

## **An Anthropological Study of Dress and Adornment Pattern Among Females of Kalash, District Chitral**

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**Abstract:** The land in the east of the Hindu-Kush range that lies between Pakistan and Afghanistan is called Kafiristan (the land of Kafirs), where the inhabitant followed their own religion and customs residing in the three valleys of Rumbour, Bomboret and Birrir. The basis of their religion is oral traditions, songs, mythical stories and the distinctive dress patterns they observe. Among the local people, still there is a constant resistance to any social change and the inhabitants are trying to maintain and preserve their indigenous cultural identity. The people of Kalash possess a very distinctive and unique cultural pattern, dress and rituals which successfully distinguish them from other tribes coexisting within the same geographical locale. This paganistic similarity is the basic reason of interest for anthropologists, historians, tourists and archeologist in the region. Kalasha rituals focused explicitly on maintaining the purity of their people and valley, against the impure surroundings. The oratory political life open repeatedly emphasize that all Kalasha are poor, all are equal in contrast to their hereditary grading characteristics of Muslims coexisting with them in their shared geographical space. The data for the current study has been taken from a PhD research survey conducted in 2008-09 from 825 households through anthropological techniques including participant observation, case studies and in-depth interviews from 115 respondents (both male and female of age 13 and above in Anish and Brun village of Bomburet Valley Kalash). The descriptive analysis of the information have been performed which is thoroughly supported with secondary information. The relational analysis thus conformed that the inhabitants of the area have a distinctive future with regard to their dress, religion, tradition and even death and funeral as well. However, changes have been observed in some of the aspect which is gradually making the local culture open to adopt a change.

**Key words:** Clothing • Conformity • Individuality • Identity • Fashion • Adornment

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Dress or clothing can safely be used as a silent way of non verbal communication. It is a tool to establish the cultural identity which assists in defining unique identities by employing accurate symbols which are permitted and approved by a culture. Culture identity [1] is one of many forms of identity that individual may express through clothing while scholars have observed many changes in the cultural identities due to globalization and modernization [2]. This identity configuration is largely dependent on the ability to understand the hidden meaning of societal values and historic realities [3]. Identities are constituted by

evaluating and adding various characters and traits whereas the most important and fundamental aspect of identity is the person's own personality and self concept. To shape up the external silhouette certain material apart from the natural abilities, like clothing and accessories are required to enhance the appearance and perception of individual in any social context. These material goods are governed by the norms and mores for a precise interpretation and placement in accordance with the culture. Individual acts can provide a means for expression and flexibility in conveying a message or combination of messages and creativity. Cultures provide "identity kits" [4] that assist in assuming conventional identities for the people belonging to marginal groups.

These identity kits facilitate the perceiver to interpret the meaning of a complete dress with the specification it attempts to signify.

The universe is surrounded by variety of objects, things and artifacts which most of the time have certain ideological values. Such values can be based on one's cultural beliefs, taboos, good fortune and fallacy. Consciously and unconsciously these staunch beliefs are reflected in the clothing either in the form of embellishments or composite. Clothing has a duality in nature; it is a tangible material and is often used as a very strong and emotional symbolic character. The signs generated by the clothing and accessories denote certain ideological truths and non verbal messages of certain minority groups. The symbols when deeply analyzed extend the darkest spatial reality of their existence. The traditional costume when created is not usually meant for the purpose it is used to symbolize. There is a possibility of perceptual disagreement between the wearer and the designer. Post modern culture frames the signs in a context that has little to do with the past, that juxtaposes elements in an eclectic manner and that places increasing emphasis on the signified portion of the sign [5]. The dresses can signify more than one meaning like in form of folk costume of Kalash one can generate information about the group identity, religious identity, values, economic aspect, social setup and norms of the particular society.

Studies indicate that every known society recognizes and elaborates some differences between the sexes, although there are groups in which men wear skirts and women wear pants or trousers, it is everywhere the case that there are characteristic tasks, manners and responsibilities, primarily with women or with men" [6]. The *kafirs* of Kalash are often regarded as "*Siah Posh*" the one in black robe. This black colour serves as a space for their traditional identity. Anthropologist and social scientist often give due consideration to certain signs and symbols generated through the effective use of colours from a cross cultural perspective, that is why colours are used universally to signify certain connotative meanings like, death, spirituality, happiness, festivities, sorrow, eternal life and vitality [7].

