

A STUDY OF THE EVIL EYE PHENOMENON AND HOW IT IS TRANSLATED INTO MODERN FASHION, TEXTILES, AND ACCESSORIES

SANA MAHMUOD ABBASI¹

College of Arts & Design, Beirut Arab University, Lebanon

ABSTRACT

The Evil eye is a curse accepted to be thrown by a malignant glare, generally given to a person when they are unaware. Many societies trust that getting the Evil eye will bring about adversity or damage. Charms are made to secure against the Evil eye are additionally regularly called "Evil Eyes". The thought communicated by the term causes a wide range of societies to seek after defensive measures against it. The idea and its criticalness change generally among various societies, essentially in West Asia. The idea appears several times in translations of the Old Testament. It was a generally an expanded conviction among numerous Mediterranean and Asian tribes and other societies. Charms and improvements with eye-like images known as Nazars, which are utilized to repulse the hostile stare, are a typical sight crosswise over Greece, Egypt, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, and Morocco. The evil eye charms in the Levant, Afghanistan, Southern Spain, and Mexico, have become a popular choice of gift among travelers. In Islam the Evil eye is mentioned in the Holly Quran, and Muslims believe highly in the power of the Evil eye and its bad affect on a person. The "Evil Eye" is referred to in Arabic as 'ayn al-ḥasūd (eye of the jealous). This mythology was popular in ancient times in the East, but it has become very popular lately, and became a very important phenomenon even in the West. This study will look into the origin of the Evil Eye belief, and the meaning behind it in various cultures, and how this ancient phenomenon is translated into modern Fashion, Textiles, and Accessories.

KEYWORDS: Evil, Eye, Nature, Charm, Hamsa, Hand of Fatima, Protection, Talisman, Bad Eye, Death Glance, Ayn Al-Hasūd, Nazars, Eye of the Jealous, Ellie Saab.

The evil eye was first recorded by the Mesopotamian about 5,000 years ago in cuneiform on clay tablets. The Evil Eye may actually have originated as early as the Upper Paleolithic age. This image is found in Jewish, Christian and Muslim cultures as well as Buddhist and Hindu societies. The Evil Eye is a curse believed to be cast by a malevolent glare, which is usually directed towards a person who is unaware. Many cultures believe that receiving the evil eye will cause one misfortune, bad luck or injury. Talismans created to protect against the evil eye are also frequently called "Evil Eyes". It is also believed that the Evil Eye dates back almost 3000 years to Ancient Greece and Rome. It was considered one of the strongest symbolic images in the world. The wearing of the Evil Eye amulet is believed to provide protection to the wearer from the Evil Eye forces. The earliest known evidence for belief in the evil eye goes back to ancient Greece and Rome. There, it was believed that the evil eye was the largest threat to anyone who had been praised too much, or received admiration beyond what they truly deserved. The praised person would become so swollen with pride that he or she would bring about his or her own doom via the evil eye, which was believed to be able to cause physical and mental illness. In fact, any disease which did not have an immediate, obvious cause was thought to be caused by the evil eye. It was thought that the gods and goddesses were punishing

those who had become too proud of their achievements, and destroyed them with the power of the evil eye to restore them to the level of mere mortals.

The Evil Eye is popular in many cultures and was mentioned in many religions, and this belief has become more and more popular lately specially among the young generation, as we started to see many Fashion, Textiles, and accessories are all about the Evil Eye, whether they are printed on the Fabrics, or translated into a piece of jewelry and accessories. This study will look in depth into this phenomenon of the Evil Eye, its origin, history, meaning, and how Fashion Designers have taken this ancient concept and made it high fashion and a must-to-wear item.

HISTORY AND MEANING OF THE EVIL EYE

The image and superstition of the evil eye is one of the most grounded typical images on the planet. However, regardless of the distinctions in the way of life which hold the Evil Eye myth, it holds to a great extent a similar importance regardless of where the story is told. In its most fundamental shape, the hostile stare is considered as a look given to cause damage, enduring, or some type of misfortune on those that it is provided reason to feel ambiguous about. It is a look which plainly expresses that one plans for something awful to happen to the protest of

¹Corresponding author

one's concentration, either out of desire or immaculate noxiousness. The superstition of the Evil eye holds that the vindictive look is sufficiently effective to realize genuine debacle for the terrible individual that is the recipient of the glare. The belief in the evil eye is widespread on every continent. The Middle East, Asia, Europe, and Central America all fear the evil eye. In Shahih Muslim Book 26, the prophet Muhammad warns about the dangers of the evil eye and says that one must take a bath in order to counteract the effects of the evil eye's power. Much as in Classic Greece and Ancient Rome, Islamic culture holds that excessive praise will bring about the ill effects of the Evil Eye. Therefore, instead of praising an adorable child, one is supposed to say that "God has willed" the child's good lucks, or risk endangering the youth. Ashkenazi Jews also believe that excessive praise causes a vulnerability to the evil eye, and will repeat a Yiddish phrase, "Keyn aynhoreh!" meaning "no evil eye" in order to protect against it.

