HIJAB OF WOMEN IN ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION HISTORY

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Abstract

In Islam, the observance of modesty of men and women and protecting privacy to the passers has had a particular importance, inasmuch as women veil is considered necessary in the religion. The holy Quran demonstrates to importance of chastity and modesty and not only asks women to cover their ornaments, but also recommends to walk dignified and to be modest in their verbal communication and even looking, to stop the ways of moral and sexual deviation in community. In the second decade of Islam emerging, Hijab verses have revealed (in Medina Al-Nnabi). Hijab was obligated to the Prophet's family firstly and then to whole faithful women. Therefore, the veil which was observed by some Arab tribes, were considered by Muslims seriously. So far all the Muslim leaders always have been consensus in Hijab so that all Islamic sects consider it as an obligatory action. After coming of the Omayyad, moral values got weak and changed the face of the Islamic government. (Zaidan) tendency of the Omayyad continued in Abbasid government. Images of dancers on wall's figures and ceramic jars of wine which has been found in the Josagh Alkhaqany House in Samarra in central Mesopotamia show these cultural changes. Apart from Samaritan paintings, drawings regarding to the women in the world of Islam during the 3-4 AH centuries (9-10 AD) is rare. The reason of the rarity of these image evidences in the Muslim world, despite of huge developments in sciences and arts and remaining the great works of architecture and art, was respecting to the public observance of the chastity and veil in the Muslim world and compliance of the artists in Islam world to its dignity. Investigating different kinds of women Hijabs in Islamic countries, using the Muslims and non-Muslims explorers's travelogues in the past centuries show that although there are so many varieties in model, design and color of clothing in Islamic cities, the element of simplicity and latency can be seen in whole of them (A. Dezzy) The clothes history books have named different kinds of women Hijabs in Islamic countries: Jilbab, Ezar or Mezar, Hibra, Chador and Milhafa from the beginning of Islam was used in Islamic countries for a variety of dress and women Hijabs and was used in the meaning of the big cover which eastern women used to wear themselves with. For covering the head are used Khimar, Maghnaa, Marat and many types of helmets and some of the women have Burqa, Shaariyya, Yashmagh (or Yashmq), mask, Jenna, Robande, Picheh and Chashm avize in some cities and periods for wearing faces which are still using in some countries. Islamic world in the 20th century faces to the growth of phenomenon of feminism in which men and women clothes are getting similar to each other, and confront a phenomenon of bareness which takes women so far away of their dignity and special Hijab. There have been pointed out about this phenomenon's consequences and recommended to be avoided in Islam.

Keywords: Hijab, Women, Islam, Veil, Hijab, Clothes
Introduction

As in all divine religions modesty has been emphasized as a social and ethical virtue, observance of chastity for men and women and preserving privacy against passers has a particular importance in Islam, how, veil of women have been considered as a requirement of the religion. The Quran has demonstrated to the importance of modesty and chastity and invited women and men to observe piety and chastity in all social behaviors and due to the specific features of women, recommends them to walk with dignity and keep modesty in communication verbal. In addition, it invites them to wear their bodies (except face and hands to wrists) and hairs so that they close up any moral and sexual deviation in communities. In fact, philosophies of veil in Islam are to maintain family joint stability, men and women physical and mental peace and community health. Obligatory being of Hijab in Islam is consensus of all Islamic leaders, how, all Islamic sects consider it obligatory and observance of the veil is seen through the history of Islamic countries. However, observing the culture of Hijab has been weakened which is affected by cultural western changes and colonialists aims in recent centuries.

Traditional manners of Muslim women in Islam

When Hijab's verses revealed after second decade of emerging of Islam in Madinah, Hijab, at first, got obligatory for Prophet's family (verses of Al-Ahzab 32-53) and then to all the faithful and Muslim ladies (verses of Al-Ahzab 59 and Noor 30-31). Thus, the veils which have been used by some Arab tribes already and in some others were poor have been performed by Muslims seriously. In addition to the Quran verses that stress the importance of Hijab, there are many Ahadith which express the border of Hijab. Despite the historical existence of many religious and verbal differences between Islamic sects, there is no disagreement about the existence of Hijab (unless nowadays, with comments coming from those who are neither learned people nor any learned has certified their ideas). About the border of Hijab is quoted that:

Asmaa, the sister of Ayesha’s went to the Messenger’s home while, had worn thin clothes. Prophet Mohammad (SAW) returned her and said:

يا اسماء، ان المرأة اذا بلغت المحيض لم تصلح ان يري الا هذا وهذا و اشارالي كفه و وجهه

O Asmaa, when a girl matured, her body should not be seen unless these parts… (While he was pointing at his hands and face)

Therefore, the Prophet (SAW) recommend women to wear something under their thin clothes in order to not to see their bodies.