The colours used by the wearer are often indicative of certain symbolic interpretation in any given culture. The traditional costume when created is not usually meant for the purpose it is used to symbolize. There is a possibility of perceptual disagreement between the

wearer and the designer. Post modern culture frames the signs in a context that has little to do with the past, that juxtaposes elements in an eclectic manner and that places increasing emphasis on the signified portion of the sign [8]. The dresses can signify more than one meaning like in form of folk costume of Kalash one can generate information about the group identity, religious identity, values, economic aspect, social setup and norms of the particular society. The current debate has been made in sense to describe the impertinence of dress and ornamentation in a culturally preserved perspective and how changes can be accommodated with regard to change in the religion of the people.

**The Argument of the Study:** Human species require apparels and accessories to cover its body against various hazards and to emphasize a reason behind the need to convey a message to the viewer. At various times many authors bring fourth their contribution relating to the historical perspective of clothing. But there has been a strange silence [9] of anthropologist on the subject of human clothing and the need to cover the body. They have spent considerable time and energy on the subject of human origin, development of language, rituals, beliefs, linguistics and studying metaphors but ignored the most visible factor which actually serves as the platform to comprehend the human behavior, social movements, trends, aesthetics, intellectual influences which possess the groups to originate an individualistic position in the shared geographical space. Clothes as one of the important component of the culture, is considered a feminine issue and little to do with serious academic pursuits. However, with regard to the current study, clothes are obviously important as markers of social and personal identity and anthropologists have developed a close personal contact with the people they studied, they ceased to pay attention to their clothes. Dress is a source of communication organized through signs and symbols which generate various meaning and messages about the wearer and his ethnic affiliations.

The current research is based upon the information collected ethnographically during a PHD survey of 825 household in the year 2008-9. The study of traditional dress practices as exist in the research locale has been taken into consideration along-with a change with regard to various aspects in Kalasha community of Hindukush Mountain in District Chitral

Pakistan. The research community is historically following a traditional system of practice which is following strict rules of no intemperance from external sources. The stability in the cultural practices is to the strict rules that have been laid down by cultural traditions since centuries old practices however, due to modernization and cultural exposure of the area, there has been a slight shift in socio-cultural components have been occurred in various practices.

#### Objectives of the Study:

- To observe that how the Kalash females are responsible for preserving the traditional identity
- To evaluate whether conformity in dress makes Kalasha an egalitarian society
- To understand reasons why females have to change their traditional clothing when they embrace Islam
- To observe changes that takes place due to external influence in Kalash dress pattern

#### MATERIALS AND METOHOLDS

Methodology as defined by [10, 11] refers to a structure and procedural rules whereby a researcher shifts information up and down the ladder of abstraction in order to produce and organize the increased knowledge. Such procedure provides an overall framework for organizing concepts, definitions, hypothesis, evidences and their explanation in a manner that certain facts could be derived to explain a situation [12]. In a similar, context, Khan and Naz asserts that it includes approaches that facilitate systematic inquiry into a problematic situation and it is similar to the underlying logic of a research project [13].

In the current study, the researcher has predominantly utilized a descriptive approach that attempts to describe phenomena in detail (to describe what happened) [14]. An effort has been made in a systematic manner to examine and analyze phenomena of dress and other adornment of female in the area, from marital relations under conditions that actually exist among the natives of Kalash. Besides, such technique has been applied because it is not mere a description, rather it represents in fact a collection of information and evidence on the basis of previous literature, theory, while a careful summarization of all the information obtained through interviews, participant observations, case studies and

