

LINGUOCULTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE NAMES OF UZBEK JEWELRY

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Abstract: This article examines traditional Uzbek women's jewelry from the perspectives of functional purpose, semantic meaning, and socio-cultural significance. The classification of ornaments according to body parts and their role in both ritual and everyday contexts are analyzed. Special attention is given to amulets as protective objects, the symbolic properties of precious stones, and their connection to folk beliefs. The study employs ethnographic, historical, and semiotic approaches.

Keywords : jewelry art, ornaments, amulet, traditional culture, semantics, ethnography, symbolism.

In modern linguistics, the study of lexical units based on various criteria is considered one of the actual issues. From a linguistic point of view, the vocabulary related to jewelry demonstrates how a people classify the world and what kind of conceptual system they possess. Therefore, studying these units within the framework of linguistics is of great scientific importance. In particular, chrematonyms — the names of material objects created by humans — constitute an important layer of language.

According to Natalya Podolskaya, chrematonyms are onomastic units denoting the names of material objects created by humans, and within the language system they perform not only a nominative but also an important cultural-semantic function. This category includes the names of weapons, musical instruments, jewelry, household items, accessories, and precious stones. In the rich cultural heritage of the Uzbek people, the art of jewelry occupies a special place, and the lexical units associated with this field reflect national values. Studying the names of jewelry items as chrematonyms helps reveal not only their nominative but also their semantic and cultural characteristics.

The Uzbek people are known not only for their linguistic ability but also for their rich culture. For centuries, jewelry has possessed aesthetically attractive and fascinating features, and it still remains a valuable source for studying the history of the people and carries national and cultural significance.

A number of studies have been conducted on Uzbek jewelry art. In these studies, jewelry items were analyzed from an ethnographic perspective, and their role in social life was highlighted. The names of jewelry items constitute an important part of the onomastic system. They reflect the cognitive classification process of human beings. The names of jewelry items in the Uzbek language can be functionally classified into the following groups:

Head and hair ornaments: tillaqosh, sersoq, hair decorations (kokil ornaments);

Ear ornaments: earrings, hoop earrings;

Nose ornaments: nose rings;

Neck ornaments: necklaces, amulets, chains;

Hand ornaments: rings, bracelets;

Belt ornaments: belts and hanging decorative ornaments.

This classification plays an important role in identifying the semantic system of chrematonyms. At the same time, it serves as a symbol of cultural values, including cultural heritage and national spirit. If we consider only the example of headwear, we can observe that it embodies several social functions, characteristics, family status indicators, as well as aesthetic and religious features. Uzbek women traditionally wore various types of headscarves. Depending

on age, social position, and marital status, they wrapped different scarves such as the doka ro‘mol (symbolizing modesty), shol ro‘mol (representing dignity, elegance, and maturity), and g‘ijim ro‘mol (associated with beauty and naturalness). The methods of wrapping these scarves also differed. For girls, the most convenient headwear was the do‘ppi (traditional skullcap), while jamalak ornaments were attached to the ends of their braids. Silver and gold coins were often used as decorative elements of the jamalak, which also reflected the wearer’s social status. Besides being decorative, it helped keep the hair neatly arranged. Since ancient times, there has been a belief among Uzbek people that “a woman’s soul is connected with her hair.” Therefore, grandmothers warned that hair should never be thrown away carelessly. Hair has long been regarded as a symbol of a woman’s dignity and inner essence. Furthermore, the jamalak in girls’ hair functioned as a national code symbolizing youth and beauty. Various amulets were also attached to the ends of the jamalak. Inside these amulets, people placed written prayers or protective beads believed to guard against evil spirits and misfortune. Traditional do‘ppi skullcaps also differed according to regional decorative styles. The skullcaps of Chust, Bukhara, Margilan, Samarkand, Boysun, and Shahrisabz are vivid examples of this diversity.

In ancient times, the jewelry worn by Uzbek women was classified according to its function and place of use: ornaments for the head, forehead, forehead-temple area, forehead-temple-neck area, temples, neck, hair, earrings, hand ornaments, and others. Complete sets of jewelry were mainly worn during weddings. Among chest ornaments, zebigardon, nozigardon, bo‘yintumor, and qo‘ltiq tumor were common, while among forehead and temple ornaments, silsila, bibishoh, mohitilla, and tavq were widely used. Brides traditionally wore tillaqosh and peshonaband ornaments. The word peshonaband, derived from Persian, literally means “bound forehead” or “tied head,” symbolizing a married woman. Jewelry ornaments functioned not only as decorations but also as markers of age and social status.

