

A Contemporary Vision of Fashion Design in Jordanian Folk Song

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Summary

This paper investigates how Jordanian folklore played a pivotal role in the clothing design industry in Jordan, in addition discussed in this paper, how fashion clearly, reflected in Jordanian folk songs, throw lyrics of popular and patriotic songs that were passed down through generations over the years. Researcher mentioned musical samples with simple melodic phrases that reflected the simplicity of this clothing and the beauty of its colors. This research focused on the fashion design industry, which was also based on traditional constants represented by preserving the popular heritage by creating design patterns that were inspired by the popular heritage, especially those patterns that distinguished the clothing of ancestors of both women's and men, children's clothing, and popular accessories that were passed down through generations. On the other hand, national role was represented by the flag and its colors, such as red, black, white and green.

Results shows, fashion design industry in Jordan was based on some patterns that formed principles in the Islamic religious heritage such as geometric shapes, miniatures and different forms of decoration. Through this research, we saw how the contemporary clothing design industry was designed based on the popular clothing heritage, as these clothes were decorated with some traditional shapes that decorated popular clothes, but in a modern way that was clearly popular in the modern design industry market.

Keywords:

Fashion design, folk costume, folk song, Shmagh, E'gal, cultural identity

1. Introduction

The fashion design industry has been throughout the ages, an important part of shaping societal culture, and a form of identity throughout the survival and sustainability of human civilizations. You do not find any race or people with a historical extension except that it has been stigmatized with a cultural identity in which fashion was an important part of formulating this identity or that. This industry developed and then suffered setbacks and then began to rise again, just like the civilizations that accompanied it throughout the ages. As for the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the clothing design industry has developed significantly and many schools, designers and fashion houses have emerged and this industry has become very active, especially in the digital age and today in the era of rapid openness of civilizations to each other and competition has intensified in the fashion design industry between companies, especially after the emergence of social media platforms and technological development, which has become an effective tool in promoting the fashion design industry product and the emergence of programs specialized in clothing design and its fast and rapidly developing technologies. Just as each society has its own identity, there is also its own dress, this dress that expresses the cultural identity, this identity that includes: (clan, tribe, ethnicity, language, nationality, religion, civilization). (Melhem, Mahmoud, 2021, p.42).

The term identity has received, in recent years, and still does, steady attention due to the importance of this term at all academic, social and political levels (as people are more distinguished

by their families than by their political party, but this is not the case all the time, in addition to the diversity of prominent features in identities of all kinds in the interactions between the individual or group and its environment). (Samuel, Huntington, 2005, p.25).

The development of fashion design in Jordanian society has not gone through historical complexities or major changes in the fashion design market, as fashion design is considered a modern industry when compared to other traditional industries, but over generations it has been slowly progressing towards development to become a craft that can play a role in improving the individual's income level from an industrial perspective and performing its aesthetic functional role as a way of expression and creativity. The clothing design industry in Jordan has extensive roots that are distinctively linked to Jordanian culture in its comprehensive concept and the aesthetic and functional aspect of the clothing design industry in particular.

2. Fashion design as a part of the cultural identity

Considering that fashion design is an important part of the culture of any society, the clothing industry was also an integral part of the culture of Jordanian society, where Jordanian folk songs played a role in shaping this industry. When we take a close look at Jordanian folk songs, we see that they gave an idea, in their vocabulary, and in a brief way, about the form and design of fashion, as we see this, also, through other forms of art prevalent in Jordanian society. Jordanian fashion design is embodied in Jordanian folk songs, folk dances (Dabkah), dancing and singing. These fashions are characterized by the simplicity of their formation and design, as we see in modern designs the fragrance of the past, where there is a re-formation of cultural vocabulary and traditions through the relationship linking the past and the present, they all harmonize in forms that appear simple and uncomplicated. The drawings and artistic forms express the viewpoints of the designer, who often derived these miniatures from folk heritage, and some of these designs preserved the national identity (fig.1). These forms are what formed the general foundations from which modern and contemporary Jordanian fashion designs developed.



