

SCIENTIFIC & ISLAMIC REASONS FOR GROWING A BEARD

By: DR. GOHAR MUSHTAQ



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About the Book

This book provides a detailed study on the importance of growing the beard in Islam. In the present age, many Muslims are affected by the Western imperialism and media so much that they do not consider the beard as a symbol of Muslim identity anymore. The author has combined various disciplines in this book: *tafseer, ahaadeth, opinions of Islamic jurists, history, social psychology, biology as well as comparative religion.*

The author's research is wide-ranging – from the history of the beard among various nations in the past and present to the reasons for the rise of beardless culture among Muslims. He delves deep into the psychological and sociological reasons which resulted in the negligence of this important Sunnah by many present day Muslims. To strengthen his case, the author has presented the *recent scientific research* done by social psychologists which shows that the presence of a beard on man's face makes him appear more attractive, intellectual, honest and heroic both in the eyes of women as well as men. In the beard, there is **attraction, protection** and **perfection** for men.

Introduction

WHEN A WATER FOUNTAIN emerges out of a mountain, its water is crystal-clear. But as this spring water flows down to the plains and grounds, dust and impurities enter into it, thus making it muddy and dirty. Those who are used to looking at things superficially will think that this water was dirty to begin with. This analogy is true for religion as well. About 1400 years ago, the fountain of Islam emerged from the mountains of Makkah and then it spread to the East and the West. With the passage of time, different impurities in the form of non-Islamic customs and practices entered the spring of Islam. Some Muslims of the later generations started to think of those impurities as part of the spring water of Islam. One of those impurities, which entered the culture of Islam, is the practice of shaving the beard. The habit of shaving the beard among Muslims has become so much widespread that today many Muslims think that there is nothing wrong with making their faces 'beardless'.

The origin of the fountain of Islam is Qur'an (the book of Allah) and Sunnah (the practice of Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him). We can see the true picture of Islam if we drink water directly from the fountain of Islam. The effeminate practice of shaving the beard has not roots among the Muslims during the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) or during the period of his companions or even the generations that followed the companions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Today the moral decline of Muslims has reached to such an extent that they consider those Muslims as backward who grow their beards. Muslims with beards are made fun of by their fellow society members and sometimes the label of "fundamentalist" is pasted on those bearded-Muslims. There is so much stark contrast between the words and actions of Muslims that many of the poetry reciters of praise-poetry (*nasheed* or *Na'at-e-Rasool*) of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) regularly shave their beards and still claim to love the face of the Prophet. In fact, it seems that they shave their faces not once but twice before going in the public and reciting the poetry in praise of Prophet Muhammad even though their own actions are speaking loudly against their words. Today Muslims have forgotten the fundamental message of Qur'an:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

"In the Messenger of Allah is a good example for you to follow." (Al-Ahzab 33:21)

Muslims had remained colonized by the European imperial powers for about 200 years in the recent past. Now, when the Muslim countries are politically free, the effect of the post-colonial trauma has not faded away from the minds of many Muslim inhabitants. In some Muslim countries, parents of young girls refuse to give the hand of their daughters to those Muslim youth who are wearing beards. Due to the colonized mentality, those so-called Muslim parents think that the presence of beard on a man's face makes him unattractive to women. However, recent research done by social psychologists has shown that the presence of a beard on man's face makes him appear more

attractive, intellectual, honest and heroic both in the eyes of women as well as men. The details of those researches will be explained later in this book.

To sum up, the beard which was the Sunnah of each and every prophet of Allah sent to mankind has become an object of ridicule in this age. Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said in one hadeeth:

إِعْلَمُ أَنَّ مَنْ أَحْيَا سُنَّةً مِنْ سُنَّتِي أُمِيتَتْ بَعْدِي كَانَ لَهُ مِنَ الْأَجْرِ
مِثْلُ مَنْ عَمِلَ بِهَا مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ يَنْقُصَ مِنْ أَجُورِهِمْ شَيْءٌ

(ترمذی، ابن ماجه)

"Whoever gives life to one of my Sunnahs which was eliminated after my time will receive the reward of all those who practice it without their reward being diminished." (Tirmidhi; ibn Majah)¹

It is precisely this hadeeth that inspired me to write this book on the subject of growing a beard. It will be appropriate to mention here that I am not only a student of Islamic Sciences but also a scientist by education as well as by laboratory training. I have a strong conviction that every injunction of Islam has a profound wisdom in it because of the mercy of Allah for human beings. Above all, I love the face of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and he (peace be upon him) had beard on his face.

1 A sound hadeeth narrated from Amr ibn Awf ibn Zayd al-Muzani by al-Tirmidhi (who has regarded it as *hasan*), Ibn Majah in his *Sunan*, Abd ibn Humayd in his *Musnad* (p. 120), al- Baghawi in *Sharh al-Sunna* (1:233), al-Bayhaqi in *al-I'tiqad* (p. 231), and Ibn Abd al-Barr in *al-Tamhid* (24:328).

The first part of this book deals with the position of growing a beard in the light of Qur'an, traditions (hadeeth) of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the verdicts of Islamic scholars on this issue. The second part of this book presents the scientific research done by social psychologists as well as biologists pertaining to the beard. The third chapter of this book presents the reasons for the rise of beardless culture among Muslims. The fourth chapter deals with miscellaneous issues related to the beard. The fifth chapter of this book contains some interesting stories relevant to growing the beard which is followed by the conclusion.

The first edition of this book was published in 2001 by Ta-Ha Publishers, London. In this new edition of this book, *takhreej* (analyzing the authenticity) has been done for all the Prophetic ahadeeth contained in this book. In addition, some of the scientific information presented in this book has been updated based on the current findings.

DR. GOHAR MUSHTAQ

California, U.S.A.

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Chapter 1

Growing the beard --- In light of Qur'an and Hadeeth

*Say (O Muhammad to mankind): "If you (really) love Allah,
then follow me, Allah will love you."*

(Surah Al-'Imran; 3:31)

IN ORDER TO APPROACH THIS ISSUE, first, we will look at the evidences from the Qur'an and Sunnah regarding the beard. Next, we will look at the position of Islamic

scholars on this issue. Before we begin the discussion, it is important for us to understand that the ultimate authority for the Muslims is the Qur'an and the Sunnah. In Qur'an, Allah the Most Exalted One, says:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا لِمُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ
 الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٣٦﴾

“It is not for the believing man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision.”

(Surah Al-Ahzab: Ayah 36)

In Surah An-Noor, Allah says:

فَلْيَحْذَرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِ أَنْ
 تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٣﴾

“And let those who oppose the Messenger's commandment beware, lest some affliction befall them or a painful torment be inflicted upon them.”

(Surah Noor: Ayah 63)

The above-mentioned verses of the Qur'an tell us that we should follow the commandments of Allah and His Messenger. We are not allowed to find loopholes in those commandments by propounding our opinions or by rationalizing our judgments just because we are not used to seeing those as the norms in the society. When we look around us, we see Muslim men with clean-shaven faces on the streets, in the sports, in politics and in the media.