HISTORY OF THE EVIL EYE IN HINDUISM

The evil eye has a very powerful superstition in India. Hinduism believes that the eye is the most powerful point at which the body can give off energy. Therefore, a strong fear of an "evil" look from the eye is something to fear, as Hinduism believes that the evil eye holds enormous powers. The Hindus fear that even one looks with admiration, this can bring about ill luck. For example: The supply of milk from cows can dry up, or the fruitful tree can lose its fruit, and die. The Hindus also believe that jealousy is the ultimate power of the evil eye, whether it is in the form of a malicious or admirable look. Interestingly enough, the Hindus strongly believe that one is most vulnerable to the threat of the evil eye during times of change in life, such as during childbirth, puberty, and marriage. Hindus believe that even animals such as the snake are capable of giving one the evil eye. They also believe that, even though men are capable of casting the evil eye, women are the most common sources of the glance. For this reason, in South India women will paint their eyelids black to protect themselves from the evil eye, and to prevent themselves from eyeing another with the look.

THE EVIL EYE BELIEF IN EUROPE

In Europe, the myth of the evil eye also originated with the idea that envious or malicious looks had the power to bring about bad luck. The largest source of the evil eye was believed to be coming from the

witches. Furthermore, those with blue eyes were seen as powerful possessors of the evil eye look. In Italy, the unibrow was another sign that one would cast an evil eye. The fear of the evil eye did not carry over to America, except in the form of a metaphor. While the superstition is not intense enough to take precaution, the evil eye is seen as impolite, and a warning that the source of the evil eye has bad intentions.

SYMPTOMS OF THE EVIL EYE

The evil eye is a human look believed to cause harm to someone or something else. The supernatural harm may come in the form of anything from a minor misfortune to disease, injury or even death. Folklorist Alan Dundes, in his edited volume "The Evil Eye: A Casebook," notes that "the victim's good fortune, good health, or good looks — or unguarded comments about them — invite or provoke an attack by someone with the evil eye. If the object attacked is animate, it may fall ill. Symptoms of illness caused by the evil eye include loss of appetite, excessive yawning, hiccups, vomiting, and fever. If the object attacked is a cow, its milk may dry up; if a plant or fruit tree, it may suddenly wither and die." The Evil Eye can even affect objects and buildings. For example: The evil eye cast upon a vehicle may cause it to break down irreparably, while a house so cursed may soon develop a leaky roof or an insect infestation. Just about anything that goes wrong (for any reason, or no reason at all) may be blamed on the power of the evil eye. Eyes, it is said, are the gateway to a person's soul. Shifting eyes are said to subtly betray liars, while a steady gaze may be endearing or menacing depending on the circumstances. Eyes can convey a wide range of emotions, including love, hate, disgust, boredom, scorn, surprise, and envy. In fact it is this last emotion — jealousy — that underlies the evil eye's cultural association with magic.

EVIL EYE PROTECTION AND CURES

The best way to deal with the evil eye is to avoid it in the first place. The methods vary by different cultures, geographic regions, and personal preferences. Amulets can be worn to reflect the evil eye, often using the color blue (symbolizing heaven or godliness) and an eye symbol. Charms, potions, and spells can also be prepared. Garlic can be used to push the evil eye away, and some believe that just saying the word "Garlic" offers protection. Once a person has been afflicted with the evil eye, there are a variety of methods to have it removed.

