

التراث التقليدي لملابس النساء في المنطقة الشرقية من المملكة العربية السعودية

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الملخص:

يهدف هذا البحث إلى توفير المعلومات التي تساعد في التعرف على جزء من حضارة هذه المنطقة، فيما يخص ملابسها التقليدية النسائية. وفي ذلك محاولة لتسجيل تراثنا الملبسي، المعرض للزوال بسبب التطور الحضاري السريع، والاستفادة مما يمكن تطويره منه؛ ليطمئن مع متطلبات العصر الحديث. ولقد تمت الاستعانة بعينة مادية وعينة بشرية، واتباع المنهج التاريخي. ومن خلال الدراسة، تم تسجيل الأنواع المختلفة للملابس التقليدية للنساء، من حيث مسمياتها وطرق تنفيذها وأنواع الأقمشة المستخدمة في ذلك، وتوضيح الأنواع المزخرفة منها. وبتحليل النتائج تم توضيح العلاقات الموجودة بين تلك الملابس وأصولها الإسلامية، وتأثير التجارة والمناطق المجاورة فيها، ومدى التشابه بينها وبين ملابس المناطق الأخرى والبلدان المجاورة لمنطقة البحث. هذا بالإضافة إلى توضيح تأثير الجو وطبيعة المنطقة الساحلية والمهن في أشكال الملابس.

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Traditional Costume Of Women In The Eastern Province Of Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to introduce the costumes of women in the Eastern Province to preserve and document a part of our culture heritage identity, of this country. The researcher conducted this study through personal interviews and direct observation of the garments, to record the different kinds of women costumes, to give a detailed study, and clear picture about it.

By analyzing the results, the study comes to the conclusion that traditional clothing in Eastern Province has a historical profound-roots origin that relates to the Islamic era. Because it was effected by: trading activities, neighbour countries, the weather, the coastal life style, the jobs, and people activities.



١ - المقدمة ومشكلة البحث:

تحتاج الأزياء التقليدية إلى كثير من الدراسة والتحليل لجوانب عديدة يكتنفها الغموض ويهددها الانقراض، وخاصةً بعد تلاحق الأحداث وسرعة التطور الذي انعكس بدوره على تلك الأزياء، مما طمس معالم بعضها ومحا البعض الآخر. وقد صدقت هيام ملقي (٦٣، ١٩٨٧م) عندما قالت: «إننا إذا لم نعلم أمرنا وندرسه بعمق ونخطط له بروية وأناة فإننا نسير في الطريق الذي يؤدي إلى إضمحلال أزيائنا الشعبية شيئاً فشيئاً».

لذا رأت الباحثة كمتخصصة في هذا المجال اللحاق السريع بتحقيق وتوثيق جزء مهم من التراث، وهو التراث اللبسي للمرأة في المنطقة الشرقية، لما تتميز به تلك المنطقة من خصوصية، ترجع إلى بيئتها الزراعية والبحرية ومقوماتها الحياتية، التي انعكست بدورها على أزيائها التقليدية، وما حدث لها من تحول بعد اكتشاف النفط.

٢ - أهداف البحث:

يهدف هذا البحث إلى:

- ❖ تسجيل القطع اللبسية النسائية وتصنيفها في منطقة البحث.
- ❖ تحديد الأساليب المتبعة في زخرفة تلك الملابس، من حيث ألوانها ومصادرها وخاماتها وأنواعها.
- ❖ توضيح أثر البيئة في تلك الملابس.
- ❖ مقارنة ملابس النساء التقليدية في منطقة البحث بملابس البلاد المجاورة لها.



٣- أهمية البحث:

ترجع أهمية هذا البحث إلى تأريخ الملابس التقليدية وتوثيقها لمنطقة من المناطق المهمة بالمملكة، والاستفادة منها بوصفها جزءاً مهماً من التراث، ومصدراً خصباً، لتأصيل الأزياء العربية الحديثة المقتبسة منه.

٤- أسئلة البحث:

- ٤-١: ما القطع الأساسية المكونة للملابس التقليدية للنساء في المنطقة؟
- ٤-٢: ما الأساليب التي كانت تتبع في تنفيذ تلك الملابس؟
- ٤-٣: ما الأساليب التي كانت تتبع في تطريزها وزخرفتها؟
- ٤-٤: هل كانت تختلف باختلاف السن و الحالة الاقتصادية والمناسبة؟
- ٤-٥: هل هناك تشابه بين ملابس المنطقة الشرقية، والمناطق المجاورة؟

٥- الأسلوب البحثي:

٥-١: منهج البحث:

استخدم في هذا البحث المنهج التاريخي والوصفي.

٥-٢: حدود البحث:

٥-٢-١: الحدود البشرية:

يتكون مجتمع البحث من عينة من الشهود الذين عاصروا موضوع الدراسة، أو ممن شاهدوا واقتنوا قطع التراث الملبسي الخاص بالمنطقة.



٥-٢-٢: الحدود الزمنية:

إنه عن طريق العينة البشرية وكذلك المادية، يمكن الحصول على معلومات ترجع إلى مدة زمنية بعيدة، ولهذا يمكن القول بأن الدراسة سوف تعطي معلومات تصل إلى حوالي مائة سنة ماضية.

٥-٢-٣: الحدود الجغرافية:

المنطقة الشرقية من المملكة العربية السعودية.

٥-٣: عينة البحث:

٥-٣-١: العينة البشرية:

عينة قصدية من حملة التراث ممن لديهم القدرة على تحقيق أغراض الدراسة، وتعدُّ من المصادر الأولية للبيانات.

٥-٣-٢: العينة المادية:

مجموعة من ملابس النساء التقليدية الخاصة بمنطقة البحث، وتعدُّ من المصادر الأولية للبيانات.

ومن ناحية أخرى، تمت الاستعانة بمصادر البيانات الثانوية، مثل كتب الرحالة والأبحاث التاريخية.

٥-٤: أدوات البحث:

- الاستبانة:

لجمع المعلومات من أفراد العينة.

- المقابلة الشخصية:

لتوضيح الطرق التي اتبعت في الزخرفة و التطريز.



- الملاحظة:

لتسجيل معلومات تفصيلية عن أساليب التنفيذ والزخرفة، والتعرف على أنواع الخامات.

- التصوير الفوتوغرافي:

لنقل صورة طبق الأصل وتوضيح التفاصيل.

- الرسوم التوضيحية:

لتوضيح الشكل العام، والخطوط الأساسية، وأماكن الزخرفة في الزي.

٦- جمع البيانات:

❖ تجميع و تبويب البيانات الموجودة في الاستمارات.

❖ فحص الملابس، وتسجيل مواصفاتها.

❖ تصوير الملابس، وعمل الرسوم التوضيحية لأنواعها المختلفة.

٧- تحليل البيانات:

تصنف البيانات تبعاً لأنواع الملابس، ويتم التعليق عليها، ومقارنة الشائع

استخدامه بملابس البلدان والمناطق المجاورة.

٨- الدراسات السابقة:

قامت الباحثة بالاطلاع على كثير مما سبق كتابته في هذا المجال؛ للتعرف على

البحوث العلمية، والدراسات الأكاديمية، والمؤلفات التي تناولت بالدراسة والتحليل

الأزياء التقليدية؛ ووجدت أنها لم تدرس الأزياء النسائية للمنطقة الشرقية، ومن أهم

تلك الدراسات التي بحثت في الأزياء النسائية في المملكة و الدول المجاورة لمنطقة



البحث ما يلي :

- دراسة ليلي البسام في رسالة ماجستير منشورة بعنوان: «التراث التقليدي لملايس النساء في نجد» مركز التراث بقطر، سنة ١٩٨٥م.
- دراسة ليلي البسام في رسالة دكتوراه غير منشورة بعنوان: «الأساليب والزخارف في الملايس التقليدية في نجد- دراسة ميدانية مقارنة بين ملايس الرجال والنساء» سنة ١٩٨٨م.
- دراسة ليلي البسام «الملايس التقليدية في عسير»، مجلة المأثورات الشعبية، العددان ٥٣-٥٤، السنة ١٤، يناير - أبريل ١٩٩٩م.
- دراسة ليلي فدا في رسالة ماجستير غير منشورة بعنوان: «الملايس التقليدية في مكة المكرمة أساليبها وتطريزها» سنة ١٩٩٣م.
- دراسة إيمان ميمني في رسالة ماجستير غير منشورة بعنوان: «دراسة تطوير الملايس التقليدية المتوارثة و مكملاتها للمرأة في محافظة الطائف» سنة ١٩٩٦م.
- دراسة وليد الجادر بعنوان: «الأزياء الشعبية في العراق» سنة ١٩٧٩م.
- دراسة سلوى المغربي بعنوان: «الموسوعة المختصرة للأزياء و الحلي وأدوات الزينة الشعبية في الكويت» سنة ١٩٨٦م.
- دراسة آمنة الحمدان وأخريات بعنوان: «زينة وأزياء المرأة القطرية» سنة ١٩٩٧م.
- دراسة أطفاف الصباح بعنوان: «تقاليد: قراءات في الثقافة والفنون التقليدية الكويتية» سنة ٢٠٠٠م.
- دراسة نجلة العزي بعنوان: «أنماط من الأزياء الشعبية النسائية في الخليج» سنة ١٩٨٥م.



تعريف بمنطقة البحث:

الموقع:

تقع على ساحل الخليج العربي في شرق المملكة العربية السعودية. وهي عبارة عن سهل ساحلي صحراوي، تحتوي على أكبر واحة طبيعية في العالم، وهي واحة الأحساء. وتشتهر بعيونها ذات المياه المعدنية، كما تشتهر بزراعة أجود أنواع النخيل (وزارة المعارف، ٤٧، ١٩٩٩ م)، (المعارف، ١٧، ١٥، ١٩٩٥ م).

المناخ:

معتدل يميل للبرودة في الشتاء، شديد الحرارة وعالي الرطوبة في الصيف. والأمطار قليلة بشكل عام (السبيعي، ٣٠، ١٩٨٩ م)، (الغريب، ٣٥، ١٩٨٨ م).

عمل المرأة:

كانت المرأة عضواً منتجاً في المجتمع، فقد عملت في الزراعة في البيئة الزراعية، وفي التجارة في الأسواق الخاصة بها، حيث كانت تبيع ما يهتم المرأة من عطور ومواد زينة وأقمشة وثياب وغيرها، بالإضافة إلى عملها كبائعة متجولة على المنازل، وتسمى «دلالة». وعملت في تزيين المرأة وتسريح شعرها وتسمى «مشاطة». وفي مرافقة العروس في أول أيام حياتها الزوجية وتسمى «رقيدة»، والتي كانت تقوم كذلك بتزيين العروس وإعدادها لهذه المناسبة، حيث تنقش يديها بالحناء وتنظف جسمها بالشنان والسدر، وتجميلها بمواد الزينة المختلفة. ومن المجالات التي برعت فيها المرأة بشكل عام الخياطة والتطريز، حيث كانت أمها تدرّبها على هذه المهارات منذ الصغر. واشتهرت بعض النساء بالعمل في مجال التعليم حيث تقوم بتعليم الفتيات في منزلها ويطلق عليها اسم «مطوعة»، كما عملت في مجال العلاج بالأعشاب والتوليد، مما جعل منها عضواً فاعلاً في تأمين احتياجات أسرتها ومجتمعها.



النتائج ومناقشتها

ستتناول الباحثة في هذا الجزء وصفاً تحليلياً للأزياء النسائية و القطع الأساسية المكونة لها في منطقة البحث، مع مقارنتها بالأزياء في المناطق المجاورة:

أغطية الرأس والوجه:

١- الملفع:

وهو عبارة عن مستطيل من القماش القطني الأسود الخفيف ذي الثقوب، مثل الشاش أو التور (التل)، بحيث يكفي طوله لتلفه المرأة حول وجهها وتغطي به رأسها وكتفها وظهرها وصدرها (٥، ٢-٣م)، كما تغطي بطرفه وجهها عند الخروج، أو تستعمل غطاءً منفصلاً يسمى «بوشية» أو «غشوة» أو «غشاية». وعرفت عادة ربط قطعة معدنية تسمى «الربيعي» في طرف الملفع، لتساعد على تثبيته وتثقله. ويكون الملفع فوق الملابس الأخرى.

ويستخدم في المناسبات «ملفع النقدة»، والنقدة هي صفائح معدنية رقيقة ذهبية أو فضية مستطيلة الشكل يبلغ عرضها ٢ ملم تقريباً، وتستخدم في زخرفة هذا الملفع المصنوع من قماش التل، حيث تثبت في ثقوب القماش على شكل ورود، أو نجوم وغير ذلك من الزخارف، وعند الانتهاء من كل غرزة أو وحدة يكسر طرف المعدن. وترتدي العروس في اليوم الأول من زفافها على وجهها غطاءً شفافاً يسمى «غشوة» و هو كذلك مطرز بالنقدة.

وملفع النقدة من أشهر الملافع المزخرفة في منطقة الخليج (العزي، ١٩٨٥م، ٢٥)، (Kennett, 1994, 109)، والملفع أو الشيلة هو الغطاء التقليدي المعروف في معظم البلاد العربية (البسام وصدقي، ١٩٩٩م، ٣٠٣).



٢- البطولة:

برقع أو قناع ترتديه بعض النساء، وبالذات الكبيرات في السن؛ لتغطي به وجهها باستمرار، به فتحتان للعينين ترى من خلالهما، أتى إلى المنطقة من البلاد المجاورة منذ حوالي سبعين سنة فقط. فقد عرف في قطر والإمارات والبحرين، ولقرب المنطقة الشرقية من هذه البلاد، وسهولة التنقل بينها انتقل هذا النوع من البراقع إليها إلا أنه لم ينتشر كثيراً. والحقيقة أن أصل البطولة غير خليجي، وأنها أتت مع المهاجرين من «البلوش» إلى دول المنطقة، وانتشرت بين عامة الناس (العزي، ١٩٨٩م، ٢٥).

وتصنع البطولة من قماش قاس يصبغ بالنيلة، لهذا فهو ينقل هذه الصبغة إلى البشرة، فيغطيه بعضهم من الداخل ببطانة أو ورق يحمي بشرة الوجه من الصبغة، ويصل طول البطولة إلى الذقن، وتربط من الخلف فوق الملمع، ثم ترفع أكمام الثوب فوق الرأس. ومنها نوع يزين بعملات ذهبية يسمى «رَيْسِي»، أي رأسي ترتديه المرأة المقتردة مادياً، وبالذات في المناسبات.

وقد لبست المرأة البدوية في المنطقة البرقع المصنوع من قماش القطن الأسود المعروف لدى البدو عامة، سواء داخل المملكة أو خارجها في البلاد المجاورة (العزي، ١٩٨٥م، ٢٥). (Kennett, 1994, 109).

الملابس الخارجية:

١- الدراعة:

وهي الزي الأساسي. يختلف قماشها والاعتناء بزخرفتها وتطريزها حسب مناسبة ارتدائها، أما خطوط التفاصيل فهي واحدة، حيث تتكون الدراعة من: قطعة مستطيلة في الوسط تمتد من الأمام إلى الخلف تسمى «البدن». وقطعة الجنب، وتمتد من تحت الكم حتى أسفل الدراعة باتساع، وتسمى «التفاجة» وجمعها



«تفافيج». أما الكم فيثبت في خط البدن، والذي يبدأ من منتصف الكتف تقريباً. وتركب قطعة مربعة بين الكم والتفاج تسمى «الإبط» وجمعها «آباط». ولها فائدة في تسهيل حركة الذراع وإعطاء الكم الاستدارة المطلوبة تحت الإبط؛ لتوفير الراحة والحماية من التمزق. وأحياناً يضاف شريط من قماش مختلف اللون إلى حاشية الذيل يسمى «ذیالة»، يحمي طرف الدراعة من التلف، ويسهل استبدال شريذ آخر به عند الحاجة. وكان من المعتاد أن تترك فتحة في خياطة البدن من أعلى؛ لتستعمل في عملية الترضيع.

