

## The Anthropology of Headdress: Use of Caps and Ceremonial Headdress by Women of Gilgit-Baltistan Region as a Symbol of their Unique Cultural Heritage

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### Abstract

*It is one of the most eye-catching experiences to see women wearing beautiful colored headdress as part of their clothing in Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) region. The custom of wearing intricately embroidered and lavishly ornamented caps and headdress by women is a unique feature of the cultural heritage of this region. These include traditional Iraghi phartsun [s] and Qalami phartsun (popularly known as Hunza Caps) and also the modern new style phartsun, called modern Hunza Cap. A less known and almost disappeared is the beautiful and ornate ceremonial Perak headdress, the serpent style headdress studded with turquoise and silver jewelry, reported in use in remote areas like Punial and Ghizer, and in rural areas of Gilgit-Baltistan. Perak is no more seen nowadays in urban centers. The practice of wearing caps and serpent like ceremonial headdress Perak is unique to Gilgit-Baltistan and neighboring Tibet and Ladakh region. Similar practices extends to Chitral where Kalasha Women also wear traditional daily headdress called shushut and more ornate ceremonial serpent style headdress kupas. My observation and travel to Gilgit, Hunza and Skardu some years ago and a literature search shows that the use of popularly known Hunza caps and Perak headdress among women of Gilgit-Baltistan region is slowly disappearing and needs to be preserved through research and documentation before it totally disappears from this region. In this regard the contribution of some local organizations like Karakoram Area Development Organization (KADO) a Civil Society Organization established in 1997 has been instrumental in preserving and promoting the culture and traditional crafts, including embroidery of the Gilgit-Baltistan Region.*

**Key Words:** Headdress, Women, Gilgit-Baltistan, Phartsun, Iraghi, Qalami, Modern Hunza Cap

### 1. Historical Background

The inquisitiveness to know more about these exquisite pieces of personal adornment and symbolic expression of women's ethnicity and womanhood in Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) region was the major impetus behind doing some serious research on the anthropology of headdress used from ancient times in these mountain regions by womenfolk.<sup>1</sup> A literature search for the origins and evolution of this particular piece of Gilgit-Baltistan Women's headdress, has found that there is very scant literature on this particular object of personal adoration and cultural heritage of women of this region. Other than few references scattered here and there in accounts written on G-B area (Sanaullah, 2011). The most useful and comprehensive work that was eventually found was a work by a local Civil Society organization, called Karakoram Area Development Organization (KADO), with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). It has the most detailed and comprehensive data on various caps, their motifs, their meaning and local names. For a complete picture of a traditional Hunza Cap with its various component parts, see Figure 3, (KADO, 2007, p.35).

The reference is made to Hunza Caps and *Perak* headdress in remote areas of Gilgit-Baltistan and of *Perak* headdress more in areas like Ladakh, but also at a smaller scale in Gilgit-Baltistan region. I was told that *Perak* might be worn in some remote areas, like Punial and Ghizer, but not in area covering Gilgit-Baltistan, but later I was informed by an informant from Ganshe that older women in remote rural areas still wear *perak* headdress (Aggarwal, 2005). The use of similar serpent style *kupas*, and *shushut* caps by Kalasha women is also documented by Bilgrami (Bilgrami, 2004, p. 54 ). Talking about Kalasha women she notes, "They wear a stunning, elaborate ceremonial head-dress, the *kupas*, which is made of wool, lavishly ornamented with cowrie shells and with medallions of brass, shells, buttons and metal grelots.

<sup>1</sup> "An important historic moment came for this region on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2009, when the Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self-Governance Order 2009 granted self-rule to the areas formerly referred to as "Northern Areas," (KADO, n.d.).

Under the *kupas*, or for every day use, a *shushut* is worn, a circular woolen cloth embroidered and decorated with cowries or buttons with an extended piece at the back,” (ibid 54), (see details in my forthcoming paper on Kalasha women’s headdress). A more elaborate account on the ornate Kalasha headdress *kupas*, is by Sperber which provides extremely interesting depictions and explanation of headdress worn by the Kalasha women (Sperber, 1996). It is interesting to note that embroidery on Hunza Caps, although looks so geometrical at first sight and similar to popular Chinese motifs, but in fact is inspired by nature, flowers, trees, religious inscriptions, bread (*phiti*) insects, birds and horned animals (KADO, 2007, p. 29) found in the area. Every motif has its own specific name in 3-major languages of the region, Burushaski, Shina and Balti. In addition, many of the motifs found on ancient antique caps are still seen repeated on more recent and modern Hunza Caps, for instance see Figures 5 and 6. The historic Gilgit-Baltistan region, see Figures 1&2, has unmatched beauty and ancient history (Rashid, 2011) when it comes to culture and people.

The great Chinese traveler Hiuen Tsiang traversed Baltistan in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and has documented its history and the Chinese and Persian influences in deriving this name Baltistan (Baloch, 2004, p.119). Also, there are interesting references to the headdress worn by women. Biddulph notes, “The women also wear a loose woolen cap, generally of dark color. In the shin caste unmarried women are distinguished by a white cap, which is never worn by married shin women,” (Biddulph, 2001, p. 74). A KADO study also notes under dress of G-B women that “For women, the embroidered pillbox cap sustaining the dupatta or veil of the women makes them look like inhabitants of the tales and lays of the European middle ages,” (KADO, 2007, p. 12). It further elaborates that “The women still wear throughout the day and for all their chores, whether at home or in the fields their embroidered caps, which, surrounded by the folds of their white veil or dupatta, give them the appearance of bygone medieval princesses waiting for their knight” (KADO, 2007, p. 17).