However, the fact that majority of Muslim men shave their beards is not a justification to make this practice permissible because the Qur'an tells us that the majority of people on earth are not on the right path:

وَإِنْ تَطَّعْ أَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يُضِلُّوكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾

"If you follow the MAJORITY of people on Earth, they will lead you astray. That is because they follow conjecture and fail to think"

(Surah Al-An'am: 116)

Evidence from the Qur'an and Hadeeth

In Surah Ar-Rum, Allah says:

فَطَرَتِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ
لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ
أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

"Follow the state of 'Fitrah' on which Allah has created mankind. Do not change the creation of Allah. That is the straight religion, but most of men know not." (Surah Ar-Rum: 30)

Hence, it is the commandment of Allah, in the imperative form in Arabic language, that we should not change the creation of Allah. In order to follow the state of 'fitrah' (inherent nature), it has to be nurtured with the divine

guidance that comes in the form of Qur'an and the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Rasool Allah (peace be upon him) mentioned ten qualities as indicative of a good, clean nature. Two of these qualities are to trim the moustaches and to grow the beard. In addition, the fitrah (natural) state of men is with the beard. It is what distinguishes them from women. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said in one hadeeth:

لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْمُتَشَبِّهِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ بِالنِّسَاءِ، وَالْمُتَشَبِّهَاتِ مِنَ
النِّسَاءِ بِالرِّجَالِ (بخاری، کتاب الباس)

*"Allah curses those men who imitate the women, and
He curses those women who imitate the men."*
(Al-Bukhari)²

Moreover, when Satan (devil) disobeyed Allah and he was cursed and ordered by Allah to leave the paradise, at that time Satan swore that he will lead astray the human beings and he said to Allah:

وَأْمَرْتَهُمْ فَلْيَعْبُدْنِي وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي
خَلَقَهُمْ وَإِنِّي لَأَمْرُنُهُمُ الْغَايِبَةُ

*"And I will order them to change the nature
created by Allah." (Surah An-Nisa; Ayah 119)*

The commentators of Qur'an, in explaining this verse, have stated that shaving the beard is also included in "*changing*

² Bukharee, Abu Abdullah Mohammad bin Ismael, *Sahih Bukharee* (Lahore: Khalid Ihsan Publishers, 1981); Book on Dress (*Kitabul Libaas*), Vol. 7, hadeeth # 773

the nature created by Allah".³

From the above mentioned verses of Qur'an, it is clear that we are obliged to obey all the commandments of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) and he has ordered us in several authentic *ahadeeth* to grow our beards and has forbidden us from shaving. Below are given some of the *ahadeeth* of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) related to growing the beard:

Hadeeth # 1

خَالِفُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ، أَحْفُوا الشَّوَارِبَ، وَأَوْفُوا اللَّحَى.
(صحيح مسلم 147/3، صحيح بخارى 5892)

*"Be different from the Mushrikin (those who worship other than Allah); trim your moustaches and save your beards."*⁴

Hadeeth # 2

أَنْهَكُوا الشَّوَارِبَ وَأَعْفُوا اللَّحَى. (صحيح بخارى، كتاب اللباس)

*"Cut your moustaches and leave your beards alone."*⁵

Hadeeth # 3

3 Khizr, Khalid Mahmood (Haafiz), *Why Beard?* (Lahore: Maktaba Markazi Anjuman Khuddam ul Qur'an, 1991)

4 Narrated by Ibn Umar in *Sahih Al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*

5 *Sahih Bukharee*, Book on Dress (*Kitabul Libaas*)

جَزُّوا الشَّوَارِبَ وَأَرْخُوا اللَّحَى، خَالَفُوا الْمَجُوسَ.

(صحيح مسلم [147/3] مع النووي)

"Trim the moustaches and let the beards grow. Be different from the Zoroastrians (fire-worshippers)"⁶

These ahadeeth of Rasool Allah (peace be upon him) clearly indicate that shaving the beard is an imitation of the disbelievers. This becomes more understandable when we look at another hadeeth of Rasool Allah in which he said:

مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ (سنن ابوداؤد)

"Whoever imitates a people (nation) is but one of them."
(Al-Jaami as-Sagheer 167/2; Sunan Abu Dawud)⁷

Hadeeth # 4

The ruler of Yemen, appointed by the Persian emperor Kisraa, sent two envoys to the Messenger (S) to summon him. When they came into his presence, he noticed that they had shaved their beards and grew their moustaches. He hated to look at them (because of their odd appearance) and he said: Woe be to you, who told you to do so? They replied: "Our lord! (referring to Kisraa.)" The Messenger

6 *Sahih Muslim with Commentary by Imam Nawawi*. (Lahore: Khalid Ihsan Publishers, 1981) Narrated by Abu Huraira in Sahih Muslim – Chapter: Characteristics of Fitra

7 Abu Dawud, Imam Sulayman ibn Ash'as Sajastani (1984) *Sunan Abu Dawud* (Lahore: Kazi Publications; English translation by Ahmed Hasan) This hadeeth has been graded as *saheeh* (authentic) by Sheikh al-Albani in his *Sahih Al-Jami'* vol. 2, pg. 1058

(S) then said:

“*But my Lord, may He be exalted and glorified, has commanded me to leave alone my beard and to trim my moustache.*”

(Recorded by Ibn Jarir Tabari in *Taarikh Umamm wal Mulook*)⁸

This hadeeth sheds lights on various subjects some of which are as follows:

- Rasool Allah (peace be upon him) disliked the act of shaving the beard to such an extent that he hated to look at the people with beardless faces. Rasool Allah (peace be upon him) did not like to look at the naked faces of those men.
- Those Muslims who shave their beards should remember that we have to face our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) on the Day of Judgment. How would we feel in front of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) if we had spent our life with clean-shaven faces?
- This hadeeth also indicates that shaving the beard is a practice of non-Muslims.
- The two envoys came with the warrant from Persian king Kisraa to take Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) with them but the Messenger of Allah did not get intimidated by them and he said the truth.

Hadeeth # 5

⁸ Tabari, Mohammad Ibn Jareer, *Taarikh Umamm wal Mulook* (Karachi: Nafees Academy, 1987) This narration has also been narrated by Ali Ibn Athir in his *Al-Kaamil fee al-taarikh* (vol. 2, pg. 146) and Ibn Katheer in his *al-bidaaya wan Nihaaya* (vol. 4, pg. 269)

عن ابن عمر عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه أمر بإحْفَاءِ
الشَّوَارِبِ وَإِعْفَاءِ اللِّحْيَةِ. (صحيح مسلم [147/3] مع النووي)

Abdullah bin Umar narrates that Rasool Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"I have been commanded (by Allah) to trim the moustaches and let the beard grow." (Sahih Muslim) ⁹

Hadeeth # 6

عن ام المؤمنين عائشة رضی الله تعالى عنها، قالت: " قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: عشر من فطرة: قص الشارب وإعفاء اللحية والسواك و استنشاق الماء و قص الاظفار و غسل البراجم و نتف الابط و حلق العانة و انتقاص الماء قال زكريا قال مصعب و نسيت العاشره الا ان تكون المضمضة. (رواه مسلم 129/1)

"Ayesha, the wife of Prophet Muhammad and the mother of believers (may Allah be pleased with her) narrates that Rasool Allah (peace be upon him) mentioned that ten qualities are from the Islamic 'fitrah':

1. Trimming of Moustaches

⁹ Sahih Muslim with Commentary by Imam Nawawi Chapter on Characteristics of Fitra.

