edge of the plaque is provided with hooks from which are suspended bunches of globular beads. At the opposite edge two oval hooks are soldered through which colored thread passes and tied at the back of the neck (Fig. 1 f).

Ornaments for the wrist

To women, ornaments for the wrist have always been significant emblem of marriage. More than any single jewellery the bangles have been crafted from the widest variety of materials. Ancient fragments testify that bangles were made from terracotta, shells, copper, bronze, gold, silver and almost any material that lent itself to craftsmanship. A woman never allow her arms to be completely bare. The popular wrist ornaments of the area are:

1. Gajroo—It is popular silver ornament of the old period worn by women. It is a hollow bracelet with teeth decoration on its upper surface. Pointed teeth are set in two or four lines. Inner lines are slightly longer than the outer sides. It has a flexible joint and has a close fit over the wrist. A pair of gajroo weighs about 150-200 gm (Fig. 2 i).

2. Sunangan—It is a round bracelet prepared from gold. It is thin and plain in the middle and widened toward the ends. The ends are engraved with the shape of lion head. The weight of one pair varies from 50 - 100 gm. If the same type of bracelet is prepared in silver it is known as gokhru.

3. Dhaaglae—It is a silver bracelet like Sunangan. The newborn baby is also arrayed with small and light weight bangle. It is also provided with cluster of jhumkas, which produce jingling sound with the movement of arm (Fig. 2 h).

Ornaments for finger

Like other ornaments of body parts the finger ornaments are also equally important ornament of women attire. The women are very fond of the finger ornaments; one can found many women in the area wearing the rings in all the fingers.

Ring—The simple ring is not ignored in the vast array of larger ornament form. It is a common ornament worn by both men and women. The ring worn by the men are comparatively heavier and bigger then that of women. It is usually made of gold, silver and copper. It is either of simple designs or provide with ornamental designs. Sometimes rings are fitted with precious stones and jewels.

Waist ornaments

Women also wears waist belt known as gachhi on her waist. The ornament consists of a number of chains held together by bands. This type of ornament also finds mention in the Ramayana as 'Kanchidama' or 'mekhla'. It serves the dual purposes by holding the lower garment and helping to keep the backbone straight. It also serves to embellishment to the feminine force. It is traditional ornament worn only during the festive occasion while other days long cotton cloth serve this purpose. Such type of costumes is frequently noted on all sculptures. The width of the gachhi is 4'6" and weigh from 2-2.5 kg.

Ornaments for the ankles and toes

All the Suhagan (married) women wear the ornaments in their ankles and toes. The tradition of wearing the ornament in the ankle is very ancient there is large number of sculpture portraying the female figures wearing the anklets. The yakshi
Fig. 2 - Traditional Jewellery of Pabber Valley
(j) Mould used for designing ornaments (Gold)

(k) Trimani, Neck ornament (Gold)

(m) Bau, Nose ornament (Gold)

(n) Bragar, Ear ornament (Gold)

(o) Kanta, Ear ornament (Gold)

(p) Hair Pin, Head ornament (Silver, Gold)

(q) Chak, Head ornament (Silver, Gold)

(r) Jutli, Head ornament (Silver)

Fig. 2. (Contd.) - Traditional Jewellery of Pabber Valley
sculptures of Barhut and Sanchi are adorned with anklets. There are number of sculptures and wood carvings in the valley dating to 8th—9th century showing the female deities with this popular ornament. Ankle ornaments are always made of silver or copper but not of gold. By wearing gold in ankle it is disrespect to this precious metal. These are symbols of her married status.

1. Panjeb—It is prepared by knitting a wire into an ornamental way. A belt of small and large drops is linked on the lower edge of the knitted piece. A clasp is also provided at the two ends, which makes it to fit on the ankle. It produces jingling sound on the movement.

2. Polasar—These silver rings are worn on toes. These rings either are simple or provided with small silver flat piece at the top and enamelled with red, blue or green.

Conclusion
The jewellery in its designs, motifs and vary act of wearing express the essence of Indian spirituality and emits metaphorical signal in a code that is immediately comprehensible to the initiated. The ornaments worn by the woman provides an insight into their notions of beauty and adornment. Over the past few years change have taken place in socio-economic cultural life. A shift in traditional values has resulted in their moving away from their centuries old life style and old customs of loading oneself with heavy silver jewellery, is replaced with light and designed gold jewellery. However the traditional form are still remained the choice of the new generation. The gold, which has high face value, not only serve the purpose of adornment but also ensures the economic security for the lifetime. With the introduction of machine made jewellery in the market the people even prefer to prepare the traditional ornaments from the local goldsmith. Apart from the local gold market the jewellery of the area also established their place in the other market of the state due to their beautiful designs and shapes. What ever may happen to the fashion or shapes of designs of jewellery, it is certain, that a woman’s love of personal adornment will never completely fade in the years to come. It will remain forever.

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