

Embroidered dresses along Ancient Caravan Routes

- 1. From Aden to Sana'a:

 The Gold and Frankincense Route
- 2. Passing through high mountains:
 The Coffee and Indigo-dyed Cotton
 Routes
- 3. Traveling along wadi's:
 The Ancient Silk Route
- 4. Interest for Yemenite craftwork in Pre-State Israel and Israel





Embroidered dresses along Ancient Caravan Routes

Dresses in Yemen are shorter than in the rest of the Arabic peninsula, with the bottom hem just beneath the knee. They are worn with richly embroidered trousers.

Festive dresses show a great diversity in styles, depending on the geographic region, use of the dress.

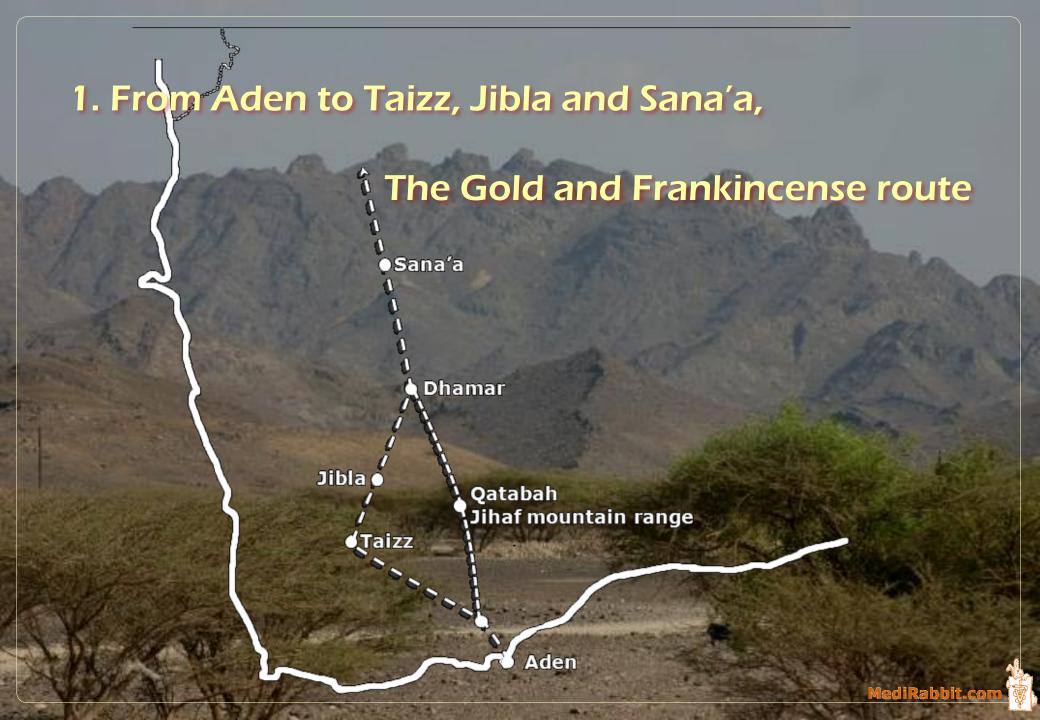
Embroidery combines combine traditional pattern, local mythology, geographic influences, but also prophylaxis or amuletic protection against the evil eye.

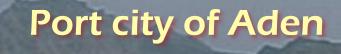
Patterns, stitches and techniques used are distinct to a region, city or village, urban or rural.

It gave women the opportunity to advertise their skills, their social and financial status and their identity.

It allows the expression of feelings, emotions, and fantasy in a society that has a rigid structure and obeys to strict rules.

Often a hidden pocket is present on the front panel of the garment, in which a small amulet, dried herbs or spices are placed.





Damascene Satin fabric, imported from Syria

untailored, inset under armpit, narrow long sleeves

no front slit

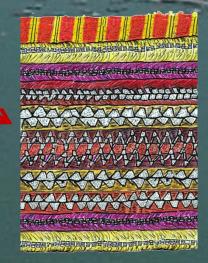




Decorative friezes are made by placing bricks at an angle, partially recessed, in the outer walls of buildings

Play of light and shadow on buildings and garments

Vivid colors, to contrast against the monochromatic scenery? the austere houses?



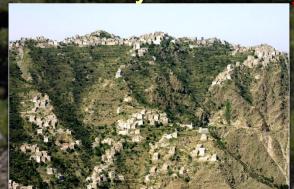
the walled city of Taizz on the chest panel

Taizz and Mount Sabir



The design reminds the rough but detailed landscape

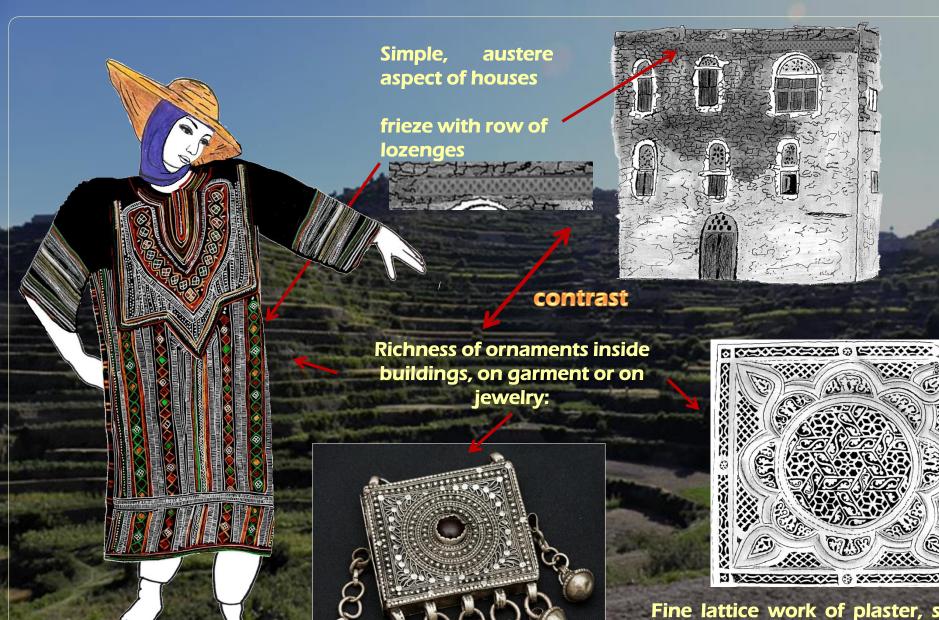
farming terraces and villages in the nearby mountains