2. *Growing the beard*
3. *Cleaning the teeth with miswaak*
4. *Putting water in the nostrils while making Wudu (ablution)*
5. *Cutting of nails*
6. *Washing the area between the fingers*
7. *Plucking the underarm hairs*
8. *Shaving the pubic hairs*
9. *Washing the private parts with water (after urination or defecation)*

The narrator of this hadeeth, Mas'ab bin Shaibah, said that he forgot the tenth thing. It might be putting water in the mouth during making of *Wudu* (ablution)."

(Sahih Muslim)¹⁰

The Arabic word ‘fitrah’ means ‘the inherent nature’. It can also be translated as ‘*the aboriginal state of man*’.

Hadeeth # 7

10 *Sahih Muslim* Chapter on Characteristics of Fitra. Vol. 1, pg. 129.

عن ابن عباس رضى الله تعالى عنه قال لما فتح رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مكة قال "إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ شُرْبَ الْخَمْرِ وَثَمَنَهَا وَحُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَكْلَ الْمَيْتَةِ وَثَمَنَهَا وَحُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ الْخَنَازِيرَ وَ أَكْلَهَا وَثَمَنَهَا وَقُضُوا الشَّوَارِبَ وَأَعْفُوا اللَّحَى وَ لَا تَمَشُوا فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ إِلَّا وَ عَلَيْكُمْ الْإِرَارَ ، إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ عَمَلَ سُنَّةَ غَيْرِنَا"

(رواه الطبرانى فى الاوسط / مجمع الزوائد)

"Ibn Abbas narrates that when Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) conquered Makkah, he declared that Allah has prohibited the drinking of alcohol and the earning from selling of it. And Allah has prohibited you the eating of dead flesh of animals (not slaughtered Islamically) and the earning from selling of it. And Allah has prohibited eating the flesh of swine and the earning from selling of it. And he (Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)) told us to trim our moustaches and grow our beards and not to walk in the market without cloth worn round our waists (e.g. pajamas, pants) and whoever follows the way of non-Muslims is not from us." (Tabaraani fil Awsat; Majma iz Zawaaid) ¹¹

11 Imam Abu Bakr al-Haythami writes after quoting this hadeeth in *Majma iz Zawaaid* (Kitaab al-Buyu' – Book of Selling; number 6417) that one of the narrators of this hadeeth, Yusuf bin Maimoon has been regarded as weak (*da'eef*) by some scholars (such as Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal). However, Imam Ibn Habbab has regarded this narrator as trustworthy. Hence, this hadeeth can be considered at least *hasan* (good).

Hadeeth # 8

عَنْ أَبِي إِمَامَةَ قَالَ قُلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِنَّ
أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ يَقْصُونَ عَثَانِيَهُمْ وَيُوقِرُونَ سِبَالَهُمْ. قَالَ: فَقَالَ
النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: قُصُوا سِبَالَكُمْ وَوَقَرُوا
عَثَانِيَكُمْ وَخَالِفُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ. (مسند احمد)

"Abu Umama narrates that we told Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that the people of the scripture shave their beards and grow their moustaches. He commanded us to trim our moustaches and grow our beards and be different from the people of the scripture."

(Musnad Ahmed) ¹²

While explaining this hadeeth, the commentator of *Musnad Ahmed*, Sheikh Ahmed Abdur Rehman al-Banna (father of the famous Sheikh Hasan al-Banna) wrote in his multi-voluminous work, *al-Fath al-rabbani*:

“This means that Jews (and Christians) used to shave their beards and leave their mustaches as majority of the people do these days so much so that some of the (Islamic) scholars are also doing this – *la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah* (There

12 Ibn Hanbal, Ahmed, *al-Musnad* (Egypt: Daarul Ma'arif, 1949) All the narrators of this hadeeth of al-Musnad (5/264-265) are reliable except al-Qassim about whom some of the scholars of hadeeth have some criticism. However, Hafiz Ibn Hajr has graded this hadeeth as *hasan* (good) in his “Al-Fat’h” (10/354). Also, Sheikh Al-Albaani has regarded the chain of narration of this hadeeth as *hasan* in *Al-Saheehah* (number 1245).

is no power or strength except through Allah).”¹³

Hadeeth # 9

It has been narrated by Ibn Abbas that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

مَنْ مَثَلَ بِالشَّعْرِ فَلَيْسَ لَهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَلَاقٌ

(مجمع الزوائد، رقم 224/8)

"Whoever has mutilated the hair of his beard has no share in the mercy of Allah."

(Majma az-Zawaa'id)¹⁴

The scholars of Hadeeth have understood the mutilation of the hair of beard to mean shaving the beard. For instance:

- Ibn al-Athir wrote in his *An-Nihaayah* and Ibn Manzoor wrote in his *Lisaanul Arab* (vol.8, pg. 203): "Mutilation of hair means shaving the hair on the cheeks and chin."
- Abu al-Walid al-Baji (d. 1081 C.E.) wrote in his *Commentary on Al-Muwatta* (vol.3, pg. 32): "Shaving of the beard is a form of mutilation."

13 al-Banna as-Sa'ati, Ahmad Abdur Rahman, *al-Fath al-rabbani bi tartib Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal alShaybani al-Musnad* (Beirut: Dar Ihya at-Turath al-Arabi, n.d.). Vol. 17, pp. 237, 314.

14 Al-Haythami, Haafiz Noor ad-din Ali bin Abu Bakr (1967) Majma az-Zawaa'id. Beirut, Dar al Kitaab. Vol. 8, pg. 224. This hadeeth has also been narrated by Tabaraani in *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabir* (vol. 11, # 10977). In the chain of narrators of this hadeeth, Hajjaj bin Nusair has been regarded as a weak narrator by most of the hadeeth scholars. However, Ibn Hibban has regarded him as a trustworthy narrator. All the other narrators of this hadeeth are trustworthy.

- Abu Bakr al-Kashani (d. 587 A.H./1191 C.E.), commented on this hadeeth in his *Bada'i as-Sana'i* (vol.2, pg. 193) as follows: “The shaving of the hair on face is considered equivalent to mutilation.”¹⁵

In addition to that, there are various other traditions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) but for any seeker of truth, the above-mentioned traditions are sufficient to guide them to the right path.

