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ENCYCLOPEDIA OF HENNA

**Harquus: North African
Women's Traditional Body Art**
Volume 3: Tattoo



Catherine Cartwright-Jones

Harquus: North African Women's Traditional Body Art: Tattoos
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Cover Graphic by Alex Morgan
Photography by Roy Jones

Published by Henna Page Publications, a division of TapDancing Lizard LLC
4237 Klein Ave.
Stow, Ohio 44224 USA

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Printed in the United States of America

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Catherine Cartwright-Jones
Harquus: North African Women's Traditional Body Art: Paint

Harquus: patterns

Harquus: North African Women's Traditional Body Art

Volume 3: Tattoo

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Always use cosmetics and body paints specifically made for safe use on skin. Always use safe, natural red-brown henna in your henna work. If you wish to use kohl on your eyes, please test it with a lead testing kit from your hardware store before using it on yourself; some kohl products contain lead. Kohl containing lead may cause long term health damage. Never use any "black henna" product containing para-phenylenediamine to stain skin. Para-phenylenediamine may cause severe injuries to both artist and client.

North African Women's Tattoos: Method, Evaluation and Interpretation

Catherine Cartwright-Jones

I have collected several hundred original postcards and photographs from the early 20th century that show evidence of traditional body arts. The images of women in colonial North Africa, particularly Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco in this book are from my collection.

Postcards are small media, and their images are often damaged by being passed from hand, or through the postal system. The reproduction processes for these postcards were often cheap, with poor paper and finishing. In a postcard measuring less than fourteen centimeters, the face of the woman in the image is often no more than two centimeters, and the tattoos on the image are only one or two millimeters at most, and only visible under magnification.

I scan postcards with a hand lens. When I see markings that may indicate presence of traditional body art, I scan the card at 1200 dpi. I adjust the contrast, light and darkness of the image to enhance the clarity of details. When an area of the image appears to show a tattoo or other traditional body arts, I compare it with records of North African women's tattoos collected by anthropologists and sociologists. This comparison helps reconstruct areas where a tattoo might have been unevenly applied and faded. If I can confirm with other records that the markings are probably intentional, and not an effect of degraded printing or physical accident (such as injury to the person), I diagram what appears to me to be the original pattern.

Not all reproductions in this book clearly show the body art details as can be seen at 1200 dpi with enhanced contrast. The images are scaled here that the reader can see the whole person's face as context for the body art, with normal lighting. I have diagrammed the tattoos as observed to the best of my ability. I have created the variants by combining anthological records with traditional textile patterns: many references state that women's tattoos mirror the patterns women produced in their daily textile production.

The purpose of this book are is to provide historically accurate examples of North African women's tattooing from photographic record with period-appropriate variations so that people can enjoy them again in all their beauty and diversity. This book also demonstrates the use of harquus, a safe temporary tattoo paint from mehandi.com, so women can enjoy wearing this beauty if they do not choose permanent tattoos. Harquus and instructions are available at <http://www.mehandi.com/shop/harquusplatinum/index.html> and <http://www.mehandi.com/shop/tattoo/index.html> .

Have fun and be beautiful!
Catherine Cartwright-Jones



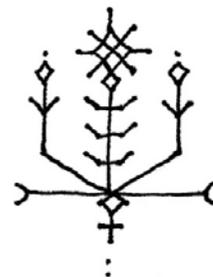
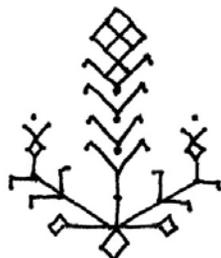
Figure 1: Woman with clearly visible forehead tattoo, chin tattoos less easily visible, 1900 - 1910: 99
Scènes et types – Fez – Jeune Fille .Arabe edit H.D Severo - Fez



Diagram of tattoos from Figure 1



Variants of forehead tattoo from Figure 1



Variants of chin tattoo from Figure 1



Variants of lower lip tattoos from Figure 1

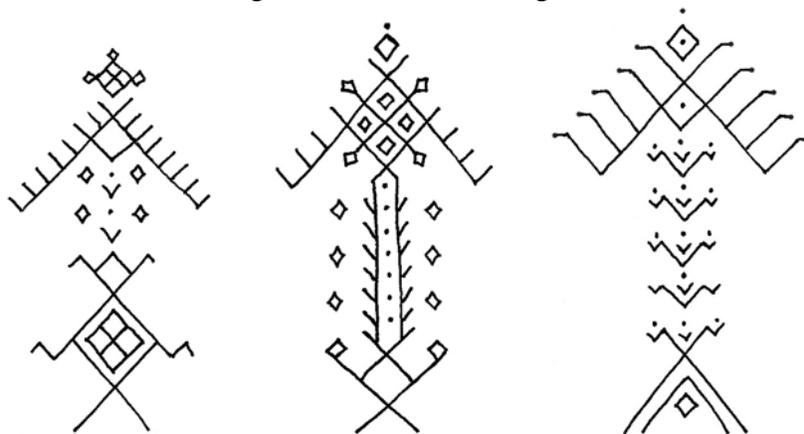


Figure 2: Child with forehead and chin tattoos, 1900 – 1910: 1255 Juene fille du Sud Alsacenne des Arts Photomecaniques Strasbourg

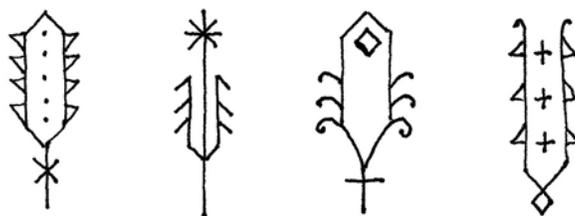
This child (by the appearance of her teeth she may have been only twelve or thirteen years old at the time of this photograph) has tattoo marks that are fairly fresh. At high resolution, it is possible to see that the individual needle or torn punctures creating the tattoos are visible, still raised and scabbing over.