dark-blue or black indigo-dyed wide cut, untailored

sleeves are straight, longer than arms, allowing to bring them back onto the shoulder, leaving the forearms bare

front panel fully covered with embroidery: white vertical separation columns filled with narrow rows of parallel lines alternate with columns of colorful diamond shapes



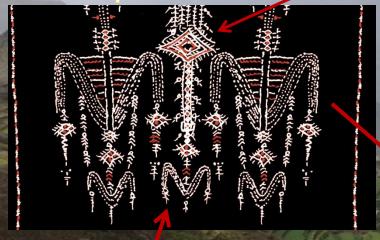
Fine lattice work of plaster, silver or embroidery thread.

Lines framing rounded motifs, diamonds



Badan mountain range and Jibla

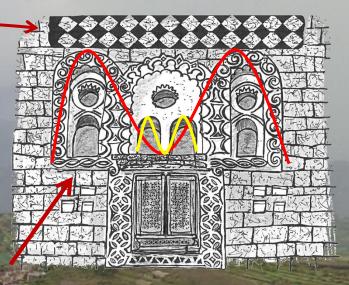
detail of dress: bottom of front skirt panel with M-motif



Dangles at bottom of M-shape

use of lozenges

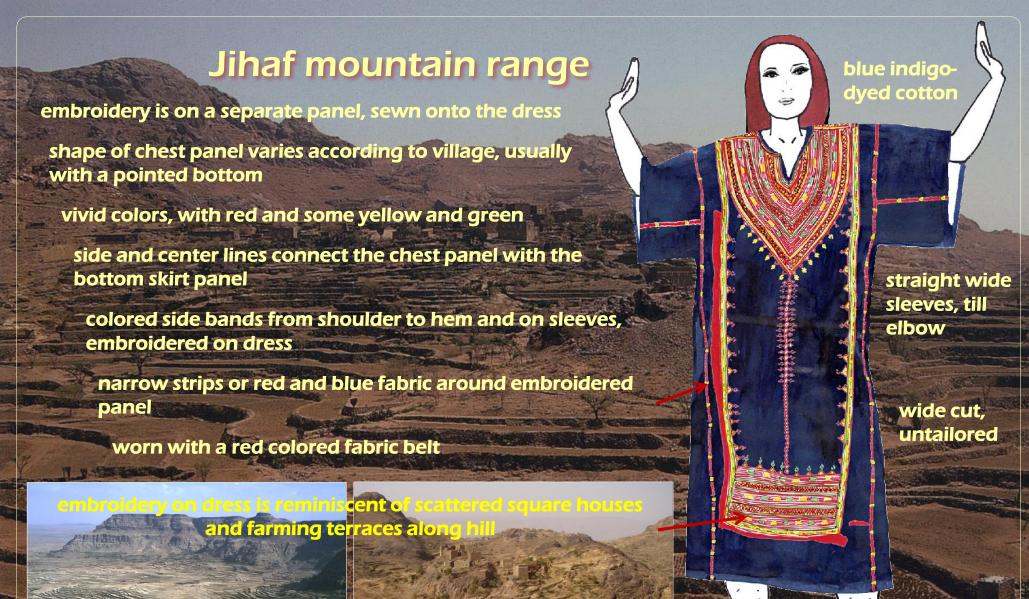
very fine embellishment on dress, plaster panels around windows and open filigree jewelry



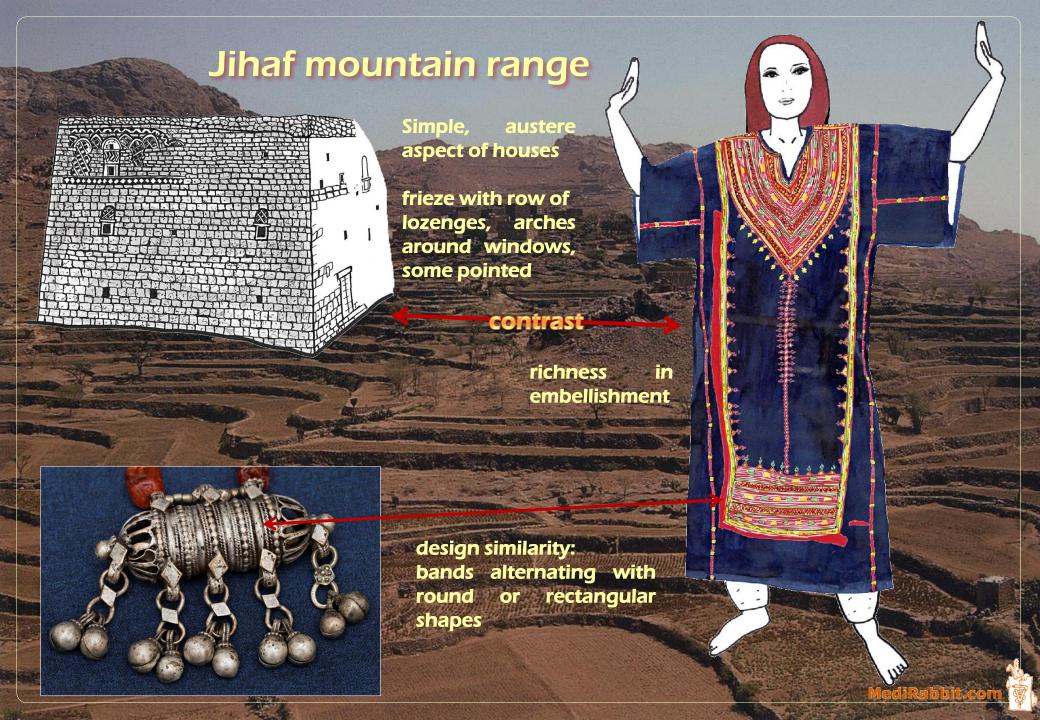
M-shape and semi arches in scenery, in embroidered motifs, above windows, in jewelry



