Veil and Chastity

Issue of veil “covering” being one of self-evident truths of Islamic jurisprudence, having multifarious and extensive arenas. Before broaching it, I find it necessary to give a bright image of the matter on hand, and the terms used in these subjects of discussion.

The words that are used in this field being: Covering, veil “hijaab”, sitr, chastity, limits of relations between woman and man. It is possible that what is intended by these words being keeping off and detaining the woman inside the house, or observing some of regulations in regard of social associations.

The issue that I intend to manifest and expound by this article being the meaning antithetical to unrestrain, sexual liberalism which is called by the Qur’an tabarruj “displaying the charms”.

In other words, we are in search of an answer to this question: Can femininity and masculinity of women and men be displayed on scene of society? Or is this quality confined inside the realm of family, and the woman and man should appear in arena of society and act as two human beings? Al-Ostaz Mutahhari is quoted to have said: “In fact concerning the issue of covering and according to term used recently Hijaab, we don't intend to talk about whether is it good for the woman to appear within society with a covering or naked? The essence of speech is that: can the woman and man's enjoyments “seeking content by marriage” be free of charge? Has the man any right to enjoy himself as much as he can of any woman, other than fornication or not? So the core of matter, being confining all the successes to the sphere of family and legal spouses, or setting free the successes and extending them to environment of society.”

On this basis, my intention, in this article is neither to prove the seclusion of woman nor talking about a special issue. i.e. covering of the woman as Sitr, but what I intend is a more distant subject within the framework of which many Islamic legislated rules can be propounded through a harmonious thought structure, like obligation of Hijaab “cover”, prohibition of gazing at a foreigner, and abominations such as adultery and homosexuality and alike.

The following pages are determined to give answers to questions such as:

1. What is intended by Islam from veil and covering?
2. What criteria Islam depended upon in regard of limits of relations between women and men?
3. What is philosophy of covering?
4. Have various religious precepts like necessity of covering, prohibition of gazing at women, and forbiddance of “committing” abominations and alike, been enacted for the sake of

diminishing any contact or touching between women and men or is there any other purpose behind them?

5. What thing can withstand the sexual liberalism, unrestrainment “tahallul” and displaying “woman's” charms? Beside other questions.

Also it should be known that in the recent century many writings in forms of books and articles, in Persian and Arabic, have been composed analysing and investigating into so many of dimensions of this subject, among which valuable researches can be seen. Despite all these, still many centres of investigation and searching in this field are found everywhere, and investigation file is still open.

Making researches and studies in connection to veil “hijaab”, can pursue different objectives each needing a particular method:

1. The purpose and motive of investigation may be rational manifestation of fiqhi beliefs and judgements, in a way that it can be propounded in secular societies.

2. Sometimes the target of investigation may be to solve the mental problems of the issue of veil inside religious communities, in a way that all mental and theoretical unrestrained obstacles should be lifted from this way.

3. Also it is possible that the aim of investigation be mere Fiqhi fathoming and studying profoundly, to the extent that can only be proper for “teaching in” the Islamic theological centres.

4. Further it is possible that the goal be guiding the society toward the required “ideal” covering… and others.

It is explicit that every goal has its own method and tendency to follow, so it is infeasible to cover and discuss all of them in one book.

In fact, other than the practical leniency witnessed in case of covering, and production of desire and hope of human beings, some ideological questions and ambiguities inside religious societies, with viewpoints and visions of secular societies, and a number of Fiqhi opinions and verdicts on carelessness and unrestrainment, can be influential in the matter of covering.

Hence reason and reflection necessitate from us to choose proper ways for confronting practical leniency, desire and inclination, like advice and counsel, and making impunible and allowable amusements and exercise to replace exciting and seductive manifestations. And also in opposite to mental obstacles we should resort to scientific searches and circulation of their thought fruits.

In this chapter, I am going to select and elaborate some subjects from among those related to veil “hijaab” as follows:

1. Chastity and philosophy of covering.
2. General conditions for mantle of women.
3. Adornment.
."4. Intermingling "between men and women

Chastity & Philosophy of Covering

Life of man is liable to develop and mature on two dimensions: material and moral. And acquiring knowledge and sciences, with fostering ethical and human traits all lie within the realm of spiritual perfections. Likewise, enjoying welfare, body health and training body organs come within the first division.

Man is one truth whose life has two extents. For this reason, perfection and deficiency are two inseparable elements. Body health is a requisite for soul health, which is in turn essential for good health of body. This point is becoming clearer than before, so bodily diseases are being cured through psychotherapy and spiritual treatment.

