

Myths and Reality: Meaning in Moroccan Muslim Women's Dress

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Abstract

This study examines the Meaning of Moroccan Muslim Women's Dress. It reviews the English language literature on symbolic consumption, sign, self, identity and clothing and informs it with an overview of an Islamic worldview relevant to the sample (Moroccan women). Clothing is a highly visible, publicly consumed cultural artefact and, as such, provides an excellent illustrative example with which a study of contextual, situated meaning can be properly considered.

In so saying, the Islamic World View and the culture which springs from it is essentially included and, consistent with the critical case methodology employed, a historic, social and legal background of the Moroccan empirical context is provided.

Given that the thesis itself is situated within the marketing, consumer behaviour, consumption, consumer culture theory, and symbolic consumption literatures implications for using particularly symbolic consumption theory for non-western samples is considered as are the implications for theories applied to Muslim samples across the social science disciplines, most especially the consideration of the impact and importance of Islam for Muslims and of transcendence as a motivator for behaviour and presentation.

The study format was in-depth interviews with nine young Moroccan women and their mothers, in Morocco. Data included background interviews, the focal interviews, questionnaire results and field notes allowing a comprehensive corpus to be complied and, so, a detailed contextual picture to be developed. Methodological contributions are made with regard to accessing such a sample and considerations necessary to design a successful research project with a Muslim sample.

A further outcome was a highlight of differences in ethical considerations when studying particularly women from a Muslim culture with regard to definitions of privacy, public domains and propriety.

The overall implications from the study point to a considerable gap in the extant literature and theory when considering such samples, making research projects utilising these respondents of negligible value in terms of a contribution to knowledge.

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والفضل في الأولى والآخرى.

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"وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ" (الروم: 21)¹.

"هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ" (البقرة: 187)².

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين.

¹ "Among His signs is [the fact] that He has created spouses for you among yourselves so that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has planted love and mercy between you; In that are signs for people who reflect". Qur'an [30 : 21]

² "... they are a garment for you and you are a garment to them ..." Qur'an [2 : 187]

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I. Introduction

I.1 Introduction

This study considers an illustrative example of symbolic consumption (Islamic dress) within a context where it is unremarkable (Morocco), but not without symbolic meaning. Clothing has significance in all cultures, and different clothing items have symbolic significance. Clothing is an excellent example of 'material culture' (Küchler and Miller 2005; Prown 1982) and an easy one to observe given that it is a conspicuously/publicly consumed cultural good (Veblen 1899).

The literature examined comes from the symbolic consumption and clothing streams with the addition of the Islamic teaching on dress requirements and an accepted explanation (*tafsir*) from an Islamic scholar. The study offers the perspective of a researcher who is familiar with both dominant perspectives on the issues surrounding Muslim women and their dress (in the English language) and, indeed, wears clothing complying with the Islamic clothing guidelines when in a public setting (the definition of this setting being one of the points of consideration in this study).

The study was partially inspired by the reception the researchers appearance received when she returned to her home country (New Zealand) after a number of years in Japan. The strength and hostility of the response to her dress from 'the public' surprised her, doubtless exacerbated by having spent a long period abroad, and an interest in examining that response provided the catalyst for this study.

I.2 Background

The portrayal of Muslim women in English language media – especially in news and film – is often reduced to the level of stereotypes (Shaheen 2001). Arab women, in particular, are often portrayed as “the closeted, subservient, and oppressed wife, the exotic, scantily clad and sexually seductive harem maiden, the fat, unattractive beast of burden, the shapeless, ululating bundle of black, and the mindless fanatical terrorist” (Sobh and Belk 2009:34). In addition to this, studies considering Muslim women’s clothing tend to take a limited perspective either focusing on the fashion aspects of Muslim women’s clothing choices (for example, Economist, 13th May 2010; Al Jazeera, 29th March 2006) or emphasising a political perspective (for example, Ahmed 1992; Kilicbay and Binark 2002; Sandikçi and Ger 2005). In so saying, the studies are ‘semantic’ – in that they focus on the explicit or surface level meanings of dress (Braun and Clarke 2006). Religious linkages to the style of dress are seldom considered (Azzam 1996; Roald 2001). In this study those linkages will be considered, because the latent ‘underlying ideas … and ideologies’ (Braun and Clarke 2006:84) will assist in explaining the meaning here.

For the purposes of this study, the mass media image of Muslim women as “shapeless, ululating bundle(s) of black” is most relevant. Arab Muslim women are often depicted as being covered from head to toe in black clothing – as a Google search will attest – however the reality is that there is much variation in the dress of the 130 million Muslim women who live in the Arab world, and just as much in the 750 million other Muslim women around the world. While the subject of dress and clothing of Muslim people is a very popular and wide-ranging topic in the English language press and academic arena, it is of little importance in the Islamic teaching and raises little controversy. However, the fascination in the popular press with Muslim women’s clothing often overshadows other issues, sometimes to extreme

degrees as Ghannoushi (2006) illustrates, “It was interesting to hear journalists report on the Beit Hanoun protest where two women were murdered in cold blood and many more injured. With all the talk of “robes”, “abayas” and “scarves” one would have thought the reporters were commenting on a fashion show, as though these women had defied the Israeli curfew for the sole purpose of exhibiting their costumes. With all the emphasis on the women’s dress the reporters stressed their difference, dehumanising them, obscuring their womanhood, reducing them to a piece of cloth”. Further, while dress is not an important part of the Islamic teaching in and of itself, it both symbolises states and ideas that are fundamental to the faith. While the subject is also not entirely free of debate, amongst Islamic scholars, it is only over whether it is a requirement of the faith that a woman’s face be covered when she is in a public setting, or it is not.

I.3 Justification

There is little made in the literature available on either the context (Morocco) or the illustrative example (Muslim women’s dress) of the role of Islam. If Islam is considered, it is often in terms of “local knowledge” or “local application” (for examples, please see Lie 2000; Ong 1990), but little effort is made to either go back to the Islamic teaching, or to go back other than very superficially (for example, quoting freely translated Qur’anic verses).

This study makes a contribution to the marketing, specifically consumer behaviour, literature in a number of ways. It contributes to Consumer Culture Theory (CCT), particularly on marketplace cultures, by highlighting the culture provided for Muslims by Islam (Sander 1997) – if culture is the soup people swim in, Islam is the texture, the colour and/or the taste of the soup. By detailing the Islamic worldview, and especially Islam’s teaching on (in this case, women’s) dress, the study provides a comprehensive cultural background to the responses of interviewees and addresses an important

dimension to the discussion of these. It can, therefore, consider the role of Islam in the clothing choices of the study sample and in the general transcendent (God-conscious) worldview of their society (Arif 2006; Fandy 1998; Sennett 1974; Tseëlon 1991).

It contributes more generally to consumer behaviour research, through providing access to a sample who are seldom heard (Burton 2009b) – women’s voices (Coates 1996) speaking for themselves on a topic much discussed, but on which they are seldom the speakers. It provides insight into a particular empirical context, Morocco, about which there is also little published in English. The parameters of the Moroccan context also provide an excellent framework for a critical case methodology (Flyvbjerg 2001), as will be used in this study.

Related to these contributions is that made to the symbolic consumption literature within consumer research. By studying Muslim women’s clothing in context – in a place where wearing clothing which meets the Islamic guidelines is unremarkable – a consideration of a theory developed using fundamental aspects of a western, psychological tradition (Kagitçibasi 2007) can be made in a non-western, religious culture.

The merits of an “emic” (or insider) perspective are being increasingly acknowledged (Bullock 2002; Read and Bartkowski 2000), and stand in contrast to the perspective historically adopted in anthropological studies which Geertz (2000) articulated as, “we were the first to insist that we see the lives of others through lenses of our own grinding and that they look back on ours through ones of their own”. To this end, as one from both of Geertz’s groups – “others” and “us” – this study hopes to provide insights hitherto un-, or under-, considered.

Jacobsen (2006) illustrates the problem, “Depending on the perspective adopted, arranged marriage [for example] might appear as an issue of deviancy among immigrants or as a part of how a majority of mankind organises its social life. The consequences for anthropology as cultural critique are obviously important. When immigrants and the social and cultural forms they represent are constructed as “social problems” and “deviance”, they can neither allow worthwhile and interesting critiques of “our own society”, nor enlighten us about other human possibilities”.

Given that Muslim dress, whether it complies with the Islamic guidelines or not, conforms to the requirements of conspicuous consumption – namely it is both visible and public (Veblen, 1894) – and to the wider considerations of symbolic consumption simply by its nature, it serves as an excellent illustrative vehicle for considering how dominant paradigms are used and how well they apply. In fact, Kahf (2008) says of the ‘veil’, “[it] has so many meanings that it is an empty signifier” (p40).

I.4 Research Objectives

This research will study the meaning of the wearing, or not wearing, of publicly consumed clothing by Moroccan Muslim women in context. This means it will consider the major themes prevalent in the literature relating to symbolic consumption and dress, within a Muslim context, where Muslim clothing is unremarkable, normal, commonplace. It will present the Islamic worldview and highlight how it differs from the worldview dominant in the literature with particular consideration of aspects directly relevant to this work. These include the definition of public and private spaces, the ‘location’ of beauty and beautification, and the purpose of clothing in different situations.

I.5 Philosophy

This study uses an ontology of social constructionism (Berger and Luckmann 1966), with an epistemological position that the knowledge generated is ideographic, time-bound and context dependent (Hudson and Ozanne 1988). The axiology is based on understanding shared meanings (*verstehen*) (Patton 2002), but additionally explanation (*erklären*) (Flyvbjerg 2001) of those meanings.

A detailed description of this philosophical position follows in Chapter Two.

I.6 Methodology

This study uses a mixed-method approach to triangulate data. Initially, background information was collected via a series of telephone interviews with a consumer and a tailor in Morocco to add context to the literature reviewed and to generate an interview protocol. Once in Morocco, nine young women and their mothers were interviewed at length about their clothing choices, tastes and environment utilising feminist interview techniques (Coates, 1986). The women were chosen purposefully, with a split between those who wear the headscarf and those who do not. The interviews with the mothers acted as rich source data and provided personal context to the nine case studies (economic, personal, social, familial background). A 'Muslim-specific' religiosity questionnaire (in response to a failure to find a suitable measure in the available literature) was generated based on the belief (*iman*) and practice (*ibadah*) aspects of Islamic teaching.

This questionnaire was translated from English into Arabic and piloted for language, consistency and clarity. The questionnaire asked questions on the basic practice of, and belief in, the tenets of Islam, demographic questions and open-ended responses to photographs of two clothing sets. It was

administered to all interviewees. Together with these main sources of textual data, participant-observation, researcher background and additional text material provides the richness essential for a critical case report.

I.7 Structural Outline

Chapter I is the thesis introduction. It provides a brief introduction to the main themes and perspectives in the study, and outlines how it will be undertaken.

Chapter II describes the philosophical position this thesis takes, and the implications for research design, data collection and analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006).

Chapter III provides an introduction to the key issues in the wider background to this study. The first part introduces the Islamic World View and gives a brief overview of the Islamic teachings relevant to this study. The second part considers the wider context of scholarship in the English language and, in particular, in marketing. Several issues in marketing research and theory are discussed which have implications for this study such as the limitations of the dominant models for studying societies and groups which do not mirror western ones in all aspects, especially religious societies and also non-white ones. The third, and final part, introduces the Moroccan context with a particular focus on the localised practice of the teachings outlined in the first section of this chapter.

Chapter IV examines the more specific academic literature relevant to this study. In the first part, the symbolic consumption literature is reviewed, with considerations of theories of the self and symbolism, along with identity, sign and meaning making. The second part of this section looks at clothing from a general perspective, its history and functions and leads to a specific

examination of Muslim women's clothing. The last part looks at marketing literature specifically relevant here and so considers consumer culture theory, religiosity and dress. This section ends with a summary of the literature sections of the thesis.

Chapter V details the method and procedures for this study. It begins with the research design and then details the procedures undertaken. It also looks at the issues surrounding bias, translation, validity, generalisability and experience as related to this work.

Chapter VI provides the analysis of the data corpus, from the questionnaire results to the interview themes and utilises photographs of the interviewees' favourite clothes and field notes to triangulate the data. The analysis is, therefore, able to provide a rich discussion of the many issues uncovered in the data.

Chapter VII concludes this report. It outlines conclusions, limitations and implications for future research generated by this study.

II. Philosophical Position

II.1 Introduction

This study compiled a data corpus designed to provide a rich insight into the meaning of wearing or not wearing Muslims women's clothing in context. This data was triangulated and analysed with the following philosophical perspective.

The study uses the overall methodological perspective of phronetic social science. Phronesis is an Aristotelian concept that can be translated into English as 'prudence' or 'practical wisdom' (Flyvbjerg 2001). Flyvbjerg (2001) has introduced phronesis as a framework for the social sciences, which he characterises as "Ethics. Deliberation about values with reference to praxis. Pragmatic, variable, context-dependent. Oriented towards action. Based on practical value-rationality. The original concept has no [one] analogous contemporary term" (Flyvbjerg 2001:57).

Using phronesis as an approach, therefore, offers a way to consider observable action, in this case, what is worn publicly in the Moroccan context and the symbolism that clothing has within a culture based on Islam. Flyvbjerg goes on to say that more than anything else, 'phronesis requires *experience*' (italics in original) (Flyvbjerg 2001:57).

The researcher has the experience – including living in Morocco for periods of time, sharing the values framework of Islam, wearing clothing that meets Islamic guidelines, knowledge of Moroccan people and the like – required by Flyvbjerg (2001). Additionally she has an understanding of the values of the sample seen as essential by Maxwell (2005:58) to meaningfully interpret the data collected,

Finally, phronesis lends itself to a case-study format, given its emphases on depth (as opposed to breadth) of knowledge and experience (Flyvbjerg 2001:135). Flyvbjerg's (2001) critical case methodology, a key component of the framework of this thesis, will be discussed in Section II.5.

II.2 Ontology

Using cases, the nature of reality (ontology) of the study accepts reality as socially constructed. Social constructionism emphasises culture and how it shapes people and their perspectives (ie their world-view) (Crotty 1998:58). This reinforces the importance of context and, as this study looks to examine meaning in the context, the context must be presented in some detail (Maxwell 2005:58). Davies (1988) maintains that for Muslim people, reality is shaped by the Qur'an, that is the agreed social construction and knowledge of Islam and its teaching mediates reality for Muslims.

Social constructionism refers to constructing *knowledge about* reality, rather than reality itself (Shadish 1995:67), so in-depth interviews triangulated with questionnaire responses, observation and field notes, allow an investigation of how that is done within the sample. Hudson and Ozanne (1988) propose that people should be studied from their own frames of reference (p510), in contrast to Geertz (2000), who believes people should be studied through the researchers lens (p 65). In consumer research, Geertz's model has framed many more studies than the perspective promoted by critical theorists like Hudson and Ozanne (Burton 2009b). However, this study situates itself firmly in the sample's own frame of reference, in order to report their perspective, and answer the study's research questions.

Consistent with Hudson and Ozanne's view, the researcher who shares a frame of reference with the interviewees and can offer insights those 'outside' the frame cannot. Consideration of the benefits and shortcomings of

the shared frame, and/or where it ends, strengthens a study, as it helps identify potential validity threats caused by the researcher and the interviewee's response to him/her (Maxwell 2005:109).

In this study, human beings are seen as actively creating and interacting to define and mould their environment – such is the nature of social beings. They are seen as autonomous beings with free-will (Burrell and Morgan 1979; Mohamed 1996), who are both dynamic and part of societies that seek moral outcomes (Davies 1988).

II.3 Axiology

Axiology is a term often used interchangeably with 'world-view'. Patton (2002) states that "... all tenable statements about existence depend on a worldview, and no worldview is uniquely determined by empirical or sense data about the world" (p97). In this particular study the goal is both to understand (*verstehen*) and explain (*erklären*) (Flyvbjerg 2001).

Understanding is seen as a process, rather than an 'end-goal', so an understanding is the objective – not the understanding (as there isn't just one) (Denizen 1984, original emphasis). The understandings are also far from interchangeable. There are better interpretations than others, and that degree of 'competence' in terms of understanding involves human judgement which, in phronesis and praxis, is always dependent on the context. It is in this way that phronesis explains phenomena so well, "the minutiae, practices and concrete cases which lie at the heart of phronetic research are seen in their proper contexts; both the small, local context, which give phenomena their immediate meaning, and the larger, international and global context in which phenomena can be appreciated for their general and conceptual significance" (Flyvbjerg 2001:136).

The consideration of Weber's *verstehen* (Hudson and Ozanne, 1998), meaning "understanding" or "to understand", is a key concept here, and allows access to the "human" aspects of the individuals which make up the sample. "The *verstehen* tradition stresses understanding that focuses on the meaning of human behaviour, the context of social interaction, an empathetic understanding based on personal experience, and the connections between mental states and behaviour" (Patton, 2002:52). Wax (1967) used this idea in terms of shared meanings – where the sample is understood in context, empathically, in their own terms. "Through active participation in the culture, the researcher strives for an insider's view, a knowledge of the shared meanings" (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988:511). The study of these shared meanings is known in anthropology as cultural relativism. However, phronetic research rejects relativism (one set of values is as good as another) and replaces it with contextualism or situational ethics (a common view within a specific reference group to which they refer) (Flyvbjerg 2005:40). For this study, the implication is that knowledge and understanding of Islamic teachings is essential.

II.4 Epistemology

Epistemology, or the theory of knowledge, is, according to Perry (1998), the relationship between the reality and the researcher. In this study, the context has been chosen as a critical case, so while the study is usually time and context dependent and the phenomenon is specific, the focus on a specific phenomenon, and the striving for a "thick description" (Geertz 1973) requires layers and layers of detail, and this results in deep levels of complexity. The context is an important aspect of the study. "By context, I mean the setting – physical, geographic, temporal, historical, cultural, aesthetic – within which the action takes place. Context becomes the framework, the reference point, the map, the ecological sphere; it is used to place people and action in time and space and as a resource for understanding what they say and do. The

context is rich in clues for interpreting the experience of the actors in the setting. We have no idea how to decipher or decode an action, a gesture, a conversation, or an exclamation unless we see it embedded in context" (Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis 1997:41). This complexity is matched on various levels by the researcher who shares a way of life with the sample and has experience of the other aspects of local culture.

This study is "ideographic...based on the view that one can only understand the social world by obtaining first-hand knowledge of the subject under investigation" (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:6). So the researcher and the sample interact allowing an iterative process of learning and that learning helps to generate "thick description" (Geertz 1973).

Reporting important insights requires a shared frame of reference to some degree. In fact, according to Burrell and Morgan (1979), "...one can only 'understand' by occupying the frame of reference of the participant in action" (p5). Similarly, phronetic social science also sees itself as *not* having a privileged position from which the absolute truth can be told and so all further discussion is rendered obsolete (Flyvbjerg 2005:41).

The combination of the researcher as the instrument (Maxwell 2005; Patton 2002) and the particular social and historical context provides a framework for the reality in which the researcher and the research participants operate. However, as Flyvbjerg (2005) points out, it is "the human skills that determine the social context [and these] are based on judgements that cannot be understood in terms of concrete features and rules" (Flyvbjerg 2005:39). Cases exist in context and praxis relies on context-dependent judgement and also on situational ethics (Flyvbjerg 2001:136).

It is the combination of the deep descriptive context of Morocco, the experience and shared framework of the researcher, and the explanation of

the situational ethics (Islamic worldview) that will highlight important aspects of the group under study. Islam, as a worldview, seeks societal and collaboration goals (Elmessiri 2006; Saeed et al. 2001), rather than self-oriented and competitive ones (Gibbs and Ilkan 2008). In fact, Gibbs et al (2007) suggest that applying secularly based epistemological approaches to Muslim consumers gives no insights but rather reinforces common misunderstandings. They say what is needed is “an understanding of the … ontology of being Muslim and how that constructs the nature of being” (Gibbs et al. 2007:165). To this end, the consideration of the Islamic worldview relevant to the context and the context-dependent judgement that can be provided by a Muslim researcher are important ingredients in the study mixture. The approach described here intends to offer those insights and understandings.

In keeping with this epistemology the thematic analysis of the data “seeks to theorise the socio-cultural contexts, and structural conditions, that enable the individual accounts that are provided” (Braun and Clarke 2006:85).

II.5 Critical Case Framework

As has been mentioned Flyvbjerg (2001) has described critical cases as having “strategic importance in relation to the general problem” (p78). He also states, however, that “…no universal methodological principles exist by which one can with certainty identify a critical case” (Flyvbjerg 2005:31). The general advice (for example, Burrell and Morgan 1979; Flyvbjerg 2006; Patton 2002; Yin 2003), is to look for “most likely” or “least likely” cases that clearly confirm or falsify propositions and hypotheses.

Bearing that in mind, and Maxwell (2005), Morocco was chosen as a location meeting the requirements for a critical case.

Table II-I Morocco As A Critical Case Candidate

Characteristic	Morocco
Muslim?	✓ 99%
Sunni?	✓ 99%
Stable Rule?	✓
“Friendly”?	✓ FTA ³ – USA Tourism
Civilly Legislated Public Dress?	X
Geographical Location?	X (not Gulf/ME)

The reasons other countries are unsuitable for this study include: 1) changes have been made to the legal structures since independence (laws no longer largely reflective of Islamic teaching) (Charrad 2001, on Tunisia); 2) large/mixed religious/ethnic population variances (Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria); 3) legislated public dress (Saudi Arabia); 4) tribal inter-relationships strong (located in the Gulf/ Middle East) (Torstrick and Faier 2009)(Yemen, Qatar, Oman, UAE, Bahrain).

In addition, Morocco is the only country in this group in which the researcher could be said to have the required ‘expertise’, having spent periods living there, rather than just passing through. Only one other Arab Muslim country comes close to Morocco for fitting the critical case criteria for this study, and that is Libya – with 97% Sunni Muslim population, and a location in North Africa (although closer to the Gulf/Middle East) – but Morocco is still the most suitable location based on the criteria as listed.

In terms of selecting an actual site within Morocco, the city of Oujda was chosen. To select a critical case the purpose should be to achieve information that permits logical deductions of the type, “If this is (not) valid for this case, then it applies to all (no) cases” (Flyvbjerg 2006:230). Oujda is on Morocco’s eastern border with Algeria. In earlier times, it was considered the ‘Eastern

³ Free Trade Agreement with the USA, 2006

Capital'. Oujda has a population of about 1.5 million and is a thriving town with an active black market in European shoes and clothing and also petrol (McMurray 2001). An estimated one person from every two to three houses in Oujda is thought to be living abroad, so every summer there is a huge influx of Moroccans returning for their holidays and bringing with them money, clothing, other presents and ideas from the various lands in which they live and work making Oujda a "cross-roads" for local and international influences. Further, Patton (2002) advises picking a site that would yield the "most information" and have the biggest impact on the "development of knowledge" (p236). In this case, every influential thing that is 'missing' from Morocco in comparison to other Arab/Muslim countries is also missing from Oujda. However, every influential thing that is present in Morocco is strongly in evidence in Oujda (please see Table II.1 above). For all these reasons, Oujda, Morocco has the characteristics from which to build a good critical case study.

III. Islam, Scholarship and Morocco

III.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into sections. The first section gives a very brief overview of the way of life outlined in the teachings of Islam for Muslims. This first part allows a broad outline of a system of living unfamiliar to many to be introduced to situate the study within its wider context. It also provides insight relevant to both the methodology and method undertaken in this study. The second part of the chapter looks at the situating of this study within the wider academic context, where the study of Muslims is undertaken using frameworks designed for universalism, but which are not necessarily universal (Costa and Bamossy 1995; Kagitçibasi 2002; Mukherji 2004; Venkatesh 1995). The last part of the chapter introduces the empirical context of the study, Morocco, with a particular focus on the practice of Islam by Muslims there.

III.2 Islamic Context

III.2.1 Introduction

Islam is a comprehensive way of life (Roald 2001). It has teachings which cover every aspect of life and, as such, it represents a very different way of life from the model followed throughout the west. Therefore, a comprehensive knowledge of the structure and beliefs within this system of life, represented as a worldview and a culture, is necessary for adequately studying a sample taken from within this group (that is, Muslims). Consequently, it is a necessary part of this study.

The study of Islam and Muslims has been a regular topic in anthropology and sociology (Gray 2006; Leblanc 1999; 2000; Lie 2000), and latterly in business (Ali 1995; 1993; 1992; 1998; 1997; Ali and Wahabi 1995; Rice 2006a; 1999;

2006b; 2002; 2000; Witkowski 1999) as well as other disciplines. Frequently, these studies approach Muslims as either a minority or sub-culture (Daly 1999; McMichael 2002; Tarlo 2007a; 2007b) or as a field or cross study (Davis 1983; 1989; Geertz 1971; Ong 1990) and so report the lived experience of Muslims, reporting a combination of researcher observation and the Muslims 'own voices'. Only sometimes, the work references Qur'anic verses to explain motivations or to illustrate justifications for the Muslims reporting of their lives and experiences. Seldom, however, is the Islamic teaching referenced in a more substantial way, using accepted references and *tafsir* (explanations of the Qur'an) by Islamic scholars⁴. This has led to some significant problems in the reporting, as 'free interpretation' of Islamic teaching is not permitted in Islam (Davies 1988), so researchers either report the free or local interpretations of the teaching, or freely interpret themselves in order to explain their respondents actions or speech. Often local behaviour is attributed to Islam, a way of life which makes up the framework for the culture shared by 1.5B people worldwide (Kazmi 2005; Said 1998), but also provides within it's teaching a measure of scope to allow local application without going outside the teaching. However, people are creatures of free will and are seen as such in Islam (Mohamed, 1996), so disobedience or ignorance of the teaching is also reasonably common, and the clear differentiation between what is the [perfect] teaching and what is the local practice of the [imperfect] followers must be made. This incomplete approach creates layers of misunderstanding and misrepresentation and makes it difficult for scholarship to provide a bridge between different groups. It also encourages stereotypes and out-groupings – "them" and "us" – and, fundamentally, "them" versus "us".

⁴ Islamic Scholars are differentiated here from Academics in that Academics are educated in Islamic Studies courses provided by Universities, whereas Islamic Scholars, while they are often also University educated and qualified, are required to have particular qualifications that are not required by the secular courses. For example, expertise in the Arabic language, memorisation of the full Qur'an in Arabic before they begin Scholarly study, and recognition by other recognised Scholars once they complete their study. Scholars can give *fatawa* (religious rulings, pl) to Muslim people, however, Academics cannot.

As a result of this difference in objectives or understanding there is a blurring in much research between what is attributable to the teachings of Islam, and what is not. This has been most problematic in literature (Kahf 1999) and the media (Said, 1998) and, hence, with western general populations, but has had some impact in academic research as well.

There have, historically, been a number of problems in the relationship between Muslims and western researchers. Roald (2001) suggests this is due to differences in aims between the object of the research and the person conducting the research. This results in a “collision” between the etic (observer) and the emic (actor) levels of analysis. Also, there is an antagonism noticeable in much of the literature which Roald concludes “indicates differences in world-views and misunderstanding which might arise in the encounters between different ‘cultural languages’” (2001:69). There are problems with words or concepts being lost in translation, and also the impact of the translators background on the nature of the translation (the words chosen, the implications of the phrasing etc), “As cultural attitudes are often embedded in concepts these tend to change in the translation process and to acquire new cultural meanings” (Roald, 2001:69).

For example, Islam is often characterized as rule-bound and inflexible, however, Iyengar (2010) has found that members of ‘more fundamentalist faiths’ – which she classified as Calvinism, Islam and Orthodox Judaism – “experienced greater hope, were more optimistic when faced with adversity, and were less likely to be depressed than their counterparts ... the presence of so many rules didn’t debilitate people; instead it seemed to empower them” (p28).

The following sections will give an overview of the key aspects of Islam directly relevant to this study. These include, the Islamic worldview, public and private in Islam and the Islamic teaching on clothing worn in public

settings. As all three of these aspects are quite different in definition to those commonly understood in an English or Western setting, their inclusion is essential.

III.2.2 The Islamic World View

This section will give a brief overview of the Islamic world view or what is valued in Islam (axiology) through the addition of a consideration of Islamic teachings. That is, the framework of reality shared by Muslims due to their commitment (Lears 1983) – great or slight (Sander, 1997) – to Islam and its extremely comprehensive teaching (Roald, 2001:62).

Islam is an Arabic word from the root s-l-m which is commonly defined as meaning “Peace”. Peace, or *salam* in Arabic, is also from the s-l-m root, but *Islam* is better translated as “submission” (Mawdudi, 1960:11; Al-Qaradawy, 1995:3; Barabozza, 1993:9). Islam is described as a “religion” in English, but Islam is a comprehensive system of living, a holistic guide to all things concerning life on this earth, and is known in Arabic as a *deen*. Arabic does not have a word for “religion”, and the comprehensiveness of the Islamic *deen* makes, “way of life” (Mawdudi, 1960:11) a more suitable translation.

The followers of Islamic *deen* are called Muslims. A Muslim is “one who submits”. Islam is a monotheistic faith, which means that central to it is one “God”. In Arabic, the English “God” is called *Allah*. *Allah* is not correctly translated as God, as *Allah* is a term that cannot be pluralised or genderised – there is no possible Gods or Goddess from the word *Allah*. *Allah* is not the word for God for Muslims, but for Arabic-speakers of all faiths.

There are 56 Muslim countries (www.oic-oci.org), and only 21 of them are Arab (www.arab.net). The shared culture of the Muslims stretches across ethnicity and language, geography and distance (Burton 2009b). The Muslim way of life is different to other ways of life in many fundamental ways.

According to Benjamin Barber (1995) (quoting Matthew 22:21), “Render unto God those things that are God’s and unto Caesar those that are Caesar’s,” representing a pre-constitutional separation of church and state .. has no analogue in Islam, which prefers that men render everything unto Allah, ecclesiastic and worldly, spiritual and temporal alike” (p210).

The belief in the centrality and unity of God’s creation is called *tawhid*. *Tawhid* is such an essential concept in Islam, that for the first 13 years of his 23 year Prophethood, Mohammed (s⁵) called just to *tawhid* – the One-Ness of Allah (Zainoo, 2003). This distinctly separates Islamic monotheism from any concept of Trinity. From this basic premise, Islam teaches a worldview based on human creation, men and women, being created for the purpose of worshipping Allah (the Creator). Humankind is accountable, in Islam, for everything they do, think and say. Therefore, people have a personal relationship with the Creator and also a social relationship with the Creator – a relationship expressed through interactions with others (Al Qaradawi 1984; Roald 2001). Islamic society privileges social goals over economic goals, and the founding unit is the family (Davies 1988; Elmessiri 2006). Islam delineates different roles for men and women in life. These roles emphasise different aspects of life based on gender, but do not inherently raise (or lower) one gender or the other (Bullock 2002). All human creation is judged on piety, with the most pious being the best and the least the worst. Similarly, Islam considers human beings to be made up of three parts psychologically – sensory, rational and also spiritual (Mohamed, 1996) – rather than the two prevalent in secular discourse. There are three sources which outline how to live according to the rules of Islam and constitute Islamic Law. “The major references in Islam have been limited to divine and infallible sources: the Qur’an and the Sunnah⁶” (Al-Qaradawi, 1990:299). Al-Qaradawi provides a

⁵ This honorific means, in English, ‘peace and blessings be upon him’ and is the required honorific from Muslims whenever the Prophet (s) is mentioned.

⁶ The Qu’ran is the Muslim Holy Book as is believed to be the verbatim words of Allah. The Sunnah is the tradition of the Prophet (s) and is a record of his behaviour, actions and speech. The oral tradition of the Prophet (s) is the hadith, and the ahadith (pl) is part of the Sunnah.

useful analogy when he writes of the Qur'an's teachings and rulings being coherent and integrated like the body's internal organs (Al-Qaradawi, 1990:305). So it is clear that it is not possible to accept some of the Qur'an and reject other parts. The third source is the rulings of accepted scholars.

The essential message of the Qur'an is that both social and cultural life are moral and ethical domains. Essential relationships are defined that integrate the biological, spiritual, material and moral and the individual with the collective (horizontal) and the collective with the transcendent (vertical). "The Qur'an is the source of the Muslim's ultimate reality definitions, its' statements define the foundation of understanding and give us the conceptual propositions that compose our framework for coming to terms with and studying the world around us "(Davies, 1998:111).

From the Qur'an and Sunnah the 5 Pillars of Islam are derived:

- 1) Testimony of Faith [*shahada*] – the declaration that there is one God and Mohammed is his Messenger [concept of unity – *tawhid*],
- 2) Prayer [*salah*] – the 5 times daily ritual of Qur'anic recitation and physical prostration (not to be confused with invocation [*dua'a*], which consists of making requests of Allah, and can be done at any time),
- 3) Charity [*zakat*] – the percentage of a persons stored income that must be given to those less fortunate,
- 4) Fasting [*saum*] – fasting the month of Ramadan [9th lunar month] between sunrise and sunset,
- 5) Pilgrimage [*hajj*] – the pilgrimage to Mecca, to be performed once in a persons lifetime if he/she is financially and physically able.

In this study, the view of Muslim women in the English language literature is particularly relevant as, "The narrative about the Muslim woman is so diffuse

as to be part of conventional wisdom in the Western world" (Kahf 1999:1), and yet it is often confused. To clarify, in Islam, Muslim:

- 1) women are not chattels of men, and have never been able to be owned (unless slaves);
- 2) women keep their own money, and are not responsible for any aspect of the family with it;
- 3) women do not 'worship' their husbands, nor is the path to Allah through them (or any other man or person) – there is no hierarchy of Believers;
- 4) women are not responsible for the expulsion of Adam and Eve from heaven, this is a joint responsibility and does not result in 'original sin';
- 5) women cannot carry the sins of others, neither can men, or children.
- 6) women and men are creations designed to support each other, created in pairs, like the rest of creation;
- 7) women have no required role outside the family, although they are free to work, and keep what they earn;
- 8) women will be judged first (by Allah) on their role as a 'bedrock' of the family – emotional, educational and psychological support for the family members – not for cooking or housework;
- 9) women, as mothers, occupy an integral place in the teaching, no-one has higher status;
- 10) women's clothing in Islam reflects their high status, protecting them from harassment and marking them out as cherished.

The Appendix to this thesis contains a more extensive introduction to the basic elements of the Islamic worldview. Two concepts within Islamic teaching are directly relevant to this study, and these will be considered in more detail below. They are the definition of 'public' and 'private' in Islam and also the teaching with specific regard to clothing.

III.2.3 Public and Private in Islam

The delineation between ‘public’ and ‘private’ situations can be well illustrated through the Muslim approach to hospitality and its etiquette. In 1911, John Foster Fraser wrote, “The Mohammedan [Muslim] is always hospitable” (p34). For example, hosts are expected to welcome guests, even if their visit is unexpected and inconvenient. Similarly, guests need to be careful about the compliments they pay hosts; hosts do not expect compliments “as the act of providing is considered honourable unto itself…in addition, a host might feel obligated to give the guest an admired item even if the guest was simply making a passing observation” (Torstrick and Fraier, 2009:134). It should be specified that men and women socialise separately, and men visiting the house of a friend or colleague for a meal will not necessarily see – let alone meet – any of the women in the family. Similarly, the opposite case is also true.

Eckhardt and Michael (1998) use the context of China to discuss collectivism and collectivist divisions between private life and the public presentation of the self. However, in Muslim societies this view of collectivism, while it has some overlap, reflects a very different use of the home and also the definition of public and private. For Muslim populations, and in terms of doing research with a Muslim sample, the home is totally private – “houses do not have picture windows facing on the street, nor do they have walks leading invitingly to front doors. Family life is hidden away from strangers; behind blank walls may lie courtyards and gardens, refuges from the heat, cold and bustle of the outside world … Outsiders are pointedly excluded” (Fernea and Fernea 1995:285–292); the space is the domain of women; the home is divided into public areas where guests are welcomed – usually one receiving room for men and one for women; but, unlike China, guests are very welcome in the home – indeed, hospitality is an important component of Islamic

teaching – although general access to the home and to those in it is very limited.

Private space is delineated as ‘anywhere where there is no “stranger” present’ (anyone with whom marriage is permissible), so includes visitors to your home inside your home. Obviously it also includes spaces outside your home where these people are present. Hessini (1994) describes the concept as “private space is reserved for the family and is considered a ‘female’ space; public space is designated as a ‘male’ area” (p43). However, public spaces which are all male or all female can become private spaces, just as being in your home with family and friends becomes private by this delineation (Boulanouar and Todd 2006; El Guindi 1999). For example, “It was only during the afternoon and evening, when Dalia’s husband and children were home that the definition of spaces shifted. The area where the rooms are located became private, designated for the relaxation of the house’s inhabitants” (Nageeb 2004:84). Personal/Face-to-face relationships are essential for data collection in Muslim countries, and access to women and children (especially for male researchers) is unlikely to be possible or successful (Nawal 2009; Tuncalp 1988).

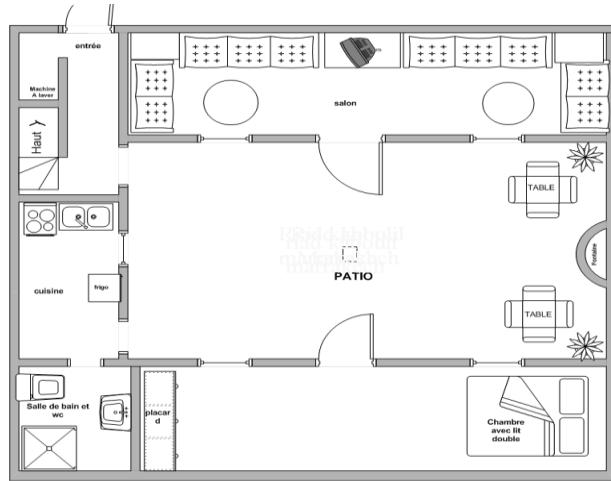
In terms of the etiquette of speech, “enquiring into another’s personal life is considered taboo, especially if the questions concern women” (Torstrick and Fraier, 2009:133). Usually, general enquiries into the health and well-being of family are made, “but very rarely specific questions about marital relationships, wives or daughters. Privacy is greatly valued” (p133). Also, as far as gender relations are concerned men commonly shake hands but men never shake the hand of a woman as “custom prohibits bodily contact across sexes, except among close family members who cannot potentially serve as marriage partners” (p133).

The fact that men never shake hands with women (and vice-versa) which Torstrick and Fraier refer to above as ‘custom’ is consistent with Islamic teaching⁷, and to do so would be out of place in any Muslim context.

The reference above to the privacy that surrounds families is also a very important point in this study. Families have been at the centre of Arab society and “much of Islamic law was designed to deal with family-related issues” (Sowell, 2004:116). The private nature of the family is reflected in Muslim architecture (please see Figures III-1 and III-2). Riad-style houses, for example, have very small high windows, or none at all, on the outside walls. On entering, perhaps through a hallway, but maybe directly, a central courtyard is faced. These courtyards often have fountains, trees, and sitting/resting areas. The rooms of the (often at least two storied) home, including the formal *salon* for receiving guests on the ground floor, all open onto the courtyard. Family life is lived within these walls in privacy. It may be thought of as the complete inverse of the typical western design, which features large windows facing outwards, and an open backyard. In the *riad* life is separated from the outside world, and regarded as private and cherished.

⁷ For a theological discussion of this please see: http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?pagename=IslamOnline-English-Ask_Scholar/FatwaE/FatwaE&cid=1119503546332 al Qaradawy, 2003

Figure III-1:Riad Floor Plan



Source 1: http://www.riad-kabouli-marrakech.com/marrakech_riad_plan_anglais.htm

Figure III-2: Typical Street View



Source 2: <http://static.booking.com/images/hotel/org/234/2341111.jpg>

When occasions are held in homes, often the men are upstairs and the women downstairs. In keeping with the common 'riad' design of houses, the main door of the house is on the ground floor, so all guests would enter this way. Then the men would take the staircase to the second level of the house, possibly affording them a view over the women as they climb. Weddings usually last for several days and on the last day the groom goes to the family home of the bride to collect her, and take her to her new home.

This can put the requirements for 'private' in Islam under stress as, in addition to the definition of the status public or private being mediated by

who is there, the ‘private’ in Islam is the location for the display of beauty and for beautification, for both men and women. Therefore in Islam a two-dimensional view of what constitutes the private exists which concerns both people and places.

This comment from Sowell (2004), “there exists a perception that women in the Arab world have been universally veiled or secluded from public life. This has usually not been the case, either during earlier times or today, but practices have varied by region and often by family” (p116) illustrates a common perception. In common with this point is Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981), who take as universal the idea that it is necessary for growth of the self and also beneficial for society, to engage in public life. In fact, “excessive investment of attention in the family might in fact drain psychic energy from the pursuit of broader goals and thus decrease the vitality of the community” (p153). This view reverses the emphasis in Islamic teaching on the central importance to society of the family unit.

It is generally understood that ‘public space’ is space open to all, freely, an opposite kind of space to a ‘private space’, which has restricted entry in some way, be it by cost, membership or some other parameter. Public spaces are usually outside the home, they are libraries, parks, pavements, hospitals, universities, municipal buildings, grass verges.

For Muslim people, public space is defined not by the location of the space, but by who occupies it. For example, usually the home would be viewed as a private space. This is usually the case for Muslim people too, but as Islam has clothing and mixing guidelines (among others) for public and private spaces there are graduated guidelines on clothing appropriateness dependent on the people present, rather than the location of the space. In the case of being at home with your family, women can wear anything they like, as can men. If a neighbour comes over, the space immediately becomes public to

some degree. If the neighbour is the wife's father, she must graduate her clothing so that her body is covered, but her forearms and calves may be bare or visible, she need not cover her hair or neck. If the neighbour is male and not one of her *maharam* (a person she cannot legitimately marry) then she must cover her head, neck, and body to the ankles. If the neighbour is a woman, she needs cover nothing more of her body than from her waist to her knees, ie, she needs make no adjustment to her 'with family' attire if any woman comes over to visit her at home (Al-Qaradawi 1984). So there are three graduated 'publics' for Muslim women⁸ – with family/women, with *maharam* (unmarriageable men), and open public.

The location of these publics can be anywhere from a friends house to the mosque to the market to her own home. So, the definition of 'public' changes with the people present, not the physical location. An important linked concept is that of beautification, it's purpose and location. Both husbands and wives are encouraged to beautify for their spouses (Al Qaradawi 1984), this necessarily 'locates' beauty in a private setting. For this reason the location of beauty can be seen to be quite different from that in the Western world view – beautification for Muslims is a private matter, undertaken for spouses and single gender celebrations, it is not for public consumption. This difference is important, because as Tseëlon (1991) notes, "a cross-cultural perspective illustrates that women or the private domain are not uniformly inferior, although they might appear so to the observer who employs Western concepts of privacy" (p116). Aspects of this distinction are discussed further in the next section.

⁸ This discussion concerns 'publics'. A situation where only a woman and her spouse are present, is not considered public.

III.2.4 The Nature of Islamic Clothing

An intersection of the concepts of public/private and modesty is found in the nature of Islamic clothing, both for men and for women. A central tenet of Islam is the concept of *haya'* or modesty (Baalbaki 1994).

The Prophet Mohammed (s) said, “every *deen* [way of life] has an innate character. The character of Islam is modesty” (Al-Muwatta 47.9) (Imam-Malik [d 796] 1997).

This conception of modesty encompasses modesty of thought, speech and action as well as physical modesty. An example of the embodiment of this tenet is marriage, which is seen as an important safeguarding of modesty in Islamic teaching. With respect to physical modesty, and in terms of clothing, Islam includes teachings for both men and women and for different situations and life stages.