(fig.1)

In order for the designer to be able to develop traditional fashion with a modernist perspective, he understood that he must modify the change instead of trying to impose it. Richard Sorger and Jenny Udall say in their book (The Basics of Fashion Design): “Fashion designers are like crows in their constant search for what to use in their designs or steal for their designs”. Fashion moves at an amazing speed compared to other creative activities and it can feel like there is a constant pressure to reinvent fashion every season. Fashion designers need to constantly search for new inspiration to keep their work fresh and contemporary. Good design, cannot be produced without

conducting investigations in one form or another of research, it feeds the imagination and inspires the creative mind. (Richard Sorger, Jenny Udall, 2019 - p.18).

In the fashion design industry, there are many roles and responsibilities that this industry takes upon itself. It gives creativity a wide scope for innovation and creation in the practice of updating traditions and creating formal patterns derived from the spirit of this heritage, where these design innovations reflect the different events that these traditions go through, where they play in some aspects the role of the historian. Over time, fashion design become, or at least the number of pieces that families consume, is increasingly important, due to the steady increase in the number of family members, as family members are the link between the past and the present, between tradition and modernity, as well as the spread of attractive and innovative design patterns. The decision of family members to buy a certain type of clothing that bears some traditional drawings and aspects, reflects the changing view of society towards local traditions and folklore. More importantly, we see people, on various occasions and celebrations, tend to browse and recall old family photo albums, especially those containing old or new clothes, on the occasions of marriage and engagement rituals and on social and religious occasions, where some designers evoke some of these old designs and select what attracts the designer's attention to use it in creating new ideas inspired by these traditional clothes that appear in the photo albums of past generations. It must be noted that the female element is the most affected in following the clothing design industry in its local and global form, and it is what attracts the attention of women in particular, and they associate it with the clothes they wear. In many cases, the bride wears a traditional costume on her wedding day that connects her to her environment, society, or even her race or region. For example, we see the Japanese bride wearing a dress inspired by the design of the Japanese traditional dress (kimono) (Yoon, J. 2017), and the sari, the traditional Indian dress (Ramaswamy, R. 2013). This costumes connects the bride with strong ties to the customs and traditions of the society in which she was raised and which expresses her identity. This choice expresses a taste that draws its spirit from her heritage that expresses her present, an expression that was evident in her choice of the design of her dress for her wedding day.

2.1. Cultural Background of Jordanian Folk Song

Jordanian culture is the product of long practices of historical accumulations. Throughout its history, many different civilizations have circulated on Jordanian soil, which have clearly and differently influenced Jordanian culture. To this day, despite rapid technological progress, Jordan has preserved its heritage through various traditional art forms, the most important of which is fashion design from an aesthetic and functional point of view. This traditional art is a sensor of the artist's background and heritage, as traditional art forms, including the clothing design industry, can be considered a moving caricature of modern cultural life in the Arab world. Traditional art directly reflects the heart of Jordanian culture and makes a person contemplate the emotional and social importance of traditions at the moment of creativity in shaping clothes and the way he deals with the traditional cultural features of the product in the field of fashion design (UNESCO. 2021). Jordanian expressive arts have been influenced by many historical conquests, making them a unique blend of different civilizations represented in the form of poems, narrative tales, folk songs and various other cultural elements. Jordanian folk songs gain special importance in terms of artistic applications through different cultural patterns. Each type of folk song has its own oral heritage, from folk tales, epics and narratives to simple, expressive and less dramatic lyrical melodies. Folk songs constitute expressive paintings, some of which are bright, cheerful, dark and sad, some of which are lowly and some of which are sublime. They are fertile exhibitions, and despite their different types, colors and multiple melodic forms, they constitute a lasting artistic

wealth. Therefore, people of all social classes have been interested in them by collecting and preserving them in various ways. These folk songs are still a source of inspiration for contemporary composers (Rasheed, Bahiya Sidqi, 1958-p.4). Such classified folk songs also emphasize the precision of performance and spontaneous expression, both individual and collective, and the ease and brevity of musical phrases, supported by words loaded with great and influential meanings, which give a unique identity to the different linguistic and cultural codes, and reveal meanings through their content. In this way, folk songs spread among different segments of the local community, crossing local borders and always remaining as a linguistic icon with cultural connotations.