other anthropological techniques has been summarized. The approach and model is based upon qualitative and descriptive approach where as the approach has been adopted towards the events and issues related to the traditional cultural practices regarding dress and ornamentation of female of Kalash valley. The research includes both Muslims and non Muslim i.e. Kalash female observing dress as a symbol of their identify residing in the exotic valley of Hindukush mountains. The area of the study comprise of three beautiful valleys of Bomburet, Birrir and Rumbour where the non Muslims of Kalash are residing along with the Chitrali Muslims. The data was collected from 825 households through anthropological techniques including participant observation, in-depth interviews and case studies which according to Young (1956), "is a method of exploring and analyzing life of a social unit-be that a person, a family, institution, culture group, or even an entire community [15]" from 115 female of age 13 and above in Anish and Brun village of *Bomburet Valley Kalash*). The data has been classified, sorted and the results have been given in the form of separate heading (for each category) which has been narrated in a logical manner, linking both the field information and literature available. The discussion and analysis is given as under:

**Women's Conformity with the Dress Pattern:** Dress is often used to signify the occupation and rank of the wearer in society whereas this component requires a precise information and authentic interpretation of accessories. Mostly, making such an understanding with respect to the cultural condition is not an easy and favorable task for researchers because pinning down the identity within a group is more difficult and not a simple task. In Kalash the way women dress up, the color of their dress, the pattern and thread used for the embroidery is identical and shows no overt differences. It is very difficult to establish any link or draw any inference regarding their social status or religious affiliation by just a naive fleeting look. In reality, identities can only be regarded as the meaning when individual's interaction in any given social context can attribute a specific role [16]. The females in Kalash are observable in clear view in the traditional clothes during day light. The night dress is *Shalwar* and *Qameez* with a *chadder* which is an integral part of their wardrobe. Such dress is no more in use during the day time and other functions as well. The people of Kalash are very cautious about the

preservation of their traditional dress pattern. They use the expression of personal adornment not only as a social ritual but also as a reinforcement of their religious beliefs, traditions, customs and values. Such conformity is inherited through traditional socialization and cultural practices while the practices are believed to be a sacred task to perform [17].

Conformity in dress and colour may be defined as change in an individual's behavior or attitude to achieve consistency based on real or imagined group pressure [18]. In a hostile environment conformity is a defense mechanism, a way of gaining social acceptance by expressing the ability to identify with the people of their own group [19]. This signifies loyalty and unification to ones group with a definite sense of security. Similarly, the traditional dress "Cou", of Kalash females are composed of head dress "Kupas", the minor head dress "Sus 't" and "Patti" the waist belt and the shawls. This attire sets them apart from the local females and also signifies their origin. This distinctive garb makes it easier for the men folk to recognize them instantly and come to their assistance if they were in distress. It is believed that individual who conforms in term of clothing is likely to have acquiescent personalities. They are most restrained and submissive and usually give in to the social order. Conformity to a dress pattern is a way for the Kalash people of reducing anxiety and showing loyalty to their culture and ethnic groups.

The phenomenon of a traditional cultural identity is reactionary in nature adopted by the deprived group to guard their interests and an attempt in surviving the rapidly changing environment. Colours play an important role in the psychology of the individual whereas the selection of a particular colour *i.e.* for wearing, rings and other ornamentations make a distinct cultural identity and such identity is relevant to the cultural structure [20]. The colours and its selection further convey certain messages with a specific thoughtfulness and purpose. The interpretations sometimes are conflicting in nature when analyzed cross culturally due to the influence of certain socio political forces. Hence, it can be assumed that a single colour can signify variety of symbolic interpretations for different culture and can be contradicting at the same time. The black colour used by the Kalash people is also indicative of certain symbolic message and it is very important to establish a genuine justification for the choice of colour. Black, with its traditional association with gloom and darkness, has been

the customary colour of mourning for men and women of Europe since the fourteenth century. However, it is imperative to note that though there is a prevalent use of black to represent death, it is not the universal colour of mourning; neither has it always provided the funeral hue even in Western societies [21]. They also used black for their highly formal occasions like a black tie party where it is customary for the guests to conform to the code and the occasion is regarded as most exquisite. In relation to the Kalash culture, black colour is associated with both festivities and mourning. They use symbols to generate meaning like there are certain codes of conduct applied to female traditional attire of Kalash. Kalash females are supposed to wear their *kupas* in their seasonal festival but if a person dies, the women of his clan will remove their *kupas* and *susit*, with their hair unbraided until the dead is buried. Women when seen without her *kupas* and *susit* with a cloth wound on her shoulder is the indication that she is menstruating and on her way to "bashalini". This symbolizes the state of impurity and therefore any physical contact is avoided.



