F I F T Y C H A R M S (I R A N)

F R O M   P I O U S N E S S  T O  S U P E R S T I T I O N
1. Charms of Pre-Islamic Times
ARAB GEOMANCY

Very near the hindu Temple in Bandar Abbas, several arab deviners operate arab magics. This one performs the geomancy, that is a deviners art according to the position of tiny stones.
FATE KNOCKS YOUR DOOR  In the doorway of a rural shop in Masouleh, Gilan, this mighty nailed horseshoe is a benevolent pagan talisman for Fate of inhabitants and visitors. Many shops feature the same in Tehran (left) *Abjad* enhiffred enhanced variants exist (right).

« "One of the widespread belief in the turkish folk culture is that Hizir [Khizr]. (...) is riding around on a horse in the sky and that he runs to help people who are in trouble. The anatolian people, who hammer a horseshoe to their doors so that Hizir will stop by their houses and will save them from difficult situations. The horseshoe is pounded in an apparent place or threshold of the houses or places of employment so that the evil eye doesn't strike and so that this brings good luck. (...) To see a horseshoe in a dream is a sign that you will have a good luck." »

[OGUZ, 2008]
ANTIQUE RURAL TALISMAN (pork tooth): Nomad lori tribesmen used to wear such talismans: ibex hair, teeths, beads. Each carry luck and protection.
SEDUCTION TALISMAN DESIGN

feat. preislamic chimera, dragon. Here associated with islamic blesses
BLOODBATH FOR SEASONNAL REBIRTH VOW About sixty sheeps & beefs are slaughtered in the occasion of the Pir-Shahliyar birthday, on 4th february, in Hawraman-Takht, Kordestan. The spurring blood is supposed to return to the earth and regenerate so the deity MITHRA for resurrection / rebirth purpose.
SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL

Unlike most Islamic countries, figurative representations of SHAYTAN (Satan) were usual in the talismanic art of contemporary Islamic Iran.
‘DIVS’ INHABIT CHARMS

The Iranian talismanology is composite, as this merges advanced numerology, zodiac, judaicca, quran, islamic demonology and basics of mithrai wicca. The modern talisman beside is a copper plate that illustrates Divs (Iranian version of the Quran’s Ghul spirits of desert). Unlike Djinns, Divs are usually held as Genii loci. Charm holder is supposed to use this for blessing.

In « La musique et la mystique en Iran » Jean DURING reported remnant beliefs in two mighty possessive Div:

- a black, six-headed Div, a.k.a. the Bala.

- a white, hairy Div, a.k.a. Sefid, who used to rapt victims.

(collected Sanandaj, 2007)
In the Tabriz area, dozens of such Div-faced charms are attached by the fellows in the emamzadeh for proprietary vows, just like fabric-made vows. This item was found in Sanandaj, Kordestan, 2007. Alexander FODOR collected a very similar amulet in Hazrat Abbas‘ mausoleum in Najaf, Iraq, and propose alternate explanations:

« According to the vendor, people buy these plaques to obtain protection from Abbas, using them as a kind of ex-voto offered to the tomb, while they pray for a cure. (...) (IBN Battuta) reports that when a person falls ill, he makes a votive offering to the Shrine (...) Such an offering consists of a golden or silver head from a person whose head is acheing, or of a golden or silver hand or foot if the illness concerns that part of the body (...) thus, this plaque which is an ex-voto, may well be a reference to the religious substratum of the solar cult. However it may also stem from a different religious tradition, which used the image of the Divine face for apotropaic purposes. This usage is attested by several passages in the old Testament... »
Djinns are illustrated as mighty auxiliaries in quranic talismanology, featuring enchiffred formulas (Taweez, read below).
DJINNS ACCORDING TO QURAN?

About *Djinns*: the holy Quran only mentions existence and various attributes of their way to be. Many later saint’s hagiographies then associated mighty fellows with feats and mastership over *Djinns*.

