

**ARAB DRESS:
From the Dawn of Islam
to Modern Times,
Revised Second Edition**

Yedida Kalfon Stillman

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ARAB DRESS

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VOLUME 2



ARAB DRESS

A SHORT HISTORY

From the Dawn of Islam to Modern Times

BY

YEDIDA KALFON STILLMAN

AND

EDITED BY

NORMAN A. STILLMAN

REVISED SECOND EDITION



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to
Hillel Fradkin

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

About the Author

Yedida Kalfon Stillman died peacefully at home surrounded by her family at the age of fifty-one on February 22, 1998 after a valiant ten-month struggle against a rare form of gastric cancer. At the time of her death, she was professor of history, Near Eastern languages, and women's studies at the University of Oklahoma. She was the world's acknowledged expert on the history of the clothing of the Arab world, both Muslim and Jewish, from medieval to modern times.

Born in the mellah of Fez, Morocco, she went to Israel at the age of five, living with her large family for two years in a squalid tent camp. But what she recalled most from that time were the flowers that her father and her sister would draw on their tent and plant outside in front of it, both to beautify their world and to help guide her home when she got lost among the thousands of identical tents in the sprawling camp. But it was not the extremes of heat and cold nor the dust in summer and mud in winter in that tent city that shaped her. Rather it was the flowers that her father planted in the dust and mud. She never looked back on that time as one of poverty and deprivation, but rather she recalled her family's strength, creativity and goodness. And she maintained that positive outlook throughout her life to the very end.

She grew up in the overcrowded prefabricated housing of the Katamonim section of Jerusalem, a neighborhood that was overwhelmingly populated by Jews from Arab countries. The years of her childhood and adolescence were a time in which there was a great deal of social prejudice against Oriental Jews in general and Moroccans in particular. But again, even though she experienced the sting of prejudice many times, it never embittered her, and she was always grateful for having grown up in a free country and for having received an excellent education at the Alliance Israélite Universelle schools and the Hebrew University.

It was already in her high school years that she became interested

in the folklore and material culture of North Africa and the Middle East. And when she entered the Hebrew University, she did her undergraduate studies in the Department of Folklore and became an assistant to her first mentor Dov Noy, with whom she remained a close friend all her life. During her undergraduate years, she did extensive field work for the Israel Folklore Society which she could conduct in Maghrebi and Levantine Colloquial Arabic, Hebrew and French. She also worked in the Israel Folklore Archives, and she was acknowledged in several of Dov Noy's books. At this time too, she gained invaluable experience in the study of material culture working in the Ethnography Department of the Israel Museum. It was there that she and I met in the summer of 1966. She walked into the room with two books that I later would come to know well, Eudel's *Dictionnaire des bijoux de l'Afrique du Nord: Maroc, Algérie, Tunisie, Tripolitaine* and Besancenot's *Bijoux arabes et berbères du Maroc*. It was love at first sight, and we married exactly one year later.

Even though she was still a semester short of finishing her B.A., she was admitted to the graduate school of the University of Pennsylvania, where she earned her M.A. in folklore and folklife in 1968 and completed her doctorate in Oriental studies in 1972 with the great S. D. Goitein (the only woman ever to do a Ph.D. with him) on female attire in medieval Egypt, based on the the trousseau lists from the Cairo Geniza and Arabic manuscripts and artistic sources in the museums of Europe, Egypt, and Israel. She was for a year also a guest student at the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University where she studied Islamic art with Richard Ettinghausen, her co-adviser on the dissertation.

Even before obtaining her first academic position at the State University of New York at Binghamton, she was engaged by the Museum of International Folk Art and International Folk Art Foundation of Santa Fe, New Mexico, to prepare a major study on its collection of Palestinian costume and jewelry and was sent to Jordan and Israel to purchase items that would fill in the interstices in the museum's already extensive collection. Her work resulted in a major exhibition and her first book, which was subvented by the National Endowment for the Arts. In subsequent years, she held guest curatorial and consulting positions at the Smithsonian Institution, the Se-wall Gallery in Houston, the Eastman Gallery in Rochester, the Jew-

ish Museum in New York, the Joods Historisch Museum in Amsterdam, the Jewish Museum of Greece, the Museum of the Diaspora in Tel Aviv, and many others.

She served on the boards of several international organizations and learned societies including the International Society for Judeo-Arabic Studies and the Centre de Recherche sur les Juifs du Maroc. Over the years she was highly successful at obtaining grants for her research from such agencies and foundations as the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Littauer Foundation, the American Philosophical Society, the American Research Center in Egypt, the Institute of Turkish Studies, the Ben-Zvi Institute, and the Bradley Foundation, which for the last eight years of her life was the principal ongoing supporter of her work on Middle Eastern and North African costume history. In 1994-1995, she was senior Fulbright Research Scholar at Muhammad V University in Rabat.