Photograph V: The Contemporary Kalash Mother with her daughter, Village Karakal, Bumburet Valley

**The Analysis of Adornment in Kalash Dress:** Clothing and adornment like culture has evolved from its primitive to the most civilized form. Adornment is an ancient practice and the earliest evidence was found on bones in mid Paleolithic Neanderthal burial cities where ochre clays were found [22-23]. The first use of clothing apparently was aesthetic rather than utilitarian. When Darwin, gave a Fuegian<sup>6</sup> a red cloth to wrap around his body the native joyfully tore the bright cloak in to strips and distributed

<sup>6</sup>Fuegian is a native South American of Tierra Del Fuego.

among his fellows, who bound the strips on their limbs as ornaments. Clothes have to serve the special purpose of telling others something about the native people- who they are? What country they come from? What position they hold as well as what they can do or have achieved in the past? A traditional dress should instill pride in individuals [24]. The people of Kalash valley are surrounded by both religious diversity and external influences which is creating an environment of acculturation in customs and traditions at the cost of the tribal individuality and independent existence. These dresses when blended with adornment refer to the decorative nature of clothes and other forms of appearance modifications for the purpose of display and aesthetic expression. Traditional attire serves as a space for their individual and group identity.

Anthropologist frequently identified adornment and ornamentation as the initial reason for wearing clothes. Adornment means to enhance appearance especially with ornaments. The desire to enhance ones appearance and personality largely depends upon environmental resources, technological development and cultural values. This normally helps people to attain aesthetic pleasures, to create individualistic expression. They support this theory on the basis of evidence that savages may be naked but are highly adorned and universal. Mans pursuits of personal adornment are universal and all societies have a tendency to adorn themselves in a distinct manner. Clothing is often regarded as a cultural phenomenon, an aesthetic medium for the expression of ideas, desires and beliefs are beyond the dominion of conscious emotions [25]. Mostly, the means for adornment are temporary, expect for tattooing and cosmetic surgery clothes on the other hand can be altered. The evidence of permanent adoration involves cranial deformation which was the artificial deformation of the head [26]. This signifies the noble birth, looks formidable and helps to improve strength and verve, it facilitates in distinguishing the children from the masses, the cranial deformation was achieved by applying pressure to the child's head soon after the birth and continued for months and years. Adornment is also attained by applying the color pigments on skin to seek protection from the unseen evil forces, sexual attraction and ritual symbol or as a status symbol [27].

Clothing and adornment often serves the psychic or magical protection provided by ornaments or clothing that did not physically protect, but served the religious functions and unconscious protection [28]. The first ever

item initiated by man to cover his body as clothing were fig leave and animal skin. The preference in material generally induces the concept of social status in the early humans. Those who wear plant material were not considered superior to those who used to wear the skin of animals the later were highly respected and were considered brave [29]. Adornment also facilitates in defining the social roles of the wearer. This feature helps in distinguishing rich from poor, the religious from the impious. The adornment in dress reveals the political bent of mind in the individual. The royal costume, military uniforms vary with the objectives being pursued [30]. Decorative emblem, pins, badges, arm bands all show political and official affiliation. Adornment also has a sexist role. It is often used to distinguish between sexes but also has a purpose of enticement of the opposite sex. The adornment is a communicative symbol that serves crucial functions within human's lives [31]. Individual satisfaction can be an objective of adornment supplied by the dress. Adornment leads an individual to attain distinctiveness and a positive medium to express his inner most desire.

