

Tales Of Tattoo From Godna to Cosmetic Tattooing

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Abstract: India had always been known as the land that portrayed cultural and traditional vibrancy through its conventional arts and crafts. Being a multi-culture, multi- ethnic and multi-religious society each religion has its own kind of art. Broadly Indian art consist of varieties of art from including painting, sculpture, pottery, and textile arts. One of the most common and popular art of Indian tribes is godna which has been practiced for thousands of years and remains a common practice in various cultures and countries. This art comprises permanent ornamentation of the body with tattoos. It has cultural as well as religious influence but in modern era, body tattooing became the symbol of fashion. In parallel with emergence of new way of tattooing, Cosmetic tattoos are gaining more attention in 21st century to enhance facial feature and beauty expression. This present review article would explore ancient practice of godna in India, its process and technique in relationship with modern fashion and permanent cosmetic tattooing.

Key words- Godna, Godhnari, Cosmetic tattoo, Permanent makeup.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Over the past decade, tattoos have become a fashion statement among urban Indian youth, but body art has been practiced for centuries many Indian communities, Known as godna.[1]It is an ancient art form of India, practiced by gond tribe in central and northern India. Godna tradition was prevalent in the tribes and associated with the symbol of purity and pollution. Godna is earliest form of body adornment and on the verge of extinction through modern tattooing is still popular. The belief says that godna marks are the only ornamentation which remains with them after the death and tattooed god, symbol or name will help as supernatural aid in the time of crisis, not in lifetime but even after their death.[2] Historical evidence of godna have been found in Bharahut (India) dated 200 BCE. Female figurines found godna in their hand, leg and face.[3,4] Earlier, people around the globe have been adoring, the skin for variety of reasons; to mark their social status, religious rites, to beautify or for protection.[5] But nowadays, tattooing are gaining wide popularity and used a permanent makeup to replace the imperfections and overcoming physical difficulties while apply makeup. Cosmetic tattooing is a technique with the help of which one is able to employ tattoo techniques to make designs that look like makeup. This includes eye lining techniques or permanent color enhancing techniques of facial skin, lips and eyelids. The main purpose of cosmetic tattooing is to enhance natural beauty and to increase physical appeal.



Figure 1. Tribal tattoo on hand and neck.[6]

1.1. Origin of Godna: As per Indian mythology, A myth prevalent in the Gond tribes describes the origin of Godna. Mahadev Shiva once invited the Gods to a feast. A Gond God also went with the others. The Goddess was sitting in a separate group with Parvati. Later the Gond God went there to fetch his wife amongst so many he could not recognize her. By mistake he puts his hand around Parvati’s shoulder. Shiva knew that it was only a mistake and laughed, but Parvati was very angry. She commanded the tribal women to wear specific tattooing marks to distinguish themselves from other castes. Since then it is believed and tattooing has become an important customs among the tribal’s.[3] Another mythical story found in the region is that Yamaraj (God of death) was confused about the sex of the dead when their spirits went to his kingdom. He desired that his daughter-in-law’s body should be marked with same black stuff so as to distinguish her from others. This was done and she looked extremely attractive. Yamaraj then ordered his daughter-in-law and son to go to the earth in Godanhari attire and roam around the villages singing and showing the tattooed parts of the body to the people. They did as they were commanded and since then godna marks are considered to be a wealth of people that they can take with them even after death.[3]