Diagram of tattoo from Figure 2



Variants of forehead tattoo in Figure 2



Variants of chin tattoo from Figure 2



Figure 3: Woman with forehead tattoo, 1900 – 1910: *Scènes et types Jeune Bédouine Collection Idéale*



Diagram of tattoo from figure 3



Pattern adapted from *La Femme Chaouia De L'Aures*, Gaudry (1929)

In “*La Femme Chaouia De L'Aures*” (1929) Gaudry writes that forehead patterns similar to those in Figures 2 and 3 are meant to resemble palm trees.



Variants of forehead tattoo from Figure 3



**Figure 4: Two women, one with tattoos partially obscured by injury, 1940 - 50 (postmarked 1954)
2579 Scènes et Types Innocente camaraderie Edition "La Cigogne" Casablanca**

Two young women: woman at left has tattoos partially obscured by scarring. She has also painted her eyebrows, and her lower lip. The fingernails of the woman at the right were hennaed about 6 weeks prior to photograph. Both young women's lips appear to be stained with *swak*, walnut bark or root.



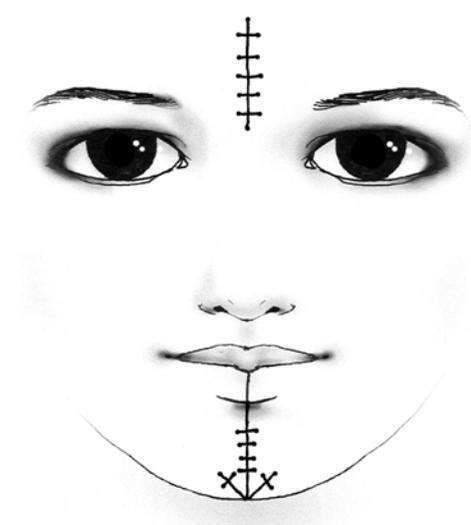
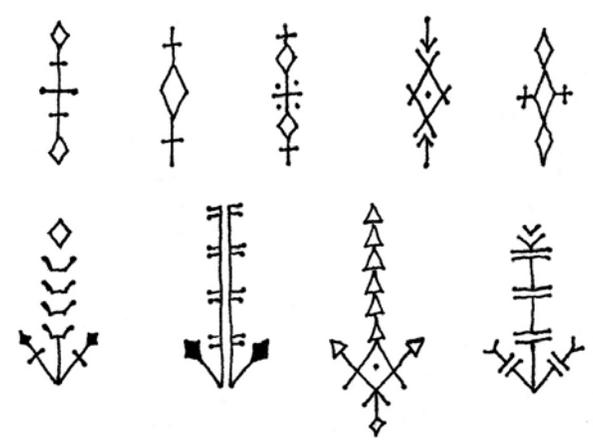
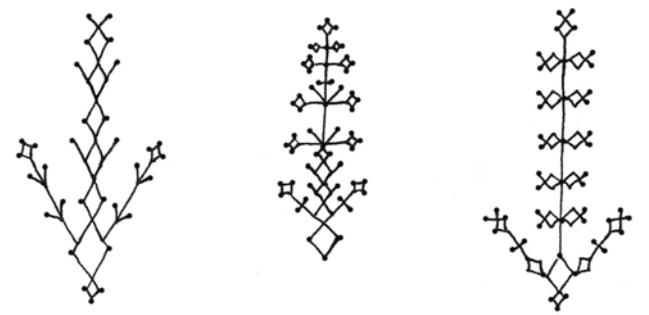


Diagram of tattoos of woman at left from Figure 4



Variants of forehead tattoos, woman at left from Figure 4



Variants of chin tattoo, woman at left from Figure 4



Figure 5: Dark skinned woman with chin tattoo, 1900 – 1910:

50 Casablanca Une Nourrice Indigene P. Madelaine, èdit, Casablanca Trompette Photo

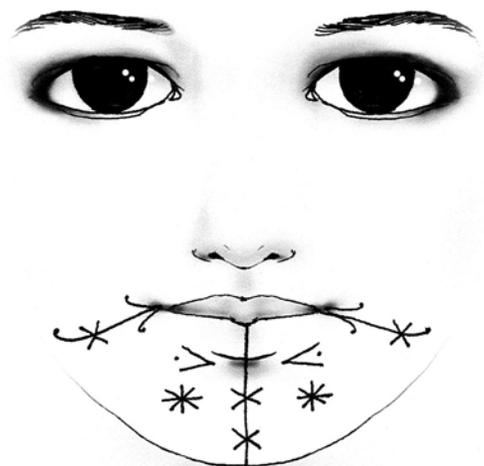
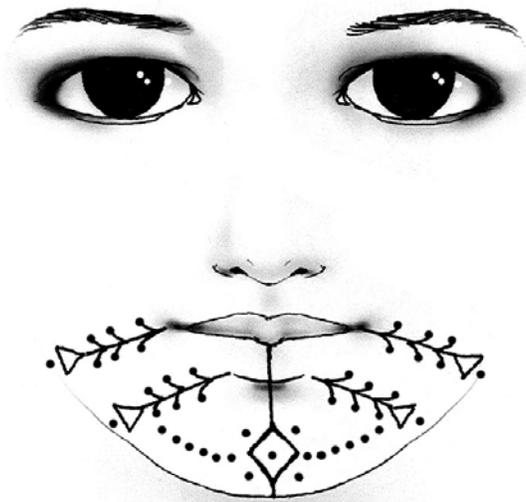


Diagram of tattoo from Figure 5



Variant of tattoo from Figure 5



Some colonial observers wrote that only light skinned women had tattoos. Figure 5, and subsequent studies by Seawright (1984), show that dark skinned women also tattooed.