The tumor (amulet) represented a special category of jewelry. It was worn to protect the owner from the evil eye and negative influences. Bo‘yintumor, ko‘kraktumor, and qo‘ltiq tumor differed in size and appearance, yet shared the same purpose and function. These amulets were usually triangular, rectangular, or cylindrical cases containing folded papers inscribed with prayers. Women also used such amulets for practical purposes, placing medicines or fragrant substances inside them.

Jewelers were well aware that every precious stone possessed its own value and unique characteristics. Some stones were believed to open a person’s path and bring happiness and prosperity, others were thought to protect against the evil eye, while certain stones were even associated with the power to bring rain during times of drought.

Traditional Uzbek jewelry art is the product of centuries of historical development and reflects not only aesthetic taste, but also the social structure, religious beliefs, and worldview of society. Functionally, jewelry items were divided into several groups according to the specific parts of the body for which they were designed. This classification is important from anthropological and ethnographic perspectives, as it demonstrates the semantic relationship between the human body and ornamentation. For example, jewelry intended for the head and forehead, such as tillaqosh and peshonaband, symbolized a woman’s marital status. The Persian origin of the term peshonaband indicates cultural interaction and historical integration processes.

Jewelry worn on the chest and neck area, particularly zebigardon, nozigardon, and bo‘yintumor, served not only decorative but also protective functions. The prayers or sacred texts placed inside amulets reflected the belief that they could protect a person from the “evil eye” and negative energies. This phenomenon can be observed in many cultures and may be regarded as a universal cultural practice.

The geometric forms of amulets — triangular, rectangular, or cylindrical — also carried symbolic meanings. For instance, the triangular form was often interpreted as a symbol of sanctity and protection. Furthermore, the placement of medicinal herbs or fragrant substances inside these amulets expanded their practical function beyond purely religious purposes. Beliefs

connected with precious stones have been widely studied. The notion that each stone possesses its own energetic or symbolic power is closely related to folklore and mythological thinking. Some stones were believed to bring prosperity and abundance, while others were thought to protect against disasters and misfortunes. Thus, traditional Uzbek jewelry represents a multilayered system of meanings in which aesthetic, social, religious, and protective functions are intertwined within a complex cultural phenomenon.

In studying traditional Uzbek jewelry, not only its formal and functional aspects but also its production technology is of great importance. Jewelry items were mainly crafted from silver, gold, and various precious and semi-precious stones. The widespread use of silver can be explained by the popular belief that it possessed purifying and protective qualities. Decorative techniques such as embossing, casting, engraving, granulation, and filigree demonstrate highly developed craftsmanship traditions. Consequently, Uzbek jewelry possesses considerable scholarly value not only from a cultural perspective but also from the standpoint of art history and craftsmanship studies.

The social function of jewelry deserves special attention. Jewelry reflected a woman's age, marital status, and even her economic position. For instance, heavy and multi-element ornaments were considered symbols of wealth and high social status. At the same time, in certain regions, the jewelry worn by unmarried girls differed significantly from that of married women. This can be interpreted as a traditional manifestation of social differentiation within society.

In ritual contexts, jewelry occupied a particularly important place. During wedding ceremonies, adorning the bride with a complete set of jewelry symbolized her transition into a new social status. This process represented a symbolic expression of important stages in human life. Regional differences were also clearly reflected in jewelry art. For example, the schools of Bukhara, Khiva, Kokand, and Samarkand were distinguished by their unique forms, patterns, and decorative elements. These distinctions developed under the influence of historical trade routes, cultural exchange, and local traditions. From this perspective, Uzbek jewelry art can be regarded as part of a complex cultural system shaped by various historical and cultural influences. Furthermore, the ornaments used in jewelry — such as *islmiy*, *giri*, and geometric motifs — possessed deep semantic meanings. They often expressed ideas related to nature, the universe, and vital energy. This allows them to be analyzed from a symbolic and semiotic perspective.

In conclusion, traditional Uzbek jewelry constitutes a multilayered cultural and linguistic system. It combines aesthetic, social, religious, and symbolic functions within a unified cultural phenomenon. The names of jewelry items themselves function as important linguocultural units that reflect the historical memory and national worldview of the Uzbek people.

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