Realm of spiritual and material life, whatever it be, pertains to how human beings view existence, man and universe. Any diversity in these views has its impact on restraint and ease of human life. The evidence for this lies in the divergence and difference between objectives and way of living of human beings who lived before the modern scientific developments and those who lived after them.

Despite all this, we should not look at things in a way that by changing the views everything would change, with no common point is left whatsoever. But rather, as is said frankly before, these changes affect restraint and expansion of life, not creating two different and even antithetical lives.

Hence, despite that remarkable difference between human beings of present time and those of the past in regard of foundations and consequences, but their common points are not little in number, the fact leading to make the way for conversation, mutual understanding and consideration, open all the time.

In all these views self ¬knowledge and world ¬knowledge being something valuable, and spread of justice and service to other people is a recommendable act. All people venerate national champions and social reformers, regarding those killed on the way of national objectives as martyrs.

All these indicate that throughout all epochs, same general beliefs prevail among people, although some difference can be seen in their applicability and samples. These points constitute part of things called in Divine religions fitrah "nature", and so much emphasis upon

them is made in Islam.

Chastity and bashfulness also being among these characteristics: Covering the front “private” parts was the usual habit of man, as the cave¬dwellers used to cover themselves “veil the private parts” with tree leaves and animal skins, and so also the present world¬dwellers. It is out of scope here to refer to form, measure and way of emergence of this trait, but the original point in this regard being that this habit was always observed as a human virtue. Besides, coyness and chastity, being not confined in a certain period of history, though certain times and epochs can be specified for special certain mantles “costumes”. And chastity is the spirit of the covering and mantle being its skeleton. Chastity is philosophy of the covering and covering is its guarantor “insurer”.

Konfosios, the Chinese philosopher of the sixth century B.C., has said: “One who can be considered man of culture is that who is honest in his conduct and behaviour with chastity in heart, and that who is delegated to other foreign countries as an ambassador, would never bring about means of shame to his king.”

Barroukh Espinozah says: “Even if we have no knowledge of eternity of our souls, still we would have given priority and importance to absteniousness and religion with all things I indicated in chapter four, that are relevant to magnanimity and dignity.

Even the adherents of Yang Choo, the famous Chinese atheist materialist philosopher, who lived in the epoch from fifth till third century B.C. and whose school in historical and philosophical literature is known with pleasure¬seeking, said in his regard: “The fact which should be kept in memory is that Yang Choo, though asking for sensual pleasures, but he withstood against extravagance and debauchery which are viewed by him and his school as desolater of man's nature.”

Gandi once addressed the women saying: “Woman's true ornamentation being her character and her purity. The real ornamentation can never be in stones and metals. Rather it lies in purity of heart and soul beautifying, not in loading the body with stones and metals.”

In all Divine religions so much emphasis and recommendation is made on chastity and modesty. The holy Qur’an has many times pointed out the women to this fact.

In treatise of Polis in Al¬'Ahd Al-Jadeed, after recommending the men with supplication and fervent prayer, the following statement is recorded: “They “men” also used to embellish their wives with clothes adorned with bashfulness and abstinence, not with ringlets, gold, pearls or expensive clothes. Rather they should invite their women who claiming religiosity, to good deeds.”

In first Treatise of Botrous it is reported: “The women are recommended not to attach any

importance to external decorations for showing beauty, like dying the hair, using ornamentation materials and wearing costly clothes, but to inward adornments which never perish and having great value near God."

The translator of the book Taareekh Libas, which is dedicated for studying all the world clothes and costumes throughout five hundred years, says: "Appearance of clothes was never something by coincidence or according to individual demand. But they emerged on basis of regional material and intellectual thoughts and demands of peoples, becoming a mirror fully indicating history of life of mankind."

Some experts made studies on relics and remains, historic inscriptions and prominent statues, concluding from them that coldness and heat never constituted the original cause of selecting the clothes but its cause was shyness and covering the privy parts.

In the book Taareekh Libas, whose author was an American researcher studied history of clothes till the year 1950, and which being a text¬book taught in colleges, we find statement about all peoples and nations, manifesting in full details their clothes and costumes.

The topics of this book, which contained pictures of clothes, were taken according to its writer's claim, from coins, images, wall carpets, paintings and decorations left from old generations.