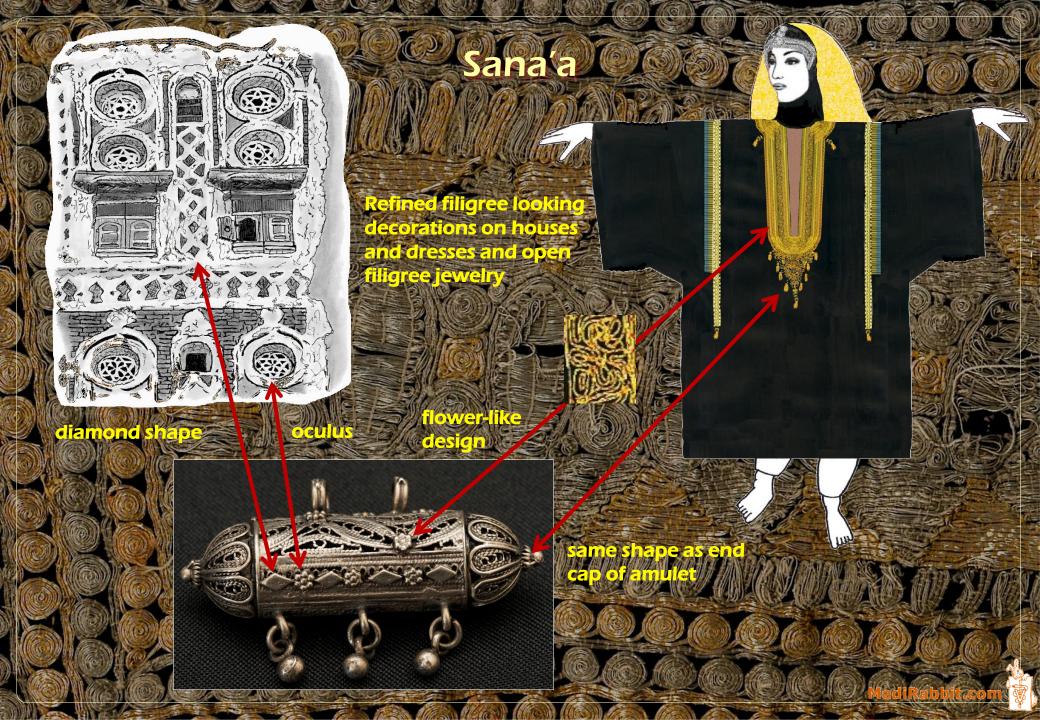
Badan mountain range

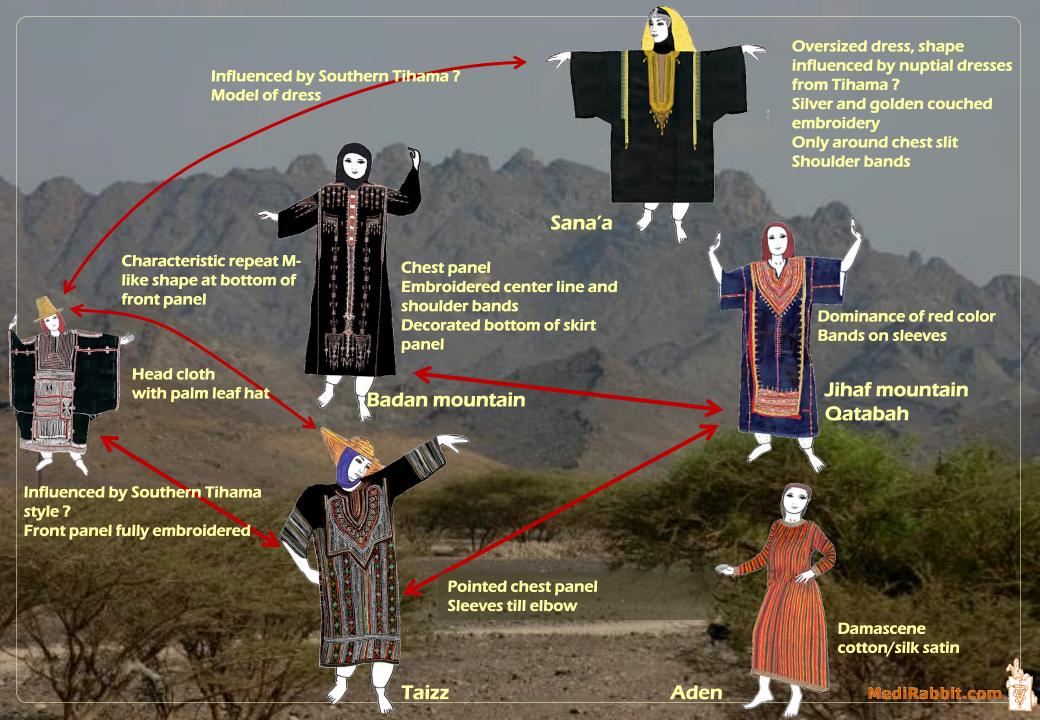


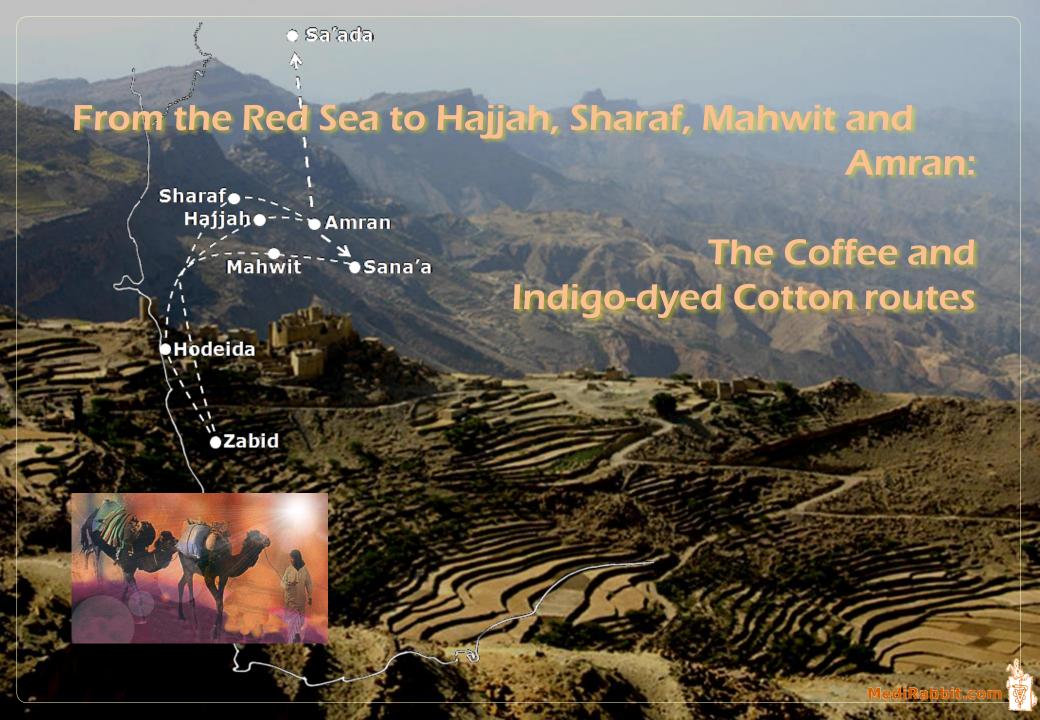
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Zabid

nuptial Muslim dress worn with hat

short center chest slit, surrounded by braided silver or metal wire braided with naturally colored or red thread

embroidery on the chest panel, shoulders and top of upper arms is symmetric

embroidery on the skirt panel is asymmetric

monotony of lines is broken by introducing red bands and diabolo shapes

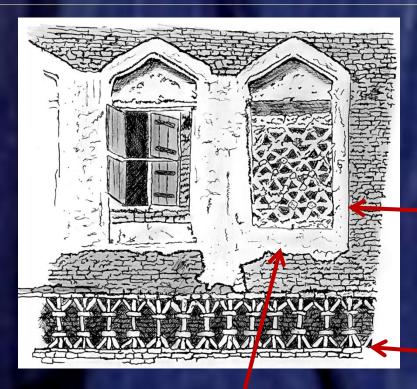
embroidery at end of sleeves and bottom hem

useless / underarm inset

embroidery on front panel is framed by vertical bands from shoulder to hem