In the Islamic teaching there are several references to dress, both in the Qur'an and the Sunnah – examples include the correct clothing to be worn on the pilgrimage (*hajj*), recommendations for clothing length, on the wearing of white, the wearing of silk, the wearing of shoes and the wearing of perfume for example (Al-Bukhari 1994/836). Some requirements are only for special occasions, such as the clothing required for the *hajj*, there are some requirements and prohibitions for all Muslims, some only for men, and some only for women – these will be explored below.

All Muslims have an *awra* or “[areas of] inviolate vulnerability” (El Guindi 1999:142) which consist of the private parts of the human body (Al-Qaradawi 1984). For men this area is from the navel to the knee or mid-thigh in both public and private settings, for women in the public sphere, it is her whole body excluding her hands and face (Al Qaradawi 1984:160). The public sphere within Islamic teaching has quite different parameters from what is

regarded as public in a Western model (El Guindi 1999; Tavris 1992) as has been outlined in the previous section. The definition of public in a Muslim context is ‘in the company of strangers’ and so this may be the case inside the home as well as outside it. ‘Strangers’ here refers to anyone (of the opposite gender) to whom marriage is possible, so the presence of anyone who is non-*mahram* (non-family) makes a situation public. In Islam public is people rather than place.

The Qur'an provides the first step in defining what is required in terms of dress from Muslims. In Surat Al Nur (The Light, Qur'an 24) the opening verse translates as:

*[This is] a chapter which We have revealed and made obligatory
and in which We have revealed clear communications
that you may be mindful*
[Qur'an, 24:1]

The explanation (*tafsir*) for the verses used here is supplied by the well known and regarded Islamic Scholar Mohammed Ash-Sharawy of Egypt. With respect to the verse (*ayat*) quoted above, Surat Al Nur, Ayat One (Qur'an 24:1) Ash-Sharawy advises: the word *surat*, which is translated as ‘chapter’ in English, also means ‘boundary’ or ‘perimeter’. So, ‘[t]his is a *surat*/chapter which We have revealed and made obligatory’ means that the whole *surat* [chapter] is obligatory and the contents of the chapter are bounded – from beginning to end what is contained within the chapter is obligatory. This is the only *surat* in the Qur'an that begins this way, and it is universally agreed by the scholars that what is contained within the parameters of this *surat* is obligatory (Ash-Sha'rawy 1991).

In the same *surat*, Verse 30 specifically refers to the dress requirements for men:

Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks

*and guard their private parts;
that is purer for them;
surely Allah is Aware of what they do*
[Qur'an 24:30]

And Verse 31 for women (detailing who are family (*mahram*) and so, ineligible for marriage):

*And say to the believing women that they
cast down their looks and
guard their private parts
and do not display their ornaments except
what appears thereof,
and let them wear
their head-coverings
over their
bosoms, and not display their ornaments
except to their husbands or
their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons
of their husbands, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their
sisters' sons, or their women . . .
and let them not strike their feet so
that what they hide of their ornaments may be known;
and turn to Allah all of you, O believers!
So that you may be successful.*

[Qur'an 24:31]

Ash-Shawary (1991) explains the above verses as follows: Verses 30 and 31 of this *surat* deal with modesty – one verse directed at each gender. Here both are told to ‘cast down their looks’ or lower their gaze. In Arabic idiomatic usage the image means to avoid something in your field of vision – a part of the whole of what you can see (Ash-Shawary, 1991). The verse addresses all believing women, and the explanation is that *khimar* – translated here as head covering – means any cover that meets the requirements of ‘fastened, loose, large and covering the head, neck and chest’. In this *surat*

the inherent beauty of women is acknowledged and selective exposure is advised. Similarly, what is worn under the covering should not be ‘exposed’ by way of sound (for example, jangling bracelets or ankle charms) or any other mode.

There is one other mention of suitable dress, which occurs in Surat Al Ahzab (The Combined Forces, Qur'an 33):

*O Prophet! say to your wives and your daughters
and the women of the believers
that they let down upon them their over-garments;
this will be more proper, that they may be known,
and thus they will not be given trouble;
and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.*

[Qur'an 33:59]

Ash-Sharawy (1991) advises here that the *surah* is directed first to the wives, then the daughters of the Prophet (s), and then to the other female believers. This means the he does not command his nation in anything which excludes himself. The use of the word ‘say’ proves that the command is from Allah and not from the Prophet (s), because the word is unnecessary if the Prophet (s) is simply giving his own command, it means that he is not the issuer of the command, and that he is simply the transmitter of the command of Allah. The family of the Prophet (s) consists of all Muslims, so the command extends to all Muslims. The word used here for women is *nisa'*, which is a plural form; and there is no singular form from its root. ‘Let down upon them their over-garments’ is an example of the jussive mood (which is a feature of the Arabic language) (Ryding, 2005), and is a command for the second person (in this case, the wives, daughters and believing women). So, the first person command was ‘say’ (directed to the Messenger (s)) and the command for the second group was ‘let down…’ The second part of this is a response to the first (see, for another example of this, Surat Al Hajj, Qur'an

22:27). The wives, daughters and other Muslim women have been commanded to cover; if they do not, a condition of *iman* (faith) within them becomes imperfect or deficient. The root of the word 'let down upon them their over-garments' is *dannia*', which means 'low and near' (Ash-Sharawy 1991). So this section means that women's clothing should be near the ground. And *aleihin* (upon them (female)) means that it includes the whole body, and this it is wrapped around (the body), drooping to the ground (Al-Sabooney 2002). The 'over-garment' (*jilbab*) must be long and covering, and should fulfil the clothing requirements (non-transparent, loose etc). The last part of the verse explains the wisdom behind the command: Muslim women will be known by their clothing and their modesty (Ash-Sha'rawy 1991).

Specifically then, the clothing guidelines require that clothing fulfil it's twin purposes which are to cover the body and to beautify the appearance; The Qur'an warns people concerning both nakedness and the neglect of good appearance (Qur'an 7:27 and 7:31). According to the Sunnah, Muslims must cover their private parts (*awra*) and be clean; for men, gold and pure silk are not permitted, nor is dressing like a woman; for women, gold and silk are permitted, but dressing like a man is not; for all Muslims dressing for ostentation or pride and tattooing, plastic surgery, use of wigs and hairpieces and plucking the eyebrows are not permitted (Al Qaradawi 1984).

For women, whose private area [*awra*] is extensive, the clothing should meet the following requirements:

- 1) cover the whole body except what has been made an exception [ie, hands and face];
- 2) should not be a beauty in itself;
- 3) should be opaque, not transparent;
- 4) loose, not tight;
- 5) should not be perfumed;
- 6) should not look like men's clothing;

- 7) should not look like the clothing of non-Muslims;
- 8) should not be extravagant/excessive (either in richness or in plainness) (Al-Albani 2002).

These guidelines are universally accepted by the Islamic scholars, as is the necessity of the head-covering. “Among Islamic scholars there is a consensus with regard to female covering but there is no consensus for the actual form of the covering” (Roald 2001:271). Muslims then, may wear anything they like, as long as it meets the clothing guidelines – so in Malaysia this is the *baju kurong* (for women) “a Malay dress with long skirt, long sleeves and tight neck … [and to] cover one’s head with a scarf or a small headdress, the mini-*telekung*” (Lie 2000:33), or “loose-fitting long tunics over sarongs” (Ong 1990:261); in Egypt, “women wear full-length *gallabiyyas* (*jilbab* in standard Arabic), loose-fitting to conceal body contours, in solid austere colours made out of opaque fabric” (El Guindi, 1999:143); in the Indian sub-continent, both men and women wear the *shalwar kameez*; in Morocco, both men and women wear the full-length hooded *jellaba*; in the Gulf a *abaya* (overdress) is favoured for women and white *thoub* for men (Sobh et al. forthcoming, 2010), in African countries much brighter, patterned robes are worn.

In addition to the materially covering clothing, behaviour associated with the other aspects of modesty as outlined above are required for Muslims to be suitably ‘dressed’. These include, lowering the gaze (as quoted in the verse above), steadiness in gait and speech, avoiding drawing attention to yourself, avoiding being alone with a man (or woman in the case of men) and avoiding male gatherings (or female gatherings in the case of men) (Al-Qaradawi 1984).

By following these clothing guidelines Muslims are fulfilling their responsibilities towards themselves (vertical relationship with Allah) and

towards others (horizontal relationship with Allah), according to the Islamic teaching. Failure to follow the teaching, that is disobedience to Allah, denies the Muslim their rights individually/vertically and also denies the society it's rights (horizontally). In this way, Islam differs from other so-called collective societies, where the group over-rides the self. In Islam there are responsibilities on both dimensions. The fact that the guidelines can be met in all climates and locations illustrates how the scope of the teaching can be generally applied while the constituent details are left to the environment to meet, as is suitable/preferred.

III.2.5 Summary

This section has clarified the requirements from Islamic teaching for the conditions of a public or private space and the delineation of suitable public dress. In addition it has given a brief overview of the Islamic world view a consideration of the general academic context in which this study is situated will follow.

III.3 Academic Context

III.3.1 Introduction

This second section will consider the wider academic context as one in which the western world view has been dominant for a long period, and relevant considerations of that for this thesis will be examined here.

III.3.2 Academic Context

There is a growing body of work across the social sciences examining the applicability of the dominant paradigms for study of the 'other', (ie, non-Anglo-Saxon or Western) societies (for example, Elmessiri 2006; Kagitçibasi 1996; Nisbett 2003). Given the obvious features of those paradigms: that

they developed to ‘match’ the society they evolved from, relative to that society’s religious, social and economic background and with the attending underlying assumptions (Arif 2006) and the obvious mismatch with societies whose values, cultures and emphases are different. With regard to this study, three general aspects will be briefly considered here: the assumed universalism of the hegemonic models, secular models for religious societies and ‘white’ models for ‘non-white’ societies.

III.3.3 The Assumed Universalism of Hegemonic Models

There is an overwhelmingly large amount of academic literature written and published in the west. This literature is produced in English. Given the accessibility of funding to researchers in the west, the dominance of business periodicals published in the west and the dominance of English language there is an under-representation of ‘other voices’ (Mukherji 2004; Venkatesh 1995) or meaningful studies of ‘the other’ (Elmessiri 2006; Kagitçibasi 2007). This is becoming increasingly widely recognised in the literature (Arnould and Thompson 2007; Mick et al. 2004).

This dominance leads, necessarily, to an assumed universalism of theory and thought. That it is assumed universal is due to the dominance of the Western education system being the best funded and prestigious, the application of models developed with the well trained minds educated in this system to many different contexts and sample profiles, but little work done on either criticising existing models, developing other perspectives/paradigms or the promotion of these (Arnould and Thompson 2007). Nevertheless, there is recognition of issues of “scientific cultural imperialism” (Costa and Bamossy 1995; Venkatesh 1995).

The dominance of the western cultural paradigm, throughout the world, is a basic fact which confronts modern man. This paradigm has approached mankind as simple and materialist and has achieved brilliant victories on this

level. It has also afforded western people's a high standard of living through colonisation, conquest and annexation of 'majority world' (Kagitçibasi 1996) people's lands. This material and empirical success increased the confidence of Western people's in their cultural project and solidified the belief that "their concept of the world is the highest point of development that the human race has ever achieved. They believe that human history has thus reached its zenith in modern western history, that western sciences are universal, and that the western cultural paradigm is valid for all time and place, or at least in modern times and places" (El Messeri,2006:17).

While this viewpoint may be read as bitter or oppositional, the position of the author is not that the western viewpoint is wrong, just that it is not universal. This is not to suggest that the 'other' nations have not contributed to this hegemony of thought themselves either through application of paradigms designed for another milieu to their home/other context (Costa and Bamossy 1995; Venkatesh 1995) or through a lack of critical thinking about the education they are receiving either overseas (Alatas 2004; Hirschman 1993) or through their own educational systems designed according to the colonial model (Burton 2009b; Sardar 1985).

Nevertheless, there is a necessity for development of paradigms that better fit societies that are not western and/or can be clustered on another general model (etic/macro) and then examined on a specific level (emic/micro). In the absence of such models, 'contributory aspects' should be applied to this study such as competencies in language (Burton 2009b), detailed socio-historical backgrounding (Flyvbjerg 2001) – "a key component of critical theory" (Burton 2009b) – and reference to original sources/founding documents (Boulanouar 2006).

III.3.4 Secular Models for Religious Societies

For the purposes of this study, the point to be examined in this section is the difference between a transcendence assumption (the centre of the world exists beyond it – Islamic world view) and an immanence assumption (the centre of the world exists within it, rather than beyond it), specifically with regard to Muslim society. It also provides the justification for a need to introduce a closer contextual consideration of the wider context of this study and, through that, the specific topic of Muslim women's dress in Morocco.

Immanence means “that either God does not exist at all or that if He does He has nothing to do with humankind's epistemological, moral, semiotic or aesthetic systems which exist within the world of temporality” (El Messeri, 2006:29). In the western worldview conception of reality, a metaphysics of immanence replaces a metaphysics of transcendence (Sennett 1974).

El Messeri traces the development of materialism from this starting point and then outlines the biases inherent in the western, hegemonic model: 1) a bias towards the material and natural at the expense of the immaterial and human – this means explaining what is human in terms of the natural and material; subjecting social phenomenon to methods of research used in the experimental and physical sciences; 2) a bias towards the general at the expense of the particular – the idea that the more general and idea, the more scientific and accurate it becomes; 3) a bias towards the perceptible, the measurable and quantitative against the imperceptible, the qualitative and that which cannot be measured – this bias ignores moral and teleological issues; 4) a bias towards the simple, the one-dimension and the homogeneous at the expense of the complex, the multi-faceted and the heterogeneous – the reduction of phenomena to one or two aspects, principles or variables; 5) a bias toward the objective against the subjective – leading to a focus on the phenomena surrounding people, and a disregarding of the inner motives of

people; 6) an anti-human bias in the structure of terminology – a tendency to the mathematical paradigm seeking to represent reality in terms of numbers and quantities; 7) a bias in favour of precise definitions – the requirement that a definition be exclusive and inclusive (Elmessiri, 2006:33–38).

What Elmessiri speaks of here is a far larger project for the non-West than this thesis, but all of the above are especially relevant here – specifically the dominance of immanence and the resulting lack of consideration of transcendence in scholarship involving peoples with an active interaction with transcendence (“God-consciousness”) and a constant awareness of it {Armstrong, 2004 #455; Elmessiri, 1997 #666}. From the starting point that there is a Creator, the reality of this world appears quite differently to those that do not believe that, or have structured their systems using a template outside of it. Clearly, this neglect is adversely affecting how the non-West is studied and represented in studies. Sardar (1993) has described this as, “the deformed sight of the blinded eye” (p88), while Davies (2002) simply states, “The real problem with Orientalism and the authority it gives to Western experts on Islam and Muslim affairs is not that it is knowledge, but it is knowledge that does not appreciate it is wrong” (p23).

As a result of the removal of religion as a legitimate element of study in the English language literature (Azzam 1996; Roald 2001), and the adoption of the Geertz model – “we [anthropologists] were the first to insist that we see the lives of others through lenses of our own grinding and that they look back on ours through ones of their own” (Geertz 2000:65) – much is being lost and “just as concepts and theories emanating from the West can and may have relevance beyond the West; likewise, concepts and theories originating from contexts other than the West can and may have relevance for the West. It is only when knowledge generation from different societal and cultural contexts contributes to the pool of social science knowledge, that social science will be moving genuinely towards its proper universalisation” (Mukherji 2004:33).

Weber's rationalisation theory (Weber, 1963), assumes that religion influences ethical behaviour, attitudes and work choices, consequently and particularly in a religious society, the religion of that society causes it to develop its "own distinctive orientation toward all aspects of life, and these orientations profoundly influence the daily actions of its adherent and hence the institutional structure of society" (Lenski 1963:6-7 in Rawwas et al. 2006) and so, the theory contends, major social institutions, including religion and religious institutions, shape our behaviours. These elements of the theory are obvious when the sample under study lives a culture which considers every aspect of life - "[Islam] is an all-embracing way of life governing the totality of the Muslim's being" (Abbasi et al. 1989:7) and so this framework must be examined, in some detail, to provide an understanding of the group at hand.

Sander (1997), in his study of Muslims in Sweden, has classified Muslims into four different definitional groups - they are, from widest in scope to most narrow - ethnic, cultural, religious, political. The parameters of his widest definition - ethnic Muslim - are "anyone born into an environment dominated by a Muslim tradition, belonging to a Muslim people, of Muslim origin, with a name that belongs in a Muslim traditions and/or who identifies her/himself with, or considers her/himself to belong to this environment and tradition" (p184). This definition recognises the continuum of individual commitment and his conclusions show approximately 60% of his sample of 385 were classified as 'religious', which he defined as someone who followed the five pillars, who accepted the articles of faith, who tried to live according to the Qur'an and Sunnah, and believed this to be a "right, good, correct or valuable [way of] life" (Sander, 1997:189). This leaves 40% in the other 3 categories, which illustrates just how 'shaping' Islam, as a culture, is - even the widest definition of a Muslim reflects in a significant relationship to Islam.

The dominance of the Western framework when studying ‘the other’ is also obvious when researching Asian culture, as Nisbett (2003) details in his book, ‘The Geography of Thought’. Muslim cultures, like Asian and other so-called ‘collectivist’ societies, privilege relationships, exemplify and amplify an identity, rather than an individualist view of the self as an “island”, and have a world-view that sees continuum rather than dichotomy (Assadi 2003; Essoo and Dibb 2004; Nisbett 2003). When these integral features are overlooked in the study of such societies and the reporting of their practices and institutional operations, context is reduced to a marginal consideration rather than a central one. However, context is essential (Holland 2004), especially when considering a critical case methodology (Flyvbjerg 2001), and an extensive consideration of the ‘world’ under study – in terms of both it’s understanding and it’s explanation – is fundamental.

Similarly, it is essential to examine the sample from a perspective devoid of superiority, and that is another problem with the application of hegemonic frameworks on ‘other’ groups. Campbell illustrates this nicely, attributing Weber’s rationalisation thesis with the foretelling of the West’s demise and eventual turn ‘East’ due to the vacuum created by the rise of science – ‘what happens next is the West “turns East”, mainly because there is nowhere else to go” (Campbell, 2007:62).

III.3.5 ‘White’ Models for ‘Non-White’ Societies

Expanding the idea of different perspectives an illustration by Nisbett (2003) is the example where when shown an image of several attractive and fast moving fish in an underwater environment the Japanese respondents ‘saw’ or focused on the background – the sea plants, the context, the environment; the American respondents, on the fish (p90). In a case where a western-educated researcher had to adjust her perceptive, Kagitçibasi (2005; 1996; 2002; 2005) designed a study to examine the Value of Children (VOC) in

Turkey based on modernisation theory (that as income increases, women have fewer children, and families become more separated and individuated – move to nuclear families). Initially, she found “with socio-economic development, the economic/utilitarian VOC decreased. However, initially we interpreted these results as decreasing dependencies *in general*, not only in economic/material terms, even though only the economic VOC was found to decrease, *not overall VOC* …Psychological VOC did not decrease with increasing affluence and socio-economic development” (Kagitçibasi 2002).

In consumer research, Burton (2009a; 2009b) has examined both how ‘whiteness’ is embedded, unrecognised in consumer research and also how it is ‘read’ and performed by non-white ‘readers’. Burton’s views on how whiteness effects the performance of consumer research specifically, will be considered in Chapter IV, but her points on whiteness models in general, will be considered here. Burton (2009b) charges that “the dominance of whiteness in economic and social life in Western societies is reflected in their systems of knowledge production” (p173), it is a form of racism – not necessarily a hatred of one, but a privileging of another (see Franks 2000). The classification of ‘white’ too is subject to change. When Benjamin Franklin classified the world’s population in 1751, he made a distinction between “the English, who were considered white, while Spaniards, Italians, French, Russian, Swedes and Germans were considered non-white …by the late nineteenth century, the cultural and biological inferiority of Italians, Slavs, Jews and other Europeans was widely promulgated … latterly, it is Europeans from the Mediterranean and Eastern European areas that have been perceived as less desirable racially, economically and culturally than north-western areas (Britain, Germany and Scandinavia)” (Burton 2009a:351).

Burton also considers the ‘performance’ of whiteness, “a mode of behaving, acting and consuming into which individuals can be socialised regardless of their ethnic ancestry… many investigators are consciously or unconsciously

performing whiteness. The term performing whiteness in this sense is writing from a white theoretical, epistemological and methodological standpoint regardless of one's racial or ethnic ancestry in order to conform to disciplinary norms" (Burton 2009b:191). Burton (2009b) asks, "What if instead of one more study of the quest for individuation through consumer embellishments, we sought to listen to the voices of Muslim women wearing the seemingly de-individuating Islamic dress of hijab?" (p192). What if, indeed.

III.3.6 Summary

Three main themes arise from the perspective of considering suitable paradigms from within the literature published in English for societies quite different from them. The first is the assumed universalism of the dominant models which share an organic bedrock and so necessarily encompass the same assumptions and biases. The second is the secular models for religious societies and the third is the dominance of whiteness in the literature overall, but in the secular model especially. The next section considers the Moroccan context.

III.4 Empirical Context: Morocco

"A strange, fascinating, cruel land is Morocco – very difficult for the European to understand"
(Fraser, 1911)

III.4.1 Introduction

Morocco, the empirical context of this study, is a country of great contrast and great homogeneity. Geographically situated on the Northern-most Western coast of the African continent (please see Figure III-3, below),

Morocco features both mountainous and dry terrains, which accounts for temperatures ranging from 4 degrees C in the year-end winter to 40 degrees C in the mid-year summer – it is not a constantly hot desert. Homogeneity is represented in the ethnicity of the Moroccan population (99% Arab-Berber) and their way of life (99% Sunni Muslim). Morocco is a constitutional monarchy, so has a government – led by Abbas El Fassi – and a head of state, King Mohammed VI.

Figure III-3: Morocco's Geographical Location and Flag



Source 3: CIA: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mo.html>

The flag (Figure III-3, above) represents the important strands in Moroccan life. The red background signifies the royal family's direct descent from the Prophet Mohammed (s) (Sowell, 2004:229), this also reinforces the King's legitimacy to lead. "Mohammed VI … still claimed a religious legitimacy as Commander of the Faithful, and he still rule[s] rather than merely reign[s]" (Pennell, 2003:188). The green colour of the star is the reported favourite colour of the Prophet Mohammed (s) as it is one of the colours of Paradise (Qur'an 76:21) and the five pointed star is said to reflect the 5 foundational pillars of Islam.

III.4.2 Arab Culture

As Arabs, Moroccan's speak Arabic, although the form of Arabic in common use in Morocco is a dialect known as *Darija*. *Darija* is a spoken dialect, it is not a written form of Arabic. Written Arabic is uniform across the Arab world, and that form is called 'standard' Arabic (*Fus'ha*), with all Arab countries having their own spoken dialects. Arabs come from 21 countries, and many differ from Moroccans in that they are either non-Muslim, or they are non-Sunni Muslim. Lebanon, for example, has a large Christian population (40%) and Egypt also has a large Coptic Christian population (10%) as well as many Shi'a Muslims (CIA). Saudi Arabia has many Shi'a Muslims as well as the Sunni majority. Morocco is quite unusual in that it is both ethnically homogeneous to a large degree, and also religiously homogeneous. The only country in the region comparable on these terms is Libya.

III.4.3 Moroccan Culture

Morocco's geographical location, as part of the *Maghrib* (meaning 'the west' in English and Morocco's name in Arabic), which consists of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, has meant that it was always on the edge of the Muslim world, "an outpost on the periphery" (Pennell, 2003:19). Morocco has been the only Arab society to have had relatively stable rule from medieval times to the twentieth century. "Morocco [has] bordered three worlds: the Ottoman Empire ... Europe ... and West Africa" (Sowell, 2004 p140). Morocco is also constitutionally, and legally, committed to the Maliki school of jurisprudence, one of the four main schools in Islam. According to Charrad (2001), "the Moroccan [legal] code [has] kept the basic principles of Maliki law" (p167). This means that while Morocco is one of 21 Arab countries (www.arab.net) and also one of 56 Muslim countries (www.oic-oci.org), it has developed a quite distinctive culture from many other Muslim and/or Arab countries, but still bounded by the parameters of Islam. For example, Morocco is seen as a

‘liberal’ Muslim country⁹, where separation between men and women is followed (in accordance with Islamic Law), but speaking to a stranger of the opposite sex would raise no concerns.

III.4.4 Contemporary Morocco

Morocco was colonised by the French from 1912–1956, entering Morocco via Algeria in 1830 in order to make Morocco “France’s breadbasket” (Swearingen 1987:21). The French colonisation of Morocco was not characterised by the bloodshed so evocatively described by French psychiatrist, Frantz Fanon (1967), but it did exact a severe cost to the Moroccan people.

Morocco’s variable climate, in combination with French agricultural policy in the country, resulted in mass rural migration to urban slums surrounding the larger cities – Casablanca, for example, became the third largest city in Africa by 1971 (Pennell, 2000:329). These slums housed an “informal” workforce encompassing 69% of the urban working population (Pennel 2000:329; 2003:149).

Since 1971, Moroccans have gone even further afield – to France, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain – largely as a result of poor weather (and, therefore, harvests) and unemployment (GDP per capita is \$4,600) (2009 estimate) and 15% of the population live below the poverty line) (CIA). “The government encouraged them to go. Successive economic plans relied on emigration to bring in foreign exchange, reduce unemployment and train the workforce at no cost” (Pennell, 2000:328). In reality most of the migrants had very limited literacy (if any) and were working as manual labourers. They did send back quantities of money, and also gifts of clothing to their

⁹ Morocco is a signatory to a Free Trade Agreement with the USA (2006) and is seen as a key US ally in both the region and the Muslim world.

families (and/or extended families). Many workers went alone to factory positions abroad and supported their families in Morocco with the money they saved and sent back. Some took their families, or sent for them when they were established, and were able to educate their children in Europe. The foreign exchange receipts into Morocco alleviated some poverty, and offset the fact that there was very little work for anyone, with no chance at all of paid part-time work for young people.

The impact of accessible mass media has had a number of important impacts on Moroccan society. With the rise of the Arabic language film industry, especially in Egypt, Syria and Lebanon in the 1940's and Algeria and Tunisia in the 1950's and 1960's, cultural information began to be shared via movies. News from (especially), Al Jazeera (based in Qatar and established in 1996) and Al Arabia (based in Dubai and established in 2003) (www.allied-media.com), but also from Europe and the USA and UK – either dubbed or subtitled in Arabic or French, or just shown “as is”. Literate and illiterate alike are exposed to vast quantities of visual media and anyone can afford it. In Morocco alone there are now 35 TV stations (CIA). Similarly, innovations in audio technology meant Arabic language music had a faster and more pervasive reach as recordings or soundtracks.

While literacy has been increasing steadily from the post-colonial low of 11%, audio technology has also been extensively used to teach Muslims about Islam. This is particularly useful for the illiterate, but also has a place for those without the time to sit down with the Qur'an or a theological text. From very early on in the development of audio technology, recordings of the recitation of Qur'an and of speeches of prominent Islamic scholars and Imams have been available ('dubbed' copies and originals) in markets and from street vendors. In this way, the transmission of religious knowledge has been made possible to even the infirm and illiterate inside their homes, who may not be able to attend the speeches at the mosque. As El Guidi (1999) has pointed

out, “Islamic text, far from remaining frozen in Islamic scholars’ specialised teachings and writings, spreads to ordinary folk through forums of collective worship and public media, and is transmitted through socialisation and by oral tradition. It enters the cultural constructions that shape thinking and influence ordinary lives” (El Guindi 1999:xv).

In 1963, television came to Morocco. Pennell (2003) provides the following statistics: By the early 1990’s 89% of the population had a television set. By 1988, 20% of homes had a video recorder. From the mid-1980’s satellite dishes became available and in 1989 a private television company (2M – deux M) was established. From then on, access was open. The decoder necessary to watch 2M was pirated, video recorders were sold on the black market and black market tapes in Arabic, English and French were widely available. Black market satellite dishes gave access to hundreds of TV stations to the poorest slum-dweller. In the 1990’s Moroccans began to access the Internet and the World Wide Web (10.3 million users in 2008) (CIA).

Similarly, global brands (for example, Coca Cola) advertise on Moroccan TV, magazines and billboards, but the content of the advertisements, whilst still quite controversial (www.iccwbo.org) for Morocco (for example, one Coca Cola ad shown on television in 2005 depicted youths on a crowded bus suffering the summer heat, many standing up, then one opening a drink and them all dancing around joyously on the bus), are far different to those used in the West.

The combination of mass media access and influences from abroad (media and family), has not, according to Pennell (2000:385) resulted in wholesale Westernisation. “Directly, or through relatives, very many Moroccans had now experienced Europe or the rich Arab states. They also met the tourists who came to Morocco and watched European, American and Arab films. A

complex picture of ‘abroad’ had developed. Young Moroccans feelings about foreigners swung between fascination and disgust” (Pennell, 2000:369–370).

Moroccan workers were also subjected to racism and exploitation abroad. The response to this by Moroccan youths interviewed by Bennani-Chaibi in the late 1980’s was that they “resented American and French imperialism. Many others watched both American and Egyptian soap operas, but felt uneasy when they viewed films with ‘shameful’ … content …margins, blurred: literate and illiterate watched the same films, and foreign culture, both Arab and European, was being domesticated” (quoted in Pennell, 2000:385).

In addition to this access to ‘foreign’ ideals, in more recent government initiatives, tourism has been actively pursued as an income earner, to offset an economy which relies on agriculture and services as staples (CIA). With the influx of tourists come foreign ideas, examples and material requirements to be met locally (Erickson 2008). Some ‘services’ demanded by tourist which are in conflict with Islamic teaching are: gambling – there are now 5 casinos in Morocco (www.worldcasinodirectory.com). Gambling is not allowed under Islamic teaching (Al Qaradawi, 1984:25). Nightclubs and alcohol – Alcohol is also available – and Morocco even brews two brands of beer and several types of wine. Alcohol is easy to acquire in the main cities and besides the local liquor there are plenty of imported alcohol brands. Alcohol can be obtained from simple grocery stores, but bars are mostly connected with Hotels (<http://french.about.com>). Similarly nightclubs are in Hotels and, besides dancing at weddings or private parties, there is unlikely to be any other formal dancing venues. Alcohol and going to, and dancing in, nightclubs are inconsistent with Islamic teaching (Al Qaradawi 1984:70,135). Beach Activities – Many of the tourist cities – especially Agadir and Tangier – have splendid beaches – on the North Atlantic and Mediterranean, respectively. According to Islamic teaching swimming, like dancing, is a gender segregated

activity outside of the family, so sun-bathing and swimming at the beach is also aimed at the tourist trade.

Local people staff the services surrounding tourists. Where the requirements of tourists (usually non-Muslim) meet the norms of Moroccan society, which is homogeneously Muslim, there will be adjustments required. The impact of this nexus of values will manifest most clearly in young people (Gibbs et al. 2007; Schwartz 2007). As Wong (2007) notes, Islam has recently been studied as an orthopraxy rather than an orthodoxy – “orthopraxic religions are focused on issues of family, cultural integrity, the transmission of tradition, sacrificial offerings, concerns of purity, ethical systems, and the enforcement thereof” (Antes, et al, 2004). This recognition of Islam as an orthopraxy also extends to the consideration of consumption decisions, where religion is referenced when making choices (Briegel and Zivkovic 2008; Sander 1997) as one might expect when it is considered a “comprehensive way of life” (Roald, 2001:10).

III.4.5 Evolution of Moroccan Clothing

The Islamic guidelines on clothing (which relates to both women and men) have not changed since Islam was established in 609CE. However, within the general guidelines there is enormous scope for variation of colour and style while still observing the requirements of the Islamic *deen* (way of life). As a result, Muslims from different countries, regions and climates wear different clothing depending on their requirements and tastes. In Morocco no law that mandates public dress is in place, and Moroccan's are free to wear what they choose in public. In this way Morocco differs from countries which are often the ‘public face’ of Muslim women’s clothing, such as Iran and Saudi Arabia. For example, Moroccans like colour, and typically wear pastels or other light colours (please see Figure III-4 below).

There is also scope within the Islamic clothing guidelines for continuous variation, and many urban dwellers particularly have, since the Umayyad dynasty (661–750), been regularly modifying their wardrobes. There has been much stylistic variance across the Muslim world, especially in the ‘outer reaches’ such as Morocco (and the rest of the *Maghreb* ie, Algeria and Tunisia). However, the basic outlines of the clothing worn in public has remained remarkably constant in both the cities and the far-flung regions – a long, loose, one piece outer garment (Stillman 2003:10).

Figure III-4: Typical Scene in Women's Clothing, Casablanca, Morocco



Source 4: Rebecca Heggarty, Worldfocus, 2009

Men and women across the Muslim world have traditionally had very similar clothing styles. The differences between male and female fashion was how the clothing was accessorised (jewellery, scarves, head and foot wear) and also colours, fabrics and decoration (such as embroidery, ties etc). Of course, “gender distinctions are a crucial part of the construction of dress, whether they are made on biological or social grounds” (Barnes and Eicher 1993:2). They are also a critical part of the Islamic paradigm, with several recorded references in the teaching, for example:

The Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) says: "Allah condemns the man who dresses like a woman and the woman who dresses like a man". [Transmitted by Abu Huraira, Abu Dawud (4098); and Ahmad 2/325; and Ibn Hibban (1904); and others.] (Qaradawi, 1998)

The Moroccan traditional dress is the *jellaba*, ‘a long-sleeved, floor-length garment which also has a hood’ (Davis 1983:26), depending on the fashion however, the *jellaba* can also be hoodless. It is similar in style for both sexes, with material and detail (embroidery and embellishments) providing differentiating characteristics: ‘women cover their bodies when they go out. They wear either a *jellaba* (long robe) and veil, or a *haik*, a large piece of fabric which they wrap around themselves so just their hands, feet and eyes remain visible’ (Davis 1983:61, in El Guindi, 1999:61)¹⁰.

Figure III-5: Haik covering full body and face (L), & Haik with lithem (face cover) (R)



Source 5: Researchers personal photographs of interviewees [mothers]

The *haik* (or some variant), as referred to above (Figure III-5), was the main garment during the 1500s–1600s across the Arab world, and this is the style shown in several medieval manuscripts from both the Middle East and the *Maghreb* (Stillman, 2003:149).

“The *haik* is a variation on the wrap worn in certain traditional circles by women (from all racial groups) in rural and urban areas of the Middle East. In that sense, it is both an ethnic and a gender marker. The hooded *jellaba* . . . on the other hand, is worn by both sexes and is similar in appearance. As a

¹⁰Taking note of the discussion of what constitutes public and private in Morocco and for Muslims generally, ‘when they go out’ is taken to mean ‘when they are in a public setting’, a place made public by who is in attendance.

clothing item it is dual-gendered, bringing out the nuanced variability of clothing as used by men and women" (El Guindi 1999:61; cf. Stillman 2003).

The Moroccan *haik* is usually black, while Algeria's is usually white, and many Eastern Moroccan towns that are close to the border with Algeria use a white one. The *haik* is rarely worn in cities or even larger towns these days, but can be seen in villages, especially in the Oasis areas.

Figure III-6: Men (L) and Women (R) in Jellabas



Source 6: David Constantine (L), and elkarma.com (R)

As is illustrated above (Figure III-6), men often put their hood up, forming a cone on the top of their heads, while women wear their hoods down, and cover their heads with a square scarf folded into a triangle.

The tendency for variation in Morocco has been noticeable since the arrival of Islam in the area. The *Maghreb*, which in the European Middle Ages included Spain and Sicily as well as Northern Africa, belongs to the Arabo-Mediterranean vestimentary system, which has the unifying factors of rectangular tunics and loose outer wraps. Within those unifying factors however, there has been a great deal of socio-economic, regional and ethnic variation. "The *Maghreb* has been noted since the time of the Arab conquest in the second half of the 7th century CE for its own particular styles in dress. The reasons for this can be conveniently summarised as follows: (1) the physical distance of the *Maghreb* from the Muslim-Arab heartlands; (2) the indigenous Berber element, which always remained strong; (3) in the case of

Spain, the large native Iberian population and the propinquity of Christian territory; (4) the absence of the Persian *katib* class; and (5) the very late arrival of the Turks in Tunisia and Algeria (and their total absence from Morocco)" (Stillman 2003:86).

There were a great variety of face veils in the Arab world during the European Middle Ages that "declined for reasons that are not entirely clear after the Ottoman conquest of the Levant and much of North Africa. By early modern times [15/1600], it seems that in most Arab countries, the majority of urban Muslims women wore one particular regional style of face veil. In Morocco, it was the *litham* (Figure III-7), a long white rectangular cloth (in the Andalusian towns of the northern part of the country, it was triangular) that tied behind the head and hung from just below the eyes down to the chest" (Stillman 2003:148).

Figure III-7: Women wearing litham under the nose (can also be worn over)



Source 7: <http://ocw.nd.edu/arabic-and-middle-east-studies/women-in-islamic-societies/lecture-and-study-materials/hessini-discussion-questions/> & Heaggarty, Worldfocus

In Morocco some of the innovations in women's fashion were actually neo-traditional and only indirectly influenced from Europe. During the Colonial period (1912–1956), the *haik* was gradually replaced with a tailored version of the male's hooded *jellaba*. The *jellaba* was frequently of lightweight gabardine and came in a wide variety of colours (made possible by European aniline dyes). "In the 1970s in cosmopolitan Rabat and Casablanca foreign

patterns such as colourful paisley Italian or French silk or artificial textiles could be found. The new feminine *jellaba* was worn with the pointed capuche-style hood covering the head and a *litham*, or veil, covering the face from just below the eyes. In the Andalusian north of the country, it was worn as a triangular bandana tied outside and around the hood, whereas in the central and southern parts it was usually worn as a rectangle tied under the hood" (Stillman, 2003:157). Most married urban Moroccan women continued wearing the *litham* face veil until the early 1970's.

Many Muslim women removed their *hijab* during the later parts of the 20th century, but there were still countries where complete veiling was universal (for example, Saudi Arabia) or practiced by the majority (for example, Morocco) (Stillman, 2003).

III.4.6 Clothing Today

Moroccan women today favour the *jellaba*, in pastel/light colours with a square scarf (folded in half to form a triangle, Figure III-8) and without a face covering.

Rarely are women seen in large hoods with face-cover (or without), and hoods are either decorative or entirely absent (Stillman, 2000:170). *Jellabas* are also worn without any head-covering.

Figure III-8: "Favourite Scarves"



Source 8: Researchers personal photographs of interviewees clothing

Jellabas are usually tailor-made – this facilitates choice through both material and decorative choice – although they can be purchased ready-made. Tailor-made *jellabas* are expensive, but there is much demand for them, and many tailors operating in the marketplace. Ready-made are cheaper, likely to fit less well, allow less choice in terms of material and decoration and are of poorer quality. Men also commonly wear *jellaba*, especially in the colder months and especially older men. The various market (*souqs*) deal mainly in ready-made clothing such as jeans, skirts, shirts and blouses. Unmarried and/or younger women typically wear these. Working people typically wear suits, working women wear either *jellaba* or skirts and jackets with a scarf, or without (Figure III-9).

Figure III-9: Casablanca Street Scenes



Source 9: Rebecca Heggarty, Worldfocus, 2009

III.4.7 Summary

Morocco is a homogeneous society in terms of Islam and ethnicity. It is ‘open’ through the air-waves and the human ‘traffic’ of tourism and ex-patriots to ideas/influences from all over the world.

The influx of media channels in Morocco (TV, satellite TV, cell phone coverage and use and internet access) means Moroccans can see/hear/watch media from all over the world. Importantly, these media channels also support the transmission of Islamic information allowing increased religious education of even the illiterate and infirm.

In terms of dress, Moroccans differ from other Arabs in colour choices and clothing use. The Moroccan *jellaba* is used as an overdress more than a ‘coat’ as in other countries (for example, Saudi Arabia). Clothing type is not legislated in Morocco and women usually start wearing the traditional hooded robe (*jellaba*) in public settings after marriage, often preferring ready-made clothing before that time. Definitions of public and private reflect Morocco’s Muslim way of life, with ‘public’ defined by who is present rather than where one is.

With an increasing emphasis being placed on tourism by the Moroccan authorities, the nexus of values and influences that Morocco represents is a rich context for research.

III.5 Summary

This chapter has introduced the wider context of this study in terms of its ‘global’ culture – Islam – and its ‘local’ one – Morocco. It has sought to clarify important definitional differences between the Islamic world view and a Western world view. It has also looked at aspects of the dominant academic paradigm to situate this study clearly for the reader.

A point raised with particular relevance to this sample is that of the consideration of a third dimension to the study of humankind – in this case the consideration of the transcendent. Indeed, consideration of humankind in general as being three-dimensional rather than two-dimensional – ie having a sphere of spirituality (in addition to sensory and rational dimensions) is a point worthy of consideration with regard to consumer paradigms in general.

The next chapter considers the academic literature specific to this study relating to the self, clothing and marketing.

IV. The Self, Clothing and Marketing

IV.1 Introduction

This study considers an illustrative example of symbolic consumption (Islamic dress) within a context where it is unremarkable (Morocco), but not without symbolic meaning. Clothing has significance in all cultures, and different clothing items have symbolic significance. Clothing is an excellent example of ‘material culture’ (Küchler and Miller 2005; Prown 1982) and an easy one to observe given that it is a conspicuously/publicly consumed cultural good (Veblen 1899).

This chapter begins with a review of the literature on the self and identity, before examining signs and symbolism theories. Both considerations of the self and symbolic consumption form part of the consumer culture theory (CCT) tradition within consumer research. The study of the self came into marketing from psychology and later sociology. As such, the approach to the study of the self is typically undertaken according to “a physical science model adhering to a positivistic philosophy of science .. this implies a methodological orientation isolating the behaviour from its natural context to control for “unwanted” variation. Thus, social and cultural factors are often absent in analysis” (Kagitçibasi 1996:4). In addition to this narrowness in the early psychological and marketing approaches to the self, “Western psychology affirms one type of self – the separate self – as *the healthy prototype*” (Kagitçibasi 2007:111). The addition of contextual, social and cultural considerations to the study of the self, and used in application to samples under study, is consistent with the anthropological and sociological sciences, and has promise within a consumer culture theory framework.

The second part of this chapter looks at the clothing literature, culminating in Muslim women’s dress. The third and last part of the chapter looks at the

particular marketing literature on religiosity, dress and considers CCT specifically.

IV.2 Identity

IV.2.1 Identity Theory

Identity theory is a sociological theory based on the concept of roles. Identity has been defined as the dispositional imputations about an individual that are conveyed by his action in a particular context (Alexander and Wiley 1981). The self is seen as reflexive “in that it can take itself as an object and can categorise, classify or name itself in particular ways in relation to other social categories or classifications” (Stets and Burke 2000:224). This process is called identification (McCall and Simmons 1966). Through the process of identification, an identity is formed.

The performance of a role is a interaction of “interconnected uniqueness” (Stets and Burke 2000), and relationships are reciprocal, so some form of negotiation and also interaction is usually required when one performs a role (McCall and Simmons 1966). At its most fundamental, identity theory, with its focus on roles, locates identity as based in ‘what one does’ (Thoits and Virshup 1997). In contrast, social identity theory uses the group as the location of identity – ‘who one is’ (Thoits and Virshup 1997).