ويختلف مسمى «الدراعة» حسب نوع القماش أو التطريز أو مكان الصنع. ومن أهم الدراريح المستخدمة في المناسبات والاحتفالات:

- دراعة أم عصا:

والعصا هو مستطيل التطريز الممتد من أعلى الكتف حتى الرسغ.

- دراعة بمباوية:

تجلب من الهند، وتصنع من الحرير الطبيعي، وتطرز بخيوط الذهب والفضة المعروفة باسم الزري، وقد تضاف إليها وحدات الترتير. وغالباً ما يكون التطريز حول الرقبة على شكل دائري، ويمتد حول فتحة الجيب على شكل كنانار. كما يكون التطريز في الكم حول الرسغ، وكذلك على شكل مستطيل رفيع يمتد من الكتف حتى الرسغ. كما يغطي التطريز خطوط البدن، ويمتد أحياناً على شكل كنانار حول الذيل. هذا بالإضافة إلى وحدات زخرفية نباتية تكون موزعة على أرضية القماش في باقي أجزاء الدراعة من الأمام والخلف.

- دراعة مفححة:

والتفحیح هو اسم يطلق على أسلوب التجميل عندما يستخدم لونين أو أكثر في صناعة الزي على شكل قطع متجاورة من القماش. حيث تصنع الدراعة من لونين مختلفين، فيستخدم مثلاً اللون الأخضر من الوسط، واللون الأحمر من الجانبين.



والدراعة زي أساسي، عرف في معظم مناطق المملكة (البسام وصدقي، ١٩٩٩م، ٣٠٥) وكذلك في دول الخليج مثل، قطر (الحمدان ١٩٩٧م، ٨٢) والبحرين (إدارة المتاحف والتراث د.ت، ٦١) والكويت (المغربي، ١٩٨٦م، ١٤٥). وتشابهت أشكالها المطرزة ومسمياتها في منطقة الخليج العربي بشكل عام.

٢- النfnوف:

من الملابس النسائية الخارجية الأساسية التي ظهرت مع تطور الأزياء فحل محل الدراعة لدى المرأة. ومن أهم مميزاته أنه يحدد الخصر على شكل قصة، ويكون الجزء السفلي من الزي (التنورة) واسعاً نوعاً ما. يضيق على الوسط بواسطة كسر كبيرة يخيظ الجزء العلوي منها بطول يشبه البنسة، أو كسر صغيرة متجاورة مفتوحة. أما النصف العلوي فيتكون من الصدر بفتحة رقبة واسعة نوعاً ما تعرف باسم دلعة، مستديرة، أو على شكل سبعة في الغالب، وكم طويل أو قصير. ويصنع النfnوف من خامات مختلفة، تحددها مناسبة الاستخدام، حيث تستخدم الأقمشة القطنية للحياة اليومية، والحرير والستان وغيرها من الخامات الثمينة للمناسبات، بالإضافة إلى التطريز بخيوط الزري أو الإبريسم (الحرير). وتسمى عملية التطريز «بالتخوير» وتستخدم فيه «الكرخانة» (الطارة).

وقد استخدم كذلك أسلوب «التفحيج» في تجميل «النfnوف» حيث يصنع النfnوف من لونين مختلفين. وغالباً ما يظهر السروال من تحت النfnوف الذي يصل طوله إلى حوالي منتصف الساق.

وقد ظهر هذا الزي في المناطق الأخرى من المملكة، وعرف باسم «كرتة»، وكان من ضمن مراحل التطور التي مرت بها الملابس النسائية النجدية (البسام، ١٩٨٥م، ١٧٣) وعرف كذلك في الكويت باسم «نfnوف»، وفي سوريا باسم «شطحة» وفي مصر باسم «جلايية» (البسام وصدقي، ١٩٩٩م، ٣٠٦).



٣- الثوب:

ويمثل الطبقة الثانية من الملابس، فهو يرتدي فوق الدراعة أو الننفوف، وتتعدد مسمياته وأنواعه حسب نوع التطريز أو الخامة التي يصنع منها، أو مناسبة الاستخدام، إلا أن خطوطه وشكله العام متشابه في جميع الأنواع. فهو يتكون من قطعة مستطيلة في الوسط تمتد من الأمام إلى الخلف، ويُطَلَقُ عليه «بدن»، وقطعتين مستطيلتين في الجانبين، وتسمى الواحدة منها «تنفاجة» (والجمع تنافيج)، وبعضهم يسميها «حدره»؛ (لأنها حدر الثوب، أي الجزء الأسفل من الثوب)، وأكمام الثوب مستطيلة وكبيرة تصل إلى منتصفه تقريباً. ويصل بين الكم والبدن قطعة مثلثة الشكل تسمى «الإبط» أو «التخروزة». وترجع أهمية هذه القطعة إلى محافظتها على طول الثوب عند رفع كمية على الرأس بشكل متقاطع. وتعرف عملية تغطية الرأس بكم الثوب أو بغيره من الملابس «بالكعب»، فيقال: كعبت ثوبها أو عباءتها أي وضعتها فوق رأسها. وتكون طريقة رفع الكم على الرأس بحيث يحافظ على الجهة الخارجية من القماش إلى الأعلى، أي أن الرأس يدخل في الكم، وتختلف عن طريقة رفع كم الثوب النجدي حيث يقلب الكم على الرأس، لذا فإن زخرفة طرف الكم هنا تكون من الجهة الخارجية بينما تكون في الثوب النجدي من الجهة الداخلية (البسام، ١٩٨٨م، ١٥٩). ويستخدم كم الثوب كغطاء للوجه عند الحاجة داخل المنزل.

ويتم الاهتمام بتطريز أكمام الدراعة؛ لأنها تظهر بوضوح من تحت الثوب. ويكون قماشها من لون آخر ولكنه منسجم مع لون الثوب، والذي غالباً ما يكون رقيقاً شفافاً ترى من خلاله الدراعة، وحتى لا يثقل على المرأة لتعدد القطع التي ترتديها. ويستخدم الثوب كزي يومي أساسي في جميع الأوقات، حيث يرتدى الثوب المصنوع من قماش القطن السادة أو المنقوش في المنزل وفي الأوقات العادية. والثوب المصنوع من الأقمشة الثمينة الفخمة والمطرزة بأسلاك أو خيوط الذهب والفضة وحببات الترت، في المناسبات والاحتفالات.

وقد استمدت زخارف الأثواب ومسمياتها من البيئات المتوافرة في المجتمع سواء



الزراعية أو البحرية أو غيرهما، ومن أمثلتها البيذانة (وهي اللوز)، والكاجوة أو الكازوة (مكسرات الكاجو)، الهيلة أو قرص الهيل (شكل حبة الهيل)، دق النيرة (فيه دوائر زري بشكل العملة)، حنبويه (شكل السنابل)، ثوب مفرخ (والفروخ هي الورد)، ثوب الثريا (مزين بدوائر معدنية ذهبية أو فضية على شكل نجم الثريا)، ثوب خف الناقة (به زخرفة شبه دعسة الناقة).

وتعددت ألوان الثياب، إلا أن اللون الأسود كان أساسياً في الأحساء (المنطقة المعروفة بالحسا الآن) وعاصمتها الهفوف (الغريب، ١٩٨٨م، ٢٢). وكذلك منطقة القطيف والتي عرف بها الثوب باسم «الهاشمي»، بينما استخدمت الألوان الفاتحة مثل الأبيض والسماوي في الأجزاء الأخرى من المنطقة، وهي ألوان مناسبة للجو الحار. كما تميز الثوب في «القطيف» بصغر حجمه وقصره حيث يصل طوله إلى منتصف الساق، فيظهر السروال من تحته بوضوح، ويصنع من القطن في الملابس اليومية، ومن التل الأسود المنقوش بزخارف وورود ملونة بألوان مختلفة، أو بالزري الذهبي والفضي أو بالنقدة. وذلك في ثياب المناسبات والاحتفالات.

والثوب بشكل عام في المنطقة الشرقية أصغر حجماً من الثوب النجدي والذي يتميز بكبر حجمه وذيله الطويل الذي يسحب خلف المرأة (البسام، ١٩٨٨م) وقد تشابهت الثياب في منطقة الخليج العربي وكان لها المسميات وأساليب الزخرفة نفسها، أما مسمى «الثوب الهاشمي» فقد عرف في العراق (البسام وصدقي، ١٩٩٩م، ٣٠٦).

وفيما يلي توضيح لأنواع الثياب المختلفة:

الثوب المسرح أو ثوب النشل:

يصنع هذا الثوب من الحرير من جميع الألوان، وتفضل الألوان الزاهية، فمنه الأخضر والأحمر والبنفسجي والفوشيا. ويتم تطريزه بكثافة بخيوط الذهب والفضة التي تعرف باسم خيوط «الزري»، وبنقوش وزخارف بدیعة يغلب عليها الأزهار وأوراق الأشجار على شكل تفرعات وتكرارات منفذة بشكل متناهي الدقة والإتقان.



ويزداد التطريز كثافة على منطقة البدن في الأمام. ويأخذ شكل الكنار حول الأكمام وعلى امتداد خطوط اتصال قطع الثوب ببعضها.

وقد عرف هذا الثوب في منطقة «نجد»، إلا أنه تميز في المنطقة الشرقية بوجود طير الطاووس كوحدة زخرفية، ويعود ذلك إلى التأثير الهندي في المنطقة، بالإضافة إلى كراهية أهل نجد للزخرفة بذوات الأرواح لأسباب دينية (البسام، ١٩٨٨م، ١٦٥). كما عرف على مستوى الخليج العربي (العزي، ١٩٨٥م، ٢٠)، في قطر (الحمدان، ١٩٩٧م، ٦٩)، وفي البحرين (إدارة المتاحف، د.ت، ٥٦)، وفي الكويت (المغربي، ١٩٨٦م، ٧٦)، وفي العراق (الجادر، ١٩٧٩م، ٢٠٤).

الثوب المفح:

يتميز هذا الثوب بأنه يتكون من شرائح أو مستطيلات طولية وعرضية من الحرير الطبيعي متعدد الألوان تثبت بجوار بعضها، وغالباً ما يكون اللون الأساسي هو الأسود. أما الحرير الملون فيكون من اللون الأحمر والأخضر والأصفر، ومن حرير يعرف باسم الكين (الجين) والخشخاشي وكف السبع. ويستخدم هذا الثوب في المناسبات المهمة والأعراس. وقد عرف هذا الثوب في منطقة نجد (البسام، ١٩٨٥م، ٨٠) وكذلك في بلدان الخليج العربي الأخرى مثل، قطر (الحمدان، ١٩٩٧م، ٦٨)، والبحرين (إدارة المتاحف والتراث، د.ت، ٥٧)، والكويت (المغربي، ١٩٨٦م، ٢٩٢)، حيث كان يعرف في باديتها باسم ثوب الحسا (الصباح، ٢٠٠٠م، ٩٥).

ثوب الثريا:

يصنع من الحرير أو التل الأسود السادة، يزين بدوائر معدنية خفيفة ذهبية أو فضية تثبت متجاورة تحت فتحة الجيب على شكل مثلث، بحيث تكون قاعدته إلى الأعلى ورأسه إلى الأسفل. ويمكن نقل تلك القطع المعدنية وتركيبها في ثوب آخر جديد، وهو من ثياب العروس، وعرف في بعض بلدان الخليج الأخرى مثل، الكويت (المغربي، ١٩٨٦م، ٧٧)، (الصباح، ٢٠٠٠م، ٧٥)، وقطر (الحمدان، ١٩٩٧م، ٧٦).



ثوب النقدة:

يصنع من التل الأسود ويزخرف بالنقدة، وتعرف كذلك باسم خوص؛ لأنها تشبه خوص النخل، تثبت في ثقوب التل، وينتج من ذلك زخارف هندسية على شكل أزهار وتفرعات نباتية ونقط منثورة في الأرضية (تسمى هذه النقاط دق المسمار) وأحياناً يتدلى تحت فتحة الصدر شكل يشبه العقد، أو الحلية. وسمي هذا النوع بالنقدة؛ لأن الخوص يباع بالوزن نقداً.

وقد عرف هذا الثوب في القصيم باسم ثوب التلى (البسام، ١٩٨٥م، ٨٢). كما عرف باسم ثوب النقدة في منطقة الخليج العربي (العزي، ١٩٨٥م، ٢١). واستخدم التلى في زخرفة الثياب الحجازية، وفي كثير من البلاد العربية مثل سوريا ومصر وليبيا وتونس (البسام وصدقي، ١٩٩٩م، ٣٠٦).

ثوب الكورار:

غالباً ما يستخدم لهذا النوع من الثياب قماش الويل (الفوال) السادة أو المشجر بجميع الألوان، وتفضل الألوان الفاتحة في معظم أنحاء المنطقة (إلا الحسا والقطيف حيث يفضل اللون الأسود) ومن الأقمشة المشهورة لهذا النوع ما يعرف باسم «حبنمبوه» وتعني شكل السنابل التي يزخرف بها هذا القماش، وهو من اللون الأحمر والأصفر معاً. كما استخدم كذلك قماش «الويل المنزك». أي المطرز، حيث يعرف التطريز المضاف إلى القماش أثناء تصنيعه «بالنزك» وتتعدد زخارف هذا التطريز وألوانه، ويستخدم فيه خيوط حريرية، ويكون على شكل غرزة الحشو.

«والكورار» هو شريط الزري المنفذ بطريقة تشبه النسيج، وتتم عملية نسج الشريط وتثبيتته على قماش الثوب في الوقت نفسه وبالتبادل. ويركب حول فتحات الأكمام وفتحة الجيب ويصل طوله حتى خط الوسط أو يزيد حسب الرغبة. أما عرضه فيزيد أو ينقص بناءً على عدد النساء المشاركات في صنعه، حيث يتراوح عددهن ما بين ثلاث إلى خمس نسوة، تقوم إحداهن وهي «القاطبة» بجمع الخيوط



وتثبيتها غرزة غرزة في الثوب بإبرة وخيط من القطن، من اللون الأصفر مع الزري الذهبي. وتقوم الأخرى أي «المعاونات» بنسج خيوط الزري الموجودة حول أصابعهن بتبديل مواقعها من يد إلى اليد الأخرى، والتي تمتد بين القطابة والمعاونات، حيث يجلسن أمامها على بعد مناسب لطول الخيوط، أو بالأصح لطول شريط الكورار.

ويرتدى هذا الثوب بطريقة مختلفة عن الطريقة المعروفة، حيث يرفع فوق الرأس ويخرج الوجه من خلال فتحة الرقبة (فتحة الجيب)، بطريقة تشبه البخنق، ويوضع فوقه «الملفع»، ثم ترفع الأكمام بالطريقة المعتادة فوق الرأس، وإذا كانت المرأة تستخدم برقع «البطولة» فهي تربطه حول الرأس قبل رفع الأكمام.