2.1.1. Designing folk clothing for women

Jordanian women clothing consists of the "Shanbar", or "Malfa", which is a black or black and white striped cloth, wrapped around the head and over the malfa, the "Habriya", or the headband made of colored silk. As for the body clothing, it is a long black dress called "Mals" or "abu Ruwisha", over which, she wears a "Madraqa" dress, which is decorated and colored and called "Sayah" embroidered with "Fatl" threads that are blue or black and usually embroidered by hand. There are different forms of dresses worn by Jordanian women, and among the forms of dresses are "Madraq" Abu Rdain: A full-sleeved shirt is worn underneath it because it is sleeveless. Abbabi dress: It is similar to the Sultani dress and consists of 3 folds (16 arms) worn over the "Damer Al-Jukh", which is worn by women over the Sayah and is also called Al-Maqtanna and is also made by hand. Shemagh also rarely wear by women (fig.2). <https://mawdoo3.com>.



(fig.2)

<https://www.instagram.com/Shmaghe/p/CqgNnFks4K1>

2.1.2. Designing traditional clothing for men

The main traditional dresses of the Jordanian man are divided into:

- *Al-Keber or Dishdasha or Qambaz*: It is sewn from white rose fabric with white cords attached to its edges and is called the "Chinese Dome" and is decorated with cords and is closed according to the size of the neck.
- *Al-Damer*: It is worn in the summer and is a coat that reaches below the waist, worn with the headdress "Al-Qadadah" made of soft georgette and the "E'gal" made of goat hair, while in the winter "Al-Kabir" is worn with "Al-Damer" made of broadcloth.
- *Alabayah*: It is made from camel hair and is loose and light with wide sleeves, and is light in color in the summer and dark in the winter.

-*Alserwal* (Trouser): is a white linen trouser that is gathered at the top to the waist and tied with a ribbon at the bottom to the leg.

- *Headwear*: "*The Shemagh*" is worn in the manner of the veil or is folded on one side over the E'gal and the other is left on the shoulder, fringed with white cotton threads and is red and white in color.

- *The E'gal*: also called "*The Maraz E'gal*" is made of black goat hair and is worn over the Shemagh.

- *The Junad*: a belt tied on the chest made of leather and has pockets in which goat slaughtering tools are placed, in addition to a wallet tied on the side of the waist. <https://mawdoo3.com/>.

Folkloric clothing was mentioned in many Jordanian folk songs, although the details of its design were not mentioned, but its aesthetics, some of its colors, and sometimes the purpose of its existence in this form or the material from which this or that piece was made were described, as well as its various shapes and sometimes the functions of these clothes and the materials from which these clothes were made, most of which are cotton and wool, and sometimes leather, heavy in weight to avoid the summer heat in the countryside and desert and the cold in the winter. As for its design, it is simple and does not contain any protrusions, angles, or breaks in the design lines, and it often covered the entire body.

If we look at women's clothing, we see that it was characterized by colors dominated by red, white, black, and gray, in line with the nature of life prevailing in those periods, as women mostly lived in tents, while rural women lived in mud and stone houses, and these dwellings do not match light colors and do not match the lifestyle of these population complexes in the countryside, cities, and desert.

3. Dressing in Jordanian Folk Song

Song has played a pivotal role in Jordanian daily life. The persistence of artistic heritage and the preservation of the old way of life and traditional heritage find their expression through traditional music and songs. Researcher Mohammad Ghawanmeh says in his book *The Jordanian Song*, "The Jordanian folk song is a true mirror of the various traditions and lifestyles in Jordan, and it originates from the common people." (Ghawanmeh, 1997-p.80). The melodic structure and simple lyrics of folk songs have served as a bridge linking the fluidity of heritage with modernity, a process that summarizes and continuously preserves the design style of fashion among contemporary innovators and designers in Jordanian society. Jordanian traditional music has long proven its close connection to folklore. The criterion of folk songs has been applied as a clear package of artistic values from which the contemporary design style is chosen, mixed with a strong folkloric flavor, as proven by early writers in the field of sociology and by various groups of researchers and folklorists.