Figure 6: Woman with forehead and eyebrow tattoos, 1900 - 1910:

Jeune Bédouine J. Geiser, Phot. Alger

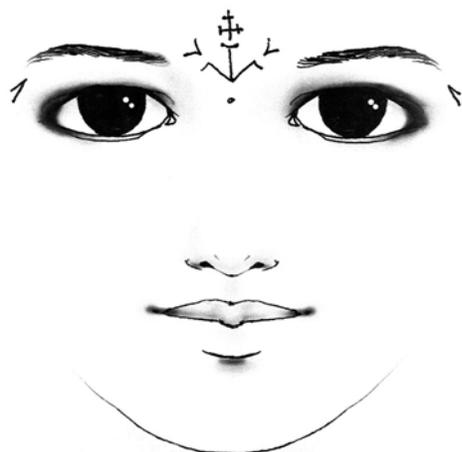
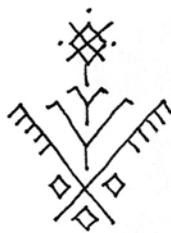
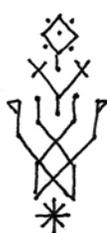
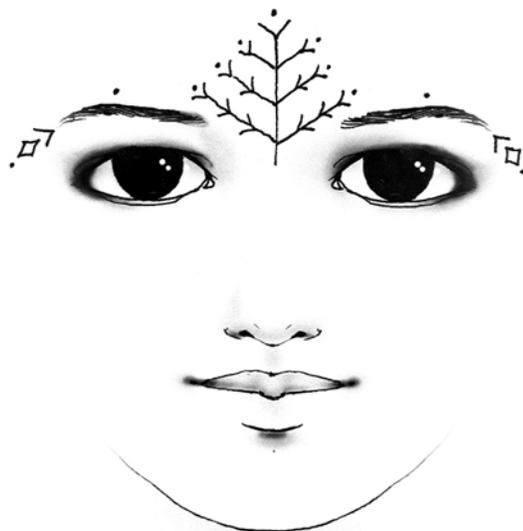


Diagram of tattoos from Figure 6



Variants of tattoos from Figure 6



Figure 7: Woman with stained lips and forehead tattoos, 1900 - 1910:
Scènes et Types Ma Fiancée, postmarked 1917, Collection Ideale

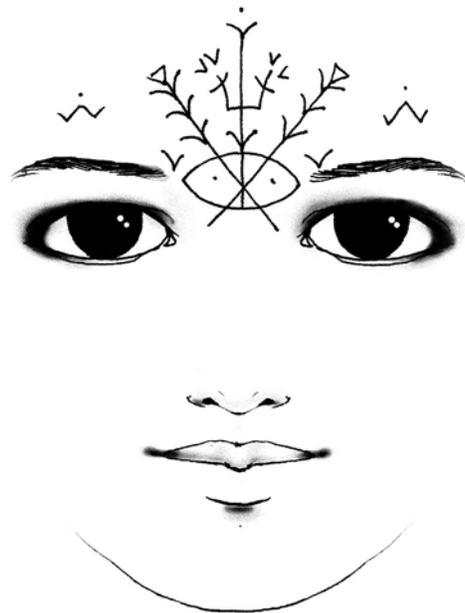
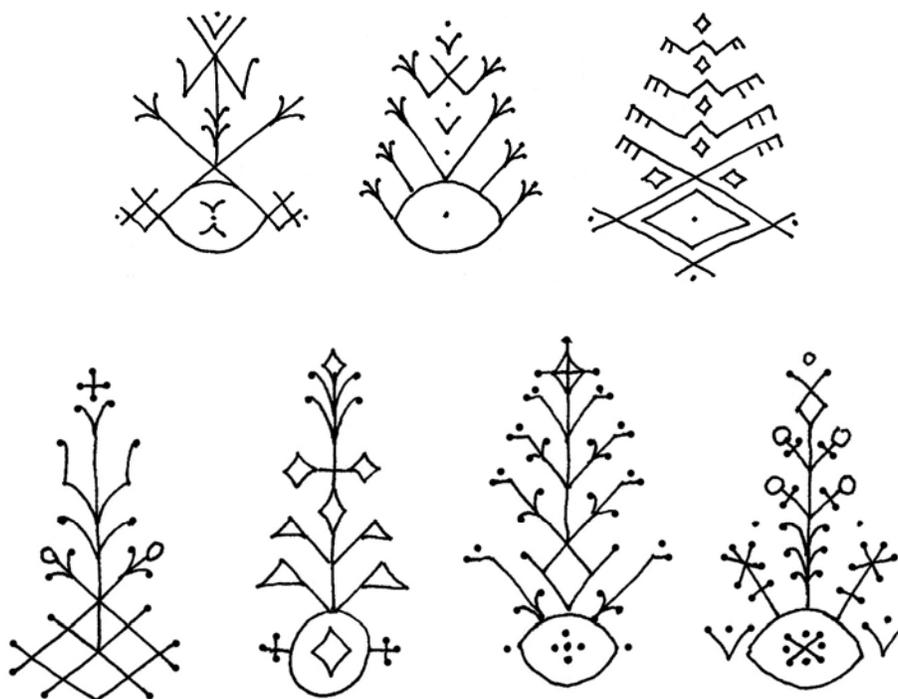