IV.2.2 Social Identity Theory

Social identity is a persons self-concept derived from perceived membership of social groups (Hogg and Vaughan 2002). Many theories used in marketing have come from psychology (Belk 1995a), one of these is social identity theory (SIT) (Tajfel 1978; Tajfel and Turner 1979), which is often used in consumer research (for a recent example please see Sowden and Grimmer

2009). Tajfel's (1978) seminal study examined group dynamics and demonstrated how, when people were randomly assigned to a group with others they did not know, the group that they were in became their 'in-group' and the members worked together to maximise their own and their group benefits in competition with other group/s. Similarly, people adopt the norms and attitudes of the group they belong to (Tajfel 1978). This work has been very influential in studies of stereotyping and out-groups and also in informing other psychological theories.

Just as there has been debate on the stability of the self concept, so there have been similar discussions in the area of identity theory. Elliott (2004) protests that "identity is not just cognitive and narrative" and considers the traditional focus on spoken language to diminish the other 'language' in a social context, such as dress, gestures, body marking and personal possessions (p130). Citing Bhaskar (1989) he notes that "social practices ... always have a material dimension" (Elliot 2004:131). He further objects to the study of identity at an individual level, and discourses of identity, but not the construction of identity, at a social level. He also introduces Wenger's (1998) concept of 'communities of practice' where, identities are located in social practice and who we are lies in the way we live each day and not just what we think or say about ourselves. "A community of practice is defined by two key dimensions: mutual engagement and shared repertoires" (Elliot 2004:132).

This context of identity has been used a number of times to examine Muslims and their self-reported 'identity'. For example, both Gray (2006) in her study of French-Moroccan and Moroccan women and Moaddel and Zaadarmaki (2002) in their study of Egyptians, Jordanians and Iranians, report that when asked for their affiliation, the respondents replied 'Muslim' rather than give a geographical or national affiliation. Kazmi (2005) attributes this to the significance of the shared culture of Muslims through their commitment to

Islam (see also, Said 1998). Identity, too, shifts in emphasis depending on context. Roald (2001) notes that a Syrian Muslim woman living in Syria may emphasise her class or occupation, but if the same woman lived in London, her ‘Muslimness’, her nationality or her gender, may be more of concern and cause her to identify herself in those terms (p14). She further notes that “in Muslims’ encounters with non-Muslims, Islam ..tends to become the identity marker no matter what relation the person has to Islamic rules and regulations” (Roald 2001:14), especially when aspects of their identity are problematic in the majority or mainstream view.

Elliot’s point that social practices have a material dimension relates very well to how identity theory is used in connection with symbols. Roald’s (2001) same Syrian woman may further ‘identify’ herself through symbolism such as a head-scarf, an additional aspect for consideration if she lived in London – where the audience for her identity is less likely to share the meanings she attributes to her symbols. However, if she was in Syria, there is more chance the symbolic meaning would be shared. The role of symbols and symbolism is explored further in Section IV.4.

IV.3 Self and Self-Concept

There are several theories connected with symbolic consumption relevant to this study, representing an enormous body of literature. Those relevant to this particular study will be briefly reviewed here. The first is self-concept theory, developed by William James in 1890.

James (1890/1950) defined the self, “in its widest possible sense ..[as] the sum total of all that he CAN call his, not only his body and psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank account”

(emphasis in original, p291). In James' theory, the self was a multidimensional construct, yet in many writings since, self-concept research has been dominated by a uni-dimensional construct (Coopersmith 1967; Rosenberg 1979).

Markus and Wurf (1987) attribute this to the empirical work on self-concept lagging behind the sophisticated theoretical conceptions on how the self-system functions, which is being overcome by three advances – the realisation that the self-concept can no longer be explored as if it were unitary and monolithic; the understanding that the self-concept depends on both the self-motives being served and on the configuration of the immediate social situation; and that complex actions may not be appropriate dependent variables (p300).

Self-concept has been variously defined as: “how the individual perceives himself” (Grubb and Grathwohl 1967); “an image shaped by the very person holding the image” (Hong and Zinkhan 1995); “the cognitive and affective understanding of who and what we are” (Schouten 1991). It can be considered as consisting of several basic dimensions, such as, the actual- (realistic), ideal- (aspirational), private- (how I am and would like to be) and social- (how we would like to be seen by others) self (Hawkins, 1998). It involves a series of formation principles which include: “reflected appraisal (“the self is formed around others’ perception of ourselves”); self-attribution (“self-concepts are inferred from our own behaviour”); and psychological centrality (“hierarchical organisation of differing self-concepts”) (Rosenberg 1979; Sirgy 1982)” (Hogg et al. 2000:643).

During the 1980’s many ‘self-theories’ were developed based on the assumption of an individual self (Kagitçibasi 2007) and causing a proliferation of “states of self” and, hence, confusion over a working/workable definition, with uni-dimensional constructs such as “actual self”, “real self”, “basic self”,

“extant self” or simply, “self”; and within the multi-dimensional constructs, “ideal self”, “idealised image”, “desired self” “looking-glass self”, “expected self” and “expressive self” (for examples see Sirgy 1982). The development of the self-concept to be seen as a multifaceted phenomenon has resulted in it being conceptualised as “a set of images, schemas, conceptions, prototypes, theories, goals or tasks” (Markus and Wurf 1987:301) so the self is seen as being ‘arrayed in a space’ or as a ‘confederation’ or a ‘system’ (p301). In turn, the self-concept seen as a multi-dimensional construct has shown the self to be active in its structure. As work on the self has developed, more weight has been given to the position that the self is affected by interactions with others (Ekinci and Riley 2003; Solomon 1983). People learn about themselves from others, through social comparisons and direct interactions (McGuire 1984), with symbolic interactionists even suggested that all self knowledge comes from social interaction (Cooley 1902/1983; Mead 1934).

The working self-concept is the result of the emphasis on the multiplicity or multi-dimensionality of the self-concept or identity work by both psychologist and sociologists, making it no longer possible to refer to ‘the’ self-concept (Markus and Wurf 1987). The working self-concept refers to a self that is accessible and it allows for a self-concept that is both stable and malleable. “Core aspects of self (one’s self-schemas) may be relatively unresponsive to changes in one’s social circumstances. Because of their importance in defining the self and their extensive elaboration, they may be chronically accessible … many other self-conceptions in the individual’s system, however, will vary in accessibility depending on the individual’s motivational state or on the prevailing social conditions. The working self-concept thus consists of the core self-conceptions embedded in a context of more tentative self-conceptions that are tied to the prevailing circumstances” (Markus and Wurf 1987:306). Within consumer behaviour, the understanding of the self as being highly sensitive to both social and situational contexts

(Schouten 1991) has been of great interest and the applications of the theories of self in consumer behaviour will be considered in the following sections.

IV.3.1 Self-Congruence

Self-congruence is a concept where the ‘self’ is aligned with a product or brand “with meanings congruent with an aspect of their self-concept” (Escalas and Bettman 2005). A product or brand can be used to enhance the self-concept by transferring the socially attributed meanings from the product or brand to the self, thereby enhancing the self (Grubb and Grathwohl 1967). For this enhancement to take place, interaction with others is required because only with the involvement of others can the meaning of the product choice be ‘delivered’ – so the product or brand must be a symbol recognised and accepted in a public context (Belk et al. 1982). In this way, “self-concept is enhanced by positive responses from significant others which reinforces behaviour as these responses function as private rewards” (Hogg et al. 2000:642).

Given self-congruence has been used to suggest consumers try to align their ‘selves’ with their goods, the question arises of who is the audience? Elliot (1997) suggests there are two audiences – the inner self, where products are used to construct the identity, and the outward self, where products are used to “construct the social world” (p287). Hogg et al (2000) consider the “major theoretical implication” of their study to be the consideration of internal factors as drivers of self-congruence consumption. This leads them to consider that there may be a link between “internal and external influences in the creation and maintenance of a social identity” (p664). Markus and Wurf (1987) consider two internal audiences – the self, and an internalised reference group. They relate the discussion to the conscious or unconscious performance of impression management (Goffman 1959) in performing roles

where conscious impression management relies on a high level of self-awareness, while unconscious management is automatic. This impression management is related to the literature on self-regulation (p325).

Other streams of self-congruence research have shown that ‘actual’ self-concept is not as significant in forming congruent relationships between consumers and brands as their ‘ideal’ self-concept, especially when the actual self-concept is considered negative (Ekinci and Riley 2003). Graeff (1996) (among others) has argued that the ideal self concept may be more relevant when consuming publicly consumed goods, rather than to those consumed privately. This is related to both self-congruent stimuli being efficiently processed and people being positively biased about their pasts, and also their futures (Markus and Wurf 1987). A further consideration in the self-congruence literature is the position that the very “hypothesis inherently suggests that the self is one-dimensional and stable” (Larsen et al. 2010:676).

Richens (1994:518), too, remarks that an area for further research would be “examining the congruity between self-concept and *public* meaning”. Richens characterises this case as where a child may be ‘forced’ to wear a school uniform that she feels doesn’t represent her fashionable self-image, but it could also be applied to a situation where the public meaning of a product is inconsistent with the private meaning the individual attributes to it and, with the self-concept of the individual publicly displaying it, such as is often the case with head-scarf wearing women in western countries. This is consistent, too, with studies of both stereotyping and out-groups, such as that by Tajfel (1978) discussed above.

IV.3.2 Situational Self

A dimension of self-concept particularly relevant to this study, is that of the situational self, utilised by Schenk and Holman (1980), who define the self as “include[ing] attitudes, perceptions and feelings about what is the individual’s character, and what should be the appropriate behaviour in the situation (which is also part of an individual’s plan)” (p610). This definition marries the sociological concept of situational self with the original self-concept theory from psychology, to give the following definition for situational self, “the meaning of self that the individual wishes others to have of him/herself” (Schenk and Holman 1980:611). The situational self is an example of where the self-concept guides and mediates interpersonal processes.

Sirgy (1982) sees a number of advantages to the concept of situational self, as it replaces the varied terms (self image, ideal self image etc), it includes a behavioural component and, it reflects that consumers have many self concepts (p289). More recent work sees situational self as “captur[ing] the notion of interdependency between consumption, context and self; and embody[ing] the idea of a ‘multi-layered self’ derived from a series of situations related to different roles and different products and brands” (Hogg and Savolainen 1998).

The definition of a ‘situation’ too, has scope to address many contexts in consumer research and can include a range of contexts including: physical surroundings, social surroundings, temporal perspective, task definition and antecedent states (Belk 1975b). Therefore, the definition of a situation, can be very wide (years) or very narrow (a single event or an hour) to allow it to function as a concept with a number of contexts or behavioural settings (Belk 1975a).

Additionally, the life situation of the consumer, which concerns their occupation, life stage, age or their priorities at a particular point in time (Banister and Hogg 2001) can be included in the definition of a situation. In keeping with life situation, individuals who are high self-monitors “who care about being consistent with the situation, have well-elaborated conceptions of prototypical persons in situations” (Markus and Wurf 1987:324) differ from low self-monitors. Similarly, in terms of interactions partners, the determination of the appropriateness of the partner and the comfort the person feels in different situations are relevant. Members of religions promoting a comprehensive teaching could be seen as ‘high self-monitors’ (Iyengar 2010), with those which follow a Prophet as a human prototype (Maududi 1960) and which particularly promote gender segregation as a fundamental consideration of partner appropriateness (Al-Qaradawi 1984) as Islam does, being good candidates for high self-monitoring. Related to this discussion is that on symbolic interaction, which will be considered next.

IV.3.3 Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is a theory developed in the field of sociology. The term ‘symbolic interactionism’ was coined by Herbert Blumer as a “label for a relatively distinctive approach to the study of human group life and human contact” (Blumer. 1969:1).

Blumer (1969) characterises symbolic interactionism as resting on three premises: 1) human beings act towards things on the basis of the meaning that the things have for them (physical objects, other humans, institutions, guiding ideals and categories such as friend or enemy); 2) the meaning of such things is derived from the social interaction people have with each other;

3) these meanings are handled in and modified through an interpretative process which the person uses in dealing with the things he encounters (Blumer 1969).

Added to the basic concept of self within symbolic interactionism theory, is the emphasis on social stimuli in situations (Schenk and Holman, 1980; Solomon, 1983).

McCall and Simon (1966:60–61) provide an illustrative framework:

- 1) Man is a planning animal – a thinker, who plans of many levels “not always verbally, but always conceptually”;
- 2) Things take on meaning in relation to plans – for example, a stick may be an assistant in a hill climb, or an assistant in a beating;
- 3) We act toward things in terms of the meaning for our plan of action – “the execution of our plan of action is contingent upon the meaning for that plan of every “thing” we encounter”;
- 4) Therefore, we must identify every “thing” we encounter and discover its meaning – “until we have made out the identity and meaning of a thing vis-à-vis our plans, we have no bearings; we cannot proceed”;
- 5) For social plans of action, these meanings must be consensual – if more than one person is involved the meaning of a ‘thing’ in the plan must be generally agreed;
- 6) The basic “thing” to be identified in any situation is the person himself – “Self qua character … is not alone a personal thing, but also a *social object*”.

In this way symbolic interactionism theory proposes that individuals formulate and then adjust their plans depending on the social situation and/or what is encountered in terms of “objects” and how those people and objects “fit” within the plan.

The differentiating aspect of symbolic interactionism theory from other theories of meaning, is the consideration of the second premise, the source of the meaning. For example, the source of meaning in realism theory comes from the thing itself (for example, a cow, a chair, a cloud), in psychological theories it comes “through a coalescence of psychological elements in the person”, but, for the symbolic interactionist “the meaning of a thing for a person grows out of the ways in which other persons act towards the person with regard to the thing” (Blumer 1969:4). This concept, where the meaning of the thing is defined by the ways in which other people interact with the person with regard to the thing, defines meaning as a social product. As such, the meaning is not fixed, as it is a process of interpretation by the people involved. The interpretation leads us to consider the ‘selves’ doing the interpreting.

Mead’s (1934) position was that individual selves are the products of social interaction and not existing preconditions of that interaction. Mead’s social theory of the self contrasts with individualistic theories of the self, where the self is superior to the social process, or has priority over it (Morris 1934:135). Symbolic interactionists, therefore, treat the self as the most important variable acting between the events of the social world and the consequent actions of the individual (Schenk and Holman, 1980:610). This gives rise to the ‘situational self’ and ‘social roles’ discussions above.

Mead was also influential in the development of role theory, where people are seen as acting out different roles when completing everyday tasks. For example, the same person can be a father, a runner, a carpenter, or an artist (Morris 1934). This theory was expanded by Goffman (1959) to include what he called “front-stage” and “back-stage” roles. Front-stage roles are for an audience, and are visible to it. These are the actions referred to by the term ‘impression management’. Back-stage roles are more relaxed and casual,

they are not intended for an audience. In consumption terms, front-stage roles and their trappings – material presentation of the self through clothes, movement, pitch of voice and the like – are a collection of symbols through which a person will interact with his/her world.

Both Mead (1934) and Goffman (1959) privileged society over the individual self. “Goffman seems to perceive the individual as nothing more than a cog responsible for the maintenance of the social world by playing his or her part. In fact he refers to the self as a ‘peg’ upon which “something of a collaborative nature will be hung for a time”. The ways for maintaining the image of the self do not reside in the image of the peg, but rather in the social establishments and demands surrounding the peg” (Salerno 2004:183).

IV.3.4 Significant Others

Another relevant concept within the ‘self’ literature considers the importance of a ‘significant other’ – defined as “an individual who is or has been deeply influential in one’s life, and in whom one is or once was emotionally invested, including members of one’s family-of-origin and people encountered outside of family relations” (Andersen et al. 2002). Adding a layer to the definition, is the concept of the influences of significant others on actors and the effects the presence of this/these person/s in a situation or context may have on the behaviour or responses of a person.

IV.3.5 Self-Construal

Markus and Kitayama (1991) introduced the idea that western cultures tended to see the self as separate from their social context – and had an ‘independent self-construal’. This ‘individuated’ self (Kagitçibasi 2007) emphasises autonomy and independence (Schwartz 2004), and is quite at odds

with the “Eastern” self which sees the self as a part of the broader social context – an ‘interdependent self-construal’ (Iyengar ; Kagitçibasi 1996; Nisbett 2003).

Kagitçibasi (2007) cites an example of moral thinking from the work of Miller, Bersoff and Harwood (1990) where American and Indian subjects’ moral reasoning was measured for hypothetical non-helping situations. They found that “for the Indian related self, the welfare of others (beneficence) is an integral aspect of moral code, invoking social responsibility. For the American separate self, however, moral code is limited to justice and individual freedom; it does not include beneficence” (p113).

Work by Harb and Smith (2008) develops the measurement of self-construal and proposes a four level inclusiveness model – the widest parameter of which is humanity, narrowing to collective (eg, religious groups), then relational (eg, family) and then focal/personal. It also has a horizontal and vertical dimension, relating to equality and hierarchy respectively, that affect only the collective and relational aspects of the model (given that equality and hierarchy are relationship concepts). This work is very important, because it links identity theories and theories of the self-concept into a useful conceptual framework. The samples used were university students in Britain, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon and the outcomes supported the interpersonal self-construal of the British students, and the interdependent self-construal of the Jordanians and Syrians (with the Lebanese in between). A notable finding was how strongly the Jordanian and Syrian students identified as part of the humanity self-construal.

The interdependent self, then, emphasises the wider group, whether that group is the in-group, the local community, the nation or all of humanity. “The main distinction drawn is between a self-contained, individuated, separate, independent self that is defined by clear boundaries from others and

a relational, interdependent self with fluid boundaries” (Kagitçibasi 2007:94). This distinction holds for both self-concept and social perception (perception of others). As Kagitçibasi (2007) further notes, this distinction may be more a dimension of variability than a distinct duality. This conception of the self is particularly relevant for ‘collective’ societies (Triandis et al. 1990) and those with a social focus (for example, Muslim societies). The next section considers sign and symbolism.

IV.4 Sign and Symbolism

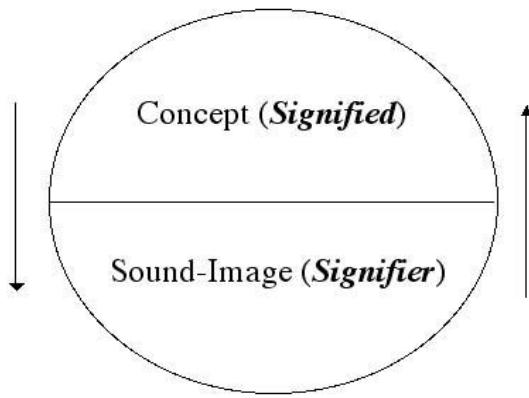
IV.4.1 Studies of Sign

In the late 19th century, two academics independently undertook research on the study of sign. Ferdinand de Saussure was a Swiss linguist, who developed a dyadic model of sign. He called this area ‘semiology’ – “a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life” with his own specialist field being just one branch (Saussure¹¹ 1983, 15–16).

“Semiotics” is an umbrella term now in common use to designate the “study of signs” (Chandler, 2007:1), or, as more widely described, “semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign” (Eco, 1976:7). Sign systems are made up of words, images, sounds, gestures and objects.

¹¹ ‘Saussure’ is the usual abbreviation (Chandler, 2002:5).

Figure IV-1: Saussure's Dyadic Model



Source 10: <http://cyberartsweb.org/cspace/theory/luco/Hypersign/Saussure.html>

Saussure's model consists of the *signifier* and the *signified* (Figure IV-1). Despite later usage of his work attributing material conditions to the signified, “for Saussure, both the signifier (the ‘sound pattern’) and the signified (‘the concept’) were purely ‘psychological’ … both were form rather than substance” (Chandler 2002:18). The *sign* is what results from the association of the signified and the signifier – that is, when the word ‘cat’ is spoken, the ‘concept’ of cat enters the persons mind, not an actual cat. Nor does an actual cat have to be seen to have the concept of ‘cat’ take place in the person’s mind.

Further, Saussure's model describes *signification*, or ‘what is signified’, as being clearly dependent “on the relationship between the two parts of the sign, the *value* of the sign is determined by the relationships between the sign and other signs within the system as a whole” (Saussure 1983:112). To illustrate, the importance in the positioning of a product is not the relationship of advertising signifiers to real-world referent, it is how the positioning differentiates the product (sign) from the other signs (products) within the system as a whole.

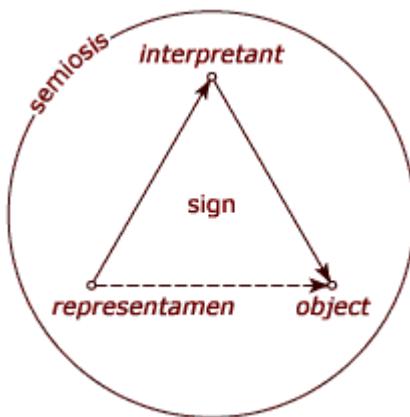
Saussure's focus was on linguistic signs and the development of his methodology, but 'semioticians'¹² now "include linguists, philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, literary aesthetic and media theorists, psychoanalysts and educationalists" (Chandler 2007:4). One may also add to this list, consumer researchers (see, for example, the work of 1982; Hirschman 1980; Hirschman 1993; Holbrook et al. 1998; Holman 1981; 1980; 1998; Mick 1986; Mick et al. 2004; Schenk and Holman 1980).

Around the same time as Saussure's work on signs, an American philosopher and chemist was working on what he called 'semiotics' or taxonomies of sign. Peirce¹³ (1867–1871/1984) was specifically looking to design an empirical model for theory of sign (Figure IV-2). His model consisted of three parts: the *representamen*, or the form the sign takes, which need not be material; the *interpretant*, or the sense made of a sign (not an interpreter); and the object, to which the sign refers. So, a sign (as *representamen*) is something which stands, to somebody, for something. This interaction between the *representamen*, the object and the *interpretant* is what Peirce designated 'semiosis'. In the Saussure model, there is no direct reference to an object, but the *representamen* is similar to the signifier and the *interpretant* to the signified. However, Peirce characterises the *interpretant* as being a sign itself in the mind of the interpreter (Peirce 1960–1966). This characterisation can be seen as going beyond Saussure's model which emphasised the sign in relation to other signs. Peirce also thought of semiosis as a dialogical process, (in contrast to Saussure's structure).

¹² This has become the umbrella term for all those who study sign.

¹³ Peirce's work on semiotics became well known after the publication of "The Meaning of Meaning" by Ogden and Nash in 1927. Peirce's own work on semiotics is scattered through his collected writings, which are referenced here (1960–1966), although the work on semiotics took place around 1867–1871.

Figure IV-2: Peirce's Triadic Model



Source 11:

http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/irvinem/theory/Semiotics_and_Communication.html

Since Peirce's (1867–1871/1984) work, there have been many variations on what is now commonly known as 'the semiotic triangle' (Figure 4.2). In Peirce's original model, the broken line across the bottom indicates that there is not necessarily any observable or direct relationship between the sign vehicle and the referent. This model allocates a place for objective reality, as Peirce argued that all experience was mediated by signs. He emphasised that "the dependence of the mode of existence of the thing represented upon the mode of this or that representation of it … is contrary to the nature of reality" (Peirce 1960–1966). An important consideration in Peirce's semiotic theory (1867–1871), and reflective of both his positivistic philosophy from his educational background and his objectives for the theory, is his taxonomy which details the relativity of signs. He was interested in signs being understood in a grouped, categorised way. Saussure on the other hand, was not interested in the organisation as such, but rather with the overall 'workings' of signs, their processes and systems.

Peirce's basic taxonomy, which has been widely used and quoted, especially in media and film studies (which favour the use of a direct object), consists of:

the *symptom* – the bodily signs;

the *signal* – the bodily emission (sound, odour etc) or movement;

the *index* – the abstractions (for example, the phrases, think over, think up, think out);

the *icon* – a sign that stimulates, replicates, reproduces, imitates or resembles properties of its referent in some way;

the *symbol* – all signs can be considered symbols in a generic sense, words in general are symbolic signs, but any signifier (object, sounds, figure) can be used symbolically (such as the cross for Christians) (Danesi, 2008:29–35).

These are the particularities which have entered the marketing discourse collectively as ‘symbols’ (Levy 1959).

IV.4.2 Symbolic Consumption

Symbols are a form of ‘silent’ or ‘non-verbal’ communication – a shorthand of meaning transfer (Chandler 2007; Danesi 1999; de Saussure 2006). There has been considerable interest in how symbols communicate class location or status in a society across many disciplines (Goffman 1951; McCracken 1990; Veblen 1899), with Levy introducing the concept to marketing in 1959. Many authors have written on how marketing acquires terms from other disciplines (Belk 1995a; Burton 2005) often without considering the context of the use of the terms or theory of that other discipline. Similarly, while Levy (1959) is widely quoted as saying, “Symbolic consumption refers to the tendency for consumers to focus on meanings beyond the tangible, physical characteristics of material objects” (for example, in Banister 2005). Levy also states, “Specialists in the study of communications, language formation and semantics make various distinctions between levels of meaning. It is customary to speak of signs, signals, symbols, gestures, and other more technical terms... it will suffice to say that in casual usage *symbol* is a general term for all instances where experience is mediated rather than direct; where an object, action, word, picture, or complex behaviour is understood to mean not only itself but also some other ideas or feelings” (Levy 1959:119).

From the publication of Levy's (1959) article onwards, symbolic consumption has been an area of interest in the marketing literature, the idea that products can "[serve] as a means of communication between the individual and his significant references" (Grubb and Grathwohl 1967:24). It is argued, "all consumption holds some kind of expressive meaning" (Wattanasuwan 2005). Dittmar (1992) makes clear that for products to succeed as communication symbols, the meaning must be socially shared and produced continually during social interactions.

Hirschman (1980) argued three issues needed addressing in the development of a symbolic consumption theory for marketing. Namely,

- 1) at what level is symbolic consumption systematised? Individual, group or society?
- 2) what are the major processes essential to the consumption of symbols and,
- 3) how controllable (by institutions/actors) are events affecting the consumption of symbols?.

She proposed that "a sociological perspective is required, the symbol production is of equal importance as symbolic consumption, and that control over symbol meaning may flow from both consumers and producers" (Hirschman 1980:6).

Symbolic consumption has been studied by consumer researchers over the intervening period (Lee 1990), although there has not been a unifying model of symbolic consumption developed. Symbolic consumption has been examined in relation to various products such as cars (Sowden and Grimmer 2009), clothing (Piacentini and Mailer 2004), and pop music (Hogg and Banister 2000) to name just a few, and also in regards to anti-consumption

(or symbolising anti-consumption) (Banister and Hogg 2004; Hogg et al. 2009).

To convey symbolic meaning, “a minimum of two conditions must be present – a symbol should be identified with a group, and within this group it should communicate similar meanings” (Banister and Hogg 2001:218). Symbolic consumption includes all social practices, from what is eaten to what is watched, and is especially easily illustrated in a visible, or publicly consumed good.

One method of ‘reading’ symbols used by people, especially members of a different group to the one a person is in themselves, is stereotyping. Stereotyping is a shorthand means of using visual objects, or descriptions of objects, to communicate ideas. These simplified conventions or formulae are developed and then repeated as messages in communication (Cunningham and Lab 1991). “Stereotypes tend to mask in-group diversity and individual differences and therefore may take the form of ‘pathologising’” (Kagitçibasi 2007:330) – a situation where negative attributions are made to groups despite evidence that they are untrue.

The idea of ‘pathologising’ emphasises the requirement for the meaning to be shared, and raises the question, if the meaning is not shared, does the item still have symbolic properties? The same symbol can have different meanings to different groups – take, for example, the school girl headscarf in France. “Is the sight of an Islamic head covering a threat to the foundations of the French Republic? The short answer is yes, it is – at least from the point of view of the French Republic” (Corrigan 2008:7).

This raises the objection to symbolic consumption where people are considered to buy using consumer goods as ‘signs’ instead of ‘things’. Campbell (Campbell 2007b) considers that regarding consumption as an activity where individuals employ the symbolic meanings attached to goods to

both construct and inform others of the lifestyle or identity and, hence, that consumption is best understood as a form of communication rests on 5 linked assumptions: “that in studying the activity of consumption sociologist should focus their attention, not on the instrumentality of good, but rather upon their symbolic meanings … that consumers themselves are well aware of these meanings (which are widely known and shared) and hence that the purchase and display of goods is oriented to these rather than the instrumental meanings of goods .. following on from this, that these activities should be regarded as being undertaken by consumers with the deliberate intention of ‘making use’ of these meanings, in the sense of employing them to ‘make statements’ or ‘send messages’ about themselves to others …the content of these ‘messages’ that consumers send to others … are principally to do with matters of identity (or ‘lifestyle’) … and, the reason for sending messages to others is to gain recognition or confirmation from them of the identity that consumers have selected” (p159–160).

The points raised by Campbell (1997) are relevant to this study, as they point out that there may be consideration other than horizontal (person to person) communication considerations in consumers choices of visibly consumed products. Additionally, both Elmessiri (2006) and Sennett (1974) argue that secularisation has replaced a societal belief in transcendence with immanence in the West. The impact of this has been that prior to the 19th century “appearances were put at a distance from the self, now they [are] believed to represent and even involuntarily reveal the self” (Tseelon 1991). Religiosity in marketing will be discussed in Section IV.8.2. The next section considers conspicuous consumption, a sub-set of symbolic consumption.

IV.4.3 Conspicuous Consumption

Marketing interest in symbolic consumption has also led to further consideration of Veblen's (1899) theory of conspicuous consumption. Products conspicuously consumed are consumed in public view – therefore exposed to societal evaluation. Traditionally, in the Veblen thesis, this was a class/status display. Related studies looked at the 'bandwagon' effect, (everyone jumps on the bandwagon, increasing demand for a good because everyone is buying it) (for example, Leibenstein 1950), the 'snob' effect (the good is consumed by a small elite) (for example, Amaldoss and Jain 2005) and the 'Veblen' effect (where sales increase with price increases) (for example, Corneo and Jeanne 1997). Recently, authors such as Chaudhuri and Majumdar (2006) have argued for an expanded definition that still acknowledges the ostentation, signalling, uniqueness and social conformity aspects of such consumption, but in an up-dated/post-modern way where the primary objects of consumption are seen as "image and experience" (p3). They argue that the basic theory of conspicuous consumption should be expanded to include "public consumption", "self –concept" and 'uniqueness' (p6). Using India as a context, Chaudhuri and Majumdar (2006) argue India is moving towards a "sign' or a post-modern social system" where a production orientation is giving way to a consumption orientation (Venkatesh 1994) and consumption patterns are largely guided by the "non-functional symbolic properties of products (brands)" (p12). The next section examines how meaning is made by signs and symbols.

IV.4.4 Making Meaning with Signs and Symbols

Mick (1986) undertook a comprehensive review of the study of symbolism in marketing starting from Gardner and Levy (1955), Levy (1959) and Levitt (1970) (p196). With specific relationship to consumer research however, the roots are in work done on the language of advertising (Holbrook, 1978); the

communicative properties of clothing (Holman, 1976, 1980, 1981, 1983) and Murray (1981; and under Kehret-Ward¹⁴, 1982; Kehret-Ward, Johnson and Louie, 1985); advertising and marketing communication (Sherry, 1985; McCracken and Pollay, 1981; Mick 1987) (Mick, 1986:201–204).

Holbrook, Holman and Murray (married name Kehret-Ward) were all doing their doctoral work at the same time. Holbrook (1975) referred extensively to Morris (1938, 1946, 1964) (the follower of Mead and Peirce) and looked at how advertising copy could be manipulated to differ in both semantics and syntax (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1993:12). Holman's work (1976) was more centred on interpretive semiology, looking at the meaning of clothing and other aspects of the fashion system, which she extended to “regarding consumer products as symbols used to convey one's self-concept to members of various relevant reference groups, including oneself (Holman, 1981) (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1993:13).

Holbrook and Hirschman (1993), privileging Saussure, state “structuralism is predicated on the fact that all mythic modes of communication mirror the values and goals for the society using them” (p10). The structuralist perspective (Saussure's) “adopts a viewpoint that virtually any object, custom or artifact can be fruitfully studied in terms of its role in a signs process” (ibid, p10). In fact, Barthes (1972) claims “semiology … knows only one operation: reading, or deciphering” (p114). According to Holbrook and Hirschman (1993), “this is how it departs from [the dominant marketing] methodology (postmodern, naturalistic enquiry, humanism)” (p10).

The assignment of meaning to symbols, and how these meanings are shared and transferred, has been described by social construction theorists (McCracken 1990; Richins 1994; Rook 1985). Perceptions of the world come through socialisation and also through participation in shared activities.

¹⁴ Kehret-Ward is the married name of Murray.

Meanings of cultural symbols are shaped and reinforced in social exchanges, and people with similar enculturation experiences tend towards considerable similarity in the meanings they attach to these symbols (Richins 1994).

This emphasises the importance of the context of meaning, and how a shared context of meaning allows an easy understanding and comfort to members of a group or society (Tajfel 1982).

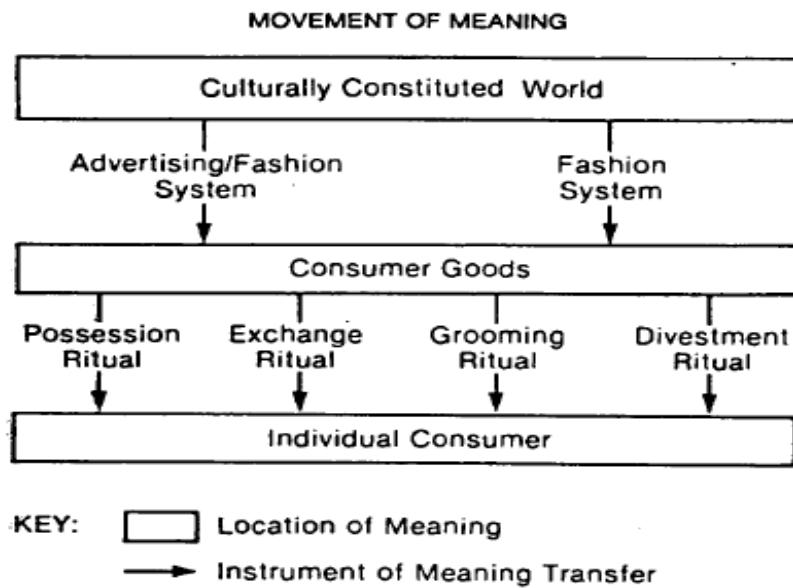
Richens (1994) discusses meaning further in terms of public and private meanings. Public meanings are assigned by observers, and private meanings by owners. She states value has been discussed in terms of self definition, communication and meanings as the sources of value. In her paper, she considers private and public meaning as distinct but related (p517), but views the meaning possessions hold for individuals as connotative in nature.

Mick et al (2004) provides a review of the “more intense interest in meaning” reflected by marketing and consumer researchers over the 20 years since his first review, as it relates to semiotics (p1). The authors highlight that there has been much work in the semiotic analysis of clothing “based steadfastly on the Saussurean principle that differentiation is the key to meaning, with codes representing, in part, the consumer’s knowledge of distinctions among signs for interpretations and usages in given contexts” (p42).

In a paper that reviews hundreds of contributions across several languages, Mick et al (2004) utilised a modified transfer of meaning model designed by McCracken (1986) to assess the articles reviewed, with some relevant adaptations as McCrackens model was originally designed to deal with clothing. McCracken’s (1986) model (Figure IV-3 below) places its “emphasis on the large and inevitable role of culture in marketing and meaning phenomena” (Mick et al, 2004:3). In the model, “cultural meaning is drawn from a culturally constituted world and transferred to a consumer

good. Then the meaning is drawn from the object and transferred to an individual consumer" (McCracken, 1986:71) – cultural meaning is located in three places, as indicated by the long boxes on the model, and there are two points of transfer – "world to good, and good to individual" (ibid).

Figure IV-3: McCracken's Meaning Transfer Model



Source 12: McCracken (1986)

While symbols without interpretation (Peirce, 1960–1966 Chandler, 2002) have no inherent meaning, Danesi (2008) allocated two additional dimensions of meaning (denotative and connotative). To these two more can be added: structural – the meanings given by the formal grammatical structure of the code, and contextual – the meanings we get from the context surrounding the sign (Berlo, 1960).

Firat (1987) relates the meanings of products to the life pattern or lifestyle of the individual, in this he agrees with Levy (1981) that product meaning is not independent of an overall lifestyle. Firat (1987) states, "even consumption items in the categories of food and clothing can become such representatives if they possess certain characteristics that make them an integrated component of a distinct life pattern" (p342). Similarly, the concept of

‘product constellations’ or groups of products representing ‘The American Dream’ (Dholakia and Levy, 1987:437), or it’s cultural counterpart in, for example, Zinder Provence, Niger (Arnould, 1989) can reflect meaning. These are a core set of products that make up the consumption standard (Dholakia and Levy, 1987:42), these societal standards may be culturally mandatory, rather than strictly desired (Wittmayer, Schulz and Mittelstaedt, 1994). The idea of the product constellations making up the set group such as the one outlined by Dholakia and Levy (1987) “to be able to own your own home, nicely furnished and two cars. It means to be able to travel and to be a member of local clubs” (p437), can also be extended to more localised situations, such as that of the clothing code for a bank interview as illustrated by Danesi (2008), “he should wear a white or blue, long-sleeved shirt, with no designs on it, with a suitable tie … he should wear a grey or blue jacket with matching pants, and, finally, … he should wear black shoes, preferably with shoelaces” (p158).

The idea of culturally mandated or acceptable ‘sets’ of products on a larger or smaller scale, has it’s definition in the cultural context and it’s explanation in the socio-economic history of the society under study. As McCracken (1986) states, “Cultural categories of time, space, nature and person make up the vast body of categories, creating a system of distinctions that organises the phenomenal world. Each culture establishes its own special vision of the world, thus rendering the understandings and rules appropriate to one cultural context preposterously inappropriate in another” (1986:72).

It is obvious that the allocation of meaning, the ‘reading of the code’ (McCracken and Roth 1989) takes place in a context of shared meaning, and this context is fluid over time (Wattanasuwan 2005). The context, then, defines the meaning and explains how some symbols can mean one thing in one place and one thing in another.

Sociological theories, because they deal with groups within their societal structures (Lee 1990) have a greater chance of developing culturally universal properties (Belk 1978) than individuated psychological or economic theories. McCracken (1988) supports this position, with regard to his work (and model). Fundamentally lacking in such advanced models as McCracken's however, is the consideration of the transcendent and its place in the societies under study. Even considerations of the 'collective' suffer from considering the human as a 'one-dimension interactor'. Therefore, symbolic interactionism theory considers the context and the group that lives in it, but it does not consider human motives within a two-dimensional paradigm (considering the persons vertical relationship to God), it considers human religion as it is reflected in the interactions a person has with other people (horizontal relationships). As has been discussed in Chapter 3, this is a dimension missing from the models when applied to Muslim societies.

IV.4.5 Summary

This first part of Chapter IV has considered theories relevant to this study on self and identity, and signs and meaning. It has highlighted aspects of these theories that are particularly relevant to 'collective' societies and aspects that may prove less applicable. The next section will look at the body of literature on clothing and dress.

IV.5 Clothing and Dress

The first 'issue' of clothing, is what it is and how it is referred to in the literature. There are a large number of names for that with which we cover our bare bodies, but for the purposes of this study, the terms clothing and dress will be used to refer to the clothing upon one's body specifically, with mention of other adornment (tattoos, jewellery, make-up, accessories) included where relevant. Kaiser (1997) differentiates between clothing as

“any tangible or material object connected to the human body” and dress (as a noun), “the total arrangement of all outwardly detectible modifications of the body itself and all material objects added to it” (p4). In this way, clothing can be understood as components, while dress is the overall ‘outfit’.

This study looks only at the presentation of the self into a scene of ‘public consumption’, so the main focus of the study is the material covering of the body, with mention of earrings or make-up if it is visible (and relevant). Eicher (1995) does draw our attention, though, to the sub-set of ‘fashion’ within the study of clothing. For the purposes of this study, fashion will be considered as a synonym for ‘en vogue’ or ‘new season styles’ – a short-term choice regarding dressing the body that may reflect a changing identity or simply minor adjustments to an identity firmly in place and constant. Fashion is especially relevant and targeted to women, and has been the subject of much disdain (Veblen 1894). Even though mass fashion is clearly mainly designed by men, for women, and may be a symbol of female shame rather than pride for its waste, reductionism and conformity (Gilman 2002; Jeffreys 2005) it is often seen as amplifying individuality and uniqueness and, as such, at a consumer level fashion also contributes to communication (McCraken 1988).

Dress has been studied intensively in the field of clothing and textiles in terms of its texture, material properties and vestimentary systems as well as its social and communications functions, and it is from that field that the bulk of literature comes (Hamilton 1987; 1991; Hamilton and Hamilton 1989; Laing and Eicher 1983; Nagasawa et al. 1991; Rabolt and Forney 1989; Roach-Higgins and Eicher 1992). It has also been studied as part of fields such as anthropology (Miller 1998), sociology (for example, Slater 2003; Turner 1994), history (Fox and Lears 1983), communications studies (Rosenfeld and Plax, 1977) and, more recently, marketing – specifically in terms of fashion marketing (Jensen and Ostergaard 1998; O'Cass 2001; O'Cass 2004), and

symbolic consumption (Crane et al. 2004; Manrai et al. 2001; Olsen 1995; 2005; 2007; Sandıkçı and Ger 2001; 2002) .

For clothing symbols to be meaningful, it is not necessary for them to indicate status. Dress can also symbolise changes in societal values and attitudes. “In Western societies mass fashion, through its symbols, functions in a culturally revealing and meaningful way, and fashionable goods are often the bearers of cultural meaning. Fashion, therefore, is an important force in maintaining and preserving the values of culture, and in reflecting changes in society (Cunningham and Lab 1991; McCracken 1990).

As stated by Roach and Eicher (1973), clothing reflects individual or group identity (such as gender, social role, occupational role, economic status, political belief or allegiances), or identifies cultural ritual and rites of passage (such as marriage or religious beliefs and entertainments) shared by members of society.

Clothing, like other material objects, can be used to help give concrete cultural meaning to people, they can be used as the media through which cultural ideas can flow and to substantiate how we like to order our cultural principles such as our values, beliefs and ideas when we view the world. In this way, dress is part of culture, which “may be defined as the way of life, with shared abilities, habits, beliefs and customs of a people or social group. It is the entire complex of learned behaviours, transmitted to subsequent generations in an ever changing, cumulative, dynamic way” (Cunningham and Lab 1991).

IV.5.1 Dress in Europe

The representation of oneself though dress has paralleled other developments such as the availability and cost of materials in the western

world. Dress has divided people along class lines throughout European history and it is accepted that dress is a symbolic form of status. As well as being a class marker, dress is also a gender marker. In this section the symbolism of dress will be discussed within a historical context.

From the 14th century until the 18th century, there was an enormous expansion of trade and this contributed to the emergence of a middle class in urban areas, able to buy the now more reasonably priced materials for their clothing. By the second half of the 14th century the shape of clothing began to change and, despite the introduction of sumptuary laws restricting clothing practices (Braudel 1973), by the 16th century the rich could only distinguish themselves by speed of new style adoption, rather than form. The cycle became, new styles bought by the rich, after some time these styles were adopted by the poor in inferior materials and, once the style ‘trickled down’ to the poor, the rich moved to the next style (McCraken 1988; Simmel 1904/1957).

The modernist period began with the industrial revolution, beginning at the end of the 18th century. The impact of the industrial revolution was immense and touched all parts of life. “The industrial revolution created the city, the mass society, and anonymity, as well as a distinction between public and private zones unknown in the Middle Ages. This separation between the public and the private, in turn, created a distinction between private self and public personae, and a need to keep the private self secret” (Tseëlon 1992:3). Another important change began where work created the order rather than lineage. At this stage, uniforms were introduced to reflect rank, and dress came to reflect time of day (daywear, eveningwear), type of activity (work, rest), type of occasion (formal or informal), gender – and even individual mood. This ‘coming together’ of people in proximal and sartorial aspects required another way of showing their divisions. The method became ‘social

‘cues’ – the knowledge of suitable manner, language and style of dress – separating the ‘in’ from the ‘out’ (Williams 1982).

