

ISLAM & MODESTY



U UNDERSTANDING
ISLAM



THINK



PAIR



SHARE

What do you understand by the term 'modesty'?

AIMS

- ❖ To learn about the history of the Veil
- ❖ Understand the Islamic teachings about modesty, the Veil and the responsibilities upon Muslims
- ❖ To understand the purpose of the Veil to Muslim Women



Bronze: Know the origins of the Veil



Silver: Explain the teachings of modesty for both men and women, in light of the Holy Qur'an

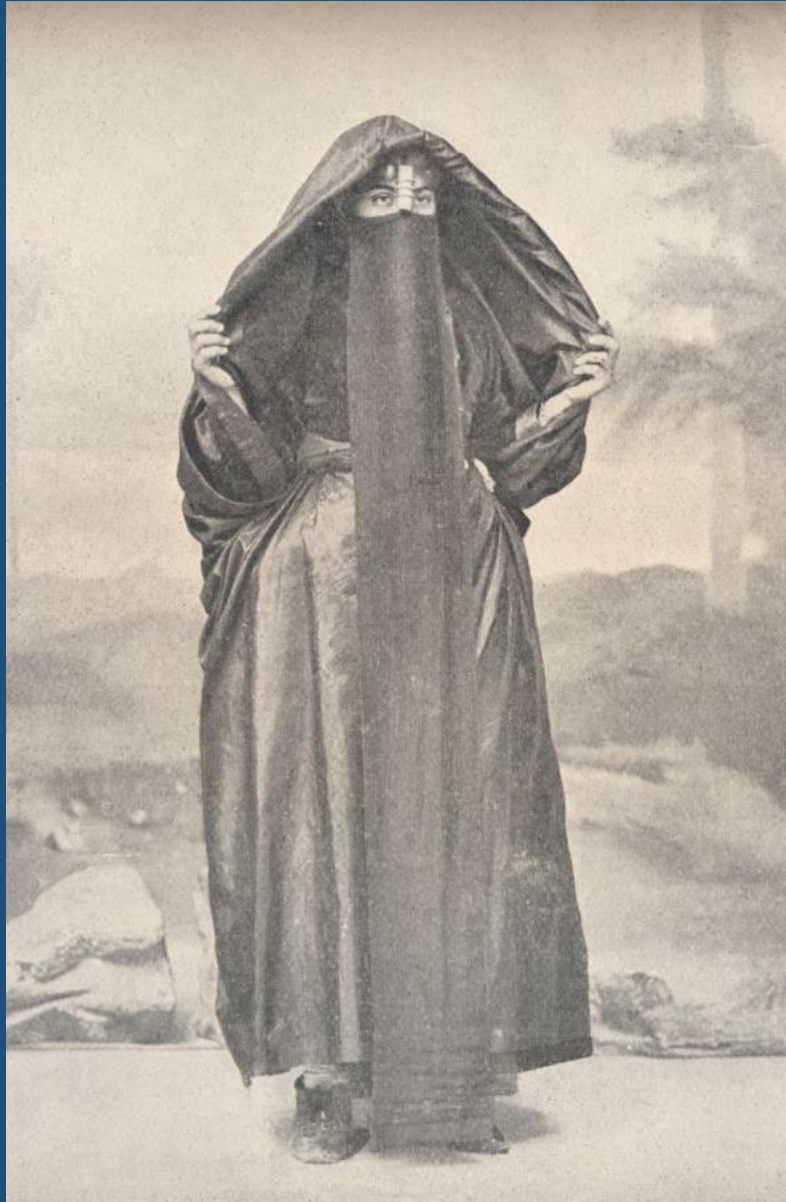


Gold: Evaluate the impact of a a ban on the Veil

KEY VOCABULARY

- Holy Qur'an Scripture of Muslims outlining Islamic faith - believed to be the exact words of Allah
- Burka Outer covering worn by some Muslim women
- Niqaab Face covering worn by some Muslim women
- Hijaab Hair covering worn by some Muslim women

THE VEIL - WORN BY WOMEN FOR CENTURIES



ORIGINS OF VEILS AND HEAD COVERINGS

A modern-day misconception is that the Veil is worn only by Muslim women. In truth, the Veil has long been a part of a vast number of religions and cultures.

In Christianity, we find the most iconic image of a holy woman observing a head covering in Mary, the mother of Jesus. It represents her modesty and piety.

Veils and head coverings became not just a statement of a woman's morality but a fashion statement. Between the 10th and 14th centuries, the wimple (a head-chin-neck covering) was popular, as were kerchiefs and headscarves. These morphed into the more extravagant headdresses we often associate with 'fairy tale princesses' - a tall conical headdress with a face veil attached.