The use of beads for adornment of self or clothing probably began in Neolithic period. The original practice was based on using shells, teeth and vertebrae of fish, reptiles and mammals. In Zulu society, beads marked the changes in the life of both males and females [32]. People regarded human body as the "primary form of sculpture [33]" and focus all his attention to improve and enhance it to look better. Personal adornment is in constant influence of the cultural interaction and is subjected to convey some meaning to the viewers. This brings us to the conclusion that adornment is a language with certain connotative meanings depending upon the cultural setting and practices of the society. There is no shred of doubt that there are aesthetic responses in the individual itself when he sees someone else's adornment. It is worn only to win admiration and to establish a sense of belongingness. The primary reason for wearing clothes and ornamentation is for the reason of decoration; concepts like modesty and protection were added when clothing becomes the habit. Clothing was used to protect humans from various kinds of fears of being deride, loneliness, conceited and dissolute and above all lack of aesthetics [34].

Anthropological scholarship, *i.e.* Annette Wiener and Jane Schneider have noted the tendency for clothing to be an emotive symbol of attachment that is common across many diverse cultures [35]. Each Kalasha woman's

clothing can be read as a map of her significant relationships across the valleys and across her lifetime—material manifestations of enduring ties with friends, bonds with natal family, acceptance into community of woman in her marital home and reminders of her courtship with her husband and lover [36]. The object of adornment is to induce pleasant responses but in fact it reflects the mood and the inner emotions of the person. It is often used to create an illusion or opposite impression in the viewers. The adornment on the dress sometimes symbolizes the social status and stratification on the basis of bravery and heroic deeds of the ancestors or often due to economic prosperity. This exhibition is regarded as the expression of individuality of the wearer. The adornment on Kalasha dress has no significant social and religious meaning and is regarded as a healthy recreational activity to attain individuality and appraisal. Female utilize beads, buttons cowries and colored slivers for the purpose of adornment. These embellishments though appear to be very pleasing and interesting carry hardly any coded message regarding the status of women in the society.

Iva Pokornowski interestingly added that the art historians, archeologist and anthropologists today are in consensus that study of decorative arts and beads as an intimate part of culture has a highly significant value both in the reconstruction of material culture, tracing trade contacts and a study as visual language [37]. Beads found in ancient ruins not only aid in tracing and dating those ruins but to shed light on the technological development of the people who made them or provide evidence of migrations, trading activities and cultural contacts. They can also mediate the taste of the viewer [38]. According to Loude and Lievre the prestige of a father and husband of a Kalasha woman is judged among other things, by the number of necklaces up on a woman's breast [39]. This is very true because women used beads as a representation of wealth, whether she procures it from her family or through her own labor or social networking. There are several occasions when a woman receives beads as a gift. When women marry, she receives set of beads from each of the women in her In-laws. Sometimes the elder ladies take off beads from their own necks and give it to the bride as symbol of welcome and whole hearted acceptance in to the house hold. They believe that this will bring charm, prosperity and fertility for the new bride and their lineage. These beads are also used as souvenirs and during my fieldwork I received various set of beads of different

colours from the females and girls with whom I developed close association. Maggi Wynne states that the cowries or shells used for decorations for *the susit and kupas* are evocative example, linking Kalasha women to ocean and people they have never seen. Cowries are the most essential decorative element in women's head dresses, the one item for which there is no appropriate substitute. The species of shells used by the Kalasha "cyprea moneta" found only off the Maldives. These shells are very expensive and women go to great lengths to locate them for their young daughters head dress. Beads and bells came to the valley via trade routes from all over south, central Asia and Middle East [40].

#### **Conversion of Kalasha Females to Islam and Impact upon**

**Their Dress:** The traditional symbols for Kalash women identity are their distinctive braids along with their attire. The hair have to be braided tightly so that no hair fall in the kitchen or home as the broken hair are considered sacrilegious and impure. This is actually the reason that the women folk take bath and wash their hair by the flowing stream, carefully combing wet hair and braiding them. The converted Muslim women who joined the Islamic community give up their traditional attire but they continue the practice of braiding which reflect their desire to cling to some resemblance of their own original identity even after becoming Muslim. This very action casts a doubt on their conversion to Islamic faith; but may be, in reality, it is their innate desire to hold on to their uniqueness in the wider, absorbing Islamic culture or just a habit.