In the holy scripture "Bible" it is stated that during the lifetime of "Prophet" Solomon (A), the women used to wear veil on their faces beside the covering of the body. The same habit was commonly followed during the time of Prophet Abraham (A) too. It is reported that when fiancee of Ishaq "Rifqah" saw him for the first time, she put a veil "mask" on her face.

Further, during various periods like Medes, Achamenian, Ashkaani, and Sassanid eras, the Iranian women used to wear certain covering "mantle".

During the Medes epoch, the women used to wear two-piece garment , which was made of a piece of carpet belonged to the Achamenian epoch, in which the women used to wear a cape¬like cloth on their heads, in a way similar to chaadur "large veil worn by women".

During the Ashkaani era, the women used to put on as a covering a long garment open in front "qabah" reaching to the kneels, with a cape thrown on the head and a mask "niqaab" which was usually brought to the back part of the head.

While during Sassanid rule the women were sometimes wearing a loose Chaadur, with a fence¬like on the head, reaching to middle of the leg. The paintings representing the Sassanid women, designed on silver plates, show every and each woman wearing a Chaadur wrapped on her body.

All these quotations and historic reports confirm the view that shyness and modesty being

among the causes of covering, and that the motive behind wearing mantle by man being not protection against coldness and heat or ornamentation and ostentation. Nevertheless, these motives can never be negated in regard of manner and kind of clothes.

The other point that can be obtained out of these quotations being that observing modesty and chastity between women and men differed proportionately to creation of every one of them. And women always used to wear more clothes than men. So if coldness and heat be the only stimulant, these differences would never be liable to analysis. Even beauty ¬seeking merely for showing off can never respond to them. The transition that came in sight through the past fifty years, especially in industrial countries, in regard of clothes had a special cause.

Some researchers have analysed this phenomenon in this way: “With the beginning of the world war II, the war that shocked the structure of civilisation, the development of costumes took a revolutionary shape. Thenceforth clothes, which reflect the economical capability, political standpoint, cultural and social abilities, religious beliefs and official and traditional obligations, have been put under influence and domination of capitalist regime. In this system, clothes found another position, transforming to a merchandise that having a binary value. In other words, clothes could meet the human needs, with turning to an article for sale. Then they should, like any other article, give the maximum profits, and when they attain to this goal, time would not be convenient for them; As the articles should be capable of consumption for a long time, so as they can have the most extensive bazzar, that is the largest number of consumers and purchasers.

If the world nowadays has some kind of freedom and liberation in clothes, but no one has liberalised immodesty and unchastity, then regional and world regulations emphasising on prevention of indecent acts and offences continue to be valid and in force. And still the statistics show that men be averse, in nature, to unchastity.

The purpose intended of all this being to show that modesty is a human quality that can be proposed for mankind, regardless of any cultural or religious tendency. Although in some cultures and schools the ground for approving and manifesting it being easier.

Humans, in their nature and instinct, and according to structure of their existence, have inclination to this habit. And this quality, like all other qualities and values, has capability to development and growth, meaning that all people possess its inward grounding, though it cannot reach actuality with one degree in all people. It is like truthfulness or honesty which is instinctively sought by man, and capable of development and extension as a positive quality and human value, but all people can never be at one level of truthfulness and honesty. Hence, man's practical violation to these qualities and recession on stages of life, can never do harm

to perfection of these virtues, or derogate their instinctiveness. Rather many violators make confession to their deviation in behaviour, depriving themselves of this maturity.

This subject can be expounded through other words and expression. Man has several instincts that should, whether desired or detested, knowingly or unknowingly, be satiated, as they are like engine of life that all the time needs revision and reinforcement. Because these instincts are tantamount to engine and power for living, so it is improper to say about them to be bad manifestations in life of man.

These instincts being so necessary for organism of our life, as through them we can discern the right and the unright. On this basis, the probability saying that the human instincts, which are origin of all life activities, being an obstacle on the way of humanity of man and so they should be taken away, would not be a logical matter. That which is indicated by exigency of logic and Divine wisdom, being that these instincts should be controlled and overpowered by human character and resolution.

And if these instincts be exploited without control or restraint, the human soul will take the mien of a commanding soul “to evil” that would not know a reality other than desire and passing fancy. While when being controlled and restrained by man's strong will, these very instincts would acquire a human sublime aspect and help man in strengthening an ideal life.

In other words, the sexual instinct is as necessary as life itself. But if these vital instincts be set at liberty, the human character would be definitely brought to naught, or rather man would not be there so as to say: Does he have personality or not?

