

## Women, Then and Now..

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[This is an article that numbers women who ruled in the gulf region not too long ago](#)

It is interesting how society managed to change its perspective on women. Women in Islam have always been out there in the forefront right next to man; she joined him in battles, tutored men and women alike, teaching and reciting Quran and Hadeeth. Women owned their businesses back in the old days, many used to buy and sell side by side with their fellow men. Women married themselves and had the freedom to choose suitable husbands or suitors without tribal and nationality restrictions that we witness today.

Society was able to reduce woman from being a whole person with an independent mind, thoughts, feelings and social roles to an object of pleasure. Because of that she is now hidden away from fear of male predators that eat away at her bare flesh with their lustful gaze! They stripped her bare from what ever humanity she had. A woman in some countries of the gulf is a mere shadow.. She is black..

I was observing people walking up and down the corridor outside the office I was working in (it being in a public place) and all I could see was either black or white. It doesn't take a genius to know that men wear white robes (thob) and women wrap themselves in black here in Saudi Arabia.

If you take the symbolic meanings of the two colors chosen for men and women in this country; white meaning pure and good while on the other hand black meaning evil which incidentally also absorbs the heat from the scorching hot sun of Saudi Arabia where the temperature reaches ٥٠ degrees centigrade in the summer, that makes one wonder if the choice was purely coincidence.

It actually saddens me to see women trailing along walking behind men literally covered up from head to toe to the extent that many even wear black gloves and thick black stockings to make sure that no lustful eye could sneak a peak at a female toe or a finger which might switch on a sexual signal/desire from the other sex God forbid!

It makes me sick to see a woman having her ١٥ year old son as a guardian as if she was mentally ill or what is worse is watching a young boy who can hardly see the road ahead from the steering wheel due to his young age yet driving the family car with the backseats stacked with women and children because a woman is perceived as an object not a mind or a decision maker. A child can drive in this country but oh no not a woman!

A woman has become so much of a sex object that if a home was broken into and the male guardian wasn't around; police officers would not enter that home nor speak to women residents in fear of being alone with the opposite sex! God forbid an officer might get seduced in the presence of women but it is alright to leave them in harm's way! The mindset is the same even in a mixed environment workplace. If a woman is bold enough to work among men then she must be easy. If a woman uncovers her face or hair then she must be asking for trouble and deserves whatever harassment she gets!

I wrote once before about the ambulance refusing to take women in need of emergency medical services without their male guardians! Caution to all women out there, you are not allowed to have an accident or a stroke or..or..or.. Without your male guardian! He has to be around in case you decide to seduce your rescuer while fighting for your own life!

It is also common here to wish a widowed man who just lost his wife to renew his bed partner! Showing no respect what so ever for the deceased wife, on the other hand if a woman is widowed; society would not easily accept her remarrying! How could she renew her bed partner and shamefully disrespect her deceased husband years after his death?!

It also saddens me to see that society was able to reduce man to a semi animal with no self control what so ever although he was able in the past to treat a woman as a peer, a partner, a teacher and a fellow human.

I don't believe Islam intended for a woman to become such a dependent second class shadow! She definitely played many important roles in society in the past and earned respect from both genders yet now she is not even acknowledged as a whole entity rather she is handed down from man to man like a piece of furniture!

We must acknowledge the existence of both men and women's sexualities, it is part of the human structure but it's not all there is.. It is easy to say that we can change societies, educate and provide awareness programs for both genders but the initial step would be to acknowledge this problem and I still don't think society realizes that a problem actually exists!

This is a photo of a Saudi woman from Hail in Saudi Arabia called Fatema who ruled Hail from ١٩١١-١٩١٤ (the good all days when Saudi \*Muslim\* women were perceived somehow as equals to men!)