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Session: Rethinking Temples: Agamshastra, Shilpshastra and everyday Indian experiences.

Spiritual Healing Clothes: a Spring Season Shringar of Srinath ji at Nathadwara, Udaipur

In ancient India the temples were not only the place of prayer or worship, they were created as powerful spaces where an individual could imbibe the enshrined energies. Temples were the centres for spiritual healing and were based on the fundamental science. In India its a living heritage practice of offering all the belongings, whether food, clothes or music as obeisance and accepting everything as Prasad (sacrament) since ancient time. They were the centres of community gatherings as well. The Srinath ji ki Haveli, Nathadwara, Rajasthan a 17th century temple is also following all these aspects since its inception. It is also a centre where various arts forms have flourished which was associated to the main deity Srinathji. At Nathadwara from 17th century onwards on everyday basis priest pay their obeisance as per season, festival and rituals by offering shringar (textiles and ornaments used), bhog (food offered) and raag (musical instruments). The 'Shringar' of Srinath ji, is undertaken 365 days as per the season, ritual and festival.

This presentation will focus on 'Shringar' of Srinath ji in the spring season when spiritual healing clothes are offered which were described in two treatises Gandhasāra of Gangādhara and Gandhdavāda (anonymous) composed between (AD 1200- 1600) and in the Sashruta Samhita (AD 1100-1300) an ancient Sanskrit text on medicine and surgery. The spiritual healing clothes have unique spiritual vibrations and it depends on sāttvik factors. The community was also using these spiritual healing clothes as Prasad. Archival and painting records of the Royals of Mewar reveal that they were also using these spiritual healing clothes and were getting it made for their courtiers as well. The main concept of discussion will be based on the technology they were using for making these spiritual healing clothes and their historical scientific significance.