Position of Islamic Scholars regarding the growing of a beard

It is important to mention here the position of Islamic scholars regarding the issue of beard in Islam. All four imams including Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Shaafi, Imam Malik and Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal agree that shaving the beard is prohibited (*haraam*) in Islam. Similarly, Imams Ahmad bin Hanbal, Ath-Thawri and Abu Hanifa agreed that if the beard of a person is forcibly removed by someone, it is an act of mutilation and that the one who removed it must pay the full 'diyah' (blood money) as if he had removed an eye or a limb of the victim. The position of the Islamic scholars regarding the beard goes as follows:

Umar bin Abdul Aziz (Fifth Rightly Guided Caliph)

15 Khizr, Khalid Mahmood (Haafiz), *Why Beard?* (Lahore: Maktaba Markazi Anjuman Khuddam ul Qur'an, 1991)

Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (died. 505 A.H. / 1111 C.E.) has mentioned in his book *Ihya Uloom-ud-din* (Revival of the Islamic Sciences) that a man who used to shave his beard was brought as a witness to the court of Umar bin Abdul Aziz but Umar bin Abdul Aziz did not accept his testimony.¹⁶

Muhammad Ala-ud-din Haskafi

According to the great Hanafi scholar Muhammad Ala-ud-din Haskafi (died 1088 A.H.):

"It is prohibited for a man to cut his beard ... as for cutting it shorter than a fist-length --- as is done by some people from the west and by the effeminate men --- no one permits this. And as for shaving it completely, it is the doing of the Indian Jews and the Persian Magians." (The Durr-ul-Mukhtar)¹⁷

Imam Shaafi

Renowned Shaafi scholar Ahmed bin Qassim al-Abbadi (died 995 A.H.) states in the *Commentary on Tuhfa-ul-Muhtaj*:

“Sheikh Ibn Rif’aaah has stated in his *Hashiah al-Kaafiah* that Imam Shaafi has mentioned in his famous work *Kitab al-Umm* that to shave the beard is Haraam. The same has also been mentioned by al-Zarkashi and al-Haleemi in *Shu’ab al-Emaan* and

16 Ghazaali, Imam Abu Hamid, *Ihya Uloom ud Din* (Karachi: Darul Isha'at, n.d.). Vol. 1, pg. 144.

17 Haskafi, Muhammad Ala-ud-din, *The Durr-ul-Mukhtar* (New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1992)

al-Qaffal ash-Shaashi (al-Haleemi's teacher) in his *Mahaasin ash-Shaariah* about the prohibition of shaving the beard. And Sheikh al-Azra'i said that the true position is not to cut the beard unless there is a reason for it." ¹⁸

Sheikh Abu al-Hasan Maliki

Sheikh Abu al-Hasan Ali al-Maliki al-Shadhili (died in Cairo in 939 A.H.) who was a Maliki scholar writes in *Sharh ur-Risaalah*:

"Shaving the beard is prohibited, as is cutting it if it causes a (clear) mutilation. But if it becomes oversized, and it cutting it would not appear as a mutilation, then it may be cut; but that would be disliked and contrary to that which is better." ¹⁹

Haafiz Ibn Abd al-Barr

In *At-Tamheed*, which is the commentary of *Muwatta Imam Malik*, famous Maliki scholar and theologian Haafiz Ibn Abd al-Barr (died 1071 C.E.) writes:

"It is prohibited to shave the beard, and the only people

18 al-Sharwani & al-Abaadi (1996) *Hawashi al-Sharwani wa Ibn Qassim al-Abaadi ala Tuhfatul-Muhtaj fi Sharh al-Minhaaj*. Edited by Mohammad Abdul Aziz al-Khalidi. Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah. Vol. 9, pg. 375-377.

19 *Sharh ur-Risalah* by Abu al-Hasan and the commentary on it by al-Adwi (Vol. 2, pg. 411) quoted in: Al-Jibaly, Muhammad (1999) *The Beard Between the Salaf & Khalaf*. Arlington, Texas: Al-Kitaab & as-Sunnah Publishing.

who do it are the effeminate men." ²⁰

Imam Ibn Taymiyyah

The great revivalist and Islamic scholar Imam Ibn Taymiyyah (died 1328 C.E.) stated:

"It is prohibited to shave the beard." (Al-Ikhtiyaraat ul-Ilmiyyah) ²¹

Imam Ibn Hazm

The great Spanish Muslim theologian and Islamic scholar Imam Ibn Hazm (died 456 A.H. / 1064 C.E.), who even though disagreed with Islamic scholars in many issues, said:

وَاتَّفَقُوا (أَيَ الْأَئِمَّةِ) عَلَى أَنَّ حَلْقَ اللَّحْيَةِ مُثَلَّةٌ لِاتِّجْوُزٍ.

“They (the Muslim scholars) agreed that shaving of the beard is a form of mutilation, which is forbidden.”

(Maratab Al Ijmaa)²²

Shah Wali Ullah Dehlavi

The famous Islamic scholar and reformer of Indo-Pak subcontinent, Shah Wali Ullah (died 1762 C.E.) (who had been regarded as "the last great theologian of Islam" by

20 Ibn Abd al-Barr, Yusuf ibn 'Abd Allah, *al-Tamhid li-ma fi al-Muwatta' min al-ma'ani wa-al-asanid* (Rabat: Cambridge: Microreproduction Department, Harvard U. Library, 1977, 1967) Vol. 24, # 145

21 Al-Ikhtiyaraat ul-Ilmiyyah pg. 6: quoted in Al-Jibaly, Muhammad, *The Beard Between the Salaf & Khalaf* (Arlington, Texas: Al-Kitaab & as-Sunnah Publishing, 1999)

22 Ibn Hazm, Imam Ali (1402 A.H.) *Maratab Al Ijmaa* Beirut: Manshuraat Dar al-Afaaq al-Jadeedah. Pg. 182.

Allama Iqbal in his book *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*) writes about the beard in his book *Hujjat Ullah al-Baalighah* as follows:

"It is due to the beard that a distinction is made between adults and children. The beard is a beauty for men and its presence completes the personality of man. That is why, it is obligatory (in Islam) to grow the beard and to shave the beard is an act of Zoroastrians."

(Hujjat Ullah al-Baalighah)²³

Muhammad Al-Ameen Ash-Shanqeetee

The famous scholar of Islam and the commentator of Qur'an, Muhammad Al-Ameen Ash-Shanqeetee (died 1973 C.E.), in doing the tafseer (commentary) of the ayah of Qur'an, "*He (Prophet Harun) said (to Prophet Musa): O son of my mother! Seize (me) not by my beard, nor by my head. [20:94]*" stated that this verse is a Qur'anic proof that growing the beard is the tradition of the Prophets of Allah.²⁴

This tafseer of the verse by Imam Al-Shanqiti nullifies the claim of those people who pose the argument that the Qur'an is silent on the issue of beard. The truth is that the Qur'an mentions about the beard. In addition, even if we accept the argument that in Qur'an there is not direct commandment to grow the beard, we have to remember that the Qur'an presents only the general guidelines of the Islamic way of life. It is the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) which explains the injunctions of the

23 Waliyullah, Shah Muhaddis Dehlavi, *Hujjat Ullah al-Baalighah* (Karachi: Darul Isha'at, n.d.)

24 Ash-Shanqeetee, Muhammad Al-Ameen (1995) *'Awdaa-ul-Bayaan*. Daarul Fikr, Beirut. Vol. 4, pg. 506.

Qur'an in detail. The Qur'an commands us at various places that we have to obey Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him). Hence, when we follow the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), we are in fact following the commandments of Qur'an.