Diagram of tattoos in Figure 7



Variants of forehead tattoo from Figure 7



Figure 8: Ouled Nail with forehead tattoo and painted eyebrows, 1900 – 1910

1281 Scènes et Types Une Ouled Nail Cie Alsacienne des Arts Photomécaniques Strasborg

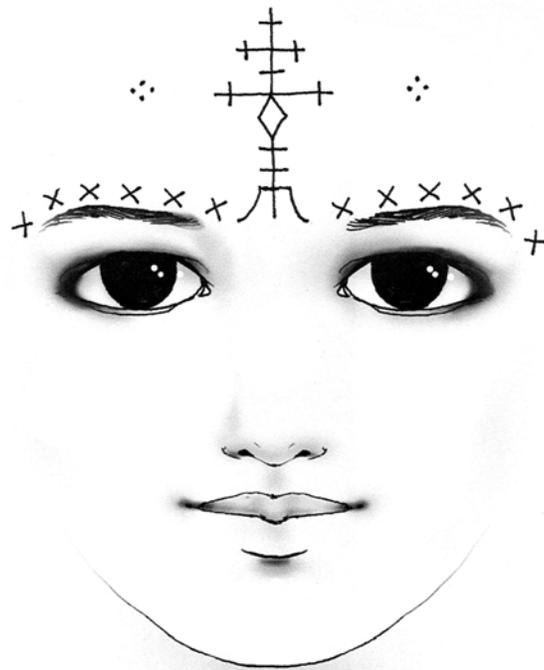
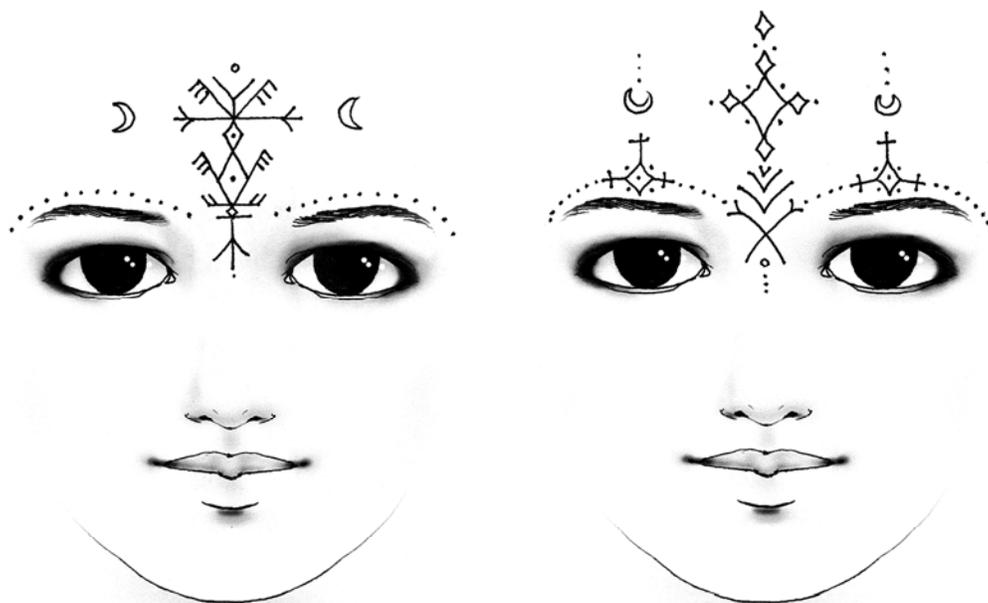


Diagram of tattoo from Figure 8



Variants of tattoos from Figure 8



Figure 9: Woman from Southern Algeria with forehead and chin tattoos, 1900 – 1910:

322 Femme du Sud-Algerien J Geiser - Alger

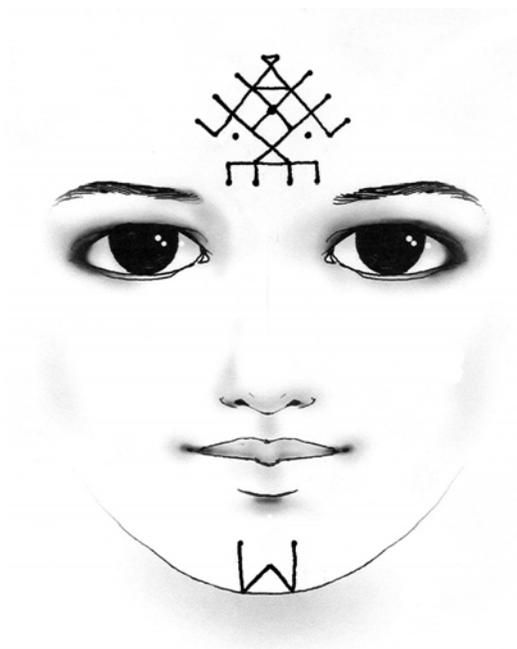
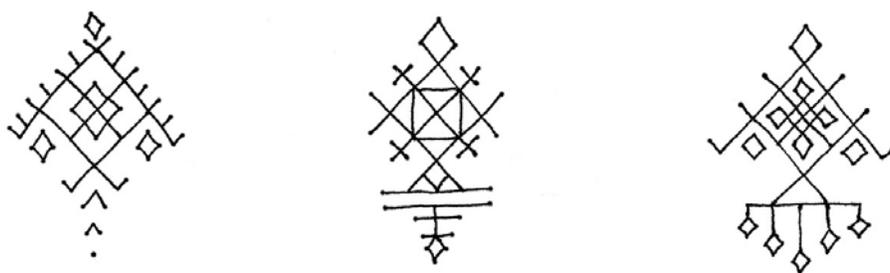
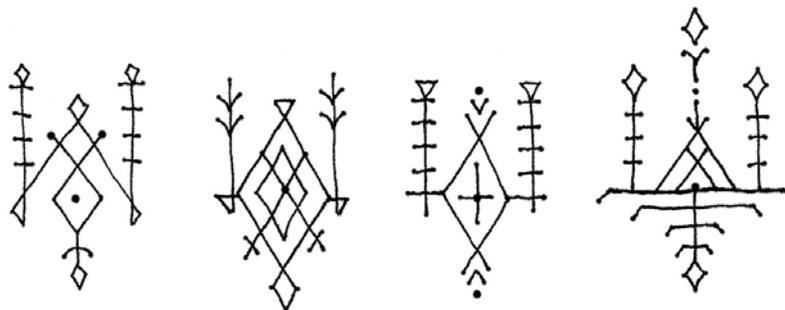


Diagram of tattoos in Figure 9



Variants of forehead tattoos in Figure 9



Variants of chin tattoos in Figure 9



Figure 10: Ouled Nail with forehead and cheek tattoos, 1900 – 1920:

Une Ouled Nail, LL

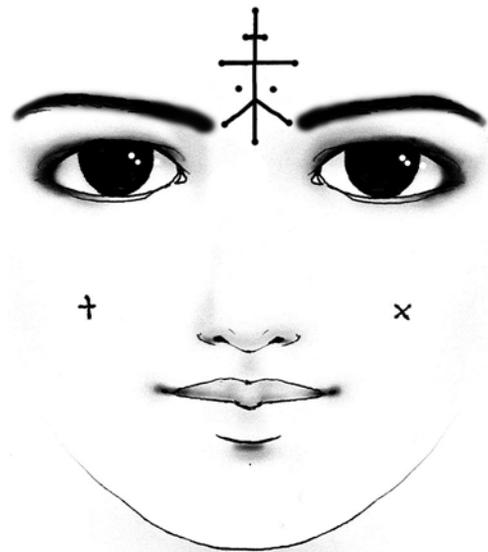
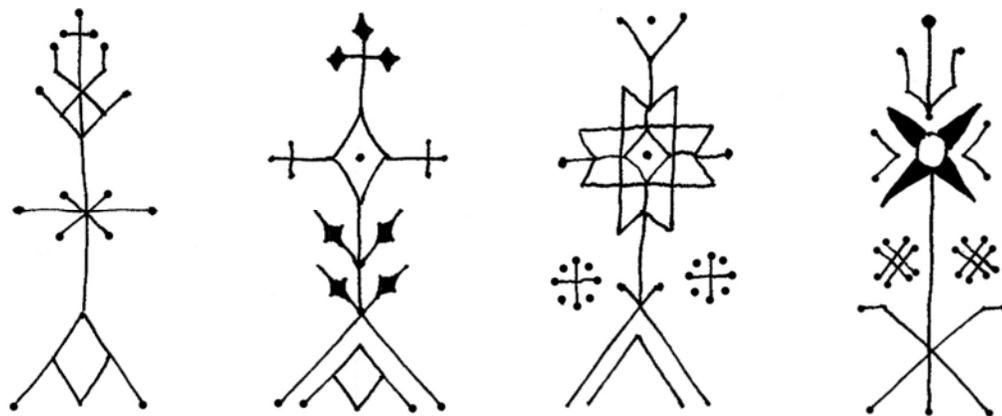
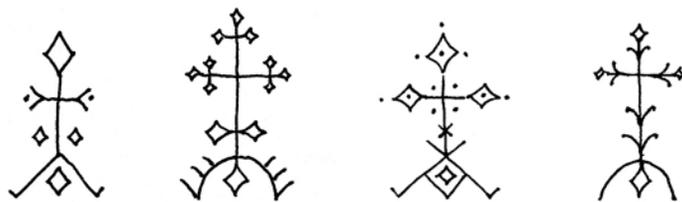


Diagram of tattoo pattern from Figure 10



Variants of forehead tattoo pattern from Figure 10



Figure 11: Woman with tattoo along jaw line with raised scarring at tattoo site, 1900 – 1910:

Maroc Scènes et Types Une Mauresque

This woman's tattoos show signs of imperfect healing. The pigments used to create tattoos were not sterile, and the tools used to cut or pierce the tattoos were not sterile. Infection often followed tattooing.

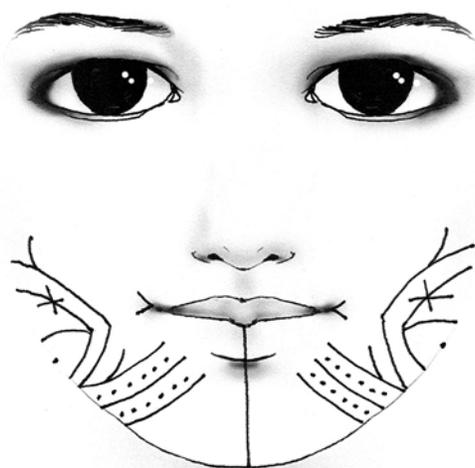
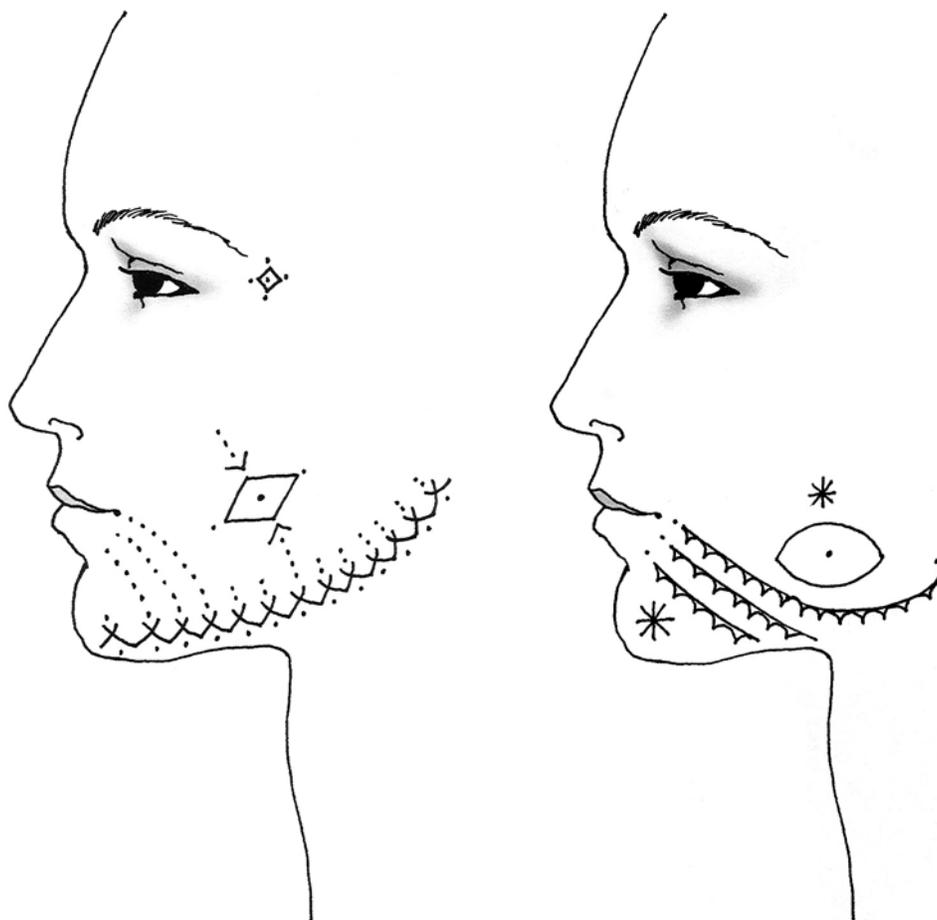


Diagram of tattoo from Figure 11



Variants of tattoo from Figure 11



**Figure 12: Young woman with tattoos made from small razor or knife cuts rubbed with carbon:
1900 – 1910: 859a Mauresque ND Phot**

High resolution scans of Figure 12 show the tattoos are made of finely cut lines rubbed with black pigment. These cuts were probably made by a very sharp knife or razor.