Often those who believe they have been harmed by the evil eye will seek out witch doctors, psychics, or other spiritual healers to remove the bad curse. Even though the evil eye belief is widespread, it is not universal. A 1976 cross-cultural survey by folklorist John Roberts found that 36 percent of cultures believed in the evil eye. In one 1965 study, not only did 55 percent of expectant Lebanese mothers believe in the evil eye cast generally by envious women, but also that it could have serious effects ranging from an inability of the mother to breast-feed, to the illness, blindness, or even death of their infant. It is tempting to view the evil eye as an ancient, discredited belief that plays no role in our 21st-century world. Instead, as folklorist Dundes notes, we "should keep in mind that the evil eye is not some old-fashioned superstitious belief of interest solely to antiquarians. The evil eye continues to be a powerful factor affecting the behavior of countless millions of people throughout the world." Though belief in the evil eye can be a harmless superstition, it can also be dangerous in some circumstances. Any time one person believes that another has harmed them — whether naturally or supernaturally, intentionally or accidentally — there is the potential for deadly retribution. Like other accused witches and sorcerers over the centuries, many people have been attacked, beaten, and killed for casting an evil eye.

MEANING OF THE EVIL EYE IN MOST LANGUAGES

It is known in most languages : In English as evil eye, evil look - in French Mauvais Oeil - in German böse Blick - in Arabic ayin hasad (eye of envy) - in Armenian pasternak - Yiddish aynore or ahore from Hebrew ayin harac - Hungarian szemmel verés (beating with eyes) - Polish oko proroka (the eye of the prophet) - Swedish onda ögat - Sicilian jettatura (casting) . Brazilian Portuguese has olho gordo (fat eye) or quebranto (breaker) - in Spanish mal de ojo (the eye's curse or ojo turco - ojito turco) - in Irish droch-shuil - in Greek matiasma or mati someone refers to the act of cursing someone with the evil eye.

THREE TYPES OF EVIL EYES

It's believed that there are three types of evil eyes. They are:

1. The unconscious evil eyes. These harm people and things without intending to.

2. The one that intends to harm where the person looks with jealousy and envy
3. The unseen, hidden evil which is considered the most dangerous one

MEANING OF HAMSA OR THE HAND OF FATIMA WITH EVIL EYE SYMBOL

A blue eye can also be found on some forms of the Hamsa hand jewelry: A hand-shaped amulet against the evil eye found in the Middle East. The word Hamsa, also spelled khamsa and hamesh, means five referring to the fingers of the hand. In Jewish culture, the Hamsa is called the Hand of Miriam; in Muslim culture, the Hand of Fatima. The Fatima amulet is called a Khamsa in Muslim world, from the Arabic word for five, and is seen as protection against the evil eye. The amulet consists of five spread fingers, often with an eye on the hand. It can be found today throughout the Middle East in women's jewelry, as hamsa bracelet (Figure 3), hamsa necklace, hand of Fatima pendant, flat-weaving (Figure 4), embroidery, door-knockers, automobile ornamentation, and much more. According to the Native American version, a person who stares fixedly at a pregnant woman or a child or who is too admiring or physically affectionate with children may produce a malicious effect on their lives, whether or not by intent. This belief may have arisen because people from cultures not used to the evil eye, such as Northern Europe, are likely to transgress local customs against staring or praising the beauty of children. Thus, in Greece and Turkey amulets against the evil eye take the form of blue eyes. The Turkish talisman Known as Nazar is most frequently seen in Turkey, found in or on houses and vehicles or worn as beads. A blue or green eye can also be found on some forms of the hamsa hand, an apostrophic hand-shaped talisman against the evil eye found in West Asia. The word hamsa, also spelled khamsa and hamesh, means "five" referring to the fingers of the hand. In Jewish culture, the hamsa is called the Hand of Miriam; in some Muslim cultures, the Hand of Fatima. Though condemned as superstition by doctrinaire Muslims, it is almost exclusively among Muslims in the Near East and Mediterranean that the belief in envious looks containing destructive power or the talismanic power of a Nazar to defend against them.

DIAGNOSIS OF THE EVIL EYE

Sometime the evil eye is diagnosed from the circumstances. For example: The child was well in the