All over the Middle East, King SOLOMON (right side) is notoriously mighty over every Djinns. In many adorcist worships of arabs, persians, swahilis & arabo-malagasyans, SOLOMON is held as the ruling king of *Djinns* or their merciful Master.
« OBEYING TALISMAN » INHERITED FROM ARABIC DJINNOLOGY White magic records (see bibliography) describes how influential is holder of this upon surrounds.
« DEVINER TALISMAN » INHERITED FROM ARABIC DJINNOLOGY White magic records about talismans (see bibliography) describes how mighty this one makes potion drinkers: so they get inspired deviners.
# Runic Alphabet of Charms (Antique Abjad)

[Runic Alphabet of Charms (Antique Abjad)](https://www.example.com) [Gilani & Al; 1975]

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<th>Kha</th>
<th>Ha</th>
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<th>Tha</th>
<th>Ta (ü)</th>
<th>Ba</th>
<th>Alif (l)</th>
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<th>Ta (b)</th>
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<th>Sad</th>
<th>Shin</th>
<th>Sin (ṣ)</th>
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<th>La (γ)</th>
<th>Ha (θ)</th>
<th>Waw</th>
<th>Nun</th>
<th>Mim</th>
<th>Lam (ʾ)</th>
<th>Kaf (ḍ)</th>
<th>Qaf (ʾ)</th>
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**Note:** The table above represents the Runic Alphabet of Charms, also known as the Antique Abjad, as described in the work by Gilani & Al (1975). Each rune is depicted alongside its corresponding letter and name.
PUPPETS FOR WHITE MAGIC (1)

Propiatory talismans represent the victim, very much like voodoo puppets. Talismans are made of copper sheet, and carved with quranic surat scriptures. Such charms invoke mighty Jinns, most for beloved affection, sometimes fertility.

(collected Sanandaj, Kordestan 2007)
PUPPETS FOR WHITE MAGIC (2)

Below: featuring jafari-type magic formulas.

(collected Tehran, 2009)
PUPPETS FOR WHITE MAGIC (3) charms for love attraction (collected Tehran, 2009)
WISHES: an old belief claims that making a knot (fars. *mand*) initiates the completion of a wish, til the knot to vanishes. Hawraman, Kordestan.
WISHTREE PERPETUATES YOUR WISHES:
In Iran, most wishtrees originate in zoroastrian Era. Dehrakeh greens, Tehran. But [OGUZ, 2008] explains that trees embody resurrection in the turkic religion of Altai mountains, as they revive on every springs. For that reason, settlers of Anatolia have perpetuated trees as burial places, and used to celebrate sesonnal semestrially seasonal ritual around it. The mythological tree of the turkic gave 9 branches and each of them gave 9 persons, that embody the 9 turkic nations.

"Sometimes an animal is sacrificed at the foot of the wish tree and distributed to the poor. It is hoped that the wish will be realized"
[OGUZ, 2008]
DRIVER’S SPELL: such islamic blessing are usual for good luck when driving.
After the miraculous watersource in Mecca, most Shrines have their own miraculous watersources.

*In most cases, local watersources worshipping is an ante-islamic custom.* Fellows leave some offerings and may benefit so the benevolent mightiness of the sources. The same was observed in sunni *ziyara* pilgrimage places.
2. NAZAR, ESFAND

EVILEYE, BADFATE
ESFAND (SYRIAN ROE) SMOKE REPELS EVIL EYE: burning esfand coals as a repellant is a widespread custom in Iraq, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Iran (here in Khorasan). In Iran, beggars used to burn some for protection of the passer-by. « Aspand » retained the name.