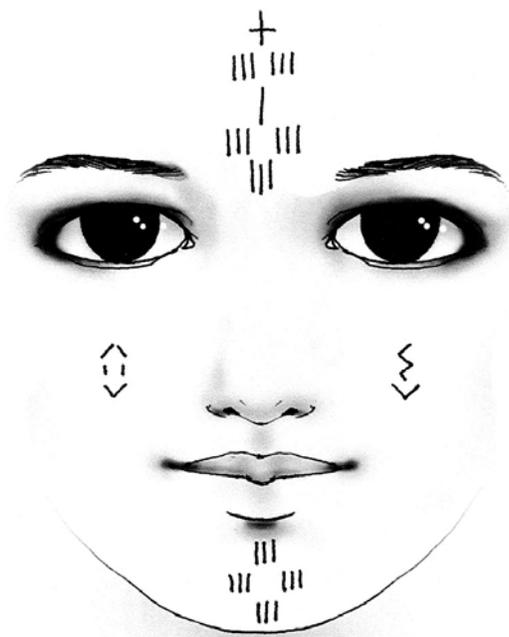
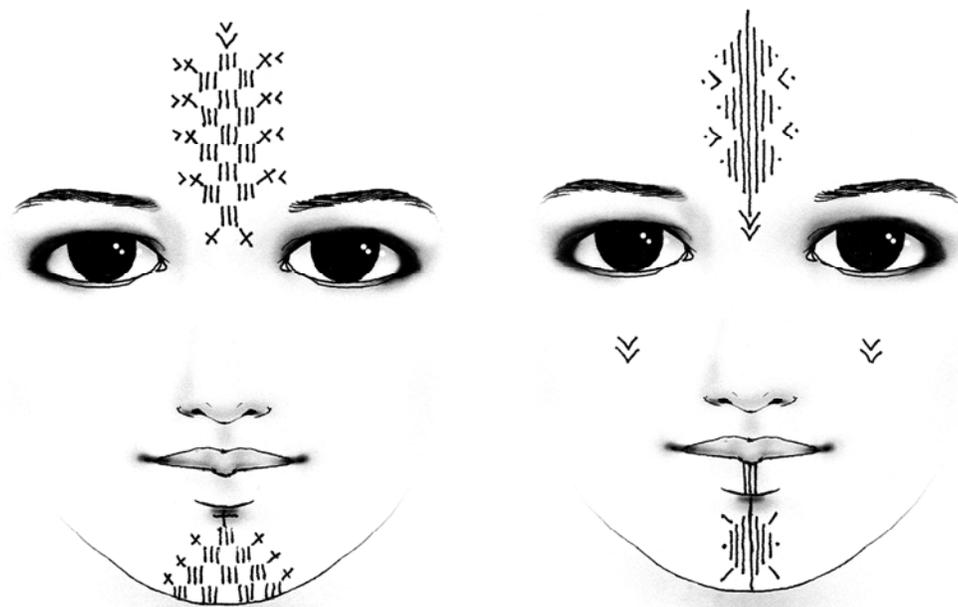


Diagram of tattoos from Figure 12



Variants of tattoos from Figure 12



Figure 13 Woman with tattooed lip and chin, 1920- 1930:

Type De Marocaine: Edit. Librairie Papeterie Avedis.

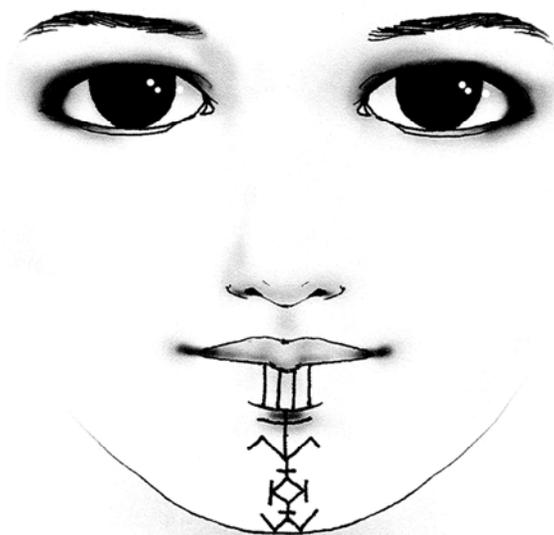
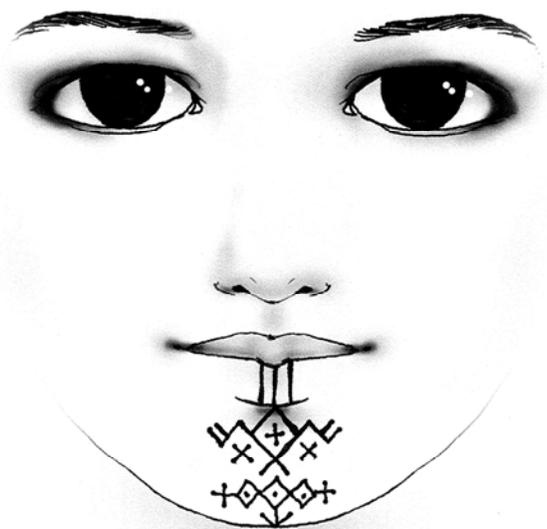
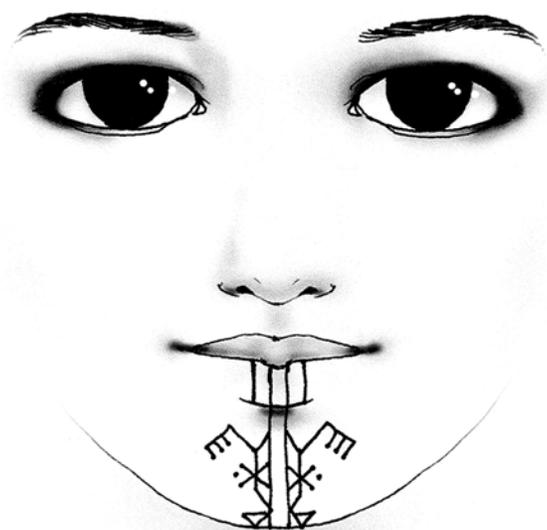