The conclusion we get is that shyness and chastity, as a human quality, being the foundation for relations between woman and man in view of the Islamic culture. And the issues of clothes and their attachments come in the course of safeguarding and developing this virtue. Then forbidding “women” from displaying charms and intercoursing with men was made in accordance to this philosophy.

The holy Qur’an has made a reference to this innate virtue, in the story of creation of Adam and Eve, when talking about their eating of the forbidden tree: “Then he instigated them both by deceit so when they tasted “of” the tree their shameful things got displayed unto them, and they both began covering themselves with the leaves of the Garden…” (Qur’an, 7:22).

In continuation of these verse “verse 26” there is a reference to sending down of a raiment to cover the privy parts, with a mention of enmity of Satan to man through stripping off the raiment of Adam and Eve “verse 27”.

“O children of Adam! Let not Satan involve you into affliction as he got your parents out, from the garden “of the blissful life” stripping off their raiment, that he may expose unto them their

shame;…" (Qur'an, 7:27).

Praising Yousif's chastity in dealing with Egyptian women, he quotes his speech in this way: "Said he: "O my Lord! The prison is dearer to me than that unto which they invite me; and if Thou turneth not away from me their guile I may yearn unto them and become of the ignorant ones." (Qur'an, 12:33).

In other verses there is emphasis on shyness and chastity of Shu'ayb's daughters in social relations and their way of walking and behaviour as in the following Qur'anic verse: "And when arrived he at the water of Madyan, he found on it a group of men "watering their flocks" and found he besides them two women keeping back "their flocks"; said "Moses": "What aileth you?" Said the two "women" "We cannot water until the shepherds take away "their sheep from the water", and our father is very old." (Qur'an, 28:23).

These daughters recognise and consider shyness and chastity in time of being engaged in work and activity and presence on arena of social activities.

Also these very daughters showed a polite way of walking and modest behaviour: "Then came unto him one of the two women walking bashfully…" (Qur'an, 28:25).

In this very episode virtuousness of Moses (A) is reiterated, as in some narrations, thus: "Moses said to the daughter: Show me the right way and move "walk" behind me, as we children of Jacob, never look at the posterior parts of women."

Likewise it "the holy Qur'an" praises chastity of Mary (A) in this way: "And "O Muhammad! remember" her "Mary" who guarded her chastity, therefore We breathed into her Our Spirit, and We made her and her son a sign unto all peoples." (Qur'an, 21:91).

The holy Qur'an regards guarding the modesty to be one of characteristics of the believers, giving orders to the prophets to bid the believing men and women to lower their gaze, as in the following verse: "Say thou "O Our Apostle Muhammad!" unto the believing men that they cast down their gaze and guard their private parts; that is purer for them; Verily God is All¬-Aware of what they do. And say unto the believing women that they cast down their gaze and guard their private parts…" (Qur'an, 24:30, 31).

In these verses the philosophy of this prescription, the development and nurture of man being regarded to be confined in self¬restraint and guarding the private parts.

The holy Qur'an prescribes those who cannot afford for marriage to observe continence, as in this verse: "And let them be in continence, those find not means to marry until God of His grace maketh free from want…" "(Qur'an, 24:33).

Concerning the aged women "past child bearing" though there being no rigid restriction upon them regarding covering and clothes, but observing continence is better for them "verse 60 of

surat An-Noor".

For manifesting its objectives in these fields, the holy Qur'an uses terms like chastity, bashfulness, fortification, lowering the gaze and guarding the private parts.

Chastity "continence" is used with the meaning of self¬ preservation and controlling and restraining the self. Shyness is used with the meaning of contraction and self-¬abstaining.

Fortress "hisn" means fortified and inviolable region and also is used to mean continence and chastity "abstinence".

Ghazz means lowering and decreasing the gaze not closing the eyes. This meaning was affirmed by Martyr Mutahhari through many evidences in his book Mas'alah hijaab.

Out of the above¬mentioned verses we can conclude the following results:

Chastity and bashfulness have no relation to history or certain era, as human beings have been observing and abide by them since the beginning of creation.

o Chastity and shyness being a human quality, that does not specially belong to men or women. But innate nature and intellect of man reflect them, the fact regarding which no difference is there between woman and man.

Chastity and bashfulness do not necessitate sitting home behind veils, but they be compatible with the social activities, as was pointed out in the story of Shu'ayb's daughters.

Chastity itself being a means having effect in attaining to maturity and good development, as propounded in verses 30 and 31 of surat An-Noor.