Photograph IV: Two real sisters Kalasha and converted Muslim: Analysis of the style of head braid signifies their unconscious attachment to their true identity

#### **The Traditional Kalash Dress:**

**The Paran (Dress):** The traditional Kalash dress is made up of woolen material and often known as "Cou" or "Paran" is derived from the word *parahan* i.e. clothing. The traditional dress of Kalash females in the past was a

long pure black woolen kimono style dress. The women in the past were supposed to wear woolen cloth in all the seasons. They weave the fabric on a hand loom and then stitch. The utilization of cotton fabric is a relatively new phenomenon. In 1974, they performed in Islamabad on the invitation of late Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Here they were supplied with the cotton dress, especially designed for them according to their traditional style. This cotton dress was instantly rejected by the natives and was referred to as an ugly and lighter dress. The people resisted the idea of changing their traditional fabric as they regarded it a direct attack on their traditional heritage but soon they realized the convenience and comfort allied with the cotton material. Now the woolen dress is a delicacy and there are few proud owners who possess it. Normally it is seen in the Greek Museum of Bumburet valley. In the past customarily people donned new dress just once a year only on *joshi* festival but now due to some financial stability they can afford new dresses before every religious festival.



Photograph VI: The Original Kalash Woolen Traditional Dress of the Past Worn With Metallic Jewelry, Photographure Taken in Greek Museum Brun, Bumburet Valley, Kalash

The purest woolen dress is presented to a child when he/she is approximately three to four years old before the *chelum joshi* festival. As the child grows older the same dress is altered. The child is informed about the importance and significance of the costume and is sworn in to keep the integrity and sanctified sentinel. In the past, the dress was very plain simply adorned with metallic jewelry combined with a colorful *kupas* but in contemporary period, the neckline, sleeves and hemline are embellished with embroidery using bright vegetable dyed threads. The metal ornaments are also replaced with plastic beads and pearls preferably in white, black, yellow, orange, green and red color. There is no restriction of color for any female belonging to any age or social status. The woolen dress is now restricted to the commercial use only, especially manufactured for the tourists and foreigners and are very expensive. The construction of

the dress is more of Arabic style and bares absolutely no resemblance with Greek Ionic, Chiton and Draped fabric [41].

**Pati (Belt) and Susit (Minor Head Dress):** It is a simple belt with borders and long fringes wound around the hip. Belt helps to keep the dress in place which otherwise hang loosely above waist as kimono without front opening. The loose fabric successfully serves as pockets in which they can keep small items like, cash, pins, friendship bands, dry fruits and other utility items. This *pati* is often utilized as souvenir for the guest. The minor head dress, a less formal embellished item which is customary and females are not allowed to be seen without it. This head dress is constructed in two parts a ring with a long tail. The tail is approximately 10-15 inches in length which hangs down the back. This head dress is given to the girls along with the “*Cou*” on her fourth birthday. The headdress is the symbol of pride, integrity and respect to the family and their tribal identity in the region so they ensure that the child is capable of handling it with required grace and dignity. The dress and accessories has undergone several changes. In the past it was just a plain ring with fringes at the back and the sole purpose was to support the *Kupas* because *Kupas* were compulsory for these females. Now the *Kupas* are only restricted to special occasions and festivals. The girls are more conscious and are aware of changes which are taking place around them as they have easy excess in areas which were previously beyond their imagination. So now they have developed a better aesthetic and are using this faculty to create individuality in conformity to their group.

The girls used to embellish the long fringes of thread with beads, buttons, cowries and stones in rows and columns but now instead of the thread they are using the desired piece of cotton cloth. Convenience and modernity is facilitating the perpetuation of the tradition. Regional differences can be observed in the *susit*. The people of Bumburet are more innovative in design and color scheming where as the Birir valley is very conservative.



Photograph VII: Traditional *Susit* the Minor Head Dress

The changes in designs are only evident in the dresses and accessories of youth, the older generation are restricted to their older shield design because of the symbolic meaning attached to it. The Kalash women put enormous amount of time, resources both material and human creativity into crafting their clothes. Maggi Wynne in her book states “that very little about women dresses is sensible, it is too heavy, too expensive and growing more costly every year. They like to take fashion risk, trying out new patterns and colours. Old women as well as young take immense pleasure being beautiful not just for festival but every day [42]. According to my data and observation the females believe in conformity and are very proud of their attire and do not wish to bring any change despite all the difficulties. When I ask *Koi Begum* the mother of my key informant that your dress is too heavy and difficult to carry, are you comfortable in this dress? She smilingly pointed my jeans and said don’t you think it is way too tight are you comfortable? And then on a serious note she added that we are very comfortable in our traditional dress, this black colour and dress is our identity.