Talking about the dress of women in Nagar and Hunza, Lines touches upon women’s headdress and notes, “Towards evening, women, dressed in gaily colored shalwar-khameez and bright pill-box hats, climbed the paths, bearing large baskets filled with grasses...,” (Lines, 1988, p. 125). Raza’s study also shows a young girl in Hunza cap (Raza, 2006, p. 168). The most useful account of all, however, on Hunza embroideries and Hunza caps is found in the book, “Lifting the Veil on Northern Areas: Motifs & Designs of Embroidery” (KADO, 2007). It has the design and motifs used, what those motifs denote, and called in local languages. Both old and modern Hunza caps with their motifs and stitches are elaborated, with samplers from KADO archives, with local terms in three major languages of the region, Burushaski, Shina and Balti. This book has immense amount of very useful information for any serious future researcher interested in the culture and heritage of headdress of Gilgit-Baltistan Women.

The growing trend and interest of famous designers in men’s and women’s traditional headdress and growing popularity of various headdresses for both men and women is apparent from seeing the modern Hunza cap [s] and also some articles that were eyed in recent newspapers and magazines. Khan notes that Thomas Phillips’ influential portrait, “George Gordon, Lord Byron” (1914), depicts the poet in a red velvet jacket and a remarkable turban, layered in orange, gold and brown...immortalizing him in a timeless ensemble,” It further notes that 18<sup>th</sup> century was marked by a trend to have fascination and longing for the ‘orient’, with western luxury and art markets turning to Arabia and India for inspiration (Khan, 2011)., (LIBAS, 2011)

The importance of headdress as unique feature of a people’s identity was also displayed recently by an advertisement of an international bank showing headdresses from different parts of the world to highlight their international operations, see Figure 30. The subsequent account shall elaborate on major types of G-B headdress and their features, embroidery patterns and colors and when and how women use them to this day as a unique expression of their personal adornment and a piece of their past cultural heritage.

## **2. The Headdress [s] of Gilgit-Baltistan Region**

The word *phartsun* comes from Burushaski language, meaning cap. The five major types of *phartsuns* used in the Gilgit-Baltistan area at present are 1)Topo 2)*Iraghi Phartsun* 3) *Qalami Phartsun* 4) The New Style *Phartsun* and 4) The *Perak* Headdress. All five are taken up separately in the subsequent text, including more ornate ceremonial headdress, “*perak*” to elaborate the difference among them and who wears them and when? And the role the headdress plays in the construction of a woman’s identity as a mountain woman from Gilgit-Baltistan region.

2.1 Topo: the old simple Cap

2.2 The *Iraghi Phartsun*: The Traditional Wowan’s Cap: (in Burushaski) or *Khoi* (in Shina)

### 2.3 The *Qalami Phartsun*

### 2.4 The New Style *Phartsun* or Modern Hunza Cap

### 2.5 The Ornate Ceremonial Headdress “*Perak*”

**2.1 Topo Cap:** According to KADO, this was, “the old version of the modern woman’s cap,” (KADO, 2007, p. 34). It was a simple and plain cap, less frequently used now.

### 2.2 *Iraghi Phartsun* or Traditional Woman’s Cap

*Iraghi phartsun* is more elaborate, with intricate embroidery and brilliant colors, most frequently seen worn by young and old women. The embroidery is made on a cloth called *do-sooti* and *char-sooti*, used traditionally for making Hunza Caps in this area. The *do-sooti* and *char-sooti* cloth is a loosely weaved cloth with easily identifiable squares in the weave to easily do this kind of embroidery. The base color used is only white or beige. No *phartsun* with a colored base was observed in Hunza or Gilgit area nor on the Folk Festivals held every year in Islamabad, by the Folk Heritage Institute, Islamabad. The *do-sooti* cloth has more intricate embroidery and tight stitch than the *char-sooti* one, which has more loose holes and hence, is easy to embroider. But an immature can not find the difference between the stitch of the two. They look almost alike. I was shown the difference by Nigat Bibi and I could see that she was right. See Figure 3 and Figures 5 to 8.

### 2.3 *Qalami Phartsun*

*Qalmi phartsun* is the old traditional cap worn by older women. Although it is not frequently made anymore, old specimens are still available and worn by old women. The reason it is called *qalami* (a bamboo pen) is because the design is traced with *qalam*, according to Nigat Bibi.<sup>2</sup> The embroidery is done after tracing the design. *Qalamis* have relatively less intricate embroidery as compared to *iraghis* as shown in Figure 25 and Figure 27 respectively. They are cheaper in price as well due to less time spent and less labor involved. The tops of *qalami* phartsuns as well as *iraghi* phartsuns are made separately called *Ikhoto* (pronounced *khoo-too*) or *toro* and headband separately called *totur* (*to-tur*), both are joined later, see Figure 14 for a headband in making by an old woman.