Ayeshah says about Ansar women that:

For example in: عبد الوهاب احمد،الاتصارى (شعراني)(قرن 10) مسنجد ج8 ص184

1 ابن داوود(275م) سنه جام دار الرائد العربي، بيروت ج4 ص62
2 Ibn Daud (275 CE) Senen Chab Dar al-Raouf al-Arabi, Beirut J4 P62
Huzzah to the Ansar women, once the verses of Surah Al-Noor revealed none of them could be seen outside as the former, they covered their heads with scarf as if crows have sat on their heads³.

After the ruling Bani-Umayyah in which moral values have been weakened, debauchery and depravity increased and changed the figure of the Islamic government, there can be seen some images on the walls of palaces which are imitated of Roman's empires.

In the article of 'The Clothe of Iran's Land' works of this period is mentioned that:

On the wall painting of Ghasir Umrah, the women's bodies have been drawn in different ways: naked and clothed. A woman player of reed has a long sleeves dress with flower designs and diamond which indicates the tradition of women's dresses. Adorned dancers in plenty of ornaments but naked have been shown… Such these tempting dresses are repeated in other paintings of courtiers and dancers of Umayyad Caliphate period...⁴³

Georgi Zaidan⁵ in his book i.e. "Islamic Civilization History" about social transformations in Umayyad period writes:

Increasing number of bondwomen decreased the men's zeal. As result of this unsuitable situation, the values of women felt down, self-esteem and their independence of thought and freedom destroyed, the men were suspected to them and avoided to trust them, communications among women and men have been got based on tricks and enmities instead of honesty. Men used to keep women at

⁴ Zamakhshari, Alkashshaf(1995). Al-kashshaf, Published in Dar Al- ketab Al-Arabi, Beirut

⁵ Georgi Zaidan 1861–1914, in Arabic script جورجي زيدان also transliterated "Jorge Zaydân," "Georgie Zeidan," or "Jirjî Zaydan") was a prolific Lebanese novelist, journalist, editor and teacher most noted for his creation of the journal al-Hilal, which he used to serialize his 23 historical novels. His Works on History are:

- 1889: Ta’rikh al-masuniya al-amm (History of the Freemasons)
- 1890: al-Ta’rikh al-‘Amm (The History of the World)
- 1899: Ta’rikh al-yunan wa A’r-ruaman
- 1901-1906: Ta’rikh al-Tamaddun al-Islamii 5 vols. (History of Islamic Civilization)
- 1907: al-‘Arab qabla l-Islam
- 1910-1913: Ta’rikh adab al-luga al-‘arabiya 4 vols. (The History of Arabic Literature)
homes and close doors and windows and prevent them to go out, mix, speak and communicate with men.

The tendencies of Umayyad Caliphate were continued in early centuries of Abbasid Government, of course, with gradual changes in creating new styles. Some pieces of wall paintings and also ceramic wine jars which have been found in palace Josagh Alkhaghani, located in Samara, in the central Mesopotamia.

Some images of other dancers in Samara's wall paintings can be seen that They are naked waists and wore colorful and bright skirts which are closed by Gaitanis shawls in the bottoms. Their clothes remind the depicted clothing in Umayyad tore in Kharbat Almalfjar and Alhir Algharbi Palaces.

Of course, in this palace, some dressed women are illustrated as well:

Headband of a woman which is seen on a master piece of the remaining wall painting of Alhir Algharbi palace is including the cloth and short cover which are wrapped round the face, that could play the role at times needed. Except to Samara's painting, the pictures related to women in the Islam world during the 3-4 AH centuries (9-10 AD) are quite rare.