three vertical parallel bars on bars that are reminiscent of the M-like shape





Zabid

Richness of decorations similarity

diabolo-like shapes

open screen work in windows and amulets

combination of straight lines, braided bands







fine embroidery on front panel, associated with mother-of-pearl and brass disks

symmetrical on front panel

longer center front slit, surrounded with fine motifs, combining embroidery and brass disks

decoration continued under the slit, with parallel vertical bands of embroidery or brass disks, ending with pieces of mother-of-pearl sewn onto the dress

other decorations appear like wheat ears

finely embroidered vertical bands from shoulder to hem frame the front panel embroidery

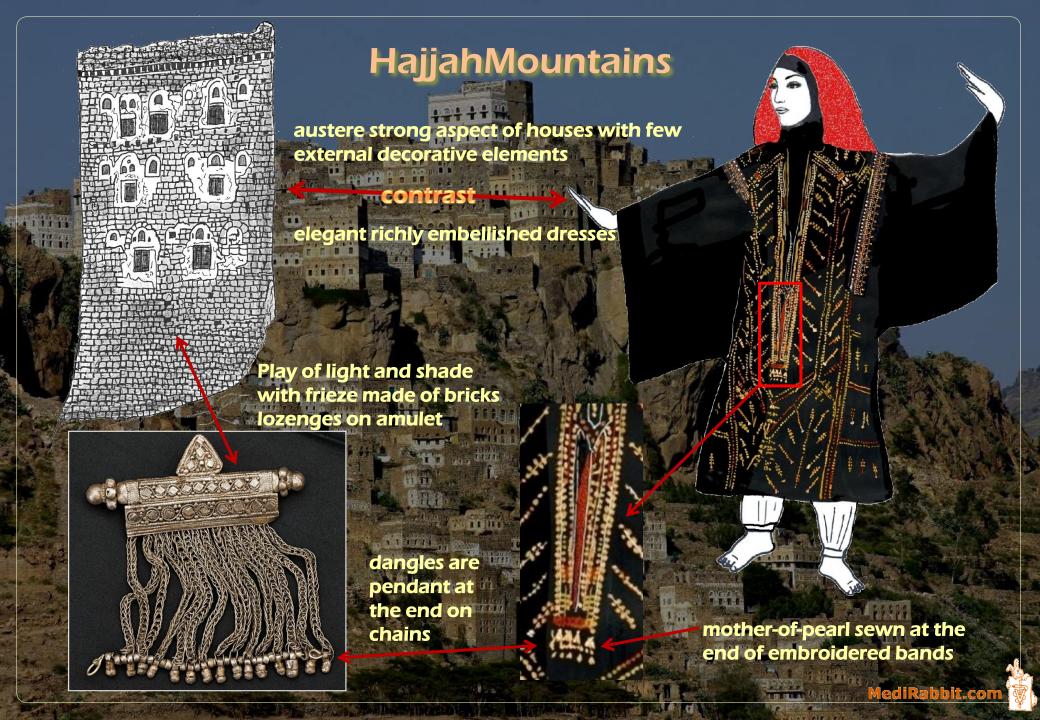
bottom of skirt panel end with a wide M-shape