### 2.4 The New Style *Phartsun* or Modern Hunza Cap

Looking at the taste of more sophisticated western and local buyers, KADO has produced this more innovative style of Hunza cap, as shown in Figures 16 to 18 and Figure 29. The base material used is velvet with only headband embroidered, in very simple three colors; blue, brown and silver grey, and black for outlines for middle floral motif. As compared to use of multiple brilliant colors in traditional *Iraghi* caps, as shown in Figures 22, 23 and Figures 27 & 28, motifs are similar to those used in traditional caps, floral and horns but instead of wool yarn silk yarn is used, perhaps to match the shine of velvet cloth with the sheen of silk thread. Another marked difference is that *thana*, the upper double brim is replaced with only one top brim and two bottom brims including woven brim at the bottom edge, called *chaghazi* and *thana*, which are an integral part of the traditional *iraghi* and *qalami* caps, are totally absent in the new modern Hunza cap [s] see Figure 18. The modern cap only has three parts left; 1) the plain upper part *Ikhoto*/ or *Toro*, and *kanghorah* (sh) *kanghorang* (br) and *zameen*, both part of *totur* [headband], (KADO, 2007, p. 35). The formerly four part *totur* or headband is only left with one part *zameen*, if one excludes the *Kanghorang*. See Figures 16 and 17.

It is handmade, with full headband of 23 square inches embroidery piece. Materials used are velvet cloth, satal cloth and silk yarn. Local price is rupees 600 shown on Thread Net Hunza site (KADO) whereas in craft shops it is sold for Rs 800 (about US\$ 10). Women artisans at G-B Pavilion in a recent folk festival informed that due to dying popularity of traditional *phartsuns*, we are trying to bring in new and more practical caps using same embroidery styles for a more sophisticated buyer and for foreign tourists. Modern Hunza cap, I was told, is popular among tourists and foreigners as compared to traditional *iraghi* cap.

### 2.5 The Ornate Ceremonial Headdress “*Perak*”

The beautiful serpent style headdress *perak*, see Figure 4, less frequently worn in Gilgit Baltistan area at present other than remote rural areas and places like Skardu and Ganche, (Mr. G. R. Balti, personal communication, October 13, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> I bought two *qalami phartsuns* for Rs 300 each in June 2011 from G-B Pavilion at Folk Festival in Islamabad.

A *perak* headdress was “typically worn by the old aristocracy in the Himalayan Ladakh region of Asia... a symbol among the Ladakh of the rank and economic status of the women wearing it.” They are worn in areas like Ngari Rongchung in western Tibet, by the Zanskari women, Ladakhi women and of course at a small scale by women in remote rural Gilgit-Baltistan areas. The ornate *perak* headdress is generally composed of a strap of leather, cloth like felt or a woolen cloth studded with semi precious stones such as turquoise, lapis lazuli, pearls, corals and further adorned with silver jewelry, trinkets and disks of precious metals like silver and brass, See Figure 4, worn more on ceremonial occasions. The *perak* headdress is still found and worn in places like Ladakh, and Ladakhi women on special occasions wear their prized possession the ‘*perak*’ headgear, “The ‘*perak*’ is mostly worn during festivals and ceremonies and is handed down from mother to daughter or daughter-in-law.”

However, due to ancient Tibetan cultural influence in G-B region, it is highly likely that women in olden times may have been wearing *perak* headdress in this region that may have been slowly disappeared.

### 3. Embroidery Types in Gilgit-Baltistan Headdress

Talking about embroidery types in Hunza area, a site notes, that “Fine Hunza embroidery with silk thread is traditionally known as *iraghi*, and is composed of the cross or roll stitch, or a combination of the two.” A more rustic form with thicker woolen thread also uses similar stitching, and is known as *charsuta chuk*. *Qalmi* is also another type of silk thread embroidery, which is done using long and short stitches to create floral designs. It notes, finally, silver or golden threads (collectively called *qalabatu*) are used in a form of metal thread embroidery known as *zardozi*. In my study, however, I did not come across any silk embroidery or *qalabatu* or *zardozi* *Iraghis* or *Qalmis* at all, that may be found more locally in Gilgit Hunza area.

### 4. Motifs of Hunza Embroidery

Two important motifs are bread *phitti* and flowers, which are the base of all traditional and modern designs in multiple variations. The site on Hunza Carpet notes, “Most of the designs in *iraghi* represent wild animals and their paw prints, birds, leaves and body parts of insects. Examples of the traditional motifs include *turankish* (ibex horns), *tamuts* (snow leopard) *urki itsu* (wolf’s foot) *kishtimuts* (boat), *herimani chuk* (millipede). Some of these motifs can be seen in older (more than a hundred years) carpets and textiles from Khotan and Yarkand, and in embroidered wedding veils from Central Asia.” My study did not indicate any such motifs found on any of the caps, in my observation and personal collection. It might be a hundred year old practice, but contemporary headdress only show few traces of the past motifs left. For instance see Figures 6 & 7 for old *Gulsuri Askur* flower motif on contemporary *iraghi phartsun*, Figure 6 left, as also shown on old *iraghi* in Figure 7.