Variety of headdresses and veils; detail from *Philosophy Presenting the Seven Liberal Arts to Boethius*, a Coëtivy Master, circa 1460.

MODERN DAY USE OF VEILS AND HEAD COVERINGS



Christian Nun



Christian Orthodox bride



Hindu bride



Jewish kippah

Today, many Jewish, Hindu, Christian and Sikh women and men also practice some form of head covering or Veil.

TASK

Can you list 5-10 items of clothing that people wear because of their religious beliefs?



TASK

Can you think of any famous women who wear hijab/other form of Veil?

WHAT DOES THE HOLY QUR'AN SAY ABOUT CHASTITY?

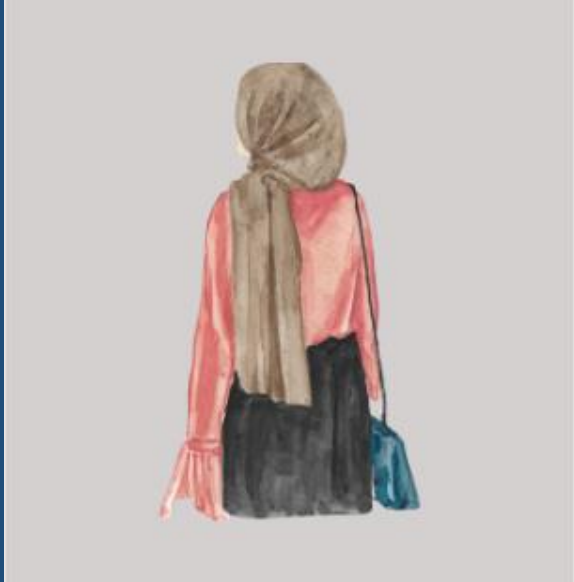
Surely, men who submit themselves *to God* and women who submit themselves *to Him*, and believing men and believing women, and obedient men and obedient women and truthful men and truthful women, and men steadfast *in their faith* and steadfast women, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their chastity and women who guard *their chastity*, and men who remember Allah much and women who remember *Him* — Allah has prepared for *all of* them forgiveness and a great reward.

-The Holy Qur'an Chapter 33 Verse 35



List the 10 qualities of a believer mentioned in the verse.

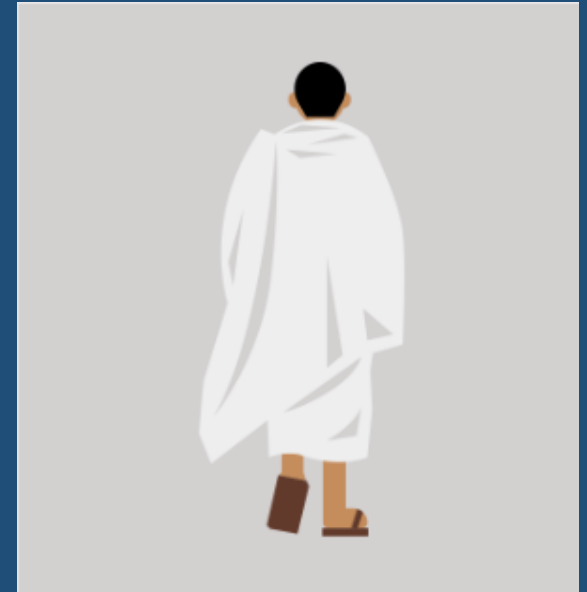
DOES ISLAM DISTINGUISH BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN GUARDING THEIR CHASTITY AND MODESTY?



