

## **Godna Tradition of Awadh-From Mythology to Modernity**

**NEETU SINGH**

**Vidyant Hindu P.G. College**

**LUCKNOW UNIVERISTY**

**Bahukhandi Mantri Awas**

**Dalibagh, Lucknow, INDIA**

Email Address: [somvanshineetu@gmail.com](mailto:somvanshineetu@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** Godna (body tattooing) is believed to be the adaptation of a primitive form of art in India. The art of Godna is closely related to religion and is considered to be a rite de passage in Non-Dwij castes of Awadhi region. This art comprises permanent ornamentation of the body with tattoos made by Godarins or Maharins. The beliefs say that these are the only ornamentations which remain with them after their death and tattooed god, symbol or name is remain with them as supernatural aid in the time of crisis even after their death. This is popular among women though some of the men in Awadh also have this art on their bodies. This art may provide an insight into a peoples world view. According to the myth and history, Godna is an age old tradition. Female figurines found in Bharahut dated 200 BCE had Godna in their hand, leg and face. The record of human history shows that Godna have served in various functions as a rite of passage, mark of status and rank, symbols of religious and spiritual devotion, decorations for bravery etc. In modern times body tattooing has become a symbol of fashion and religious significance is losing its meaning. This paper would analyse the history of Godna in India, its process, technique, motifs, symbolism, division of labour, incentives of Godarin, palliation and relationship with modern fashion tattoos.