### 5. Raw Materials Used for Embroidery

The materials frequently used for embroidery are wool in thin strands, see Figure 19. Multi color thin wool strands are used by women to create very traditional Chinese looking motifs, probably having some neighboring Chinese influence as well, but in fact most of them come from nature, as detailed under patterns and motifs. The base-cloth used for embroidery for *iraghi* is called *charsuta* or satal cloth, cotton on *qalami phartsuns* and cotton yarn, and velvet cloth and silk yarn on more contemporary modern Hunza caps, see Figures for all three types. The inside cotton cloth lining of an *iraghi phartsun* is roughly attached and filled with a stiff material both at headband and at the top to make it stand on the head, *qalami* also have cotton cloth lining un-sewn at the edges to be filled with a stiff material as desired and at the top, but the new modern Hunza cap made of velvet cloth has a matching inside lining neatly sewn at the edges to satisfy a more sophisticated local buyer or a foreign tourist, see Figure 29.

### 6. Time Spent in Preparation

As per Nigat Bibi, it takes about two months, working two to three hours a day to finish one *iraghi* cap. Younger woman can do a better job as it involves hard eye work not very easy for elderly women. But at present the trend is changing and younger women do not involve themselves in this kind of hard labor and eye work, that is the reason, Atlas, says all her trained workers are elderly women. Who due to economic necessity still work on producing *iraghai* caps, see Figure 14. Most of the vendors on Folk Festival in Islamabad, in June 2011, said they get it made through women on per piece basis and sell to the buyers. Nigat Bibi, is doing it for a long time, and still gets them made and sells them through her brother. Her brother has a hotel, in Karimabad in Hunza. Her nephew, Ismail Khan, had accompanied her from Hunza to help her in selling at folk festival at Lok Virsa, Nigat Bibi understood very little Urdu, and spoke Burushaski.

She demonstrated making a *totur* (the embroidered headband of an *iraghi phartsun*) by doing some embroidery, see Figure 14. That showed she is still actively involved in doing the traditional embroidery and keeping the G-B embroidered headdress tradition alive.

### **7. Use of Color in Traditional Phartsuns [Caps]**

In traditional *iraghis* and *qalmis*, most vibrant colors are used, shocking pinks, florescent greens, orange, red and more subtle blacks, whites and browns for the adjoining stitch, where *Ikhoto* and *totur* are sewn together. Some thread may also be used in completing the cap. The bottom rim is always a solid color chain of weaving about one quarter of an inch. See Figure 5.

### **8. Patterns and Motifs in Iraghi Phartsuns**

The patterns are more Chinese looking, due to perhaps close proximity to Chinese neighbors. The designs are floral and geometrical in combination. Top always has a middle motif, either floral or geometrical see Figures 20 to 23 and *totur* (pronounced *to-tur*) or headband with more floral patterns. See Figures 27 and 28.

### **9. Patterns and Motifs in Qalami Phartsuns**

The more older traditional *qalami phartsuns* are a total contrast to relatively modern *iraghi phartsuns*, in terms of both color and pattern use. Although the shape of the cap is somewhat similar. With an embroidered *Ikhoto* (*khoo-too*) and about two inches wide *totur* or headband, see Figures 24 and 25.

*Qalami phartsuns* are called *qalami* because the designs are traced with *qalam* (pen) on the cloth and then embroidered, as per Nigat Bibi. To shape this soft cap, the top and sides are filled with simple cut outs of usual packaging carton material, on request on the spot. Or otherwise some of them are just left soft and worn by old women like that.

### **10. Use of Color and Embroidery on Modern Hunza Caps**

Colors used in modern Hunza caps of velvet cloth are non-traditional reds, yellows, blues, browns and burgundy for base cloth, with side embroidery in similar traditional *iraghi* style in only few colors. See Figure 16, which has blue velvet base with yellow, blue, and brown embroidery only on headband, top part of the cap or *ikhoto* has no embroidery at all like traditional *iraghi* and *qalami* caps and is left plain.

### **11. The Jewelry Piece Silsila**

The traditional piece of jewelry worn in front of *iraghai phartsun* [s] is called *silsila* (in *Burushaski*) and *tumar* (in *Balti*) made of pure silver, as shown in Figure 11. Not found for sale in folk festival that had G-B Pavilions, in the most recent folk festival in Islamabad Folk Heritage Complex, in Shakarparian, Islamabad. The reason being it is an expensive piece of jewelry and the cost per piece at this time runs around rupees 5000 to 10, 000. Due to its expense its use is also becoming limited. Especially for tourists, only caps are sold in the market and not the jewelry piece. Although, I was told in shops of Hunza and Gilgit one can find this jewelry piece, as it is still locally made by the native jewelers. The usual design of a *silsila* has 3-medallions with the center piece in the middle, adorning the middle of the forehead, with trinkets hanging down on the forehead, see Figures 12 and 13. I was told, on the wedding day each bride wears an intricately embroidered expensive *iraghi phartsun* with pure silver *silsila* forehead ornament. But it has become more symbolic nowadays. It is worn for weddings primarily by g women and then not used in day-to-day life of a young bride, or by younger women in general. By arranging regular folk festivals, throughout the country, the government is also making considerable efforts to keep the heritage of this remote region alive by inviting local artisans and showcasing their products in big city centers.