وثوب الكورار من الملابس اليومية التي يكثر استخدامها في المنطقة، والتي تتميز بها من المناطق الأخرى من المملكة. إلا أن شريط الكورار الرفيع استخدم في إنهاء فتحة جيب الدراعة وأطراف الأكمام وبعض أغطية الرأس الخاصة بالأطفال في منطقة القصيم (البسام، ١٩٨٨م، ١٨١)، (البسام، ١٩٩٢م، ١٦).

كما أن ثوب الكورار نفسه استخدم في بلدان الخليج العربي الأخرى (العزي، ١٩٨٥م، ٣٨)، مثل، قطر (الحمدان، ١٩٩٧م، ٧١)، والبحرين (إدارة المتاحف والتراث، د.ت، ٥٩)، والكويت (الصباح، ٢٠٠٠م، ٧٨).

الملابس الداخلية:

١- السروال:

وهو اللباس الداخلي. يتميز بطوله ووسعه، ويربط حول الوسط بحزام يسمى «دكة»، يدكك في ثنية تعمل أعلى السروال، وتكون الثنية باتجاه الخارج، ويعمل في وسطها من الأمام فتحة تسمح بمرور «الدكة» مما يسهل عقدها على البطن. أحياناً يطرز طرفي «الدكة» بزخارف من ورود وطيور ملونة بفرز يدوية متنوعة. ويصنع السروال غالباً من الأقمشة القطنية، بألوان زاهية، منقوشة أو مقلمة، مثل «البازة»



المقلمة ويزخرف بأساليب متعددة، إما بإضافة الكلف إلى طرف السروال، ويُطَلَقُ عليها «شَلَش»، أو بإضافة كلفة من الجوخ الأسود، يقص على شكل مثلثات ويُطَلَقُ عليها «شرف». أو يزخرف بالتطريز ويسمى سروال خياطة. وينفذ السروال المطرز غالباً من نوعين من القماش الجزء العلوي من القطن، ويصل إلى الركبة، أما الجزء الأسفل منه فيسمى «حدارة»، ويكون من الحرير الستان الملون، وقد يكون السبب في ذلك صلاحية قماش القطن للملابس الداخلية، بالإضافة إلى إمكانية نقل الجزء المطرز إلى سروال جديد. وشاع استعمال السروال المطرز في المناسبات والأعياد، واعتادت العروس ارتدائه ليلة زفافها، ويراعى غالباً أن يكون لون السروال مناسباً للون الدراعة، أو أن يكون من القماش نفسه. ويطرز بزخارف نباتية بخيوط الزري أو الحرير في الجزء الأسفل في منطقة الساق أو الحجل، وهو الجزء الذي يمكن رؤيته، لهذا فإنه يسمى «المحجل». وأحياناً يضاف إلى طرف السروال خطوط من التطريز بفرزة تشبه الفستون لها سنتان من الجهتين باللون الأسود، وفي وسطها دوائر بيض ويُطَلَقُ عليها «عيون» (أو عين الحمامة) تنفذ كذلك بفرزة الفستون الدائرية. واستخدم هذا النوع من السراويل في القطيف والحسا فقط.

والسروال مشتق من الكلمة الفارسية «شلوار»، وعم استعماله منذ العهود الإسلامية الأولى (رشدي، ١٩٨٠م، ٤٨).

٢- الشملول:

وهو مثل الإزار. ويستخدم بدلاً من السروال، ويصنع من قماش القطن، ويطرز طرفه من الأسفل.

ملابس المنزل:

ترتدى أنواع الملابس نفسها، لكن من أقمشة أقل مستوى من أقمشة ملابس المناسبات، وهي تختلف كذلك حسب مدة الاستخدام، فمنها ما يرتدى أثناء العمل وغالباً ما يكون من الأقمشة القطنية البسيطة (مثل الشاش الممل، وخشم البلبول)



ومنها ما هو للزينة في وقت العصر، ويكون من الأقمشة الجيدة مثل الويل (القوال)، والتور (التل)، ومنها ما خصص للنوم، ويكون كذلك من الخامات الخفيفة. وملابس المنزل بسيطة من حيث التطريز، ومن أهم أنواع الثياب المستخدمة للباس اليومي الثوب المعروف باسم «ثوب الكورار». وكان يستخدم الاستخدام بنفس في بعض بلدان الخليج العربي (إدارة الآثار والمتاحف، د.ت، ٥٩)، (الحمدان، ١٩٩٧م، ٧١). والذي تشابهت فيها ملابس المنزل.

ملابس العروس:

يوم الجلوة:

وهو الاحتفال الذي يتم بمناسبة وضع الحناء للعروس، حيث توضع الحناء في يديها وقدميها قبل ليلة من هذا الاحتفال، وتفك في الصباح، ويتم الاحتفال في المساء (بعد العصر).

ترتدي العروس دراعة وثوب نشل وسروال محجل، وجميعها من اللون الأخضر، ويستخدم شال مزخرف بخيوط الذهب من اللون الأخضر؛ ليوضع على رأس العروس، يسمى «المشمر»، وأحياناً تنذر أم العروس أن يكون لابنتها سبع جلوات بسبعة شيلان من ألوان مختلفة، حيث ينشد النساء المحتفلات أناشيد مخصوصة أثناء الجلوة.

يوم الزفاف:

ترتدي العروس ملابس معدة لهذه المناسبة، وعادة ما تكون من أفضل أنواع ملابس الزينة والمناسبات من الثياب المسرححة أو النشل المطرزة بخيوط الذهب بكثافة، كما تتحلى بالحلي الذهبية مثل القيقب، والهامة، والخماخم، والمرتعشة، والمعاضد، والحجول. ويخضع ذلك للإمكانات المتاحة، كما أن التكافل الاجتماعي يسمح باستعارة الثياب والحلي لمثل هذه المناسبات.



مواد الزينة:

كان لدى المرأة خبرة كبيرة في تركيب تلك المواد بنفسها؛ حيث تستخلصها وتحضرها من مواد متوافرة في البيئة أو في متناول اليد. مثل السدر، والكرم، والزعفران، والحناء، والمحلب، والكحل، والديرم. والزيوت المختلفة مثل، زيت السمسم وجوز الهند، والأطياب، مثل، الزباد، والمسك، والعنبر، والورد. فتدهن شعرها بالزباد والمسك وتضع في مفرق الشعر الزعفران، والطيب (الرشوش). ويوضع نبات الريحان (المشموم) المثبت على شكل مجموعات بالخيوط والإبرة في ضفائر الشعر.

تجميل الشعر وتسريحه:

يقسم شعر الرأس إلى ثلاثة أقسام، ويضفر من الخلف حوالي خمس عشرة ضفيرة (تسمى بلهجة المنطقة: عكيفة)، ومن الأمام ثنتين كبيرتين، أو أربع صفار، حسب كثافة الشعر والرغبة، وفي المناسبات يدهن الشعر بالزباد والمسك، ويوضع في مفرق الشعر «الرشوش» والذي يتكون من الزعفران والطيب. هذا بالإضافة إلى نبات الريحان الأخضر (المشموم) والياسمين، الذي يثبت في الضفائر.

الحلي:

تميزت الحلي التقليدية في المنطقة بتعدد أنواعها حسب مكان ارتدائها من الجسم، حيث كانت توضع على الرأس، والصدر، واليدين، وحول الوسط، والساقين. تضع المرأة على الرأس القبقب الذي سمي بذلك؛ لأنه يشبه الحيوان البحري المعروف بهذا الاسم (السرطان)، وقد عرف على مستوى الخليج العربي كله. وفي الأذنين تضع الأقراط (من أنواعها الشغاب وصباح الخير). وعلى الصدر قلادة كبيرة تسمى «المرتعشة» أو «المرتعشة»، وذلك لأنها ترتعش أثناء الحركة، ويتراوح طولها من نصف متر إلى متر تقريباً. وفي اليدين ترتدي الإسوار المزخرفة «البنافر» أو «البناجر»



و«الشميلات». بالإضافة إلى الخواتم. وهناك أسورة مشبوك بها بسلاسل خمسة خواتم لجميع الأصابع تسمى «الكف». أما الأنف فيحلى «بالخزامة» أو «الزمام». ويلف حول الخصر «الحزام». وحول أسفل الساقين «الحجول» أو «الخلاخيل». وقد غلب على جميع قطع الحلبي المختلفة أن تكون مصنوعة من الذهب، ومطعمة بالأحجار الكريمة التي كان من أهمها اللؤلؤ الذي كان يستخرج من الخليج العربي. وقد تأثرت المنطقة بشكل واضح بسوق الذهب في البحرين والهند، وذلك بسبب موقعها على الخليج العربي.

أردية التستر عند الخروج:

١- العباءة / الدفة:

من الأردية الخاصة بالخروج، كانت تصنع قديماً من الصوف المنسوج محلياً. ومن أنواعها الفخمة المرينة، والماهود، والونيشن. ثم صنعت من خامات أخرى مثل الحرير السميك المعروف باسم «الحبار» و «الكريب»، وتطورت بتطور النسيج وتوفر أقمشة من اللون الأسود الذي يصلح للعباءات. وبسبب الشكل المستطيل الذي تتميز به العباءة، فإنها تنفذ بعرض القماش وليس بطوله، حتى يكفي للثني باتجاه منتصف الأمام وبدون خياطات في الجانبين. وتترك مسافة (حوالي ١٢ سنتمتر) بين الطرفين تكفي لوضع العباءة على الرأس. وتخيطة العباءة على طول خط الكتفين والذراعين مع عمل فتحتين صغيرتين في الزاويتين العلويتين تسمحان بمرور اليدين. وهكذا فإن العباءة تحتاج تقريباً إلى ضعف المسافة من الرسغ إلى الرسغ، واليدين ممدودتان مرتين. كما تحتاج إلى عرضين من القماش يثبتان معاً حتى تكفي لطول المرأة. ويعود ذلك إلى قلة عروض الأقمشة قديماً؛ لأنها منسوجة يدوياً. ويتم خبز العباءة على شكل ثنية داخلية في منطقة اتصال العرضين معاً، تساعد في تعديل طول العباءة بما يتناسب مع قامة المرأة.



وكانت العباءة تزخرف بحيث تنهى حواشيها وأطرافها وفتحاتها بالقيطان أو العمائل من الزري الذهبي أو البريسم الأسود، وتتدلى من الأمام على الجانبين على شكل كور تسمى «كركوشة»، أحياناً تحلى بعميلة من معدن الذهب تسمى «عبلة»، وخصوصاً للعروس. وتطرز عباءة المناسبات والتي ترتديها عادة العروس ليلة زفافها في الوسط وعلى اليمين واليسار بزخارف تشبه شكل السمكة بخيوط الزري الذهبية، وتسمى هذه العباءة «أم سمكة». واستخدمت المرأة الخليجية عامة العباءة عند الخروج، حيث لم تجد الملاءة العثمانية انتشاراً في المنطقة (العزي، 1985م، ٤٦)، مثل ما وجدت في البلاد العربية الأخرى، لأنها لم تدخل تحت الحكم العثماني.

٢- الرداء:

وهو الزي الذي تستخدمه المرأة في منطقة القطيف والقرى القريبة منها عند الخروج. وهو عبارة عن مستطيل من القماش الأسود المزخرف بخطوط عرضية من الجانبين يغلب عليها اللون الأحمر الغامق، ويضاف إليها خيوط الزري الذهبية في الأنواع الخاصة بالمناسبات ويسمى «الترملى». وتلتف المرأة «بالرداء» عند الخروج بحيث يغطيها كلها. كما تستخدم الشيلة السوداء بمقاس كبير بدلاً من الرداء في العزاء. وتجلب الأردنية غالباً من البحرين، حيث تصنع وتستخدم من قبل القرويات هناك بكثرة (إدارة المتاحف والتراث، د.ت، ٦٢). وقد عرف قديماً على نطاق واسع في البلاد العربية والإسلامية وقبل الإسلام باسم «الإزار»، وهو النوع الذي يلبس فوق جميع الألبسة (الجادر، 1979م، ٩).

٣- المشمر:

نوع آخر من أردية الخروج في القرى، يصنع من الأقمشة الخفيفة مثل الويل (الفوال) المشجر. ويقص بشكل كلوش، وهو يشبه «الشادر» الإيراني. ولا ترتدي القروية العباءة إلا في السفر. وهو كذلك من الأزياء الشعبية في قرى البحرين (إدارة المتاحف والتراث، د.ت، ٦٢)، (Ross, 1981, 84)



٤- البخنق:

وهو من أغطية الرأس الخاصة بالفتيات منذ الطفولة وحتى سن البلوغ أو الزواج، حيث يحل محله العباءة. ويصنع من الأقمشة الشفافة السوداء اللون، مثل الجورجيت والشفيفون والنايلون. ويكون على شكل مستطيل، يثنى بالطول، ويخاط أحد عرضيه معاً، بعد ترك فتحة صغيرة من جهة الثنية، تكفي لتحيط بالوجه عند ارتدائه، فيغطي البخنق الصدر وينسدل على الكتفين والظهر، ويتراوح طوله من الخلف بين منتصف الجذع وحتى القدم، حسب الرغبة والمناسبة.

ويطرز البخنق بالزري على شكل كنانر أو شريط يحيط بالوجه وتتوزع الوحدات الزخرفية على أرضية القماش، وأحياناً توضع وحدة زخرفية مختلفة وكبيرة نوعاً ما فوق الرأس، إما على شكل هلال أو وردة. وعادةً ما تأخذ زخارف البخنق أشكالاً مستمدة من البيئة، ويغلب عليها الزخارف النباتية والهلال والنجمة.

والبخنق كلمة عربية قديمة تدل على غطاء رأس تشد طرفيه الفتاة تحت ذقتها (الجادر، ١٩٧٩م، ١٧٥). وقد شاع استعماله بالطريقة نفسها التي استخدم فيها في المنطقة الشرقية في بلاد نجد، إلا أنه كان يطرز بوحدات الترتير الذهبية والفضة والملونة (البسام، ١٩٨٨م، ١٥٣)، كما استخدم بكثرة في بلدان الخليج العربي الأخرى (العزي، ١٩٨٥م، ٤٢).

الأحذية:

القَبَقَاب:

حذاء منزلي يصنع من الخشب، يضاف إليه من الأعلى سير من الجلد ليمسك الأصابع كلها، أو أعلى شكل زائدة بارزة يمسك بها إصبعي الإبهام والسبابة وهذا الأخير هو الأقدم.



البابوج:

وهو حذاء جلدي واطٍ (منخفض)، طرفه الأمامي مثني إلى الأعلى. يوجد منه نوع يسمى «الروغان»، من الجلد الأسود اللامع، من ملابس النساء الثريات. وبهذا العرض المفصل لأنواع الملابس التقليدية النسائية تمت الإجابة عن تساؤلات البحث موضحة علاقتها بالأزياء الإسلامية، والأزياء التقليدية بالمناطق المجاورة.

الاستنتاجات:

أولاً- إن الملابس التقليدية في المنطقة الشرقية ذات جذور إسلامية عريقة، اتصفت بشكل عام بالحشمة والوقار.

ومن ملابس النساء ذات الأصل الإسلامي: الخمار (ويقابله الممفع)، القميص (ويقابله الدراعة)، كما عرف الثوب ذو الأكمام الواسعة المستطيلة، وكان يسمى «الهاشمي»، أو «السبلة». هذا بالإضافة إلى البخنق والعباءة والإزار والسروال.

أما بالنسبة للزخرفة والتزيين، فقد اشتهر المسلمون بالاهتمام بزخرفة وتطريز ثيابهم، وكان من النادر أن تخلو أي قطعة من التطريز أو الزخرفة.