« Harmal (peganum harmal) is a plant with leaves and white flowers with its fruits in a capsule. The seeds of this plant are strung on a string and hung in an house. The belief is widespread that the harmal seeds hung in an house prevent the entrance of bad spirits into that house. It is believed that the illness caused by the evil eyewould be cured by making incense from the harmal seeds and holding it to the face of children and persons, whom it is believed that the evil eye has struck. It is believed that the evil eye would also depart from the sound of seeds, which produces a sound when burning."
ATTENDEES BLOW ESFAND SMOKE TO PASSING-BY PARADERS OF ASHURA (ARDESTAN, IRAN)
Shape and colour historically resembled a deformed eye. Jinn-repellant rugs are hung on the wall or horses for domestic protection. They are supposed

« The evil eye can also be detrimental, and even fatal, to livestock and their offspring. The source is a person who is jealous, covetous or greedy. »

(Aref ABU-RABIA)
The graphic pattern of *Mushqah* wards off evil eye and is omnipresent in the geometrical design rug.
TURKMEN NOMADS WEARING AMULET BAGS
Nazar eye is an alleged continuation of « Aspand » among Turks and Persians. The blue colour is the evil-eye global repellant factor of the ‘Nazar’ or ‘Nazar Bonjuk’ beads. This superstition is much visible among Turks in Turkey and Iran.
Blue beads ward off the Evil Eye. Many tin-made “bismillah” plates are used sometimes in one and same necklace as a protection of the children. (Museum of Luristan, Khorammabad)
Beads protects cattles from sicknesses.

Aleppo (Syria)
3. VOTIVE PADLOCKS:

DISMISSING UNSOLVED PROBLEMS
Masjid Hajj Fakri, near Sheikh Safi shrine, Ardabil:

Fellows write their wishes and attach them on the outer altar of the mosque.
KNOTS, IRON KEYS & PADLOCKS have a special deep meaning of unsolved problems, so that some keys (ex: *tchehel kelid*) are held as mighty talismans. Various beliefs consist in making a knot with fabric or locking a padlock until the related problem to be solved. In this regard, iranian fellows attach locks in the religious shrines, that is actually widespread custom in China, too. Pictures: ex-voto, Shiraz. Right: locks at *Nasir Ol Molk mosque*, Shiraz.
BRIDES THROW LOCK KEYS TOWARDS SUITORS: a custom surviving in Yazd. On Fridays, it happen single women wear locked chador and throw lock keys from top of the minarets of Jameh mosque. Suitors who collect the related key from basement may supposedly be elected then as the matching husband.
COLLECTING BLESS: paraders of Ashura exhibit votive locks, hanging on their pierced breast (Qajar period)
4. MIGHTY BLESS

ISLAMIC TALISMAN
Hierarchy of the angels – not to be mistaken with desert Divs - has a very central role in Yazdani religions (Alevi, yarsan, yezidi) but in persian talismanology as well. Mighty Haftan (« the Seven ») feature prominent angels, incl. Ezrachel, Michaël, Raphaël and Jibril. Tchehelton (« the Forty ») group feature many secondary foreign angels of the Yazdanism.
BLESSING CHILDREN DURING ‘ASHURA’ PARADES: Fellows attract blessing on their babies by seating them in the symbolic cradle of ALI ASHGAR – youngest child of emam HOSEIN - during Ashura parade, Taft, near Yazd.
« SHIR VA KHORSHID » (LION & SUN): this polyvalent shiite-iranian symbol holds the strength of the Emam ALI (i.e. the lion), here as a seduction talisman.
BISMILLAH
(“in the name of God”)

The esoteric significance of calligraphy and surat was raised to hidden messages & proper powers according to speculative theories by Fazlallah ASTARABADI (hurufizm). This lens-shaped graphic is omnipresent from the Alam flagmast end among the Shi’a. Several of such bismillah are used sometimes in one and same necklace as evil-eye protective bless.

‘TAWEEZ’ , OR QURANIC CHARMS VS EVIL EYE
invocations and praises to mighty emams Ali, Hosein, and Reza are benevolent blessings. Reza’s sister Fatmah Masumeh , and Hosein’s brother Abbas « Abolfazel » are usually held as equivalent mightiness.

