

# Bangle sellers

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The poem " Bangle Sellers" was first published in the year 1912 by Sarojini Naidu in her collection of poems called " The Bird of Time. " A group of bangle sellers is on its way to the temple fair to sell their bangles. One of them is the narrator of this poem. They are an impoverished and marginalized group of people whose income from the sales of their bangles is at the best of times uncertain and very meagre. However the bangles they sell are of religious and symbolic importance: no Indian widow is permitted to wear bangles.

Hence the wearing of bangles is considered to be very auspicious and of symbolic value bordering on the religious. What is of great significance in the poem is that the bangle seller does not say a word about his/her poverty, nor does he/she say anything about the profit that he/she intends to make by selling his/her bangles at the temple fair where he/she will certainly do roaring sales. On the contrary he/she only concentrates on the human element of the product he/she is going to sell at the temple fair: Who will buy these delicate, bright Rainbow-tinted circles of light?

Lustrous tokens of radiant lives, For happy daughters and happy wives.

Sarojini Naidu has foregrounded the auspiciousness and the symbolic value of the custom of wearing bangles by repeating " happy. " The 'happy' daughters look forward to their marital bliss while the 'happy' wives are content and glory in the fulfillment which is a result of their marital status. Each of the next three stanzas deal with the three stages in the life of of an average Indian woman - a virgin maiden, an expectant bride and finally a mature matriarch. The bangles are of many colors. However, each stage in an Indian woman's life s described lyrically and appropriately according to

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the colour of the bangle suitable to that stage: for the maiden virgin who is always dreaming of a happily married life it is a misty silver and blue, for the expectant and passionate bride it is a golden yellow, and for the mature matriarch it is a " purple and gold flecked grey. " Similarly Sarojini Naidu very poetically describes the longings of an Indian woman according to each stage of her life: the virgin maiden is carrying in her heart countless dreams of her future married life and she is compared to a " bud that dreams. The young bride is described as brimming over with passionate desire although she is nervous about what the future holds for her as she leaves her parental home - " bridal laughter and bridal tear. " Finally, she describes the proud and faithful matriarch who has attained fulfillment by successfully rearing her sons - " serves her house in fruitful pride -" and hence is permitted to take her rightful place by the side of her husband in all the domestic religious rituals.