Since the 1960’s – a period Tseëlon (1992) calls ‘post-modernism’ – the rejection of tradition, relaxation of norms and emphasis on individual diversity and variability of styles has resulted in a confusion about what particular styles mean.

The historical pattern outlined above can be seen in the ‘newly emerging’ economies of Europe such as Turkey (Chaudhuri and Majumdar 2006; Sandıkçı and Ger 2005; Sandıkçı and Ger 2007). “The postmodernist movement which has prevailed since the 1960’s has been characterised by placing the individual above social norms, and reflecting the fragmentation of the self” (Tseëlon 1991). The question is, how much of this is relevant for the sample under study? Tseëlon (1991) notes, that “the conceptions of privacy referred to … are very much Protestant, Liberal and Anglo-Saxon where privacy is identified with individualism” (p115). As has been discussed, the definition of privacy is a central issue in this study.

IV.5.2 Clothing Function

Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860–1935) identified 5 main purposes for “the phenomena in clothing: protection, warmth, decoration, modesty and symbolism” (Gilman 2002:7). For the purposes of this discussion, these will be grouped into protection (including warmth), modesty, decoration and symbolism.

IV.5.2.1 Protection

There have been a number of explanations for clothing as protection from the elements. Obviously, clothing protects the skin from the cold and the sun. It can also protect the skin from being scratched by plant-life or bitten by insects (Horn 1968). There has also been an attribution to “psychic or magical protection” (Kaiser 1997:18) by anthropologists and psychologists, especially with regard to ornaments.

Figure IV-4: Clothing as Protection from the Elements

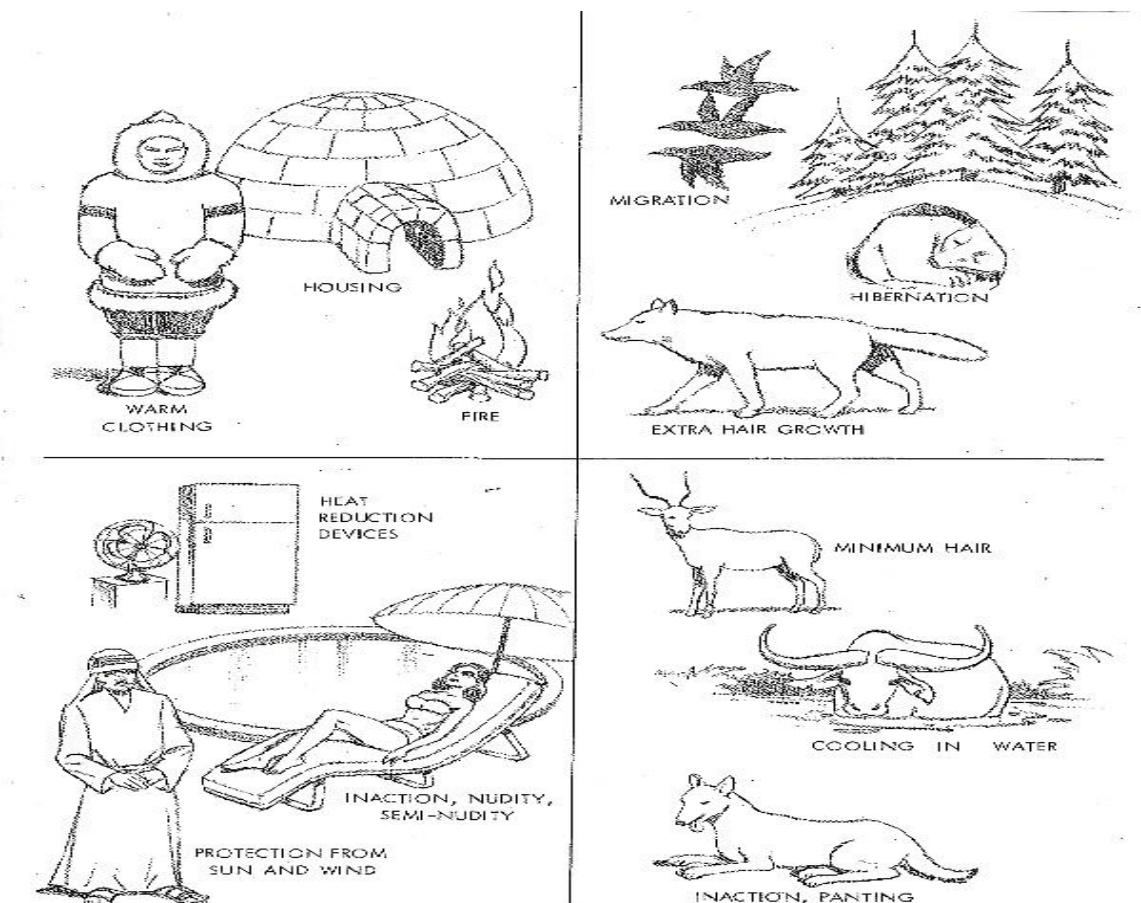


Fig. 4-3. Unlike lower animals, man can opt to be naked or to cover or shelter himself for survival in his climate. (From James F. Downs and Hermann K. Bleibtreu, *Human Variation: An Introduction to Physical Anthropology*, 1969. Glencoe Press of California.)

Source 13: Roach and Eicher, 1973:56

Roach and Eicher (1973) have a diagram (Figure IV-4 above) showing how it is possible for humans and other creatures to manage their environments through covering, or not.

IV.5.2.2 Modesty

The attribution of the category of ‘modesty’ has been particularly susceptible to cultural imperialism. Originally derived from a “Christian, Biblical explanation of clothing … the theory was based on the idea that morality was dependent upon modesty, as expressed through the concealment of the human body” (Horn 1968). However, the theory was extrapolated to explain the “primitive” nature of naked peoples, as opposed to the “civilised” (clothed) western people. While Kasier (1997) considers this ‘food for thought’ and a product of the ‘times in which [these theories] were developed’ (p15) they are a further representation of the hegemony of the English language academic literature and the assumed universalism of perspective which is still in evidence today (Burton 2009b; Sardar et al. 1993).

Related to the functional category of clothing as a form of modesty, is its opposite – clothing as a form of immodesty, exhibitionism, or display – “herein lies the paradox of clothing: that it is not used to cover, but to attract” (Horn 1968:4).

While there are a number of examples of revelation of body parts for attractive purposes – the Japanese kimono’s display of the back of a woman’s neck is one – few accept the idea that immodesty is a reason for wearing clothing.

IV.5.2.3 Adornment

The decorative or ornamental aspects of clothing use have also suffered from the assumption that decorating the body was a step on the road to becoming clothed (in the case of the naked) and moving from being ‘primitive’ to ‘civilised’. Few peoples do not engage in adornment of the body from body

painting to tattooing, using makeup and piercing, shaving, plucking and plastic surgery (Horn 1968), and what constitutes ‘beauty’ is strongly culturally mandated (Jeffreys 2005; Wolf 1990).

IV.5.2.4 Symbolism

The symbolic function of clothing is the focus of this thesis. Clothing has been used to symbolise various meanings. As mentioned earlier, it is an easy medium through which to indicate class or status (conspicuously consumed). It can be a clear marker of gender, culture, religion or occupational class (uniforms). It can also act as a vehicle of self-expression – a means to communicate to the world at large who you are and what you value.

Clothing as a symboliser of class or status is well documented and has received much attention from this perspective since Veblen’s seminar study of this kind of consumption (conspicuous consumption by the leisure classes) was published in 1899. In keeping with this thesis, clothing can clearly symbolise status through the conspicuous wearing of items that are scarce or very expensive and so exclude the majority of consumers. This consideration of symbolism focuses on the economic, but throughout history there have been other marks of ‘distinction’ – often linked to either office (as uniforms) or occupation (Christian religious leaders, hunters in Paleolithic times, Greeks and Romans of rank) (Danesi and Perron 1999; Horn 1968; Tseelon 1992).

Uniforms, are an example of how the ‘self’ is overwhelmed by the state or organisation to which it is linked. Uniforms have an intended symbolism of “sameness, unity, regulation, hierarchy, status and roles” (Craik 2005:7). They stand ‘for’ something, representing something other than the person wearing them, often, leaving nothing of the ‘self’ of the wearer noticeable, the body is subordinated to the dress (Roach and Eicher 1973). This description

has been given to Muslim women's dress (Wilson 2007), which has been represented as submerging, uniform and monolithic (Mohanty 2003), and forms much of the framework for the position that the clothing removes agency from women, making their bodies sites of male occupation/canvases of reigning patriarchy.

In order to understand the symbolic functions of costume we must learn to read them as signs in the same way we learn to read and understand languages (Bogastyrev 1971:93). Obviously, this requires some shared culture, but also some agreed culture – some symbols are read one way by one group and quite another way by another. An obvious example is the headscarf in the West (Tarlo 2007a). Take, for example, Gilman's comments on modesty (related to the early 20th century), "modesty in dress, as applied to that of women, consists in giving the most conspicuous prominence of femininity ...Why should it be "modest" for a woman to exhibit neck, arms and shoulders, back and bosom, and immodest to go bathing without stockings, no one so much as attempts to explain" (Gilman 2002:10). This also illustrates the argument for a difference between communication of appearance and communication as a language function, which will be discussed below.

Clothes express the attitude of the wearer and therefore mirror the aesthetic, moral and nationalistic ideals of those who wear them. McCracken, commented on the importance of any clothing (or goods) that significance is found largely in their ability to carry and communicate meaning, rather than in their utilitarian and characteristic commercial value (1988:71). According to McCracken, the meaning of material objects travels from the cultural world of the object, and then from the object to individuals who select and buy them. In Western societies the transfer of meaning from the cultural world to commercial objects is facilitated by advertising and the fashion system, with meaning being transferred from the object to individuals through rituals, such

as gift-giving, or in possession, grooming and divestment practices (McCracken 1988:72). The ideas and meanings associated with clothing may be transmitted visually or through a written description. Whichever way is chosen, the clothing conveys its message through signs and symbols, and the meanings generated by clothing symbols relate directly to the function of clothing in a culture. The communicative function, however, may be different from language and Stone (1962) (below) suggests just that. According to McCracken, clothing does not function like a language as a communicative system (1988:57) and he considers the power of material culture may lie in its instrumental function in constructing and ordering the self and the world (1988:68). From this perspective, objects in our lives, and particularly clothing, are seen as essential to our identity in society.

Dress can express (consciously or unconsciously) our personal attitudes, values, beliefs and emotions. Whether we draw on stereotypes to know a person or reflect on the clothing in a painting, we often “know” (or think we know) a person through their dress. The idea of appropriateness in dress is important for both expressions of self and to show group affiliation and so the idea of appropriateness – and who/which group defines it – is very relevant. Gilman (2002) has defined an aspect of appropriateness for society in her time (above), but stereotyping – usually used to classify minorities in a majority culture or people of another culture in another place – is also common.

We can look for meaning through the use of stereotypes. Stereotyping can be considered a shorthand means of using visual objects, or descriptions of objects, to communicate ideas. Stereotypes are simplified conventions which we develop and then repeat as a message in communication. The image immediately tells us what or who the person or object is. Thus, stereotyping relies on visual image, of which dress is an integral part, to relay a message. Using clothing in this shorthand convention communicates a wide range of

ideas in a manner that words cannot, more quickly, and to a wider audience. The way in which clothing communicates, as in stereotypes, can also be explained in terms of symbolic interaction theory developed by George Herbert Mead. This theory (as outlined in the previous section) states that we respond to clothing symbols on the basis of the meanings they have for us. For communication to occur, the meanings must be shared by both the wearer and the viewer. The information that is communicated is then directly related to the function or purposes of the clothing as shared by the interactors (Cunningham and Lab 1991). This proves how important context is in achieving successful communication between people (Holland 2004).

Dress has a certain priority over verbal discourse in communicating identity since it ordinarily sets the stage for subsequent verbal communication and gender definitions are often made obvious by the body (Roach-Higgins and Eicher 1979). Stone (1962) suggests that “*Appearance*, then, is that phase of the social transaction which establishes identifications of the participants. As such, it may be distinguished from *discourse*, which we conceptualise as the text of the transaction – *what* the parties are discussing. Appearance and discourse are two distinct dimensions of the social transaction” (p88–91). Whilst appearance is commonly communicated by such non-verbal symbols as gestures, grooming, clothing, location, and the like; discourse, is usually verbal symbolism. “Yet the relationship between the kinds of symbolism and the dimensions of the transaction is not at all invariant. Appearance and discourse are in fact dialectic processes going on whenever people converse or correspond…One may…appear without entering the discourse. As Veblen suggested, we may escape our discursive obligations, but not our clothed appearances” (Stone 1962:88–92).

Dress serves many purposes, one of which is to make intangible meanings concrete (Bronner 1983; Fernea and Fernea 1995). Dress can express one’s attitudes in an observable way (Hamilton, 1991). It can also be a badge or a

symbol that serves to reflect extrinsically intangible meanings held within oneself (Holman, 1980). Due to this ability of dress, “elements of dress, like other cultural symbols … have the ability to represent, express, and facilitate a variety of complementary and/or anti-ethical goals at the same time” (Hamilton 1991:31). It can be used as a symbol of agreement with the norms and values of a cultural group (Cunningham and Lab 1991:2), where this agreement is visually demonstrated by wearing dress consistent with the culture. There is another purpose of dress – especially ethnic dress – that is to identify oneself as being a member of a group. Dress, as a “cultural symbol” (Hamilton 1991:31), serves as an indicator of a group membership. Holman (1980) identified this as the emblematic function of apparel, which consisted of three criterion, it must be visible, variable and personalisable. With this group identification comes a sense of belonging (Crane et al. 2004).

Clearly, dress is very important. It is often through its meaning that we show our sense of self and our place in our society, it becomes an indicator of our values and beliefs. Clothing is used to communicate individuality, personality, group and familial associations, occupations and status. “We often expect others to be able to understand what we are communicating through these sartorial devices, and we in turn read the clothing messages sent by others. Indeed we share ideas about the meanings of these clothes, in a silent and ever changing vocabulary of meaning” (Cunningham and Lab 1991:2).

The ability for clothing to successfully communicate meaning, depends on several factors, one of which is context (which is “vital”) (Holland 2004:16) and one of which is shared world view (or understanding of the world view of the sender of the message/the wearer) (Eckhardt and Michael 1998; Holman 1981; Nisbett 2003). An important element of this is the difference between the verbal and the symbolic (Cunningham and Lab 1991) and the difference between self and identity (Stone 1962). Identity gives the what and where of

the person in social terms, “when one has an identity, he is *situated* – that is, cast in the shape of a social object by the acknowledgement of his participation or membership in social relations. One’s identity is established when others *place* him as a social object by assigning to him the same worlds of identity that he appropriates for himself or *announces*. It is in the coincidence of placements and announcements that identity becomes a meaning of the self, and often such placements and announcements are aroused by apparent symbols such as uniforms … *Identity is intrinsically associated with all the joinings and departures of social life*” (Stone 1962:90). With this in mind, so-called collectivist societies, which privilege relationships, exemplify and amplify an identity, rather than an individualist view of the self as an “island”, and have a world-view that sees continuum rather than dichotomy (Assadi 2003; Essoo and Dibb 2004; Nisbett 2003).

The difference between modesty and adornment perhaps best describes the essential difference in the purpose of publicly consumed clothing from an Islamic and Western viewpoint. As has been articulated previously clothing in Islam is for public modesty, and a private setting is the location of adornment – the location of beauty is juxtaposed – in the West, publicly consumed clothing has increasing come to be a displaying of the self (Tseelon 1992). In the next section literature on Muslim women’s clothing will be discussed.

IV.5.3 Muslim Women’s Clothing

Muslim women’s publicly consumed clothing has been the subject of a large body of literature across the social sciences. These studies can, in the main, be divided into three groups: they either look at Muslim women in environments where they are a minority in the population (a ‘them’ group) and usually the researcher is part of the ‘us’ group or they look at Muslim women in environments where they are a majority in the population (an ‘us’ group) and usually the researcher is part of the ‘them’ group; and/or they

concentrate only on the women's head covering in absence of consideration of a context that extends past the woman's head, denying, even, her other clothing. This is exacerbated by the fact that although many of the papers are about Muslim women and their clothing, few feature the voices of Muslim women (Bullock 2002; Read and Bartkowski 2000).

A recent example of the study of Muslim women is that by Duits and van Zoonen (2006) who compare headscarves and g-strings in an attempt to show "they are part of a single hegemonic discourse about women's sexuality .. [where] girls are denied their agency and autonomy" (p104). They make some very good points. These include the headscarf debates in Europe have focused more on the choices of young girls than the choices of women, and that the debates have centred on a locational crossroads of public and private – the school (Corrigan 2008). Further, the debates have ignored the religious reason for wearing the headscarf entirely, while "reading other meanings ... gender inequality, multicultural excess and the undermining of the separation of church and state" (p109) (see also Heath 2008), and also denying entirely any decency discourse which enters debate on the g-string, but not on the headscarf. Duits and van Zoonen (2006) go so far as to say "the headscarf is implicitly constructed as *too* decent" (p111). The meanings Duits and van Zoonen (2006) refer to are prevalent throughout the literature – both academic and mass media – and are commonly cited as a problem by Muslim writers (Kahf 2008; Masood 2008).

Besides denials of agency, a focus on politics is also prevalent, (Ahmed 1992; Hirschmann 1997; MacLeod 1992; Sandıkçı and Ger 2005; Sandıkçı and Ger 2007; Sandıkçı and Ger 2002; Westerlund 1996). In Turkey, Egypt and Iran in particular, there is much discussion of Muslim women's head-covering as primarily a political act (MacLeod 1992; Sakaranaho 2008; Sandıkçı and Ger 2005).

“It is accepted in feminist and feminist film theory that the beauty system transforms the woman into a spectacle to be consumed by men. It is through her looks, it is argued, that her value as a person and as a mate is established … by internalising the male gaze, the woman participates in the ideology of her own subordination … finally, a structuralist dichotomy between public and private assumes that to be invisible is to be powerless. In the distinction between the man “who is doing the gaze” and the woman who is the object of the gaze, there is an assumption that one position, that on the onlooker, is inherently more powerful than the other” (Tseelon 1991). This summary of the feminist conception of the male gaze is important because covered Muslim women, especially those with a face cover, are seen as literally invisible (Mattson 2008), presumably because their face cannot be seen; those with a simple head-cover are also seen as invisible, but in a framework of inferiority (Franks 2000).

In contrast, ““Just because my veil blocks your senses, doesn’t mean it blocks mine. The veil is no blindfold. I see out; you are one whose vision is obstructed… Is that why you find the veil frustrating from your male-identified viewpoint?” (Kahf 2008:29). As has been discussed in Chapter 3, the Islamic position on head-covering is quite different to the way it is often represented.

IV.6 Consumer Research

Burton (2009b) is very specific in her criticism of consumer research with regard to its ‘whiteness’. That criticism is relevant to this study, given the hegemony of the models available and their ‘lack of fit’ with the context, and even the worldview, of the sample under study.

Burton (2009b) states that whiteness theorists consider the concept of whiteness as being created by politics and culture, and that it is based on a racial hierarchy in relation to physical, social or cultural characteristics. This is most clearly illustrated in consumer research by the over-emphasis on white consumers, and the assumption that they are the most lucrative consumers, which can be “considered a legacy for the long-standing historical orientation emphasising non-white inferiority” (2009b:172). This is an important criticism of consumer research, which does not reflect in its publication preferences an interest in the socio-historical backgrounding of either samples/contexts, or itself as a discipline (Burton 2001; Burton 2005).

Burton (2009b) further proposes examining ‘whiteness’ in consumer research by looking at “how whiteness structures our views of what is *appropriate scholarship*”; how this examination and reconsideration could help the practitioner audience of academic research by helping them to “employ a *wider frame of reference*”; to acknowledge that “whiteness is a *distinct epistemological standpoint*” which needs to be examined and acknowledged in the structuring and framing of research; that whiteness also provides a “distinctive *methodological approach*”, especially with regard to the privileging of English language in research – conducting research in English when the sample is not fluent/native, only interviewing those who can speak English well, not offering the opportunity for respondents to speak freely and fully by using their own language etc – and “understand[ing] the different dimensions of whiteness and the forms it can take in marketing and consumer research”.

In terms of the development of consumer research then, at present there are three main research streams – Behavioural Decision Theory (BDT), Judgement and Decision Making (IDM) and Consumer Culture Theory (CCT). BDT and IDM are viewed as ‘quantitative’ and CCT as ‘qualitative’ {Belk, 2009 #611}. According to the Consumer Culture Theory (CCT)

Organization website the CCT “approach basically considers consumption and its involved choices and practices as social and cultural phenomena – as opposed to psychological or purely economic phenomena” (<http://www.consumerculturetheory.org/about>). Or, in the words of two leading contributors to the field, CCT considers culture “as a dynamic network of boundary spanning connectivities” (Arnould and Thompson 2007) where “exchanges are considered rhizomatic and networked” (Arnould and Thompson 2007:12).

CCT’s four main programme areas, as delineated in Arnould and Thompson’s (2005) review, are: socio-historic patterning of consumption, consumer identity projects, marketplace cultures and mass-mediated ideologies and consumers interpretive strategies. The theme most relevant to this study is “marketplace cultures” as that area “aligns CCT with anthropological studies on material culture and the role of everyday rituals in creating social and familial solidarity” (Arnould and Thompson 2007:8). Although, bearing in mind the considerations outlined above, the ‘fit’ is not perfect.

CCT has been criticised on a number of levels. These include the charges that “this research stream is defined by the use of qualitative methods; that its findings are context-bound and a-theoretical; and that it only investigates entertaining esoterica that lack practical relevance” (Arnould and Thompson 2007).

CCT has also been criticised on the basis that it privileges consumer agency to a point seen as untenable (Firat and Tadajewski 2010). Specifically, in relation to the most relevant area for this study, Bradshaw and Holbrook (2008) state, “the emphasis still remains on consumers’ active engagement or indeed on their having an interpretive strategy up their sleeve for the purposes of developing resistant or oppositional readings … [it takes] the

starting point that consumers are not really manipulated” (p39). This provides support for both a focus on context – as required for critical case methodology – and also reveals a clear area of contribution this study can make, into a style of living much under-represented in the literature (Hirschman 1993; Nawal 2009) and into a construction of reality much misunderstood (Davies 1988; Moisander et al. 2009). “For insightful analysis, the consumer must be framed within her or his historical-cultural context” (Burton 2009b:10; Firat and Tadajewski 2010; Flyvbjerg 2001). In so saying, religiosity and marketing will be considered next.

IV.6.1 Religiosity and marketing

Religiosity is a controversial term, and a difficult thing to measure. Sander (1997) summarises the issue by stating, “religiosity is a matter of kind as well as of degree, and which conditions should be suggested as necessary and/or sufficient conations for somebody to satisfy being considered a [genuinely] religious person, is to a large extent, a matter of choice and, of course, of what is most suitable given a specific interest or research task” (p189). For the purposes of this study, religiosity is considered religious commitment, “the level of a follower’s commitment towards his or her religion. For example, a Muslim follower who offers prayers five times a day would be considered to have higher religiosity levels than a Muslim follower who (1) does not pray or (2) does not pray regularly” (Nawal 2009). Religious commitment has been variously operationalised as church attendance, importance of religion, confidence in religious values and self-reported religiosity (Essoo and Dibb 2004; La Barbera and Guerhan 1997; Rokeach 1969a; Rokeach 1969b; Sood and Nasu 1995; Wilkes et al. 1986), in the mainly Christian studies carried out.

Within the marketing literature there have been several papers on consumer decision making and religiosity (Delener 1990 using Allport's (1954) scale; Fam et al. 2004), while most of the literature describes studies that are both American and Christian in context (Kennedy and Lawton 1998; Longenecker et al. 2004; Singhapakdi et al. 2000), there has been a link shown between highly religious people and ethical sensitivity (Esso and Dibb 2004; Gibbs et al 2007; Waller and Fam 2000). Esso and Dibb (2004) state, "religious influences are either direct in terms of influence of religious codes on conduct on personal choice or indirect relating to religions influence on attitude and value formation", (Harrell (1986) in Esso and Dibb, 2004:684). Therefore, differences in the culture of the sample, are significant as Assadi (2003), considering religion using Maslow's (1954) hierarchy noted, "Anglo-Saxon culture values self-actualisation and individuality above all else" (p7) (see also Inglehart 2006; Schwartz 2004), and these values are not prevalent in the culture of the sample under study.

Delener (1990) states, "Religious values should also be connected to the media behaviour of the consumer. By knowing the preferences of large market segments, marketing strategist would be better able to select media mixes and appeals that would reach and enhance important values of consumers. Assessment of the religious value orientations would allow the identification of new product opportunities and their positions on existing products" (p35). This position is reinforced by the work of Fam and Waller (Fam and Waller 2006; Fam et al. 2004; Waller and Fam 2000; Waller et al. 2005) into Asian responses to the advertising of controversial products.

In terms of applications involving Muslim populations, there have been the Fam and Waller studies mentioned above concerning likeable advertising/offensive products (Fam and Waller 2006; Fam et al. 2004; Waller and Fam 2000; Waller et al. 2005), several studies on ethics including consideration of socio-economic, political and religious factors (Cornwell et

al. 2005), the implications of different conceptions of ethics for international marketers (Rice 1999), and for advertising to Muslim audiences (Rice and Al-Mossawi 2002), the relationship between the different religions and their consumer behaviour (Assadi 2003; Essoo and Dibb 2004), the role of materialism, religiosity and demographics in subjective well-being (La Barbera and Guerhan 1997), and the relationship between religions and markets (Mittelstaedt 2002).

There has been some criticism on the work done, especially in terms of the marketing ethics literature, where authors “have had relatively little concern for the epistemological position of the ideology and have chosen and shown how pragmatic methods can be used to “colour” an existing neo-liberal capitalist approach with a gloss of Islam. This approach is transparent to the faithful because it concentrates on the surface value and leads to misleading ways of seeing the world. To offer an alternative requires an understanding of the phenomenological ontology of being a Muslim and how that constructs the nature of being” (Gibbs and Ilkan 2008:166).

Throughout this thesis, this concern has been echoed, and it is an issue this study hopes to contribute to addressing.

IV.6.2 Dress and marketing

There have been four main streams of study of dress in marketing. These have been the involvement and fashion stream (Auty and Elliott 1998; Goldsmith et al. 1999; Goldsmith and Stith 1992; O'Cass 2001; O'Cass 2004), the ethnicity/ethnic dress stream (Crane et al. 2004; Hamilton 1987; Hamilton and Hamilton 1989), the new markets stream – representing developing consumer economies such as Russia (Ruane 1995) and Turkey (Sandıkçı and Ger 2005; Sandıkçı and Ger 2007; Sandıkçı and Ger 2001; Sandıkçı and Ger

2002; Sandıkçı and Ger 2010) and the “green” or sustainable stream (Meyer 2001; Phau and Ong 2007). Lately another stream, linked to the new markets stream, is that concerning youth clothing consumption practice and expectation (de Klerk and Tselepis 2007; Koksal 2007) , and related to this, an interest in on-line shopping behaviour (Kim and Kim 2004; Nantel 2004; O’Cass and Fenech 2003). Across these themes clothing symbolism studies can be found (Piacentini and Mailer 2004). The linkage between these streams and the new markets stream exists because many of the new markets are in economies either opening to imports when they have been formerly closed, and/or societies where a consuming class is emerging in some numbers which was not in evidence before. Usually these countries (for example, Turkey, India and China), which have been known as “developing”, have a large proportion of their population in the younger age groups (30 and below), in contrast to the late-capitalist economies of the West, whose populations are skewed towards older age groups (40+).

One stream in consumer research on clothing has begun to address Muslim women’s dress – previously the domain of anthropologists, sociologists, feminist and textile studies (Hamilton 1987; Hamilton 1991; Hamilton and Hamilton 1989; Laing and Eicher 1983; Rugh 1986; Rabolt and Forney 1989; Roach-Higgins and Eicher 1979; Yamani 1996). Two streams are especially relevant here, because they cover Muslim women’s clothing, and relate to majority Muslim population contexts – Turkey (Sandıkçı and Ger 2005; 2007; 2001; 2002; 2010) and the Middle East – Qatar and UAE (Sobh et al. forthcoming, 2010), and Lebanon and Kuwait (Witkowski 1999).

Sandıkçı and Ger (2005; 2007; 2001; 2010), highlight the unique aspects of that society. Turkey differs from the context under study in this thesis in that it has institutionalised secularism despite the fact that the population is 99% Muslim. That is, it has reformulated the society and its laws to reflect a secular framework by design under their former leader Mustafa Kemal

(1881–1938). “With the establishment of the republic in 1923, Turkey set her direction, unconditionally to the West” (Sandıkçı and Ger 2002:465). Further, “An entire generation was educated thinking religion to be some evil and irrational force of mere orthodoxy and blind tradition” (Sandıkçı and Ger 2001:146). At the first “genuinely free elections in 1950” (Sandıkçı and Ger 2001:146), the people voted in a government which started making the first steps back to a reinstatement of Islam in the daily life of Turks, leading to a society fragmented on ‘identity’ lines (Sandıkçı and Ger 2002). Another consideration is language. The Turks speak Turkish, a language they share with no other Muslim nation. These factors combine to make the Turkish society complex – “sit[ting] problematically between the West and the East” (Sandıkçı and Ger 2002:465).

Sandıkçı and Ger (2005; 2007; 2001; 2010), examine the particular ‘consumptionscape’ of Turkey, specifically a newly emerging middle class who are motivated by Islam (2001; 2002) and have becoming an economic force since the industrialisation, and subsequent opening up, of Turkey to the global market (2002). Throughout the papers, the authors consider how identity is being shaped and re-shaped in modern Turkey through the wearing of the headscarf and ‘covering’ fashion there, resulting in a fragmented society and an “Islamist” group which are becoming bourgeois in their consumption practice (2001). Linking the headcovering and ‘political Islam’ (2001), they speak of a tension between the covered and the non-covered members of Turkish society (2005; 2007) and the response of the covered Turks in looking for beautiful dressing styles that will not alienate or repel their non-covered sisters (2005). Sandıkçı and Ger (2005) detail the material aspects of covering styles in Turkey and present unique aspects of scarf-styling – for example, the use of “bonnets with a pad stitched into the rear end. The bun of hair or padding elevates the back of the head, which according to many women make the head and the face appear beautiful and

the scarf fold shapely and smoothly" (Sandıkçı and Ger 2005:16). (Please see Figure IV-5 below for an example of the style described).

Figure IV-5: Turkish Scarf Style



Source 14: Researcher's Photograph, Istanbul, 2005

Sandıkçı and Ger provide a detailed socio-historical background to the Turkish context which is wonderfully informative, and shows the value of this depth of description (Flyvbjerg 2001; 2005). However, this series (Sandıkçı and Ger, 2005; 2007; 2001; 2010), shows a very limited referencing of sources of Islamic teaching relevant to the topic, resulting in a repetition of misplaced criterion such as the application of Western feminist paradigms to explain straightforward situations within Islam such as the use of 'faceless' models in 'covered' print advertising. For example, "the face is either camouflaged by a black or white space .. or chopped out altogether...As Kilicbay and Binark (2002) point out, the absence the face might be related to the worry about concealing female sexuality in Islam" (2007:197) . This is likely not the reason, as a quick review of Islamic teaching would reveal. Sandıkçı and Ger also think Kilicbay and Binark (2002) are incorrect, "we

believe there is a more disturbing aspect to this absence: it represents a deliberate act of silencing that erases subjectivity altogether and ascribes anonymity to women. The women depicted in these advertisements appear to be freestanding objects, isolated from their environment. The abstraction of the social and material world constructs the female as *any* female. Given the lack of representational cues, the audience can neither decode nor imagine the model's socio-economic background, lifestyle, and aspirations; the pious woman remains unidentifiable" (2005:197). Depiction of the creation by other than the Creator is prohibited in Islam as "The Messenger of Allah (peace be on him) then said, The makers of such figures will be punished and will be told, 'Bring to life what you have created" (Al-Qaradawi 1984) Hence, Muslim people generally do not have pictures/photos on their walls, sometimes the faces are removed from children's toys, and any hint of idolatry is avoided.

Similarly, the position of Makhlouf (1979:38) cited in Sandıkçı and Ger (2005:63), that "the [Islamic] modesty code rests on two contradictory assumptions: that 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 males and the integration of the group", is not presented with any reference to Islamic teaching. Within the latter there is no conflict, covering clothing is, firstly, the wearer's religious duty for herself, and secondly, her contribution to a peaceful society where she won't be harassed, rather than be a source of trouble (Roald 2001) [Qur'an 33:59] (emphasis added). The explanation of this verse has been covered in some detail in Chapter III.

It should be further noted that Makhlouf (1979) in considering Yemen is referencing Papanek (1973) who is considering women who live in Purda in South Asia. Roald (2001) has noted that the Indian sub-continent was part of the British Empire for a very long time and there is a high probability of influences from the coloniser's religious tradition as "the notion of women as temptresses has been pervasive in much Christian thinking" (p125).

Similarly, Papanek (1973) herself discusses the influence of Hinduism on this belief (p317). In this way, “cultural context is relevant” (Sandıkçı and Ger 2005) .

Sandıkçı and Ger also equalise religion as a motivator with politics for the sartorial choices of their respondents (2005:78), therefore explaining their classification of “Islamists” as “those who are politically religious, to distinguish it from secular Muslims who are believers without an affiliation to political Islam” and “Secularists” as “including both practicing or non-practicing Muslims and non-believers” which, at face value, are odd – that is, grouping the practicing Muslims with the non-believers.

The respondents Sandıkçı and Ger (2005) quote spend a great deal of time choosing and putting on their chosen clothing, especially headscarves. They note that “the actual practice of [covering] ultimately becomes a subjective experience” (p64) which it must be, as Turkey does not require Islamic clothing to be worn by law and, hence, the wearing of it is like any other clothing choice anyone in the world makes within the constraints of his or her access.

Despite these reservations, Sandıkçı and Ger’s work highlights a number of things relevant to this study.

The next papers to be considered use samples based in Qatar, the UAE, Kuwait and Lebanon, which are all Arab countries. Qatar, the UAE and Kuwait are predominantly Sunni Muslim, with the UAE having a small Shi'a minority and Kuwait a larger one, while Lebanon is almost 60% Muslim (mixed) and 40% Christian (mixed) (CIA-World-Fact-Book). Qatari, Emerati and Kuwaiti people share a similar culture, both groups descending from nomadic Bedouin Arabs, and both have ‘petrodollars’ (GDP per capita in Qatar is \$121,700, in

UAE is \$42,000, in Kuwait is \$54,100 and in Lebanon is \$13,100) (CIA-World-Fact-Book) .

Witkowski (1999), in his study of a Lebanese and Kuwaiti sample repeats several points that occur throughout the literature. For example, “there has been much debate among Muslims over just what constitutes appropriate veiling” (p1), “veiling … can symbolise opposition to the dominant, secular political establishment” (see Sandıkçı and Ger, above) and “*hijab* is frequently less expensive than western clothing” (Turner 1994) . Utilising stimulus pictures and a survey method to test three hypotheses he generated based on “published reports”, Witkowski concluded his hypotheses were all supported. However, all three hypotheses, which were designed to relate to religiosity (measured as prayer, Mosque attendance, fasting and pilgrimage) were based on confused assumptions about Islam and its teachings – for example, “Religiosity will be positively associated with wearing Islamic dress and negatively associated with wearing cosmetics and jewellery” was supported with “the [religiosity] index strongly associated both with the frequency of wearing *hijab*, with the extent of the body covered, and with not wearing cosmetics (eye makeup, lipstick, perfume) and jewellery” (emphasis in original, p2). The public presentational aspects of women dress in Islam have been covered above, and it is clear that the index does not bear a relationship to the teaching. In terms of the Witkowski’s index, Mosque attendance for women is not compulsory, or even required, in Islam. Further, the style of body covering is a cultural measure – the Kuwaitis are Gulf Arabs, they wear covering outergarments – and, while Islam forbids women wearing perfume in public, there is no such limitation on jewellery, unless it is noisy. Witwowski’s (1999) paper also repeats much that is assumed universal without reference to the Islamic teaching. Therefore the premises behind his three hypotheses are flawed and so give misleading results. It is problematic that this type of design, and the much repeated points above, are so prevalent

in the literature. These problems are addressed in other parts of this document.

For the purposes of this study, recent work by Sobh, Belk and Gressel (Sobh et al. forthcoming, 2010; Sobh et al. 2008) is most relevant within consumer research. Using stimulus pictures, the authors interviewed business school students in Qatar and the UAE in English (the language of instruction), with an Arabic option for the Qatari's based on the abilities of the researcher there. Young Qatari women, while wearing the traditional black *abaya* and *shayla* (overdress and head-covering), “enact Western style identities in uncontrolled spaces and settings such as in women-only gatherings and gender segregated spaces where tensions between traditional and modern, modesty and vanity are alleviated”, (p8) highlighting the use of abaya as a kind of coat, removed on arrival at the destination and also illustrating the financial ability of this Qatari sample to participate in “global youth culture” (p4) owing to their petrodollar purchasing power. The authors conclude that “regardless of their degree of religiosity, Islam was used by all informants to justify their clothing practices whether vain, modest or somewhere between the two extremes” (p8). This work highlights the identity conflict these young wealthy mobile consumers face between Muslim culture and globalised culture.

IV.6.3 Summary

This section has examined the literature streams within marketing relevant to this thesis – consumer research, consumer culture theory, religiosity and dress. It has highlighted areas where a useful contribution can be made through a study of an ‘other’ with a comprehensive research design.

IV.7 Summary

This chapter has reviewed the relevant literature on identity, the self, signs and symbolism, clothing and dress and consumer research. It has brought these literature streams together to situate the study. The review has clearly shown that there is scope within the identity and self literature for further application to a ‘collective’ society. It has shown that sign meaning is assigned by interpreters and so further emphasised the importance of context and its clear delineation in academic study is. It has shown how clothing is symbolic and in what ways and also how Muslim women’s clothing has been approached. It has focused on relevant marketing studies and show how these have been framed and undertaken, as well as what can be learned from them.

IV.8 Literature Review Summary

The literature review in Chapter III has sought to meet Flyvbjerg’s (2001) critical case requirements by providing a broad and comprehensive situation/context for this study. It has offered a brief introduction to the Islamic world view (additional details can be found in the Appendix), to the wider academic environment and to the Moroccan empirical context. Chapter IV has narrowed the focus considerably to targeted and familiar literature – identity and the self, sign and symbolism, clothing and dress and the specific consumer research areas relevant to this study. The aim of this combined review, and its structure, has been to provide a comprehensive background to the method used and data collected, discussed and analysed in the following two chapters.

V. Methodology

V.1 Introduction

This study has the overall objective of investigating the meaning of the wearing, or not wearing, of clothing which meets the Islamic guidelines for publicly consumed dress by young Moroccan Muslim women in (their home country/native) context.

The research protocol was informed by an academic (western) literature review, Islamic teaching literature review, contextual telephone interviews, and the personal, lived experience of the researcher.

This study was designed to explore Muslim women's clothing choices in a context where wearing Islamic clothing was normal or unremarkable to investigate the meanings for the wearers. To adequately examine that, a "rich description" (Geertz 1973) needed to be built up, hence a triangulated design was generated. Young women were chosen as they are accepted as "change leaders" (Schwartz and Bilsky 1990) in societies and so a group of nine women, half *hijab* wearing and half non-*hijab* wearing and their mothers were selected for this study. The data collected in the field (Morocco) consisted primarily of in-depth interviews, but with support from questionnaire responses, observations and field notes. The details of the procedures that were followed and why, are given below. It is important to make this position clear with the thematic analysis approach taken to the textual data (Braun and Clarke 2006) and the overall philosophical position the thesis takes as outlined in Chapter 2.

V.2 Research Design

The research design consisted of several stages. Background interviews were first conducted by telephone with both a Moroccan tailor and a Moroccan woman who is an active consumer of clothing to ascertain how, where and by which method people in Morocco shopped, and how tailors responded, directed and informed choices made in terms of clothing consumption. As has been outlined, in Morocco tailors are prevalent in the marketplace and tailor-made *jellabas* are favoured over ready-made for style, quality and fit.

Based on this background information, a review of the relevant literature, especially that from consumer research, (for example, Ger and Sandikci 2006; Holman 1981; 1980; 1998; McCracken 1985a; 1987; 1990; 1989; 1995; 1988; 1985b; 1989; 2005; 2007; Sandıkçı and Ger 2001; 2002; 2010; Schenk and Holman 1980) but also the wider social science literature (for example, Ahmed 1992; Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981; Dittmar 1992; Göle 1997; Haddad and Smith 2002; Said 1978; Turner 1994; Ware 1993) and the researcher's experience, a group of interview 'topics' or 'themes' was developed so that, as data was gathered, an iterative process would see ideas added to the themes or adjustments made to them as appropriate. Consistent with the critical case method, data was sought which would allow meaning to be explained and understood (Flyvbjerg 2001). Necessary to this method is a 'deep' consideration of the empirical context and its culture and in keeping with this 'richness' (Geertz 1973) in-depth interviews were proposed. Eighteen interviews were undertaken providing nine full pairs of interviews (one with the daughter, one with the mother), with the primary focus being on the daughters. As mentioned, young people, particularly the late teen/early 20's age group, are seen as "value change leaders" by values theorists (Schwartz and Bilsky 1990). The mothers provided very rich background information not just on their own daughter, but also Moroccan society as a

whole, and were very forthcoming and co-operative interviewees. This thesis reports on the data collected from eighteen interviews conducted in Morocco over a three month period, with additional background provided by the interviewees questionnaire responses, participant-observations, field notes and researcher reflection.

V.2.1 Background Interviews

Based on a general reading of the literature on Muslim women's clothing and the researcher's experience two wide-ranging background interviews were held via telephone before leaving New Zealand for the field and were pivotal in developing the interview protocol and questionnaire.

Firstly, a tailor known to the translator was called to discuss the clothing market in Morocco. The discussion was very broad, for example, how people bought, when, who used his services, constraints on the market (supply), who bought what and where.

Secondly, a young "active shopper" was interviewed on the same topic. This discussion was also broad and yielded an exceptional amount of very different information from the first interview with the tailor.

The purpose of the interviews was to gain a general background of the field as there is a paucity of information on Muslim women's clothing conducted in Muslim countries in the literature and almost nothing on Morocco in general published in English. The eventuating interview protocol and questionnaire informed by these initial interviews are detailed below.

V.2.2 Interview Protocol

The interviews were conducted using a feminist interviewing technique (Coates 1996). This approach is based around the style of ‘women’s talk’, where interlocutors ‘jump’ from topic to topic and back again as when having a natural conversation. A more natural, informal style allows interviewees to complete or clarify responses made earlier in the conversation and so allows a richer and more accurate representation of the topic under consideration. There is ample research detailing differences in women’s and men’s communication styles (Brugman 1995; Coates 1996; Holland 2004), and differences are also evident in Moroccan communication (Kharraki 2001). Another benefit of this approach was that it offset the formality and unfamiliarity with the situation and distracted interviewees from the recording devices.

