

Costume
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Such values are also revealed through an examination of tribal costume, and all bodily adornments - hair styles, tattoo marks, the mode in which the body is both revealed and hidden and therefore given social, personal and symbolic significance.

It is not surprising, that amongst this mobile people, the accept should be on/ rhythm, continuity, living metaphors expressive this fluid culture. Representational forms are almost non existent, with the possible exception of the Lion which is used as, for example the gravestone of heroes. The style is always abstract expressing the principles of harmony, balance, and constant mobility, continuity.

The costume of the tribesmen and women reveals this same balanced structure. Men wear costumes, traditionally only in black and white. The women wear bright colours, with the exception of widows, and older post menopausal women, beyond the time of physical creativity. They too wear black.

In the colour spectrum all colours come from white and disappear into black. Once again this takes on a gender division. With the colours- female- between white and black - male. The male world enclosing the female world, the structure that is now readily apparent in so many features of Bakhtiari life, from the structure of their camp groups, to their poems.

The male costume consists of a Black circular hat made of felt. High status Khans can wear white hats, low status shepherds were smaller brown felt hats. In the past the white hats were also higher, indicative of status., while the brown were the shallowest.

Traditionally a white shirt was worn, with a high round neck, opening on the right side. -"Pirhan". Wide black cotton trousers called "Shalwar", very baggy and as much as two foot or more at the ankle. The ankles were bound with webbing for support - papitsch, wound round and round the ankles. White woven cotton shoes - giveh were the traditional footwear. Around the waist a white cummerbund - shall-was wound. This shall was at least eight to ten feet long, and provided support for the back. It was used for many purposes, such as a rope etc. The shall was knotted - giving a woven appearance, carefully over the front, covering the naval.

Over this was worn the distinctive Chugha, woven of lambs wool, and coloured black and white. The designs woven on the chugha are significant. They are all variants on the sema theme. A ziggurat or pilgrimage centre, holy city etc. An inverted pyramid structure in two dimensions.

As can be seen from the photographs, there are many different designs, all exhibiting the same symmetry. The basic elements are that of a squared graphic representation of an spiral, starting at the apex on the small of the back, ascending and expanding to the shoulders, then descending and contracting on the front of the garment as far as the waist. Only the upper part of the chugha, covering the upperhalf of the body carries the design. Under the armpits are two tassels - similar to the sticks or wands placed in the armpits of the dead when buried.

to be dead when in these sticks when they are raised up to be judged

The Bakhtiari then literally carry this severely abstract design of expansion and contraction, ascending and descending on their back. It is impossible to escape the implications of this design. They wear a costume, alternately black on the head, white on upper body, black on lower body, white on the feet, bound at the waist with a white cummerbund with protective stylistic knots covering the navel, again symbolic of the centre of the body and by extension the centre of the self. and the world. Note that Mecca, the ritual centre of Islam, towards which daily prayers are oriented, the dead are layed facing Mecca - is called the Navel of the world.

Taking the navel as the centre and radiating outward to the surface, the clothes are coloured towards the head, white, then black and in the opposite direction to the feet, black then white. The top and bottom of the body, divided at the waist are mirror images of each other - the inverse of each other. The outer covering as it were is the chucha, striped below the waist in black and white, and designed above the waist with the enclosing, encompassing expanding and contracting form of the two dimensional squared spiral. $\otimes - \times$. This crossed symmetry has already been seen in the dance, where the six dimensions : Right - Left: Up-Down, Inside-Outside were seen to be moved in balanced harmony. In this instance upper left=lower right and upper right arm = lower left foot; U.L. inside= L.R. outside etc.

The logically structured costume encased the inner body, presenting to the outside a controlled rigorously symmetrised aspect enclosing and constraining the movement of the physical body.

Female costume

The women's costume exhibits a very wide range of colours, some shot through with gold or silver threads. The costume consists of many skirts- ideally seven layers hanging from the hip bones, below the navel. Over this a dress is worn split to mid chest in the middle, allowing for wasy breast feeding. The over grament comes to knee length and is split at the sides to the hips, thus forming a front and back flap. Ovef this is ovten worn a waistcoat, sleeveless. It is a very colour full atire.

On the hat of all women from about seven years upwards, is put a cap tied under the chin by two straps. This cap covers the back part of the head only, from the middle of the head. On this cap are embroidered sequins in a verietiy of stylised designs - trees, interlockking squares cross hatching with sequins in the centre of each square. The are mostly variants on a spiral theme. These designes form a band at the front of the cap (Photo or drawings)

To the back of the cap is pinned a long veil reaching to the back of the knees in brightly coloured chiffon or some such material. A chain of jewelry also hangs from the cap down the back.


Hair

The hair styles of the women are identical. The hair is parted into four sections from the crown of the head. The two forward portions uncovered vy the cap, are parted at the centre, rolled into wringlets and brought round under the chin where they are secured by the ties strings of the cap. The hair thus entierly circles the face, which is never veiled except during wtheimarrriage ceremny when the bride is entirley covered with a white veil. The back two portions of the hair are braided and

hidden under the cap and veil at the back. The veil is slung over either the right or the left shoulders. There appears to be no set pattern as right or left shoulders. The exposed parts of the female body are decorated in a number of ways either to attract, enhance the appearance, or to protect against baleful influences such as the evil eye. This is done by tattooing, dots for example on the chin, cheekbones, sides of the mouth or on the lower lip itself. These tattoos on or close to the mouth are for protective purposes. The mouth being one of the entrances to the inner body and therefore requiring protection and control.

Tattoo

A mark considered of some beauty is to tattoo the eyebrows, right across the bridge of the nose, thus forming a continuous undulating line outlining and the eye, the sensory organ from which we look at the world. The eye is of great significance for the Bakhtiari as a source of danger as well as of beauty. Belief in the evil eye, the glance of an envious or covetous person is feared and many protective devices used to deflect its dangerous powers. The eye is double edged. The eyes reveal the soul the inner being, and can also project harm. Defects of the eye, such as squints are thought to be inherently dangerous.

Wrists, the backs of the hands, ankles and the lower limbs are also often tattooed. The wrists may be encircled with a line -  a protective design. Stylised Allahs are also tattooed. Inverted swastikas, the sign of peace are also common. Circles of dots.

The structure of these tatoos are that of enclosing- a sort of grasping to control a potential intrusion of psychin harmful forces. This recurrent them of enclosure is yet again seen in the many talismans sown on to the garments, particularly of the young. Protective amulets. They each replicate this dominating structring principle of a protected and enclosed inside.

Talismans

Miniature Korans are wrapped up in green cloth and concealed within the clothing or are attached to the surface of the clothes, invariably to the upper arm or the upper back of a child, on the shoulder, or on babies sown on to their caps, along with coins, blue buttons, cowri shells. Verses of the Qoran written on pieces of paper are also wrapped up usually in green cloth. Green is a holy colour in islam.

A somewhat different talisman, but structured identically are those which are wrapped up claws of leapords, or wolves, or the hair of a wolf wrapped up and pinned in a childs upper back. Here is is not divine power that is wrapped up and used to deflect malevolent forces, but part of a powerful and dangerous wild animal - the power of wild nature, wrapped and controlled by green holy coloured cloth. Again the purpose is to defelct extenal forces and dangerous by mobilising the trapped power of wild animal nature, metonymically symbolised by a small part of the wild animal - hair, or claw or tooth.

Reflecting objects, such as the sequins sown on womens caps, or little mirrors, shiny coins are used also to deflect and reflect back on itself malevolent powers from the outside.