In addition to five published books (two in collaboration with her husband), she was the author of numerous scholarly articles, encyclopedia entries (including the monographic "Libās" in the new edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islām*), journalistic articles and reviews in several languages. Two major books were in progress at the time of her death—this short history of Arab dress and an encyclopedic dictionary of Arab clothing.

Her contribution as a teacher was no less important than her scholarship. In her twenty-three years at Binghamton, she took a Hebrew language program that had scarcely a score of students and developed it into one with well over a hundred. In 1978, she was honored with the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. Many of her students, who always knew her simply as Yedida, became lifelong friends.¹ She had similar success with her teaching at the University of Oklahoma, doubling the size of her classes for each of two consecutive years. Even during her illness, she continued to teach her classes whenever she could. In addition to teaching, mentoring younger researchers was a sacred task for her. On the day before she died, despite her weakness, she insisted on helping a young doctoral candidate in Canada who had turned to her for help in

¹ For a moving personal tribute by one of her former students, see *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin* 33:1 (1999), pp. 150-151.

identifying a puzzling marriage belt of unknown provenience. She did in fact identify the unusual item from the detailed photographs that she had been sent and in a whisper dictated her reply to me for the young scholar.

In accordance with her wishes, she was buried in the Judean Hills outside Jerusalem. In the year and a half since her death, memorial symposia, colloquia, and panels have been held in her honor in the United States, France, Morocco, and Israel.

The Editor's Task

The manuscript for this book was more than three quarters finished at the time of Yedida's death. Most of the chapters were fairly complete. One chapter (Seven) was only half finished, but with an extensive outline for the part that remained to be done. As with any work done over several years, there were marginal notes with references and quotations to be added or to be checked, manuscript illuminations to be reexamined, and various illustrations to be considered for inclusion. Although costume history is not one of my areas of specialization, I was always intimately familiar with Yedida's work, as she was with mine. There was no individual project that was not thoroughly discussed, commented upon, and critiqued by one of us for the other. And in fact, we had done some collaborative work in this field together.

Obviously, preparing this book for publication has been a bitter-sweet task. On the one hand, it has given me the feeling that I am still working with Yedida in closest partnership as we had worked together through thirty years of blissful marriage and professional collaboration. While on the other hand, it is one more constant reminder of her absence and the void that it has created in my life and the lives of all who loved and cherished her.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Since authors frequently leave the front matter of a book, including the acknowledgments, to the very end, there was no draft to be found with the manuscript of this book after Yedida's death. And although I believe I know many of the people and institutions that she would have wished to thank, I cannot be certain that I know all of them. Her correspondence was voluminous, and even going through her many files of letters, I am sure that I have not seen everything. If, therefore, there are any omissions here, it is I who am totally, albeit unintentionally, at fault. Yedida was always extremely punctilious in thanking those who had been of assistance, even in the smallest way, to her in her work.

Without any doubt, the profoundest thanks go first and foremost to the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which for the past decade has been unfailingly generous in its support of Yedida's work on the historical study of Arab attire. The Bradley Foundation was not only kind enough to allow me, as Yedida's colleague and literary heir, to make use of what remained of the considerable funds that it had already allocated for this book and for the much larger historical dictionary of Arab clothing, which I also intend to bring to publication for her, but it generously provided me with additional funding as a further extension of the grant.

Other research grants that helped fund Yedida's study of textiles and costumes were provided by: the Fulbright Foundation in Washington, D. C., the Lucius N. Littauer Foundation in New York, the American Research Center in Egypt, the American Institute for Turkish Studies, the American Philosophical Society, the Ben-Zvi Institute in Jerusalem, and the Jerusalem Center for Anthropology.

Our deepest gratitude also goes to the publisher Koninklijke Brill of Leiden. It was Brill that first proposed that Yedida write a work to replace Reinhart Dozy's classic, but thoroughly outdated *Dictionnaire détaillé des noms de vêtements chez les Arabes* (1835). Over the years, we have had the closest relation with Brill on this and other projects and became friends with a number of its editors. The continuous encour-

agement and support that we both received on this and other projects has been deeply gratifying. One could not ask for a better working relationship with a publisher, and it has truly been a privilege working with all of the Brill staff.