Physical Description of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)

It has been mentioned in numerous prophetic traditions that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had a beard and he was the most handsome of all the people:

Narrated Abu Ma'mar:

قلت لِحَبَّابٍ: أَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يقرأ فِي الظُّهْرِ وَالْعَصْرِ؟

قال: نعم. قلنا: من أين علمت؟ قال: باضطراب لحيته. (بخاري)

“I asked Khabbab bin Al-Art whether the Prophet used to recite the Qur'an in the Dhuhr and the 'Asr prayers. He replied in the affirmative. I said, 'How did you come to know that?' He replied, '**From the movement of his beard.**'” (Bukhari)²⁵

Narrated Anas bin Malik: “Once in the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him) the people were afflicted with drought (famine). While the Prophet was delivering the Khutba on a Friday, a Bedouin stood up and said, "O, Allah's Apostle! Our possessions are being destroyed and the children are hungry; Please invoke Allah (for rain)". So the Prophet raised his hands. At that time there was not a

25 *Sahih Bukharee*, Chapter on: Characteristics of Prayer, No. 746

trace of cloud in the sky. By Him in Whose Hands my soul is as soon as he lowered his hands, clouds gathered like mountains, and before he got down from the pulpit,

رَأَيْنَا الْمَطْرَ يَتَحَادَرُ عَلَى لِحْيَتِهِ

I saw the rain falling on the beard of the Prophet....” (Bukhari)²⁶

In addition to this, there are several other authentic traditions which clearly mention that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had a thick, long beard:

Jabir bin Samrah, a companion of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) while narrating the Prophet’s physical description said:

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ سَمْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ كَانَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.... كَثِيرَ شَعْرِ اللَّحْيَةِ (رواه مسلم)

“Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a person with a copious beard....” (Sahih Muslim)²⁷

In Sunan Nisai, Prophet’s companion al-Bara’ ibn Azib narrates:

عَنْ الْبَرَاءِ بْنِ عَازِبِ بْنِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ كَانَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.... كَثَّ اللَّحْيَةِ (رواه نسائي)

26 *Sahih Bukharae*, Chapter on: Friday Prayer, Number 1033

27 *Sahih Muslim with Commentary by an-Nawawi* Vol. 15, pp. 98-99.

“Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) was thick-bearded (*kathth al-lihya*)” (Sunan an-Nisai)²⁸

In Ahmad’s *Musnad*, Nafi‘ ibn Jubayr ibn Mut’am narrates from Ali bin Abi Talib:

عن نافع بن جبیر بن المطعم عن علی رضی الله تعالیٰ عنه كان
رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لا قصير ولا طويل، عظيم الرأس رجله،
عظيم اللحية، مشرباً حمرةً (مسند احمد)

“The Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) was neither short nor tall, he had a great head [of] wavy [hair] (‘*azeem al-ra’si rajilahu*), a great beard (‘*azeem al-lihya*), with a reddish complexion (*mushraban humratan*)....”²⁹

To sum up, Qadi Iyad in his famous book on the Seerah titled *Ash-Shifa* summarized the physical attributes of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as follows:

“He had the most radiant coloring, deep black eyes

28 An-Nisai, Abdur Rehman Ahmed bin Shuaib (1997) *Sunan an-Nisai* (Lahore: Maktabatul Ilm) Hadeeth no. 5232. This hadeeth has been graded as *saheeh* (authentic) by Sheikh al-Albani in his *Sahih An-Nisai*.

29 Ibn Hanbal, Ahmed, *al-Musnad* (1/116) All the narrators of this hadeeth of *al-Musnad* are the same narrators as those of Sahih Muslim, and hence, they are reliable except one narrator Salih ibn Sa’eed al-Mu’adhin who is unknown (*majhool al-haal*). However, the famous hadeeth scholar Imam Ibn Hibban has regarded Salih ibn Sa’eed as a trustworthy (*thaaqqah*) narrator. Moreover, great Yemeni contemporary hadeeth scholar Sheikh Ali bin Ahmed bin Hasan ar-Razihee has graded the chain of narration of his hadeeth as authentic (*saheeh*) in his book *al-Jaami fi Ahkam al-Lihya* (pp. 24, 25).

which were wide-set and had a sort of red tint to them, long eyelashes, a bright complexion, an aquiline nose, and a gap between his front teeth. His face was round with a wide brow and he had a thick beard which reached his chest...

Abu Hurayra said, 'I have not seen anything more beautiful than the Messenger of Allah. It was as if the sun was shining in his face.'

In her description, Umm Ma'bad said, 'From afar, he was the most beautiful of people, and close up he was the most handsome.' ”³⁰

Shaa'ri Length of the Beard

Hence, we have seen the authentic tradition of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) which indicate beyond any shadow of doubt that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had a thick beard which reached his chest. Now regarding the issue of the shaa'ri length of the beard, there are authentic reports from some of the companions (sahaabah) of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) which indicate that they used to cut the hair of their beards which exceeded beyond a fist-length. Similarly, there are reports from many of the scholars of early generations such as Ibrahim an-Nakhi, Malik, and Ahmad about trimming of the beard beyond fist-length.

It has been narrated in Sahih Bukhari that when Abdullah bin Umar went for Hajj or Umrah, he used to hold his beard with his fist and cut whatever extended beyond his fist:³¹

30 Qadi Iyad, Ibn Musa al-Yahsubi, *Muhammad Messenger of Allah (Ash-Shifa of Qadi Iyad)* (Scotland: Madinah Press Inverness, 1991)

31 *Sahih Bukharae* Chapter on: Book on Dress (*Kitabul Libaas*) Hadeeth no. 5892.

“وَكَانَ ابْنُ عُمَرَ إِذَا حَجَّ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ عَلَىٰ لِحْيَتِهِ فَمَا فَضَلَ أَخَذَهُ”

(صحيح بخاری)

In the commentary on this hadeeth, contemporary Islamic scholar Sheikh Muhammad Al-Jibaly says: "The general command of sparing the beard should be restricted to the understanding and practice of the sahabah (companions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him))." ³² However, if a Muslim has a beard less than a fist length, it must be in accordance with the *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

We must remember that to have a beard means to grow real facial hair. When we grow a beard, our facial skin should be covered with the hair of our beard. This means that *fashion beards* or *French-cut* or *goatee-style beards* or *Hollywood-actors-style beards* are merely a comfort to our guilty conscience and they are not religious beards. Such beards have nothing to do with Islam.

Today certain Imams of masjids (persons who lead prayers in mosques) heavily trim their beards or do not shave their beards for few days and think that they are fulfilling the *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). They may be following the *Sunnah* of Shaitaan but this is certainly NOT in accordance with the *Sunnah* of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). A beard should be like the beard of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and it should NOT look like five o'clock shadow (which appears on a person's face if he did not shave for a couple of days). Even if that Imam is leading the

32 Al-Jibaly, Muhammad, *The Beard Between the Salaf & Khalaf*

congregational prayers and reciting the Qur'an in the best possible voice but if he is heavily trimming his beard or has just five o'clock shadow on his face, despite his beautiful Quranic recitation, he is disobeying Allah and His Messenger Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through his actions. A person who shaves his beard or heavily trims his beard is committing a sin even if he is a "Sheikh Graduated from an Islamic University" or "haafiz" of the Qur'an, leading the prayers. The scientific evidence presented in this book will make it clear to the readers that those Imams of the mosques or certain sheikhs from some Islamic universities (not all of them) who shave their beards or have fashion beards and who are trying to copy their European and American masters in order to look like them (clean-shaven faces or French-cut beards) are in reality going backward, not forward. Modern social scientific evidences show us that the presence of a beard on man's face makes him appear more attractive, intellectual, honest and heroic both in the eyes of women as well as men.