dark indigodyed cotton imported from Tihama

> straight wide sleeves covering all arm

side gores with embroidery

untailored cut MediRabbit.com





dark indigodyed cotton imported from Tihama



decorations symmetrical on front panel

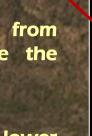
fine embroidery surrounding longer center front slit, collar, vertical and diagonal bands

embroidered medallion at bottom of chest slit with vivid colors

at top of medallion, M-shape upside down

embroidered vertical bands from shoulder to abdomen frame the chest panel embroidery

vertical bands are linked to lower chest slit embellishment by diagonal finely embroidered bands

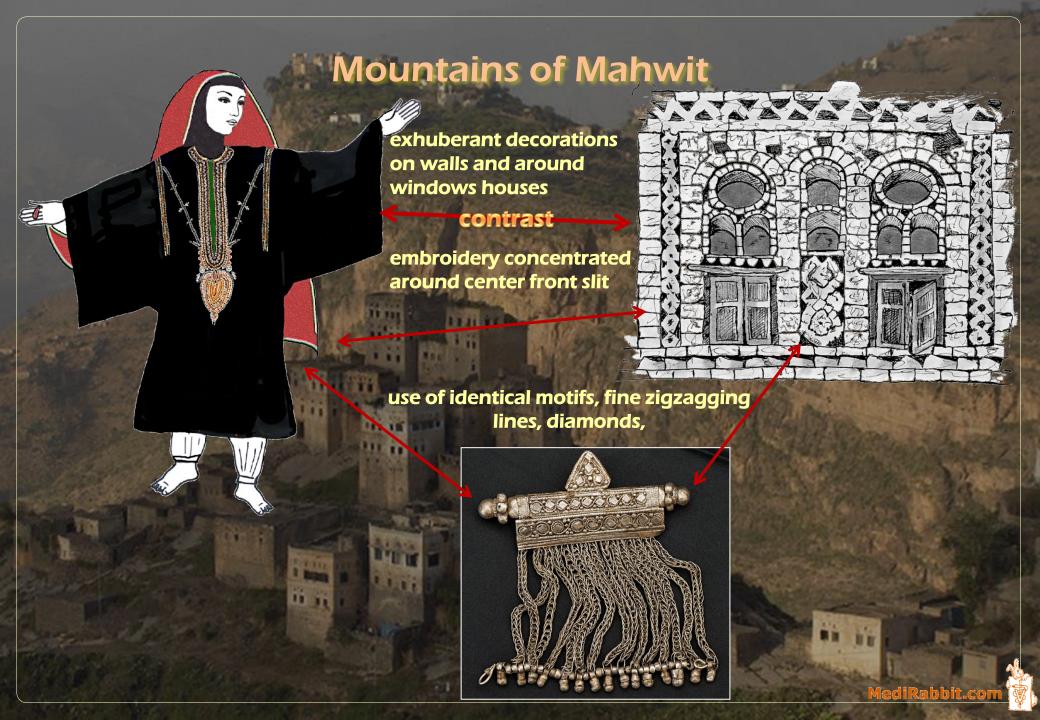




straight wide sleeves covering all arm

untailored cut





Al-Sharaf Mountains

decorations symmetrical on chest panel, no symmetry on abdominal-hip region

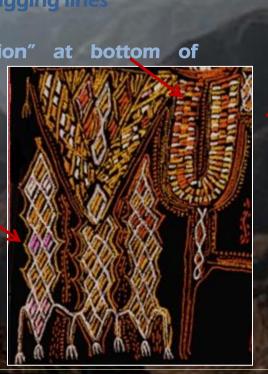
embroidery surrounding longer center front slit, collar, cuffs

recurrent use of triangular and diamond motifs, and white zigzagging lines

embroidered "medallion" at bottom of

chest slit is a pocket.

unusual pattern of zigzagging lines filled with colored diamonds, ending with M-like motifs