وقد اتصفت العناصر الزخرفية التقليدية بتشكيلات رائعة مأخوذة من العناصر الطبيعية بعد تحويلها إلى أشكال زخرفية. ويتفق هذا مع مبدأ التجريد والرمز في الفنون الإسلامية. بالإضافة إلى أن جمال المظهر من الأمور المستحبة في الدين الإسلامي.

ثانياً- تتشابه أزياء المنطقة الشرقية بشكل عام مع أزياء دول الخليج العربي في أشكالها ومسمياتها وزخارفها وخاماتها، وذلك بحكم موقعها الجغرافي، بالإضافة إلى تقارب اللهجات والعادات والتقاليد.



- ثالثاً- هناك تقارب واضح بين أزياء المنطقة الشرقية والمنطقة الوسطى (نجد) من المملكة العربية السعودية، أكثر من أي منطقة أخرى من المناطق الخمس المكونة للمملكة؛ وذلك بسبب القرب و سهولة اتصال السكان.
- رابعاً- يظهر واضحاً تأثر المنطقة بالطابع الهندي في الأقمشة وبعض المسميات والمصطلحات وطرق الزخرفة، وذلك بسبب التبادل التجاري القديم بين المنطقتين، ومن أمثلة ذلك «الثوب البمباوي».
- خامساً- استعيرت بعض مسميات الملابس من لغات أخرى غير عربية، وأطلقت على أزياء شبيهة أو مناسبة من حيث المعنى، وإن لم تكن مطابقة للزي نفسه مثل «الكرتة» الهندية الأصل.
- سادساً- استمدت مسميات بعض العناصر الزخرفية من البيئة الطبيعية والمحيطة بالسكان مثل: البيذانة (اللوز)، الكاجوة أو الكازوة (الكاجو)، قرص الهيل (حبة الهيل)، دق النيرة (العملة).
- سابعاً- تناسب الملابس الواسعة الأكمام والفضفاضة مناخ المنطقة الحار، حيث تسمح بمرور الهواء داخل الجسم. كما أن أغطية الرأس تحميه من حرارة الشمس، وكذلك من برد الشتاء. ويتمشى اتساع الملابس وطولها مع عادة الجلوس على الأرض.
- ثامناً- تميزت المرأة بالاعتماد على النفس، وإتقان فنون الخياطة والتطريز، وبعض الفنون اليدوية المميزة للمنطقة مثل، شغل «الكورار» و «النقدة».
- تاسعاً- استخدمت المواد الثمينة في زخرفة الملابس، مثل، خيوط الذهب والفضة والترتر.
- عاشراً- استخدمت المرأة في الحسا والقطيف الثوب العلوي من اللون الأسود، بينما استخدمت الألوان الفاتحة والأبيض في بقية المنطقة، بالإضافة إلى الأسود.



وهكذا تتضح صورة الملابس التقليدية النسائية في المنطقة الشرقية، وأصالتها وجذورها الضاربة في عمق التاريخ، وارتباطها بالبيئة وما يميزها من نواح اقتصادية واجتماعية وطبيعية. وهذا دليل على ارتباط الملابس بالإنسان وفلسفته من جهة، وبالبيئة وشروطها ومتطلباتها ومظاهرها من جهة أخرى.

مما يؤكد أهمية استيحاء الملابس التقليدية، وتوظيف التراث بشكل يتناسب مع التطور والحياة العصرية، ويضمن لنا التميز والأصالة، ويحافظ على هويتنا ومكانتنا من التاريخ والحضارة.

التوصيات

- جمع مقتنيات التراث المادي في المنطقة بشتى الطرق، وإجراء الدراسات عليها وتوثيقها بالأساليب العلمية، ووضعها في متحف إقليمي يضمن لها الحفظ للأجيال القادمة، ويحقق الاستفادة منها.
- إضافة ما يناسب منها للمواد الدراسية، النظرية والتطبيقية، وبالذات التربية الفنية والتربية النسوية والنشاط اللا منهجي، لما يخلقه تذوق التراث والإحساس به من الشعور بالانتماء، ووصل الماضي بالحاضر والمستقبل.
- إنشاء مراكز تدريب حرفية؛ للمحافظة على الحرف والفنون التقليدية، وبالذات المميزة للمنطقة مثل، تطريز «النقده».
- استثمار التراث من خلال الاهتمام بإحياء الحرف والصناعات التقليدية وتطويرها، ورفع الوعي لدي المواطنين بأهميتها القومية والاقتصادية، واستخدامها كأحد روافد التنمية البشرية، والاكتفاء الذاتي في بعض المجالات. وأول مطلب لتحقيق ذلك هو الوعي بأهمية التعليم الحرفي لدى المجتمع خاصة الجيل الجديد. وتوافر أسواق جديدة للمنتجات مع توجه الدولة للسياحة.



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التراث التقليدي للاباس النساء في

د. ليلي بنت صالح البسام

المنطقة الشرقية من المملكة العربية السعودية





ملفح النقدة من التل الأسود
مزخرف بصفايح معدنية تسمى خوصة



دراعة بمباوية



دراعة أم عصا



برقع البطولة العادي والرايسي



تفتوف من الحرير
الطبيعي الأحمر
مطرز بخيوط الزري
بغرزة السلسلة

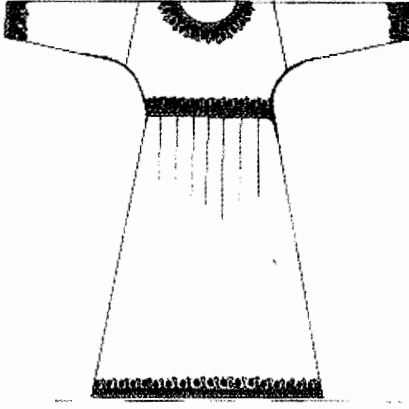


تفتوف من الحرير الطبيعي
البنفسجي مزخرف بزخارف
نباتية

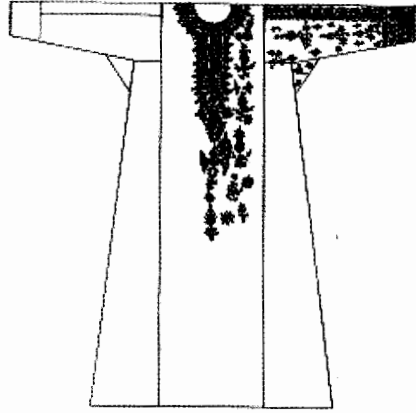


د. ليلى بنت صالح البسام

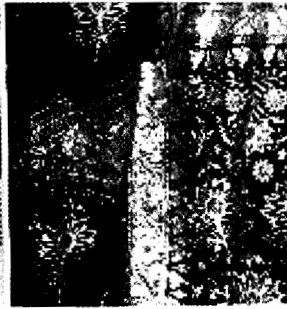
التراث التقليدي للملابس النساء في المنطقة الشرقية من المملكة العربية السعودية



رسم توضيحي يبين الشكل العام للثوب
ومناطق التطريز فيه

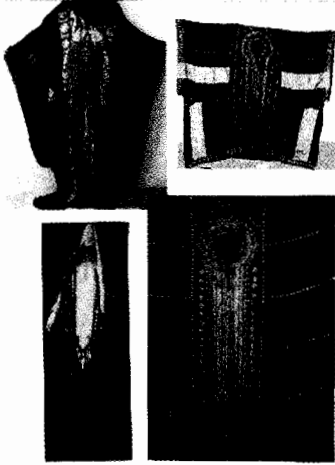


رسم توضيحي للشكل العام للدراعة وخطوطها
الأساسية ومناطق التطريز فيها

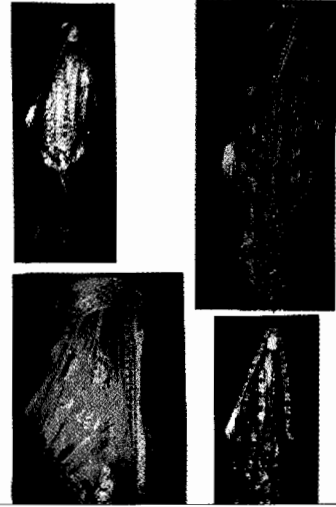


ثياب مسرحة من الحرير الطبيعي البنفسجي والأحمر والأخضر
مطرزة بالزري والترتر والسرايح هي خطوط التطريز الممتدة
بطول الثوب.

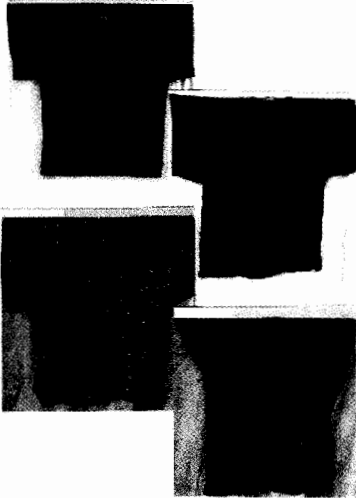




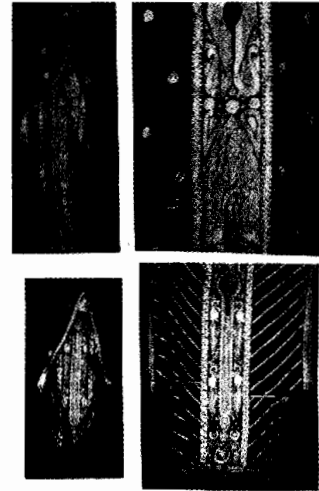
ثياب مفححة تتكون من عدة ألوان
بالإضافة إلى التطريز بالزري



ثوب النشل من قماش الجورجيت
(الجرجيس) الأسود
وطريقة ارتداء كم الثوب على الرأس

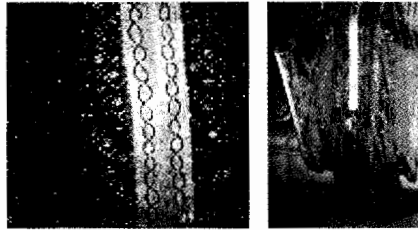
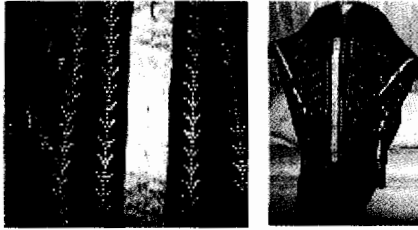


مجموعة من ثياب الهاشمي من منطقة القطيف
مصنوعة من أقمشة مختلفة تتميز بصغر حجمها



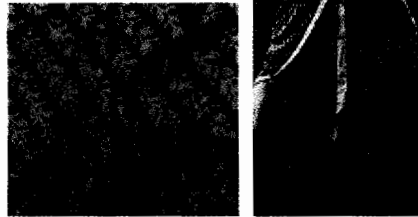
ثياب نشل ملونة مزخرفة بطائر الطاووس
والهلال والنجمة والأزهار



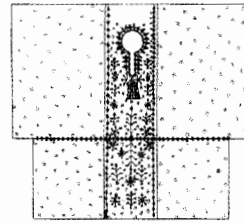


النقدة على الشيفون الأسود والأزرق

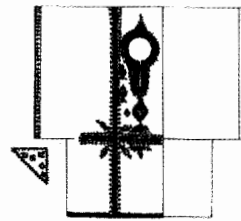
ثوب الكورار من قماش قطني
مزخرف على شكل سنابل
(حبيبه)



ثوب الكورار من قماش الويل
(الفوال) الأزرق المشجر
وتوضيح طريقة لبسه على
الرأس مع البطولة



رسم توضيحي لثوب النقدة وزخارفه



رسم توضيحي يبين الشكل العام للثوب وخطوطه
الرئيسية ومناطق التطريز عليه



ثوب النقدة من التل الأسود المزخرف بصفايح
معدنية تسمى خوصة مثبتة في ثوب التل

فتاتان بأزياء تقليدية ثوب أبيض
وأخر أسود بنقشة الثريا. الكويت
حوالي عام ١٩٣٠م. وزارة الإعلام.
(المصدر: الصباح، ٧٥، ٢٠٠٠م)



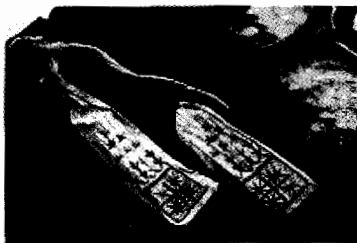
ثياب العروس يوم الجلوة وتتكون من دراعة وثوب
وسروال ومشمع جميعها من اللون الأخضر



توضيح تطريز
السراويل بالزري



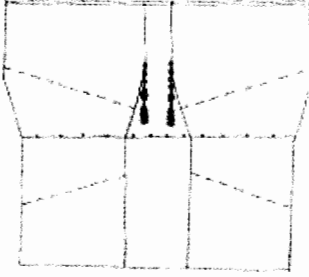
سروال طفلة مطرز
بالنقده



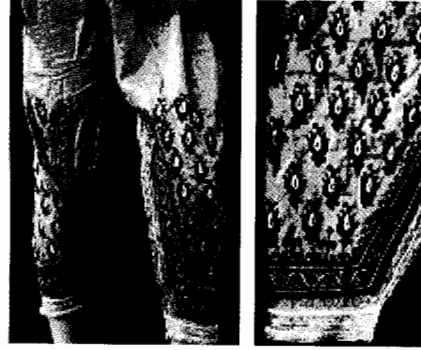
سروال مطرز بالزري مربوط بدكة مطرزة
بالوان متعددة



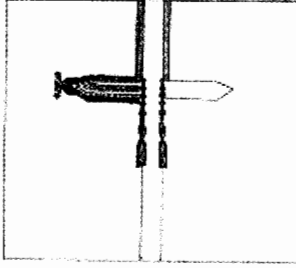
سروال مطرز بالزري مربوط بدكة من القطن
الأبيض مطرزة بخيوط متعددة



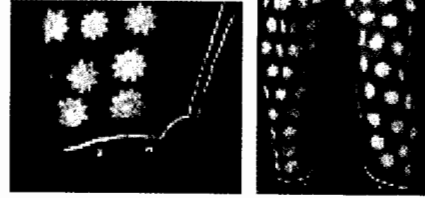
رسم توضيحي يبين الشكل العام للباءة ومنطقة الخبنة فيها



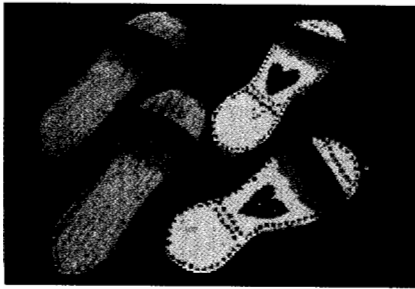
سروال مطرز بخيوط ملونة يغلب عليها اللون الأزرق بزخارف نباتية متكررة



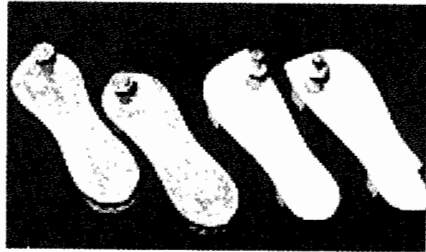
رسم توضيحي يبين الشكل العام لعباءة الدفة



سروال من الستان الأحمر مطرز بالزري وعلى طرفه تطريز تظهر به الدوائر (عيون الحمامة) وتتميز بهذا التطريز منطقة القطيف



القباب وهو حذاء منزلي يصنع من الخشب



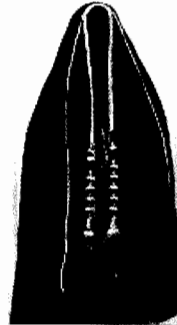
قباب أبو إصبع



ردا يمثل عباءة المرأة في منطقة القطيف



عباءة أم سمكة
وهي عباءة العروس



عباءة معصمة بالزري
تتدلى منها الكرايش



بخنق مطرز بالتلي



بخنق مطرز بالزري





3. A model with the typical Emirati beard displays the Emirati national dress with the gold embroidered bisht (gown) Courtesy of Abu Haleeqa stores, Abu Dhabi.