1.2. Ancient practice of godna in Indian tribes:

A tattoo or godna is a form of body modification where a design is made by inserting ink, dyes and pigments, either indelible or temporary, into the dermis layer of the skin to change the pigment.[7] The art of making tattoos is tattooing. This art comprises permanent ornamentation of the body with tattoos made by Godanhari. Godanhari is the person either male or female who engraves godna on body. Godanhari used to carry a sample design in their bag and can be found in local market in particular market days. They are also roaming one village to another and make a call “come and get a beautiful Godna on your body”. Design samples comprises particular art of local places, cultural symbol which reflect the environment of the people, their flora and fauna they have to live with Varieties of myths and symbols associated with Hindu mythology and religion.[8] Body tattooing was very popular in female tribes, used to get godna mark three times in their life. Firstly at the age of 8-10 or before she attains puberty, secondly after puberty and third time when she got married and get godna mark at their husbands house. It is commonly found that girl should tattoo her body prior to marriage.[9] Tattooing has medicinal value and it is believed that this tattoo helps them to cure from some typical disease.[10] According to Elwin tattoos are form of sexual expression and a powerful sexual stimulant.[11].

Table1- Few cultural symbol, there meaning and local name

Sr.no	Symbol	Meaning	Local name
1.	Sun	Try to control nature	Suraj
2	Moon	Belief in nature	Chandrama
3	Dots	Serve from evils eye	Chatki-mataki
4	Om	Religious belief	Om
5.	Scorpion	Fertility and stimulating sexual desire	Bichu
6.	Peacock in pair	Beauty and prosperity	Mayur
7.	Trident	Symbol of lord shiva	Trishul
8.	Lotus	Symbol of goddess laxmi	Kamal
9	Flower pot	Fertility	Gamla
10.	Fish	Prosperity and good fortune	Machli

2. PROCESS OF GODNA:

The traditional procedure of tattooing is a bit painful as they used natural methods for creating tattoos by cutting designs into the skin using wooden needle and rubbing the resulting wound with ink, which is derived from mineral or geological sources to produce certain colors and hues.[12] Though it being painful procedure, they used to rub turmeric or fresh dung from calf to reduce inflammation and prevent skin form infection. Godna isn’t immediately visible after being tattooed. Blood oozes out from the particular body part after being pricked with needles and then it intumesces causing pain after applying turmeric paste, within a week, so the design Of godna start emerging onto the body part.[13] Girls are scream while tattooing. So Godanhari and other ladies sing a song to divert her attention. These songs are symbol of love, purity, affection and reflect the socio-cultural life as well as easing the severity of pain and divert attention.[14]



Figure 2. Godanhari engrave tattoo on female body.

Folk song (Awadhi language)

*Ban kay godanhari Kanha pahuchaye jahan rehti thi Radha,
 Gali gali ghumay nand kay lal, kehu gadwaai godanwa,
 Kanhaji sunkay, boli Radha, kholi kiwaad,
 Aawa godanhaari awwa hamray bhawanwa,
 Hum godwaibay godanwa.
 Bankay[8]*

3. CHANGE AND CONTINUITY:

Art changed over time but in the era of globalization acculturation is taking place and had some profound effect on art and tradition. Earlier a primitive form of gonda engrave by only tribal community which was the inseparable part of body while modern tattooing is permanent and temporary. In this modern era, person belongs from any cast and religion can get tattoo marks. Folk song which was sung by local people have been replace by modern music. Earlier specific castes were practicing godna work as their profession which was one of the sources of livelihood but now a day's tattooing become very much commercialized and any one can do this. Ancient tattoo technique was unhygienic and bit painful whereas modern cosmetic tattooing more hygienic practice. Wooden needle have been replaced by electronic machines with this tattoo isn't only the part of religion, caste and creed but also the trend mark of fashion which introduce new term to world apart from drawing symbol, name and any mantra on body, this technique used to make permanent make up to enhance their external feature and gaining popularity as cosmetic tattooing.



Figure 3. Continuity and change in tattooing.