Diagram of tattoo from Figure 13



Variants of tattoo from Figure 13



Figure 14: Woman with forehead and chin tattoos mixing henna, 1900 – 1910:

1505 L'Afrique du Nord, Type de femmes



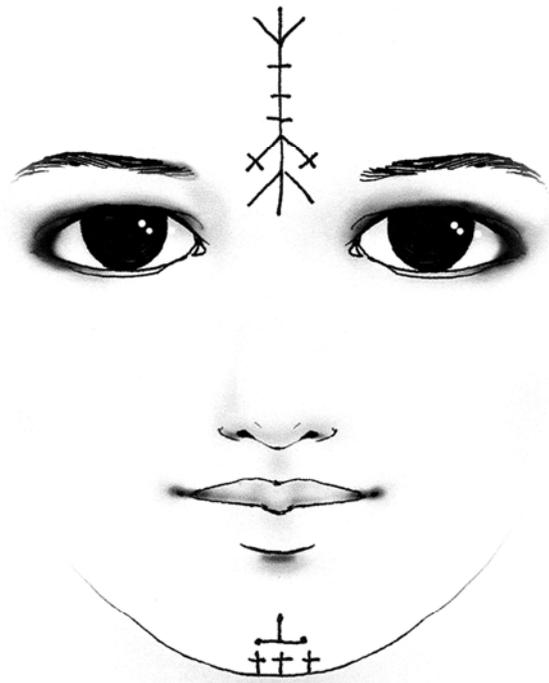
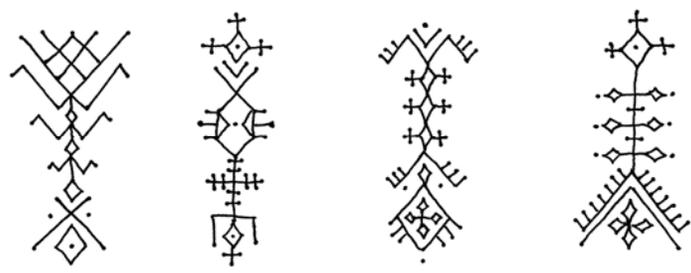
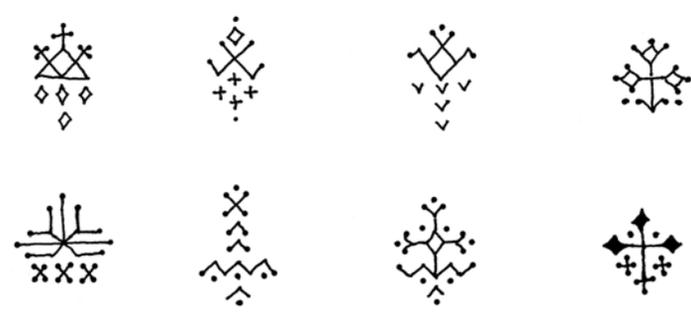


Diagram of tattoos from Figure 14



Variants of forehead tattoo from Figure 14



Variants of chin tattoo from Figure 14



**Figure 15: Woman with forehead tattoo and hennaed fingernails eating a date, postmarked 1934
Tunisia: 8188 – *Le Femme à la date***



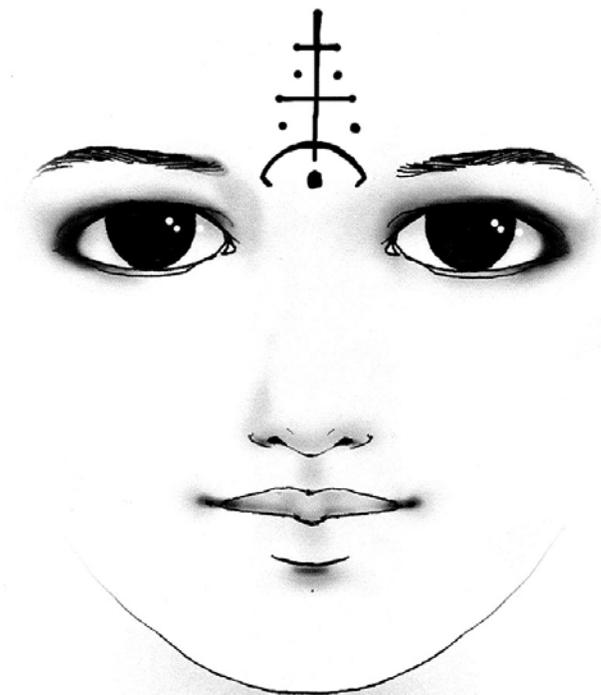
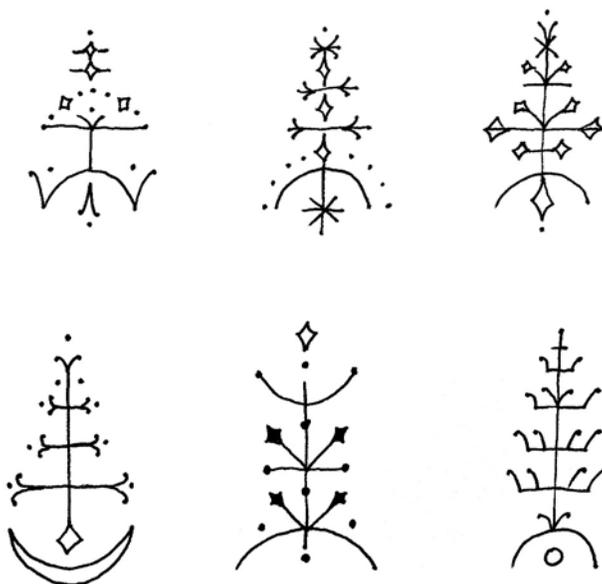


Diagram of tattoo in Figure 15



Variants of tattoo in Figure 15



Figure 16: Tunisian woman with tattooed arms, hennaed left hand, and tattooed forehead, 1900 – 1920: 236 Tunis – Femme Tunisienne se couvrant de son haik LL