The additional importance of Jordanian folklore, especially with regard to Jordanian folk songs, was vividly reflected in Jordanian folk costume. The lyrics of folk songs and their permanence helped folklore curators and collectors, in general, to design innovative and modern clothing pieces, which significantly helped to preserve the identity of these Jordanian folk costumes and maintain the specific formal features of this aspect of national culture. Just as there are different folkloric costumes, there are also different folkloric songs that carried within their vocabulary the names and forms of some costumes that were and still are prominent among the vocabulary of folk songs and constitute the focus of fashion design in Jordan. There are many styles that have developed and are developing independently and that represent the creative expression of Jordanian folk traditions. The fashion design industry will remain indebted to the pioneers of art and music who employed folk dress and sang about it in musical drama, cinema, theater and

television, in addition to the folk arts groups that were and still are the best ambassadors for their homelands abroad, appearing before the public in their traditional country costumes that are in harmony with the spirit and content of the singing shows of these groups. <https://alrai.com/article/10573228/>.

Jordan has a unique growth path. However, it must be emphasized that Jordanian folklore represents a treasure trove of oral and popular traditions as well, and deserves an appreciative attitude from designers in Jordanian society. From a cognitive point of view, Jordanian songs constitute social studies, act as true encyclopedias of the past, and tell the facts of local life. At the same time, from a historical, ethnographic and emotional point of view, these songs constitute an important element of the past and present of the fashion design industry in Jordan. Here are some examples of the fashions that were mentioned in the popular song:

3.1. Designing the Shemagh (hatta) in the musical form of (Addal'una):

The Shemagh or hatta is considered a Jordanian national symbol that has been mentioned in many Jordanian songs. It is also called (Hatta, Kuffiyeh or Qadadah) depending on the region. (Aziz, T. 2018). It is a piece of cloth with different colors, but the most famous are red and white. The Jordanian Shemagh is distinguished from others by its thick fringing made of cotton, square in shape, with an approximate side length, in northern Jordan, for example, of 120-140 cm. The Jordanian Shemagh is distinguished by its fringing with white cotton threads. The Shemagh is worn in several ways, some formally and others otherwise, such as the (lithām), or wrapped around the neck to warm the neck and worn on the head for national purposes, as members of the Jordanian army wear it as a national symbol, or for aesthetic purposes to emphasize masculinity and pride among men or tribal sheikhs and men, or for environmental reasons, as it brings and maintains body warmth in the winter. We also find another way to wear the Jordanian Shemagh, as it is tied on both sides or one of its sides to the E'gal and the other is left on the shoulder.

Design of Jordanian Shemagh:

The Jordanian Shemagh as following:

- 1- Cut the white piece of cloth into a square shape with a diameter ranging between 120-140 cm
- 2- Stitch the four sides of a square with a tight weave so that the threads of the cloth do not fray from each other
- 3- Embroider the white piece of cloth and decorate it in a fixed geometric shape over the entire area of this piece, and the shapes of these stitches take the shape of a square, rectangle, triangle, or mixed with each other. This shape consists of red threads that give each small piece of this mosaic the shape of a small irregular rectangle and are repeated in a straight or zigzag shape (fig.2), and tie them together with a thin thread shorter than its size over the entire area of this piece of cloth, so that the Shemagh appears as a red mosaic piece on a white board decorated with geometric shapes dominated by the square, rectangle, and triangle. Let's not forget that these shapes came from the most important principles of Islamic design, which is geometric or geometric decoration (Al-Drayseh, Muhammad, 2014).
- 4- This piece of cloth is hemmed after it has been decorated with red spots. The hemming process is done with a special popular weave inherited through generations using pure white cotton. The denser the hemming, the heavier the Shemagh becomes and the more valuable it becomes in terms of prestige, social status, and the financial status of the person or E'gal entity. (fig. 3)



(fig.4)



(fig.3)

<https://www.etsy.com/listing/1736852717/palestinian-thobe-embroidery-tatreez>

The fringe takes the shape of a small ball tied with finer and thinner cotton than the size of this white cotton ball, which does not exceed 2 mm in diameter. This fringe covers the entire circumference of the cloth, while these spherical fringes cover and are present on the four corners of the cloth, so that they are designed in different sizes that increase proportionally until the last one reaches soft cotton balls, each of which is 1-2 cm in diameter.