The word "purer" "azkah" which is used in these two verses, is repeated three times in the holy Qur'an, two of which being among these verses, and third one being in surat al¬baqarah, verse 232, which is also related to family connections between wife and husband.

In these three verses, guarding the private parts, chastity and returning to renewed life after separation and divorce were considered a means for purification and development.

Al-Allamah At-Tabataba'i is reported to have said: Islam is a religion of Zakaat, purification "tahaarah" and knowledge. And objective of the Prophet (S) was introduced in several verses to be purification and teaching.

Then legislation of rules and enacting of laws being for the reason that man can attain to this development, purity and awareness, as indicated in these verses. All prophets struggled and concentrated their efforts on fulfilling these aims. The Prophet Moses (A) has invited Pharaoh to this purification and development: "And say "unto him": "Hast thou "a desire" to cleanse thyself "of thy disbelief"." (Qur'an, 79:18).

The Messenger of Allah (S) used to gather alms from people so as to cleanse and purify them "from sins": "Take thou alms out of their wealth, thou wouldst cleanse them and purify them

thereby.” (Qur’an, 9:103).

Ultimately the delivered man will be that who attained to purification: “Indeed be “alone” succeedeth who purifieth himself.” (Qur’an, 87:14).

In short, man's perfection, in view of the Qur’an, lies in purification and full awareness. And chastity plays a good role in achieving one of these three ideals, which is purification “tazkiyah”. And what violates and traverses chastity of women, in perspective of the Qur’an, being Tabarruj “adornment and displaying the charms”, which is set forth for discussion in the form of an address to the Prophet's wives: “And stay ye in your abodes and display not your finery like the display of the ignorance of yore…” (Qur’an, 33:33).

Interpreters of the word “tabarruj” took it to have several different meanings like: walking “of women” among men, uncovering the necklace, ear¬ring and neck, walking with coquetry “amorous gest”, displaying the finery and charms whose covering is obligatory, and manifesting those charms that stimulate and excite lust of men… and alike.

It seems that all these things can be admitted as evidences and applicabilities of Tabarruj, since Tabarruj means displaying of finery and every one of these can be an applicability of these things. The verse 33 of surat An-Noor stated three applicabilities of this Tabarruj “displaying the charms” in this way:

1. Displaying and revealing hidden finery and charms;
2. Uncovering the neck and place of necklace;
3. Walking in a coquetry way to show off the concealed finery.

To sum up, what causes deviation from life and course of development, in view of the Qur’an, being Tabarruj which is an indecent and obscene practice. In many traditions, as in the Qur’an, chastity and bashfulness are referred to as philosophy of covering.

1. Al-Imam Ar-Ridha (A), in a reply to a question put to him by Muhammad Ibn Sinan, said: “The reason behind prohibition of gazing at hair and body of women lies in the fact that this gaze constitutes a ground for exciting the men, the excitement that will lead ultimately to corruption and indulgence in unlawful acts and practices.”

2. Al-Imam as-Sadiq (A) said: “Successive looks “at women” plant seeds of lust inside the heart “of men”, and constitute a seduction that causes the seer to slip “commit sin”.”

3. In Tafseer Al¬-Qummi, al-Imam Al-Baqir in interpreting the verse “O children of Adam! We have revealed unto you raiment to conceal your shame…”, said: “The raiment being that which people put on, with living facilities and wealth. Raiment is absteniousness and chastity. A chaste and pure man is that who never displays his private parts although being naked of clothes. While a debaucher is that whose private parts are revealed, even when his body be

covered with clothes. Allah says: Raiment of virtuousness is better, meaning that chastity is better “for people”

4. There are traditions reported too about chastity giving this meaning, like:

• “No chaste man has ever committed adultery.”

• “Overcome the sensuality by chastity and continence.”

• “Chastity weakens the lust.”

• “Bashfulness lies in lowering the gaze.”

On the other hand, among statements of the Infallibles a reference is made to this fact that chastity is one of factors leading to perfection of character of man:

• “Virtues can never be completed but only through chastity and sacrifice.”

In brief, chastity and bashfulness being a human characteristic that was and be admitted by all human beings, and to which all great men and Divine religions recommended and called. The Islamic Shari'ah has also recommended emphatically on it making it a basis for certain rules and ordinances like: Covering, controlling the gaze and observing the limits between woman and man.