5. Models in an advertizment representing an Emirati young family in their traditional dress.



6. Different styles of wearing the ghurta (Head dress).





1. Emirati men in their white kandouras and head cover performing a traditional dance.



2. The black abayas of Emirati women contrast sharply with the white male dress.



4. A close up photo showing the isama styles.

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- o Dependence on their Emirati sponsors for renewal of work and residence permits. They are basically clients and their Emirati Kafeel is in a position of patron.
 - o Receive low wages and many are exploited.
 - o Have no or very little access to political power.
 - o Can only establish transient and often precarious forms of situational mechanisms of support for coping and extending their stay.
 - o Receive limited welfare benefits.
 - o Can not bring their families and dependents unless they earn certain relatively high income
 - o Experience a sense of marginality and inferiority.
 - o Cannot assimilate in the local Emirati society and culture as naturalization in the UAE is a very rare prospect.
- 8 A brief comparison of salaries and other privileges in educational institutions received by Emirati and non-Emirati (Arab) schoolteachers illustrate the sharp distinction that is found in favour of the Emirati. An average Arab schoolteacher with a Bachelors degree earns a maximum of Dhs. 6,500 (\$1900) a month, whereas his national counterpart would earn around Dhs. 15,000 to 18,000 (\$4000 to 5000) a month. In addition, the state provides him with a family allowance of Dhs. 500 a month per child. The Emirati teacher and his family enjoy full medical coverage provided free of charge by the state, whereas the expatriate Arab would pay Dhs. 300 each for each family member, plus a small payment when receiving medical services.
- 9 It should also be noted that most young and middle-aged Emirati women wear make-up (including lipstick), body adornments, accessories and perfumes.
- 10 Longva (1997) described in Kuwait that it was often the Asian female workers who were frequent victims of sexual harassment and aggression. These women lack protection that is usually given by family or middle-class connections. They do not wear the abaya or the headscarf, but jeans, saris or other casual clothes; this was often interpreted as a sign of un-Islamic moral predisposition, particularly when combined with free interaction with men.
- 11 There is also a special type of abaya worn to attend social occasions such as wedding parties; in Arabic it is called 'abayat al-munasabat'. It is usually made of very fine material, with delicate embroidery on the chest, back, sleeves and hem. Informants state the female Moroccan and Lebanese tailors in the Emirates have radically transformed this type of abaya, some even with long slits down the sides. These abayas have become expensive fashion statements, with prices ranging from \$200-400.
- 12 Frantz Fanon (1968) wrote an essay on the transformation of the functions and meanings of the traditional women's veil within the context of the Algerian revolution. The veil acquired a new revolutionary role when Algerian women began wearing it to assist their compatriot men in the war with the French.
- 13 There is a popular wheel cover bought by young men, which shows the face of a young woman wearing the niqab, with very prominent and beautiful eyes.
- 14 (see issues in 2003-04).



End Notes

- 1 This 2 page long letter is written and distributed with compliments of Department of Islamic Religious Affairs in Dubai, Women's Division.
- 2 The GDP has been fluctuating between \$20,000 and \$21,000 during the years 1985 to 2000. However, it fell slightly to \$ 18,200 in 2003 (Gulf News Feb.13, 2003, p. 28)
- 3 In 1963 it was estimated at around 95,000, in 1975 the population had jumped to 557,887, in 1985 it reached 1.379,000. Since then the UAE population by the end of 2003 has tripled reaching 4.041 million (Gulf News, April 13, 2004, p.2) This gave the Emirates the highest population growth in the world with the ratio of almost 6% between 1985 and 2002 . (Gulf News Feb.5 2004, p 7). In fact the population increase surged to nearly 8% in 2003 to reach 4.04 million (Gulf News June 2004, p 7)
- 4 Within the Islamist movement itself there appeared different politico-ideological currents that were reflected in variations of the Islamic mode of dress. The Muslim Brothers movement demanded only the regular hijab, which covered the hair and neck along with a loose garment covering her body. However, the Salafi movement, which is more puritan and fundamentalist in its religious ideological groundings, regarded the hijab as insufficient. They opted for al-niqab (face cover that keeps only a narrow slit for the eyes), to complement the hijab. In addition to that women wore the abaya, which covered the body from head to toe.
- 5 Al-Humoud elaborates further by stating that the topic of the woman's dress and her modesty is an issue that concerns all religions as it forms a significant aspect of the value system in any given society, yet for the Arabs and Muslims it represents a greater dimension that sometimes becomes a heavy burden and generator of psychological anxieties as well. (Al-Hayat, 8 Nov 2003, p10).
- 6 There was no mention in the exhibition defining the appropriate decent color for men's dress. However, the color white is considered in the UAE and the larger Gulf as the proper color for men. There is a religious directive stating that the Prophet Himself recommended white as the proper color for men There is a saying, hadieth, by him "Dress in white it is better for you and purer , and shroud your dead in white". Narrated by Abi Abdullah (Al-Adnani,1999:159)
- 7 In contrast the expatriate operates under laws that contain and restrict his activities. To illustrate this point further, expatriates in the UAE, as well as other oil-rich Gulf countries:
 - o Do not receive retirement benefits
 - o Cannot own business without a local Emirati partner or sponsor (kafeel).
 - o Do not have job security
 - o Are not allowed to own land or houses, although in 2002 Dubai has developed certain housing projects where non-nationals can buy and live.
 - o Do not enjoy subsidized housing or social securities that in comparison are very generous and extensive for the Emirati nationals.
 - o May not practice certain professions such as law.
 - o Cannot organize unions



Even when certain aspects of dress and identity are articulated by Emirati citizens as essential to their identity, this should be interpreted using the framework of 'strategic essentialism' (Spivak, 1993). In other words, there are specific socio-political purposes that were generated by specific oil political economy, which in turn drove people to essentialize certain things about themselves.

The Emirati's current adherence to their traditional national dress is a function of both tradition and modernity; modernity in the sense that it is a reaction or protest to threatening global forces. We should remember, "protest has always been a central component of modernity" (Eisenstadt, 2002:57). During the 60's and 70's a large number of Gulf Arabs came to adopt western dress as a marker of modernity; however, this social trend was halted in the early 80's. Emiratis as well as other Gulf nationals have now taken the cultural position that you can be modern while at the same time adhering to national dress, as dress has gained significant cultural and political meanings that relate to the making of Emirati national identity. The case of Emirati dress and the dynamics associated with its discourses inform us that there are in our contemporary world different versions of modernity and different paths to it (Madsen et al., 2002).

It is important that the sociological interpretation of the Emirati dress also needs to be contextualized within the wider frame of other interlaced domains and activities that help the Emiratis organize, in the Barthian sense of the term, their life privileges and situations in order to maintain clear national ethnic identity boundaries with the other, in spite of (or perhaps because of) the intense and complex interactional forms they have with this global other.

Our discussion of the Emirati national dress and identity is informed by a particular view of Emirati contemporary society, as we had to expand our socio-economic and political parameters in order to understand the larger contexts in which discourses and uses of dress are produced and reproduced.



veiling behaviour, mark both gendered and ethnic differences in such a way to emphasize inequality and its association with an impotent, or inferior masculinity" (Lindisfarne-Tapper and Ingham, 1997:21).

vii) The niqab and/or the ghashwa are used for protection, particularly in crowded spaces. Young women will tell you that al nas (people) are more than ready to gossip about women seen in places such as cinemas or malls. One informant said that she feels better wearing the ghashwa when walking with her brother in crowded places, as if not to cause him any embarrassment when other men looked at her. This exaggerated form of veiling (the abaya and the niqab) is used sometimes by Asian maids when travelling to visit distant friends since they are, as noted earlier, the most vulnerable objects of sexual harassment. They hide their identity, as it were, under the folds of the Emirati protective ethnic dress. In such situations veiling provides at the same time two contradictory functions that are often identified in the local perception: protection for the woman against external offences of society and protection for society against the inherent fitna, the sexual force of women.

Concluding Notes

In order to explain the complexity and dynamics of dress discourse as they relate to the construction of Emirati national identity, I have utilized a multi-layered theoretical framework. These theoretical perspectives included globalisation and political/cultural economies as well as concepts derived from ethnic and cultural studies that relate specifically to the topic of construction of self as an imagined political community. These multi-layered perspectives, in the form of onion rings, contain each other in inclusive concentric forms; expanding and narrowing their analytical spotlights on the various layers and discourses of Emirati national identity through dress.

In this paper, uses of Emirati dress are viewed as complex acts which can generate multiple different discourses about self and the other. Dress offers numerous nuanced interpretations that I have attempted to delineate, but the national/ethnic interpretive discourse remains significantly most important at many levels.

Contextualizing Emirati dress and identity within wider political/cultural economies has meant that they can be viewed as a cultural aesthetic complex that carries multiple voices accents, dialectics and meanings.



makes them a focus of attention, particularly when the woman wear eye makeup and colour lenses. The use of colour lenses has indeed become a fad among young Emirati women. By framing the eyes, the niqab can produce what some may consider a touch of feminine mystique¹³.

iv) The ensemble of the niqab/ghashwa and the abaya is increasingly being used by young women not only for *sitr* (modesty) but also for *tasatur* (covering up and concealing) and *tanakur* (hiding one's identity). Young women who venture in having dating relationships often use the niqab or the ghashwa to conceal their identity from the eyes of their local society. The niqab and the tinted car windows, which the locals call *al-makhfi* (the hidden), can indeed provide good cover for rendezvous. *Ahwal*¹⁴, an Emirati bimonthly social satire magazine, has frequently satired the new social trend of misusing traditional Emirati female dress for purposes other than traditional modesty. According to informants, some Emirati young men who go out with their European girlfriends usually have them wear the full abaya/niqab dress in order to hide their identity and save themselves the social embarrassment of dating foreigners. Many elderly local women insist that all those women who stay out till midnight in malls and cinemas dressed in abaya and shaila can not be Emiratis but women of other nationalities donning the Emirati dress, as they believe it is a social taboo for Emirati girls to be out of the home so late. The niqab as a cover hiding identity gives potential to break social rules.

v) The niqab/ghashwa are frequently worn by beggars who are usually seen at the gates of mosques on Fridays. While most female beggars are usually not Emirati, they use the local dress to hide their identity as begging represents a disgraceful practice.

vi) It is used to show respect before social authority. Most women will have the ghashwa draped down over their faces when meeting Emirati men of high authority. This behaviour is not generalized before all men, as there is gradation in the ways women strategically utilize their decency dress code. (Abu-Lughod, 1986) For example, nowadays it is rather frequent for Emirati women to appear before non-kinsmen only partially veiled, as those men are regarded as social inferiors. They are usually domestic servants or employees coming from Indian, Southeast Asian or Arab origins. As servants these men will live in their employer's household and it becomes rather inconvenient and impractical to veil in front of them all the time. In such situations "dress, and more specifically



are restricted in their movement; they avoid mixing with men in the workplace and cannot roll up their sleeves, so to speak, and perform manual tasks. In fact the national dress for both genders has become equated with only white-collar jobs. These attitudes are reinforced by the implicit social expectations regarding the homogeneity in national dress and the idealized image associated with it.

In the context of the rapid change within Emirati society, the abaya and the shaila are in a sense a sort of convenient halfway station to fuller freedom. Many traditional families still find it difficult to allow their women to be out in public without the protective national dress. Thus one can view dress as carrying the social dialectics of the day; what is used to control can also liberate at the same time in Fanon's sense of the term¹². The same dress garment can sometimes speak with different voices depending on the historical conditions of the time. The privacy and protection in public afforded by the shaila and abaya have enabled thousands of young Emirati women to pursue university education and move with comparative ease in a modern society. It is a common sight to see Emirati women in their abaya and shaila drive their own cars, go to work, deal with banks, shop, get together in small groups for tea and pastries in elegant caf es in the modern malls and international five-star hotels.

The niqab is multivariate and quite versatile in its contemporary uses. Informants numerated seven uses of the niqab and the ghashwa, which are usually associated with very conservative social groups or with Salafi fundamentalist Islamic female identity.

i) Some women wear the niqab all the time in public for conservative religious reasons.

ii) It is also worn by some women for anthropological reasons, simply because wearing it is a social custom they grew up with and find it difficult to abandon. This dress practice is still widely seen among women of Bedouin family background. Wearing the niqab is very similar to the burqu' (face mask) which was worn by all Emirati women in pre-oil conditions. The burqu' covers the mouth and the spine of the nose, and is still being worn as a cultural survivor by some elderly women although its use is declining rapidly (Kanafani, 1983).

iii) The niqab is used for ziena (beatification). This appears contradictory since the garment covers three quarters of the face. Informants explained that the niqab brings out the beauty of the eyes and



wealthy women. More women are seen nowadays wearing what they call 'the open abaya' (al abaya al-maftuha). With one or two buttons on the chest, the rest of the abaya can casually fall open to reveal garments beneath ñ floor length colourful dresses or trousers. Many women will tell you, "We wear the abaya for society and what we wear beneath is for ourselves". They try to accommodate in their choice of clothes the demands of personal taste and the general guidelines of their local culture. The affluent shopping malls have become popular social arenas attracting young Emiratis not only to shop but also to be seen. Tailoring the abaya according to individual tastes has become very common, and young women will take fashion magazines specializing in Gulf dress styles to their tailors¹¹.

The headscarf, the shaila, is also being produced in different fabrics and embellishments to match the abaya as an ensemble and to suit all pockets and social status. Within Gulf society, Yamani (1997) has shown how the elite wealthy Saudi women have, in the face of national homogeneity of dress, found new ways to establish status and wealth. Since the 1970s they have begun wearing dresses especially designed for Saudi clientele by leading Western designers, preferably by the haute couture of Europe.

For women of lesser social class, the abaya and the shaila can also be regarded as a means of escape from the tyranny of fashion. A woman can hide her limited economic means and cheap clothing under her black abaya. This use of the Emirati dress also conforms to the Islamic puritanical ideology against unnecessary and wasteful consumer practices (israf). Therefore it is no coincidence that large numbers of female students who come from relatively poor Bedouin families reap this social benefit, particularly as many of them wear a face cover (niqab) as well.

Similarly the abaya can provide a practical function as women need not dress up to leave the house for shopping or other daily errands; the abaya can conveniently cover their casual household wear. Yet while the abaya can be a practical facilitator in some areas of daily life, one has to consider it within the larger package of Emirati dress that generates a set of negative socio-psychological attitudes towards manual labour. In an unintended latent form the Emirati dress stands in contradiction to the society's repeated call for all its citizens to fully participate in the labour force to achieve sustainable development. Women in abayas and niqabs



all meaningful, in that it provides a symbolic frame constituting their distinct cultural identity. However, Bourdieu's insight is more likely to manifest itself in the future as we have already started to witness mild incremental changes in the styles and forms Emirati youth are adopting in their dress, such as women wearing trousers and blouses under the abaya, and young men adopting baseball caps instead of the ghutra.