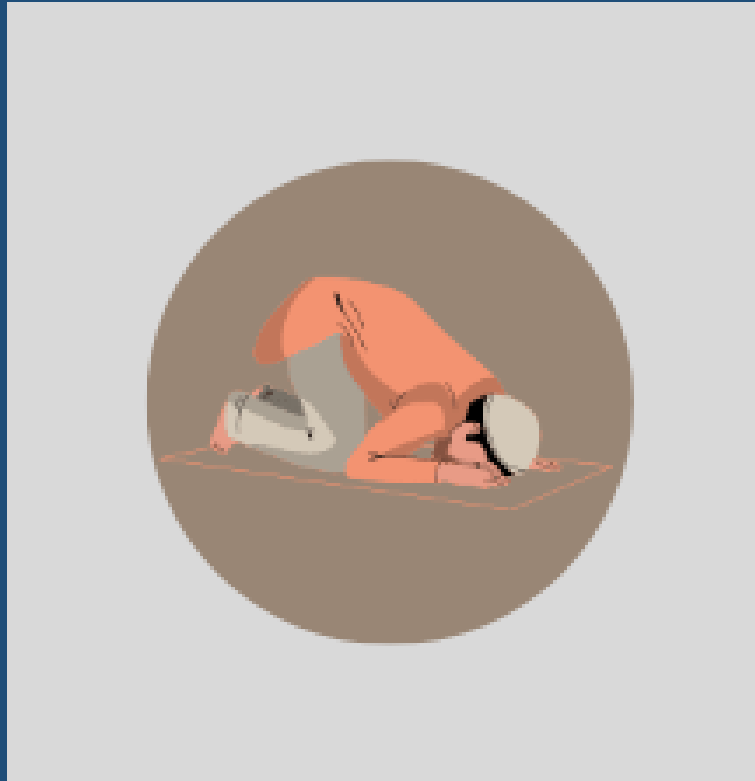
The responsibility to observe modesty is equally relevant to men as it is to women. Both have the responsibility to ‘restrain their eyes and guard their private parts’ (Holy Qur’an Chapter 24, Verses 31 and 32)

The Holy Qur’an goes as far as to explain who Muslims should restrain themselves from and with whom they do not need to.

By addressing both genders, the words have true equality.



HOW DO MUSLIM MEN DISPLAY MODESTY?



It is obligatory on Muslim men to safeguard their piety and modesty. They have been commanded to observe *ghadd-e-basr* – lowering of gaze (pronounced gh-udd ear bus-u-r) and should keep their gaze lowered and hearts and mind safeguarded against impure thoughts and bad intentions. Each Islamic principle is based on wisdom and strong reasoning. Through *ghadd-e-basr*, Islam teaches control of the self.

DO ALL MUSLIM WOMEN HAVE TO WEAR THE SAME STYLE OF HEAD COVERING?

Islam is a universal religion and prescribes no specific dress code for Muslim women. Instead, it furnishes Muslims with guidelines to which they can adopt their own national or ethnic dress. ‘The veil’ has no one shape or form; rather, Muslim women around the world have a diverse array of dresses that keep in accordance with Qur’anic instructions.

Head coverings worn by Muslim women



Burka

Full body, covers entire face, a mesh screen covers the eyes



Niqab

Veil for the face, eyes remain visible



Hijab

Square scarf covers head and neck



Chador

Full-body cloak



Shayla

Long scarf, wrapped around the head



Al-Amira

Two-piece headscarf



Khimar

Cape-like, covering hair, neck and shoulders

IS THE VEIL OPPRESSIVE?

The Islamic veil is seen by some as a symbol of oppression and subjugation.

The Media often portrays Muslim women as unequal to Muslim men, oppressed, living in subordination to men and with little individual rights.

Consequently, in Western society the veil has become increasingly controversial over time and many misconceptions regarding its true purpose have arisen. Many now consider that Muslim women require liberating from the veil, a garment that embodies their oppression.



TASK

Watch a Video from the perspective of Muslim woman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZMp-DdWc3E>

Discuss in groups

THE TRUE PURPOSE OF THE VEIL FOR MUSLIM WOMEN



The Veil represents a woman's devotion to Allah. It is not meant to differentiate between men and women, rather Muslims believe that it liberates women and enables them to excel within all dimensions of society.

The Veil is no obstacle to success. In modern day society, the wearing of a veil does not hinder Muslim women from functioning in a professional environment. Muslim women work in diverse professions, from medicine and law to teaching and engineering. The Veil enables them to thrive and be appreciated for their intelligence, personality and endeavours, rather than for their physical beauty



TASK

Do you think that as a society, we tend to judge people on how they look/dress?

Discuss in groups and share your thoughts with the class

HOW DOES A BAN ON HIJAAB AFFECT A MUSLIM WOMAN'S HUMAN RIGHTS?

Some countries have tried to impose a ban on wearing the Hijaab in public.

TASK: Write a passionate open letter which argues against the case of banning the Hijaab.

In your letter, consider what the Hijaab symbolises for Muslim women. You may also wish to think about the following issues:



Freedom of choice

Freedom to practice faith

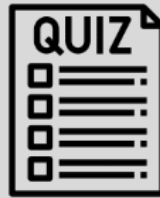
Freedom of expression – symbol of modesty

Imposing immodesty by force upon women

Religious discrimination

Violates dignity and modesty that Muslims hold close to their faith

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE



<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSddwoxAs1WKzKs6qcPReUzRgtd1WGctPg6Um4vo0fcuqqdnMQ/viewform>