The themes explored in the interviews were whether the respondents liked clothes, and/or were interested in them; what they looked for when shopping (styles, colours which would always/never be considered); examples, aspects (fashion, femininity etc); where they buy (ordinary/special occasions); sources of clothing ideas; their thinking about how they look; what they are trying to ‘say’ with their clothing; what they think others see when looking at them. Sandıkçı and Ger’s work (2005; 2007; 2001; 2002; 2010) particularly, has contributed to interview questions on political aspects of dress, conflict between covered and non-covered women and the use of makeup and perfume in publicly consumed clothing.

The interviews themselves informed each other and so were iterative in the sense that the ‘flow’ of the interview followed the ideas/interest of the respondent and each interview informed the next, giving ideas of strands to pursue for more insightful information.

The interviews were recorded using two digital recorders and digital photographs were taken of the respondents self-selected “favourite” clothing. As has been mentioned, photography of living things can be a sensitive issue for Muslim populations (Ger and Sandikci 2006), given the teaching (please see Appendix) but photographs of objects raise no objections.

The interviewees were asked about publicly consumed dress and privately consumed dress in order to identify where each respondents’ delineation between the two was located and to provide richness and depth.

V.2.3 Questionnaire Development and Design

A questionnaire to evaluate belief and practice was sought which could be replicated easily in Morocco, but, despite several attempts to find a suitable ‘questionnaire in use’, none was located. Eventually, a questionnaire was developed informed by the work of Harb (2005) and Billiet (2003) (both developed for mixed affiliation samples) Wilkes et al. (1986) and Sander (1997). The questionnaire was designed for Muslim respondents, and it would not be suitable for use with mixed groups or respondents affiliated with another religion. The questionnaire consisted of two main parts. The first part asked about the respondents’ Islamic belief (*iman*) and practice (*ibada*), and was followed by some demographic information.

The decision to measure religious commitment to Islam in addition to the in-depth interview schedule was due to cause-effect attributions in the literature that appeared inconsistent with the researcher’s experience. A specific point relevant to this study is the assumption that Muslim women who do not wear hijab are either not committed to Islam, or are hostile to it (Nasr 2009) and that women who do wear hijab are primarily politically motivated (rather than religiously) (Ahmad 1980; Sandikci and Ger 2005) or, in the

specific case of women who come to Islam rather than are born into it as passive, submissive, weak and malleable (Franks 2000). As Islam is the basis of Muslim culture (Kazmi 2005; Said 1998), the impact of a respondents commitment to the religion is significant. Several studies have suggested level of religious commitment has an effect on consumer decision making (for example, Delener 1990; Delener 1994) as discussed in the Chapter IV. As Islam is a “holistic” or “comprehensive” *deen* (“way of life”) (Maududi 1960; Qutb 2001; Roald 2001), there are distinct opportunities to measure belief and practice. In Islam there are clear and universal “points” which denote belief (denial of belief in them denotes unbelief [Ar. *kufr* ie, “to cover/conceal” – (Maududi 1960:25); “*kufr* is the rejection of the oneness of Allah (*tawhid*)” (Mohamed 1996)] and Islam also has requirements of practice which can be measured, such as adherence to, and belief in, the pillars of Islam and articles of faith. Utilising these in-built requirements, the questionnaire comprised sixteen questions to measure the religiosity of interviewees.

As Islam has a legal framework, there are certain concepts that are basic to belief and certain basic practices to perform. In this way, a formal measurement of belief and practice is reasonably easy to make with a Muslim sample. Some questions were also included based on the reference questionnaires mentioned above, these included more personalised questions and utilised techniques designed to reverse code and evaluate the views of others. These types of structures, while common in Western questionnaire structure were considered to be a possible source of some conflict with Islamic teaching for respondents. However, as the methods are in wide use in the West, they were included. The specific questions were: ‘do you describe yourself as a religious person? yes/no’; ‘would your friends/family describe you as a “good Muslim”? no/only some of them/some of them/a lot of them/most of them/all of them’. These questions could cause conflict for Muslim respondents based on the idea of boasting/pride in the first example and attributing/passing judgement on others in the second. The interviewees

were asked to answer freely and frankly to try to offset this. Following these questions, basic demographic information was gathered.

The last section of the questionnaire utilised a broader ‘projection’. Two clothing sets were photographed flat (to avoid using a model – as discussed in connection with the work of Sandkci and Ger (2007) in Chapter IV) by a professional photographer. The first set consisted of a Moroccan style hooded jellaba and a square scarf, folded into a triangle in the way it is most commonly worn in Morocco. The second set consisted of a style of Muslim dress from the Indian sub-continent, referred to as a ‘Pakistani’ in Morocco (mid-thigh length tunic and pants) but with Moroccan traditional embroidery and the same square scarf. The respondents were asked six questions: ‘how would you describe these clothes?’, ‘in your view, what sort of woman would wear these clothes?/ how would you describe her personality?’, ‘how do you imagine she spends her spare time?’, ‘in your view, what does she like? what does she dislike?’, ‘do you know women like her? do you admire her/them? why/why not?’ and ‘would you like to be like her?’.

The questionnaire was generated in English and translated into Standard Arabic (*fus’ha*). The first version was then given to a group of native Arabic speakers to complete. This group came from different countries, so while they all used Standard Arabic in their written language, their dialects of spoken Arabic differed. In this way, the very best translation was thought to be able to be generated. Once they had completed the questionnaire, they discussed the question meanings and how they had answered with the translator, highlighting any questions they had. The questionnaire was adjusted and given to another small group to complete. The same process was repeated. The first group were also asked to comment on the second version of the translation. This process was repeated a third time, until a clear translation was achieved.

The purpose of giving the interviewees the questionnaire was to provide another data stream to complement the interview data, photographs and field notes.

The Appendix details these concepts from the Islamic teaching. Additionally, a copy of the questionnaire (in English) is included.

V.3 Research Procedures

V.3.1 Site and Sample Selection

The study used purposeful criterion-based selection characterised as “a strategy in which particular settings, persons or activities are selected deliberately in order to provide information that can’t be gotten as well from other choices” (Maxwell 2005:88). This method of sampling, which can be classified as a form of ‘convenience sampling’, was considered most appropriate for this study due to issues of access to interviewees (Tuncalp 1988), importance of personal knowledge and reputation in the local culture. This was due to the Arab preference for personal relationships (Torstrick and Faier 2009).

The intention was to carefully choose respondents from whom the most information relevant to this study’s purpose could be gathered. Schwartz (1990) recommends using young people, especially students, to ‘take the pulse’ of a society, believing them to be ‘bringers of change’ (Schwartz and Bilsky 1990; Schwartz and Bilsky 1987). Nine young women were approached for in-depth interviews. As Maxwell (2005, p 89) notes, “there are situations where convenience sampling is the only feasible way to proceed – for example, attempting to learn about a group that is difficult to gain access to” (Weiss 1994:24–29). As discussed, access to Muslim women, and their mothers, in their homes is very difficult (Tuncalp, 1988), especially when the translator is male (Sobh et al. forthcoming, 2010). To combat this difficulty,

both family and personal contacts were used. This made the research teams family reputation an important component in securing interviews and allowing access to people's homes. With the family being from the area, having extended family living in the area and a 'solid' family by reputation, connections could be used effectively to engender trust and, hence, secure agreement. The criterion for individual candidates was their public dress, ranging from those who were fully compliant with the Islamic guidelines on dress – the fully covered and with a headscarf to those dressing with little reference to the Islamic guidelines. They also had to be 'young' (of university age or high school age), be willing to be interviewed and have a living mother who was also willing to be interviewed. There is a paucity of literature on Muslim women in which the women 'speak' themselves (Bullock 2002; Burton 2009b; Read and Bartkowski 2000), rather than are 'spoken about'. This study intended to 'give voice' to these few Moroccan Muslim women, both the young and the middle-aged. As Schwartz (1987;1990) states, young people exist in a dynamic world, so changes in a cultural context should be most visible and explicit with them. The mothers, on the other hand, represent the 'settled' society, so their thoughts will give both insight to their daughters and also the wider society. In this way, the volume of interview data that this opportunity for access presented, was both useful for triangulation and consistent with the requirement of the critical case methodology, which emphasises a rich, deep and detailed understanding and explanation of the context the study is situated in (Flyvbjerg 2001). Possible candidates for interviews were suggested by friends and family and approached until an even distribution had accepted along the continuum of clothing adherence. It should be stated that no one who was approached refused. In fact, they welcomed a chance to speak for themselves. These respondents also completed the questionnaire. Of particular relevance to this study and this context, is the issue of gaining access to the homes necessary to reach the women interviewees.

V.3.2 Data Collection

The data collection period was April–June 2005, on-site in Oujda, Morocco. The research ‘team’ consisted of the researcher and the translator. Typically, candidates were informally contacted through friends or siblings and, once acceptance agreed, an appointment was made for the researcher and translator to go to the interviewee’s home.

All of the interviews took place in the interviewees’ homes, most frequently in the formal sitting room (*salon*). To have the interviews in another location would have been, for the majority of respondents, impossible. The home is the sanctuary of women (Davis 1983; Hessini 1994), a place where they can relax and be tranquil. It is also a ‘protected’ environment, making issues of trust and access so very important to the study. In the case of the younger women, it may have been possible to interview the university students on campus, but for the high school students and the mothers, the only location that would be suitable would be the home. It is the necessity of this access, into the home, that Tuncalp (1988) described as limiting the access so severely to Muslim women for non-Muslims in some cases, and to men in general. Women do not usually go to cafes and other locations where one might conduct an interview would be seen as unsuitable (for example, a restaurant). Further, this situation, known to the researcher as a result of her experience, was useful in obtaining photographs of the favourite clothing and also in taking general field notes around attire at the interview as well as noting socio-economic indicators.

As discussed in the Chapter III, Muslims have a ‘hospitality’ culture from Islamic teaching and this was in evidence at all interviews. The interviews began with the translator reading an introduction to the study and advising interviewees of their rights to withdraw participation or decline to answer at

any time. He also clarified his position as 'mouthpiece' for the research, and stressed his lack of involvement in the study outside of that role.

At this point, the prepared statement was read, "I'm doing research on women and clothing, so I'd like to talk to you about clothing – particularly your clothing. It's a conversational format so feel free to ask me any questions you like at any time and to add anything to earlier answers when they occur to you." The statement was designed to be informal and 'chatty' to relax interviewees. The fact that the interviews focused on publicly consumed dress was carefully reiterated reinforcing that the study focused on the public, the known, visible consumption of respondents. Following discussion of this statement, the interviewee was asked if recording was acceptable¹⁵ (in all cases it was) and two digital recording devices were prepared.

The questions and responses were translated immediately so the researcher retained control of the direction of the interview and posed relevant questions as they came to her throughout the discussions. This also enabled the researcher to continuously clarify her understanding of interviewee responses (please see Appendix for examples).

Once the interview themes were exhausted, the researcher asked the interviewee if she would like to add anything to her answers or ask any questions of the researcher. Then the interviewee was asked to show the researcher her favourite clothing, the clothing she liked best, and to explain why. She was asked if this clothing could be photographed and, if consent was given, it was. Only one main interviewee did not want to show her clothing, or have it photographed (her mother also declined). The

¹⁵ Some women consider their voice 'awra', or at least private to, and a part of, them. However, Yusuf Qaradawi, the President of the International Union for Muslim Scholars is quoted as saying, "The promotion of negativity against women has led many "scholars" and "imams" to make the unsubstantiated ruling about female speech. They claim that women should lower their voice to whispers or even silence except when she speaks to her husband, her guardian or other females. The female act of communication has become to some a source of temptation and allure to the male. <http://www.jannah.org/sisters/qaradawi.html> (Accessed 4th August 2010)

photographed clothing was that used in both public and private settings as the private clothing provided a further comparison with the public and the other data for assessing clothing adherence.

After the interview was finished, the questionnaire was given to the respondent to complete. The mothers' interviews were conducted in exactly the same way. The interviews were separated, so that the mothers and daughters were not in the same room while their interviews were taking place. This was done to minimise social desirability bias or significant other influences, although it must be remembered that the interviews concerned publicly consumed artefacts and did not deal at all with the invisible or the private consumption practices of interviewees.

It should be noted that the interviewing process was far different from what is commonly described in textbooks. The interviews ranged in duration from 90 minutes to 4 hours and all were attended by people in addition to the interviewee. As the research team were known to a greater or lesser degree to the interviewees and/or their families, they were treated as guests, as would anyone coming into a Moroccan home. As the interviewees and their families knew that the researcher and translator had children, they were expected to bring the children to the house when the interview was conducted. Everyone had tea and some food before the interview began and shared personal information. The interviewees or their family members would ask about the children, the researchers parents and siblings, New Zealand, and anything else that was topical or polite conversation. Depending on how well the interviewee and/or the family knew the translator, this process could take some time to complete (catching up with the closer family and friends). Once this formality was completed, some of the family left the room so that the interview could take place. Often there would be interruptions due to guests arriving, people returning home from work/school/shopping, or sometimes even neighbours coming over to meet the research team. There

were also interruptions caused by the number of children in the house – including the researchers own! As this description shows, using a feminist interviewing technique is in keeping with the ‘style’ of the interviews including their location and the behaviour around them, and sets them apart from the interview style more common in the business literature. The suitability of the feminist format in terms of conversational flow and the ability it provided to address and re-address issues throughout the interviews was considered invaluable. This technique allowed wide-ranging conversation and revealed generous and sometimes surprising insights.

V.3.3 Data Analysis

Field notes were kept on the researchers’ impressions and observations, especially of the dress worn to the interview appointment. As explained in detail below, as the translator is both male and a non-*mahram* for the interviewees, the setting, although inside their home, is public according to Islamic teaching. On that basis, the interviewee’s clothing should have reflected that, depending on their level of implementation of the teaching in their clothing. The closed-ended questionnaire responses were recorded on a spreadsheet. The open-ended questions were translated and added to the spreadsheet. Following Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-point step-by-step guide the researcher 1) familiarised herself with the data by listening to all the recordings again and reviewing field notes, then had it professionally transcribed (the transcripts were the main form of textual data); 2) generated initial codes in response to items of interest within the data; these were fashion, religious commitment, religious knowledge, self-view, social context (emerging from the literature) and femininity, colours, gifts and market factors (emerging from the transcripts); 3) searched for themes (repeated patterns); 4) reviewed the themes (studying their relationship between codes, themes and levels of themes); 5) defined and named the themes (social aspects, religious aspects, life-stage aspects and personal choice aspects)

and 6) wrote up the themes (in Chapter VI). The photographs were kept with the relevant cases and the mothers interview data was used as background to both their own daughters transcripts and the society overall.

V.3.4 Ethical Considerations

There were a number of ethical considerations for this study, not least of which the need to address hegemonic issues in literature and thought. Ethical approval for this project was required and was granted in March 2005.

There was a need to explain to the Ethics Committee that the understanding of religion as a ‘private’ matter was not a universal perspective, and that discussion of, and about, religious matters is generally welcomed by Muslims in Muslim countries (and often outside them, too). Religious belief/commitment is expected in most Muslim countries and a declaration of secularism or atheism is often met with disbelief. Just as religious consumption could be considered public in that it extends to men’s and women’s publicly consumed clothing in many Muslim countries, it is also a favourite topic of conversation – the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed (s), stories from the Qur'an and Sunnah, discussion on recent *fatawa* (scholarly rulings) are regular themes. As Lawrence [of Arabia] (1917) noted: “Religious discussions will be frequent. Say what you like about your own side, and avoid criticism of theirs, unless you know that the point is external, when you may score heavily by proving it so. With the Bedu, Islam is so all-pervading an element that there is little religiosity, little fervour, and no regard for externals. Do not think from their conduct that they are careless. Their conviction of the truth of their faith, and its share in every act and thought and principle of their daily life is so intimate and intense as to be unconscious, unless roused by opposition. Their religion is as much a part of nature to them as is sleep or food” (Article #21: Lawrence 1917).

Ethical issues surrounding photography, an area of sensitivity for Muslim women, were offset by the fact that the clothing was photographed not the interviewee or the interviewee wearing the clothing (especially the private clothing). Knowledge of, and sensitivity to, the Moroccan culture and Islamic world view made ethical considerations more extensive (for example, considerations around recording and photography) but also more manageable (Patton 2002). Only one interviewee (and her mother) did not want to show her clothing or have it photographed. Photographs were considered important because the example used in this study is Muslim women's clothing, which has been chosen because it is a visible, publicly consumed, illustrative part of material culture. Similarly, photographs of respondents clothing provide 'evidence' in support or at odds with their questionnaire and interview responses.

V.4 Methodological Choices

Considerations of the strengths and weaknesses of a chosen methodology should be addressed in any research project. Patton, (2002), states, "In short, no absolute rules exist except perhaps this: Do your very best with your full intellect to fairly represent the data and communicate what the data reveal given the purpose of the study" (p433).

This study uses both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, and the overarching approach to the study is phronetic, so the perspective of relevance here is the one with which the data will be analysed (Burrell and Morgan 1979; Dul and Hak 2008).

Consistent with the different criteria demanded by social constructionism, Patton (2002:544) advises that the following should be addressed:

- subjectivity should be acknowledged (this takes into account ‘bias’, but also acknowledges that subjectivity gives rise to deep understanding);
- trustworthiness/rigour – considered by social constructionists to consist of credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability) and confirmability (objectivity);
- authenticity (reflexive consciousness);
- reflexivity and praxis (‘how one’s background and experience affects what one understands and how one acts in the world’);
- particularity (doing justice to the integrity of unique cases);
- enhanced and deepened understanding (*verstehen*);
- and, contributions to dialogue.

These considerations will be discussed below.

V.4.1 Validity and Reliability

“Validity in quantitative research depends on careful instrument construction to ensure the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. The instrument must then be administered in an appropriate, standardised manner according to prescribed procedures. The focus is on the measuring instrument – the test items, survey questions or other measurement tools. In qualitative enquiry, **the researcher is the instrument**” (emphasis in Patton 2002:566).

Maxwell (2005) points out that, “Validity is a goal rather than a product; it is never something that can be proven or taken for granted. Validity is also relative: it has to be assessed in relationship to the purposes and circumstances of the research, rather than being a context-independent property of methods or conclusions” (p105).

This study uses both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods in order to provide a triangulated approach to the case studies (Borjesson and Nilsson 2006). The questionnaire used for the first part of this study was piloted for both language and question comprehension several times (after each adjustment) amongst native Arabic speakers at the local mosque (test-retest).

Consideration of the challenges to the validity of the qualitative interviews, as it depends on the context and the researcher, are described in the following section.

V.4.2 Bias, Perspective and Reactivity

All people, and so all researchers, have biases (Maxwell 2005), and, as Patton (2002) notes above, it is essential that the credibility of researcher be examined by disclosure of any obvious bias (see also, Burrell and Morgan, 1979:xi); using reflexivity (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Patton, 2002) to counter its negative aspects as well as possible and by generally ‘trying one’s best’, as Patton outlines above.

However, analysis of the bias of the researcher is an important consideration in terms of the challenges to the validity it poses to the study overall. As Maxwell (2005) states, “it is impossible to deal with [validity issues] by eliminating the researcher’s theories, beliefs, and perceptual ‘lens’” (p108). It is fortunate then that Maxwell notes further that qualitative research, when multiple people are involved in a research project, is not deeply concerned with eliminating variance between researchers in what they bring to the study, but on understanding how a particular researcher’s values and expectation influence the study and avoiding possible negative consequences. Patton (2002:570) promotes “conscious and committed reflexivity” as a foil to research bias in any study.

Reflexivity, considering one's biases, and evaluating how they inform one's perspective and overall thinking, is critical to any research. However, experience is also important, and the perspective that brings. Flyvbjerg (2006) states, "Phronetic social scientists are highly aware of the importance of perspective, and see no neutral ground, no "view from nowhere", for their work. The "we" may be a group of social scientists or, more typically, a group including other actors as well. Phronetic social scientists are well aware that different groups typically have different world views and different interests, and that there exists no general principle by which all differences can be resolved. Thus *phronesis* gives us both a way to analyse relations of power, and to evaluate their results, in relation to specific groups and interests" (p40).

Patton (2002) advises "making the obvious obvious, the dubious obvious and the hidden obvious" (p480), and with that in mind, some further inter-woven aspects of the study should be addressed, in order to see how the study is being influenced by the researcher (Maxwell 2005:109) – the shared and unshared characteristics between interviewer and interviewee, including race of interviewer .

Rahika Parameswaran (2001), an Indian researcher, quoted in Patton (2002), noted that the young women she was interviewing might have been more open with a Western researcher "who might be seen as less likely to judge them based on cultural expectations of women's behaviour in Indian society" (p53). In the case of this study, it is possible that the participants could feel 'judged' by the researcher as she is a non-Arab, 'Westerner' – it is also possible that the opposite could occur. While the researcher shares a world-view with the participants given that she, too, is a Muslim, 'distance' is created between the participants and the researcher in a number of ways. The researcher is not local, not Arab, and not a good Arabic speaker –

therefore, she cannot follow the interchanges between translator and participant in ‘real time’, but must wait for the translation. In the case of the interviews, this creates a time delay. An advantage of that is that it allows for researcher clarification of her understanding and also allows the question to be re-phrased and re-asked if more information is required. In terms of the process for the interviews, this was their first interview, so the delay for translation/clarification was unlikely to prove stranger than the process of being interviewed overall. Given that the researcher shares a values framework with the interviewees the feeling of “distaste” Ger and Sandıkçı (2006:512, 516) felt for their Muslim respondents is not intimated.

The concern with ‘race of interviewer’ effect has been addressed in Rhodes (1994), where a discussion about the effect of different races between interviewer and interviewee is undertaken. Usually considered in terms of a power paradigm, this can be a problem in qualitative interviewing (Dwyer 1999), especially if the difference is great and meaningful in context, such as if a white French woman were conducting this study in Morocco. However, Islam does not emphasise ‘race’ and the holistic nature of the thinking in Islam about people and places (ie that all the world and its people’s belong to Allah, (see McMichael 2002)), would see ‘whiteness’ or ‘foreignness’ as being less of a problem than being a Muslim was a benefit (Prophet-Mohammed 632). Also, English language literature would suggest that, as a revert¹⁶ to Islam, the researcher can also be seen to have lost her ‘whiteness’, at least to non-Muslims (Franks 2000).

Roald (2001) addresses this ‘feet in both camps’ position, which she encountered in her research on Muslim women, as a Muslim woman and Swedish revert, when she states “I believe that the knowledge a Muslim researcher obtains in studies on Muslims is *different* from the knowledge a

¹⁶ A ‘revert’ is a person who has reverted to the faith they were born into. Muslims believe that all humankind is born Muslim, so when people who have not lived or been brought up as Muslim become Muslim, it is viewed as ‘coming back’ to Islam (ie not CONversion, but REversion); returning to a ‘default’ position.

non-Muslim might obtain due to different approaches and due to the difference in ‘cultural language’ ie perceptions of objects or statements, between Muslim and non-Muslim researchers” (p70). Critically, Roald (2001) believes that the differences in both the acquired knowledge and the perceptions don’t always have to do with being a Muslim or a non-Muslim. In much the same way, this study argues not for a ‘subjective’ view of Muslims, but for a more widely informed view than that overwhelmingly represented in the literature at present. In addition to this is the consideration of the ‘novelty’ aspect of the researcher to interviewees – a non-Arab revert to Islam.

Also, the issue that while shared gender, age or ethnicity can make a difference in access to data, the sharing of aspects such as these can mean that less information is revealed – ‘in some settings with some topics, difference in ethnicity can lead to fuller explanations because common experience is not assumed’ (Glesne 2006:112).

Tuncalp (1988) has written on the difficulty of gaining access to Muslim households, and especially to Muslim women, by academic researchers. These issues are partially mediated in this study by the gender of the researcher (female), her religion (Islam), and her family associations (extended family by marriage in the area). However, given that the researcher does not speak Arabic nearly well enough to conduct the research herself (ie act as her own translator), it was necessary for someone to act in this role. In Morocco, the second language, the language legacy of the coloniser, is French. Few people in Morocco speak English, and very few speak it well. Therefore, given the researcher is only fluent enough to undertake this study in English, a speaker of Arabic and English was essential in the translators role. The opportunity to have the translator also be a family

member allowed the study to go ahead¹⁷, it also meant that interview participants were happy to have him as the translator (they were all women, but he was either a member of their family or a family member of someone they knew well). Also, in Muslim societies, reputation is very important, and both the translator and his family have a good reputation in Oujda. This encouraged participants to volunteer and/or to agree to interviews in their homes – which included showing their clothing, much of which was not their publicly consumed clothing, but that which was worn in the ‘private’ sphere (ie, clothing that the translator might not usually be eligible to see). There are implications for social desirability bias. Not only could interviewees want to portray their ideal selves to the (foreign) researcher, but also to the (well regarded local) translator with personal ties to her (family or family friendship). The research design, with its triangulated approach, sought to temper this potential problem, by allowing cross-referencing of the different streams of data.

Similarly, the topic of the study itself, publicly consumed dress, offset the portrayal of their ideal selves by its nature as ‘material evidence’ of consumption visible to all (including significant others) rather than being private or invisible.

V.4.3 Credibility of the Researcher

Patton (2002) advises, “the principle is to report any personal and professional information that may have affected data collection, analysis, and interpretation” (p566). He also has a useful list of five questions with which to interrogate the credibility of the researcher. The questions, and their answers, follow:

¹⁷ The translator, being the researcher’s husband, is *mahram* for her – he represents a person from the ‘private’ sphere of life for her.

- 1) What experience, training and perspective does the researcher bring to the field?

The researcher is a revert to Islam, and had been a Muslim for five years at the time of data collection. No-one else in her birth family is Muslim. She was born and brought up in New Zealand, so her 'native' culture is western/New Zealand. She wears clothing consistent with the Islamic teaching in public (long, loose clothing and head covering), and does this for religious reasons. She has done this since she first became Muslim, a decision she made based on her research into Islam (studying the teaching). Her knowledge of Islam could be considered 'linear' in that she studied Islam from books, rather than being born/brought up Muslim with a cultural or holistic, more all-encompassing and undelineated knowledge. She has a Master's degree in Marketing, and utilised a case study/interview format for the thesis component of that qualification.

- 2) Who funded the study and under what arrangements with the researcher?

This study was partly funded by the University of Otago through a School of Business Grant, which she received when working for the Department of Marketing, an extra grant from the Department to help with the high transport costs to location, two other grants applied for as a student, and personal funds. The grants were 'without strings'.

- 3) What prior knowledge did the researcher bring to the research topic and study site?

Relevant knowledge brought to the study site by the researcher was her research into Islam and knowledge of Muslims and their culture. The researcher has spent six to seven months in total living in Morocco and has travelled briefly to many other relevant countries including Jordan, UAE, Malaysia and Singapore. Also, the researcher has extensive experience of living in a foreign culture, having lived in Japan for almost seven years, which she has found invaluable in her study and research. Living for a long period in a culture different to one's own gives an appreciation that almost everything can be done in different ways, and

does not have to be done just the way its done ‘at home’. Also, having gone to Japan with no Japanese language skills, the researcher is perfectly comfortable spending long periods being unable to speak/communicate well, and has lots of practice in using this environment as a template for observation, making her a seasoned observer. The experience in Japan encouraged curiosity and reflection which can be usefully applied in a research situation.

- 4) How did the researcher gain access to the study site?
- 5) What personal connections does the researcher have to the people, program, or topic studied? (questions 4 and 5 are answered together below)

The researcher is married to a Moroccan. Her husband is from Oujda and attended the university there as an undergraduate. Access to the interview candidates was arranged through personal contacts – family members or friends of family members. There are a number of considerations surrounding access to a sample such as this, which are addressed throughout this study, one of which is trustworthiness. Access was facilitated by reputation, connection, shared way of life so very real fears of misrepresentation were made negligible. Access could also have been facilitated by the researchers ‘novelty’ and also the interviewees distinct enthusiasm at being given the chance to ‘speak for themselves’ about themselves and their consumption.

V.4.4 Generalisability

There is some debate about whether case studies (in general) can be used for generalisation – or, indeed, what “generalisation” actually means. Flyvbjerg (2006) states that “Predictive theories and universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs” (p224). However, Ruddin (2006), commenting on Flyvbjerg, quotes Popper (2000:423) “even ordinary singular statements are “interpretations of ‘the facts’ in the light of theories”. And …[“the facts”]

contain *universals* ; and universals always entail a *lawlike* behaviour””; and also Mary Douglas (1979) who “illustrated … that qualitative generalisation is a matter of applying the facts on one case to another case instead of attempting to sum them up. Moreover, the practice of generalisation is personal, being executed by the individual making the comparison”. Further, Ruddin (2006) notes, “there are situations in which knowledge of a specific case may be generalised to great segments of the population” (p805).

So, while phronesis does not require generalisation, given that the population under study here is part of a much larger group (Arabs, or more generally, Muslims) who subscribe to a particular framework/world-view (Islam) and constitute a full fifth of the world population, this study can make a useful contribution outside the critical case detailed here. The choice of Morocco as a location for the critical case is once again reinforced in this way. At a minimum, the critical case will highlight research themes to examine in more detail, and offer important insights to studies that will affect policy, as well as marketing approaches. However, it is intended that this study will offer insights into the study of Muslim populations in general in terms of illustrating how reference should be made to Islamic teaching in order to properly study a Muslim majority context.

V.4.5 Translation/Translator

This study relied on translation from English into Arabic and also Arabic back to English. The questionnaire was written in English, translated into *fus'ha* (‘standard’ Arabic) and then tested and re-tested as outlined above. The questionnaire was presented to respondents in *fus'ha*, they responded using the closed response items provided, and answered the open-ended questions in Standard Arabic (*fus'ha*). As with all Arab dialects, Morocco’s (Darija) is not used in a written format. All Arabs read and write ‘Standard Arabic’ (*fus'ha*).

Temple and Young (2004) identify several considerations when using translation in research, one of which is “does it matter if the translator is identified or not?” (p162). As this study uses a perspective of social constructionism, Temple and young (2004) argue that it does matter, because “[this] approach to knowledge and how it is produced acknowledge that your location within the social world influences the way in which you see it” (p164).

The translator clearly advised the interviewees that he was working purely as a translator for the researcher, and was not involved in the research himself beyond that point. This was to reassure the interviewees both that he was not asking questions about them himself and also that he was not ‘judging’ them. This was seen as necessary given that the translator is male and, some of the interviewees were family members or close family friends, while others were sisters of other family members’ friends.

The translator is fluent in English and both Standard (*fus'ha*) and Moroccan-dialect (*Darija*) Arabic. He is a researcher himself, and was very clear on what was wanted from his role – translations without any interpretation, as verbatim as possible – in both the written and verbal communications between researcher and informants.

Patton (2002) has outlined the various dangers in using translators, such as the possibility that they may summarise or explain interviewee responses (p 392). These points were carefully considered, and every attempt made to guard against problems was made. It is important, too, to remember that all translation involves an element of interpretation, as a word in one language can often not be exactly replicated in another {Patton, 2002 #371:392; Patton, 2002 #371}. Therefore ‘sensitive’ translation, born of “a balance between translators’ inherent knowledge of language and researcher clinical

expertise" is essential (Larkin *et al.*, 2007:471). As the translator is the researcher's husband, it could be claimed that he biased the responses. However, given that he is the husband, far more full and frank explanations of how the translation must be done and the parameters of the role were able to be undertaken than they may have been with another person, especially a local Moroccan.

This also addresses Temple and Young's (2004) point that it is necessary for researchers to understand translators views "to allow for differences in understandings of words, concepts and worldview across languages" (p171). Similarly, the fact that translators are expensive and so often employed for minimum period, therefore reducing the ability of researchers to come back to translators throughout the analysis process, is overcome in this case (Temple and Young, 2004).

Given that respondents do not speak any English, had a translator not been used, this sample would have been completely inaccessible to the researcher rather than her being able to provide full and detailed responses (Burton 2009b). With this 'language' factor added to the consideration of access to Muslim women in general (Tuncalp 1988), a failure to use a translator would have meant a failure to hear these women's voices. In addition to translation allowing these women to speak for themselves, it also made possible an ability to meaningfully contrast and compare responses, to enable the interview to be deep and wide-ranging, and to maximise the feminist interviewing technique to visit and re-visit questions, responses and issues. Given the hegemony in the academic literature on non-western/non-white/non-Anglo-Saxon populations, the hostility in the literature to Muslim women as respondents (for example see Ger and Sandikci 2006) and the calls for voices such as these to be heard (Burton 2009b), the potential issues in using a translator are outweighed by the advantages.

V.4.6 Justification for Paradigm and Methodology

Consistent with the framework of *phronesis*, two very important aspects for consideration in this study were the researcher's experience, and the context. As outlined in Chapter I, this thesis was partly based on responses to the researchers appearance in her own home country, doubtless exacerbated by having spent a long period abroad, that provided the catalyst for this study. Further, upon reviewing a significant amount of literature relating to Muslim women and their clothing, the researcher found the perspectives outlined were quite inconsistent with her experience, and her experience of other Muslim women both in Muslim countries and outside them.

On this basis, this study was developed and sought to examine 'themes' in the English language literature on Muslim women and their publicly consumed dress. These include ideas that wearing clothing consistent with the Islamic teaching was a reflection of religious fundamentalism of some kind; that the clothing related to strength of religious belief or religious commitment; and that the opposite was also true – that not wearing clothing consistent with the Islamic teaching – especially clothing that did not include a head-covering – meant that the Muslim was not committed to Islam, and/or had some hostility or negativity towards the teaching and to others who did wear Islamically consistent clothing.

Methodological considerations generated by the context included: access to a group difficult to access, suitable location/s for the interview, the setting (people present), the format of the interview and the eagerness of the interviewees.

V.5 Summary

Taking a social constructionism approach to the study combined with a critical case framework, eighteen interviews with Moroccan Muslim women were undertaken and the transcripts of the interviews were analysed thematically ensuring they matched the context (Braun and Clarke 2006:83). A number of particular methodological and ethical considerations were raised with this sample, such as their sensitivity to photography and the difficulty of access to women at all in Muslim countries (Tuncalp 1988). Of special interest was the difference that Islamic culture made to an expected Western interview situation – the interviews were held in the respondents homes, they were framed as a ‘guest’ experience, the experience was comfortable and relaxed.

VI. Analysis and Discussion

VI.1 Introduction

The following chapter analyses the triangulated responses of the nine case studies (18 interviews) to a questionnaire and their interview transcript data with a focus on the daughters. To this end, the same questionnaire was administered and the same interview protocol utilised in interviewing the main respondents mothers. Additionally, field notes were kept on the clothing worn to the interview and the socio-economic placement of the family in the sample. Finally, the interviewees favourite clothing was photographed – that for public consumption is the focus of this study, but their ‘special occasion wear’ provides further richness of context to the overall thesis objectives and an additional illustrative data layer for triangulation.

VI.2 Participant Characteristics and Presentation

The nine case studies analysed here fall along a continuum of dress which considers whether or not the interviewee plucked her eyebrows, was *hijab* (scarf) wearing (or not) and finally, her adherence to the Islamic clothing guidelines. This continuum is shown in Figure VI.2-1(below).

Figure VI-1: Clothing Adherence Continuum



The continuum can be used to show that, for example, the first three do not pluck their eyebrows (plucking eyebrows is forbidden in the Islamic teaching (Al-Qaradawi 1984)), while the following six do. The first four cover their heads, while the following five do not. They are then ordered on their dress in terms of how closely it follows the guidelines. This continuum is

constructed based on the respondents' questionnaire responses, their 'favourite clothes' photographs, the interviewers observation and in-depth interviews.

All main participants live with their parents except the one respondent who is married (Khadija). Three have full-time jobs, but none have part-time jobs. Four are either university or high school students, and one is neither employed nor a student. Only one main respondent's family is from the city they now live in (Oujda) that is she was born there and her parents families are from there too. All interviews were attended by the interviewer, the translator and their children (who were entertained by the participant's family members at the location).

All participant responses to the 'belief' questions "would you describe yourself as a religious person?" "to which extent do you believe in the Articles of Faith?" and "how important is prayer?" were strongly affirmative, with only Memuna differing from the group on both questions (Figure VI.2-2 below). There was some variation in answer to the questions, "is being a good Muslim important to you?" and "do you practice jihad (ie struggle) to be a good Muslim" elicited more varied responses, which will be discussed further below. Their responses to the four 'practice' questions¹⁸ were uniformly reflective of a profile of active practice (except for Maria, who did not answer the question, "do you fast Ramadan?", which will be discussed further below). Overall, then, the respondents reported consistent adherence and commitment to Islam from the fixed questions on the questionnaire. The open-ended questions, variations mentioned previously and other elements of the data corpus will be interrogated below.

¹⁸ Practice is measured using the Five Pillars of Islam – the first being the declaration of faith, covered in 'Belief'.

Figure VI-2: Belief continuum



It is important to establish, then, that the respondents report that they are committed to Islam in eight out of nine cases, with Memuna being notably less committed and/or interested in Islam. It has been argued that Islam is the umbrella over this culture, rather than a component of it, and in keeping with that the self-reporting of religious commitment and practice informs the research questions as a possible source of meaning. Further, all interviewees, by answering in this way, acknowledge a consideration of transcendence, an acknowledgement of Allah (as per Islamic teaching) and Islam as a reference in their lives (Elmessiri 2006; Sennett 1974).

VI.3 Introduction to the Cases

VI.3.1 Case One – Khadija

VI.3.1.1 Profile:

Khadija is a recently married woman aged 23 and is a second year student of Islamic Studies at the university. She is placed first on the clothing continuum – she does not pluck her eyebrows, wears hijab and wears clothing consistent with Islamic teaching – she is the closest of the nine cases to the Islamic teaching on publicly consumed dress. Khadija's family are Amazigh (Berber). Khadija not only wore the most adherent clothing, she referenced Islam and

¹⁹ The participants to the left of this arrow were consistently at the most 'committed' end of the measure for each of the questions.

²⁰ The participants to the left of this arrow had some variation – they both said that 'being a good Muslim was important to them' (the most affirmative answer is 'very important').

²¹ Memuna alone believed [only] 'strongly' in 'the day of judgement' and 'the hereafter' (two of the pillars of faith) and also responded that being a good Muslim was 'of little importance' to her.

Islamic teaching extensively to explain her clothing choices throughout her interview.

VI.3.1.2 Interview Setting/Presentation:

To the interview, which was conducted in her home, she wore a large kaftan²² and large scarf. This clothing is appropriate and consistent with the teaching. The interview was conducted in the formal sitting room and in her room and present at all times were the interviewer, the translator and the participant.

Her mother was interviewed in her house, and also wore a kaftan and scarf. Present at all times were the interviewer, the translator and the participant.

VI.3.1.3 Questionnaire Responses:

Besides her strong commitment to Islam reported in both the ‘belief’ and ‘practice’ sections of the questionnaire, Khadija’s responses to the question, ‘do you follow the Islamic clothing guidelines now? why/why not?’ she responded:

Khadija: Yes. There is no discussion or argument about it, [it is] a settled matter by Godly order. Besides it gives the women the respect and status that she was created for.

Consistent with this position and the Islamic requirements for clothing to be long, loose, opaque and not eye-catching is Khadija’s favourite public clothing (Figure VI.3.1.3-1 below).

²² A kaftan is a one piece dress which features full length embroidery. They are used for special occasion wear.

Also consistent is Khadija's favourite private clothing (Figure VI.3.1.3-2 below) which reinforces the point that the concept of public and private is inverted – a public area is defined by the people in it, not the space itself and beauty is for private consumption, not public.

Figure VI-3: Favourite Public Clothing - Khadija²³



Notes 1: (L to R – Brown Jabador²⁴ Tunic and Pants, Pinstripe Jabador Tunic and Pants, Jellaba).

Figure VI-4: Favourite Private Clothing – Khadija



Notes 2: L to R – Ghandora detail x 3, Tikshirta²⁵ sleeve x 2

²³ Various people are holding the clothing photographs used throughout this thesis with their faces obscured by the clothing in deference to the Muslim dislike for photographs of people. The backgrounds have been retained to give some context to the data and to support field notes.

²⁴ A Jabador is a two-piece set – mid-calf length tunic and matching pants.

²⁵ A Tikshirta is a two-piece dress consisting of an underdress and an overdress which is made from extremely decorative material and often also features embroidery on the underdress. A tikshirta is regarded as the highest level of special occasion wear, most expensive and most vulnerable to fast fashion changes.

VI.3.2 Case Two: Sawda

VI.3.2.1 Profile

Sawda is a 39 year old single woman, the oldest main interviewee in the sample. She lives with her parents and does not study or work. Sawda wears adherent clothing including hijab.

VI.3.2.2 Interview Setting/Presentation:

Sawda was interviewed in her home's formal sitting room. She wore a white cotton housedress and scarf. Present at all times were the interviewer, the translator, the participant and her sister.

Her mother wore a long-sleeved ghandora²⁶ and a scarf.

VI.3.2.3 Interview Analysis:

Sawda is from a conservative family, and she is the oldest of the interviewees. Reflecting that she is very concerned with both following the Islamic guidelines and also reflecting an accurate picture of her family's social position in her dress. Additionally, Sawda is very talented in embroidery, and her clothing is often hand-decorated – a discerning feature as the styles done by hand (for example, the diamond pattern called *randa*) are very hard to do and very expensive to have done by someone else.

VI.3.2.4 Questionnaire Responses:

²⁶ A decorated dress like a kaftan, but only half-length embroidered.

Sawda's questionnaire responses reflected a very strong commitment to Islam. The two 'belief' questions "is being a good Muslim important to you" and "do you practice jihad (ie struggle) to be a good Muslim" evoked a "very important" and "yes" response respectively. Similarly, her answers to the 'practice' questions were strongly affirmative.

The open-ended questionnaire questions which asked about clothing worn now and future intention regarding clothing were answered as follows: "yes [I wear Islamic clothing now], it is obligatory upon the Muslim [male and female]"; "yes [I will wear it in the future] so that I will be a Believer".

This quote reflects the importance of Islam to the respondent, and her mother reflects the same sentiments.

Figure VI-5: Favourite Public Clothing – Sawda



Notes 3: (L to R – Jellabas x 3, Scarf Detail)



Notes 4: (L to R – Jellaba detail (hood, front panel, sleeve)

Figure VI-6: Favourite Private Clothing – Sawda



Notes 5: Kaftan featuring randa style embroidery

As is noticeable from Figures VI.3.2.4-1 and VI.3.2.4-2 above, Sawda's publicly consumed dress is quite colourful and also contains a number of flourishes such as the embroidery of the sleeves, wide panels running the full length of the jellaba and also the tasselled hood. Sawda does not 'go out much' and also does not like to 'store clothes' so only keeps four jellabas at a time and has few other clothes.

VI.3.3 Case Three: Zainab

VI.3.3.1 Profile:

Zainab is a 22 year old second year student of economics. She is single, is fourth on the continuum of clothing adherence and wears hijab. Zainab's family is the most wealthy of these respondents. Zainab is very self-possessed and capable. She is the second youngest child in a large family and was, for a long time (12+ years), the baby of the family.

VI.3.3.2 Interview Setting/Presentation:

Zainab wore black pants, a brown shirt and a brown scarf to the interview, which was conducted in the formal sitting room of her home. Present at all times were the interviewer, the translator, the participant and a number of other family members came and went throughout.

Zainab's mother was interviewed in the same location, she wore an underscarf, a white cotton housedress and tights. There are two possible reasons this style of head-covering may have been seen as acceptable by the participant – 1. Zainab's mother and the translator's father are cousins; 2- Zainab's mother is 50.

