

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**TRADITIONAL HAND EMBROIDERY  
FOR WEDDING DRESS IN SAUDI  
ARABIA: MAKKA AND MADINA**

**DALIAH ABDULGHADER FAIRAK**

Thesis submitted in fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
**Master of Art**

**Faculty of Art and Design**

**May 2013**

## AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.


Name of Student : Daliah Abdulghader Fairak

Student I.D.No. : 2008537559

Programme : Master of Art and Design

Faculty : Faculty of Art and Design

Thesis Title : Traditional Hand Embroidery for Wedding Dress in Saudi Arabia Makkah and Madinah

Signature of student : 

Date : May 2013

## ABSTRACT

There have been a number of researches that presented information on the history of traditional hand embroidery wedding dress of the people in Makkah and Madinah, which is a way to preserve the heritage and to renew it. This study also intends to demonstrate what today's brides desire to wear, and also describe the methodology of collaborating the traditional hand embroidery with contemporary design. This study was conducted in order to identify certain aspects of young brides' personality as a factor for implementing special gown design. By using the existing knowledge of the elders from Makkah and Madinah on the traditional hand embroidery and feedbacks from young brides, it is found that majority of them do not have the knowledge and understanding of the hand embroidery heritage. Moreover, a theoretical analysis backed by observations from Makkah and Madinah's wedding dress shops, and Hejaz wedding ceremonies, indicates that young brides are attracted to the unique gown designs, such as traditional dresses that express their character. Quantitative results in the form of questionnaires are provided as evidence to show that modern gown designs embroidered with traditional hand embroidery is preferred by the young brides, who are responded to the questionnaire, and it also shows that it is feasible as a fashion item and is marketable in Makkah and Madinah's clothing stores. The final results showed that a large number of the respondents agreed with this concept of integrating contemporary gown with traditional hand embroidery, while only small groups of them disagreed. However, from these small groups, little number disagreed based on the reason that they do not have enough facts about this handicraft. It is believed that this concept the integrating contemporary design with traditional hand embroidery will benefit the Saudi's fashion industry, as well as a big step towards reviving wedding dress traditions and enhancing its productivity.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my highest praise and thanks to Allah and his Prophet for guiding me in improving my knowledge. I also wish to thank my supervisor, Associate Professor Dr. Norwani for offering her advices and guidance which encourage me towards the steps of promising future. This research project would not have been successful without the support of many people. I take this opportunity to show my deepest gratitude to Dr. Adzrool and Mr. Firdaus without their assistance that has been instrumental in the successful completion of this study. In addition, I would also like to thank the staff members of Altayebatcity (Khalil museum) and the traditional fashion shops workers for providing materials and information that supported my study work. Also, I wish to thank the students of King Abdul Aziz University, Umm Al-Qura University and other institutes in Makkah, Madinah and Jeddah for their time to respond to the questionnaires.

My special thanks to my family; my mother, who did not hesitate to push me hard to become a better person, my cousin and my niece for their help and suggestions, my friends who gave non-stop support emotionally and help to find resources related to my study. I am also not forgetting to the older ladies who spent time to interview them even with their health condition.

Last but not least I would like to take this opportunity to express a sense of appreciation, respect and love to my beloved sister, Amani; for her support, encourage, strength, help, understanding, endless love and everything that goes along the line. Without her help, I would face many difficulties while doing this. I cannot say thank you enough for her tremendous support and help. Finally, yet importantly, I would like to dedicate this work to my beloved father, Abdulghader, who passed away recently before I finish my study. My deepest appreciations, admiration, gratefulness and my heartfelt thanks to my beloved father for his blessing, support, endless love and everything that help kept me to continue my study and being cheerful for me. May Allah bless his pure soul.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The hand embroidery is a beautiful and fine art. It is a handicraft that decorates fabrics for the purpose of making materials look beautiful. Decoration is usually done by using beads and sequins sewn using a needle with threads or yarns such as silk and metallic that requires great skills (Gadi, 2010). It is usually sewn onto special outfits like the panels of an expensive bridal gown. Embroidery is a handiwork that experts in the art of yarning and sewing pass down from one generation to another; an art with which the daughter can learn from her skilled mother (Naik, 1996). Consequently, all experts in the art of embroidery have preserved the knowledge of the perfect artistic movement, visualization and excellence across time.

This craft requires great skills and creativity. Great skills were acquired from elder people who are well-experienced on the arts and techniques. Elder people, in this context such as the mothers and grandmothers, are the typical people who teach their young daughters the skills until they achieved excellent work and performed well on their own. Through time, young people learned hand embroidery by observing previous handiworks. They usually started learning at a young age when they are able to learn the basics of hand embroidery or sewing. When they become older and more skillful with constant practice, they become experts in their handicraft (Naik, 1996). Each work leaves a mark and an impression of an individual person's knowledge and style making each work unique with its own personality, uniquely different from one another (Dhamija, 2004). Thus, this makes the embroidered work priceless and appreciated by everyone.

Every woman has a different lifestyle which helps her to be imaginative in her work. She brings about creative ideas from what she sees every day around her, such as the designs on buildings and any objects in her surroundings. She can also express her feelings or she may imitate other's piece of work, while at the same time mixing it with her personal experiences (Ali, 1993). Others can be travelers who wander from