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Sex & the Ummah: As A Virgin

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The latest buzz in France is about a **court case regarding a Muslim couple** whose marriage was annulled due to the woman lying about her virginity. Besides the issue of religion vs. secularism that's particularly sensitive in Europe, especially considering the hijab ban, cartoons, and other infamous incidents, another topic is brought to light: that of **virginity and hymen restoration**.

A quick Google search will yield hundreds of results - the majority focusing on the European phenomenon of women from Muslim families seeking "certificates of virginity" and/ or hymen restoration surgery before they get married. Debate rages on about European Muslims importing such cultural backwardness as vaginal blood on newlyweds' bedsheets to be proof of the bride's virginity, affecting even the generation of youth born and brought up on Western soil.

Reading these stories, several things come to mind. The situation isn't just about women's virginity... it's about many convulated societal ills that the Muslim community is facing.

First and foremost is straying from the Deen, placing culture over religion and having messed up priorities. It seems that in many of the cases, the women (and men) involved weren't very religious anyway - hence their dilemma. In at least one case, a boyfriend/ girlfriend couple were engaged to marry, but the guy's family demanded proof of her virginity... and the only way for her to get it was hymen reconstructive surgery. Clearly, to them, proof of (technical) virginity was more important than the fact that they'd been going out for ages already, which is the first big no-no!

Furthermore, the entire concept of proof of virginity is alien to Islam and totally absent in the Shari'ah. Since it is commanded of both Muslim men and women to abstain from pre-marital relations, and the only Islamically acceptable way of knowing whether or not they followed this rule is by confession or having been caught fornicating by the required 4 witnesses, the whole idea of "proof" is redundant.

Ignorance is another contributing factor to this sensitive issue. Way too many people believe that a woman's hymen is destroyed only by intercourse. The truth is, however, that accidents, physical activity, and even everyday movements can result in the 'puncturing' of hymens. Thus, the expectation of vaginal blood as proof of virginity is a faulty one that cannot be depended upon for accuracy.

Double standards are another sign of culture being placed over religion, in that many families are willing to turn a blind eye to their sons "playing the field" - but totally freak if their daughters are caught doing so. It must be understood by us all that the Shari'ah does not differentiate between male and female when it comes to gender relations and sexual conduct. Pre-marital relationships are 100% forbidden. It isn't "worse" if a girl commits *zina*, or "not as bad" if a guy does. In both cases, it is WRONG and the gravity of the sin is equal in the eyes of Allah.

Sheikh Yaser Birjas provides us with a scholarly overview of the issue:

Asking for a 'virginity test' is something new in the Muslim society due to the social change occurring as a result to the proximity with western culture. Its hard to find anything regarding this issue in such a straight forward manner in classical works of fiqh, for such a request implies suspicion in the chastity of the woman and hence falls under 'Qadhf' false accusation. The rules of Shariah are based on 'sitr' concealing blemishes when possible and promoting chastity, therefore, unmarried women are assumed virgin unless an evidence suggests otherwise. Women are not obligated to prove their virginity, but if it appeared to their husbands they were not virgin then an explanation is required if requested by the husband or his or her wali. The husband has no right to go around speaking ill against her, he would have the option to dissolve the marriage and take his mahr back or stay with her on that condition.

This request is not only a violation to her body, but also to her innocence and to her honor.

If the man or his family were suspicious of the virginity of a woman then they should dissolve the contract, not demanding such request. This request springs out from fear of shame on the part of the groom or his family. They do not wish to be accused of calling off a marriage for no reason fearing that this might cause a cultural backfire on them.

On the "Bloody Bedsheets" Tradition

This is absolutely haram, awful and works against the request of Rasulullah (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) to keep intimate matters private. If speaking about what happens between a husband and wife behind closed doors was made haram per the statements of Rasulullah (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), how about then showing it or put it on display? The Hadith in Sahih Muslim:

"Verily among the worst people before Allaah on the Day of Judgement is a man who approaches his wife sexually and she responds and then he spreads her secrets."

And in Musnad Imam Ahmad, "On the authority of Asmaa bint Yazid who narrated "that she was once in the presence of the Prophet and there were both men and women sitting. The Prophet then said: "Perhaps a man might discuss what he does with his wife, or perhaps a woman might inform someone what she did with her husband?" The people were silent. Then I said: "O, Yes! O Messenger of Allaah verily both the women and men do that." Then the Prophet said: "Do not do that. It is like a male shaitaan who meets a female shaitaan along the way, and have sex with her while the people look on!"

On Hymen Reconstruction Surgery

If the reason behind the loss of the hymen was accidental with no haram act involved then its permissible. In some cases a doctor provides the patient with a letter attesting for the reason of this accidental loss. There is some disagreement among contemporary scholars if the reason was rape, but absolutely wrong if the woman was a fornicator, divorcee or widow.

See more here: [Ruling on Hymen Reconstruction Surgery](#)

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