On this basis, we can criticise the various theories that have been presented on the subject of emergence of covering among human beings. Some “researchers” have presented reasons and purposes for covering of women, which being incompatible with human history and man's nature, and for affirming of which no witness or historical evidence is available. Very often these causes have been stated for showing ignorance or tyranny of veil “hijaab”. Herewith I will first cite these causes, and will give a finish then to their criticism.

1. Self¬discipline and monasticism being a factor for the covering and for creating limits “if inviolability” between woman and man, in order that the greatest subject of joy and pleasure for humans, i.e. seeking sexual pleasure, would be removed.

2. Insecurity of women before violation and injustice, being another factor causing women to cover themselves and hide their charms.

3. Men, for getting more enjoyment and economical exploitation of women, they accustomed them to stay at home.

4. Men's jealousy caused women to cover themselves. The husband would cover his wife for the sake of secluding her exclusively for himself and preventing others from exploiting her.

5. Menstruation and menses of women led them to think little of themselves and to their retirement from society and keeping aloof from them.

6. Martyr Mutahhari considered another factor for covering of the woman, saying: “In my view the social root of emergence of limits and fender between woman and man should not be

sought in inclination to mortification of the man's desire to exploit the woman, or man's jealousy, or social insecurity, or woman's menses, or at least can be sought with a less degree. The root of this phenomenon should be sought in an instinctive skilful prudence of the woman herself".

In general the debate is concerning the origin of woman's sexual morals like bashfulness and chastity, and among them the tendency toward covering and veiling herself from the man. There are several theories introduced on this subject.

The most exact of these theories being that bashfulness and chastity, veiling and covering being altogether a policy adopted by the woman as an inspiration to valuating herself and preserving her position in front of the man. The woman, with her innate intelligence and own special sense, realised that she cannot be equal to the man in respect of bodily capabilities. And if she wants to struggle with the man in the field of life she would not be able to cope with him is strength.

On the other hand, the weak point of the man lies in this want that creation being stored in existence of the man as God made him a manifestation of love and request "search" and the woman a manifestation of belovedness and subject of desire and request. When woman realises her status and position in front of the man and recognises the man's weak point in front of her, she would, just as she was trying to fascinate the man's heart through ornamentation and displaying her finery and charms would resort to seclusion and keeping aloof from the man. She realised that she should not offer herself gratuitously, but rather should make flame of loving and desiring her sharper.

The reason why this viewpoint was attributed to Ostaz Mutahhari being that he has not criticised this theory, and admitted its basis, that is woman's being beloved and man's being lover in his other articles, from which he derived some scientific conclusions.

These opinions and viewpoints, regardless of their not having an evidence and witness on their generality, have faced so many criticisms:

1. In these views no human root is considered for covering of man throughout long history, but woman and man were supposed to be engaged in a trade manly and womanly dispute, evaluating one's acts according to it.

2. Origin of mantle was not confined to women alone so as to approve of veracity of most of these opinions. The covering "mantle" has no restriction to women but it includes all mankind throughout history. With this description how can one talk about exploitation, jealousy or violation seeking on part of men and regarding them to be the motive behind covering.

3. Generality and comprehensiveness of covering among various peoples and communities,

with multifarious ideals and aims, would lead us to refuse the influence of monasticism and asceticism in emergence of covering.

To sum up, it is infeasible to neglect the effect of instinctive quality of shyness and chastity in appearance and perpetuity of covering, and resort to mechanistic causes. In the same way as it can't be denied that some of these philosophies were effective in certain epochs and places, but restricting the emergence of covering in them is incorrect.

Of course it should be added that if bashfulness and chastity being the main incentive for covering, some conclusions other than sensual perfection, would be resulted from the covering. One of them being safeguarding the healthiness of human society, to the meaning that woman and man can, in social intercourses, establish relations as two human beings having human request from each other, and so they won't go after satisfying their sexual instincts in collective life.

The other benefit that is derived from them “bashfulness and chastity” being to preserve the genuineness of the family. Since the family, which is composed of a woman and a man living together as legal spouses, can insure the permanency and safety of mankind offspring, which is one of original and essential aims of the family, through legitimately satisfying the sexual instincts. Observing continence and woman's and man's adherence to bashfulness and chastity, and restricting the satisfying of sexual instincts within a legal environment, all this will have great impact upon stability and healthiness of the family.

General Conditions of Covering

The extent of covering in every school and society depends on many things such as way of looking at man, the family, range of admittance of social participation of woman, rate of influence of both sexes on each other… etc.