The reason of scarcity of visual works after Abbasid's period in the Islamic world, despite of the tremendous progress in science and technology and leaving great works of art and architecture, is only the public observance of modesty and veil in Islamic world and respect of artists to them.

Reinhart Dozy, the Dutch author of the book "culture of Muslim's dresses" investigated a variety of women's coverage in Islamic countries by using the itineraries of the Muslim and non Muslim explorers. At first, he explains about the culture of social coverage in the past centuries that indicates the frequent quantity of variety of forms, designs and colors of clothes in Islamic cities and there is no necessity in its consistency and he emphasizes:

Among of various groups which make up the Islamic communities, there are vast differences in forms of clothes.

Various forms of the veil for women in the past centuries of Islamic world

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7 Scientia Iranica, P. 151
8 Ibid, P. 143
9 Dozy, Reinhart Pieter Anne who was born in Leiden and studied at the University of Leiden, obtained the degree of doctor in 1844, was appointed an extraordinary professor of history in 1850, and professor in 1857. He was a scholar of Arabic language, history and literature. His famous works were: Supplément aux dictionnaires Arabes (1877-1881, 2 volumes) Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne, jusqu'à la conquête de l'Andalousie par les Almoravides(1861; 2nd ed., 1881).THE STUDY OF ARAB CLOTHING: A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL EPILOGUE.
**Ezar or Mezar**: In early period of Islam, it has been used for different kinds of clothes… in the whole Islamic periods; this word has been used as meaning of big Chadors or covers by which eastern women wear them. *(Mezar word has also gone to Italy and it is root of Mezarro i.e. a big piece of painted cloth by which women used to cover their heads and shoulders)*

**Jilbab**: Bokhari used the word of *Jilbab* (which has been in Quran and at least is old since then) in the meaning of Ezar and said that is Chador which women wear their heads when they go out.

**Hebrah**: Is a kind of *Burd*, i.e. a striped loose dress which is making in Yemen. *(in another part of this book is: a shirt or loose cover of black silk) Wearing Hebrah is common in Syria, Arabia and Algeria.*

**Kamari Chador** (Belt Chador): (A Chador which has a rope in it's waist) there has not been used scissors cuts in its sewing, it is sewed from the inside the same as *Aba* which is fixing by a rope from head to waist or as a dickey around the waist and for wearing it, legs should be put into the middle and pulled up like pants and pull the upper part up to the head. Some ladies for more beauty, embroidered around it by lacing or sewing margins, this type of cover mostly was black color. *Kamari* Chador or *Ghajari* Chador is older model of Chador in Iran which used to be famous during the rule of Ghajarid.

**Chador Namazi** or *Charkhi Chador*: (today Chador in Iran): *Charkhi* Chador or Round Chador the same as praying Chador is open-front and without belt. Ordinary women used to wear such striped blue and white Chadors which were made of cotton cloth (*Chit* and Canvas).

**Borqa**: A mask for women. *Dozy* quoted of *John Fraser* that *Borqa* in Mavara Al-nnahr was a kind of cover which has been worn from the heads to feet of the women. In Afghanistan, people have named their cover *Borqa*.

**Khemar**: *(That is mentioned in the Quran and had been used as scarf in that time) It is a type of Hijab for women which covers front of neck, chin and mouth and connect to each others in head.

**Chaarie (or Shaariah)**: Thin cloth of black horsehair that women cover their faces by them and could see their ways through the gap of them.

**Shawl**: A piece of a long hairy or wool cloth that they wrinkle it and wrap it around the neck several times. It is a Persian word which has been gone into many European countries.

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11 Ibid. P.45
12 Jelbab or Jilbab is root of Jellebbai and Jillet. Ibid. p.118
13 Ibid, P. 63
14 Ibid, P. 215
**Maghnaah** (Ghena, Maghnaa): a piece of cloth (Kerchief or Charghad) that both men and women fasten to their heads. (Zoroastrians consider that the same as *Makna* which is a cover of Zoroastrian women).

**Yashmagh** (or *Yashmak*): a black cotton or silky cloth which hangs from the forehead by a decorative object, gold or silver or bronze. Would connect and hangs. This curtain wear wole of face except eyes, covers sometimes on chest and sometimes it comes on knees.