Questions to ask those who have Doubts

Today in this age of materialism, when the practice of shaving the beard is so much predominant in this world, we may find some Muslim scholars who would give "fatwah" that growing the beard is not important in Islam. The interesting thing is that many of those so-called Muslim scholars themselves do not have beards. Scholars are supposed to be the 'hujjah' (proof) for people. Today, Muslims say "Sheikh" (or Imam) so and so does not have a beard. We can ask those Muslims that Rasul Allah (peace be upon him) had a beard. Is that not a good reason to grow one? But these people go the opposite way. These people try to self-delude themselves and human beings have

tremendous capability of self-delusion.

Another question that can be asked to those people and also the so-called Islamic scholars is that: "Why did Rasool Allah (peace be upon him) turned his face away from the beardless face Persian envoys whereas he never turned his face away even from Abdullah bin Ubi (chief of hypocrites in Madinah) or Abu Jahl (chief of pagans in Makkah)?"

Still another question that can be asked to the 'modernist' Muslims is the same question as was asked by Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal in the royal court of Abbasid khalifah Mu'tassim. The modernist Islamic scholars of the royal court of khalifah Mu'tassim were presenting all kinds of proofs in support of their "fatwaah" that Qur'an is the creation of Allah. Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal asked those modernist Islamic scholars of his time only one question which they had no answer for:

أَعْطُونِي شَيْئًا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ
أَوْ سُنَّتِ رَسُولِهِ حَتَّى أَقُولَ بِهِ

"Show me something from the book of Allah (Qur'an) or from the Sunnah (traditions) of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) so that I would accept your argument."³³

³³ Abu Zahra, Muhammad (1998). Hayaat Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal. (in Urdu) Faisalabad, Maktaba Kashmir.

Chapter 2

Scientific Research Pertaining to the Beard

(called "*facial hair*" in scientific terminology)

SIGNIFICANT SCIENTIFIC research has been done regarding the social and biological value of the beard. This includes research by social psychologists and biologists as well as intellectuals from other disciplines. There is no doubt that physical appearance of a person plays an important role in his/her interaction with other members of the society. Research has shown that facial features of a person may be regarded as a key determinant in impression

formation by the people.³⁴ This means that the impression formed of a person by other members of the society upon meeting him/her is heavily influenced by facial features of that person. This is important because people, living together in a society, deal with each other based on the impressions they form in their minds about each other. One of the most important aspects of facial features for men that may contribute to impression formation is the presence of facial hair (beard). Beard refers to the hair which grow on the face naturally (i.e. the sides of the face and the chin). The growth of the beard is an in-built natural feature among the human males, a feature which continues from their puberty until their death. Various research studies have been done which have focused on perception of men with facial hair. Some of those researches will be summarized in this chapter along with the biological and medical value of the beard under separate headings.

Presence of Beard Makes Men More Attractive to Women

The beard is a part of the male anatomy which beautifies, gives respectability and adorns the man. Dr. Daniel G. Freedman, at the University of Chicago (U.S.A.), did research on the survival value of the male beardedness.³⁵ To test his theory, Dr. Freedman and his graduate students asked a group of undergraduates about their feelings about beardedness by giving them questionnaires as well as

34 Berry, D.S. and McArthur, L.Z. (1986). "Perceiving character in faces: The impact of age-related craniofacial changes on social perception." *Psychological Bulletin* 100: 3-18.

35 Freedman, Daniel G. (1969). "The Survival Value of the Beard." *Psychology Today* 3: 36-39.

interviewing them. One of the graduate students further interviewed seven women about their feelings toward men with beard. The female students rated a bearded male face as more masculine, independent, sophisticated and mature as compared to a clean-shaven male face. They concluded from their studies that a beard increases "sexual magnetism" and attractiveness and makes the men more appealing to women. The presence of a beard makes a man appear more masculine to a woman, and she feels more feminine towards him. ³⁶

This research carried out by Dr. Freedman in the field of social psychology shows that the presence of beard on a man's face makes him sexually more attractive to women. This research falsifies the claim of those people who think that women do not like beard on the face of a man. This research also falsifies the idea of those parents who suppose on their own (without even asking their daughter about that subject) that their daughter will not like a husband who wears a beard. In fact, it is not their daughter but the Satan (devil) in their own commanding-self (*nafs ammaara*) which does not like the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Impression of a Man's Personality Based on the Presence or Absence of a Beard

In the area of psychology, one of the most prestigious journals is *Psychology*. In 1973 issue of *Psychology* (Volume 10, No.1), Robert J. Pellegrini, a psychologist

36 Ibid.

from the California State University (San Jose, U.S.A.), published the results of an experiment on the perception of male personality as a function of different states of beardedness.³⁷ To carry out the experiment, Pellegrini hired eight full-bearded young men (in the ages 22 to 25 years) who were willing to have their beards fully shaved off. All of those eight men were Caucasians. Each of the bearded participants was professionally photographed in each of the following states of beardedness:

- Full beard
- Goateed
- Moustached
- Clean-shaven

Upon the completion of the photographic sessions, there were a total of thirty-two photographs, i.e. four photos of each of the eight participants. In the experiment, those photographs were randomly distributed to subjects who were asked to rate their first impressions based on a number of personality traits. The subjects who evaluated the photos comprised of 64 male and 64 female introductory psychology students. Hence, two males and two females judged each photo.

The results of this study by Pellegrini indicated a generally positive correlation between the amount of hair on the person's face and his being perceived as masculine, good-looking, dominant, mature, courageous, liberal, non-conforming, older and self-confident. There results also suggested that men with full-beard are perceived as more

37 Pelligrini, Robert J. (1973). "Impressions of the Male Personality as a Function of Beardedness." *Psychology* 10: 29-33.

intelligent, strong, healthy and attractive.³⁸

In discussing the results of his experiment, Pellegrini wrote:

"Judging from the data in the present research, the male beard communicates an heroic image of independent, sturdy, and resourceful pioneer, ready, willing and able to do manly things."³⁹

Pellegrini summed up his discussion by stating:

"In conclusion, it may very well be true that inside every clean-shaven man there is a beard screaming to be let out. If so, the results of the present study provide a strong rationale for indulging that demand."⁴⁰

Hypothesis that a Bearded Man is Perceived Less Attractive than a Non-Bearded Man Proven Wrong

Charles T. Kenny and Dixie Fletcher from Memphis State University (U.S.A.) examined the hypothesis that a bearded man is perceived less favorably than a non-bearded man in the society.⁴¹ In their study design, they varied beardedness, sex and geographic information in the photographs. Half of the subjects were shown the picture of a bearded man on the screen and the other half were shown

38 Pelligrini, Robert J. (1973). "Impressions of the Male Personality as a Function of Beardedness." *Psychology* 10: 29-33.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Kenny, Charles T. and Fletcher, Dixie (1973). "Effects of Beardedness on Person Perception." *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 37: 413-414.

the picture of the same person clean-shaven. The subjects were asked to write their impressions of the stimulus person and to describe their feelings toward the picture on an adjective checklist. The results did not support the hypothesis and those results indicated that the bearded man was perceived more favorably than his non-bearded counterpart. The subjects described the bearded man as more enthusiastic, extroverted, sincere, generous, inquisitive, masculine and stronger.⁴²

Similarly, William E. Addison did a study in which 114 subjects (55 men, 59 women) participated and those subjects rated pictures of bearded and non-bearded men with respect to characteristics linked with masculinity.⁴³ The results showed that men with beard were rated much higher than clean-shaven men in terms of masculinity, aggressiveness, strength and dominance.