The white kandoura, worn by youth and the aged alike, can be viewed as an inhibitor of the emergence of youth subculture with its associated inter-generational rebellious outlook. Major dress innovations and differences are few, but are increasingly noted among young people. They include wearing baseball caps, and either adopting a different style of wearing the headdress or abandoning the headdress entirely. Some male college students have opted for the light and more casual asama, a loose turban-like headwear made by folding the ghutra round the head. Some national teenagers wear clothes representing the youth subculture (jeans, cut aways) when they visit shopping malls in other Emirates, in other words, away from their hometown. Acceptances of measured degrees of change are being tolerated now. The fact that Emiratis change out of national dress when travelling abroad is significant in implying that their dress carries its important national discourse only within the Emirati/Gulf context. Even when visiting other Arab countries for lengthy summer holidays the majority change their dress to casual western-style clothes. Many Emiratis point out that wearing the national dress abroad can be financially taxing as outsiders associate Emirati dress with great wealth, thus rendering them to exploitation.

Both the men's kandoura and the women's abaya do not easily reveal social class or status. However, this statement needs to be qualified as the Emirati dress for men and women is a social leveller only in relative terms. Emiratis as social actors manage to clothe themselves in subtle and not so subtle ways so as to be viewed differently and to make their claim as occupiers of different statuses in society. For instance, the quality of the garment fabric and tailoring is noticed. Other forms of bodily adornment, shoes, handbags, jewellery, watches, perfumes, mobile phones and cars can be strategically utilised to distinguish oneself in terms of status and class. It is perhaps relevant to note that the UAE has one of the highest sales figures in terms of new mobile phones.

Houses of fashion are making various changes to the abaya, and it is increasingly becoming an expensive fashion garment among young and



to inform the expatriates, particularly the men, about the proper attitudes to adopt when interacting with Emirati women. As a social discourse it is primarily directed at the expatriate male population to give the Emirati female citizen the social deference that goes with her dignity and status (Longva, 1997).

The abaya differentiates Emirati women from other expatriate women, particularly Asians who are positioned as a depressed and exploited underclass. The majority of Asian women either work in low skilled service-related jobs, which necessitate their daily contact with customers of all types, or they work as domestic servants. This inferior position has meant that they are subjected to sexual harassment and victimisation in the Gulf region at large¹⁰. Viewed within this broad multi-ethnic context, the Emirati abaya creates the necessary social distance and boundary maintenance mechanism vis-à-vis expatriate Asian women. In this particular socio-economic and political context, the Asian women stand out as a negative reference group that the Emirati women do not wish to be associated with. This has generated a set of negative social and cultural attitudes towards not only the ways they are dressed but also the type of jobs they perform in society.

The abaya, when viewed with the Emirati elaborate system of ethnic stratification, becomes invested in multiple ways with social and cultural attitudes, meanings, images and symbols that help in the construction of the Emirati identity. The black abaya has become the symbolic protected space for the Emirati women; her spatial bubble, as it were, that not only protects but also differentiates and identifies.

Part III: Emirati dress in the context of social change

In addition to its role as the significant marker of national identity, Emirati dress carries other manifest and latent functions and discourses that have emerged within the broader context of rapid societal change. In his book "The Fields of Cultural Production", Bourdieu (1993) maintains that intellectuals and artists who align themselves with youth in their manner of dress and in their whole bodily hexis are representations of their opposition to power and bourgeois's seriousness. Because all Emiratis are empowered, in the sociological sense of the term, as a privileged ethnic bourgeois class vis-à-vis the global transient expatriates, the acceptance of the homogeneity of their dress becomes



power of the stamp and the capacity to hire and fire

As for the Emirati women's abaya the symbolism appears to be in the domain of religion and social customs. At the surface level people tend to interpret the abaya as a sign of female modesty and religious morality. This is true, yet it offers an incomplete analysis; the abaya needs to be interpreted as both a sign of religiosity as well as a sign in the everyday politics of ethnic stratification. In cities the black abaya and shaila (headscarf) are worn almost exclusively by Emirati women and women of the Gulf region. Arab expatriate women living in the Emirates are rarely seen wearing the abaya, and appear in public wearing multicoloured headscarves as their hijab. "The correct dress for Muslim women consists of a head scarf, and the full-length, long sleeved, non-form-fitting dress. The abaya is nowhere mentioned as a prescribed garment." (Longva, 1997: 413)

Occasionally the abaya is worn on top of the head to cover the hair and held securely around the face by one hand. It is often worn in this way with a facemask (niqab) that covers a large part of the face, leaving a narrow opening for the eyes. Young women regard this style of veiling as old-fashioned and associated with their grandmothers, although it has more recently been associated with religion, particularly among Salafi groups. In UAE university campuses, students who wear the abaya in this fashion either come from very conservative Bedouin family backgrounds, or are very religious students studying in the colleges of Islamic Law (Sharia). It is the latter group of students who were very active in constructing the exhibition in Sharjah University in support of the Decency Law of 2001.

The majority of Emirati women nowadays have made some stylistic alterations to the abaya so that it is worn like a long loose dress with buttons in the middle or on the left side to keep it closed, rather than an open gown. This has improved its practicality and facilitated its everyday use. Increasingly, young women on university campuses have added numerous decorative frills and embroideries, to the extent that conservative voices in the community have been raised criticising the newly tailored and embellished styles as not garments for *sitr* (covering) and *hishma* (decency) but rather as garments for displaying beauty, style and attraction⁹. Worn in this way, the abaya can only partly be interpreted in terms of religion; rather it has now become a symbol of 'Emiratiness'. In its prevalent current form the purpose of the abaya is social; it is there



haweyyatna).

Even though the dress fabrics and accessories are imported from distant global places, it is the gestalt ways and styles the Emirati person clothes his/her body that constitute what we may term his/her 'Emiratiness', or better perhaps, his/her Emirati configured symbolic self. To use Geertzian terminology, the dressed Emirati body becomes a cultural text, with multiple signs, diacritical marks and semiotic meanings that others can read and interpret according the wider politico cultural, ethnic textual frames of reference they are living in and familiar with.

In many new states among Third World countries, 'little traditions' as termed by Redfield (1996) can be represented by local folk dresses and dances that become selected and elevated as national symbols. Often these peasants, tribal or regional 'little traditions' are paraded in public squares as reinvented and institutionalised traditions to celebrate the making of new political culture for the emerging state (Shils, 1963; Hobsbawm, 1992). However, in the UAE the ubiquity of the Emirati dress collapses the 'little traditions' and the 'great traditions' into one synthesis, into one cultural form worn by everyone all the time. The Emirati dress itself has in a sense become institutionalised as national form.

Emirati dress as a traditional cultural complex is not stored away in remote villages by old

folks who are invited occasionally to perform in city squares in national celebrations. Every adult Emirati dressed in his everyday clothes can walk in the street and join a national heritage dance. He need not change garments or add special paraphernalia. In this ordinary cultural fact lies the efficacy of the Emirati dress in providing a generalized and omnipresent symbolic boundary and meaning for the definition of being an Emirati, both for the individual citizen and for the Emirati political community at large.

The social dimension of the Emirati dress is primarily lodged within the ethnic stratification system that has evolved in the UAE during the last forty years. Wearing the kandoura and the abaya convey the image and sense of Emiratiness in the complex maze of national/expatriate interactions. The Emirati dress makes life easier for the Emirati citizens, especially when interacting with officials in government institutions. The kandoura is widely accepted as a symbol of social power and privilege. The wearers are seen as fellow nationals, as state bureaucrats, sponsors, business partners and employers of expatriates. They hold the



mass of identical persons, all of whom are, as it were, shouting the same words at the same time" (Lurie, 1981:20).

When examining this aspect according to Barth's (1998) notions of construction of ethnic boundaries, the Emirati dress becomes the main medium of classifying and organising themselves, in this case, as an economically privileged and politically powerful group. The Emirati dress is not only a medium but also a politico-cultural message. At the political cultural level, the uniformity of their national dress only enhances their collective imagination for constructing their imagined and re-imagined community (Anderson, 1991).

d. The social-cultural discourse

As a social-cultural item, dress is multi-referential and multi-vocal; its meaning is relational and contextual. The relational meaning of dress is parallel to the relational social meaning of dialect in language (Lindisfarne-Tapper and Ingham, 1997). A particular design, colour or embellishment may be a sign of a regional local identity. While all male citizens of Arab Gulf countries (GCC) wear the long and loose white robe, there are a few differences in style which reveal the localized regional identity of the wearer. A quick glance at the Emirati in his kandoura will identify him from his cousins in Saudi Arabia or the northern Gulf states. The low cut collar and the 18? tarbusha (braided tassel) decorating the front of the kandoura are markedly Emirati. There are also differences in naming this garment; in the northern Gulf states it is called dishdasha and in Saudi Arabia the thoub. The white kandoura thus differentiates the Emiratis not only from other European and Asian expatriates, but also from other Gulf Arabs as well as Arabs in general.

The importance of the kandoura lies in its popularity and common daily use. Emirati boys wear it all the time at home and in school, and as adults they wear it in colleges and universities. It is their school and national uniform at the one and same time. It is the ubiquitous form that gives the Emirati person his 'symbolic self-completion' (Arthur, 1997).

Without it his cultural-symbolic self becomes seriously fractured or threatened, and other ethnics around him will not recognize his identity. It provides the native Emirati with a sense of generalized cultural authenticity and connectedness to past traditions. Without hesitation Emiratis will say that the kandoura is the dress of their ancestors and they remain loyal to it, "our dress is our identity" (malabesna heyya



ethnic class presiding over the affairs of a multi-ethnic society in transition. This conceptual categorization of the Emirati ethnic divide as it relates to dress is reinforced by similar cultural practices and dress differentiating modes operating in neighbouring countries of the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). 8

The politics of inclusion of the nationals under the shadow of the welfare state, coupled with the politics of exclusion of the expatriate from this wealth-welfarist canopy, is at the centre ground that creates and maintains the ethnic stratification divide whereby the Emiratis enjoy the privileged positions. This situation achieves for the nationals what Giddens terms, "the pervasive use of administrative power" over the expatriates (quoted in Gledhill, 1994:19). In return the state, personified by the shaikhly ruling family elite, receives praise and the legitimacy it requires for maintenance and stability as a modernising political system.

At a very general level the UAE oil-welfare state has effectively reproduced the Emirati national himself as a mini-rentier by providing him with sets of politico-economic privileges that empower him to rent out his name and position as roles that translate into material gain and social power.

Being a bureaucrat in the various government ministries, receiving generous welfare state services and being a rentier, the Emirati finds himself traversing multiple politico-economic terrains that provide him with empowerment and distinction that have become marked first and foremost in the national dress, the white kandoura. Viewed within its broader multi-ethnic contexts the Emirati national dress is meant to convey a sense of cultural difference, social conservatism, moral decency, social poise and respect. Moreover, it has become the skin colour of the Emiratis as it advertises them immediately as a privileged and powerful national minority.

The unanimous adoption of the Emirati dress for men and women make their dress appear as a 'national uniform'. Longva (1997) makes a similar observation on national dress as a generalised ethnic marker in her study on Kuwait. All Emiratis wear their national dress throughout the day, with the exception of the police and army who wear modern military uniforms while on duty. According to social psychologists,

"To wear a uniform is to give up your right to free speech in the languages of clothes; instead you are forced to repeat dialogue composed by someone else. In the extreme case you become part of a



informal manifestations is an important domain for building political structures, boundaries and barriers against global currents brought about by the presence of large ethnoscaples, mediascaples and ideoscaples that are viewed as a threat to the Emirati national heritage and identity.

The UAE as a nation-state constructs itself as a distinct political community not only by safeguarding its geographical boundaries, building a national army and police force, raising a national flag, playing the national anthem, supporting the national football team, issuing banknotes, identity cards and passports but equally significantly it establishes nation-wide ministries and welfare institutes and formulates laws that provide nationals with a package of rights and privileges that empower and demarcate them from the expatriates.

It is an anomaly that the nationals find themselves, in numerical demographic terms, as a minority in their own country in relation to the expatriate population. This highly imbalanced demographic situation has driven the state to set strict legal matrices and boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, thus positioning the Emiratis within conditions of privilege that designate them as an identifiable ethnic national community in relation to the other ethnics living in their national society.

The Emirati stands out as a very privileged person, empowered to live and work as an arbab. In linguistic terms the word is the plural form of rabb, literally meaning 'lord'. The term arbab is used by the majority of Asian laborers and domestic servants to refer to their Emirati employer or sponsor. Within the UAE multi-ethnic social field the Emirati identity is elevated to that of an aristocrat, with an average of 2.5 domestic workers per household, mainly coming from poor Asian countries. Heard-Bey refers to this phenomenon as "the embourgeoisment of the national" (1997:21).

Another significant feature that locates Emirati nationals is their overwhelming preference for administrative jobs in the state public sector. The majority of the national labour force is employed in the public sector, which brings security and numerous social benefits, such as free housing, education, health and social security, and the capacity to act as a sponsor or business partner for the expatriates⁷. Employment within the public sector also means creating boundaries and political administrative frames which identify them as the bureaucrats of their city-states. In this particular context the Emirati national dress, the white kandoura for men and the black abaya for women, have become markers of a dominant



as a 'scientific conference'. The papers presented by both men and women duplicated the religious moral discourse seen in the exhibition, but also included academic references drawn from early Islamic heritage. The female participants sat in the front row in the huge theatre, dressed totally in black and delivered their papers with their faces turned away from the audience, as a gesture showing greater ihtisham.

The discourse articulated in both the exhibition and the conference papers reflected not only the Islamic traditional position on modesty in dress and public behaviour but also represented an attempt to fuse religious ideology with the dominant political culture in order to reinforce its effect in the making of contemporary Emirati identity. The Sharjah ihtisham law carries clear messages for enforcing dress conformity and discipline, particularly within female educational institutions. The description of modest dress in such institutions is outlined along with drawings of female figures showing specific dress features that should be avoided. These included tightly fitting clothes, dresses with side slits revealing the legs, and clothes exposing the chest, back, stomach or shoulders.

Dress codes when generalized and enforced become not only a collective group uniform but also instruments of discipline. In this case dress codes that emphasize homogeneity define body- dress articulation. Dress discipline defines each of the relations and meanings that the body must have with dress items, and it also defines how the body should manipulate and be manipulated by these dress items (Foucault, 1997). Perhaps because of these implications of discipline and conformity, the Sharjah ihtisham law was not evenly received across all Emirati social groups. Some informants questioned the need for the law; pointing out that Emirati/Sharjah society is already dressed in traditional decent ways. The messages the law embodies were directed not only to the Emiratis but also to the expatriate and tourist communities.

C. The politico-economic discourse: the emerging nation-state

State and society interlock in both constructing cultural elements and in organizing and maintaining the boundaries of Emirati identity. The Emirati operates within a matrix of empowerment availed to him by the nation-state. Power in its multi-faceted forms and dimensions appears as a critical mechanism that the Emiratis utilize frequently in their daily praxis for constructing their sense of national identity. Power in its formal and



“Invitation: this invitation comes from the heart, as a result of the Sharjah University Student’s Union belief in the seriousness and usefulness of this law. Our call is a genuine one for all of us to work together to respect and activate this law, and protect it from those who doubt its usefulness. This invitation is to all those living in this good country so that he/she becomes an example in applying this law. We should gain pride from repeating *ihltisham* (be decent) you are in Sharjah”.

On the fourth side of the cubicle we read:

“Abiding by the rules of *ihltisham* and proper behaviour is a response to society’s calling so that it will not be harmed, and no violation will affect its customs and its sacred and virtuous traditions. Respecting the law will help create the civilised environment that is appropriate for family stability and ensuring peace and security for all society’s members.”

