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“The line between religious conviction and its dress code. Is freedom of dress absolute?”

Introduction

I will not talk about culture stemming from the three religions in the book. I am not forgetting about half of humanity, I am just not in a position to talk about it.

Genesis is common with the three religions in the book. The story that is the basis of this culture based on a feeling of fault, of guilt and embarrassment about the body of men and women.

The three religions have a complex relationship towards the body and its sexuality.

The extreme versions of these religions, the cults that are nourished from it, maintain hysterical relations – derived from the Greek word uterus – with the body.

My talk will illustrate and give an opinion on what I believe indicates a cultic marker. The wearing of the Niqab or the Burka.

Guilt in Genesis

I don't want to bore you and each person believes they know the story. This is an error, as many memories are selective, how many details (of a key text) (systemic) are deleted by poor memory. The story is part of the collective unconscious of several billion people, a corner stone, it is important to remember it in its original form:

[3:1] Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

[3:2] The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden;

[3:3] but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die. '"

[3:4] But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die;

[3:5] for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

[3:6] So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate.

[3:7] Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

[3:8] They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

[3:9] But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?"

[3:10] He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself."

[3:11] He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

[3:12] The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate."

[3:13] Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate."

[3:14] The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.

[3:15] I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

[3:16] To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

[3:17] And to the man he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;

[3:18] thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.

[3:19] By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

[3:20] The man named his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

[3:21] And the LORD God made garments of skins for the man and for his wife, and clothed them.

[3:22] Then the LORD God said, "See, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"--

[3:23] therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken.

[3:24] He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life.

The consequences of this text: detesting of the body which must be hidden and degrade women.

The god only addresses her after addressing the man.

Created by god from the man's rib, one could say "the woman is the product of an extra bone (Bossuet)" She is the cause of sin, weak, subject to irresistible desires.

She will be punished by being required to obey god, of course, but also man.

The founding text of Genesis can also have another purpose, more feminist, when the reader will retain, by reading it in a more heretic way, that the woman faced off against god and the law to acquire knowledge. Eve, mythologically at the origins of knowledge, is as such the mother of knowledge and freedom.

A few verses from the Song of Songs that I will read to you:

How beautiful and how pleasant you are, love, for delights!

This, your stature, is like a palm tree, your breasts like its fruit.

I said, "I will climb up into the palm tree. I will take hold of its fruit."

Let your breasts be like clusters of the vine,

the smell of your breath like apples, Beloved

Your mouth like the best wine, that goes down smoothly for

my beloved, gliding through the lips of those who are asleep.
I am my beloved's. His desire is toward me.
Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field.
Let us lodge in the villages.
Let's go early up to the vineyards. Let's see whether the vine
has budded, its blossom is open, and the pomegranates are in flower.
There I will give you my love.
The mandrakes give forth fragrance. At our doors are all
kinds of precious fruits, new and old, which I have stored
up for you, my beloved.

Reading the texts in an erotic way was possible and even open. Hating the body and having to hide it
was not inevitable.
But things turned out very differently.

For St. Paul, "wives should submit to their husbands" (Eph. 5:24).

St. Paul recognises that the father can treat his daughter as he likes: starting from birth, he can force her
to remain a virgin; does he want to have her married or keep her a virgin? "...he should do as he wants.
He is not sinning. (...) So then, he who marries the virgin does right, but he who does not marry her does
better." (1 Cor. 7:36-38).

Paul of Tarsus was never married.

- The origins of his prejudices against women
- Hatred of the body, of life, women, sexuality: why?
- "thorn in the flesh": impotent?

"No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others..." (1 Cor.
9:27).

Explanation of Paul of Tarsus' attitude is reflected in the de La Fontaine fable "The Fox and the Grapes".
I will not bore you with citations, precepts and examples that indicate discrimination of women
compared to men in Islamic culture.

The same for Hebrew culture.

Mistrust of women is common in the book's religions. Hating the body by the religion in the book is
contrary to a consumer society that hypersexualises the body.

This is a source of conflict, a source of neurosis.

The guilt associated with the fact of religions could lead me to go on and on, but I won't today.

Amusing illustration of clothing guilt: women's clothing closes right over left, men's left over right due to
the devolved positions to the church.

Legal experiences.

I would like to share an overview of an experience I had:

Rules for the Verviers Police punishes the wearing of clothing that hides the face with an administrative
fine.

Appeals for this fine take place before the police court.

Limiting freedom can only take place if it is prudent and only for higher motives.

The reasoning is the following:

- The burka or the niqab is not a requirement of Islam but the result of a conflict within Islam;
- Punishing clothing choices results from a choice of balance between collective interests and individual freedoms;
- Clothing freedom is not absolute. (Nudity in society);
- Humans are associated with a family name and an image (ID card);
- Human dignity is not for sale. (decision by the ECHR regarding “throwing midgets”);
- Clothing freedom is limited by the necessity for security. (Surveillance cameras accepted by all European legal systems).

The decision was approved and the criteria were used in the many legal decisions and entered into Belgian legal texts.

Conclusions

Clothing freedom has limits based on the need to live together.

Deny humanity, as hiding a face builds borders.

Crossing the border removes people from society.

If the motivation for refusal is philosophic or religious, man (or woman) enters a dangerous cultic sphere.