**Kupas (The Major Head Dress):** The major head dress is an integral part of Kalash identity. This is a very heavy item without any strings or attachments and is a bit difficult to carry. The locals regard this as a very useful item because it provide shield from the sunrays. The *Kupas* are extremely formal in nature and are only used on feasts and festivals. It is similar to a scarf approximately 20 inches long and 10 inches wide and is heavily decorated with the cowries, sea shells, buttons and decorative stitches. The front of *kupas* is called horn [43] it covers the base of the head and its tussled tail hangs down the back. *Kupas* are placed on the minor head dress *sus~ut* and are not stitched or tied with the base of the ring. They are supported by the balanced and erect posture of the females. Traditionally the girl receives her *kupas* when she is four year of age on the winter *chamois* festival. It also like *susit* symbolizes their distinctive identity. They instruct the girls not to play with their *kupas* otherwise the deities will be angry and they might be cursed. The traditional *kupas* is similar for all three valleys in size and construction. The only difference can be found in the way the cowries and embellishment are attached. The variations induced when liked by the masses later become the fashion. These fashions are simply created due to necessity like females by rolled the front of *kupas* for better stability. This has introduced a new trend in the region (Parkes) [44].



(Photograph: viii) Traditional *kupas* the Major Head Dress

Construction of *kupas* is usually done on hand loom fundamentally working on the same principle as of the hand loom being used elsewhere. The warp and weft yarns are arranged on the loom and the plain weave is obtained. The warps are the longitudinal thread which are made up from the home spun yarn and is set in holes of the loom in four or six set of color in regular manner to attain a twill weave pattern. Weft thread is relatively finer and is wound on the shuttle and by lifting and lowering the harness the weft yarn is inserted between the warp yarns and weaving is done. On the edges fringes are attached which not only give strength to the border but also adds to length.

The cowries are attached in seven lines for adult’s *kupas* and four in children. The cowries are not the indigenous product. They are imported from Karachi and are very expensive. The size and number symbolize the social status and wealth of the person in the society. On their *kupas* there are two popular designs manifested by the females; one is the shield design which is engraved on the walls of the temples. The other is often found on the *kupas* of young girl, it is the floral arrangement of cowries. The people believe the symbolic shield design will protect them from the evil spirit and fend off bad luck. The sacredness is the cause of not applying it on the *kupas and sus~t* of young children because of their careless handling. Shield design is a sign of warrior hero status and heroic deeds of the ancestors which the females espouse in commemoration. Myth is such that there was a famous female demon killer. The four cornered arrangement of cowries shell indicate the festal rank of the owner’s ancestor [45]. Buttons are also used as embellishment on the headdress which surrounds the cowries and only the daughter of the elites can adopt it. The common women can only attach two rows of buttons. The *kupas* made for commercial reason is identical to the one made for elites. Nobility is also enhanced by attaching a “cis” a braided straw along with a blue feather.



**Night Dress and Jewelry:** During night females change their traditional dress and wear normal cotton *Shalwar Qameez* with the instruction to refrain roaming around in the valley. The reason being is the preservation of their individual identity in their own cultural dress pattern. Muslim females wear *Shalwar Qameez* and cover their heads with a *dupatta* draped around the shoulders to cover their bosoms. The females who are now converted to Islam have completely changed their attire and accessories which barely resemble with their original identity. Traditionally metallic jewelry was used but now it is substituted by strings beads of bright colors. These beads were imported from Afghanistan or some parts of Pakistan. They love to wear beads in the same manner as the females of Thar and Cholistan adore bangles. These beaded necklaces are used to add color and enhance the complete look of the person. The choice of jewelry is entirely different from the Muslims of the region. The Muslim females are still fond of gold and silver jewelry.

