

Western Beauty Standards Enslave Women to a Life of Misery

News:

On 24 July 2023, the Wall Street Journal reported, “Sorority rush at the University of Georgia kicks off in August, a lousy time to wear makeup. “You need to do it in a way that’s appropriate in southern humidity or else you’re going to have orange rivers running down your face,” said Trisha Addicks. She recommends keeping a “rush bag” with deodorant, portable fan, water and face powder. That’s the kind of practical advice Addicks gives clients of her Georgia-based sorority-consulting firm, It’s All Greek to Me. Showing up in Dr. Martens combat boots, as one client asked about, might not be putting your best foot forward in some sorority circles, she said: “During rush, you’re not going to be confident if you’re wearing them, and everybody else is wearing espadrilles.” Addicks offers a \$600 seminar for women and their mothers to learn the basics about getting into a sorority; \$3,500 buys unlimited access to sorority mentors who advise aspirants through every step. She is part of an industry emerging in recent years that sells tips and emotional support to women who want to avoid missteps that threaten first impressions. Sorority consultants cover such topics as what to wear, how to act, what to say and the wisdom of scrubbing potentially off-putting social media posts.”

Comment:

This Wall Street Journal news article describes the challenges a young woman may go through when starting her university life. The Western colonialist took their viewpoint towards women as a cornerstone of their civilization. They have kept this issue at the forefront, when challenging the great Islamic civilization. For them, the display of unrestricted adornment of womanhood is taken to be the ultimate measure of freedom in a society. Hence, organizations controlled by the West, rate societies for gender-based issues, all across the globe, based on the permitted limits of how a woman can dress publicly.

The Western-controlled media set the beauty standards as expressed through Hollywood, the fashion runways of New York, Paris, Milan, London and through the amplifying effect of media and social media influencers. This sends a message to women that they are valued based on their image and outlook. This vision for women trains their minds to think that their value and importance in society is linked to their beauty. The West was successful in labeling such a decadent, self-centered, and short-sighted behavior as modern, progressive, and enlightened. It demanded the world follows it. The matter was not left to expressing their viewpoint. Instead, the West used international organizations to impose their viewpoint about women on the rest of the world.

The reality is that these beauty standards of the Western elite are the iron collars that have resulted in the mass enslavement of women globally. It has resulted in untold pain, suffocation and anxiety. The intellectual capability, personality, character and expertise of women are less valued in the West than their looks and appearances. It is reported that by the year 2030, cosmetic surgery industry, with 84% of procedures being done on women, will be worth in excess of 200 billion dollars. Parents are having their girls go through multiple surgeries, before they reach the age of 18. The pressure to look in a particular way is so much that it is causing mental health issues and psychological impairments. And now

parents are paying thousands of dollars to consultants who coach young women starting their university education, in how to dress and behave in prestigious US universities.

Societal pressures are the foremost drivers for behavioral adjustment. A society builds its standards for what would be praiseworthy or blameworthy, and what would constitute beauty and ugliness. Accordingly, certain behaviors are accepted or rejected in the society. In fact, every society demands conformity to its standards and values. The question to be asked is, what would constitute the correct basis for the establishment of a standard or value for a society? Indeed, Allah (swt) the Most-Wise and Most-Knowledgeable answered this question in the Noble Quran when He (saw) said, **﴿وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى مِّنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾** **“And who is more astray than the one who follows his desire without guidance from Allah. Surely Allah does not take the wrongdoing people onto the right path.”** [TMQ Surah Al-Qasas 28:50].

The correct basis for defining the standards and values for human behavior, and setting the criterion for Husn and Qubh, in the society is the divine revelation sent down by Allah (swt), through His last Messenger Muhammad (saw). It is the Divine Revelation which defines how societies should be organized, and what values and standards should define the attributes of human behavior in a society.

And indeed, it is only Islam that values virtue above any other matter. Allah (swt) says in the Noble Quran, **﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ﴾** **“O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into races and tribes, so that you may identify one another. Surely the noblest of you, in Allah’s sight, is the one who is most pious of you. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.”** [TMQ Surah Al-Hujurat 49:13].

Islam will rescue and truly liberate men and women equally, by liberating them from the worship of their desires and self to the worship of One True Creator, The Rabb and The Malik Allah (swt). Men and women are equal in the sight of Allah (swt). They are rewarded or punished for their obedience or lack of it to Him. The Creator and the Law-Giver Allah (swt) balances the roles, duties and rights of men and women, through revelation to Muhammad (saw). He (swt) did so in an all-encompassing Shariah, in a harmonious way for the Islamic society, to excel beyond par to anything ever produced by any human effort. The Noble Quran and the Prophetic Sunnah guide humankind in all issues that any man or woman faces today, or will face any time till the day of Judgement. Islam brings true salvation in this world and the Hereafter.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Dr. Akmal – Wilayah Pakistan