Among the songs that sing about the Shemagh:

3.2. "Hadabat li Shmaghi lahmar":

Hadabat li Shmaghi lahmar	Wbidaha ghazlat alam
Galat yabni khalli rasak	Fog aali balgimam



" Hadabat li Shmaghi lahmar " is a song composed by the Jordanian artist Omar Al-Abdallat in the style of a popular song that talks about the mother and the red Shemagh, this color and shape that distinguishes the Jordanian Shemagh and expresses its identity, especially when it was used in the Jordanian army as a head covering instead of the military cap for some factions of the Jordanian Arab Army.



(fig.7)



(fig.6)

(fig.5)

<https://www.instagram.com/Shmaghe/p/CqgNnFks4K1>

3.3. Yabu Gadadah Baitha:

The (Qadadha) here refers to the head covering also called (Shoura) which is a white piece made from textile, decorated with an Egal on top of it and is the same size as the (Shmagh) but differs in color and function as it is not used for official purposes. This song is from the

covers the body like a blanket, narrowing from the waist and chest with a width of approximately (65) cm and a length of (153), which is the average height of a girl. The armholes are wide and the waist is the width of the shoulders. These measurements vary according to size and length.



(fig.8)

<https://www.etsy.com/listing/1736852717/palestinian-thobe-embroidery-tatreez>

3.5. AIE'gal design:

It is also called Al-Mreer. The E'gal in its linguistic meaning is the rope that the camel's arm is tied with after it is bent to its knee. Two black circles on top of each other are equal in diameter. The approximate diameter of each circle is about 25 cm and was made in the past from braided threads of black goat hair. The E'gal is worn over the Shemagh and Jordanian men show off with it (fig.8). Its types differ from one region to another in Jordan. The Bedouins prefer to wear the soft, thin E'gal, and the people of the southern cities and villages wear the Mubarrad E'gal, while the people of the northern cities and villages prefer to wear the Zipper E'gal in addition to the Mubarrad. Its types differ in terms of thickness, quality and additions. There are thin, medium and very thick ones, and the commonly known measurements are (52, 50, 48, 45). The quality, softness and hardness also differ, and this is followed by an increase in price. The best type is the (Maraz) headband. There are some types of headbands without appendages and others with appendages and from the same material (wool). It hangs down on the back of a man's head when he wears it. One of the appendages is long and extends to the middle of the back or gets a little longer to end in the shape of the inverted Latin letter (t) or in the shape of a Kurusha (a group of threads tied together to form an appendage resembling a horse's tail) (fig.9), or in the shape of two long appendages or four appendages artistically tied at the back of the headband on top of the head. The headband is worn by folding it over the other like a white headband. This type is called (Abu al-Jadayel). Some types can be made larger or smaller after tightening a special thread from its threads called a zipper. The gold-colored E'gal: It is square in shape and is only worn by the elite, such as the sheikh or prince of the tribe, to distinguish him from other people. Therefore, we see that the E'gal is associated with manhood and composure, and it is considered a symbol of

chivalry, manhood, loftiness, pride, honor, dignity, and whatever beautiful meanings you want to call it, you can do so. How could it not be, when Jordanians put it on their heads? Preserving the wearing of the E'gal is preserving authenticity. The E'gal played a role in stirring up the sense of chivalry, and its descent from the head and placing it on the neck of the person seeking refuge means that the person seeking refuge wants justice and protection from the person seeking refuge. <https://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/>.