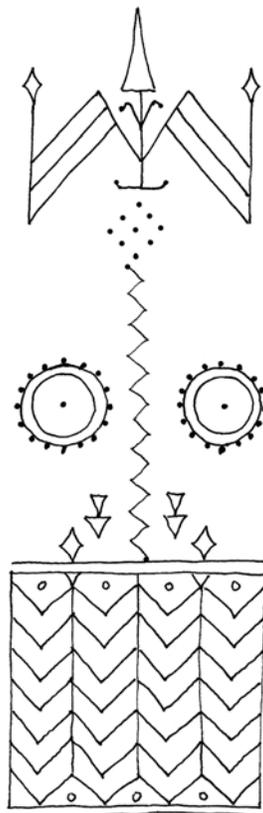
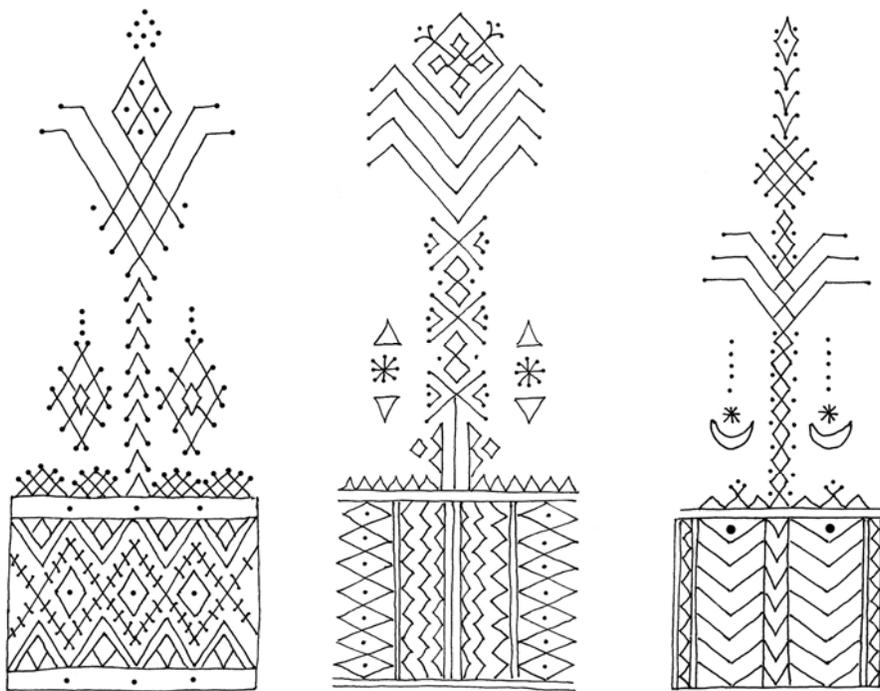


Diagram of arm tattoo from Figure 16



Variants of arm tattoo from Figure 16



Figure 17: Moroccan woman with heavily tattooed chin, 1940 – 1960

This tattoo is bolder than the ones from earlier decades may have been done with a tattoo machine.



Detail of Figure 17



Diagram of tattoo from Figure 17

Recreate these patterns for your own beauty and pleasure!

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Use materials from www.mehandi.com for body art: Safe, temporary, convenient.



Harqus Platinum from mehandi.com



Harqus Platinum is:

- A resin-based paint made to look exactly like a tattoo
- FDA approved
- Can be removed with baby oil or 99% isopropyl alcohol
- Has no PPD: it does not penetrate or stain the skin
- Is a durable waterproof skin paint
- Is safe for children and adults
- Is used to safely, temporarily, create tattoos on actors for films
- Harqus Platinum gives good coverage in only one coat: no need to apply twice.
- Harqus Platinum lasts a week under average conditions, longer if cared for.
- Harqus Platinum can be applied with a brush, like painting with India ink.
- You will need to clean your brushes and cup with 99% isopropyl alcohol.

To use Harqus Platinum:



Shake the bottle of Harqus Platinum and put about 10 drops into the bottom of a shot glass. Dip your brush in the paint.



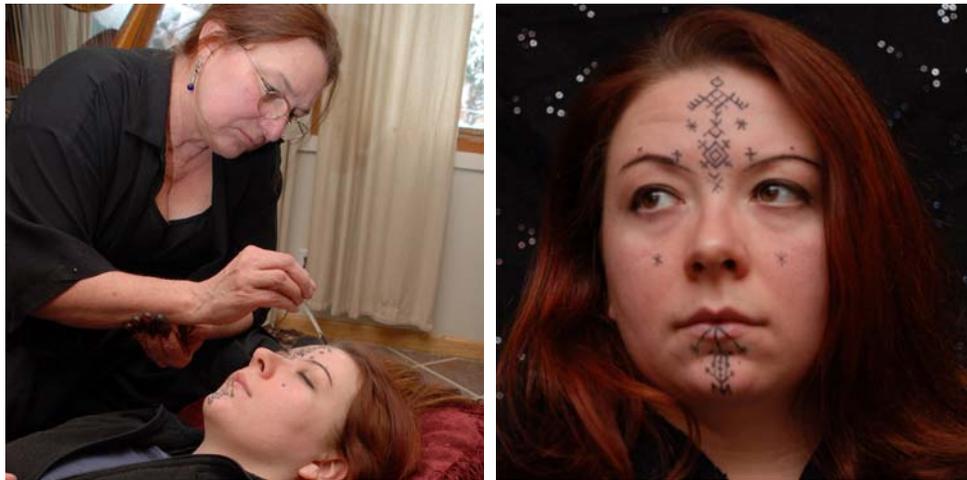
Paint the Harqus Platinum onto the skin with a fine paintbrush. Make tiny dots to line up the pattern.



Keep the lines fine and the pattern on center.



When you are finished, dust the paint with talcum powder.



Brush away the excess talcum powder, and the harqus will look exactly like a tattoo. The harqus will last a few days with care, and can be removed with baby oil.



Add color, glitter and gems for a more modern look. Apply Scheherazade gilding and Swarovski gems according to instructions at www.mehandi.com over the tribal black design: beautiful for special occasions!



Order supplies for body art from www.mehandi.com
info@mehandi.com

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