VI.3.3.3 Questionnaire Responses:

Zainab answered in the most affirmative to all belief and practice questionnaire questions except, 'do you practice jihad (ie struggle against yourself) to be a good Muslim?' to which she answered 'sometimes'. In response to her own clothing she answered that she 'sometimes' wore

adherent clothing because 'sometimes my clothing is a modest garment'. With regard for her intentions for her future style of dress she responded, 'Insha'Allah [God willing] my garments will always be adherent garments'.

Figure VI-7: Favourite Public Clothing – Zainab



Notes 6: L to R: Denim Shirt and matching skirt; Linen suit jacket and pants.



Notes 7: L to R: Beige and Black suit jacket and matching pants; Blue tunic front and back

Figure VI-8: Favourite Private Clothing – Zainab



Notes 8: L to R: Tikshirta – sleeve detail, underdress bodice and hem

VI.3.4 Case Four: Hafsa

VI.3.4.1 Profile:

Hafsa is a 24 year old woman who works as a tailor and is engaged to be married. She wears mostly adherent clothing, does not pluck her eyebrows and wears hijab. Due to her occupation she is very well acquainted with all forms of dress available in the market, and wears both jellabas and separate pieces of clothing around 50% of the time each.

Further, due to her situation – both as a tailor and as a fiancé – she is in the process of making a large number of new clothing pieces for her trousseau. Hafsa is the lowest ranked of the sample for socio-economic rank.

VI.3.4.2 Interview Setting/Presentation:

Hafsa wore a white satin leisure suit²⁷ with roses and red sleeves/collar/pocket and scarf, open at the neck to the interview, which was conducted in the formal sitting room of her home. Present at all times were the interviewer, the translator, the participant. To properly meet the guidelines this clothing should have had long sleeves and been closed at the neck, however, perhaps because of the long term family relationship between hers and the translators parents, this may have been seen as acceptable by the participant.

Her mother, interviewed in the same location, wore a scarf and a jellaba.

²⁷ Leisure suits and cotton housedresses are used inside the home and are suitable for doing housework in. These outfits are not slept in, they are changed into to work around the home.

VI.3.4.3 Questionnaire Responses:

Hafsa didn't respond to the question, 'do you practice jihad (struggle against yourself) to be a good Muslim', but on the other belief and practice questions she answered in the most affirmative. In response to the question 'do you follow the Islamic clothing guidelines now? why/why not?' Hasfsa stated, 'yes, because I'm an adherent *Muslimah* [Muslim woman]'. In response to, 'do you intend to in the future?', Hafsa stated 'at all times'.

Figure VI-9: Favourite Public Clothing – Hafsa



Notes 9: L to R: Suit top, matching pants; blouse and pants

Figure VI-10: Favourite Private Clothing – Hafsa



Notes 10: L to R: Kaftan, front panel detail, sleeve detail; white Kaftan detail



Notes 11: L to R: Blue Tikshirta sleeve detail; White Tikshirta, front, sleeve detail

VI.3.5 Case Five: Salama

VI.3.5.1 Profile:

Salama is a 23 year old single woman with a Bachelors degree who works as a teacher. She does not wear hijab. She comes in the middle of the sample group, both for clothing adherence and for socio-economic position.

VI.3.5.2 Interview Setting/Presentation:

Salama was interviewed in the formal sitting room of her family home. She wore a short-sleeved, sparkly pink kaftan, no scarf and her eyebrows were plucked. Present at all times were the interviewer, the translator, the participant and intermittently her parents, and siblings.

Her mother was interviewed in the same location and wore an orange ghandora and scarf.

VI.3.5.3 Questionnaire Responses:

Salama's questionnaire responses were all strongly affirmative for belief and practice, although to the question 'do you practice jihad (ie, struggle against yourself) to be a good Muslim' she answered 'sometimes'. Her answer to the

question, 'do you follow the Islamic clothing guidelines?' was 'sometimes' and 'because it is obligatory upon every *Muslimah* [Muslim woman] and it is a symbol of dignity, modesty and respect of self and others'. From her questionnaire responses and her overall interview, her favourite clothing is surprising.

Figure VI-11: Favourite Public Clothing – Salama



Notes 12: L to R: Jellaba, Jellaba, short-sleeved blous



Notes 13: L to R: 3/4 pants, suit jacket and matching pants

VI.3.6 Case Six: Habiba

VI.3.6.1 Profile:

Habiba is a 25 year old woman with a Bachelors degree. She is engaged to be married and works as a teacher. Habiba does not wear hijab.

VI.3.6.2 Interview Setting/Presentation:

Habiba was interviewed in the formal sitting room of her home. She wore a jellaba, no scarf and her eyebrows are plucked. Present at all times were the interviewer, the translator, the participant and intermittently her siblings, her mother her and aunt. Habiba did not want to show any of her clothing or have it photographed. She did have an appointment immediately after our interview and may have been in a hurry to get to that, but Habiba is also ranked number seven (out of nine) in terms of socio-economic position in this sample.

Her mother was interviewed in the same location. She wore a kaftan and a scarf. Her mother wrote on her questionnaire that her occupation was “Lord of the House”. In the context, that is literal, and indicates the influence of the mothers within the home.

VI.3.6.3 Questionnaire Responses:

Habiba did not answer the question, ‘would you describe yourself as a religious person’. She answered the question ‘is being a good Muslim important to you’ with ‘important’ and she answered that she ‘sometimes’ struggled to be a good Muslim. However, she ‘very strongly’ believes in all the articles of faith and performs all of the pillars of practice in Islam. Concerning her own clothing she answered that she ‘sometimes’ followed Islamic clothing guidelines now but that she intended to in the future, ‘when I settle in my house [ie get married]’. Linking the wearing of clothing consistent with the Islamic guidelines and marriage is explored further below.

VI.3.7 Case Seven: Safia

VI.3.7.1 Profile:

Safia is the youngest sample member. She is a single High School student²⁸.

Safia is interested in fashion clothing and does not wear hijab. Safia's mother is divorced and she is an only child. She lives with her mother, aunts and her uncle in her mother's family home. Safia is number eight (out of 9) on the socio-economic ranking of the sample.

VI.3.7.2 Interview Setting/Presentation:

Safia was interviewed in her family home, in the formal sitting room. She wore a short-sleeved pink cotton housedress, no scarf and her eyebrows were plucked. Present at all times were the interviewer, the translator, the participant and her aunt.

Her mother was interviewed in the same location and wore a pink cotton leisure suit and a scarf.

VI.3.7.3 Questionnaire Responses:

Safia answered all the belief and practice questions strongly in the affirmative. With regard to her own clothing she responded that 'no' she does not wear clothing consistent with the Islamic guidelines now – 'I have been self guided until now, and I ask Allah for guidance' – and 'yes' she intends to wear consistent clothing in future, 'I'm thinking about Islamic clothing and one day will come when I will use it'.

²⁸ In Morocco school starts at 7. Students must pass each year of school or they repeat it, therefore some High School students may be over 20 when they finish.

Figure VI-12: Favourite Public Clothing – Safia



Notes 14: L to R: jeans x 2, skirt, one-sleeved top



Notes 15: L to R: Various tops

Figure VI-13: Favourite Private Clothing – Safia



Notes 16: L to R: Flowery Kaftan; Gold and Silver Kaftan, front and sleeve detail

VI.3.8 Case Eight: Memuna

VI.3.8.1 Profile:

Memuna is a 20 year old High School student who does not wear hijab. Her family are Amazigh (Berber) from a small oasis town on the border with Algeria, which has a very strong local culture. Memuna's father has lived and worked in France for many years and her family are ranked third on socio-economic factors.

VI.3.8.2 Interview Setting/Presentation:

Memuna was interviewed in her formal sitting room and she wore a short-sleeved blue satin leisure suit, no scarf and her eyebrows were plucked. Present at all times were the interviewer, the translator, the participant and intermittently her brother and mother.

Her mother was interviewed in the same location and wore a short-sleeved ghandora and scarf.

VI.3.8.3 Questionnaire Responses:

Memuna would describe herself as 'a religious person' although she answered that she believed 'very strongly' in six of the eight pillars of faith, and 'strongly' in the other two (The Day of Judgement and The Hereafter) and stated being a good Muslim was 'of little importance' to her. She 'sometimes' struggles against herself to be a good Muslim, but answers strongly affirmatively regarding the practice of Islam. She also answered that she would wear clothing consistent with the Islamic guidelines 'sometime, when circumstances compel me and the time is suitable'.

Figure VI-14: Favourite Public Clothing – Memuna



Notes 17: L to R: short-sleeved blouse, knee length skirt, red jabador tunic and back



Notes 18: L to R: pants for jabador, t-shirt, pants

VI.3.9 Case Nine: Maria

VI.3.9.1 Profile:

Maria is a 23 year old, single, second year economics student. She does not wear hijab and is the least adherent on the clothing continuum. Her family is the second ranked on socio-economic position. She has a twin sister.

VI.3.9.2 Interview Setting/Presentation:

Maria was interviewed in the formal sitting room of her family home. She wore a blue, transparent blouse with jeans and sneakers. She had plucked eyebrows and also wore makeup. Present at all times were the interviewer, the translator, the participant, her twin and intermittently her mother, brother and niece.

Her mother was interviewed in the same location and wore a $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeve dress and a loose scarf.

VI.3.9.3 Questionnaire Responses:

Maria answered being a good Muslim was ‘important’ to her and that she ‘sometimes’ struggled to be a good Muslim. As previously mentioned, she did not answer the question on whether she fasts Ramadan. In all other belief and practice responses, she was strongly affirmative. With regard to her clothing she responded she ‘sometimes’ adheres to Islamic clothing guidelines ‘because my clothing is respectful and suitable [ie not something that is unsuitable] and not exposing or displaying the *awra* [private areas]’. In the future she responded ‘yes, I want to adhere to the Islamic clothing when I get married’.

Figure VI-15: Favourite Public Clothing – Maria



Notes 19: L to R: stretch leisure suit; transparent shirt and jeans



Notes 20: L to R: flower top, detail; brown jellaba, detail

Figure VI-16: Favourite Private Clothing – Maria



Notes 21: L to R: kaftan, detail; white kaftan, hem detail

The overall participant profiles are represented in table VI-1 below.

Table VI-1: Participant Profiles

Name ²⁹	Age	Mother's Age	Marital	Education	Occupation	Public Clothes ³⁰	Socio ³¹
Khadija	23	46	Married	2 nd Y IS	Student	H 1	6
Sawda	39	58	Single	-	-	H 2	5
Zainab	22	50	Single	2 nd Y Eco	Student	H 3	1
Hafsa	24	52	Engaged	-	Tailor	H 4	9
Salama	23	54	Single	Bach	Teacher	NH 5	4
Habiba	25	53	Engaged	Bach	Teacher	NH 6	7
Safia	19	40	Single	HS	Student	NH 7	8
Memuna	20	45	Single	HS	Student	NH 8	3
Maria	23	53	Single	2 nd Y Eco	Student	NH 9	2

VI.4 Study Themes

The findings of this study show that the social aspects of clothing choice are indeed very important for many of the participants. For the purposes of this thesis, the social aspects of clothing choice are defined as those concerned with the participants' considerations of how they present themselves to others, how they are meeting the societal requirements they perceive to be incumbent upon them through their dress and how they differentiate or assimilate themselves through dress.

²⁹ Names have been changed.

³⁰ Criterion: how closely Islamic clothing prescription is followed – eyebrows, hijab, clothing (H = hijab, NH = no hijab).

³¹ Criterion: own house, income/s coming in.

Table VI-2: Study Themes

Social Aspects	Religious Aspects	Life Aspects	Stage	Personal Choice Aspects
Impression on others Requirements and/or Expectations of others Utilitarian Social markers Clothing Communication	Public and Private Respect Rightful Knowledge Information Femininity	Age as a marker Hijab Marriage as a marker vs	Market availability Independent shopping	

VI.4.1 Social Aspects of Clothing Choice

Much of the research within the area of marketing, but also within the wider context of the study of Muslim women's clothing across the social sciences, has concentrated – often exclusively – on the social aspects of clothing choice.

The social aspects of clothing choice has, thus, been broken into four sections, those being: Impression on Others, Requirements and/or Expectations of Others, Social Markers and Clothing Communication.

VI.4.1.1 Impression on Others

In terms of the Islamic teaching, considering its horizontal responsibilities, ensuring your part in the 'smooth running of society' means giving consideration to the states and feelings of other, within the parameters of the

teaching. In keeping with this are the symbolic considerations of clothing, although the respondents reflected two different emphases in their responses. Emphasising the social:

Maria³²: I like clothes and I am interested in them. I mean, it's obvious, normal. It's not something unheard of or anything. If you wear something that is not well presented, they are not going to give you any value.

Interviewer: Who's they?

Maria: Just in general. But mostly at university. For example, there is a teacher called XX who is teaching one of the economics papers – first, him – he wouldn't give you any value or any consideration.

Interviewer: Is there any other reason why you like clothing or you are interested in it?

Maria: No, but if I had more money to wear more stylish or better clothing I would.

Interviewer: If you had more money to spend on more expensive clothing then this would make people treat you better, or give you more regard or consideration?

Maria: Yes. Yes, it would. I would be better treated because, especially in our time, it is the time of appearances. So if you don't wear proper clothing, then they don't care about you, don't show you any regard.

Interviewer: What does 'proper clothes' mean? New or fashionable or what?

Maria: The only thing is wearing proper clothing – clean, but also kind of high class.

Interviewer: Does high class mean fashionable or expensive?

Maria: Expensive. Oh, it's not fashionable, it's not about fashion – it's expensive, clean and respectable. We don't follow fashion.

Interviewer: What does respectable mean?

Maria: The word respectable … it means people won't run away from me or I won't scare them off. People will say I'm respectable and clean. Yeah, clean. And yes, elegant.

³² In keeping with the advice of Weiss (1995) the quotations, translated from Arabic into English, have been edited for readability, retaining words and meanings (p192).

Similarly,

Interviewer: Why? Why are you interested in clothes?

Safia: Because it's necessary, it's necessary so other people will see you outside with your look. There's a saying that based on your level of clothing, people will respect you.

Interviewer: And what does it mean, respect you?

Safia: For me it's how often you wear good clothes in front of them, they will respect you. But if you wear some clothes that are, have holes in them, and that are not well looked after, they will disrespect you.

Interviewer: So, it is how clean they are not how new they are? Or is it how fashionable they are or how much they cost?

Safia: There are two generations. In my own generation, they look at how much it is.

Interviewer: Cost?

Safia: Yes, the cost. And they also look at the brand. And they look at the fashion.

Both Maria and Safia express considerations connected with conspicuous consumption – status and social value. Their clothing is ‘read’ for status and status connect to money, or as Veblen (1894) put it ‘pecuniary strength’ (p200).

Maria (aged 23) and Safia (aged 19) do not wear hijab or adhere to the Islamic clothing guidelines. Maria’s most commonly worn outfits are jeans and a blouse with sports shoes and Safia’s, whatever is in fashion. Both of these young women, and the other interviewee most like them in term so of dress (Memuna, aged 20) are very small people – short, slight and youthful in appearance. They make little reference to Islam throughout their interviews, but do refer to Moroccan norms and Muslim norms. This suggests their formal knowledge of Islamic teaching is slight, and the responses they make relate to their social/cultural environment primarily. Consistent, again, with Veblen (1894), they see their clothing function primarily as ‘adornment’ (p

199). This can be illustrated in the photographs of their favourite clothing above.

And the other dimension, emphasising the religious:

Hafsa: Yes, clothing is important. But some of the clothes are not important when people can't afford them. So they are not that important, but in general they are important, yes.

Interviewer: Why?

Hafsa: A person wouldn't be covered without his or her clothes, so it's for covering. Clothing is important for a person to cover.

Interviewer: And why do you need to do that?

Hafsa: Religion, deen, requires us to cover, so that is one thing, and also the family, the family is conservative so it raises you with ideas of being covered. So you get these ideas and you do them kind of thing.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Hafsa: Society also like teaches you to cover as well, though today's society there is some uncovering and some ...

Interviewer: So do you think that the society here supports covering?

Hafsa: Yeah, in general, yes this society does support covering.

In this case, and mirrored by several other interviewees, the social is acknowledged and the Islamic requirements are specifically mentioned. This suggests a greater familiarity or value attributed to Islamic teaching. Hafsa is also, a *hijab* wearer, which does denote religious commitment as well. Her questionnaire responses also support this view. Her publicly consumed clothing does include *hijab* and is close to the clothing guidelines (Figure VI.3.4.3-1 above).

Further, this interviewee, who does not wear *hijab*, made the following comments:

Salama: Yes I like clothing and am interested in it.

Interviewer: Why?

Salama: It's because Allah^(s33) created man and created clothes with him. ... Allah also made it obligatory for us to be covered and to have clothes that are long, so that's why I like it and why I'm interested in it. It depends on the customs and the house as well. And depends on the upbringing.

In light of this response, some of Salama's favourite clothing is surprisingly short, as can be seen in the photographs in Figure VI.3.5.3-1 above.

The respondents emphasising the social aspects of clothing attribute their clothing with reflecting their 'value' to others and accord the 'value' weighting, in turn, with a 'respect' value. Most respondents made a reference to cleanliness, having clean clothes and looking clean in response to this question. Notably the emphasis on cleanliness was then reflected on two different dimensions as 1) cleanliness = value = respect shown from those you were interacting with and 2) cleanliness = showing respect to those you were interacting with. This divergence suggests a social versus religious emphasis in the daily interactions of different participants, and is supported by the two dimensions (vertical and horizontal) aspects of Islamic teaching referred to in Chapter Three.

A further aspect of the social, referenced by many of the respondents, which clearly illustrates the concept of the public spaces as defined by who is in them, rather than where they are, is well expressed by Maria's mother:

Interviewer: What do you wear when you go out?

Maria's mother: I wear a jellaba. And a scarf. Even my eyes, I don't put kohl on them, because then they say, "you look beautiful", so I don't... If I go to the market, who am I with? The market is for men, that's who is selling. If I go by bus, with whom for example? It's a mixed thing.

And also by Zainab's mother:

³³ This represents the honorific for Allah used by Muslims.

Zainab's mother: I'm covered. I respect myself, so that I won't be attractive and I wouldn't be attracting anything and nobody is going to talk about me – that I'm this, or that. And there is no room for them to speak, to talk about me. So they wouldn't be saying oh she's this or she's wearing makeup. And they wouldn't be talking this and that. They wouldn't be saying this and that. No. I would be properly clothed. I will be properly dressed so there is no room for them to speak badly, to say this or that.

Both mothers are aware of a social self, but are clear that the context or situation is important. Belk (1975a; 1975b) outlines the scope 'situation' can cover, such as social surroundings, physical surroundings, temporal perspective, task definitions and antecedent states. In a Muslim context, this would explain an Islamically defined 'public setting' well.

The emphasis on avoiding attention when in a public situation and not emphasising your physical attributes is a clear inversion of a fundamental premise in much English-language literature where promotion of an 'improved' and 'individual' self is very strong and dressing for going out is equal to improving the state of dress from that worn at home. These quotes also show a good understanding and application of the teaching. Muslim societies are typically segregated on gender, so there is little interaction with 'foreigners' (ie strangers) of the opposite gender for either men or women and such interaction is actively avoided or minimised (Torstrick and Faier 2009). An extended look at the public/private concept in Muslim societies has been undertaken in Chapter III.

Maintaining clear communication of your social level was an important consideration for the oldest main respondent (Sawda, 39), and was mentioned by several of the mothers.

Sawda: Your clothes will be saying that you are wearing something that is respectable, and not something that is flying. That you are not just flying. [Meaning] You are not just, not good, not respectable. And also that will match your material conditions, so you wouldn't be wearing something that is high – beyond what you can afford. You might know a person, and they might be wearing some clothes and putting on makeup and so on and going outside, but they don't match their material level. So that's no good. And people will find out your level is different from your clothing level. And that is no good.

Interviewer: Why does it matter?

Sawda: In my case, my family are working. I'm not working, but they are working to feed me . . . what I am saying to you is about our house, our style of life and our understanding. So if it doesn't suit, it's not good, how can I express it? It's no good for a person to do, like to wear above what he can afford.

Interviewer: Misrepresentation?

Sawda: Yes, so that's no good. And why do I have to force myself into buying these things which I can't afford? That's no good. Being able to wear clothes that are clean, proper but up to my level...I need to accept what my level is and when I see somebody else who is wearing some clothing that are higher for example, I won't be feeling jealous or behaving negatively. So that I say alhumdullilah [all praise to Allah] for whatever I've got and that's it. And I will accept what I have been offered and say alhumdullilah for what I have been given.

Sawda: If I get four jellabas and then I get another one I will give that one to somebody who is sort of below me [financially], who is in need and who will accept it. We don't gather clothes, store them, have a lot of them. And so that somebody will ask for mercy [invocation], for me and my parents. So that is another thing I consider.

Sawda's consideration of her social status, or 'place' on a financial continuum in society is further reinforced by her attitude towards clothing. These quotes reflect an awareness of social status visibly manifested through clothing and regulated by money as per Veblen's (1894; 1899) basic theses. However, the acceptance of that ranking and appreciation of it is discordant. It is consistent with Islamic teaching on waste, charity and sharing and these points were also mentioned by several of the mothers.

VI.4.1.2 Requirements/expectations of others

Also in keeping with a motivation to collective and societal harmony, is considering the requirements and expectations of others. This is especially true in a ‘special occasion’ context, but is also evident in everyday wear.

Interviewer: If you wear a kaftan or a tikshirta to a [party] and it's not here [at her home], can you wear it on the way there, or not?

Salama: No, it's obligatory that I put a jellaba on the top.

Interviewer: Why is that?

Salama: The road is full of people, and Dad doesn't like it. And me, too, I don't like it, I don't go without it.

Interviewer: Is this because those clothes are really attractive?

Salama: They're attractive, so why are you wearing them and going on the road? All the people would be looking at you.

Interviewer: And is it shameful?

Salama: No, it's just you by yourself going wearing a tikshirta and it's clear you are going for an occasion or something, and its attractive.

Being seen in a tikshirta on the street is not ‘shameful’, it’s more ‘showing off’. Importantly, it relates to drawing attention to oneself, which is undesirable in Islamic teaching. While societal expectation are recognised by some respondents, some claim they are meeting these same requirements, but are given scope due to their age or stage.

Safia: And they say to me if, for example, I wear jellaba, they would say, “Why? You've got to live your adolescence. You've got to live your time”. Whereas if my mum she wore jeans for example, it will be shameful… I like jellaba. It's easy. You put it on, you get some sandals as well. You just, your hair just tie it up, and that's it you are ready …when I got into the city centre I wear something long … jellaba.

Safia’s comments here reflect her perception of a ‘window’ which exists in Morocco for young women between about 17 and 23+ years of age who are

not as knowledgeable or adherent in terms of Islam, to (largely) dress as they like.

This ‘window’ does not exist in Islamic teaching, as women are required to cover from the age of puberty which, at 19, Safia has surely reached. As mentioned, Safia is very small physically, and Maria and Memuna, who similarly exist in this clothing ‘window’ are too, which may have a bearing. However, of the two other respondents who do not wear hijab, one (Salama) is not small or particularly youthful looking and the other (Habiba) is thin, but neither particularly small or youthful looking.

It is likely that the combination of their limited knowledge of the teaching and their association of ‘Islamic clothing’ with marriage, maturity, stability and perhaps motherhood is the reason they exist in the ‘window’.

The ‘window’ concept is especially relevant if their stated intentions toward their future dress is considered, (ie to become covered women, often upon marriage), as it is in their responses to the questionnaire outlined above. In the case of Maria, who doesn’t like dresses or skirts, rarely wears jellaba and very seldom wears a hijab:

Maria: I hope that if I have enough money I will move to jellaba all the time. That I will make jellaba often.

Interviewer: Why? Jellaba is not pants. Is this likely to be when you get married or something?

Maria: When I get married, jellaba and scarf.

Interviewer: Why is that?

Maria: Respect, out of respect for my husband.

Interviewer: Do you think all husbands expect their wives to do this?

Maria: I want it like this.

Safia: At the age of my Mum and older, when they reach 30 or 40, the lady has to put a scarf otherwise they will be questioning why she doesn’t.

We are a Muslim country, so why doesn't she? But for me, it's alright. I'm young.

Memuna, who is the only respondent who did not state that she believed 'very strongly' in all the articles of faith (only in 6 out of 8), was supported by her mother in an idea of a (present) lack of obligation:

Memuna's mother: We, the women, should be covered. So it's more custom. The girls [like her daughter] who are still young can wear skirts, show off their hair, wear skirts and shirts with buttons.

Interviewer: And when does that stop?

Memuna's mother: For us, women used to stop wearing this stuff when they got married, but now you find those who are teachers for example wearing skirts, shirts and pants.

Interviewer: OK, but is it expected or assumed that all women will eventually put their scarf on?

Memuna's mother: Yes, for us, yes.

Of the interviewees who currently do not wear hijab, 'obligatory' in a religious sense was not prevalent, but it was felt in a societal sense. Obvious here too is the role of 'significant others' (Andersen et al. 2002) – most especially family members – who do or will expect their daughters to behave and present themselves in certain ways with regard to a collective society (Kagitçibasi 2007). The role of mothers, in particular, is an area understudied in Muslim societies, but education of children is one of – if not the primary – role of a mother in Islam (please see the Nature of Women and Men in Islam section of the Appendix) and accordingly the influence of the mother is significant.

VI.4.1.3 Utilitarian

The “ranking” of clothing (from ‘work’ jellaba to ‘best’) highlights both the issue of the divisions of public and private in Muslim societies, and also the difference in how the Moroccan jellaba is used compared to the Saudi/Gulf abaya, which is worn as an overdress as a jellaba is, but functions as a ‘coat’, in that it is removed on arrival at the destination.

Zainab's mother: The jellaba that gets old, I start wearing it for going outside, for going to the market, you know. But if I'm going to some house [an invitation], I will be wearing one of the good ones. .. For just going to the market to buy vegetables or something, I will wear a jellaba that is not that good. Still good, but not that good. And the same thing with the scarf, one that's not that high. If I am going into town, or for a walk, I will be wearing something up from it. And so the scarf. If I am going for an invitation, it will be the best ones.

Here the way the clothing is utilised relates to situation – work or play. In this way clothing can be seen in its role as simply a covering (Kaiser 1997) all the way to symbolising status, and a social situation (invitation or party).

VI.4.1.4 Social markers

In contrast to the prevalent idea in the literature that Muslim women's clothing is monolithic is the reality that if you know what to look for, all social markers can be recognised (Davis 1983).

Maria's mother: Materially for example I can give you an example that if there are ladies sitting there and wearing whatever – not just jellaba, tikshirta or whatever they are wearing – I can tell who is poor, who is indifferent, who is rich. But also their education level [formal education] and I can tell their ‘respect’ level – who is left alone from criticism and harassment.

This quote highlights the way in which all clothing can be seen as conspicuously symbolic – given that it meets the basic criterion of visibility and publicly consumed.

In distinct contrast to much of the literature privileging black as a specifically “Islamic” colour for Muslim women, black is not a colour favoured in Morocco, in fact only one interviewee liked black (or any dark colours) and regularly wore it. Black was not unacceptable, if worn with another colour by those who wore clothing pieces in public. No-one wore black, or would wear black, as a single piece, and it is also uncommon as a scarf colour. The *khimar* (circular scarf of varying length) which is often depicted in the media portraits of Muslim women, is most commonly black and in Morocco:

Khadija: Khimar. There is some debate over this.

Interviewer: Oh, is there?

Khadija: Yes, because it's not… There is some debate because it's more attractive actually.

Interviewer: Why?

Khadija: It's more attractive in that it's not part of this society. So its more attractive...[and] the whole thing started in Sale [a city near the capital]. With the events that took place in May 2003 – a bombing. The government said it was [a political party] who did it. So these ones, they say they are the ones who wear this [khimar], right, they're the wives... and that created a whole scary image and connection ... with those sort of clothes.

This idea of hijab as a political representation is present in the literature (Ahmed 1992; Sandıkçı and Ger 2005), but just this mention of it was made in these interviews. In the case of a reported conflict between scarf wearers and non-wearers in terms of communication or friendships, several interviewees specifically denied this. Further, observation on the local university campus showed hijab wearing and non-hijab wearing women having lunch or tea together and even walking around holding hands!

With further reference to the use of black, Sawda's comment is typical:

Sawda: Nobody wears black clothes in our house ... All black, no we don't in our house. People wear back with the other/different colours, white ..that's fine...but everything black including the scarf? No, that doesn't look good.

All interviewees (both main interviewees and their mothers) responding to this study listed light colours as their favourites for public consumption (except one), as can be seen by the examples of favourite clothes at the beginning of this chapter. This interview data is supported by general observations of the 'Moroccan street' where it is very unusual to see black being worn by women, unless they are tourists from the Gulf in some of the larger centres. Khadija's comment that the scarf style and colour (black) is seen as 'foreign' is also supported by observation and field notes.

VI.4.1.5 Clothing Communication

Two respondents attributed the communication achieved as related to their dress alone, providing evidence that the symbolic function of clothing is recognised, although from different perspectives:

Khadija's mother: I've been here for 30 years and I go and take a bus or go anywhere at night or in the daytime and nobody says anything. I've got children, daughters who go to high school, university and junior school, they all say it's a good education and they never trouble them in any way. The difference is in the clothing.

While another said,

Memuna: If you wear a skirt a bit short, they've got a view. If you wear a long thing, they've got a view.

Interviewer: Is this just general people, people in the world?

Memuna: Yeah, so depending on the clothes, they've got an idea.

Interviewer: So sometimes do you feel like what you are 'saying' [with your clothes], they are not 'reading' it right?

Memuna: For example, scarf wearers, they don't hassle them a lot. And others they do. But those who wear short skirts, they hassle them more. So it um, depends on the clothes.

Khadija's mother as a older, married, covered woman is 'read correctly' (in her view) while Memuna a young, single, uncovered woman considers herself 'misread'.

One respondent specifically thought of the message her clothing was sending both to other Muslims in her society, and to herself:

Khadija: There is a requirement of how to pass on the message [of Islam] so it you are wearing [some styles] people would see you as very traditional or strict. So even though a lady will give some nice talks, and have some nice way of talking etc, that does still stay as a barrier between her and her audience. Whatever, she wants to invite into the message....you should consider that, the environment you're living in so that you would be passing the message. So that you will be inviting the others, alright?... it's not just about conveying a message to others and to enforce your personality within a society. Its from me to say that I'm worth it in the sense that I'm following the [Islamic teaching]. Not just [that]. I've got to conform to whatever goes with these clothes, Islamic clothing. So that I will behave properly. And to convince myself that I've got to do it.

Others mentioned the 'communication package':

Habiba: Jellaba is 80% respectable. Modern is just 20% or so.

Interviewer: Why? Why is that?

Habiba: They might see with a jellaba that you are married and it gives you respect etc. Also clothing can be, it does give respect. So the person wearing it is the source of trouble sometimes. Not the clothes, but the person wearing it. The lady who is wearing it. The source of trouble is

her behaviour, which creates trouble for her and it's through her clothing, without her talking that can see her calling for trouble – if the pants are tight, the shirt is tight.

Interviewer: And do you think that in the case of modern clothes compared to jellaba, when people see the jellaba here, they think they know what that means? You know, they think they can list it? Whereas when they see the modern clothes, they're not quite sure what they're dealing with? They're not sure what that means.

Habiba: Yes, it does happen. But also some styles of jellaba are attractive. They are calling for trouble. Some styles³⁴.

Maria's mother (aged 53) and Zainab's mother (aged 50) also unfailingly receive good treatment wearing a jellaba and scarf around town, but also attribute this to more than just their clothing.

Interviewer: Do you attribute this [positive] treatment to the clothes? Not to any other thing. Is it the type of clothes you are wearing?

Maria's mother: The type of clothes and my way of behaving. So we can't drop one of them.

Zainab's mother: And all the things that go with it.

Interviewer: Oh, not just the clothes?

Zainab's mother: Everything. Even when walking you wouldn't be, you know, walking and … only the person next to you would be hearing you. No laughing this wild thing and this or that or you naming a person. We don't call by name.

This extension of the self into the clothing through behaviour and into the space around these interviewees also reflects situational self as defined by Belk (1975b). Having the 'behavioural' component added also meets Sirgy's (1982) requirements of a person having many self-concepts. It is also consistent with the 'working self-concept' (Markus and Kunda 1986) which is both malleable and stable. Also, because the meaning of the symbols is shared (or understood) the congruency is further reinforced. Further, there

³⁴ At this time a style of jellaba known as 'evase' (French for 'flared') was fashionable. An evase jellaba is a fitted A-line, so the chest is fitted and it flares out to a wider than usual skirt.

is a congruency exhibited between the person and what is symbolised by the dress.

Although another, typically covered, characterised negative responders as follows:

Khadija: There are those who do interpret [my clothing] incorrectly ... they are ... socialists, you know, comrades. They say ... the scarf is for the slave and [not] for the free, because the slaves used to put it on, but they're free now. So they say. And some of them they say they don't believe in the existence of Allah (s). Some say it is not obligatory. Some say they use it just to attract [people] ... it's a matter of [political] parties. Those who [are] scarf wearers are part of a party ... and to attract more people into the party so they do that. That's the only reason. So it becomes no longer Islamic, it's more Party Business ... They don't say 'Islamists' for example, the word [they use] is 'Islamaween', it's 'Islam for the purpose of something', like using Islam as a political tool.

So, for Khadija the negative responses were from people politically opposed to Islam, whereas for the non-hijab wearers it was much more broad:

Interviewer: If you are going to be harassed, who is it going to be by?

Habiba: Up to 25 [years old], those that harass – not criticise. Criticism starts from 30.

Interviewer: Is this men or women?

Habiba: Men from 30.

Interviewer: And who does it most? The telling off?

Habiba: Mostly women [over 40].

VI.4.2 Religion

In contrast to Chapter IV much of the research within the area of marketing, but also within the wider context of the study of Muslim women's clothing across the social sciences, has downplayed the religious aspects of Muslim

women's clothing choice, and few studies use women's own voices (Burton 2009b; Coates 1996).

The sources of Islamic information reported amongst the respondents provides an indication of their understanding and reflected commitment in their publicly consumed dress. This, in turn, informs the respondents meaning and motivation in their clothing choice – especially when combined with the other data sources presented – which is the focus of this study.

For example, Sawda recounts how much of her Islamic information came from her parents and through her mother (Sawda's mother) from her mother's father – some of it recounted in the interview is not part of Islamic teaching (for example, the requirement to wear your headscarf at all times). One part of their knowledge they mention here came from reading the Qur'an:

Sawda: We have always been conservative. But one day [her sister] was reading the Qur'an, Surat al Nur, and there is a verse about covering, about hijab. And it's obligatory upon us to cover ourselves exactly as we are [now], as it is obligatory for us to pray. So that's how we learned to cover, you know, the head, to cover the hair etc. The only parts to not cover, the hands, the face and the feet. I don't cover the feet. Some they say, yeah, you cover the feet as well.

Khadija came to Islamic knowledge through attending talks and reading books. With what she learned, she educated her family (including her mother). She is in the process of learning, so she still does some things that she will probably change when she has more information.

Memuna is the most 'distant' from the teaching in terms of questionnaire responses and 'tone' (for example, her response that being a good Muslim was "of little importance" to her). Her mother is very strongly influenced by the customs of her hometown and those norms are the ones being perpetuated to her daughter – for example, there is no requirement for

Memuna to wear a scarf (she is 20) and there won't be until she is 30-ish. This is very late by the prevalent cultural norms in Morocco, and, of course, extremely late by the teaching.

Although mosque attendance, especially for Friday prayer – which is the main day of worship for Muslims and consists of a speech with the congregational prayer, is very important for Muslim men in the teaching, for women it is not required (Sander 1997). However, as a source of religious education, attendance at Friday prayer (especially) and other attendance as evidence of a connection with the mosque is relevant.

All of the main interviewees attended Friday prayer less than once a month, except Memuna, who responded “once a month”. This is in contrast to the mothers, of whom four attended weekly (Salama’s mother, Khadija’s mother, Sawda’s mother, Maria’s mother), one once a month (Hafsa’s mother) and four less often than that (Habiba’s mother, Memuna’s mother, Safia’s mother, Zainab’s mother). Although it is common for women to attend the mosque more often and/or to seek religious knowledge once their children are older and their demands on their mothers time less, the pursuit of religious knowledge through weekly attendance by Salama’s mother and, especially, Maria’s mother may seem discordant. Neither Salama nor Maria reflect any evidence of their mother’s education or knowledge of Islam – which may be due to the fact that it is only now, as mature women, they are receiving/pursuing any. Given the respondents stated commitment to Islam as per their questionnaire responses, while limited knowledge is reflected in the clothing of 50% of the main respondents in this sample, perhaps this seeking of knowledge by the mothers is simply a life-stage marker.

Further mosque attendance (that is, excluding Friday prayer) for congregational prayer was undertaken by Zainab (“many times a month”), Hafsa and Memuna (“once a month”), and Salama (“twice a year for the two

Eid prayers"). Both Safia's mother and Memuna's mother did not attend the mosque at all.

VI.4.2.1 Public and Private

In keeping with the general separation of men and women in Islam, and the definition of 'private' relating to 'who' rather than 'where' (as has been discussed), the respondents are very careful to guard their privacy.

Interviewer: And at the wedding, if it's mixed and the people are not family would you have your ghandora on, or jellaba?

Maria's mother: If there are members of my family I would take my jellaba off [when I got there].

Interviewer: If there is a womens section do you take your scarves off? Is that what you get your hair done for?

Maria's mother: No, even with ladies I like to stay with my scarf on [if] the men are not very far away from us.

Interviewer: So when you get your hair done, what's that for?

Maria's mother: If there were only ladies, I would take it off. But if there were also men I wouldn't. If there was any chance of men. But if they were only my family I will take my scarf off.

Further, in keeping with the further distinction of the private as a sphere for beauty and beautification (clothing and all aspects of appearance) the guarding of privacy is extended to photography, as has been mentioned previously and also discussed with regard to the research approach of Sandıkçı and Ger (2006).

Zainab's mother: Wedding is the top occasion. It's number one.

Interviewer: This is women only?

Zainab's mother: Yes... you know if our son is coming to get his bride, and if there's some camera, we are scarce, because we shouldn't be seen by outsiders. ... Even if it is our children, we wouldn't be sitting together. We wouldn't be all together and we wouldn't be [being photographed] even without children. Except if he comes to get his bride and then go...

[that's] the only time when a male would come in, is when he gets his bride and if he's from the family. If he's an outsider, no. If he's an outsider he will be in another room. Right... and if there is some dancing, we don't do that.

Interviewer: And at the parties, can you take your jellaba [with tikshirta underneath] off in a mixed party or do you still have to wear it?

Habiba: I can take it off when it's indoors and mixed, yes.

Khadija: [At the wedding], if it's just very close family, like my aunt and sons of my aunt, [I do wear tikshirta]. We do some very traditional dance. We don't follow strictly the Islamic rules for like the extended family, but it's not free mixing.

Interviewer: Would outsiders see you in your tikshirta or kaftan?

Khadija: Yes, it's not free mixing, but, yes, they could. For example, if they are upstairs, they might go up and then down. Or if we are going to get the bride, for example to [take her to] her house we go wearing our tikshirta.

Interviewer: Outside?

Khadija: Yes

Interviewer: So if you wear your [party outfit] there you still wear over the top your jellaba?

Memuna's mother: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: What about if the parties are mixed parties? Do you still take your jellaba off?

Memuna's mother: We take off our jellaba, but we still wear our scarves. Yes.

Interviewer: So when there's only women, do you wear tikshirta with no scarf?

Memuna's mother: Yes, I do still wear it [age]... [the younger ones] don't wear the scarf. They brush their hair and have it made up.

The responses to these questions showed much diversity with no-one travelling to a party wearing their party clothes, but mixed responses on what is usually appropriately worn when there. The Islamic rules are clear about who women need to cover in front of, but perhaps because there is less

inter-family marriage in Morocco (Rashad et al. 2005) than in more strongly tribally based Arab societies (for example, the Gulf States, please see Torstrick and Faier 2009), culturally the ‘family’ parameter extends to cousins and other “eligible” future marriage partners. From the questionnaire responses, this is not a reflection of a lack of commitment to Islam or its teaching. However, Morocco is known in the Muslim world (and outside it) as ‘liberal’ due to the relatively relaxed interaction of men and women and, as can be seen in the introduction to each participant at the beginning of this chapter, this leeway can be seen in clothing practice. The diversity is right across the interview group, both by age and clothing adherence.

Another point, which serves to illustrate the concept of public and private by highlighting, in these cases, the private, concerns husbands:

Memuna’s mother: So that also when your husband comes in, he finds you wearing good clothing, covering and good. We give our men value as well.

Interviewer: What does that mean?

Memuna’s mother: Respect. So that they will see their lady covered. Clean. So clean, so that is part of respect.

Zainab’s mother: Like if you are at home, like your husband coming in or somebody else coming in, you will be wearing something acceptable. Not just like you are sitting always in the kitchen [ie, working]…that [your clothing] is clean, proper, organised. Even if it is simple it should be clean.

And the influence of mothers within the family:

Interviewer: Have you got any like that [tight evase]?

Zainab’s mother: No I don’t make them and I don’t let my daughters make them or wear them. That’s a fashion I do not follow…[tight clothes] I wouldn’t wear them, nor my children, my daughters, Not even those I like. If one of those I like wears it I will give her something to wear until she goes home.

This quote further reinforces the role of mothers as ‘significant others’ (Andersen et al. 2002).

VI.4.2.2 Respect

In terms of the main interviewees, a relationship to the jellaba is considered as easy (Safia, above), (Khadija, below), but also as preferred for some situations such as the Muslim Holy Day and the Holy Month:

Maria: I wear jellaba mostly on Fridays, but also from time to time to the market, the city centre or somewhere.

Interviewer: Why do you wear jellaba on Fridays, why not Mondays?

Maria: It's tradition. And it's the Eid of the Believers.

Habiba: Ramadan is also an occasion.

Interviewer: Why Ramadan? What different clothes do you wear for Ramadan?

Habiba: Mostly jellaba.

Interviewer: Every day a jellaba, or just about?

Habiba: Yes, almost every day. Oh, and a shawl as well.

Interviewer: Why, why do you wear that?

Habiba: It's a holy month and we respect it.

Similarly, the relationship to hijab specifically for some situations can be considered by those who don’t wear hijab in everyday life such as visiting a family in which there has been a death and, of course, it is obligatory for the prayer:

Interviewer: Do you usually wear a scarf?

Habiba: No.

Interviewer: For Ramadan? Or when people die?

Habiba: Yes. Yes, for us mostly they do it. And for us between family we all do it.

Interviewer: Is that if somebody dies in your family?
Habiba: Yeah, and the prayer as well.

Interviewer: Do you have a scarf so that if you have to go to something and wear the jellaba that the scarf goes with it if you have to wear a scarf?

Safia: No, only for a death. And that's just anything you find.

Reiterating the emphasis on respect symbolised by clothing these respondents reflect the success of the communication of clothing which meets the Islamic guidelines in the society when choosing it to show respect, as well as wearing it with the intention of getting respect (Banister and Hogg 2001).

VI.4.2.3 Rightful

The last section of the questionnaire contained open-ended questions concerned two clothing sets. The first set showed a Moroccan hooded jellaba with a plain square scarf as is commonly worn in Morocco. The second set showed a 'Pakistani' – a trouser suit in what is known in Morocco as Pakistani style (a mid-thigh length tunic and straight-leg pants) – embroidered with traditional Moroccan embroidery and also featuring a plain square scarf (Figure VI.6.3-1 below). Respondents were asked if they, (1) knew women like those who would wear the clothes, if they admired them (or not) and why, and (2) if they would like to be like these women.