### **12. The Socio-cultural Role the Headdress Play in the Life of the Mountain Women of the Gilgit-Baltistan Region**

Weather could be one important reason to wear *phartsuns*, and as Muslims covering head all the time could be another very important reason for women of older times to wear *phartsuns*. With modernity of living with increasing education, younger educated women do not get into either making or wearing traditional *phartsuns* anymore, as it makes them look old-style, which they do not aspire. But in spite of its traditional appeal when it comes to defining the uniqueness of cultural heritage of the women of this area, women irrespective of age express their uniqueness by wearing the traditional *iraghi phartsuns*, especially on auspicious occasions, even young women wear *iraghi* headdress to express their unique cultural legacy and personal beauty and adoration, as G-B women.

I was told, by Ismail Khan, that as women age they start wearing *iraghi phartsuns*, but could not give a reason as to why they do that? Probably a sign of respect by covering their heads all the time, following Islamic religious tradition. Whereas, young girls and younger women really do not care for wearing *phartsuns* anymore, modern or traditional. Atlas bibi, the presidential prize holder, for making and promoting the Hunza embroidery, said she still gets *iraghi* caps made in her area through elderly women, she called 'maen' (mothers). She proudly said, they are old women who are earning their own living and are not dependent on any one "Isn't it remarkable about them?" she asked me with so much passion, of course it is, I thought.<sup>3</sup> Her partner on the shop, also from Hunza, told me that "now we only make *iraghi* caps for tourists." In our own society, due to change in cultural practices, it has lost its use and popularity. Young women do not wear it any more and they have no time to do such laborious work of making one any more. Other than on their wedding day, when it is symbolic for a bride to wear an *iraghi phartsun* adorned with the traditional silver jewelry piece, *silsila or tomar*.

It looks to me its more a matter of free time that women had in old times that they indulged in such time consuming activities, then they are doing now. Many of them are studying and many other are working or taking care of their children, Poor women old women with no source of income and some people with special needs are also trained in making and embroidering *phartsuns*, and hence they are making a contribution to keep this unique aspect of the cultural heritage of G-B alive at present. Government through folk heritage museums and by organizing folk festivals is also making a big contribution to bring these artisan and their creations to the limelight.<sup>4</sup>

### **13. The Role of NGO's and Civil Society Organizations**

KADO is a Civil society organization working in G-B area to produce the contemporary Hunza cap, and other local handicrafts for touristic purposes and for conservation of local handicrafts. Although, not many women nowadays wear this traditional headdress, this unique piece of a women's dress is kept alive more by the older generation of women, and of course some NGOs, (Mountain Women Development Organization (MWDO) in collaboration with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, based in Gilgit and Islamabad. There are many more but the mention of which is beyond the jurisdiction of this paper. By making Hunza cap popular among the local and foreign buyers these organizations are playing a pivotal role in preserving this centuries old cultural heritage of the G-B region. By making innovations in G-B headdress for touristic purposes these organizations are helping attract more visitors who come to see the magnificent beauty of this region and return home with a beautiful piece of heritage in the shape of a Hunza cap as a souvenir.

### **14. Conclusion**

Although there is very scant literature available on the subject, an effort is made to highlight what is available on G-B Headdress and how women use it to express their unique cultural heritage as mountain women and from Gilgit-Baltistan. It seems that traditional headdress of the mountain women of Gilgit-Baltistan region is slowly losing its popularity among the younger and educated women of the G-B but an effort is underway by the local and foreign civil society organizations to popularize it again in the shape of modern Hunza Cap among tourists. How long this rebirth of the traditional headdress of Gilgit-Baltistan women's unique fashion and dress heritage will go, only the time will tell.

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<sup>3</sup> Her caps were a cheaper quality with thick motifs and thick woolen designs. Sold for Rs 500 a piece, see Figure 6 left and 15, as compared to a more intricately embroidered *iraghi* piece sold for Rs 900, see Figure 5 & 8.

<sup>4</sup> The June 2011 Folk Festival at Shakrparian, Islamabad, had a big G-B pavilion, showcasing elaborate collection of both traditional and modern headdress of the mountain women from G-B region.