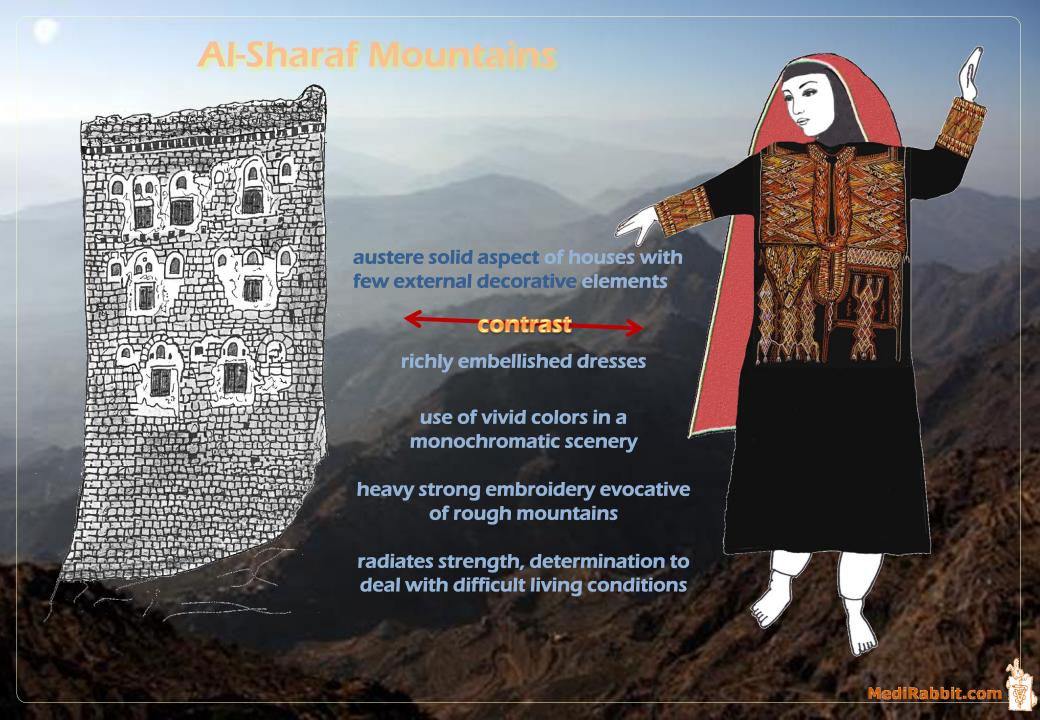
dark indigo-dyed cotton

narrow sleeves

untailored cut

covering all arm





decorations symmetrical on chest panel.

dominance of yellow embroidery with red and white

recurrent use of Y-like shape on front panel

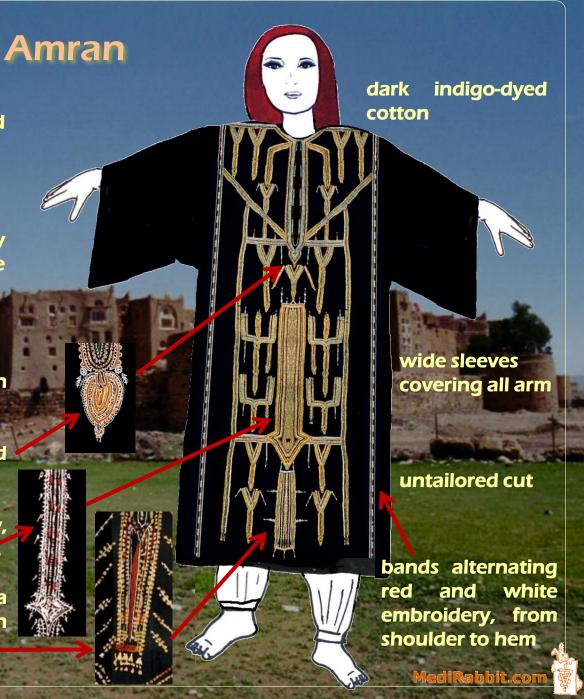
embroidery on front panel is framed by bands with alternating red and white embroidery, from shoulder to hem

mix of local styles on center line of Amran dress?

small embroidered medallion as observed on dresses from Mahwit...

continued by band that ends like an arrow, as seen on dresses from the **Badan region...**

and a series of lines that end with a horizontal band and dangles, as seen on dresses from the Harraz region...