SHI’A PRAISE

-“Al-rahim
Ya Hossein “

“O Hosein the merciful”

Quranic talismanology shifts on the mightiness of the 99 names of Allah as magical formulas. “Rahim” is one of them.

(collect. Sanandaj, 2007)

MIGHTINESS OF HOLY WORDS

(collected Tehran, 2007)
VILLAGE HEALER (TURKEY): uses surat, Nazar, Fatmah’s hand, salt for protective spell vs Evil Eye.
« TCHEHEL KELID»: A SYNCRETIC BLESS OF BIRTH

ZOROASTRISM
The original zoroastrian talisman is a 40 keys set (tchehel kelid) that preexisted the islam. After islamization, each key is now supposed to be carved the name of Allah. See earlier explanation about votive locks.

QURANIC NUMEROLOGY
Scriptures include numerological table, a pagan relief. According to REGOURD, makers used to mention the soonest astral event on the making day.

« The Fatiha (sura) is a cure to everything except Es-Sam, and Es-Sam is death »
(excerpt from Hadith)

SHIITE
“KHAMSAH”: After islamization, the added hand reminds the cut hands of ABBAS in Kerbala, and each finger is given for a member of the family: Emam ALI, emam Hosein, FATMAH, ABBAS MASUMEH, emam REZA.

QURAN: Scriptures are carved quran Surat (surat 84 & 71, usually). In the Maghreb, scriptures also inventories user’s instructions and therapeutical properties of the cup, such as snake bites, stomeaches, childbirth, etc... (read Annette ITTIG)
"Tchehel Kelid" (Forty keys) is a holy water cup. Drinking this water is reported to be heal fellows and pilgrims.

The cup is usually used during traditional rituals of birth and circumcision for cares of after pregnancy of both the mother and child. Drinking so is believed to be safe for their health. Anne REGOURD reports the Yemeni women to drink vegetable stock in similar magical bowls for the same purpose / occasion. Yemeni items don’t feature nor molded Hand, nor key set. For stomach aches or colic, this is held as fighting out the related possessive jinn.
The square of three was known as early as the fourth century B.C. in China, where it was designated Lo-shu. One of the myriad symbolic meanings attributed to Lo-Shu was that it represented the universe, with its middle number signifying the cosmic axis at the center of the world. Such squares first appear in Arabic literature about 900 AD, (…) the square 3x3 cells was presented as a charm for easing the pains of Childbirth. (…) Most probably it was introduced into Western Asia by Arab and Persian merchants who had visited Chinese port towns.

By 989 AD, the 3x3 square had been given a religious interpretation (…) the Brethen [manuscript] developed continuous squares in which the motion was perpetuated after passing through the middle number.

Such scriptures are encoded Surat, benevolent dates or even names of the appropriate mighty jinns.

To Sufi Mystics, such squares referred to Life in endless flux, constantly being regenerated by a source of energy at the heart of the universal plan. In a desire to confuse the uninitiated and to prevent recopying, the order of the numbers of the square was sometimes varied so that the sums were not always equal to fifteen, (…) A variant of the magic square was produced in which letters were substituted for the numbers. This was accomplished in accordance with the abjad system, whereby the letters of the alphabet are given numerical equivalents. The square of three known as buduh because these letters (or their numerical equivalents) are distributed in the four corners of the square… »

Magical numerology is based upon the science of calligraphy and the numerological alphabet, or Abjad.
"le carré aux 3 cases a le pouvoir d’attirer, de rallier, de donner du courage, de consoler, et d’exercer une influence sur tout nom commençant par la lettre “djim” = J “.