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**Figures**

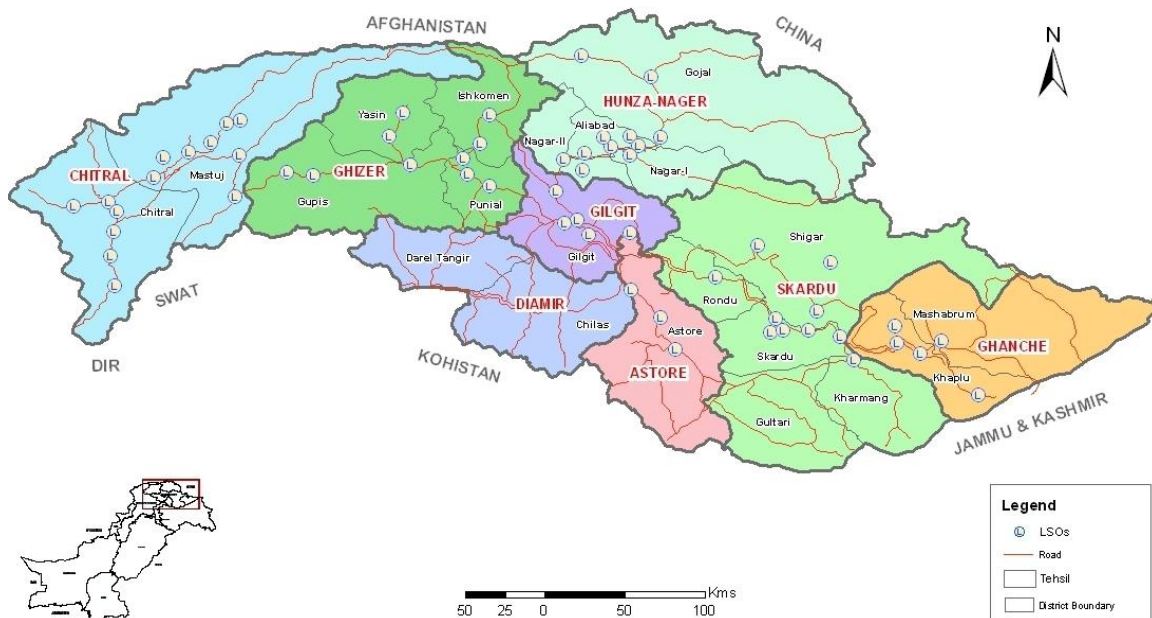
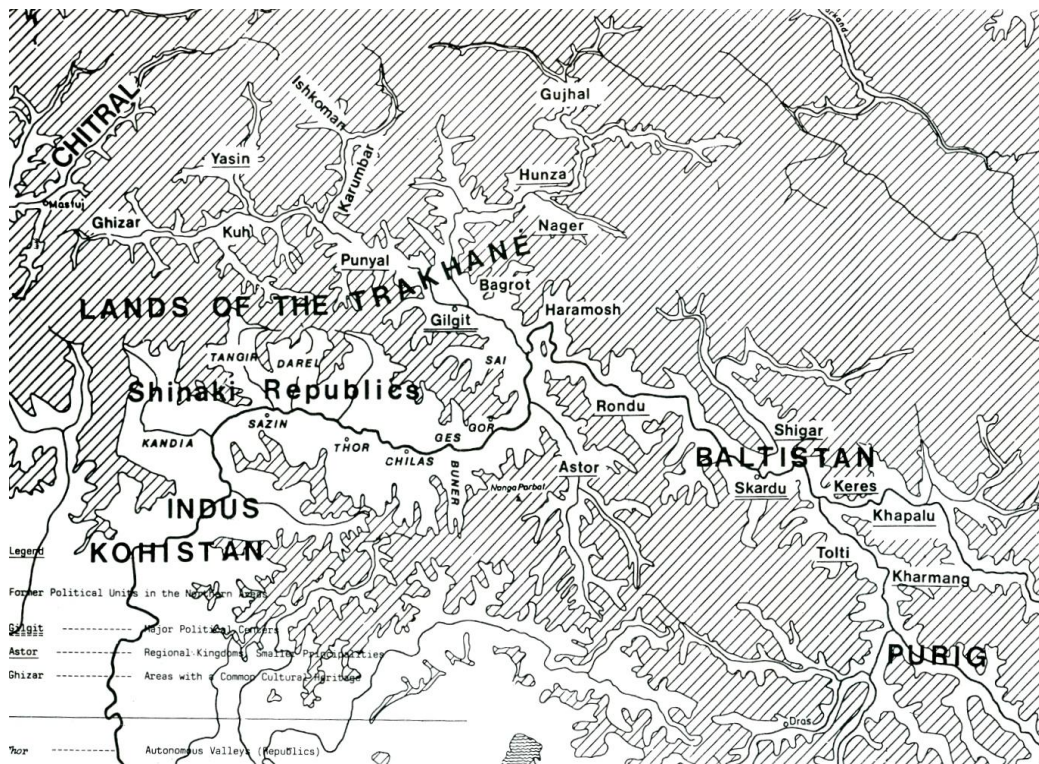


Figure 1 Map showing the spread of Headdress tradition among women from remote eastern part of Ghanche in Skardu to western end in Chitral  
 (Source: Gilgit Baltistan Map, Retrieved from [http://gulbtur.files.wordpress.com/2010/04/gb\\_admin3.jpg](http://gulbtur.files.wordpress.com/2010/04/gb_admin3.jpg))



**Figure 2 Map showing Punial and Gizar areas**  
 (Source: Dani, A. H. (2001), History of Northern Areas of Pakistan (Upto 2000 AD), p. 52)



**Figure 3 A traditional *Iraghi Phartsun* (cap) with details of all component parts, written in local language (s) Burushaski, Shina and Balti.**  
 (Source: Lifting the Veil on Northern Areas by KADO, 2007, p. 35)





Figure 4 The ornate Perak headdress, studded with turquoise and silver ornaments (Source: Bonjour Magazine (1996), Pearl-Continental Hotels, Pakistan Last glance at the mirror before performing traditional dances from ‘Wandering with the Indus’ by Philippe Fabry)



Figure 5 Collection showing two *iraghi* (right) and one *qalami phartsun* (on left corner). Note that *iraghi* has a stuffed side brim whereas *qalami* has no stuffing and worn soft by elderly women. The one on right corner has traditional river boats motif or *kishitmuts phiti* (br), or *kishti lai* (sh). (Source: KADO (2007) p. 105)



Figure 6 Collection shows a variety of traditional iraghi caps, highlighting both intricate (right) and rough embroidery (left) types and the richness of the traditional color and motif of the Gilgit-Baltistan embroidery.