The discourse presented on the surrounding poster display was primarily about the superiority of Islamic moral rules regarding decency in dress and public behaviour, and criticism of women who were adopting a Western dress style. A sample of few brief poems and caption statements illustrate this well. One viewed women as being precious and, therefore, needing to be wrapped and protected. “He who has a valuable jewel wraps it in a chiffon cloth. He will not discard it”. Other statements were written in a satirical poetic form.

“Oh sister, from where did you get this costume?

It is not known to the Hijazis, nor it is known to Najd

Two opposites, oh sister, will never meet

The religion of righteousness and the way of unbelievers

I swear that the fall of our Umma (nation)

Is the result of embracing such opposites.

Allah attests to that”

One poster praises the ruler of Sharjah for the *Ihltisham* law. It reads:

“The decision to introduce the law is a bright light in the history of a rich civilisation. It is inscribed with pride by our dear father (the ruler) - he has built an eternal register that history will bow in respect before it. It will be respected for an authentic culture, a noble faith, a great vision, and a forward-moving history.”

Two weeks later, the Faculty of Sharia and Islamic studies in University of Sharjah organized a conference (23-24 October, 2001) on “*Al-ihltisham* and public conduct and its effect on society”. It was advertised on campus



ih̄tisham (modesty) and al-haya' (shame). When parts of the human body are uncovered, it is regarded as 'awra (indecent body exposure). Islamic dress code requires that both men and women cover their 'awra (Al-Adnani 1999:136). The woman's 'awra is defined as her whole body apart from her face, hands and feet, while for men it is defined in much less strict measures, from his waist to just below his knees. The popular religious explanation for the strict covering of the woman's body comes from viewing 'awra as a potential fitna, a source of sexual excitement. The modesty code in Muslim /Arab societies rests, according to Makhlof, on "two contradictory assumptions: that the woman is weak and needs to be protected from threats to her honour, and that she has strong sexual impulses which threaten the honour of the males and the integration of the group" (1979:38). Viewed within these perspectives, the veil is a double shield, protecting the woman against external offences of society and protecting society against the inherent evil of womenî (Lindisfarne-Tapper and Ingham, 1997: 15).

Instead of elucidating this discourse in general terms as they appear in Islamic religious texts and debates or Western anthropological studies, I will focus primarily on the decency law (qanoun al-ih̄tisham) that was introduced in the Sharjah emirate in 2001. The reaction of the university students represents a living discourse in illustrating how Emirati female students define themselves through the construction of their own cultural exhibition and involvement in a conference to celebrate and support the issuing of the Al-ih̄tisham law.

The law was issued in a glossy pamphlet carrying the title "Decency and Public Conduct: Rules and Objectives". It was translated into Arabic and six other predominant languages spoken by the expatriate residents and tourists. The ih̄tisham exhibition was organised by the Female Student Union of Sharjah University in the women's campus from 6 ñ 10 October 2001.

The title of the exhibit, 'Al-Ih̄tisham and Public Conduct: Rules and Objectives' was inscribed on one side of a large cubicle. On the other appeared the new rules regarding dress. Women could not wear clothes that exposed the stomach, back or legs above the knee, or clothes that were tight or transparent. For males, indecent dress in public places was defined as wearing very short pants, baring the chest, and wearing the izar (Emirati male undergarment, similar to the Indian longi).⁶ The third side had the following message:



trends in women's dress that have gained social acceptance during the last fifty years. First, in the pre-oil period condition, the abaya (gown) covered the women from head to toe. Second, by the end of the 1950's young women kept the abaya and discarded the bousheyya (face cover); they walked out of the house without covering their faces. Third, starting in the early 60's and continuing till the mid 70's young women did not wear the abaya and walked out in public life safirat (unveiled). This dress mode was then acceptable in society at large. Fourth, in the context of political changes that emerged with the rise of the Islamic revival (al-sahwah al-Islamiyyah) in the late 1970's and 1980's, the viel (hijab)⁴ became popular again with the young, although there was much less acceptance among middle-aged and older women. It became common to see a young woman wearing the veil and niqab walking next to her safira (unveiled) mother. This was the reverse of the social phenomenon during the 60's when one saw a mother enveloped entirely in her black abaya and bousheyya walking in the company of her unveiled daughter.

It is relevant to note that changing patterns in Emirati women's dress did not exactly follow those that occurred in the northern Gulf. This is attributed primarily to the fact that large-scale modernization did not begin until the mid 1970s in the UAE, just a few years before the Islamic revival process (al sahwa al islameyya) became influential throughout the Gulf region. Living within these wider historical conditions, the Emirati women were saved, as it were, the ups and downs of dress styles that were experienced by women in other Gulf societies like Kuwait and Bahrain. Having said that it remains evident that Emirati female dress patterns have recently begun reflecting some variations, ranging along a continuum of modern, highly fashion-oriented jeans and blouses under the abaya to the very conservative Islamic salafi-type-niqab-wearing styles.

b. The Islamic religious / moral discourse.

Islamic teachings about the proper dress for men and women are of great importance in shaping and guiding the dress code for the adherents of the Islamic faith.⁵ Both Emirati men and women dress modestly because modest dress defines them as Muslims, and through the language of dress they also single out themselves as members of a particular Islamic community. The religious moral discourse has its foundation in formal Islamic teaching and rules regarding notions of al-



clothes, the kandoura (robe) and the ghutra (headdress) to wear instead Western clothes, the shirt and pants. During the 1960s the younger generation had received modern education and exposure to the outside world. Also people of that generation watched movies when television entertainment was then very limited. At that time the pantaloons (pants), the shirt and the shining hair presented youth as modern, open minded and educated. Those who remained dressed in the traditional mode were viewed as representatives of the past that was destined to decline. People thought that a day would come when nobody would wear the traditional garb, and that we all would be wearing Western clothes, similar to the case of our Arab brethren who earlier arrived in our countries as teachers, doctors, and the like. This inclination came to a halt in the majority of Gulf countries as everyone, including the young (al-shabab), returned to the traditional dress which has acquired with the passage of time some changes in small stylistic frills and touches.

The fabric of these clothes has become very expensive and a source for exhibitionism and self-aggrandizement. Traditional dress has come to reflect both expressed and latent wishes for the presentation of an indigenous Gulf personality (al-shakhseyyah al-Khalijeyyah al-mahaleyyah) and its distinction from others. The sight of al-Khalieji as a tourist in his traditional dress mode became noticeable when you saw him in the streets of Cairo, Damascus or Beirut.

These changes in dress appearances have come to indicate things beyond simply viewing dress as something that protects us from the natural elements. Dress has become a social convention or frame reflecting a mode of thinking, social trends, and behavioural and ideological orientations in society. During the 1960s and 1970s the trend was to shed off the traditional; it reflected a situation of rebellion against prevailing social customs including manifest forms like dress. This trend was affected by external cultural and cinematic influences as represented by Egyptian film stars and youth social movements in the West like the Hippie movement. The new strong return to traditional national dress mode (al-zai' al-watani) with its shining whiteness and elegance reflects not only the new state of wealth but also the desire for distinction within the new non-Khalieji human environment that has been created recently in our societies. (Al-Khaleej, 21 August 2000, p36)

In a similar vein Al-Humoud, in his newspaper article "Political changes and variations in women's dress: The Kuwaiti case", identifies four major



family background. Over the last decade, I have noted that about one fifth of female students at university campuses wear the niqab. The cultural dynamics and uses of these dress items will be explored further in the last section of this paper.

It is possible here to identify and elucidate four highly interrelated discourses of the Emirati dress, which are examined separately below only for analytical purposes. They are: the historically conditioned discourse, the Islamic religious moral discourse, the ethnic political-economic discourse, and the socio-cultural discourse.

a. The historically conditioned discourse

Every political community or social identity is exclusive in the sense that not everybody can take part; groups and collectivities are always constituted in relation to others. The boundaries of ethnic groups are relative and vary situationally in their importance and significance for the various groups involved. There are times and situations where awareness of ethnicity is relatively unimportant and there are situations where it provides a decisive mechanism for exclusion or inclusion as well as guidelines for behaviour.

The historically shaped discourse of identity reflects the changing views and attitudes of the Gulf people toward their national dress. As a general discourse it envelops all other dress discourses as it affects the making of the broad conditions in which the entire Emirati national ideology is formed. The Emiratis' awareness of their national identity and their articulation of their cultural difference in relationship to others have varied in intensity of expression according to the larger historical transformations described earlier.

Local Gulf intellectuals and commentators have noted these post-oil changing dress modes and the attitudes associated with them as manifestations of historically shaped structures and issues that enter into the very making of the Emirati identity. Hasan Madan, a Bahraini intellectual who spent many years working in the area of culture and information in the UAE, wrote an insightful article on the cultural ideologies surrounding Gulf dress. A translation of his newspaper column is presented here as it offers sociological comments on the topic of Arab Gulf dress.

"I believe that many people, like myself, still remember the time when Gulf people started to liberate themselves from their inherited traditional



(tassel) which hangs down from the collar covering the front buttoned opening. Men cover their heads with a white scarf called ghotrah, held in place with a black rope, aqal. Many youth wear the scarf without the aqal in the form of a loose turban called isama. White is the dominant color for the isama; however, other colors are used much less frequently. Sandals are every Emirati man's foot wear. For ceremonial occasions such as weddings the groom and his male family members will wear the bisht; it is a light weight often-transparent gown with gold embroidery along the edges. It is usually black but also comes in various muted autumn colors. Shaikhs and VIPs are usually seen in public wearing the bisht as it adds a rather regal touch upon the wearer. (Refer to photos inserted in the paper)

Emirati women's clothes, like those of men, are tailor made. The women's traditional clothes are heavily embroidered. Older women wear a traditional long loose robe called a kandoura. It has a round neck with a short slit down the front. The slit and the sleeves at the wrist are usually embroidered and the fabric is either colourfully patterned or plain. The younger generation of women tend not to wear this traditional kandoura as they have been influenced during the last four decades by Western dress styles and general economic prosperity (Crocetti, 1999). Instead, they wear blouses with long skirts or pants. However, all generations of adult women cover their hair with a long black scarf (shaila).

When adult women are out in public, they cover themselves with a black abaya (ankle-length cloak). With the abaya and the shaila as the two major external garments, the Emirati woman's body is configured in black from head to toe. Many of the old Emirati women continue to wear the traditional facemask, burqu that covers the eyebrows, nose and mouth. Old women view it as having basically two functions: it indicates women's modesty and respect to traditions, and it also represents a form of adornment, as some mask types, designed with a low cut, do not conceal much and thus are used to enhance the woman's pretty facial features (Kanafani, 1983; Crocetti, 1996). The niqab is another face cover made of relatively thick black fabric and is worn by women of different age groups. As a veil it covers almost the whole face apart from narrow slits for the eye. However, there are some variations in the niqab design, with certain types worn with large eye opening used to enhance the beauty and charm of the eyes. The niqab is worn more commonly among very religious young women or those coming from ultra conservative Bedouin



the coin, for every act of identification implies a 'we' as well as 'they' (1978: xii). In view of this we find that the Emiratis' conception and identification of themselves as al-muwatnoon (the nationals) is a historically produced, newly constructed generalized political category used to classify and differentiate themselves from the al-wafidoun (expatriates). However, within these two major categories there exist sub-categories of identity. For the nationals there are sub-regional emirate-based identities, such as Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah. However, Emirati sub-identities cannot be reduced to regional bases alone, as tribal identification as well as other bases of identity (such as religious sects, origin of groups - Arabi versus Ajami (Persian), native Emirati versus the recently naturalized, upper classes versus lower classes) complicate the identity cultural webs that people find themselves caught in. However, within this paper the thematic focus and space considerations do not allow us to explicate further.

The expatriates are regarded as being made up of two major sub-categories: al-wafidoun Al-Arab (Arab expatriates) and al-wafidoun gair Al-Arab (non-Arab expatriates). These two sub-categories of al-wafidoun are also ethnically differentiated further according to region, locality, nationality, language and/or religion.

Clothes are voices that speak out many languages with different dialects and accents.

They are basically discourses about one's identity as it relates to gender, age, profession,

work, ethnicity, status group and social class. Therefore, the discourses of dress, like clothes themselves, are multi-layered, multi-dimensional, multicoloured, and multifunctional in their uses, meanings, cultural representations and ideologies.

Within the highly globalized and multi-ethnic present-day society, the Emirati dress may be examined with reference to the multiple discourses it communicates to the Emirati person himself as well as to the expatriate actors who represent a large number of different ethnic groups. Before elucidating the various discourses it is relevant to give first a brief description of the Emirati dress. The male garment, kandoura, is a loose ankle-length robe, and is usually white in color although occasionally shades of beige are worn. Sometimes in the winter season one sees Emirati men dressed in different shades of dark colors. The kandoura can be elegantly and subtly embroidered and has a distinctive tarbousha



distribution of privileges and assets as well as in the overall structuration of certain socio-political fields and boundaries required for the construction of the larger Emirati national identity. As shown in the ethnographic snapshots presented here as well as local voices appearing frequently in the press, the Emiratis feel nowadays that their culture is being besieged by this huge diversity of global culture and its agencies. This explains their apparent communal national allegiance to what they call "adatina wa taqalidana alasila" (our authentic customs and traditions), including their allegiance to their national dress, the most telling cultural and organizational symbolic form of identity.

Part II: Discourses of national dress and identity

The process of development in the UAE has resulted in intensification of the globalization process, which has been countered by local sentiments, reactions and adjustments aimed at preserving what the Emiratis usually refer to as 'our authentic (asila) national cultural identity'. National identity is constructed as a multidimensional historical process containing multiple psychosocial, economic as well as politico-cultural factors and components. The formation of national/cultural identity as a process is a function of the interplay of internal (local) and external (global) variables as these emerge and operate within a given historical/social context. The dialectic process resulting from the interplay of these two dimensions manifests itself in complex perceptual and behavioral modes of adjustment, accommodation or resistance all relating to the historically continuing process of inventing and reinventing one's social self.

It is sociologically meaningful to talk about the construction of identity only where groups of different ethnic origins have been brought into interaction within a given social context. The notion of ethnic identity provides a set of categories with ethnic cultural labels, through which people order their social environments and pattern their relations with others. Hence, Epstein writes, "Ethnic categories always have a dual aspect: they are at one and the same time both 'objective', external to, or independent of, the actor, and 'subjective', that is internal to the actor, a perception of the self" (1978:14). Viewed as such, they are shared collective representations. When introducing the concept of identity, as Epstein maintains, "We are at once reminded that this is only one side of



autonomy from the evolving civil society (Al-Naqeeb 1990, Crystal 1990). In what may appear as a paradox to its economic autonomy, the state returns to this civil society of citizens and manages to reorganize and restructure its relationship with it as a patronizing and caring welfare political system. This oil-maintained welfare system represents the driving force for modernizing the UAE as a nation state. It has meant the building of a modern institutional infrastructure through which wealth and lavish welfare provisions and services are distributed to the nationals. The control of the oil wealth has resulted in giving the state particular powers to extend its domination over economy and society. The Emirati state is the largest and most powerful and generous employer; over 90% of the total national labor force is employed in the public sector (Gulf News, July 19, 2002, p31). With the evolution of this particular situation of national employment in the state sector, being dressed in white robes (kandoura) has become a specific national privilege and a national marker that separates them as a distinct ethnic and political group from other expatriate ethnics.