4. COSMETIC TATTOOING

Cosmetic tattooing is magical approach in the 21 st century for decorative and reconstructive purpose as women can successfully employ cosmetic products to manipulate their appearance. Cosmetic tattooing or micropigmentation or permanent make up has evolved into becoming a popular trend among the public since the late 1970s. Main aim of this technique is to perform permanent makeup of the eye, lips and eyebrows.[15] Permanent makeup help to enhance effect

of lifting, making an area more of a focal point, minimizing or masking asymmetry, creating fullness, or minimizing an area facial features.[16] It is also favored by ladies who find difficulty applying cosmetics due to visual or physical impairment.[17] In contrast to the traditional tattoo technique, micropigmentation is done through injecting a pigment into the dermis using a handheld tattoo pen.[18] Pigments that are used in tattoo ink, such as all color and cosmetics additives, have to match the standards set by the Food and Drug Administration and other regulatory agency policies. Drug and Cosmetic Act of 1938 as “color additives” and intended for topical use.[19] The most common procedures done include applying permanent eyeliner, eyebrows, lip liner or a full lip pigment, cheek blush and beauty marks. Cosmetic tattoos are also used for therapeutic purposes to correct disfiguring skin diseases such as vitiligo, alopecia areata or some vascular malformation.[20]

5. BENEFITS OF COSMETIC TATTOOING:

The most obvious benefit of permanent makeup is that it can simply save time and money with makeup, reducing—or even eliminating everyday makeup routines.[21] Permanent makeup never smear or run so it is beneficial to athletes, personal trainers and professional swimmers who want to maintain a lasting attractive appearance while exercising, sweating and swimming. It is especially beneficial to people who can't wear cosmetics due to allergies and skin sensitivities. Also permanent makeup cited enormous benefits of confidence regarding their physical appearance.[22]

6. TECHNIQUE OF COSMETIC TATTOOING:

Technique includes eye lining techniques, or permanent color enhancing techniques of facial skin, lips and eyelids.

7. COSMETIC TATTOOS FOR EYEBROWS:

Eye brows are able to crown the face in the best possible manner. Eyebrows may be used to shorten, elongate, soften, or harden the look of the face. A subtle lift, shortening, elongation, lighten, darkening, or filling in may cause a major change to the face.[23] Permanent cosmetic eyebrows are also used to minimize asymmetry. The technical expertise work in a way that they are able to show the brows in a manner that no one would know that our brows are artificial. It is used to create the look of a full pair of eyebrows for people who have lost all of their facial hair. These are a boon for people that have no eyebrow growth, owing due to medical reasons.

8. COSMETIC TATTOOS FOR EYELINERS:

Permanent eyeliner is the most common procedure of cosmetic tattooing consisting of “a deposition of pigment along the eyelid cilia in a linear fashion performed to enhance the appearance of the lash line and impart depth of eyes as well.[24] The application of eyeliner may also be used to give the appearance of lifting the eye by creating an upward angle on the tale of the outer aspect of the eyeliner. Therefore the smudges and uneven lines of the eyes can be easily avoided in favor of sexy and attractive eyes.[25] It can be beneficial for people who can't wear regular makeup due to sensitivities and allergies, and for those who have vision issues or dexterity conditions such as arthritis and Parkinson's.[26]

9. COSMETIC TATTOO FOR LIP:

Cosmetic tattoos are used by the modern people to enhance their looks. Lips, being the focal point; are used to have impressive impact of words. Technique include procedures that makes the lips more beautiful, pouty, youthful and sensual. [27] Therefore in case if you have thick lips they could be made to appear thinner. The technical expertise of the artist is to redefine the shape of the lips to regenerate the existing lip line.[25] Lip liner may be used to give the lips more color, definition, or fullness, or to minimize the shape. The application of pink or red pigment into the lip with either a liner or full lip color gives the appearance of younger fuller lips and aids in minimizing asymmetry.[28]

10. CONCLUSION:

The modern era has witnessed widespread technological advancement and globalization leading to transmission of ideas, meanings and values around the world. With this technological advancement, ongoing phenomenon of cultural homogenization has a major impact on various cultural and traditional realms thereby diminishing their existence. With the same advancement in technology, godna the ancient form of body adornment losing its religious significance and become a part of cosmetic tattooing. Permanent makeup along with all the benefits is boon for the people as one can wake up with makeup and adore themselves for life time.

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