reminds crenellations on top of buildings



austere strong aspect of adobe houses with few external decorative elements

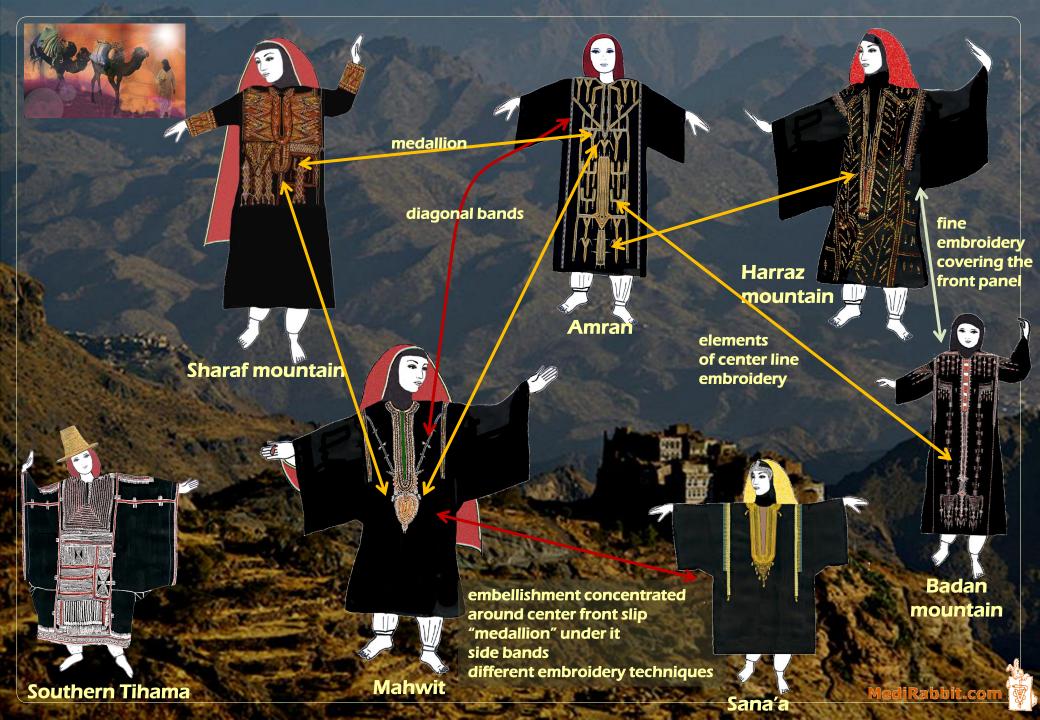
contrast

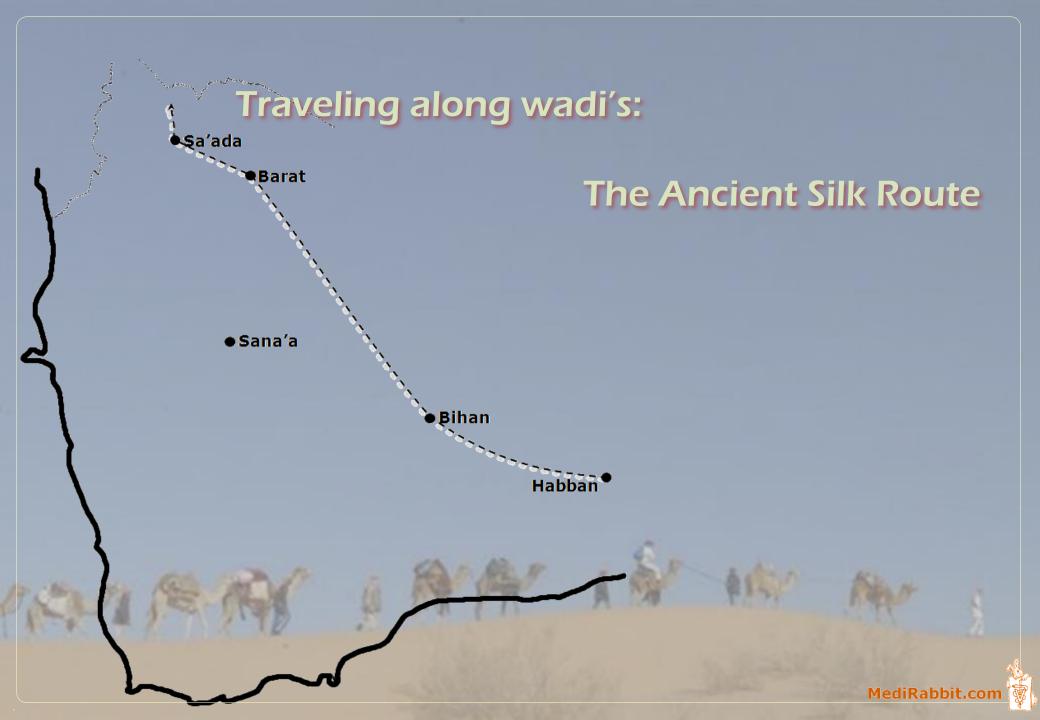
richly embellished dress

city wall around the city

vertical bands framing the embroidered panel







Eastern Yemen: Habban

Mashru satin fabric with a silk warp and cotton weft, giving the appearance of a silk textile on the front, while the weft floats on the back are cotton

fabric is renders it smooth, comfortable to wear, and esthetically pleasing, with a shiny finish

bands of fabric sewn onto the dress

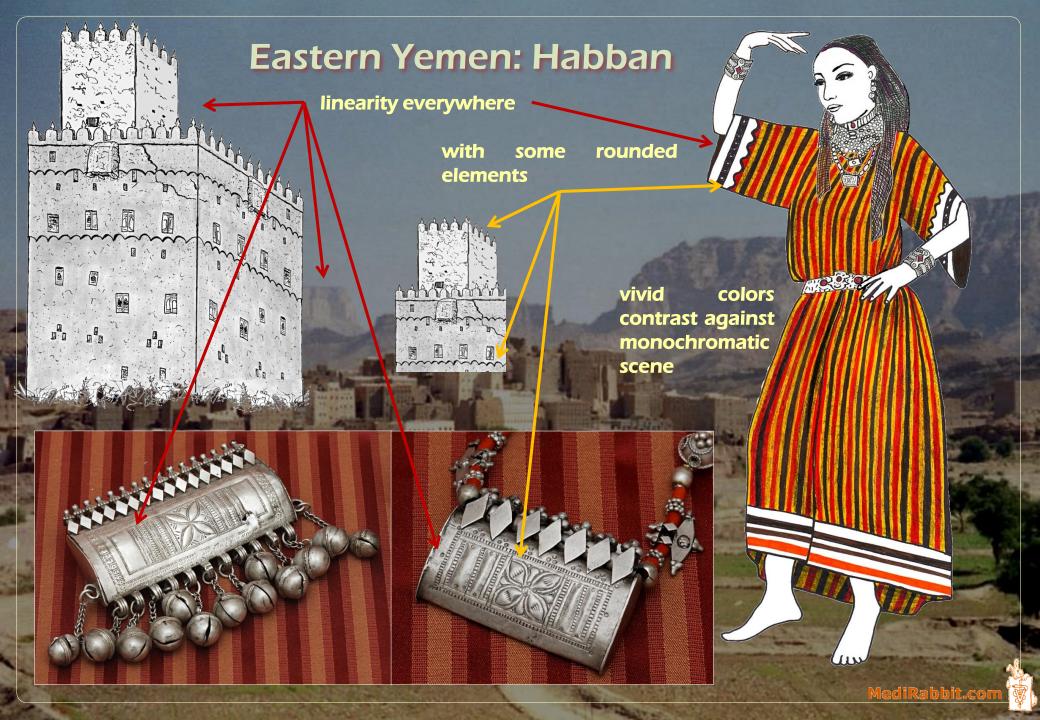
back of the dresses is longer than the front