4. The socio-cultural transformations. Over the last 40 years major changes and trends in the overall social and cultural patterns of life in the UAE have resulted in a highly urbanized society. The cities of the UAE have grown very rapidly into large centers of consumption, attracting not only rural migration within the country but also thousands of people living in the neighboring poor Asian and Arab countries as well as those of Eastern Europe. Migrant workers of all descriptions still arrive in huge numbers as the UAE undertakes the challenge of diversifying its economic base to lessen its dependence on oil, thus triggering a new large-scale construction boom. In the coastal cities now reside expatriate people representing diverse nationalities and/or ethnic groups, and consequently socio-cultural life has become characterized by being globalized, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural.

The new dynamics generated by oil wealth and the establishment of the UAE as a welfare society have been undermining traditional forms of socio-cultural life. Structures and organizational forms like the tribe, the clan, the lineage, and the extended family have lost many of their old functions, and are no longer major principles in the ordering of economic, political and social life. However, these traditional forms are being reinvented as new ideologies and are being utilized strategically by indigenous Emirati individuals and groups as instruments in the



material lifestyle and concomitant perceptual ideological attitudes which frame their cultural difference as a privileged national community. In general situations “ethnicity and class are not one and the same thing and must be distinguished from one another analytically. While class refers to systems of social ranking and distribution of power, ethnicity does not necessarily refer to rank” (Eriksen 1997:7). However, the recent economic-political transformations in the UAE have indeed privileged the Emiratis in large measures that it is possible to talk about a high correlation between ethnicity and class as, in this case, both fuse and reinforce each other.

2. Demographic transformations. The Emiratis’ awareness of themselves as a distinct and separate national community is primarily fostered by the huge demographic transformations that have radically changed the population composition of their society. The quest for achieving rapid large-scale national development meant importing not only modern technology and services, but much more importantly, great numbers of unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled labourers, technicians and professionals of all types to build the necessary institutions and material infrastructure needed for a wealthy modernizing society.

The large flow of immigrant foreign workers, mainly from Asian and Arab countries, is reflected in the rapid and progressive growth in the population size of the UAE 3. This population increase has primarily been the result of inflow of migrant workers of all types and nationalities, to the extent that the UAE now has a larger proportion of foreign workers vis-à-vis nationals compared with other Arab Gulf oil-producing countries. Foreign workers now constitute 80% of the total population, thus reducing the national citizens to a minority in their own country, with only about 10% participation in the total labor force in the society.

3. Political transformations. The economic empowerment derived from huge oil revenues and the establishment of the UAE as a federal state in 1971 enabled the Emirati shaikhs to transform their small shaikhdoms into an emerging development driven modern nation-state. Relying heavily on oil wealth, it has emerged as a monarchical oil welfare state, with the shaikhs as both controllers and distributors of national wealth. This has contributed significantly to the solidification of the economic-political structure of the shaikhs’ authority, which has become disarticulated from society in terms of economic power structure. This has given the Emirati state authority structure a significant measure of latent



behaviour towards the construction of their contemporary national identity as it is centred on dress. The particularities of these highly interconnected transformations are the synthesized end result of internal and external, local and global dynamics.

1. Economic transformations. The advent of the oil economy has led to a total transformation of the traditional economic activities and material infrastructure in UAE society, which in the early 1960s had a population of only 95,000 inhabitants. The society's former economic activities, which supported an impoverished subsistence existence, were finally swept away by an increasing flow of oil wealth. Pearling, shipbuilding, fishing, small-scale oasis agriculture and pastoralism were undermined in their entirety, although some have been renewed for economic commercial purposes using foreign labor, modern technology and new relations of production. What is significant here for the issue of national identity is that some of the material artifacts and the theatre of these old industries and activities have been salvaged and reproduced as history, as economic and cultural museums of a previous mode of life. The reconstructions of these former economic activities have become the main ingredient and focus of a growing heritage revival industry supported by both state and society to reconstruct Emirati national identity.

Although the increase in population has far outpaced growth, the UAE has maintained its status as having one of the highest per capita incomes in the world.² The transformation of the material conditions of the population from 'rags to riches' has enabled the UAE citizens to emerge as top spenders in the Arab world. "With its total population of 3.48 million at the end of 2002 the average daily private consumption - except real estate - was put at \$26.80, compared with the average Arab spending of only \$3.50 a day" (Gulf News Feb 2, 2004:30). It should be noted that this data on income and consumption behavior is deceptive as there are huge disparities in income among groups and social classes. For example, most foreign domestic workers and other unskilled Asian and Arab laborers receive only about \$1500 to \$2000 a year. This parity in income is largely in favor of the nationals and subsequently has played a significant role in motivating the Emirati citizens to perceive themselves as a very privileged and distinct community playing host to other diverse expatriate ethnic groups. This has led to the creation of the Emirati nationals as an elite group, expressing themselves in both an affluent



dialectical interplay between self and the other. These political-economic conditions are basically the newly configured realities that not only locate social actors but also shape their behaviour. Yet this dialectical process between local and global, self and the other, in turn affects the making of these conditions and the configurations of the Emirati politico-cultural world. Since socio-economic conditions are the outcome of broad historical processes, they should not, therefore, be viewed as fixed and enduring but rather as dynamic processes of a globally driven oil economy grounded in a modernizing traditional Arab/Islamic culture.

Increased accumulation of oil revenues since the early 1960s has empowered UAE society to embark on a large-scale rapid modernization/development process for what were once traditional small and poor communities. Both the pace and scale of this development have meant an acceleration of the society's integration within the global economy, international labour migration and their overarching global culture. This has manifested itself in rapid socio-economic, political and cultural transformations that now have become the most salient feature of the UAE as an oil-rich modern society harbouring more than 100 nationalities as its present day residents.

The globalisation process points to the extension of global cultural interrelatedness (Hannerz, 1990). It can be understood as "leading to a global ecumene," defined as a "region of persistent cultural interaction and exchange" (Featherstone, 1990:6). Globalisation as a process manifests itself in a series of cultural flows, which produce both cultural homogeneity and cultural disorder. These cultural flows link together previously isolated pockets of relatively homogenous cultures, which in turn produce more complex images of the other as well as generating identity-reinforcing reactions (Featherstone, 1990). Appadurai (1998) views the larger globalisation process as constituted of a set of five dimensions or cultural flows: ethnoscaples, technoscaples, finanscaples, mediascaples and ideoscaples. "Global flows do not receive equal reception or acceptance by local cultures. Global cultural flows occur in and through growing disjunctures between these various scapes" (Appadurai, 1998: 301).

How have these combined global flows impinged on the concrete social reality of the UAE? Economic, demographic, political and socio-cultural transformations can be identified that have generated the conditions shaping the Emirati perception of their image and their



that declare you by their loud knocking, and there are many more things girls are attracted to. All of this will lead you to fitna, (sexual enchantment). The Prophet describes those women who follow this path as "those women, who are clothed, yet appear half naked, and also those who sway their bodies will not enter heaven and will not smell its fragrance."¹

Part I: The political/cultural economies of the Emirati national dress

These ethnographic snapshots inform us that the Emiratis as a national community feel certain anxieties about the current conditions that threaten their traditional cultural identity. They also represent explicit messages about their need to retain their national dress as an essential component of being an Emirati. This concern about the importance of preserving national dress has been common discourse since the early 1990s. However, it should be noted here that this type of discourse is not confined to dress alone but is extended to other domains of Emirati society and culture such as newly invented cultural traditions, social customs and heritage sports, like camel racing, traditional boat racing, and falconry. This broad national heritage-oriented discourse is reinforced by the religious Islamic discourse that represents another significant aspect in the Emirati effort to construct their national/ethnic identity. Thus Emirati contemporary discourse on national dress is a fusion of multiple ideologies and value systems that include social traditions, heritage, Islamic values as well as national political symbols.

The questions that interest us here revolve around why nationalistic concerns about dress appear at this juncture in time and why the discourse on national dress manifests itself with such intensity, as indicated by these ethnographic snapshots? Like other cultural things, dress has its political and cultural economies and in order to provide a plausible explanation of the Emirati discourses of their national dress at this juncture in time, we need to look at it within the broader transformations that together have constituted the present-day UAE political/cultural economy. Emiratis as social actors/agents need to be grounded within the new economic-political realities of a rapidly changing oil-rich society. Emerging socio-economic and political conditions are the outcome of what globalisation-minded writers would term the interplay of local and global forces. It is these conditions that set the grounds for the



this gives a bad reputation.”

Gulf News, September 15, 1996, p. 3

c) A woman from Abu Dhabi calling herself ‘The Daughter of the Emirates’ wrote a scathing letter that appeared in the local Arabic press. She criticized female television announcers who were not properly wearing the shaila, the Emirati women’s black headscarf covering both the head and shoulders.

“It is my right to stand in defence of the shaila as I am one of the citizens of this nation. A law was introduced obliging Abu Dhabi television announcers to wear it. The fact that these announcers could not object to this law we see that every one of them wears it according to her way and style. The result is they do not give it the respect it deserves. Some wear it with short sleeve dresses, others let it fall back over their heads so much that you can hardly see it ... Our national dress is the symbol of our nation. Alshaila does not need to be mistreated like this. Either it is worn properly with the respect it deserves or let them cancel this government law.” Al Ittihad, September 8, 1996, p. 12)

d) A parents’ letter to their daughter (1999). The letter is a document of advice supposedly written by parents to their young daughter who has just joined the newly established Zayed University for women, with campuses in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The students typically wear ankle length black cloaks (abayas) and black headscarves (shailas). The letters were distributed in the cafeteria and other places on campus, and were elegantly typed in different colours and covered in thin plastic wrap for protection against tear and wear. Below a section purportedly written by the mother is translated.

My beloved daughter, times are changing and accordingly customs and traditions change too. However, principles and religious morality are unchanging among the people who adhere to them. Remain as we have raised you up, the pure and unblemished girl who does not get taken away by the false glitter of things, and does not get misguided by sweet words. Do not be misled by the glamour of material life. Should you do that, next you will find yourself wearing tight garments that will show your body form, or short garments that will reveal your limbs even when you cover them with that light cloak, abaya. Beware of wearing those cursed pants that make you look like men. This would be against our customs. Pay attention to your headscarf; it is now embellished with embroidery only to be worn improperly on the neck. Avoid those high-heeled shoes



Ethnographic snapshots:

A few ethnographic snapshots of Emirati behaviour and discourse about their national dress serve to introduce the research topic as well as give a feel for the immediacy and the cultural accent of the language of dress that is circulating in Emirati society.

a) Fighting with Mickey Mouse. MacDonald's, the fast food chain, opened its first outlet in Dubai in 1995 in Al Ghurair Mall in the heart of the city. Two Walt Disney characters came out during the opening party dressed in animal costumes to amuse the children and new customers. Later on, other two Disney characters appeared wearing the local male headdress of the ghutra (white headscarf) and the iqal (black rope). They went around dancing and amusing people in the crowded restaurant. Soon two young Emirati nationals went straight to the Disney characters and attacked them. They started beating them, supposedly for insulting the local national costume. When the restaurant manager appeared on the scene, he himself was attacked and badly beaten for allowing such insulting theatre of national dress.

b) In 1996 a lengthy article appeared in a daily newspaper entitled "Concern over expatriates misusing kandoora". Kandoora is the local term used by Emirati nationals for the robe worn by both men and women; the other less frequent term is dishdasha, which refers only to the white male robe.

"Calls by nationals to ban non-GCC citizens from wearing the kandoora have been the main topic of discussion in the readers' column of Al Ittihad, the UAE Government official newspaper and the most widely-read Arabic daily among nationals. Many nationals, mostly women, wrote in to urge local authorities to ban expatriates - except those from Gulf Cooperation Council states, which share the kandoora as their national dress with UAE - from wearing the flowing white robe. They said that the kandoora and the dishdasha are important national symbol for the Emirates and should thus be restricted to the people of the UAE and other GCC states ñ Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain and Qatar. One national businessman believed that these expatriates wore the kandoora so that they could pass off as nationals, hoping that they would get preferential treatment. A lot of foreigners who wear the kandoora actually pretend they are UAE nationals. Many even imitate our accent well. When they do something wrong people think they are real nationals and



nationalities. Second, the paper identifies the various discourses of dress by examining why and how the Emiratis use their national dress in the construction, negotiation and management of their national/ethnic identity. The ethnographic material will illustrate how the Emiratis as an 'imagined community', in Anderson's (1991) sense of the term, use specific cultural discourses, praxis and dress items as a cultural frame to construct collective meanings for themselves and simultaneously create social boundaries vis-a-vis the other that share and at times contest with them the same social/cultural field. Third, the paper looks at the various versatile and utilitarian uses of Emirati national dress within the wider contexts of their rapidly changing society.

The use of identity related terms such as ethnic, national and cultural require brief clarification with regard to their meanings, as these terms are interrelated. Social anthropologists writing on ethnicity and nationalism regard nationalism in its modern manifestation as something derived from and congruent with ethnic identity. Ernest Gellner states that "the nationalist principle requires that the political unit and the ethnic one be congruent. In other words, given that ethnicity is basically defined in terms of shared cultures, it demands that everyone, or nearly everyone, within the political unit be of the same culture and that all those of the same culture be within the same political unit. Simply put: one culture, one state" (1997:45). Viewed this way nationalism not only has its origin in primordial ethnic sentiments and other shared cultural elements but also is the realization of those cultural sentiments in the form of nation-state. Thus the terms ethnic and national represent the two sides of the same analytical coin. With regard to the contemporary Gulf we note that Anh Nga Longva (1997) in her seminal ethnographic work on the cultural interface between foreign laborers and their Kuwaiti hosts uses ethnicity as both descriptive and a key conceptual analytical term to delineate the dynamics of constructing Kuwaiti ethnic identity.

In view of the fact the Emiratis use in their daily discourse the term 'nationals' (al muwatinoun) as their emic view of themselves vis-a-vis other ethnic groups living in their midst we will talk more often about the construction of Emirati 'national' identity and utilize the terms of 'ethnic' and 'cultural' to qualify, and/or sharpen our analytical discussion.



“Our national dress is the symbol of our nation.” An Emirati woman

“Know, first, who you are; and then adorn yourself accordingly”.

Epictetus, Discourses, 3.1

“For the apparel oft proclaims the man

The soul of this man in his clothes.” Shakespeare , part 1, act 3

In a light humored way Emirati poet, Almwlawi, wrote

“I should think Shakespeare would probably conclude that people who wear white dishdashas (the Emirati robe) all year round must have white souls all year round.” (Gulf News, Friday Magazine, June 19, 1997:74)

Dress is a thoroughly socialized thing, a thoroughly politicized thing, as well as a thoroughly cultural thing. Dress does not only transform the human body into a cultural form, but also transforms it into a walking script, a social language. When clothed or framed by particular dress items, the body becomes a moving constellation of symbols and signs that speak out to the social world. In its silent ways dress gives messages about our identity, social position and status and subsequently it triggers and commands particular sets of social responses from others.

The Emiratis' current perception and need for the preservation and construction of their national identity as an ongoing socio-cultural and political process has become more evident recently within the challenging contexts of oil-wealth, rapid modernization and multiple global cultural flows and dynamics. Based on fieldwork observations carried out in the UAE during the last five years, the paper offers an ethnographic documentation and analysis of why and how Emirati men and women use their national dress as a significant boundary marker for maintaining their distinct national identity. The paper is organized in three major parts. First, it describes the political and cultural economies of the Emirati dress by showing how the oil-driven modern transformations - economic, demographic, socio-cultural and political - have constituted both internal and external factors that are presently shaping life conditions and identities within the Emirati new social scene. New political and cultural economies have been created whereby the Emirati nationals are a minority in their own country among more than one hundred expatriate