The research done by S. Mark Pancer (University of Saskatchewan, Canada) and James R. Meindl (University of Waterloo, Canada) about the length of hair and beardedness as determinants of personality impressions also showed that men with beards were regarded to have more impressive personalities than clean-shaven men.⁴⁴

All of these researches done by scientists, who are authorities in their fields, demonstrate that the presence of a beard on a person's face does not make him unattractive.

42 Ibid..

43 Addison, William E. (1989). "Beardedness as a Factor in Perceived Masculinity." *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 68: 921-922.

44 Pancer, S. Mark and Meindl, James R. (1978). "Length of Hair and Beardedness as Determinants of Personality Impressions." *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 46: 1328-1330.

Conversely, these studies indicate that the men who have beards on their faces are given more respect in the society. People have positive attitude towards bearded males. It is also interesting to note that in all of these researches, the judges are both men and women. This indicates that men having beards are liked by both women and men in the society.

Influence of Beard on the Perception of a Job Applicant by Persons Making the Hiring Decisions

J. Ann Reed (The University of Texas, U.S.A.) and Elizabeth M. Blunk (Southwest Texas State University, U.S.A.) examined the influence of facial hair on the perception of a job applicant by persons in business.⁴⁵ The subjects in this study were 150 males and 138 females in management positions who made hiring decisions at 177 companies in four major cities in Texas. The subjects judged ink sketches of six male job applicants each of which was drawn with three facial hair dimensions, i.e. clean shaven, moustached, or bearded. All men were dressed in business suits with an appearance considered appropriate in the corporate world. The sketches were assessed on semantic differential scales. The results of this study demonstrated more positive perceptions of social/physical attractiveness, personality, competency and composure for men with facial hair. The results showed a consistency in the ratings of the four dimensions in terms of

45 Reed, J. Ann and Blunk, Elizabeth M. (1990). "The Influence of Facial Hair on Impression Formation." *Social Behaviour and Personality* 18(1): 169-176.

men with facial hair being viewed as more favorably than clean-shaven men. Hence, this study suggests that facial hair may be a key component in the perception of professional image of a person.⁴⁶

This research shatters yet another myth about the beards. According to that myth, people (mostly Muslims suffering from inferiority complex) think that men who grow beards have hard time in finding jobs. In the study described above, the participating female and male judges were people from the management positions who had been involved in making the hiring decisions of job candidates at 177 companies in the real world. This research has proved that men who wear beards have greater chances of getting the jobs, not lesser, contrary to the belief of many people.

Beardedness in Advertising

The role of facial features in interpersonal perception is very important in the field of advertising. This is so because the purchase intentions of the consumers (buyers) are influenced by the endorsers' (models used in the advertisement) credibility. When consumers look at print ads or TV commercials, they tend to judge the trustworthiness of the source on the basis of marginal elements such as physical attributes and appearance of the model used in the advertisement (e.g. beard in the case of male-models).

A recent study in the *Journal of Marketing Communications* found that men with beards were deemed

46 Ibid.

more credible than those who were clean-shaven. The study was conducted by three Italian scientists Gianluigi Guido, Alessandro M. Peluso, and Valentina Moffa. The study was conducted on a sample of 426 voluntary university students (average age: between 18 to 27 years; 32% were males and 68% were females). The study showed participants pictures of men endorsing certain products. In some photos, the men were clean-shaven. In others, the same men had beards. The male and female participants or judges in this study thought the men with beards had greater expertise and were significantly more trustworthy when they were endorsing the *expertise-products* or *trustworthiness-products* like cell phones and toothpaste. While discussing the results of their study, the investigating scientists wrote:

“The results of this research, first of all, confirmed the crucial role of physical appearance and even of its secondary attributes like a beard in the perception and formation of interpersonal judgments.... The beard is a facial element that is *only apparently* marginal, due to its role in both interpersonal perception and inferential processes leading to the formation of an initial judgment about the interlocutor’s personality.”⁴⁷

The researchers of this study also argued that the implications of their findings could extend far beyond advertisements. For instance, male politicians might want to consider not shaving because the "presence of a beard on the face of candidates could boost their charisma,

47 Hellstrom, Ake and Tekle, Joseph (2010). "Person perception through facial photographs: effects of glasses, hair, and beard on judgements of occupation and personal qualities." *Journal of Marketing Communications* First published on: 09 April 2010 (iFirst).

reliability, and above all their expertise as perceived by voters, with positive effects on voting intention."⁴⁸

Effects of Having a Beard and Wearing Glasses on Judgments of Occupation and Personal Qualities

In one scientific study done by Ake Hellstrom and Joseph Tekle from Stockholm University (Stockholm, Sweden), the effects of glasses, cranial hair (hair on the head) and beard on judgments of occupation and personal qualities were evaluated.⁴⁹ In the study, thirty-two photographs of male faces, four for each combination based on the presence and absence of glasses, hair, and beard were rated by 75 judges (48 females, 27 males) who evaluated the typicality for 15 occupations as well as eight personal qualities. Characteristic profiles for the different scales were formed based on the effects of facial attributes on ratings. The pattern of correlations between facial attributes and factor scores from a factor analysis of the ratings was analyzed. The results indicated that the judges gave a positive evaluation of the depicted man having a beard and/or glasses. Hellstrom and Tekle summarized their results by stating that "the subjects regarded highly educated --- physicians, professors, pastors, psychologists, etc.--- and intelligent men as tending to wear glasses and a beard, but no hair [cranial hair]; the opposite kind of look [i.e. clean

48 Ibid.

49 Hellstrom, Ake and Tekle, Joseph (1994). "Person perception through facial photographs: effects of glasses, hair, and beard on judgements of occupation and personal qualities." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 24: 693-705.

shaven face and no glasses] was ascribed to factory workers, farmers, and salesmen." ⁵⁰ Furthermore, the judges associated having both hair (cranial) and beard with "the 'liberal' occupation of artist, as well as with being good-looking, masculine and congenial". ⁵¹

Again, this research in the field of social psychology reveals that people associate the men wearing beards with highly educated professions. In other words, men with beards are considered socially more successful in the society. Bearded men are perceived to have more successful careers as compared to the clean-shaven men in the society.

Beard Increases Our Own Feelings of Manhood

Douglas R. Wood from the University of Maine at Orono (U.S.A.) in his research studied the effects of wearing a beard upon the person's self-perceived masculinity. ⁵² The subjects of that research were 60 males, divided into three groups and they were tested individually. Twenty students wore an appropriately colored artificial beard (of the kind used in theaters and movies). The other group of 20 males wore black bandannas outlaw-style around the face. The third group was the control group whose faces (clean-shaven) were not changed in any way. Each student was asked to look into a mirror for 1 minute and then he had to complete the Bem Sex-role Inventory (questionnaire). The results of this study indicated that the group, which had put on a beard and looked in the mirror experienced an increase

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid.

