

Tajiks Style In The Late 1995s

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Interviewing my mother.

Questions that I asked my mom:

- What was in style when they were young? What type of style did they have?
- How they lived and what were their beliefs: Urban, Suburban, Rural?
- What was important to them: Education? Career? Trade/Business/Entrepreneur? Family?
- The degree of rigidity in the class structure: How was that reflected in how they dressed?

What they considered appropriate?

In 1995, when my mother was a new bride, who recently got married in Samarkand (the city where I was born), their style was way different than it is now. Tajik national clothes were very bright, beautiful and cozy. Tajik clothes were a part of the rich cultural traditions and lifestyle of Tajik people. According to my mom, traditional Tajik women used to wear a dress that had to cover most of the parts of their body. Their style consisted of plain khan-atlas tunic-dress and wide trousers. Holiday garments were made of satin fabric richly embroidered with golden thread. Women's headdress consisted of three elements: a skull-cap, kerchief, and turban. An essential part of the traditional holiday garments of Tajik women was gold and silver jewelry: earrings, bracelets, necklaces. Samarkand women most of all prefer the colors of red as a symbol of a new bride. The embroidery pattern was chosen not by chance, it always had magic or practical function. One could judge the owner's social status by the patterns, though sometimes they bear other meanings. For instance, repeating geometric pattern on the braiding was something like an amulet clothing of black or dark blue colors was not popular in any region of Samarkand due to a superstition. The colors in this tradition were chosen on the basis of the position in society. For example, prevailing blue and violet nuances in a woman's dress showed

her husband's pride of place. In the past, In urban places it was uncommon to meet people in Tajik traditional clothes, it was worn on traditional festivities and holidays. But in rural places, it was a part of everyday and holiday garments. Their footwear was called "mahsi" (ichigi – nice heelless step-in boots with a soft sole), and high boots made of rough leather or rubber. It was very handy and warm footwear. The mahsi footwear used to represent the people's social status, the person who's wearing the mahsi considered as someone from a higher social class family. A style for married and single women was different, for example; single women had to wear more simple dresses that were sewn with traditional fabric-Ikat Atlas. Married women such as brides had to be more stylish by wearing more pretty dresses that are full of design with ornate beads. What they wear and their style was important because their style was something that allowed other people to identify their marital status. During that period of time marriage and family was important to women, therefore, they had to dress up in a way that would represent them as someone who's married and has a family. So basically for clothing, the purpose of their style was their religion and nationally. They were forced to follow and participate in their religious activities such as getting married early and dressing up in a way that would show who they are, which affected some people in a certain way. It mostly affected the people from lower social class, even though some of the women were married, they still didn't have enough money to buy those fancy expensive outfits to show their marital status.

Interviewing my father.

The questions that I asked:

- What was in style when they were young? What type of style did they have?
- How they lived and what were their beliefs: Urban, Suburban, Rural?

- Their values what was important to them: Education?  
Career? Trade/Business/Entrepreneur? Family?
- The degree of rigidity in the class structure: How was that reflected in how they dressed?  
What they considered appropriate?

During the same period of time (1995) men also had a totally different style than it is now. Tajik traditional clothes differ from region to region in terms of color, embroidered patterns, style. But there are some common features in every national costume. According to my dad, the basis of national men's suit was a chapan, the quilted robe, tied with a kerchief. Traditional men's cap was "tubeteika." "Kuylak" is the men's straight cut undershirt. "Ishton" is men's wide trousers, narrowed at ankles. Belts for gala dresses were normally very smart, made of velvet or embroidered with silver figured metal plates and buckles. Everyday shirts are tied with long sashes. Headdress-which is called tubeteika, is one of the main elements in the traditional Uzbek clothing, All men, women and children used to wear Tubeteika. Traditional footwear is high-boots, made of thin leather, which was expensive and designed for people from higher social class. Therefore Tajik people used to wear that footwear to show their social status. Shirts were worn everywhere, but the men from the city of Fergana and Bukhara region wear a yakhtak, a wrap shirt. People from other cities would recognize people from Fergana and Bukhara based on their style, which was not a good thing because, as soon as people from other cities, like Samarkand saw people from Fergana, they judged them and treated them disrespectfully just because they were Uzbek speakers whom Tajik people hated the most. Family and the way their family looked was important to them because Tajiks and Uzbeks were

haters and always used to compete on each other. Therefore Tajik people always wanted to look good in order to be considered as someone stylist and rich.