**Neghab** (which is called *Ruband* in Iran) or *Mask:* *Nīghāb* A Curtain with holes. That is a cloth which there are two holes and in white slim and tall in front of the eyes. (According to the verb *Naghaba* نَقب to mean Fiddler thrust)

**Ruband** or *Ruband:* Ruband traditionally scavenger was worn by Iranian women in the 9th century, when *Ibn Battuta* (a Persian traveler in the 9th AH, 16AD) met Shiraz. Articles Iranica, 1385, 154)

**Djenné:** The piece of cloth which is used to cover head except to face and two sides of the chest and have been made two holes in eyes places so that it looks like Borqa.

**Chashm Aviz** (literally hanging net in front of eyes): It is a Black net mask of horsehair that women wear as an amulet. This cover allowed women to cover their eyes concurrent with hide from others, be able to see. This mask used to be wear from medieval. This type of cover has been named Ayazy or Ayasy as well.

**Picheh:** It is a mask which is made of a weaved horsehair or by a rope which fasten to the forehead and through it to the front of their faces. The length and width, tiny and the texture of the coarseness of the elderly and the youth people was less.

**Chaghchur:** It is a sock or socks drawers which are made of two connected parts from ankles up to the waist.

**Types of caps:** There are many varieties of hats in aftermath of Islam. Hat usually includes half circle hats with beautiful decorations. Domination of Mongols in Iran, was coincident with entrance of many styles, special in Far East, particularly, Chinese styles to Iran.

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15 Ibid, P.353  
16 Ibid, P. 398-399  
17 Ibid, P. 120  
18 Ibid  
19 Gheibi. Mehr Asa (1385AH, 1995AD) *Eight Millennium Apparel of People in Iran.* Tehran. Published by Hirmand. AH. P.345  
20 Ibid. P. 345  
21 Ibid.
In this period, women's clothes did not change a lot, unless their head's covers which were similar to kerchief for non Mongol women.

**Women's Hijabs in different Islamic countries**

Firstly, I deal with considering variety of women's Hijabs in Islamic lands. Our resources regarding to this issue are: clothes history books and thesaurus of dresses and logbooks.

Dozy has investigated about different kinds of coverage of women in Islamic countries by using travelogue of explorers. First, it explains the diversity of shapes and designs of clothing and colors in large cities but in all their elements are simple. He mentions the origin of the dress simplicity of Muslims social culture as follows:

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has repeatedly said in his advises that luxury should not get into his nation:

Ornaments, if are for Showing grace and goodness that God has given us, are not unlawful but if they are only of pride and showing off is not allowed. Simplicity in dressing has been often recommended on behalf of Arab and Iranian leaders to males. 22

He writes about color of outer clothes of Muslims as follows:

"The colors have been used frequently in Islam's period are white and black."

He attributes the black dress of condolence to Abbasid Caliphate. 23

In the Umayyad Caliphate governance in Spain, condolence dresses of Muslims were white. 24

He has quoted from some Arab writers that Sadat clothes were green color.

**Egypt:** There have been mentioned in the logbook of Helfrish that:

In the city of Cairo, whole women wear the same clothes i.e. when they go outside of homes, they used to cover themselves in a white and nice Chador, called Ezar. 25

Corneille Dobrin says about Arab women in Cairo: when they go out of their homes, they cover their entire bodies as well as their heads except their eyes. This is similar to the Spanish covers.

22 Ibid, 7
23 First, it explains the diversity of shapes and designs of clothing and colors in large cities but in all their elements are simply
24 Ibid, 20
25 Ibid.
This author continues that, they wear Borqa which is made of a black and atlas cloth and those who are from the generation of Mohammad prophet (SAW) have green Borqa.

"In large cities, women follow the way they have learned from Turks i.e. they hang on a small curtain which is weaved of horsehairs…. Using Shaariah in this city has been expanded from the period of Soltan Salim."267

Jerusalem: Dazi mentiond from the Mentegza: out of houses, women cover themselves by a white cover which is weaved of cotton and thin cloth. They bring the cloth from India and called weaved and women wear them as this. In Reje travelogue is mentioned that: women cover themselves by thin clothes of horsehairs and this cover is called Shaariah by which women could see and walk.278

Dozy has quoted of Helfrish that, women in Jerusalem, used to cover themselves by white cloth instead of wearing outer clothes how, their whole bodies were covered as well as their clothes and differentiating them was impossible as was common in Cario.289

Wearing Hebre in Saudi Arabia, Syria and Algeria is common. Borghart says: Mecca's women wear loose shirts made of black silk, as was common in Egypt.