Proposing the issue of covering in the Islamic religion had the same rule, as in this school has admitted certain ultra¬material and bestial maturities for man, female and male, as man being not the only material creature that must strive to insure his desired needs in life, but there are several other arenas of life, much broader and deeper than life itself, can be sensed.

In these arenas, other characteristics insuring the perfection, like learning and knowledge, worship and benediction, self¬edification… and continence also is one of them. Hence covering has connection with individual perfection.

According to the Islamic Law “Shari'ah”, the family being the primary and essential nucleus of human society. As the first step in education is taken inside the family, and father and mother being the first educator and teacher for the child. So safeguarding and preserving this centre

being among the firmed and indisputable principles of the Islamic Shari'ah, and as a reference was made to this in discussion of purpose of covering, so mantle has a certain role in protecting and safeguarding this centre.

Admitting the woman's social participation, which was set forth in the previous chapter, should be considered in determining the covering. Hence it is improper to oblige the woman to cover her face since with closed eyes she cannot practice social activities as required. So do the other factors.

Taking into consideration all that is said before, we can say: There are certain limits and conditions for covering stated in Islam, with no emphasis made on special certain shape and form. As clothes and covering being not among confirmed worshipping matters, and affected by norms and customs. If clothes had those general conditions and covered those limits, so no obstruction or restriction would be for them, and this would differ according to change of circumstances and situations.

Ibn Taymiyyah has an excellent statement in this regard, thus: “To follow the example of the Prophet (S) sometimes concerning something done and some other time regarding some farther thing, means that the Messenger of Allah (S) sometimes does some act for the sake of a thing farther than this work. In this case the legitimacy of that aim not that special act would be farther. For instance, the Messenger (S) was using oil for keeping his hair healthy, can we say that all people have to do the same for safeguarding their hair, and if another method be proper in some region with regard to water and atmosphere, it should be adopted and applied. The same is true in regard of food; for instance the Messenger of Allah (S) used to eat dates and barley¬bread, then does following his guide mean people everywhere should do the same? No definitely it is not true, as the Prophet's companions and Fuqaha have used and eaten the foods of the regions they conquered, putting on the clothes of those places. If anyone should imitate others in costumes and food, it was proper for the companions to follow the example of the Prophet in these fields. Likewise, the Prophet and Sahabah used to wear a wrapper and cloak, so wasn't it better for others to follow them and do the same. The religious authorities have different opinions regarding this issue, but I think it is unnecessary to refer to this subject.”

The limits and conditions that should be considered in regard of clothes are as follows:

1. All the body except the face and two hands up to the wrist, should be covered.
2. Fame clothes should be abstained from.
3. Women's clothes should be totally different from those of men.
4. Transparent clothes “incarnating the body” should be abstained from.

.Following is a brief explanation of these five principles

Limits of Clothing

It is known among Fuqaha that the woman should keep her body covered from the eyes of foreigners “unconsanguine men”, except the face and two hands up to the wrist. Of course some “Fuqaha” go farther and believe that all the body even the face should be covered. And a few of them held the view to “covering” less than this limit “of the body”.

There are skilfully made articles in Persian and Arabic about these fields, that strongly defended the well¬known opinion, giving firm and strong evidences for proving this view, regarding the two other views unacceptable. Taking all this into consideration no necessity is .seen to elaborate on this subject

Abstention from Fame Clothes

In many traditions prevention is made to wearing clothes that make someone famous and distinguished; The Messenger of Allah (S) is reported to have said: “Whoever wears fame cloak in this world, Allah will verily cloth him with a similar garment on the Day of Resurrection.”

The fame garment is that one which being unsociable and incompatible to the common law of society, and should observe a norm or habit that is not being incompatible to the Islamic .Shari'ah

Adversion to Males’ Clothes

In so many traditions, the Prophet (S) has damned and cursed those men and women who liken themselves to each other, one of them being the following: “The Messenger of Allah (S) damned those men likening themselves to women and the women who liken themselves to men.”

This narration prohibits any kind of simile and likening in all fields and grounds. And in respect of covering and clothes what is apparently intended is the public prestige of those women who liken themselves to men or vice versa, as if appeared a resemblance in a piece of clothes there .would be no disapproval and prohibition

Abstention from Transparent Clothes

Usaamah Ibn Zayd says: The Messenger of Allah (S) has one day clothed a man a white thin

garment, and that man gave it to his wife. Some day the Messenger of Allah (S) questioned: Why don't you wear that cloak? The man said: I gave it my wife. The Messenger said: Tell her to wear some other piece of clothes under it so as to prevent her body from being visible.