**Shoes:** For the shoes now they prefer to wear joggers and leather *chapaals* which are most convenient. The traditional Kalash handmade shoes are very rare to find. Only few exhibits are present in the Museum.

*Namerik Kal'un* is a leather shoe with colorful decorations.

*Sharakand'alia* is a simple leather boot with high flaps. *Kalun* is leather shoes tied with a shoe flap (*shuman echoyak*). A *kuta pati* is used to wrap around the flap of the shoes to keep it in place.

*Ghun Kulun* hand woven shoes made of wool hair.

*Shula Kirman* is the traditional clogs.

*Zakin* is a string made of leather which helps to tie the *tacing* so that it can remain in place.

*Tacing* is a flat square piece of goat skin draped on the foot and is tied with the help of laces.

**Men's Dress:** Men's dresses are not very attractive and unique as found in the case of female member of the society. They just require a set of *Shalwar Qameez* with a waist coat and a *chatrli* cap with feather on the top. In the past they used to wear black *militia Shalwar Qameez* with a Turkish style trouser (straight slack). The youth of today are aware of prevailing life style and fashion trends and are more creative and innovative. Secondly they desire to conform to the larger society so they have adopted the style commonly practiced by the Muslims of the region. Today there is a drastic change in

the clothing requirement of boys; they now prefer jeans, pants with dress shirts and T-shirts because of the exposure to surroundings [45]. The traditional waistcoat is now replaced by both jeans and leather jackets.

Following are the traditional dresses and accessories used by the Kalash people at various occasions.

*GhuniKatohoki* is a dress worn by the Shepherd in winter.

*Ghuni Bhut* is a shalwar made of goat hair stitched like a pant. It is a *shalwar* like construction with ample *gahir* or gathers. The ankle girths are wound with as weaved *kuta pati*.

*Kuta pati* is a 4 to 6 inches weaved strip of fabric identical to *shuman* (one they present as souvenir to honor the guest).

*Shualak* is a woolen dress.

*Danshak Bhut* is a loosely draped woolen pant.

*Khas'ong* is a woolen cap used by the shepherd

## CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the identity of any community is directly associated with its lineage and traditional social structure they live where family is playing a pivotal role to transmit the same into the new generation. In the contemporary Kalash Education and exposure of the youth to the external modernized world has led the youth to opt for a change in their traditional life styles. Like any other changes they have brought, dress and adornment are also in constant change due to the social and cultural invasion in the form of modernization, social change and development. The traditional culture can only be practiced and exercised if the society is living in isolation and have no level of communication with other alien groups. The traditional culture can only exist in a specific periphery or genealogical territory. On the other hand, when the material environment changes; opportunities, beliefs, class structure and positionality, ideals and stance also confront the change. This stage brings a contestation of ideology between the orthodoxy and heterodoxy. The orthodoxy tries to implement the old traditions and resist change, but the heterodoxy emerges and establishes a new rhythm of practice which is a refined form of old traditions according to the present demands and requirement.

The research study further reveals that people have to leave their cultural setting and in doing so they take their traditional culture in a specific time. But fortunately

culture cannot be bounded by the elements like time and space though it exists in an imagined space where people believe that they belong to the same space by utilizing technology, ideology and media. Further, all these spaces interact and create a unique and distinguished cultural identity. Hence Kalash culture is also subjected to various changes parents are unable to control changes in the form of dress and ornamentation.

It has also been concluded that the Kalash traditional dress fulfills the requirement of *sattar* (Islamic code of minimum requirement of dress) but when a Kalash woman embraces Islam she is expected to change her dress and adopt the local Muslim dress pattern i.e. a *shalwar, Kalmeez and a dupatta*. This is meant to change their Kalash cultural identity and bring it in line with Kalash Muslim cultural identity. Kalash people in retrospect have constructed and negotiated their personal and group identity by sharing experiences, storytelling, myth and setting themselves apart from other ethnic groups living in the same region. Their distinctive traditions and its patterns serve as a space to formulate a specific individual and cultural identity through which they can be recognized and continue the struggle of preserving their mythical legacy.

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