Figure VI-17: Clothing Sets



Notes 22: (L) Moroccan jellaba with square scarf, (R) 'Pakistani' with square scarf

Particularly in the case of clothing set one, the Moroccan jellaba with square scarf, the responses for hijab wearers were:

Hafsa: (1) "My mother, I admire her a lot because she educated me on the principles and values and tenets [of Islam]"; (2) "Yes".

Zainab: (1) "Yes"; (2) "I want to be like her".

Khadija: (1) "I know a lot and I'm one of them. Not admiration, but I wish from Allah (s) that they would wear this garment and respect it"; (2) "I like to be a Muslimah [Muslim woman] who applies the legislation of Allah and who has established its higher role which she was created for".

Sawda: (1) "I know women like her and I admire her"; (2) "I would like to be like her".

These responses may be as expected, given the profiles of the four hijab wearing respondents, but the responses from the remaining five interviewees raise some points for discussion:

Salama: (1) "Yes, my mum"; (2) "Yes, insha'Allah [God willing]".

Habiba: (1) "Yes, a friend of mine and I'm very admiring of her because Islam isn't just in wearing a jilbab and a head cover. Islam is the deen of love and forgiveness. The Messenger of Allah said, "None of you will believe until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself"; (2) "Insha'Allah [God willing]".

Maria: (1) "I know a lot of women that put on the head cover and wear jellaba and I'm very admiring of them because it is respected, modest

clothes and they don't show the women's awrah [private areas of the body]"; (2) "Yes, I would indeed like to be like these women because they are respectful and modest women and I wish to be like them and I will be like them insha'Allah [God willing]".

Safia: (1) "I know [people like this]"; (2) "In the future, I would like to be a Muslim woman wholehearted to my deen [way of life – Islam] and respected and to love good to all people".

Memuna: (1) "yes, yes, because she is very respected and she modest and she follows the Islamic clothing guidelines"; (2) "Insha'Allah [God willing]".

All of the non-hijab wearers had a positive opinion of these clothes and those who wore them, and all of them wanted to become like them – even Maria, Safia and Memuna – with Safia and Memuna even invoking Islam in their response. In particular, in the cases of Safia and Memuna, the youngest interviewees and the most fashion conscious, the response seems almost childlike. Their fashion interest is not a rebellion against their family or society and is not seen as such by them or a society that provides them a 'window'. Their lives are very sheltered, as they are still at high school, and they have little financial independence (or autonomy) as there are very few part time jobs.

Further, the uniformly positive responses reflect an "ideal" aspired to, in some of the cases, as mentioned, quite a distance from the place the respondents now occupy. There has been some reported difficulty using projective techniques in the Muslim world (Tuncalp 1988), given that it could be seen as objectionable by Muslims on the basis that you are making judgements about someone else which is discouraged in the teaching. However, these results are consistent with other studies done on Muslim youth in Malaysia which show how important, respected and influential parents are to teenagers and young adults as models and figures to emulate (Yusof et al. 2002). And also the conclusions of Ekinci and Riley (2003) which

show ideal self image to be a better predictor of brand loyalty than actual self image.

VI.4.2.4 Knowledge vs Information

Four of the respondents made reference to the Islamic clothing rules in their interviews and wore hijab themselves (Khadija, Sawda, Zainab, Hafsa). Two others made reference, but do not wear hijab (Habiba, Salama). The three remaining respondents made no mention with regard to themselves (Safia, Maria, Memuna), but in one case did regarding others (Safia) – please see Section VI.7.2.

Amongst these respondents, the hijab wearers show that they have the Islamic information, and then use it to act, or not to act:

Interviewer: Do you consider the Islamic clothing rules when you buy your clothes?

Zainab: Not necessarily, yet it should cover.

Interviewer: Oh, OK, so not necessarily all the rules, but it should cover?

Zainab: The skirt would not reach my knees, down to my knees, and the pants, – sometimes the shirt is not as long as going down to the knee or beyond the knee, it should but I don't.

Zainab's position here is directly reflected in her favourite clothing. Notably, she knows what the rules are and her questionnaire reflects a strong commitment to them, but she still chooses not to follow them in her clothing choices.

In contrast, Khadija uses her knowledge in the following way:

Interviewer: What do you look for when shopping for clothes?

Khadija: First thing is that it should be suitable. So, it should be Islamic clothing. It should be loose and should be beneath the knee. And it shouldn't be transparent. And I should like it, so the colour as well as the shape of it, the cutting.

Interviewer: What sort of colour? Do you mean all this has to be acceptable to you or all this has to conform? Does it conform to the Islamic rules or should it conform to what, what is it?

Khadija: First of all it's the Islamic requirements. It should not go against the Islamic requirements. An example is the colour red, red is a colour that is attractive on ladies. It is not something suitable, so I avoid that. Within the other colours available I can choose, but the colour shouldn't be attractive, but still within these boundaries I shouldn't be overly strict with myself. There's still ample choices that I can make.

Similarly Khadija's position is reflected in her public clothing, what she wore to the interview and her questionnaire responses.

The two other respondents that mention Islamic requirements (non hijab wearers: (Habiba, aged 23) and (Salama, aged 25) make much of their meeting of them:

Salama: I don't wear clothes that are not appropriate. If I wear a skirt, the skirt is long. If I wear pants, I put on a shirt that is long as well. I don't wear clothes that are sort of tight or attractive in some way...Adidas track pants, they are still covering. But the classic ones that suit a lady. Pants, blue jeans for example, or any jeans – are still covering. They're not tight or anything.

Habiba: If I wear a skirt that is tight up here [waist/hips], I will have a jacket or a vest that is wide here [same place]. I wouldn't wear a skirt that is tight – because some of them are like evase which is tight here [chest] and wide here [hip]… if it was something tight … I would wear something on the top, like a jacket or a vest or something like that.

As part of this study interviewees were asked to show their favourite clothing (please see Section VI.3) and this information was also used to classify their overall clothing adherence. Habiba was the only respondent who did not show any of her clothes. Salama did so and what she showed was a surprise

in light of her interview and questionnaire responses. In fact, her clothing was the most unexpected as it includes a bright pink and white fitted suit!

These responses are very significant, because they reflect that there is a difference between having knowledge, and using it in connection with self-representation in clothing. Given that the questionnaires reflect commitment in terms of both belief and practice to Islam, the choices these interviewees make in terms of the use of their knowledge in terms of reflecting it, or not reflecting it, in their dress is noteworthy. It also supports Nasr (2009) in his point that while Muslims may not look like Muslims to non-Muslims (ie may not dress in clothing which conforms to the Islamic guidelines – especially in terms of women not wearing hijab), that does not necessarily reflect a lack of commitment to Islam or its teachings.

In a related point, two mothers mentioned other forms of education Moroccan young people were getting (or not getting):

Maria's Mother: All of my children, they don't watch TV ...

Interviewer: Do you see a direct link, do you? Between digital satellite and corruption?

Maria's mother: Yes, because [of] the relationship. And yes, because boys and men are not educated outside. So their way of acting ...

Interviewer: Oh, you mean outside countries?

Maria's mother: No, no, here, when you go out. They are not ...well brought up...When you go out with our daughters beside you, they don't respect you. They say words that don't respect even your home.

Hafsa's mother: It's an interesting thing. Before the girls used to think that to get married they had to show themselves [when] out. Whereas today, no. Now they know that the boys are getting [kind of] knowledgeable or [something]. They are no longer interested in this. So a girl they know that, for example, the boys want to get married to those who respect themselves.

These two mothers quotes seem to be contradictory. However, both have similarly aged daughters – Maria does not cover and is, in fact, the least clothing adherent on the continuum based on the triangulated data. Hafsa, on the other hand, is towards the adherent end of the continuum. This experience lends support to the idea that the society ‘tolerates’ rather than ‘supports’ the clothing style/s employed by the less adherently dressed on the clothing continuum.

VI.4.2.5 Femininity

All the interviewees expressed surprise at the idea of ‘unisex clothing’ and, that it could be applied to their commonly worn items such as the Moroccan jellaba and denim jeans. As mentioned previously, Islam supports the clear definition of both femininity and masculinity and strongly discourages “cross-dressing”.

Interviewer: What if you buy jeans or something like that that's sort of unisex? Then how do you counter femininity there?

Salama: We don't have unisex.

Interviewer: Don't you?

Salama: No.

Interviewer: What about jeans? They're unisex, aren't they?

Salama: Oh no, there are differences.

Interviewer: Like what?

Salama: Jeans for girls are different than the ones for boys ... girls ones usually are not, the legs are wide. Also the buttons, left for women and right for boys. And also if there is a mannequin, and they are displaying them, you can tell as well, girls jeans.

Memuna: I do put it in my mind to buy something that is special for girls and not boys. I had a problem once with blue jeans. I got some pants, with something on it and sort of straight and my Mum told me to take it back, and so I got a looser one, wider leg. I took it back because it looked

boyish. Girls should be wearing girls clothes and boys boys clothes...Boys and girls jeans are different.

Interviewer: And why is it that boys should be wearing boys clothes and girls should be wearing girls clothes?

Memuna: So you will know boys are boys and girls are girls. Especially now that you find some girls with haircuts that are boyish. And with the fact that some of them don't put on earrings so you can't tell. [It's necessary] that the femininity of the lady will be known – Allah (s) has given her femininity, not masculinity. Yes.

The ready-made clothing available in Morocco, even for babies, is very gender distinctive. The pink and blue division commonly seen in New Zealand is not prevalent; rather the distinction is based more on frills, lace, embroidery and details or additions to collars, hems, pockets etc. This style of distinction carries over into adult clothing, especially noticeable in jellaba nuances of pocket, hood, embellishment and ornament, but also in details of ready-made clothing. A number of examples of this can be seen in the interviewees favourite clothes photographs at the beginning of this chapter.

VI.4.3 Life Stage

VI.4.3.1 Age as a marker

Just as the respondents who were unmarried and did not wear hijab noted, age was a significant marker of 'change of life stage'. In the case of the mothers, it related to colours and styles that were/could be worn; in the case of the younger interviewees it related to wearing the jellaba (its relationship to hijab will be examined in the next section). For the mothers, 'growing up' also relates to changing from multiple clothing pieces to single pieces as separate from the consideration of hijab. (Safia's mother is 40 years old, so 27 years ago she was 13 – the common age of puberty):

Interviewer: Would you wear a skirt?

Safia's mother: No. 27 years ago we moved here and we've never worn anything like a skirt except when it's fully covering to the ankle. My Dad used to buy us skirts and pants when we lived in our other house, before we moved here.

Interviewer: Do you have particular colours or styles that you would or wouldn't wear?

Sawda's mother: The colours of little girls or young women. I wouldn't consider buying their colours ...

Interviewer: Do you wear pants?

Salama's mother: Mmmm?

Interviewer: Trousers.

Salama's mother: Underneath?

Interviewer: Yeah, at all...Jeans then.

Salama's mother: No, I don't wear jeans (laughing).

While in a western context many women of the age of these mothers would also consider jeans unsuitable for them, there are many who do wear them. In Morocco the idea is laughable for older women.

VI.4.3.2 Hijab

The wearing, or not wearing, of hijab is a very important consideration in Moroccan society. And the interviewee who discussed this was very harsh in her judgment of non-wearing adult women (although a non-wearer herself):

Safia: Like the age of like my Mum or older, for them, when they reach like 30 or 40, the lady has to put a scarf otherwise they will be questioning why she doesn't. We are in a Muslim country, so why doesn't she? But for me, it's alright. I'm young ... For example if like a lady passes by who's 50 years old, if she's well covered I would just go head down and I will respect her, but if she's not, I might just look at her in a funny or strange way or I might even make dua'a [invocation to God] upon her.

Interviewer: Dua'a ON her, not dua'a FOR her?

Safia: Yes.

Interviewer: Like what, ooh, get away from me?

Safia: Like, curse upon those who did not educate you well, for example...Because we are a Muslim country. The prayer is at 7 years. And scarf is [at] puberty. And you got people who became Muslim and they put scarf on. So how about us, [in a] Muslim country. There are people who ask us, "Why don't you put on your scarf?"... most of them think they will do it when they get married. So there is no point. What I was looking for, I've got it. So why would I? I should be carried now [that I am married]. I am not talking about myself.

This comment further highlights the cultural ‘window’ for the under 23’s – Safia is 19 – which has been mentioned in other sections. This “window” is not part of the teaching of Islam – as Safia clearly states above, wearing hijab is required from puberty, which one imagines is at an age earlier than 19 – but is tolerated in Moroccan society. An important point to consider, too, is that the ‘window’ which features throughout this research is not actively promoted by the society, it is more ‘tolerated’, where it is disliked, but most people think it is not their business to regulate others:

Zainab's mother: I respect myself and I'm respected ...I respect myself so I wouldn't be doing it [wearing revealing clothing]. And my husband doesn't like it, and he doesn't like her .. he doesn't like his wife to be naked [improperly dressed] even that much - but at 12 or 13 he wouldn't allow it. He doesn't like his daughters to be out, not wearing proper clothing, not covering. And he doesn't like those who are outside not covering themselves properly.

Interviewer: And, what about you? Do you just do that because of him?

Zainab's mother: No, not because of him... and he never forced it on any of his children. That's what he likes, but he never forced upon them to have any of this covering.

As Safia states above, everyone knows the rules on prayer and hijab, and the ages at which these acts become obligatory in Islam. Further, as shown in the

above quotes harassment and criticism over dress is very specific and does not usually occur for covered women of any age.

In some cases, as Memuna's mother (below) states, the 'window' concept is taken to extremes:

Memuna's mother: The lady who doesn't cover her head is no good. It's shameful or they tell her off, her parents or the children of her brothers etc.

Interviewer: And what if the, if a lady waits until she's 40, can she be getting told off all the time? Like OK what time does the telling off start?

Memuna's mother: From now they start telling them to put the scarf on and so from 25 or so – especially people from my hometown.

Interviewer: So is it all Moroccans but especially those from your hometown?

Memuna's mother: Yes, especially my hometown. Especially there. So [at 25] the girl wouldn't walk around men and doesn't care even when they are sitting [in a big group] all just men. When there is some invitation and then men are sitting. No lady would bring in the food – her husband or son will go and bring the food in.

Interviewer: So is it like growing up? When they put the scarf on is it like they grow up? Does it mean they have grown up?

Memuna's mother: Yeah, it's proved that it's growing up, that she has grown up.

Interviewer: So no girl will bring the food who's what? Will someone who's 10 bring in some food? Or is there sometime when it stops when you won't go into a big group of men like that – you know what I mean?

Memuna's mother: Oh, when she's 18 or so it's fine and we can send her in. Yes.

The situation Memuna's mother outlines – uncovered women of marriageable age bringing the food into large groups of men is very unusual. Typically, either one of the sons, the husband or much younger children (8–12 years old for example) would run back and forth with items and messages between the women's area and the men's. As Memuna's mother states, this is norm for their hometown, rather than for Morocco. As has been noted several times

already, Memuna is the 'least' committed to, or interested in, Islam of the respondents and the culture within the family clearly consists primarily of referencing the hometown culture rather than any other (ie her parents are the main 'significant others' (Andersen et al. 2002)). This is further evidenced below.

Hijab is often worn at all times by the mothers, which is not a requirement in Islamic teaching:

Interviewer: Do you always wear your scarf?

Sawda's mother: At home and outside.

Interviewer: Oh, at home as well? You always wear it at home?

Sawda's mother: Mmm. In the presence of all, I will wear it.

Interviewer: Why?

Sawda's mother: I will wear it. Because I'm an old lady. That's from the olden days. My Dad ...my Dad used to put used to tell them it's forbidden to not cover the head.

Interviewer: All the time?

Sawda's mother: He said to us also to cover up to here, to cover up to here, the hair and to not wear tight clothes or to have uncovered back here for example. All of these places.

Interviewer: Inside and outside? All the time?

Sawda's mother: Yes, but the scarf all the time. All the time.

Interviewer: Why is it shameful to go out without your scarf of jellaba on?

Salama's mother: Well, if a lady has got a husband and children they will just laugh at her if she out without a scarf. It's shameful, something shameful.

Interviewer: Is this even for young people?

Salama's mother: No, Young people no, no.

Interviewer: Oh OK. Do you wear your scarf at home as well?

Salama's mother: Yes, but when I was young I didn't.

Interviewer: So why is that?

Salama's mother: It's a habit. I do that, that's all.

Memuna's mother: When we got to 45, 46 even at home I wear my scarf. And before now, at home. We people from [her hometown], from that area, when we get older we put the scarf on all the time ...before 30 though, some of them [from her hometown] don't put the scarf on outside.

The scarf worn is either the commonly very large Moroccan underscarf which is usually triangular and white and tied at the back of the neck and/or on the top of head, or a full hijab as would be worn in public.

VI.4.3.3 Marriage as a marker

A significant change, or proposed change, occurs for the young women upon marriage – in the cases where the women are not following the clothing guidelines in the culturally tolerated ‘window’ period.

For the one main interviewee who was married:

Interviewer: Do you dress differently now to before you got married? Is there some, does it make a big difference?

Khadija: No. Jellabas I didn't used to wear at all before, that's all. Jellaba is quite easy to put on and it doesn't take long, that long to put it on. It's quick and off you go, so I go to my parents place, and there I can be like here. Whereas the jilbab takes more time.

For one mother of an interviewee, arguably the most distant in her current attire to the clothing guidelines in Islamic teaching:

Maria's mother: Even when they don't wear proper clothing, when they get married, like the man tells them, can give them a condition for example ... start covering ... jellaba and scarf. They would. They would obey their husbands and they wouldn't not listen, not obey or there wouldn't be fighting between them or anything like that. It would be fine.

In fact, very significant for this point, are the responses to the open-ended clothing questions on the questionnaire as outlined in the case introductions at the beginning of this chapter.

A reinforcement of marriage as a marker comes with the responses to the two clothing sets at the end of the questionnaire. Clothing set one (shown above) was a Moroccan style jellaba and a square scarf – typical clothing for Morocco. Clothing set two (shown above) was a “Pakistani”, made in a Moroccan style (Moroccan material and embroidery) with the same scarf – a far less typical ensemble. In response to clothing set one, the image of the Moroccan jellaba and scarf as the ‘uniform’ of the married woman was repeatedly reinforced. When asked to describe (1) the clothing and (2) who wore them the hijab-wearing interviewees responded:

Hafsa: “Covering clothes”, “the mother firstly and secondly the hijab female wearers”;

Zainab: “Modest clothes”, “women who conserve or guard their deen [way of life]”.

Khadija: “Traditional Moroccan clothes, it turns up fitting the descriptions of an Islamic garment”, “the Moroccan women and the foreigners”.

Sawda: “Good garment”, “All the modest women”.

And the non-hijab wearing:

Habiba: “traditional garment, baggy jilbab, the cover is big, gives the impression of modesty and dignity”, “the married, most of them. Some young girls and hijab wearers”.

Maria: “Traditional garment, comfortable and respectful, and also an Islamic garment”, “respectable women, the normal, most people in our country, the married women”.

Safia: “Respected clothes; traditional Moroccan clothes”, “married women, the elderly and some hijab wearing young girls”.

Memuna: “Good and modest clothes”, “the respected woman”.

Salama: “A normal garment, any women or sister wears it”, “the married women a lot”.

These responses indicate that the jellaba and a scarf is the standard dress of a (married) adult woman in Morocco, and reflect the congruence they (expect to) feel with those women and that state. Further, the jellaba is accepted as both a traditional Moroccan garment and one that meets Islamic requirements, and several further comments indicate that. This clothing set greatly surpassed the acceptance levels of clothing set two which was seen as inadequate by many respondents either in terms of Islamic requirements or on the basis of its attractiveness/ability to cause the wearer (assumed in all cases to be young) to stand out.

VI.4.4 Personal Choice

VI.4.4.1 Market Availability

The markets are supplied with clothing pieces from Europe in the main, with limited amounts from other Arab countries such as Syria. This clothing is for 'specialist' stores as mentioned above, such as the shops 'for the Sisters', which sell clothing for covered women which meets the Islamic requirements. It is obvious, then, that there will be an area of mismatch between what can legitimately be clothing pieces that 'cover' as required, and those that do not. Especially given that the sources these clothes come from are not looking to meet Islamic guidelines. In that case, the recent European fashions for $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeves and trousers will impact the Moroccan market:

Habiba: I wear pants that are not long to here [ankle], but up to here [3/4], so that is how long they should be. The shirts the same – I wouldn't wear it up to here [short sleeved].

Salama: A skirt with an opening at the front or the back, it's fine. It's long… During the summer I can wear short-sleeves – a tee-shirt, for example.

While these two interviewees wear $\frac{3}{4}$ or short sleeves or pants or skirts with splits in them, they do not wear hijab, so it is more surprising that a style might be shared with a hijab wearing interviewee as below:

Hafsa: I like some skirts and shirts. Some of the skirts – they usually have an opening in them – and you need to wear tights underneath. If you closed the openings, you wouldn't be comfortable walking, so if it was covering and the openings were fine, and I like it, I will buy it.

Having problems with availability in the market, either in terms of choice or suitability, is also an acknowledged problem, although more for the hijab wearers who are less willing to compromise on length or looseness:

Khadija: I buy material and sew it, or I buy things already made. But mostly I buy material and make it.

Interviewer: Why?

Khadija: Well, because it's not long enough, though they say that it's long, it's not long enough. It doesn't sort of meet the requirements.

Interviewer: Is this because you are tall? Or is this just because the clothes are a little bit too short?

Khadija: Usually there is something missing in what is available at the market. So that's why I don't like it. There's something missing about it. Like the cutting, I might not like it. But lately there is more I like available. Now there is a shop that they, where they bring in clothes from Syria. And he has got good stuff. By my standards.

Hafsa: Sometimes things are standard in the market. Even if I want a 38 or a 40, I can't find it. Sometime I will buy pants but get the rest made by [her friend, a tailor who specialises in making clothing pieces]. That's mostly during summer. In the winter, it's just jumper and jacket, so no problem.

Interviewer: Do you find clothes that fit you and are suitably long in the sleeve and everything at the market mostly?

Hafsa: No, I don't. [But] today in the city centre, there are a few shops especially for hijab wearers.

It is less of one for the others:

Interviewer: Is there ever a time when you want a new suit or something and you go to the market and there's nothing you can accept there? There's nothing. Does this ever happen?

Habiba: It happened once during Eid. I wanted to buy something for Eid, and I went and they had those pants with wide legs, and I was looking for the colour dark red. I couldn't find it. I waited until after Eid, and I got it.

Perhaps the mothers give the most obvious illustration of the 'clothing evolution' in Morocco. Traditionally, many Moroccan women wore a *haik*, a black or white sheet-like garment with which they wrapped their bodies (please see Figure VI.8.1-1:below). Following on from the *haik* was the Moroccan *jellaba* with a very large hood that women pulled up over their heads and a *lithem*, or face veil, often worn under the nose in Morocco (please see Figure VI.8.1-2 below).

Figure VI-18: Haik



Notes 23: Personal Photograph, Morocco, 2005

Figure VI-19: Lithem



Notes 24: Source:<http://www.travelgogirl.com/?p=3464>

The current style, jellaba with square scarf, followed the jellaba with *lithem*. As all of the interviewees had their jellabas tailor made, the availability of material and the changes to its presentation and availability have impacted the clothing choices Muslim women have had to make. Several mothers recount that material, available pre-cut into 2.5 or 3m sections, is bought from a material shop and taken to a tailors for sewing. However, the pre-cut sections used to be 3.5m, to accommodate the large hood, which was used instead of a scarf. With the change in the supply of material, women wanting a big hood would have to buy two pieces of material significantly increasing the cost and also causing much to be left over.

Most Muslim women wear a jellaba with a separate scarf and no face cover now, at least partially, it can be seen, as a result of the lack of availability of material pre-cut to a suitable size.

Interviewees also reported that ready-made jellabas are now available in the market, although often they are of poor quality and/or too short/tight.

VI.4.4.2 Independent Shopping

The reality of just how much independent shopping the interviewees do, and have done, is evident in their responses. The school uniform at the schools both Safia and Memuna attend is a white, short-sleeved smock. This must be worn over all clothing worn to school, unless the student is wearing a jellaba. It is compulsory until year 9 (16 years old).

Safia: Before, when I was about 16 and before that, I used to wear anything, fashion or non-fashion.

Memuna: Almost 60% of my clothes came from outside. They brought it from France [her older brother and her father], from when I was little until the end of year 9, so 16 [years old].

Maria had her clothes made for her until she was 18.

Maria: My mother used to make all our clothes [knitting and sewing]...until we [finished] high school – about 5 years ago.

Added to that, there are almost no part-time jobs, so these young women don't have any money of their own and their families do not have a lot of money either, in most cases (please refer to Participant Profiles Table VI-1 above). In reality, they have a space between school 'smock' and 'marriage' to wear what they like, and then they have little money to fund it. It is during this time that they either take advantage of the 'cultural window' or continue to follow the Islamic clothing guidelines which would have been in place for them since puberty. Further, they all receive clothing from overseas-based relatives:

Memuna: Here my Mother used to buy my stuff. And my brother and Dad used to bring me stuff as well. But from year 10 I started wearing my own stuff. From year 10 until now the 60% is decreasing.

Interviewer: But you still get heaps of clothes from your brother and father who bring them from France?

Memuna: 30 or 25% now, and it's still decreasing.

Interviewer: Why? Do you not like the clothes they bring?

Memuna: No, because they bring less and the styles they bring I don't like...sometimes what they bring is too small or too big. Mostly it's because my Dad is old, and ...

Safia: I buy from the market, the shops here, but not the boutiques because they are more expensive...My paternal aunt brings me clothing – like this one is from Holland, those 2 pants, France, that one from Belgium...So I don't buy much...I don't buy every year. I buy once a year, but my aunt sends me things twice a year or more, and I've got a friend, who buys for me once a month. Whenever her Dad gets paid.

Habiba: Rarely do I buy new clothes. It's my paternal aunt who comes from Germany and she get us clothes. Me and the others. All of us.

Interviewer: And what percentage?

Habiba: About 80% from my aunt, and 20% I buy.

Interviewer: And do you like the things your aunty chooses? Does your aunt send a whole lot of stuff which is for all of the girls and they choose what they want? Or does she send stuff for her and each of her sisters individually?

Habiba: Sometimes she does send some things that I don't like. And everyone gets their own sack with their name on it.

Habiba had the largest percentage (80%), and Maria the lowest (5%), but given the combination of factors: lack of money, lack of choice until 16+, potential 'window' of opportunity and the reliance on overseas relatives, the amount of clothing, and clothing choice for these women is very limited.

Concerning the place of second hand clothing as an option:

Safia: There are those who can't afford clothes, so they buy second hand. But here are also those who have, they buy, but they don't find [what they want] in the new, [so] they buy it in the old stuff.

Interviewer: So there's no fashion for them [second hand clothes]?

Safia: No.

As Tseëlon (1992) notes, second-hand clothing is used by people who can risk looking poor in a stylised way, marking their distance from both conservative dress and from real poverty (p11).

Also, the point should be made that the clothing coming from relatives overseas is not necessarily new either, but second hand in the various European countries the relatives live in.

VI.5 Summary

A reference which occurred across the interviews and across the questions, was that of 'public' and 'private' and how the concepts were operationalised in this context. The avoidance of attention attracting when in mixed gender environments is brought out clearly by Maria's mother speaking of the markets and the bus, and by Memuna and Safia talking about how women can be harassed by both men and other women for wearing revealing clothing in public.

The position taken by the interviewees in these situations provides support for Belk's (1975b) delineation of locations of situational self. It also supports the contextually based self-construal work of Harb and Smith (2008) Kagitçibasi (2005; 1996; 2007; 2002) and Kagitçibasi and Ataca (2005) which considers the relational self or interdependent self more common in so-called 'collective' societies.

Religious observance reflected in clothing is notable. Habiba, Salama and Memuna (all non-hijab wearing) specifically stated they wore different clothing in Ramadan – with Maria even observing the 'Eid of the Believers'

(Friday) in this way. For those more knowledgeable in terms of Islam, their clothing reflected their superior knowledge and considerations of transcendence and obligation to Allah (Elmessiri 2006; Sennett 1974). This is consistent with Hogg (2000) who found that there is a link between internal and external influences in the creation and maintenance of a social identity. However, the point that knowledge and commitment does not equal dressing in clothing that meets the Islamic guidelines cannot be ignored, and is an important point to follow up in future research.

Another important theme is the importance of the mother, both in terms of the family position, and in terms of the power of her relationship with her children and others. This is illustrated Zainab's mother's assertion that she would not allow her daughters or her friends to wear tight clothing and in Salama's mother's answer to the occupation question on the questionnaire: 'Lord of the House' is the translation. The mothers were clearly significant others to the main interviewees (Andersen et al. 2002; Hogg et al. 2000). This is also an area for future research.

The interviewees also highlighted the use of the clothing, with them making clear that the jellaba is an overdress which stays on during visits and trips to different locations. It is only used as a 'coat' (as over-garments are used in the Gulf) when going to a party wearing their best and most beautiful party clothes, to cover them on the way there and back.

The answers concerning black clothing were also illuminating, given the background literature. Black and other dark colours can be seen as attracting attention in this society, where pastels and lighter shades are prevalent. Black can also be seen as an indicator of 'foreign styles' which draw (unwanted) public attention, so are to be avoided on that basis.

References made in the interviews to the functions of the market are also informative. There are pressures noticeable to wear ready-made clothing – it is cheaper and readily (immediately) available. Several interviewees also remarked on societal changes in education and how that affected interactions with young men on the street.

A firm rebuttal of the idea that ‘Muslim women who dress like us are like us’ (ie secular) was reflected in the questionnaire responses, in which the majority of interviewees exhibited strong commitment to Islam, regardless of their clothing status. Additionally, no mention was made in the interviews of conflict or friction between those who do follow the clothing guidelines and those who do not. Similarly, their responses to the clothing sets in the questionnaire – especially the first example – were remarkably positive. Notable here is the intended future clothing choices the currently uncovered women reported they would make – all stated they intended to wear jellaba and a head-covering when they married. This supports the idea that an ideal self congruence is more important than an actual self congruence (found in relation to brands) by Ekinci and Riley (2003). Further, Graeff (1996) found that ideal self-concept is more relevant in publicly consumed goods. Therefore, while social desirability bias must be considered here, the research design has attempted to offset it by using triangulation, the potential for these women to actually change their dressing style as reported or intended should not be underestimated or discounted.

Evidence was found in these interviews also of a very strong societal influence. Often even with no real (obvious) knowledge the cultural ‘hammock’ of Islam supported the teaching and the young women’s future plans and expectations. All interviewees were strong in terms of commitment to Islam (belief and practice) with the partial exception of Memuna, based on questionnaire responses. On a continuum reflecting their interviews they could be represented as three weak, two middling and four strong on Islam.

In terms of identifying Islam as a motivation or location of meaning for clothing, two could be considered motivated by Islam, four middling and three more motivated by social considerations. This assessment is based on both the interviews and observational field notes.

The ‘ideal’ self, ‘future’ self or ‘ideal future’ self consistently highlights the situational consideration (Belk 1975b) of marriage as a turning point towards dress consistent with the Islamic guidelines for those not already dressing that way.

The data highlighted that the clothing symbolism in context was very successful. This, too, is an important point because a contextual approach has been fundamental to this study, both in terms of introducing a particular cultural context (one within a framework of Islam, a religion or way of life) and of considering that symbolism within a context that meets the condition of being identified with a group and communicating similar meanings (Banister and Hogg 2001). This reinforces the work of Belk et al (1982) that defines a symbolic product as one that recognised and accepted in a public context.

This contrasts with work (and many findings) based on Muslims as a minority in a different/hostile majority context, where the symbols have been ‘redefined’ by the media and accepted by the majority society with their new symbolism. Obviously that is also a case of congruency not being reinforced, as meaning of the symbolism is not shared and so others reasons for persisting in the dress must be sought.

VII. Conclusions

VII.1 Introduction

This study evolved from an interest in symbolic consumption and its meaning(s) for a particular group, in a particular situation. The choice of sample (Muslim women) essentially arose from a realisation by the researcher that a disparity existed between her own lived experience and the anecdotal experience of her Muslim friends, the media representation of Muslim women and, especially, the academic literature on the subject.

Given this disparity, the study was designed to investigate the question, “What is the meaning of wearing, or not wearing, clothing which meets the Islamic guidelines for publicly consumed dress by young Moroccan Muslim women in their home context”.

Morocco was chosen as the empirical context based on a number of factors both convenient and specific. Morocco has a 99% majority Sunni Muslim population, it has had less structural legislative change delivered by colonisation than its co-colonised neighbours (Tunisia and Algeria), it has no legislated dress requirements and is seen as a western ally and ‘liberal’ Muslim country. The significance of this is Morocco is a Muslim nation free to exercise their free will in matters of dress. In addition, the researcher has family connections to Morocco which could be utilised to offset trust issues and allow access to homes – both very pertinent considerations in research involving Muslim women.

This study was developed using a critical case design, triangulated data and the voices of the samples themselves as a framework. The decision to study the sample in their home country context was central. Much of the research on Muslim women and, specifically on their clothing, and its symbolism, has

been conducted in contexts where they are not the majority or even a well understood minority, and certainly not at 'home'.

While Muslim women's clothing in any context can meet Holman's (1981) criteria for communication (visible, variable and personalisable) a good starting point for meeting the symbolic consumption criterion of Banister and Hogg (2001) (a symbol should be identified with a group, and **within this group** it should communicate similar meanings) (emphasis added) is a context where the meanings communicated are similar, and are not subject to noise or distortion (Belch and Belch 2004), such as is often the case in a context where an alternative meaning has been assigned by another group. While the within group meanings of Muslims in societies in which they are the minority may be similar, to situate a study in a location where the whole group (or the very vast majority) should have similar meanings also much more adequately meets the conditions for a critical case.

The data revealed a complexity of meanings. For young covered women, there were references to the obligatory nature of the covering, reflecting their religious knowledge and commitment. However, the women who did not cover also displayed, in some cases, religious knowledge. In terms of questionnaire responses, they showed strong religious commitment. The interviewees of particular interest here are those that do not cover, but talk as if they do (respondent Habiba); actively disapprove of others who do not cover, even though they themselves do not cover (respondent Safia); or who do not cover now, but have a stated intention to cover when they marry.

For some interviewees, clothing that reflected the Islamic guidelines was more about a societal expectation of a married woman than about Islam, although the two may be inter-twined. Anecdotally, the Jewish Moroccans (0.2% of the population) also wear *jellaba*.

VII.2 Contribution to the Literature

In addition to the contributions which are more broadly relevant, the contributions to Marketing/Consumer Culture/Consumer Behaviour are divided into the areas of symbolic consumption, consumer culture theory and methodology.

VII.3 Marketing Contributions

VII.3.1 Symbolic Consumption Literature

Referencing the Islamic teaching has shown that the guidelines for women's clothing are very broad (rather than monolithic), and can be met in any number of ways. As long as garments are long, loose and opaque, not eye-catching or noisy, and unperfumed, anything may be worn. The implications of this for future studies is that the basic premises on which they rest can avoid being undermined by resting on inaccurate understandings and, instead, be successfully formulated to allow meaningful research to be done.

In this case, for the context of Morocco the traditional clothing, or that identified as Moroccan, is the hooded jellaba. The hooded jellaba is accepted as both suitable in terms of Islamic clothing and as Moroccan clothing. It is also seen as a 'marriage marker' – clothing worn by married women especially – when it is worn in conjunction with a square scarf.

The interviewees in this sample however, also wore a number of different styles of clothing. Some of this clothing was consistent with the Islamic guidelines and some was not. Of those who were the most adherent to the Islamic teaching on clothing, besides jellabas, they wore combination tunic and pants sets of varying styles such as the jabador in public settings. Those

least adherent wore more ready-made styles such as jeans and blouses or shorter jacket and pants suit sets – there was also less variance in what they wore for public and private settings. This reflects their more blurred delineation of public and private according to Islamic teaching. Rather than making a clear distinction between the two states as Islamic teaching does, they observe a far less differentiated approach, and this is reflected in their publicly consumed dress.

A related consideration that emerged from the data was the use of black. There is no proscribed colour/s for clothing for Muslims. While black is favoured for women (and white for men) in the Gulf States, that is a traditional, or cultural choice, and not a matter legislated by Islam.

In the case of the sample studied here, the respondents actively avoided black – especially as a single colour, although it could be acceptable if teamed with another, brighter or contrasting colour. Preference, in all cases, was shown for pastel shades and these are the colours most commonly seen on the streets.

The reasons for these perceptions of Muslim clothing are easy to locate. The Orientalist overhang from the 18th century of the ‘exotic’ East (Kahf 1999), and an interest in the region since the discovery of oil, has combined to present Gulf Arabs as the ‘public face’ of Muslims in the media. Hence, their clothing has been depicted as “Islamic dress”. Another factor is the newsworthiness of modest clothing legislation as is in place in both Saudi Arabia and Iran. In addition to these factors there is a general lack of knowledge about Islam and its teaching in Western societies and this, combined with the general misinformation about Islam and Muslims, contributes to a haze of misunderstanding and associated mistrust (Kagitçibasi 2007).

In this way the symbolic properties of Muslim women's clothing (in particular) have been 'redefined' – to exclude any consideration of religious commitment (in a positive, societally beneficial way) – and some of these 'redefinitions' have strongly influenced academic literature.

One such example is the literature linking Islamic clothing, and particularly the head-scarf, to politics. The literature contends that the *hijab* is used to show political party identification, as a ploy to recruit new members, or to generate tension between women who cover (and their supporters) and women who don't (and their supporters). This has been evident in literature concerning Egypt, Turkey and Iran.

This study found no evidence of political motivation for either wearing, or not wearing, *hijab* or Islamic dress, generally. Only one respondent (Khadija) could be considered to have any interest in politics, and she was clear that her motivation for her clothing (she is a *hijab*-wearing woman) was religious. Perhaps given her interest, however, she was also the only one to mention the link between the *khimar* (long, circular) style hijab, usually in black, and a political party blamed for the Casablanca bombings in 2003. Respondents gave no indication of any tension between peers following Islamic clothing guidelines and those who did not. That is not to say that there was no societal sanction for failing to follow Islamic guidelines, but there was no indication this came from a political source.

Islamic teaching is quite clear that there is no division between any areas of life, so politics is part of Islam as are all other social and religious aspects of living. The division of Muslims into 'political' or 'religious' is misleading, if not erroneous, in that religious adherence should always be the first motivation for Muslims, with other considerations second to that. Sandıkçı and Ger (2005) state this to be absolutely the opposite case, with politics being the primary consideration of their sample. This begs the question

whether the sample should be called 'Islamists' (as Sandıkçı and Ger call them) at all, given that their motivation (according to the authors) is not from Islam. The current study has made a contribution to the literature on this point, and has addressed an assumed corollary linking headscarf wearing and political activism.

Interviewees in this sample who did wear clothing that complied with the Islamic clothing guidelines stated they did so for religious reasons, which is consistent with the work of Roald (2001) and Yamani (1996). They quoted relevant Qu'ranic verses or other teaching to support this position.

A further example is the link between publicly consumed clothing and strength of faith. As has been outlined in this study, clothing adherence is not a fundamental of the faith, although it can represent fundamental concepts. The most fundamental single issue in the teaching is *tawhid*, a commitment to the unity and One-ness of Allah. While an apologist argument for not wearing the scarf ('Islam is in the heart') is derided by many Muslims, clothing commitment is not a definitive measure. The literature tends to view people who follow the Islamic clothing guidelines as either 'political' (Duval 1998; Macleod 1993; MacLeod 1992) or as weak and oppressed (Franks 2000; Kahf 1999), and their unveiled/ready-made clothing wearing sisters as 'just like us' (Nasr 2009) (ie, just like non-Muslims). This is clearly not the case for my sample whose questionnaire responses reflected genuine religious commitment regardless of their clothing consumption practice.

This sample was considered in terms of religious commitment from a number of angles. The interviewees completed a questionnaire on their own beliefs and commitment to Islam. Observations were made on what they wore to the interview, analysed in what they said at the interview, and reflections and interpretations were then made based on their display of self-selected favourite clothing. Only one of the interviewees 'wavered' on her

commitment to Islam – although half the sample did not wear *hijab* or observe compliant clothing.

Nasr (2009) does discuss this Western perception and how misled people can be by it. Although these perceptions can lead to the avoidance of women following Islamic clothing guidelines in some societies, due to attributions of ‘dangerous political motivations’ it can also lead to perceptions that Muslim women not following Islamic clothing guidelines do so as a reflection of a lack of faith.

This study showed the importance of a carefully situated study and an informed understanding of the context. This is consistent with critical case methodology. It showed that without a comprehensive contextual understanding on the part of the researcher, studies of Muslims as a minority group are not structured to provide meaningful insights. This position is reinforced by other calls for greater contextualisation of studies – not calls for relativism, but accuracy of context and its representation.

In particular, in the case of the symbolism of religious items, symbolic consumption theory, with its strong emphasis on the individuated self and its inter-relationships with other similarly individuated selves provides a one-dimensional portrayal of human interactions. In the case of religious societies, there is a consideration of the transcendent—one’s relationship with God to be added as a dimension, and that is lacking in many studies concerning such societies. This could also be considered true of so-called ‘non-religious societies’ and could be examined by including the ‘third dimension’ of spirituality to the two dimensions already studied (the rational and the sensory). Further, many societies also have groups as central and so the concept of an individuated self does not adequately represent the interactions of these people in their societies, again giving them a ‘flat’ representation

that contributes little that is meaningful to our collective knowledge of or about these groups.

VII.3.2 Consumer Culture Theory

For consumer culture theory (CCT) this study highlights the religious considerations in a field which is already interested in the contextual (Belk 1995b; <http://www.consumerculturetheory.org/about>). It calls for a further expansion of depth of approach to understanding and explaining contexts to counter the criticism that CCT is only interested in the quirky and far out and other attempts to reduce this research stream within consumer behaviour (Arnould and Thompson 2007). It adds to the call for a comprehensive representation of the sample under study that provides insightful and meaningful analysis and discussion (Burton 2009b; El Guindi 1999; Flyvbjerg 2001).

This study has highlighted the need for an accurate and informed contextualisation of studies of the ‘other’, particularly in the academic literature. To this end, a comprehensive knowledge of Islam as it frames a culture (in the case of this study) is essential, and it is also essential to reference the formal teaching to provide meaningful and insightful analysis of data resulting from a study with a Muslim sample. The argument also extends to other ‘other’s’ from the Balinese to Africans from Hindus to Brethren. Without a comprehensive consideration of the culture and its bases and frameworks, it is impossible for a meaningful analysis of data be undertaken; meaningful questions cannot be formulated or asked; useful, usable information cannot be contributed and successful decisions resting on faulty premises cannot be made.

Related to these considerations of comprehensive contextual back-grounding are how these affect/inform method and methodology.

VII.4 Methodological Contributions

This study has used Islamic teaching to describe an empirical context which is based on Islam culturally, legally and ‘religiously’ (Pennell 2001; 2003; Said 1998). This makes an enormous contribution to the literature across the social sciences as this referencing of Islamic teaching is extremely uncommon in even long term anthropological field work on Muslim peoples. To be utilised effectively, and contribute to effective studies, the teaching must be ethically approached. As has been pointed out in this study, Qur’anic verses, for example, cannot be used in free translation or without appropriate reference to a *Tafsir* (explanation) by an accepted Islamic scholar (an Islamic scholar differing from an Islamic Studies academic in both academic requirements and status). The use of Islamic teaching, including an/some accepted explanation/s in providing a detailed context to Muslim samples facilitates a successful research design.