**Iran:** Tavarnihe writes:

"Women in Iran don’t show themselves to anyone except their husbands. When they go to public bathrooms, they used to wear themselves by white Chadors by which they cover their entire bodies."2910

The outdoors clothes are including a long white Chador which covers the whole bodies that are white or black masks weaved of horsehairs, they have either modesty or anonymity.3011

Outdoor clothes of women that used to be masks or white Chadors along with loose trousers or without trousers, have been changed to black or dark Chadors at the middle of the last century.3112

Of course, women's Hijabs which have been Black Chadors in recent centuries and in these recent decades, *Manto* (a loose and long shirt which is shortened lately) and scarf or Maghnae have been placed instead of it.

**India:** Indian women often wear their traditional, beautiful and colorful clothes, *Sari.* *Sari* is mostly made of silk and made of many parts including: one blouse, a long skirt and one long shawl. There are many models of this clothe in India. Of course, in addition to Sari, women wear another

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26 Ibid, short report, and of travelling, the back tab 393
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid 345, 33
29 شهبازی، ع.شاپور(1383)، پوشاش در ایران زمان، از سری مقالات دانشنامه ایرانیکا، انتشارات امیرکبیر، تهران، ص198
30 Ibid. P. 201
31 Ibid. P. 220
type of clothe in India called Panjabi. It is mostly common between Muslim Indians and covers bodies more than Sari does. The difference of Panjabi and Sari is in having trousers. Panjabi is making of a long dress and loose trouser, conversely, Sari is made of a long dress and a short blouse which can be complemented by a long shawl.

**Algeria:** Algerian women typically have got Islamic veils. Today, there are three kinds of Hijab in Algeria including: traditional Hijab (Al-Hayek) which is made of a white Chador with a white Nighab, and is common among Algerian women. Al-Malaye, which is another type of traditional Hijab, is made of a black Chador like an Aba, is common in eastern cities of Algeria. Al-Jebab, that occasionally, is like a black or dark blue Chador along with a Nighab which covers the whole faces except eyes and sometimes used as Chador the same as Hijab of Iranian and Lobnanian women.

**Malaysia:** There are variety of models and colors in Muslim Malaysian's women veils. Common clothe in this country is Baju Kurung that is loose and long dress. Occasionally, the women are interested in wearing Baju Kebaya, which is a tight blouse, instead of Baju kurung. Kebaya is a short shirt along with skirt that can be considered as Muslim Malaysian traditional dresses.

**Indonesia:** In Indonesia, the word which is more common for Hijab is Jilbab and its regarding to head coverage. Hijab has become popular in year 1980 in Indonesia. In recent centuries, western Colonialists with internal Tyrant mercenaries have culturally changed Islamic countries.

Contriving for political domination by cultural penetration, economic colonialism by issuing culture of modernism and consumerism caused essential changes in Muslim women's traditional coverage and by growth of feminism phenomenon Islam's world has confronted similarity between men's and women's clothes and also bareness phenomenon which reduce the femininity dignity of women and their own particular Hijab. Islam has demonstrated the destructive consequences of these phenomena and commanded to avoid them.

Although those Muslim women who believe Hijab may wear western clothes in parties or their homes in recent centuries, when they go to public, wear traditional or new Hijabs.

**Conclusion**

Regarding to the importance of Hijab in Islam, observing public modesty among Muslim nations and Hijab has been always considered by Islamic leaders. According to historical evidences, during the period of cultural history of Islam world, with a little bit ups and downs, there are wonderful variety of shapes and colors of Hijabs in different countries. But general trend is to observing the Hijab's borders. Of course, in some cases in addition to hair cover, covering faces have become common which seldom can be seen in a few Islamic countries. Islamic world are influenced by western cultural changes and contrived by colonialists in economic and political aims and need more attention for maintaining traditional and cultural values based on modesty and Hijab.
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