

TRADITIONAL JEWELLERY TECHNIQUES

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We know from history that mankind started making jewellery back in the Paleolithic times.

Depending on the form and purpose of use, jewellery can be divided into several groups:

1. Bead. These are the most widespread jewellery all over the world. They are divided into groups: Group 1 is a circle with a drilled middle. The beads of this group are made of shells and stones; Group 2 is fluted bead clusters made from bird, animal, and fluted shells; Group 3 beaded bunches with the upper part drilled; Group 4 is square, rhombic and amorphous beads [1, p.111].

2. Tumor. This is an amulet or talisman that warded off evil spirits and showed one's status in society. They were made of animal teeth and bones. A hole was made in the top or in the middle for a thread. Tumor was worn around the neck.

3. Ring. Few things have been found that resemble modern rings in form or function. At one of the sites of ancient people in Central Asia was found a piece of jewellery resembling a ring made of shell. But it is not known whether it was worn on the fingers.

4. Bracelet. They were made of clay, slate, serpentine or chlorite.

5. Clothing jewellery. These include buttons and other items that were attached to clothing or hats. Research shows that such items had no sacred meaning, and served mainly for decoration only and demonstrations of social status.

6. Labretka. This type of jewellery is radically different from others. It did not require threads or other fastenings. Labrettes were worn directly on the body (on the lip, ear or nose). They were worn on special occasions, such as marriage or hunting [1].

The greatest interest is in the jewellery business of Central Asia. Masters have preserved the secrets of their ancestors even today.

The embossing technique is the creation of volumetric patterns or designs on metal. The patterns were applied using a special hammer and die on a thin sheet of metal.

Filigree is the interweaving of gold or silver threads, sometimes with the use of beads. Unlike other countries, the masters of Central Asia learnt to get threads and beads no thicker than a hair from a single ingot.

Openwork carving is a technique in which the craftsman uses various chisels to create holes and depressions, resulting in a pattern that can be compared to lace.

Cloisonne is a technique of creating jewellery with precious stones or glass, which are fixed with wire or plates of noble metals. In ancient times, this technique was simpler: precious stones or other materials were placed in special recesses in gold.

Turquoise plays an important role in jewellery making in Central Asia. This material requires careful processing and is also difficult to maintain. Despite the importance of this material for jewellery making, it is not a gemstone. It is a phosphate mineral that is formed as a result of oxidation and decomposition of other metals. Natural turquoise has a porous structure and therefore this stone requires impregnation to increase strength and improve colour. Sometimes the stone has characteristic veins of quartz, hematite, limonite or clay.

An important feature of jewellery making in Central Asia is the thriftiness of valuable materials. Only the shell was made of gold or silver. And inside there was a special mastic that gave the jewellery weight and strength.

Studying techniques such as embossing, filigree, openwork carving and cloisonne can help in learning about history: what the techniques were, what materials were used, what tools were used and what purposes jewellery was used for [2].

References

1. Typology of stone age jewellery of Central Asia / U. Umarov // American journal of interdisciplinary research and development. – 2023. – p. 110–113.
2. Voices on Central Asia. Jewelry of Central Asia: Past and Present of the Art Tradition. – URL: <https://voicesoncentralasia.org/jewelry-of-central-asia-past-and-present-of-the-art-tradition/> (date of access: 16.03.2025).