The one on left corner has floral, or *Gulsuri askur* motif on top in heart shapes.  
(Source: KADO (2007) p.79)



Figure 7 Model for the “*Gulsuri Askur*”  
Source: Flowers (X1V) KADO (2007) p. 79



Figure 8 An *Iraghi phartsun* showing superior intricate embroidery on *char-soota (satal)* cloth with wool yarn



Figure 9 A young women wearing GB Headdress with no dupatta over it.



Figure 10 An old woman with GB headdress with *dupatta* over it

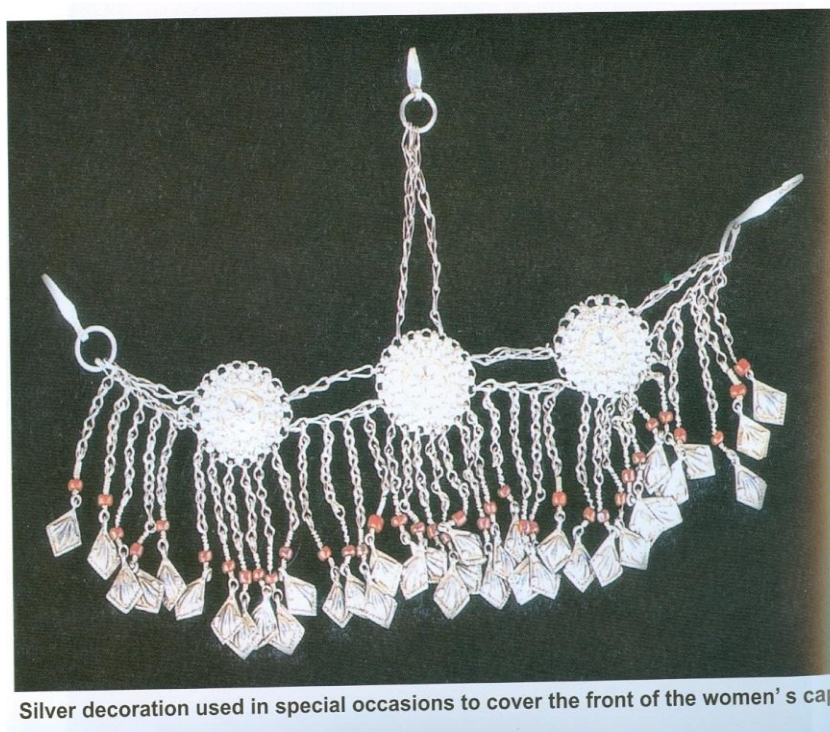


Figure 11 Silver Jewelry piece called *silsila* worn on front of a Hunza cap on occasions  
(Source: *Lifting the Veil on Northern Areas: Motifs & Designs of Embroidery*. By KADO, 2007, p. 20)



Figure 12 *Iraghi phartsun* with traditional jewelry piece “*silsila*”  
(Source: From IBA Add, Dawn, Islamabad, Sept. 26, 2010)

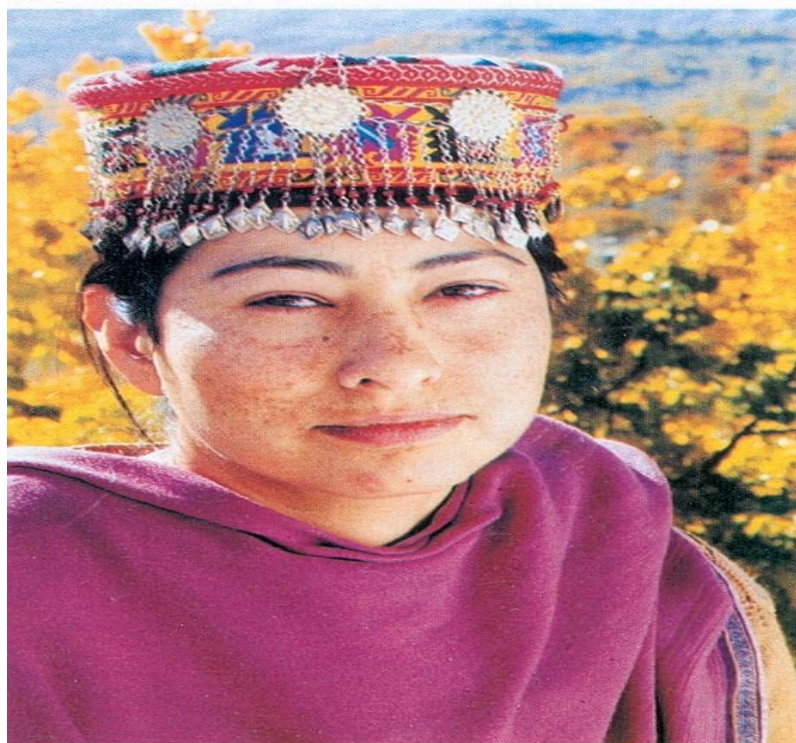


Figure 13 A young woman wearing *Iraghi* cap with traditional silver jewelry piece, *silsila* or *tumar*  
(Source: Lifting the Veil on Northern Areas: Motifs & Designs of Embroidery. By KADO, 2007, p. 15)



Figure 14 An old woman embroidering a headband for the *iraghi* cap



Figure 15 An inferior quality *iraghi phartsun* with rough embroidery on *char-soota* cloth, showing traditional *butz-e-tap* motif in th center (derieved from the leaves of plane tree [chinar]) so common in Northern Areas.