"le carré aux 4 cases a le pouvoir de faire persévérer dans la foi et d’exercer une influence sur tout nom commençant par “dal” = D“

"celle aux 4 cases est utilisable pour se protéger des maladies, éloigner les maux, atteindre les êtres distants, se réjouir, faire oublier ses peines, être cheri, se faire accepter, avoir une bonne réputation, être écouté. “

"Le carré aux 5 cases a le pouvoir de faire naître le respect, la passion, l’agitation, de faire apparaître les dons, etc…”

"celle aux 5 cases sert a faire augmenter la connaissance et l’intelligence, à éloigner les désastres, améliorer les moeurs des enfants et les protéger des maux, atteindre ses buts, être accepté, être bon, avoir des clients, obtenir le silence des autorités et accabler les ennemis. “

" Le carré aux 6 cases a le pouvoir de dominer, de rendre sincère, de protéger, etc “

“celle a 6 cases sert entre autres à devenir riche et éloquent ”
“le carré a 7 cases a [le pouvoir] de permettre une vie ascétique, de bénir, de faire gagner de l'argent, d'aider au mariage de donner de la prété au coeur par l'amour, de render cordial, etc…”

celle aux 7 cases sert à acquérir le savoir, le droit, etc…”

“Le carré aux 8 cases rend attentive, clement, de bonne grace , chastedans l’âme et aide à trouver le droit chemin, etc…

celle aux 8 cases éloigne toute maladie des homes ou des animaux, arrête la fièvre ou les démangeaisons, améliore les mauvaises moeurs, guérit de la bétise, etc. “

"celle aux 9 cases vainc les ennemis et convainc les tétus"

“Le carré aux 10 cases aide à gagner la richesse, à garantir la fidélité aux serments, la force physique, le travail, etc…

celle aux 10 cases fait chéir, guérit du poison, rend sûr et gai”
ANAGRAMS

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BASIC ‘ABJAD’ CODING

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ADDITION (RANDOM DIRECTION)

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<td>60+30</td>
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‘ABJAD HAVAZ’ CODING

Ex: “SaLaaM“

4 WIDESPREAD ENCODING ARTEFACTS. Each table is an hidden message and complies with the encoding technic of his vower. Such secret message is held then as a mighty quranic charm.
‘RAML’

Roll of pierced dices. They are still in use for divination among traditional fortune tellers in Afghanistan.

“BUDUH” FOR “TAWEEZ” USE

Small table is a numerological encoding of a quran sura (= esoteric interpretation of letterings and symbols of Quran). Such tables are usually held as quranic charms (:

ZODIAQUE

FORTUNE TELLING ACCORDING QURANIC NUMEROLOGY the small carved table (centre) is a numerological encoding of a quran sura (= esoteric understanding of the Quran sura).
QURANIC NUMEROLOGY
Scriptures include numerological table, a pagan relief.

SHI’ITE TALISMANOLOGY
SHI’ITE KHAMSAH:
the hand is a central symbol of the Shia, as it reminds the cut hands of ABBAS in Kerbala, and each finger is given for a member of the family: emam ALI, emam Hosein, FATMAH, ABBAS MASUMEH, emam REZA.
RARE CALLIGRAPHD BLESS

The banknote was manually blessed by a famous seyyed.

“Truth is with Ali and Ali is with the Truth”
4. “NINETY-NINE VIRGINS”

BLESSING THE DEPARTED
QURAN READER IN EMAMZADEH-E-IKZAK, SAVEH: visitors wash and flourish tomb of relatives.
I observed also that departed relatives used to offer datefruits and sweets after Mourning period.
SEDUCTION TALISMAN INVOKING DEPARTED’ S POWERS

the talisman is efficient with departed shroud pieces and charcoal ashes.

“BUDUH” FOR “TAWEEZ” USE encoding of a quran sura ,usually held as quranic charms (: taweez)

ZODIAQUE

Scorpio is a frequent symbol in hurufi-like designs of the quranic formulas. Each cell of its end symbolizes stages ( silsila lineages, or anagrams of formula, so on)


[I3-BK] : Ittig , Annette, "A talismanic bowl" , in Annales Islamologiques #18, p. 79-94, as issued by Institut Francais d Archeologie (http://www.ifao.egnet.net ), Cairo, 1982. (p)