(fig.9)



(fig.10)

<https://www.etsy.com/listing/1736852717/palestinian-thobe-embroidery-tatreez>

One of the popular songs that sings about the E'gal is a song by the Jordanian folk artist Nahawand. This song spread in the popular community in a noticeable way at the beginning of this century, as the tilted E'gal symbolizes pride and social or official value. The song consists of one musical phrase that is repeated in the first and second lines of the verse, as it is repeated in every verse, and in the musical meter 4/4. The song is performed quickly, arousing enthusiasm and passion. The song "Hey hey Mayyel E'galak":

Hey mayyel e'galak allah allah
Hey mayyel e'galak allah allah

fog alkufiyyah
Hinna Urduniyyah



4. Modern design ideas for fashion inspired by heritage:

There are some designs that took the colors of the hijab mixed with some other colors in an open shape and covered the neck and chest opening and the shortened and open sleeve opening. These quotations from traditional clothing appeared in children's and youth clothing and some supplies on some shirts and women's clothing. Some accessories were also influenced by traditional designs such as bracelets, accessories and women's bags (fig. 12, 13, 14). These bags came in a circular shape that suggested the shape beloved by children, a circle with a diameter not exceeding 30 cm and a relatively small size that matches the requirements of the girl and does not match the

requirements of the woman. The colors were also bright, indicating optimism and hope for the future and freedom. As for the geometric shapes, they showed again that the Jordanian designer does not cease to adhere to religious and social traditions in his designs, especially with regard to children and upbringing. We also see some designs containing pictures of birds and decorative geometric shapes as in (fig.11). Modern designs came decorated with bolder colors than the colors used in traditional clothes. The colors varied in their shades, such as white, black, gray, pink, dark brown, and blue. As for the red color, it was the color that continued from traditional clothes to contemporary ones in an indispensable way. There is no doubt that the designer focused on choosing colors according to the occasion to suit the different occasions that require special clothes (fig.15-16).



(fig.11)



(fig.12)

<https://www.instagram.com/sheedesign/?hl=en>

We see some designs that adhered to some social traditions as in (fig.10) and religious ones, so they came in a loose size as in (fig. 11), but the bright colors on the sleeves and shoulders in the shape of a shawl resulted in a special beauty, as this design can be deliberately suitable for plump and average-weight women. Also, the sides of the dress were crowned with embroidery taken from the embroidery of the headband, which gave the dress a movement that displaced the monotony of colors and a traditional touch.



(fig.13)



(fig.14)



(fig.15)

<https://mawdoo3.com/>



(fig.16)



(fig.17)

<https://www.instagram.com/sheedesign/?hl=en>

Geometric shapes and embroidery are the two features that have continued to decorate modern and contemporary clothing in innovative and multiple ways. As we mentioned earlier, these two principles are an extension of the principles of Islamic art that Islamic art has not abandoned since the dawn of Islam to this day. In terms of form, many changes have occurred in the clothing design industry market that contradicted the traditional form. For example, the dress covers the entire body from top to bottom, and it is neither transparent nor descriptive. It is made of heavy fabric through which the details of the woman's body cannot be seen in an indecent way, nor is it cut to clearly describe the woman's body. These two characteristics have been largely surpassed in modern designs, as the dress has come to embody the woman's body in many areas

of the body such as the waist, chest, shoulders, and pelvis, and it begins to expand smoothly until it reaches the soles of the feet. There was a widening of the sleeves or even the open and wide sleeves, while the length is subject to the nature of the general design of the designed piece.

Conclusion

We saw through the research that clothing design in Jordan was based on traditional constants represented by preserving the popular heritage by creating design patterns that were derived from the inspiration of this heritage, especially those patterns that distinguished the clothing of the ancestors of both male and female and even children's clothing and popular accessories that were passed down through generations. The national role was also represented by the flag and the colors that the state flag contained, such as red, black and white, which carry a national connotation. The fashion design industry in Jordan also contained some patterns that formed principles in the Islamic religious heritage, such as geometric shapes, miniatures and various forms of decoration. There is no doubt that folk singing included descriptions of many Jordanian folk clothes such as the women's dress, the Shemagh, and the E'gal, which were also decorated with the colors of the Jordanian flag, which were reflected in the lyrics of folk and patriotic songs and passed down through the generations, with simple melodic phrases that reflected the simplicity of this dress and the beauty of its colors.

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