Figure 16 A Modern Hunza Cap made of velvet and embroidered with silk thread



Figure 17 A woman wearing Modern Hunza Cap



Figure 18 Modern Hunza Cap, showing top border strip *kanghorang* (br) no bottom woven border *thana* (br) and no bottom border strip *chaghazi* (sh) as woven on all traditional *iraghi* and *qalmi* caps, as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 19 Wool strands and other materials used for making *phartsins*





Figure 20 Top of a superior quality *Irghai phartsun* showing intricate embroidery and a geometrical motif



Figure 21 Top of an inferior quality *Irghai phartsun* showing rough embroidery and a floral motif



Figure 22 A beautifully colored top of an *iraghi phartsun*, showing a rough embroidery.

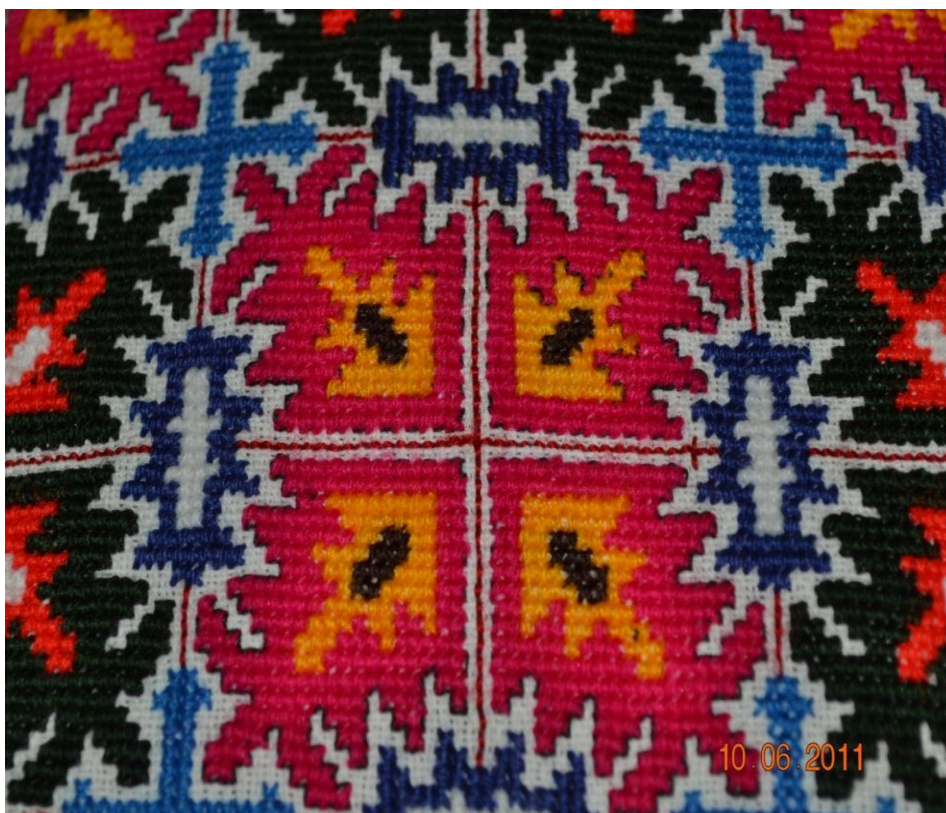


Figure 23 An *iraghi* cap flat top (*ikhuto*) showing popular traditional juniper tree extremities design, *chili lai* (sh) frequently used on *iraghi* caps to this day  
(Source: KADO, 2007, p. 85)



Figure 24 The disappearing traditional *Qalmi phartsin*, and the different embroidery stitch, floral motif and color use on side panel and the top, compared to more refined embroidery on *iraghi phartsuns* (Personal collection, Price Rs 800 purchased in June 2011, Islamabad, Pakistan).



Figure 25 Details of a headband of a *Qalmi phartsun*, showing rough embroidery on cotton cloth instead of char-sooti cloth, filling done with *Gasi* stitch or *qalmi* stitch (from qalam, the word for pen) and wool yarn, instead of *char-sooti* cloth used in traditional *iraghi phartsuns*



Figure 26 Full view of a traditional *Qalami phartsun* with top and side details and floral motif and *kanghora/kanghorang* in brown thread, joining the top or *ikhuto* with bottom headband *totur*



Figure 27 The headband (*totur*) of a *iraghi phartsun* (traditional Hunza Cap)



Figure 28 The headband (*totur*) motif of a traditional *iraghi phartsun*. Showing use of *cotton satal cloth* or *char-sooti* cloth and use of woolen yarn for embroidery



Figure 29 The modern style Hunza cap is nicely sewn with proper lining to attract more sophisticated clients and tourists. Note the use of simple light colors as compared to bright multi colors used in traditional *Iraghi phartsuns*.



Figure 30 An international bank advertisement showing use of caps as symbols of identity for various people from different parts of the world  
(Source: *Dawn Islamabad*. April 28, 2011)