worn with profuse jewelry around neck and belt

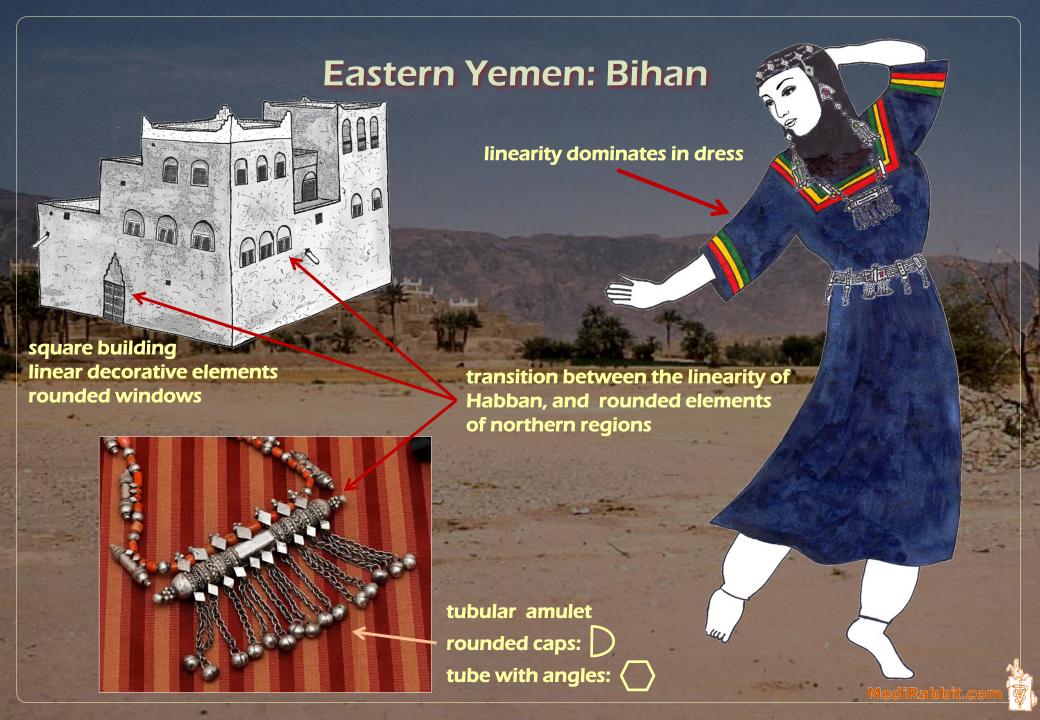


festive dresses were also in yellow, teal or red, the latter with white diamond decorations

wide sleeves till elbows untailored cut



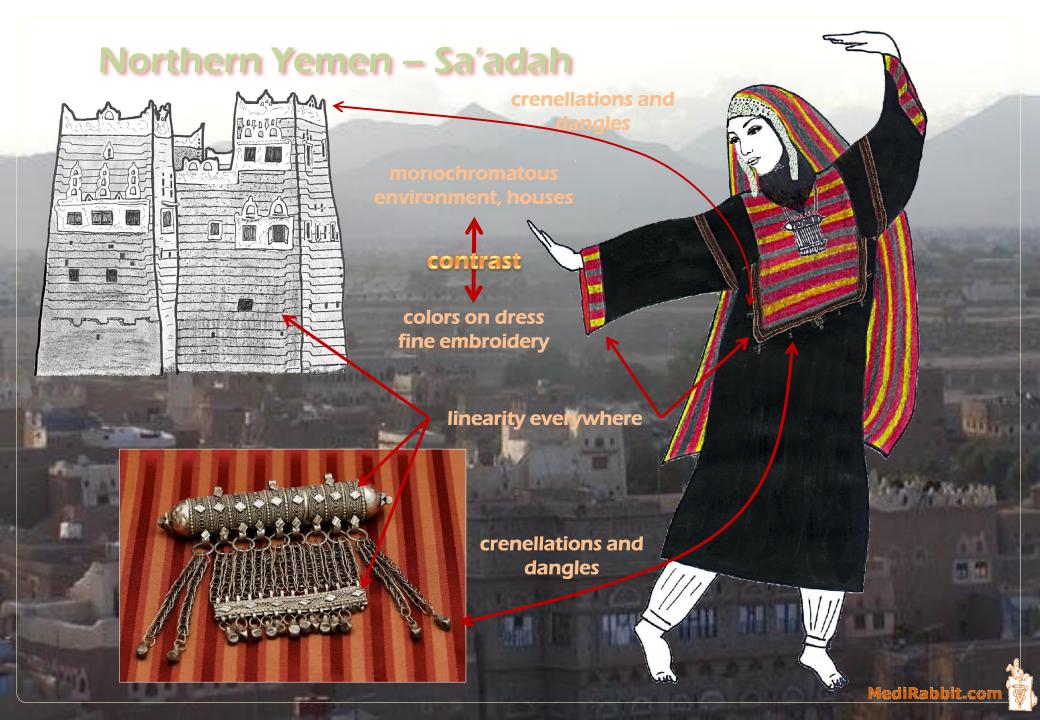






















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Interest for Yemenite craftwork in Israel...



The interest in Yemenite embroidery remained high during the 1950 and 1960'se, after which it progressively declined.



Pictures: Courtesy of Anat Madmony, Ph.D.







On luxury items for women:



Note pad and jewelry box with Yemenite embroidery received from my grandmother in Holland end 1960'se



Thank you...

to

Prof. Yossi Tobi, Israel
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presentation can be seen again at:

www.medirabbit.com/Oral/Dresses.pdf