

## SUMMARY

This dissertation argues that Mughals not only used jewellery for adoration but also used it for achieving their personal political motives by social display of their status and power in court ceremonies and royal exchange. The first chapter proposes that Mughal ornaments had symbolic language. To explain this, I have examined jewellery as an effective means of symbolic communication and firstly, studied its relation with the status, power, self-defence, rituals and cultural tradition of various medieval courts of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century and then studied the symbolic nature of Mughal jewellery particularly with reference to Mughal court. Mughals displayed their magnificence through jewellery. They wore jewellery for their self- defense and to ward off evils. They also used gems and jewels for medicinal purposes. They sent symbolic political messages by gifting jewellery ornaments to their courtier and foreign rulers. The second chapter highlights that the Mughals used jewelry to sustain or create power through gift-giving practices in Mughal court. The gifts presented to Mughal emperor and empresses during royal exchange and cultural interaction were meant for making friendly alliances and also to create and sustain power. To illustrate this, I have studied the bilateral relationship of Mughals with its two powerful neighbouring states, safavids dynasty and Adil Shahi dynasty. There was a patron – client relationship between Mughals and their subjects. Mughals bestowed gifts on their subjects in order to obtain the loyal service of their subjects and in return courtiers also presented gifts to emperor in order to grab favor from emperor or escape from punishment. The gift-giving practices of Mughals were embedded in ranking system known as mansabdari system. The third chapter examines that royal ladies of Mughal harem used expensive gems and jewellery to intercede in court politics. The Mughal ladies gifted the expensive ornaments to Mughal emperors on court ceremonies and festivals to achieve their personal political gains. The foreign Ambassadors also gifted expensive jewellery to Mughal empress, princesses for getting their favour because these Mughal ladies had great power influence on Mughal court decisions. Sometimes these Mughal ladies acted as bridge to build friendly relations with other courts through diplomatic exchange of precious gems and jewels. To explain this, I have discussed in this chapter, the role of three powerful Mughal ladies Nur Jahan, Jahan Ara and Roshan Ara in Mughal court politics. The fourth chapter explicates *Mughals used many representational motifs i.e. plant and animal motifs in their jewellery in order to set their dynasty identity and show their love for nature. Through these representational motif they also showed their power and strength. The constant use of rubies, emeralds, diamonds and sapphires in Mughal jewellery made these precious gem stones for identification Marker for Mughal dynasty. To explain this, I have discussed that Mughals patronized the jewellery industry and set up Royal Karkhanas and introduced new techniques like meenakari or enameling and Kundan work in jewellery making industry. They hired skilful artisans in their Royal Karkhanas and maintained record of every gem and jewel of royal treasury and placed imperial seal on them.*