Adornment

The Islamic Law, as considering covering for women more important than men, has taken into consideration nature “fitrah” and intrinsic desires of woman in regard of adornment “zeenah”, permitting certain bounds for adornment for women or even encouraging to them.

The holy Qur’an divided adornment into two parts: outward and bodily, prohibiting displaying the inward finery and adornment, allowing outward adornment for woman: ”… and they display not their adornment save what is apparent of it…” (Qur’an, 24:31).

Applicabilities of apparent adornment became manifest in the conduct “Sunnah” of the Prophet and Infallible Imams, to some of which a reference can be made here:

Khizab "Dyeing"

Dyeing the hand and the nails of fingers “with hennah”, which is called khidaab, was something encouraged by the Prophet who abstained from taking bay'ah “swearing allegiance” from women whose hands and nails were devoid of Hennah.

'A'ishah is reported to have said: Hind the daughter of Otbah said: O Messenger of Allah swear allegiance with me. The Prophet said: I won't take an oath of allegiance with you until you change “colour of” your hands, they seem like hands of a “wild” beast.

'A'ishah is reported to have said: A woman has extended a letter toward the Prophet from behind a curtain “veil”. The Prophet said: Is this a hand of a woman or of a man? She replied: It is a hand of a woman. He said: You should change colour of your finger¬nails.

It is also reported from al-Imam Al-Baqir to have said: “It is not permissible for every woman to leave her nails white, unless she at least dyes “touches” them with some Hennah.”

Letting Long the Nails

Imam as-Sadiq reported from the Prophet that he said: “For men, you are asked to trim your nails and for women you can let them grow longer as it is better for your adornment.”

Face Beautification

Imam as-Sadiq reported from the Prophet the following hadith: “The scent of women is that whose colour should appear and odour be concealed, while scent of men is that whose odour should be apparent and colour should be unseen.”

Some of the researchers hold that women can beautify their faces in a way that their odour should not be smelled. The traditions that prohibit women from using perfumes pertain to three cases:

1. In time of going to the mosque.
2. When perfume being of smelled odour.
3. When the woman intends to excite a sedition in the society.

.Other than these cases no prohibition is imposed whatsoever

Intermixing

Out of the discussions introduced in this chapter, the relations between woman and man in the Islamic society became somehow manifest. The following is an abridgement of whatever stated before.

The issue of intercourse between woman and man turned to be subject of numerous debates, and the writers use sometimes the term Tabarruj with the meaning of sexual unrestrainment. Seemingly, if intercourse means this unrestrainment to which the holy Qur’an refers as displaying the charms, so it is an indecent and obscene habit that the Islamic Law has definitely forbidden. But if what is intended of intercourse the mere presence of woman outside the house, then no prohibition is imposed on it. Hence we can say: In our opinion, the Islamic Shari'ah has admitted social presence of women, determining for it certain norms and regulations, which have been discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

This is based on the fact that woman and man have, beside femininity and masculinity, an original human dimension that can be taken by them as pivot of communications. Determining the etiquette and regulations should be done in a way that connection between woman and man never transcends the human boundaries.

It is true that if relation between woman and man in a society revolves round axis of femininity and masculinity, that is the woman and man take their femininity and masculinity to the society, this will be something indecent and clumsy, which is that reprehensible intercourse. In other words, the term intercourse “ikhtilaat” can be given to relation between woman and man within the frame of sexual instincts, and the term connection “irtibaat” can be used for the domain of human relations.

Sometimes it is said that these two realms can never be separated from each other, as a result

of which the women should be denied the right of social presence. In response to this it should be said that this judgement is based on two views that take seduction as the original character of women which men have no ability and power to restrain themselves in front of it. As a result of this view, comes the inhuman look at woman and man.

While the religious texts cited in chapters four and five indicate that woman and man are human beings and can, with strong determination, embark on separation of different realms of their life. Of course this innate and human resolution should be controlled by religious rules and regulations, so as to get a good result.

To sum up, it can be said if the connection between woman and man be healthy and according to rules and good manners, no legal prohibition would be there upon it, and even women's social participation can never be achieved without this connection. But this relation should observe the current circumstances and its purpose should be only work and labour. But when laws and regulations are not observed by women and men and no business or work be the aim of relation between them or their presence in society, this would be that very indecent and reprehensible intercourse.