Research on the history of Arab and Islamic attire required work in many libraries and museums, and institutes for the study of textiles and costumes around the world. Thanks go to the personnel at the British Museum in London, the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Musée de l'Homme in Paris and its Curator for the Middle Eastern and North African Section Dr. Dominique Champault, the staff of the Oriental Manuscripts Section of the University of Leiden, the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, the Abegg Stiftung in Zurich and its director Dr. Karel Otavsky, the Musée de la Ville de Genève in Geneva, the Vatican Library in Rome, the Museums of Coptic and Islamic Art in Cairo, the Ethnography Department and Library staff at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, particularly to her friends and colleagues there Chaya Benjamin and Carmela Teichman, and the L. A. Mayer Memorial Museum in Jerusalem, the Jāhīlī and Early Islamic Arab Poetry Concordance Project of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem, and especially to Dr. Avraham David of the Hebrew Manuscript Section, the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and its now emerita director Dr. Yvonne Lange, the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, l'Université Mohamed V in Rabat where she was very much adopted by our good friend and colleague Professor Majid Zeggaf, the Qasbat al-Widāya Musée des Costumes Populaires du Maroc in Rabat, le Musée des Arts Populaires in Tetouan, the Topkapu Museum in Istanbul, the Jewish Museum of Greece and its then director Dr. Nikos Stavroulakis, the Joods Historisch Museum of Amsterdam and its entire staff, in particular Judith Belinfante, Julie-Marthe Cohen, Hetty Berg, Steven Hartog, and Daniel Bouw. The Interlibrary Loan staffs of Binghamton University and the University of Oklahoma cheerfully processed hundreds—perhaps over a thousand or more—requests for books and articles needed for this project which were not easily available to us.

I could not pretend to know all of the many individuals who had

given assistance and advice to Yedida over the years that she worked on this project. However, among those who were of particular help in recent years, particular thanks must go to Professor Paula Sanders of Rice University, a dear friend and colleague, who collaborated with Yedida on the article “Ṭirāz” for the *Encyclopædia of Islām*, and who kindly put at my disposal her own extensive notes on references on garments and textiles in Arabic and particularly Fatimid sources. Words fail to express the gratitude that I personally feel for her acts of kindness during Yedida’s illness. Naomi’s blessing to her two daughters-in-law in Ruth I:8 comes closest to expressing it.

Over many years Dr. Marilyn Jenkins-Madina of the Islamic Department of the Metropolitan Museum in New York had often provided Yedida materials related to her project and was kind enough to give me advice when needed. Dr. Louise Mackey has also over many years been a source of valuable information and advice when she was first at the Textile Museum in Washington, D. C., and later at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. Dr. Nancy Micklewright of the University of British Columbia, who collaborated with Yedida on an important *mise au point* of Islamic costume research, had over the years been Yedida’s expert consultant on Ottoman Turkish clothing. Dr. Patricia Baker of London has also been a colleague with whom Yedida consulted on matters of costume history. Dr. Elisabetha Duda of the Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek in Vienna gave her assistance and counsel. Professor Albert Arazi of the Hebrew University also provided assistance at one stage.

I know that Professor Michael Cook of Princeton University kindly sent Yedida several references to material that she was seeking. Professor Hans Jansen of the University of Leiden also provided some important photographs of medieval Egyptian garments, as did Dr. Georgette Cournu of Lyon.

Over the course of many years, Professor Bernard Lewis of the Institute for Advanced Study and Princeton University emeritus professor encouraged Yedida in her work. He was, I believe, along with me one of the first people to strongly urge her to write a history of Arab attire after the appearance of her monographic article “Libās” in the new edition of the *Encyclopædia of Islām*.

Yedida had many research assistants over the years of work on this project who held the title of Bradley fellows, many of whose names

I cannot recall or easily find. One, however, that I know she definitely would have mentioned, because he certainly was academically the best trained and the most helpful was Josef Meri, who recently received his doctorate in Islamic Studies at Oxford.

Several people deserve my personal thanks for their assistance to me in the year and a half following Yedida's death that I had been working on completing the manuscript. These include M. Michel Garel of the Oriental Manuscript Section of the Bibliothèque Nationale. He went out of his way to give me every personal assistance and to show the greatest personal kindness when I explained to him the nature of my work checking manuscript illuminations that Yedida wanted rechecked.

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Yedida's and my secretary, Ms. Jan Rauh, who in the last two months leading up to finally sending off the manuscript to the publisher, worked long hours polishing the format and layout, proofreading, even drawing the sketches for the figures used in this book. My own research assistant John Borrego worked long and hard to put the bibliography together from the references in the footnotes. He also helped look up incomplete publication data, find inconsistencies in the use of abbreviations and citation form. He too provided another pair of eyes for proofreading the text. Forrest Bacigalupi shot one of the photographs needed for the plates on short notice at the last minute.

Our son Enan also pitched in and made up the list of illuminated manuscripts and Geniza documents by extrapolating them out of the many footnotes. No words of acknowledgment can adequately express Yedida's and my profound gratitude and love for the tenderness, love, and support that he and our daughter Mia provided us throughout her illness. In spite of our attempts to urge them to remain in school and finish their degrees, both insisted on withdrawing from their studies for a year to be by our side. They, of course, were right, not we. Neither of us could have done without them.

N. A. S.
August 1999

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