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Dynamics B4

## The Bedouin Culture

Originating from the arabic word *bedu*, meaning "inhabiting the desert", Bedouins are basically nomadic in nature. This is mainly because there are little resources in the deserts to sustain any life. Aspects of the Bedouin life style

The clothing of the Bedouins are mostly constant throughout the people. The Bedouins, both men and women wear wear an article of clothing called a jalabiyya, it is a long cloak with a hood that usually is ankle length. A Bedouin man wears a easily recognizable headpiece which consists of a *kuflyya*' cloth and an '*agal*-rope. This '*agal*-rope is very signifigant to Bedouins. Wearing this rope symbolizes the owners ability to uphold the responsibility of being a man. Women wear headgear that represents their obligations as well. All women must cover their heads at all times with a black cloth called an '*asaba*. These basic coverings, both of male and female, directly reflect the environment through which they are traveling.

The Bedouin life style is directly related to their constant motion. No formal buildings are created where they would be obligated to stay and tend to them. The Bedouin tent is divided is two by a woven curtain called

a *ma'nad*. The two sections each have their intended purposes. One of the sections, called the *mag'ad*, translated in arabic as "sitting place", is used for entertaining guests and receiving visitors. The other section is called *ma'nad*. This section is used for cooking and receiving women guests. The most permanent part of their existence is probably their burial techniques. Although their burial services are short and simple, Bedouins have a profound respect for their dead. They bury the deceased in a shallow grave with a stone placed at the head and the foot of the grave. The deceased's belongings are then stacked on top of the grave so that a fellow traveler can come and use them.

Etiquette is also a large part of Bedouin life-style. When Bedouins have visitors, they honor their presence by greeting them and serve them spiced tea. "Visitors are also a cause for some festivity."(Sinai HP) These festivities include music, dancing and poetry. Bedouins are notorious for their music and their one-stringed violin called a *rababa*. Many Bedouins are musicians called *shabbaba*, the Bedouin term for a bard specializing in music.

In conclusion, Bedouin culture is one forged by the environment and it's multi-faceted people. They are a people of traveling and music, and respect most of all. They honor both those who come and those who leave. Ironical that they seem most primitive to all Middle-Eastern cultures, yet they have some of the most righteous and honorable virtues.