morning, but right after he or she was praised or gazed upon, the child began sweating and vomiting. It is believed that the cause is the Evil Eye. But most often the diagnosis and cure can involve a complex series of rituals, which vary by each different culture. Water, oil, and melted wax, and other liquids, may play a part in curing the symptoms of the Evil Eye. Sometimes the ritual may center on an eye-shaped and liquid-filled natural objects. Using eggs to cure the Evil Eye is a common tradition. Diagnosis may vary from one culture to another. For example: In Eastern Europe, the evil eye is diagnosed by dropping charcoal, coal, or burnt match heads into a pan of water. If the coals float, then it is assumed that the child has been given the evil eye. In the Ukraine, melted wax may be dripped into holy water to diagnose spiritual diseases. If it splatters or sticks to the side of the bowl, then it is believed that the patient is suffering from the evil eye. Secret prayers known only to women are recited and the holy water is used to bathe the victim. The wax is reheated and this time when it is poured into the water, it sinks to the bottom in a solid lump, indicating that a cure has taken place. In Greece, Mexico, and other places, holy water is given to the child to drink and/or drawn on the child in the form of a cross. If the remorseful perpetrator can be made to spit into the water before the child drinks it, so much the better. In order to avoid direct accusations of having caused such a calamity, a family member may stand outside the church when the supposed perpetrator attends and ask all who pass by to spit into a cup of holy water, thus embarrassing no one. In Italy, diagnosis is made by dripping olive oil into a basin of water, a drop at a time, while reciting secret prayers, passed only among females in a family. If the drops run together in the form of an eye, then it is confirmed that the evil eye is the cause of the illness. The cure consists of reciting prayers while dripping oil into the basin of water again and again, sometimes for hours, until a perfect array of oil forms that does not resemble an eye. Furthermore, In Mexico, both diagnosis and cure are often accomplished using a whole uncooked hen's eggs. An egg is rolled across the child's body or placed beneath the bed and then cracked open. If it is "hard" or "looks like an eye" then the evil eye is confirmed to have caused the child's illness.

EVIL EYE INTERPRETATIONS IN FASHION, TEXTILES, AND ACCESSORIES

The Evil Eye blue bead reflects the evil intent back to the onlooker. It somewhat resembles an eye and it

is believed that the typical blue color is a factor in protecting to the user. The Nazar Boncuk charm (or Evil Eye Bead) is an "eye", often set on a blue background. It stares back at the world to ward off evil eye and keep you safe from harm (Figure 1). In the Jewish faith, the color red is often associated with luck and good fortune, so red is also a popular color of the evil eye stone. In India, a mirror made with the Shisha embroidery technique is placed on the newborn baby's clothes, so when the envious eye hits the baby, the mirror reflects it back and protects the infant. Among the Kalbeliya Gypsies of India, mirroring back the evil eye takes the literal form of fabulously ornate multi-colored mirror charms, which are crocheted, braided, and wrapped with beads, buttons, and tassels. The practice of crocheting hundreds of tiny mirrors into fancy cloth, especially wedding garment cloth, is also widespread in parts of India.

The Middle East is home to the Hamsa hand or Hamesh hand charm, (also known as the hand of Fatima among Arabs and the Hand of Miriam among Jews). This hand-shaped charm may be cast in metal and worn as jewelry, but larger ones, inscribed with prayers are often made of blue-glazed ceramics and hung on a wall (Figure 2). In Sicily a lemon (a liquid-filled, eye-shaped fruit) may be pierced with nine nails and placed above doorway to prevent a bad luck from entering. Red is another color employed against the eye, mostly in regions where blue is not used: Red cords around the neck or wrist protect babies in Eastern Europe and also in India. Likewise, it is an old Jewish custom to place a red thread on a baby to protect it from ayin ha'ra. In Mexico a large brown Legume seed that resembles an eye, called: Ojo de Venado (Deer's Eye), is usually hung from a red cord and outfitted with a fluffy red tassel and a holy print of a saint. It can be worn on the person, hung over the baby's crib, or dangled from the rear-view mirror of a car to ward off the evil eye. In Italy, when a man's potency is threatened by the evil eye, gold or silver hand charms making the Mano Fico (Fig Hand) gesture, which are used to repel the evil. These amulets are usually carved of blood red coral, and sometimes found in silver or gold. They are worn as necklaces, and pocket pieces by men and boys. Wearing the Evil Eye charm has become very popular in the west. Some famous movie stars such as Jennifer Aniston has appeared in public wearing a necklace with the Eye charm on October, 7, 2016. The Designer Kenzo has teamed with the department store H&M and has sent his models on the runway all wearing the eye earrings (Figure 3).

Some Textile companies who create custom-made patterns have created the Eye pattern calling it: The Evil Eye good luck pattern such as the British company Spoonflower. The pattern can be transformed into fabric, wallpaper, or gift wrap paper (Figure 4). Mr. Ellie Saab, the International Lebanese designer has created dresses that were embroidered with blue stones that had the evil eye embroidery on them, in his latest collection for Spring/Summer 2017. This is to emphasize that the methodology of the evil eye is a rooted methodology in the Eastern culture (Figure 7). His Collection "The Birth of Light", pays tribute to the 1940-1960 post-war Egyptian period, also recognized as "an era that still sparkles in our memories".