The study accessed and allows the voices of an ignored or ‘invisible’ or even ‘silenced’ group to be heard. Having interviewed young Muslim women in-depth on clothing issues, some important challenges to the accepted norms of this group in the literature have been identified. A significant one already mentioned is that uncovered women are not committed to (or are even hostile to) Islam (and/or their covered Sisters). Similarly the way they are interviewed and their enthusiasm for speaking was discussed. The use of the feminist/iterative style made an unfamiliar situation (interviewing) far more comfortable for the interviewees than a more formal style and it allowed questions to be explored, expanded, returned to and re-put which reinforced answers or highlighted differences.

The study highlighted the difficulty of access to Muslim women which may be partly responsible for their lack of representation in the literature. These difficulties, which are a combination of language/translator and culture issues situated in Islamic teaching, have been overcome in this case. As has been discussed, while there may be other suitable locations to interview University students or male interviewees, younger/female interviewees commonly need to be accessed in their home. As the home is a locus of tranquillity and privacy for families in Islamic teaching and as Arab people's in particular favour personal, face-to-face knowledge and experience of other people, reputations are very important. To facilitate interviews, especially with women inside homes, researchers need personal/reputational connections and often native speaking translators. The best of these connections, as other researchers have acknowledged, is personal or family connections or, at least, graduate students/colleagues with these (Tuncalp 1988).

This study utilised personal and family connections, used a native speaking translator and followed cultural protocol setting up the interviews and conducting them – for example, working with cultural differences in perceptions of time – monochromic versus polychromatic – interviews took some time to set up, they lasted between 90 minutes and 4 hours and involved visitors, refreshments and other diversions as outlined in the body of the study (Methodology). How this was achieved is informative for other researchers, but the difficulties are such that only the 'well-equipped' (for example, in terms of gender and/or language and/or religion) may attempt it due to its prohibitions in these terms and also that of the cost of circumventing all or some of them. The recommendation of this study is that researchers come to a Muslim field well prepared to deal with a culture based on Islam.

In the particular case of Muslim women, as has been mentioned, respondents can be sensitive to their voices being recorded or having their image

recorded (video or photo) – especially if they are not in clothing suitable for a ‘public’ situation. It is essential that researchers observe ethical practice in the field and deal respectfully with those they seek to study. Practices such as photographing Muslim women without their knowledge – especially when this sensitivity is known – is exploitative and ‘colours’ the research undertaken (for example, Ger and Sandikci 2006).

In terms of the general academic context of marketing, and the specific context of consumer research, this study has found that studying a sample for whom religion is so integral to culture, law and society overall gives a ‘one-dimensional’ quality to the outcomes achieved. While Muslim women’s clothing in an out of context situation (where Muslims are a minority in a culture) is intensely symbolic, the symbolic meaning is quite different to that in an in-context situation (Roald 2001). Even in the many out of context studies, little attention is given to the motivation of Islam, the widely stated primary reason for dressing in this way in a society unfamiliar with it, especially when the intended symbolism of the dress is known to be mis-read. With a focus on ‘person to person’ interactions, without considering motivations outside of that, religious societies are not completely represented in the literature in a way true to what they are. This is, as well as a methodological problem, an ethical one, as it encourages assumed universals to continue unchallenged and unadjusted (Burton 2009b).

VII.5 Conclusions

This study has gathered a data corpus comprising questionnaire responses, field notes, photographs and in-depth interviews in a critical case framework in order to test specific literature themes on an ‘other’ population in context. This study has not only revealed a number of differences between what could have been expected from a wide-ranging review of the academic literature,

but has also highlighted a number of other issues in marketing scholarship and consumer research in particular.

- It has reinforced the view that Islam is the framework from which the culture of each Muslim country comes;
- It has challenged common links in the literature between, for example, Muslim women's publicly consumed colour choice and symbolic messages;
- The study found no preference for black here and there is no teaching proscribing it;
- The study found no links between colour and anything other than personal preference as long as this was consistent with the teaching (ie, did not draw attention);
- It has provided a very different view of Muslim women and their publicly consumed clothing choices;
- The study has shown that not wearing clothing which conforms to Islamic guidelines does not reflect a lack of knowledge of the clothing requirements of Islam;
- That the society expects married/older women to wear clothing which conforms to Islamic guidelines;
- And, that Muslim women who do not wear clothing that conforms to the guidelines are not necessarily hostile to, or even less committed to, Islam as their way of life. This supports the position of clothing, especially the head covering, in Islamic teaching (ie a minor consideration) rather than how the academic literature reflects it (a major consideration). As many studies formulate premises based on the position outlined in the literature, this finding alone is very significant.
- It has provided a useful framework of literature and method for researchers interested in conducting research with such samples:

- Particular considerations of Muslims in general, and Muslim women in particular, for norms of conduct during interviews as well as suitable locations, expected access, methods of recruitment, accepted format and considerations of what may be unacceptable and why;
- It has also addressed translation issues, and how these may be dealt with in a similar study;
- It has highlighted the importance of a rich context for studies – especially those looking at sample with a different way of life from the researchers or that represented in the extant literature.

This study has raised, both for Symbolic Consumption Theory and Consumer Culture Theory, the consideration of the importance of transcendence as an element of context and self. It has shown that Symbolic Consumption Theory, in particular in relation to clothing, is dominated by a western world view and for a sample with an Islamic world view a different format for consideration is valuable.

The limitations of this study will be considered next.

VII.6 Limitations

This study took place in a medium-sized city (1.5m inhabitants) in Morocco, and consisted of only 18 respondents. Oujda is on the eastern side of Morocco and shares a border with Algeria. The city is not a main thoroughfare for foreign travellers, being quite a distance from the main gateways and centres of Casablanca, Rabat and Tanger, although it does have a large number of 'ex-pat' travellers returning from abroad annually for the summer holiday period.

The interviewees were recruited by association and willingness. Therefore, there was some bias involved in their selection on that basis – they had to be ‘open’ enough to be interviewed and recorded – and so did their mothers. They had to be trusting enough of the ‘middle-person’ – be it the translator or another family member – to invite the research team into their home and allow the process to take place (although no one who was approached, declined). They had to be prepared to talk about clothing in general, their personal clothing, and interested in doing so in order to provide a richness of data for analysis. And they had to have the time to give, for free, to the research team.

The study employed translation. This is a limitation in the respect that all translation has elements of interpretation, and so all translated words are nuanced by the translators perceptions and worldview. However, as has been discussed, the common concerns with translation raised in the literature were carefully considered and addressed in this work by the use of a translator who was known well by the researcher, was very linguistically competent in Arabic and English and was well accepted by the interviewees. This is just as true if the primary researcher is the translator – and may be more so as bias compounds bias in research design and interpreted translation.

VII.7 Overall Conclusions and Future Research

A number of potentially rich areas for future research emerged from this study. It could look at the difference between knowledge held and knowledge enacted. A follow up of these women would be revealing – those who have married, what do they wear now? Have they actualised their stated ideal future selves? The role of mothers as role models and significant others is evident in this study, and this could be explored further both where there is a formalised recognition of the role and value of mothers (as is the case in Islamic teaching), or those where it is not.

The study has raised the notion of transcendence, and has highlighted (Islamic) religion as a culture, also illustrating the importance of the provision of a rich context. By giving a clear overview of Islam as a teaching and how it related to this example in particular, it allowed the seldom heard to speak for themselves, and also highlighted issues around access and suitability of practice for interviewing different groups. Further, it highlighted how ethical issues are different in different situations. This kind of comprehensive approach forms a basis for future research and theory building and allows identification *of* gaps/opportunities in the consumption and wider marketing literature to be highlighted, especially as it is relevant to 'other's.

This study has met its objectives. It has 'married' the Islamic teaching perspective, the academic literature perspectives, and the lived experience of a sample of young Moroccan Muslim women.

It has illustrated a critical case framework, and used that to its best advantage, in terms of explaining and understanding a sample of young Moroccan Muslim women and their clothing choices amongst a nexus of views, perspectives and contested identities.

It has given an underrepresented group the chance to voice their own position, in their own words. To explain, deny and temper what is 'known' about them in the world of print.

It has given form to a framework that could be expanded to other 'other' populations to help challenge and strengthen both the writing on the other in marketing, but the theory and method in marketing research itself.

This thesis has argued for more than a subjective 'Muslim on Muslim' or 'other on other' framework for studying the non-white or majority world

(Kagitçibasi 1996). It has illustrated, using a highly visible, publicly consumed artefact in a culture with a clearly delineated source teaching how a deep and thorough exploration of the culture the study participants live in can deliver meaningful and insightful research on ‘other’ populations all over the world.

This study is part of Belk’s ‘new’ consumer research (1995b) – “challenging the linger[ing] legacy of] economic assumptions [about consumption] ... tak[ing] a distanced and sometimes critical perspective on marketing management ... seek[ing] to understand consumption processes in a broad, literal and contextual sense” (p74).

VIII. References

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IX. Appendices

IX.1 The Nature of Islam

As has been mentioned, *Islam* is best translated as “submission” (Al-Qaradawy 1995:3; Barboza 1993:9; Maududi 1960:11). Tabbarah (1978) looks at the lexical meaning: “If we study the Arabic word *salima* from which the word *Islam* is derived, we will find that it assumes the following meanings (in Arabic): a release and exemption from inner and outer evils; peace and security; obedience and surrender”. Tabbarah then considers the legal meaning (the meaning in Islamic Law): “Islam is the assertion of the Unity of God, and the yielding, submission and deliverance of conscience to Him; it is also the faith in the religious precepts revealed by God” (Tabbarah, 1978:10-11). So, while the word Islam is derived from the word peace, peace is not its best translation into English.

The Arabic term *”Ahad”* (used in Qur'an 112:1-5] to refer to the unity of Allah is much more precise than the term *“Wahid”* used in everyday speech which [also] means “one”. “*”Ahad”* has the added connotations of absolute and continuous unity and the absence of equals” (Qutb, 2001:350). So belief in the One God, does not mean “one God from amongst many”, it means One God, there is only One, and that One has no peers or equals or comparable entities. *Tawhid* is such an essential concept in Islam, that for the first 13 years of his 23 year Prophethood, Mohammed (s) called just to *tawhid* – the One-Ness of Allah (Zainoo, 2003). This distinctly separates Islamic monotheism from any concept of Trinity.

There are three sources of Islamic Law. The first source is the Qur'an. The Qur'an is believed by Muslims to be the verbatim words of Allah, revealed to the Last Prophet, Mohammed (s), through the Angel Jibrial (Gabriel) and recorded by Mohammed's companions (as Mohammed (s) was illiterate). The revelation lasted 23 years, and ended with Mohammed's death at 63 in

632CE. The Qur'an is referred to as the 'Last Testament', as it is for all humankind and for all time. It is allegorical and shows the history of other peoples and it also offers an evaluative scale for all people because everyone is part of the potential of humanity created by Allah, and part of the collective experience of human history.

The Sunnah is the recoded behaviour and sayings of the Prophet Mohammad, an oral tradition, "which gives detailed teachings of Islam, it's application, and the nurturing of the nation upon it" (Al-Qaradawi, 1990: 311). The Qur'an and Sunnah are interdependent with Muslims needing the Sunnah to explain the Qur'anic rulings (Al-Qaradawi, 1990: 314). The Qur'an is a comprehensive guide – "And we have revealed to you the Book expounding all things" (Qur'an, Al-Nahl:89) – and from it the Prophet explains what was revealed to him. Authentic collections of Sunnah (and there have been invented ones) will, therefore, never dispute Qur'an (see also, Tabbarah, 1978).

The Sunnah is documented as *hadith* (*ahadith*, pl) which are the recorded speech and actions of the Prophet witnessed and transmitted by members of the first Muslim community. Through the Sunnah the institutions of Islamic society are outlined, and the concepts and values within the Qur'an and Sunnah were also diffused throughout society, as they formed part of the socialisation of the individual Muslim.

In addition are the rulings of Islamic Scholars – characterised as those of consensus and analogy (*ijima* and *quiyas*) – where Scholars "draw their assertions only from the Qur'an and Sunnah – and with this their applicability is asserted, not by themselves" (Al-Qaradawi, 1990: 298). The rulings can also be fallible "... So, what is found in the history of Islam and its legacy, is only the effort of humans who are not infallible; in their attempt to understand Islam and to work thereby; they are accepted, so long as the effort comes

from its people and creed, on the basis of good intention" (Al-Qaradawi, 1990: 299). These rulings are only called for to deal with "new" situations that were not present at the time the Prophet lived and/or the scholars feel cannot be adequately addressed by rulings already extant – examples are in-vitro fertilisation and smoking.

It is necessary to highlight the point that Islamic Law (*Shari'a*), which is derived from the three sources outlined above, has two dimensions. The emphasis on a "vertical relationship" for an adherent Muslim is the key to a complete understanding of Islamic codes. If the "perceived legislator" is Allah, then the laws of Allah are the guidance. "The Qur'an and Sunnah are the two main sources of *Shari'a*" (Translators Note, Al-Qaradawi, 1992:14). *Shari'a* covers social legislation concerning individuals rights and responsibilities in terms of human relationships (horizontal). It also has legislation concerning the humans relationship with God (vertical). The vertical is over the horizontal, because all relationships are "regulated by belief in God as the Creator of all things ..." (Roald, 2001:104–5). The construction of the term 'collective' applied to Muslim societies, therefore, is incomplete, as it reflects only a one-dimensional role (person to others) and ignores the transcendent framework of these societies.

From the Qur'an and Sunnah the 5 Pillars of Islam are derived:

- 1) Testimony of Faith [*shahada*] – the declaration that there is one God and Mohammed is his Messenger [concept of unity – *tawhid*],
- 2) Prayer [*salat*] – the 5 times daily ritual of Qur'anic recitation and physical prostration (not to be confused with invocation [*dua'a*], which consists of making requests of Allah, and can be done at any time),
- 3) Charity [*zakat*] – the percentage of a persons stored income that must be given to those less fortunate,

- 4) Fasting [*saum*] – fasting the month of Ramadan [9th lunar month] between sunrise and sunset,
- 5) Pilgrimage [*hajj*] – the pilgrimage to Mecca, to be performed once in a persons lifetime if he/she is financially and physically able.

At the end of the month of fasting (Ramadan) and at the end of the period of pilgrimage (Hajj), all Muslims celebrate. These two festivals (Eid al Fitra and Eid al Adha, respectively) along with every Friday (the congregational prayer day and usually called the ‘Eid of the Believers’) constitute the Islamic holidays.

Another fundamental, the Articles of Faith, which requires belief in the following, are derived from the same sources:

- 1) Allah – the One God, without partner or parallel,
- 2) His Angels,
- 3) His Books – the Zabour (Daud/David), Tawrah (Musa/Moses), Injil (Isa/Jesus), Suhuf Ibrahim (Ibrahim/Abraham) and the Qur'an (Mohammed),
- 4) His Messengers (from Adam (as) to Mohammed (s), including Musa, Isa, Daud, etc,
- 5) The Day of Judgement,
- 6) The Hereafter,
- 7) Predestination,
- 8) Heaven,
- 9) Hell.

The all-encompassing nature of Islam is illustrated by Mohamed (1996) as follows:

“In Islam there is not the same distinction between religious and secular, sacred and profane, church and state, that there is in Christianity. The unitary perspective of Islam is rooted in the metaphysical principle of *tawhid* [unity] in which all aspects of life are within the power of Allah. In this sense, nothing can be ultimately profane because everything has its origin in the Divine. *La ilaha illa’llah* [the *shahada* – the testimony of faith] means that there can be no other reality except the One Ultimate Reality, Allah, the source of all that is considered real ... if a man knows himself, his *fitra* [natural predisposition of man], he comes to know his Creator ... the source of all secularism is the separation of man’s being from the Divine” (p145).

IX.2 The Nature of Allah

In Arabic, the English “God” is *Allah*. Allah is not adequately translated as God, as Allah is the revealed name of God and it is a term that cannot be pluralised or genderised – there is no possible Gods or Goddess from the word Allah. In Arabic this means that the actual word “Allah” is not the root word for any other words. Allah is not the word for God for Muslims, but for Arabic-speakers of all faiths.

Another nuance that doesn’t come across well in English are the “gender issues” of “God-talk”. “The masculine tenor of God-talk is particularly problematic in English. In Hebrew, Arabic and French, however, grammatical gender gives theological counterpoint and dialectic, which provides a balance that is often lacking in English. Thus in Arabic *al-Lah* (the supreme name for God) is grammatically masculine, but the word for the divine and inscrutable essence of God – *al-Dhat* – is feminine” (Armstrong, 1993:xxiii). In Islamic teaching Allah is not male or female, because Allah is not like humankind at all – Muslims do not believe that Adam was created “in the likeness of God”. In fact, Muslims ‘know’ Allah only by his attributes (The Just, The Merciful etc) and not only do not attribute human physical characteristics to him, they also do not attribute human conditions (ie, just as there are no depictions of Allah, there are also no such concepts as “Allah was tired”).

Just as Allah has no gender, he also favours no gender. Unlike Christianity there is no hierarchy where man is followed by woman, and woman by children (x-ref, 1 Corinthians 11:15). Allah is not male, and there is neither hierarchy nor clergy in Islam, the ‘communication’ between a Muslim and Allah is direct, without intermediary.

IX.3 The Nature of Humankind

As referred to above, *Tawhid* means “unity” and Islamic teaching regards mankind as a creation that strives for unity. There is a mutuality between men and women, a complimentary dependence or balance that is the basis of the family unit which, in turn, is the basic unit for all humanity.

The common origin of humans, their common biology and nature are ordered as planned by Allah but it is also necessary for all knowledge, enquiry and speculation to be structured by a relationship with Allah.

Muslims believe that all humans are born in a perfect state of Islam, that they are all party to the original covenant with Allah, share the same origin, biology, inherent nature and endowments and that they will all be returned to Allah for judgment at the end of time concerning the same matters – their actions and intentions in conducting their lives on earth. So, there is a unity and community both to and within humankind (Davies, 1998).

Muslims believe that all humankind is born in *fitra* – “an inborn natural predisposition which cannot change and which exists at birth in all human beings” (Mohamed, 1996:13). *Fitra* is a state of goodness, there is no ‘original sin’ in Islam.

Mankind is also diverse in terms of such things as colouring and language. This diversity, which gives a sense of identity to each nation, tribe or clan within the larger group of all human creation gives the opportunity for relationships between people and connects people with each other and with Allah.

In terms of the rest of creation, man is distinguished, “because he has been endowed with intellect (‘*aql*) and free-will (*iradah*). The intellect enables him

to discern right from wrong and the will enables his to choose between right and wrong. He can use these faculties to complement his *fitra* and to please Allah or to be untrue to it and displease Allah. The choice is his" (Mohamed, 1996:20).

IX.4 Nia (intention)

Muslims, as people who submit and are obedient to the Laws of Allah, must act with the intention of pleasing Allah. So, before beginning any act Muslims are required to say “*Bismillah*” (in the name of Allah) and to then proceed with the act with an intention of seeking Allah’s pleasure. Intention to pray for the sake of Allah must be made before the ablution [*wudu*] for prayer is started, and before the prayer is performed.

Similarly, with all things done in Allah’s name and for Allah’s sake, the intention is absolutely critical. This is why, in Islam, the ends never justify the means, because Muslims are judged on the means, not just the outcomes.

Narrated Umar bin Al-Khattab: I heard Allah’s Apostle saying, “The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended. So whoever emigrated for worldly benefits or for a woman to marry, his emigration was for what he emigrated for. Bukhari 1:1:1

Similarly, there is a warning in doing things for ‘show’, or with a misplaced intention (ie, for the sake of others, rather than for the sake of Allah):

Narrated Jundub The Prophet said, “He who lets the people hear of his good deeds intentionally, to win their praise, Allah will let the people know his real intention (on the Day of Resurrection), and he who does good things in public to show off and win the praise of the people, Allah will disclose his real intention (and humiliate him). Bukhari 8:76:506

The similarities between all of humankind then, are fewer than their differences. Similarly, the differences between men and women are fewer than their similarities.

IX.5 Nature of Men and Women

In terms of men and women, they are seen as equivalent creations, one having no value over another except in terms of piety:

O people, we created you from the same male and female, and rendered you distinct peoples and tribes, that you may recognise one another. The best among you in the sight of God is the most righteous. God is Omniscient, Cognisant [Qur'an, 49:13³⁵].

Men, then, are neither superior, nor are they normative – they are not competitors with women – men and women are supporters of one another:

The believers, men and women, are Awliyaa' [helpers, supporters, friends, protectors] of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'roof [all that is good], and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar [polytheism and all that is evil]; they perform As-Salah [prayer], and give the Zakah [charity], and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah will have His Mercy on them. Surely, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise [Qur'an, 9:71].

³⁵ The Qur'an was revealed in Arabic and any translation is only of the meaning, not of the actual Qur'an. Used here is Shakir's 1999 .

Men and women were created in pairs:

And of everything We have created pairs, that you may remember [Qur'an 51:49].

Yet they are not alike:

And the male is not like the female [Qur'an 3:36].

Nor are they adversaries, they are from each other and for each other:

You are from one another, and, And Allah has given you wives of your own kind [Qur'an 4:25].

Married women have particular rights in Islam:

- 1) to a marriage gift from her husband for her to keep or spend as she wishes,
- 2) to maintenance – clothing, housing, medical treatment according to his ability (ie, without either extravagance or meanness),
- 3) to be lived with honourably – meaning “good manners, a flexible attitude, sweet words, a smiling face, a pleasing playfulness and an amusing mien, etc.” (Qaradawi, 1998).

Women have obligations to her husband in terms of obeying him as long as it does not mean disobeying Allah, taking care of money (not wasting money), the house (monitoring who enters, etc). Women are expected to beautify themselves for their husbands, and the husbands for the wives.

“Islam has made a good wife the best treasure a man can have in his life, after belief in Allah and following His commands. She is considered the key to happiness. The Prophet (greetings and peace be upon him) said, “The world is delightful and its greatest treasure is a good woman”. [Transmitted by Muslim on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr (1467).]” (Qaradawi, 1998).

Mothers, too have specific roles and duties: “The mother … is cherished by Islam and given all these rights has a task to perform. She has to take care of her children, raise them well, implant values, and make them loathe evil. She has to teach them to obey Allah [and] encourage them to defend what is truthful” (Qaradawi, 1998).

Men and women, then, are a paired creation and each have specific primary responsibilities and tasks. As a wife or husband, women and men have different roles and responsibilities, as a mother, women have another set of fundamental tasks to perform. Outside of these obligations, each can pursue other interests – for example, women are free to work. Like all of the guidance in Islam, there is the framework, and the goals which must be met. How this is done differs between people and their situations (for example, rich or poor, cold climate or hot).

Further to the relationship between women and men as separate creations, and women and men in married relationships, the relationship between unrelated men and women is also specific.

As mentioned above, all humankind is created with free will, so this will also have a bearing on how (and how well) people meet the requirements of the guidance.

IX.6 Nature of Submission

Within a framework of unity, the Muslim submits to Allah (vertical) and follows Islamic guidelines in order to ensure community (horizontal) unity through the way of living [*deen*] outlined in the teaching. As Islamic teaching is so comprehensive, it really does provide a framework for a complete way of living, as others ways of life do, but often less explicitly [such as in the case of secular capitalism].

“As the source of ultimate meanings [*deen*] is diffused through society by underpinning all meaning, all habits, customs, speech and behaviour are linked in some way to the meaningful realm of the *deen*” (Davies 1988)64). Therefore, an individual is socialised on many levels, in many way (through both intuition and reason) and the value scale within Islam is both explicit and implicit in the way of life.

The fundamental definition of *deen* is as an operational process of social and cultural life, a total way of life. Central to this way of life is what humankind were created for: worship.

I have created the jinn [unseen] and humankind only for My worship
[Qur'an, 51:56]

Worship is an entire pattern of human existence, it is all the social and cultural elements of Islam represented, the way of life [*deen*]. Islam [submission] both creates balance and is the balance.

“From an Islamic standpoint it is logically impossible to conceive of a group of people that do not have a system of social organisation, for that is inherent in our definition of mankind. Similarly the definition admits of analytical

levels that can be used to distinguish between the general possession of a set of rules, social organisation and culture, and the specific attributes and form these possess. In this Islamic frame of reference there can be no logical opposites, no description of a society as the negative of a Muslim one. There can only be categories of analysis distinctive in the nature and substance of their diversity. The formal difference of the rules of social organisation operated by each group or category admit of analysis because they are composed of consonant spheres of activity" (Davies 1988).

IX.7 Self and Identity

A fundamental teaching in Islam is that of *tawhid* or One-ness. This concept refers to the unity of creation – the unity between all humans and also the unity of the Creator. Obviously, this gives Islam a centrally social focus, the teaching calls for a society structured around people and their needs and requirements (Elmessiri 2006).

Islam teaches that all human beings are born in a state of natural goodness called *fitrah*. All people are predisposed to both belief in Allah (God) and also to submission to what they recognise as a Supreme Being. Being made up of several components, humans can choose their own way in life, and they are accountable, in Islam, for the choices they make. Islam is often labelled “fatalistic” (in a negative, or passive, sense) and yet, study of the teaching would reveal that this is incorrect and, in fact, each person is individually and completely accountable for what they do, say and also think.

In Islamic teaching mankind began with a covenant between Allah and every created individual – so, all of mankind collectively. This covenant is referred to in Surah Al A’raf:

*And when your Lord brought forth from the children of Adam,
from their backs, their descendants,
and made them bear witness against their own souls:
Am I not your Lord?
They said: Yes! we bear witness.
Lest you should say on the day of resurrection:
Surely we were heedless of this
[Qur’an 7:172].*

and this covenant binds all of mankind. “It endows mankind with, can only be repaid, fulfilled or completed with, free will... The purpose and function of the

fitrah is to prompt a willing acknowledgement of this covenanted indebtedness... it is God who enjoined free will upon us as the highest challenge of existence" (Davies 1988:88). This teaching means that although before the human race began a covenant was made between humankind and the Creator, human beings have been given free will to exercise in either keeping the covenant, or breaking it, for the period they are alive.

Fitrah is a term which has both a religious and a linguistic definition as "an inborn natural predisposition which cannot change, and which exists at birth in all human beings" (Mohamed 1996:13). The difference between the linguistic and the religious definition is that the religious understanding acknowledges not only the *fitrah* as a natural predisposition, but also one that is inclined both towards pursuing the right action and also submission to Allah.

Islamic teaching is not confined to belief and formal prayer to Allah, but includes ethical conduct as well. Allah instructs and prohibits in matters relating to food and drink, martial relationships, social justice, etc. As humankind's true nature is one of intrinsic goodness, he is expected to conform to the Divine laws that will guide them to good conduct. This will then strengthen his original nature and make him more inclined towards values demanded of his nature. "Islam is designed to develop a mental state within man which will make the values of truth, honesty, brotherly feelings, etc dear to his heart and the opposite qualities, dishonesty, hypocrisy, etc abhorrent to him". (Mohamed 1996:97-98). "Morality as ordained by the Koran is not only a strong binding and unifying element among the Muslim faithful all over the world, but it serves as the foundation for all social and economic behaviour" (Abbasi et al. 1989:16; Schwartz 2007).

A related point is the fact that man alone of all creation has both intellect ('*aql*) and free will (*irada*). With these tools he is able to distinguish right

from wrong (using his intellect – ‘*aql*) and to choose between right and wrong (using his free will – *irada*’).

Hence, from the beginning of a human beings life, the consideration of his/her natural state in Islam is different from the Christian tradition (Campbell 2007a:58), from which many academic researchers – and, hence, their assumptions, biases and ultimately academic paradigms – come. Islam teaches a concept of Original Goodness, not Original Sin, and this inherent goodness in human beings is not passive, it describes “an active inclination and natural innate predisposition to know Allah, to submit to Him and to do right. This is mans natural tendency in the absence of contrary factors” (Mohamed 1996:21).

The fact that not all people conduct themselves in accordance with their *fitrah* does not diminish the concept. Following an aberrant path is not due to the innate wrong within a persons nature, it is due to the emergence of the *nafs* (self/mind) and/or negative effects of social circumstances (the concept of *nafs* is followed up in detail below).

There are three types or levels of *nafs* (self). The Qur'an uses the term *nafs* to indicate the psychic dimension of man, or ‘the self’. The self is dynamic and needs to be properly trained in order to develop in spiritual awareness and attain harmony with the *ruh* (spirit). The lowest level of psycho-spiritual state in terms of the *nafs* is *an-nafs al-ammarah* – the commanding self. This is the seat of egoism and selfishness and is the negative psychic force within a person. This lowest level of spiritual awareness of man, can be contrasted with the heart (*qalb*), the spirit (*ruh*) and the intellect (‘*aql*), which represent the positive psychic force within a person, the spiritual drivers. The *nafs* has a negative imagery in the Qur'an being called the *an-nafs al-ammarah bi's-su* (the self commanding evil), whereas the *ruh* is viewed as the

Divine Spirit breathed into man. “This aspect of the *nafs* is referred to as the lower *nafs*, which at-Tustari grouped under 4 main headings:

- i) the selfish desire of the *nafs*: it desires its own pleasure through its inborn lust (*shahwah*) and passion (*hawa'*).
- ii) The autonomous claim of the *nafs*: it claims its own self-centred power (*hawl*) and strength (*quwwah*) and follows its own planning (*tadbir*) without regard for Allah’s guidance.
- iii) The antagonistic temper of the *nafs*: it tempts man to act in accordance with his natural inclinations for both restless movement (*harakah*) and listless passivity (*sukun*), in opposition to Allah’s command (*amr*) and prohibition (*nahy*).
- iv) The *nafs* as man’s enemy and *shaytan’s* [Satan’s] companion: it is the worst enemy (‘*aduw*) of man and associates itself with *shaytan* by taking heed of the whispering (*waswasah*) (Mohamed 1996).

The second level of the *nafs* is *An-nafs al-lawwamah* (the reproachful self: see Qur'an 75:2). This is the first major step in psycho-spiritual growth. At this stage, the slightest departure from the path of the Islamic teaching arouses pains of conscience. It is the mid-point between the commanding self and the contented self, and does not result in man responding to every whim or desire he/she feels. The highest level of *nafs* (as mentioned above) is *an-nafs al-mutma'innah* (the contented self). At this stage the individual is totally liberated from the base self and attains the highest level of spiritual balance. *Nafs* now adopts the characteristics of *ruh* (spirit), with which it is united in a state of complete psycho-spiritual harmony (which is the spiritual goal of all Muslims).

Islamic teaching cautions a balance between the body, the mind and the soul/spirit of a person. The dimensions recognised in Western psychology are the biological/body and the psychical/mind, but not the spiritual (as

mentioned above). The psyche (in Arabic *nafs*) is seen as the constantly changing aspect of man, whereas the soul/spirit (in Arabic *ruh*) is the “incorruptible and immutable transcendental essence” of man (Mohamed 1996:88). The reconciliation of the *nafs* (capable of rebellion) with the *ruh* is what man must strive for so that he is qualified for the status of *khalifah* (or, vice-regent) of Allah on the earth.

The epistemological implication of *fitrah* is that “man’s psyche (*nafs*), his will, and reason must conform to Divine Revelation for the intellect to be fully functional or reach its full potential” (p96). This is consistent with the highest level of spiritual development referred to in the Qur'an as *an-nafs al-mutma'innah* ‘the self made tranquil’. This is when man’s entire being is in total harmony with his *fitrah* [natural state of goodness] and when the principle of *tawhid* [One-ness of Allah] is manifested in his total submission to Allah” (Mohamed 1996:91).

IX.8 Questionnaire (English Translation)

1) To which of the following groups do you belong?

Sunni/Shi'ite/Other _____

2) Which school of jurisprudence do you follow?

Maliki/Shafi'i/Hanafi/Hanbali/Other _____

3) Do you describe yourself as a religious person?

-Yes

-No

4) To which extent do you believe in:

	Very Strongly	Somewhat Strongly	Moderately	Weakly	Not At All
Allah					
His Angels					
His Books					
His messengers					
The Day of Judgment					
The Hereafter					
Predestination					
Heaven					
Hell					

5) How important is prayer?

Not Important At All – Of Little Importance – Moderately Important – Somewhat Important – Very Important

6) How often you attend Friday Prayer?

Every Week/Once Every Two Weeks/Once a Month/Less Than That

7) How often do you attend the Mosque apart from Friday Prayer?

For Every Prayer/For Most Prayers/Once a Day/Many Times A Week/
Once a Week/Many Times A Month/Once a Month/For The Two Eid
Prayers Only/Not At All

8) How often do you pray?

5 X A Day/3-4 X A Day/1-2 X A Day/Every Day/Once Every Few Days
More Than Once A Week/Once A Week/At Least Once A Month/A Few
Times A Year/Once A Year/Less Than That/Not At All

9) Do you pay Zakat?

Always/Sometimes/Not At All/None Is Due

10) Do you fast Ramadan?

Always/Sometimes/Don't Fast At All

11) Have you, or do you intend to, perform Haj?

Yes/No

12) Would your friends/family describe you as a “good Muslim”?

No/Only Some Of Them/Some of Them/A Lot Of Them/Most Of Them/All Of Them

13) Would you describe yourself as …

Not Religious/Religious Regarding Important Matters/Religious Regarding Some Matters/Religious In All Matters

14) Is being a good Muslim important to you?

Not At All – Of Little Importance – Moderately- Important – Very Important

15) Do you practice jihad to be a good Muslim?

Yes/Sometimes/No

16) Do you follow Islamic clothing prescription?

Yes/Sometimes/No

If yes, why? If no, why not? _____

If no, do you intend to in the future?

Yes/No

If yes, when? Why then? _____

Demographics

1) Are you male or female?

Male/Female

2) What is your age?

3) What is your marital status?

Single/Married/Divorced/Widowed/Engaged

4) Are you a student?

Yes/No If yes, what is your major? _____

Clothing Samples

Please look at the following set of clothing and answer the questions:

- 1) How would you describe these clothes?
- 2) In your view, what sort of woman wears these clothes? How would you describe her personality?
- 3) How do you imagine she spends her spare time?
- 4) In your view, what does she like? What does she dislike?
- 5) Do you know women like her? Do you admire her/them? Why/Why Not?
- 6) Would you like to be like her?

Clothing Set One:



+



Clothing Set Two:



+



IX.9 Transcript Excerpts:

SALAMA

AISHA: Ok, about the *jellabas*, does she always wear *jellaba*'s to work? Or other stuff as well?

ZAKARIA: What?

AISHA: Her suits and her *jellabas*, she wears to work?

ZAKARIA: *Jellaba*, mostly she wears it on Friday. But the other days, suit, yes.

AISHA: And so how often does she get a new *jellaba* made?

ZAKARIA: She says mostly I, since I started making *jellabas*, one. During Eid al Adha.

AISHA: Every year, one?

ZAKARIA: Yeah. Every year one.

AISHA: And so where does she, so she gets the material and takes it to the tailor, and when she does that does she have some set style or does she make something for the fashion of the year or?

ZAKARIA: Not always, sometimes the fashion that is there she doesn't like it. She said usually I just get it made simple. But last year because there was the fashion of *evase* [shaped] so she liked it and she [thought it] suited her figure. Yeah, yes, yes. She choose it, she choose that one. So she said when she says *jellaba* simple, she means just with *sweefa* and those wee buttons and a bit wide. A bit wide so that's fine. Just simple.

AISHA: So does um, like things like if it's, does she have those split pockets? Or does she have that or is there some things that she always has? Or move with the fashion, like the pockets that change with fashion and the sleeve size changes with fashion?

MARIA

AISHA What about femininity?

ZAKARIA Ok. Yeah well she's saying it is obvious that I would get girls clothes which are feminine. I wouldn't go to a place and get boys clothes, there are obvious boys stuff and girls stuff.

AISHA What about plain clothes – clothes that are not asymmetric or don't have frills or embroidery, no rooshing, no pictures, plain.

ZAKARIA She said even if it is plain, you can still tell that it's girls by the cut etc.

AISHA Any example? Because these are, this is different for ...

ZAKARIA Yeah because she said her mum for example, a person gave her a shirt. Jeans shirt. And her mum said to her why did you give that away? She said it was too big. I will look like a chook. Chook, chickens.

AISHA Chick. So was it girly looking or could boys wear it?

ZAKARIA Yeah a chick with it. I said if it was your, if it fitted you, would you have kept it? She said yes. She said it girly looking and boys couldn't wear it. She said boys wouldn't be able to wear it because it was girly one. The buttons were on the left. But also it was just a girly one anyway.

AISHA Was it cut girly or did it have some sparkly stuff on it or did it have girly buttons or what?

ZAKARIA There was a picture in it. Ok I said could a boy wear it? She said no, no , no.

HABIBA

AISHA: Does she consider fashion?

ZAKARIA: Yes she still follows what is in the market or the fashion. But still within a context that is her own context. She can get for example, sometimes there are pants that are wide as a fashion, she will get it. But she wouldn't be wearing it with a shirt that is short to here [waist] or with, in a way so that with a belt, you can see the belt. So she would be wearing it with some shirt that is long. So that would be within her context.

AISHA: Next is femininity.

ZAKARIA: Oh ok. She says like last year there was the *milfik* material. And even if you go and you want something else you wouldn't find it. And when you go to the tailor depending on how much you want, how much you can afford and what you want. If you want just small buttons he will do it for you. So that depends on you as well. So she still will get the fashion. Whatever that piece of, fashion that will be within her own context. Within her own boundaries.

AISHA: Yeah because she's still constrained by the market, right?

ZAKARIA: Yes, well not just the market but also by her own boundaries. That's what she's saying. So within the boundaries that she makes, she draws a line.

KHADIJA

AISHA Because the *khimar* is foreign? It's not Moroccan?

ZAKARIA Um no it's the whole thing started in Sale, Sale is the city just near Rabat. With the events that took place in May 2003 – the bombing. The government said it was the Salafi and Jihadist party who did it.

AISHA Salafi and Jihadist, is this Al Adl Wa Al Ihssane?

ZAKARIA No, a strict one. So these ones, they say they are the ones who wear this, right, they're the wives. But because they're wives, they don't spread the message. They don't spread the message. And that created a whole scary image and connection between being Jihadist, Salafist and those sort of clothes.

AISHA In Morocco?

ZAKARIA In Morocco. So that's why, even a lady will not encourage her daughter to wear that except when she's married. And if she's married to a man who is Salafi, Jihadist, alright? So that's how. And that's also, it's kind of alien – it started in Saudi, but lately it's started coming in here as well. Alright? So that's how it's alien sort of. But ...No she's not against it. She's not saying it's wrong or anything. It's just you should consider what, the environment you're living it so that you would be passing the message. So that you will be inviting the others, alright? So it's just differences, but still you have got to consider the society you are living in. So you've got to consider that and that's the point of it. Alright?

AISHA Mmm hmm.

ZAKARIA To get in and to be able to pass to talk to people etc. So that's why you still can do that, still can follow the Islamic rulings, and fulfil the requirements, the Islamic instructions regarding clothing. Yet be accepted within the society itself, that you will fulfil that role of teaching by example. Right? Anything else?

HAFSA

ZAKARIA: Ok she said, do they suit you?, Yes they do. She said you wouldn't be wearing something that doesn't suit you. And a Moroccan saying says eat with your taste, but wear the taste of people. So what suits people, you eat what suits you but you wear what suits others. So like blue, mauve. Yeah, pink, these are the fashion today. Those three colours in the traditional are fashionable, but in the modern line there is blue and pink. So yeah. Ok. She said like there are some clothes for the sisterhood today in the market that are not kind of suitable. Like there are some skirts that have got too many folds. And some shirts that are just up to here [waist]. Tight pants and some shirts that are also elastic and up to here [waist].

AISHA: Sleeveless or tee shirt?

ZAKARIA: No, no, no, shirt, shirt, proper shirt. But is just tight. I said things that are tight in general you don't like? She said well if it tight, what are you covering? You are covering nothing actually. There are some styles that you can wear them. She said I'm giving you just an example of this. She said if the clothes were tight for example, the scarf should be taken off actually. She said either they put it because they like it tight and add a scarf. Or because um, or that she has got some idea in her head for example attract or something, we don't know. Or you can't wear like dakshirta with the underneath one, the strap and the top one is transparent for example like this one. Or you can't wear something that is often up to here [split] for example and see the legs. I said so transparent, you wouldn't be wearing it. She said if it was transparent well all the hand would be clear. You would see the hand. Or are you going to wear something under it. What elegance is that? So clothes shouldn't show the skin. She said well if was open to here, what sort of clothes is that. Are you going to wear something tight underneath it? No, no.

AISHA: And so does she wear jeans or um, skirts that are to the knee or anything like that? Three quarter sleeves.

ZAKARIA: No it doesn't suit because it means she needs a scarf that goes with it. It needs a scarf that would be long so that it cover here .

AISHA: Oh so she needs to wear a *khimar* to make up for the missing bits.

ZAKARIA: Yes, yes. Yeah she wears jeans with the jacket or with *monton* [3/4 jacket].

AISHA: To the knees? Is that what a *monton* is? A three quarter length coat.

ZAKARIA: Yes.

AISHA: Below the knee?

ZAKARIA: Yeah. Oh she said I'd never wear the skirt up to the knee. I did try it on, put it on, just to try it on, right. So how can I wear that sort of skirt? Though at home a person would wear whatever he wants. Except when a guest comes and you would put something else on. I said can you for example wear a skirt up to the knee here? She said yes I can. But she doesn't. She said like I wear shorts for example or short dress etc when I'm at home. But when, when we are just between us. But when there is a guest, well of course, of course I will be putting scarf and the rest. Yep.

AISHA: What is 'between you'? Does she mean just the family?

ZAKARIA: When my brothers usually are out and my father doesn't come back until late at night, that's what I mean. But when they come back, a person would put something extra on.

AISHA: When her brothers come home?

ZAKARIA: Yes. Yeah, something on the top, like a bathrobe, you know.

SAWDA

AISHA: And what does she mean by it's important that the clothes are covering?

ZAKARIA: Before she used to wear *hijab*, right?

AISHA: When, when?

ZAKARIA: This about 12 years ago. Because when they moved here, she started wearing it. Before that even before that she used to wear, she didn't like to put like makeup. And when she used to cover up to here, like and only here wasn't covered. And also up to here.

AISHA: Only her calves, only her lower arm and only her head and her neck.

ZAKARIA: Yeah, up to here.

AISHA: But high neck things.

ZAKARIA: Ok, up to here.

AISHA: Ok so a three quarter sleeve tee shirt?

ZAKARIA: Yes. But now she likes things to be covered. Like, you know, head. Only the hands you can see, the feet and the face. Yes. Well like she said unlike our old time she said, even when she wasn't wearing *hijab*, they used to wear mini skirt, having clothes that are in the back here open, not covered. But she said we have always been conservative. Always she said mum and dad they have been telling us about Islam, it's not allowed you be uncovered. So she said my mum and dad they used to teach us that in our religion it's *haram* [unlawful] to be uncovered. To uncover our body and to show our body so that's why we didn't do it even though those who we used to play with they used to be uncovered as I told you about.

AISHA: Ok so why is she sitting there now with her scarf on?

ZAKARIA: No she said that they used to be conservative and they have been always conservative. But one day [her sister], she was reading the Qur'an, Surat al Nur, and there is a verse about covering, about *hijab*? And it's obligatory upon us to cover ourselves exactly as we are, it is obligatory for us to pray. So that's how we, and to cover, you know, the head, to cover the hair etc. The only parts OK to not cover, the hands, the face and the feet. Always the hands and the feet. She said that she doesn't cover the feet. Some they say, yeah, you cover the feet as well. Yeah. Ok this bit of information they are not sure about it, about whether to cover the feet or not.