

Published on Al-Islam.org (https://www.al-islam.org)

Home > Beauty of Concealment and Concealment of Beauty > Foreword

## **Foreword**

Hijab in a society has its roots in the culture of that society, a culture comprising the manner of apprehension and the type of views of the society about man and life. It is on the basis of these apprehensions and types of views that culture delineates the human existence in general and the position of women in particular. In the Islamic hijab culture, a human being occupies an honourable and dignified position in whose body, made of clay, God has breathed His soul, and therefore he possesses the innate capability of acquiring the divine qualities in the course of his evolutionary journey.

Naturally this holds good even in case of woman, being half of the mankind. However, Islam believes that the Creator of man and the world, in order to regulate the human affairs and the society, has created man and woman in two different forms, and has assigned basically different roles to each of them in the society. It is these differences based on divine Wisdom, which are responsible for the mutual attraction in both the sexes, which also guarantee companionship, playing the role of a complement to each other and lastly the continuation of the human life on earth.

What is important and valuable for a man and a woman from Islamic point of view is the occupation of their respective positions and the proper fulfillment of their own roles with the help of their existential capacities. In the Islamic hijab culture one can easily find the elements of realism, kindness, truth and perfection. This culture relies upon realities in its dealing with man and the problems relating to him, and keeps itself away from indulgence in fanciful whims, idealism and aberrant thinking current these days, assigns the roles carefully and delicately and does not neglect the tender sides of human character particularly in dealing with woman.

It does not utter a word irresponsibly or unrealistically, and takes into account the respective qualities of man and woman and saves them from degeneration, degradation and deviation in thoughts and deeds. In such an intellectual system, hijab has some meanings. Hijab is meant for covering and concealing the attractive and delicate parts of the body and controlling the undue exposure of the sex-appeal (in a woman) in the society.

Islam recognizes man and woman on the basis of existing realities and the laws governing the human existence, and is fully cognizant of the fact that they possess appeal and attraction for each other.

Although this appeal and attraction applies to all the existential dimensions of the two sexes, yet their most superficial manifestation is their outward attraction for each other.

From the Islamic viewpoint, woman occupies a number of delicate and attractive qualities which, if exposed in a vast and unlimited manner in the society, may not only cause sexual, emotional, intellectual and psychological disorders and ruin the very foundations of the society, but may also lose its healthy and useful effects within that framework.

When sex is allowed an unlimited and uncontrolled sway in the society, it destroys its very foundations based on human relations in a reasonable and solemn manner. So also when it wields its adverse effects on the family that is based on profound spiritual and emotional relations, it shall also ruin its foundations. This would be the greatest tragedy one can imagine in a society, since most of the social crises in the West that have led to the unrestricted and free sexual activity in all the fields and departments of human life emanate from the same source.

It is possible for some people to conclude that the best solution for this problem is to remove woman from the sphere of social activity so that the society may be cured of the plague of her sex-appeal and attraction. Another group holds the view that we should basically fight against sex-appeal itself, since it is the source of all sufferings and disturbances.

Both these views, the former being forwarded by the dry and fossilized minds throughout the past centuries and the latter held by Christianity, are the product of aberrant thinking and indulgence in fanciful whims, and have tread the wrong path in dealing with woman and the sexual instincts, and, due to superficial and aberrant thinking, have tried to rely on wrong solutions.

Islam repudiates both the above viewpoints, and finds the solution of this problem in the adoption of hijab system by woman, and thus brings woman to society in the most active and best manner without allowing her to be a source of sexual disturbances and disorders. In fact, woman enters the field of social activity sans sexuality, so that firstly she may have the opportunity to utilize and manifest her capabilities and creative faculties as a human being, and secondly, society may be allowed to benefit itself from her energies and useful qualities.

Of course, Islam has not been heedless to the priorities and necessities. It considers woman as the only person competent to bring up children, and as such it has assigned some particular role to her. From the Islamic viewpoint, woman, in the position of a mother, has to play a very important and delicate role in the proper functioning of her society, since due to a special emotional texture she happens to possess a great collection of capacities and energies for the physical, intellectual, spiritual and religious training of the children, which, if and when fully realized and properly utilized, can bring about a great change in the society. However, even this important factor does not prevent her from participating in the general social life.

This is why we find that in the Islamic civilization, woman occupies the highest peak in the human

values, and enjoys the most beautiful and delicate manifestations of human life. From the Islamic point of view, all the importance and value is attached to this very active and evolutionary role of woman in the human society, and nothing else.

Here is "The Message of Hijab from a Muslim Woman" one of the most valuable works of Sister Zahra Rahnavard. It carries a message in all the domestic, social, political, cultural and other fields for you, O woman! For you who form half of the body of the human society. For you who possess the capability and capacity to move towards the achievement of a supreme and sublime objective. Such movement may turn you into an unparalleled innocent person, in the same way as it did with Fatimah, the venerable daughter of the holy Prophet, peace be upon him.

Cultural Consulate,
The Islamic Republic of Iran,
Islamabad, Pakistan July, 1987

## Source URL:

https://www.al-islam.org/beauty-concealment-and-concealment-beauty-zahra-rahnavard/foreword#comment-0