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

CONCLUSION

The evil eye is the name for a sickness transmitted usually without intention by someone who is

envious, jealous, or covetous. It is also called the invidious eye and the envious eye. In Hebrew it is ayin ha'ra (the evil eye), which in Yiddish is variously spelled ayin horoh, ayin hora, or ayen hara. In mainland Italian it is mal occhio (the bad eye), in Spanish mal ojo or el ojo (the bad eye or just the eye). In Sicily it is jettatore (the projection from the eye) in Farsi it is bla band (the eye of evil), and in Arabic it is the eye of hasad (The envious eye). The evil eye belief is that a person can harm you, your children, your livestock, or your fruit trees, by looking at them with envy and praising them. The word "evil" is unfortunate in this context because it implies that someone has "cursed" the victim, but such is not the case. A better understanding of the term "Evil Eye" is gained if you know that the old British and Scottish word for it is "overlooking," which implies merely that the gaze has remained too long upon the coveted object, person, or animal. In other words, the effect of the evil eye is misfortunate, but the person who harbors jealousy and gives the evil eye is not necessarily an evil person. The evil eye is essentially a specific type of magical curse, and has its roots in magical thinking and superstition. In Europe it is a common belief that the ones with blue eyes are the ones who can give the evil eye more than ones with dark eyes. Europeans also believe that it is the work of the witches. Hindus believe that the evil eye holds enormous powers, and that the evil eye is more effective during life changes from infancy, to puberty, to marriage. Hindus place mirrors embroidered into their clothes to reflect the bad eyes, while other cultures such as Turkish, Lebanese, and Moroccans, wear jewelry and accessories with the blue color stone to reflect the evil eyes. In the Jewish faith, the color red is often associated with luck and good fortune, so red is also a popular color of the evil eye stone. There are many ways to diagnose the evil eye depending on the culture, such as rolling an egg over the child's body to check if he or she got the evil eye. When the egg is cracked open and looks like an eye, then the evil eye is confirmed to have caused the child's illness. However, the Evil Eye ancient methodology has continued to get stronger, and today we find that Fashion and Textile designers have incorporated this phenomenon into modern fashion and accessories that are almost a must to wear and have created many styles, and products that people wear them or have them in the home, car, and work place, believing that this blue or red stone with an eye image will truly bring good luck and reflects the evil eye away from the wearer. Famous movie stars such as Jennifer Aniston wore an Evil Eye necklace proving that

this Eastern phenomenon has spread to the West and fashion leaders like her are setting the trend and everyone follows. The Designer Kenzo has created a collection for H&M and dressed all his models with the Evil eye earrings. Some Textile companies have created a custom pattern with the Evil Eye pattern calling it the Evil Eye good luck pattern. The Evil Eye has become a stylish symbol and fashion and jewelry designers have created various styles and shapes and wearing the Evil Eye charm, bracelet, or a necklace has become so popular, as it became almost a must to wear. The craze has spread even in the nail polish, bed covers, wall paper, gift wrap, and Textiles. Nail design has also followed the evil eye fashion (Figure 5). The Evil Eye phenomenon, which has originated in the Eastern Greek and Roman methodologies, has spread out to the West to become a leading Fashion concept even used by high Fashion Designers, and worn by Fashion leaders and movie stars in Hollywood. Wal-Mart however, has many styles of the Evil Eye charms and bracelets selling for as low as \$6.99 each. The Evil Eye charms, bracelets, necklaces, and key chains are sold on Amazon as low as \$5.99 each. Chanel house has created the Evil Eye jewelry with the Coco Chanel logo in the center of the eye to reflect the Evil Eye (Figure 6), and Mr. Ellie Saab the International Lebanese Designer has embroidered the evil eyes in blue stones on his latest couture dresses' collection " for Spring/Summer 2017 (Figure 7) "The Birth of Light", which pays tribute to the 1940-1960 post-war Egyptian period, also recognized as "an era that still sparkles in our memories". It seems like the Evil Eye phenomenon that originated about 5000 years ago, will stay with us for a long time as it became part of our daily life and has been translated into Fashion, accessories, Textiles, and fun products in our daily life.

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