52 Wood, Douglas R. (1986). "Self-Perceived Masculinity between Bearded and Nonbearded Males." *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 62: 769-770.

in self-perceived masculinity.⁵³ In other words, the beard is responsible for an increase in the feelings of manhood in bearded men. This may also suggest that the presence of a beard increases the feelings of strength and self-confidence in men. In other words, growing a beard can be one of the defining moments in a man's life.

Beard as a Secondary Sex Characteristic of Males

Beards serve as a male secondary sex characteristic. Secondary sex characteristics are those physical features, which develop when human beings reach the age of puberty. Primary sex characteristics are the genitals. On the other hand, the beard is a secondary sex characteristic in males. A beard is a type of hair called androgenic hair, which means that it appears as a result of the androgen hormones secreted by the body after puberty. Under the influence of the pituitary gland, androgens are secreted in the bodies of men are converted into testosterone. The purpose of secondary sex characteristics is to distinguish males from females. In addition, the secondary sex characteristics serve the purpose of attracting the opposite sex.

A comparative analysis of facial hair (beard) and cranial hair (hair on the head) shows that they are made up of different chemical content as it was shown by the research done by E. Tolgyesi et al in Maryland, U.S.A. ⁵⁴ In this

53 Ibid.

54 Tolgyesi, Eva, Cobble, D.W., Fang, F.S., et al. (1983). "A comparative study of beard and scalp hair." *J. Soc. Cosmet. Chem.* 34: 361-382.

study, the differences in shape, physical properties, chemical composition and reactivity between the facial hair and scalp hair were analyzed by using light microscope, electron microscope, tensile measurements and chemical reactivity. In this research, beard and scalp hair were taken from three ethnic groups, i.e. Chinese, Caucasian and Negro. The gist of the study of E. Tolgyesi et al is that the hair of the beard and the hair of the head are significantly different from each other in their form, physical properties, chemical composition and chemical reactivity.⁵⁵ This difference supports the idea that the hair of the beard (facial hair) have been created to serve different purpose than the hair of the head (cranial hair). This can be further understood by the fact that with the progression of age, men lose most of their cranial hair and become bald. However, the facial hair are not lost in men with increasing age because the facial hair are secondary sex characteristics. Hence, the beard is a natural inherent part of the biological characteristics of the male gender of the human beings and its purpose is to differentiate between the male and the female.

Interesting Relationship between Sexual Activity and Beard Growth in Men

A very interesting relationship between testosterone (male hormone), sexual activity and beard growth was published in the May 30, 1970 issue of *Nature* (a very prestigious and famous scientific journal). The author and subject of this research carried out a detailed study to measure the rate of

55 Ibid.

growth of his beard by shaving his beard everyday and weighing the hairs, which he collected in his electric shaver.⁵⁶ The author supplemented his article with scientific data in the form of charts and graphs. He concluded based on the results of his research that "the stimulus for increased beard growth is related to the resumption of sexual activity."⁵⁷ It was also shown in the research that as the weekend approached with the promise of spending free time with female companion, there was a great increase in the beard growth. The author further writes: "Even the presence of particular female company in the absence of intercourse, after a period of separation, usually caused an obvious increase in beard growth." ⁵⁸

Since the beard is a secondary sex characteristic, its growth is influenced by the levels of testosterone (male hormone) in the male body. The rate of production and the levels of testosterone in the body are affected by a man's sexual behavior. A more interesting thing is that it has been shown by research that whereas testosterone stimulates the growth of beard, it has almost no effect on the scalp hair (hair on the head).^{59,60} This further shows that the beard is, in fact, a secondary sex characteristic and our intelligent body does not grow the beard on our face to be removed with a razor every day.

56 Anonymous (1970). "Effects of Sexual Activity on Beard Growth in Man." *Nature* 226: 869-870.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid.

59 Thornton, M.J., Hamada, K., Laing, I., et al. (1991). "Metabolism of Testosterone by Cultured Dermal Papilla Cells from Human Beard, Pubic, and Scalp Hair Follicles." *Annals of the N.Y. Academy of Sciences* 642: 452-453.

60 Ibid.

Medical Benefits of the Beard

There are various medical benefits of growing the beard. A beard protects the face from harmful chemicals and pollutants in the air, which can cause cell damage, and increase wrinkling and bad skin. The presence of beard on a man's face keeps his face younger-looking. Keeping a beard protects our skin from the environmental pollution, keeps our skin naturally moisturized and reduces wrinkles, ageing, and bad skin. In addition, a beard covers the skin, which protects the sebaceous glands from being infected by *acne vulgaris* bacteria, thus preventing acne or pimples. Presence of beard also protects a man's face from cancer. Basal-cell carcinomas are the most common form of all cancers and four out of five cases of this form of cancer in men appear on the face, head, or neck. In this regard, a recent study conducted at the University of Southern Queensland has shown that beards block up to 95 percent of the sun's UV rays and, hence, beards play a major role in preventing this form of cancer among men.⁶¹

According to the research of the herbal doctors, growing the beard prevents a person from the diseases of the throat and the diseases of the gums.⁶² Similarly, some of the medical doctors of the Western medicine are also aware of the medical benefits of growing the beard. Physicians tell us

61 Fetters, K. Aleisa (June 20, 2013). "5 lesser-known benefits of having a beard."

<http://www.foxnews.com/health/2013/06/20/5-lesser-known-benefits-having-beard/#ixzz2XvedwMnK>

62 Ar-Raashidee, Badi-ud-Din Shah (Maulana), *The status of Beard in Islam* (Muzafar Abaad (Kashmir): Mu'askar Abdullah bin Mas'ud, n.d.)

that if we grow a beard, we are less likely to suffer throat diseases. Recently, a medical specialist from Harley Street, London, prescribed a treatment to a man who was suffering from chronic cough (cough for a long period of time).⁶³ When the patient acted upon the advice of doctor, his cough disappeared. Chronic coughs may have the major indication of asthma and, hence, they may get activated by the same factors as for asthma, which include sudden changes in temperature or exposure to cold air. In this case, a beard acts as a preventive measure of chronic coughs by keeping the neck warm.⁶⁴ Since hairs are imperfect conductors of both heat and cold, they are placed round the entrance of the nose and lungs. Consequently, beard hairs promote warmth in cold weather. Besides, just like the hair in our nostrils, the hair of the beard help trap pollutants. If those pollutants from air enter into our air without being caught, they can cause harm to our body. According to Dr. Clifford W. Bassett, medical director at the Allergy and Asthma Care of New York, the more hair a person has on his face, the more pollutants will be trapped by those hairs as long as a person washes his beard regularly and keeps his 'filter' clean.⁶⁵

A beard relieves the chill of the winter wind and keeps the faces warmer. In this regards, a young researcher took one step forward in order to prove that a beard keeps us warmer. To test this theory and to get the accurate information that whether we feel warmer with a beard or not, he shaved half

63 "Bad cough, sir? Here, growth this beard once a day." <http://www.keratin.com/ar/ar011.shtml>

64 Ibid.

65 Fetters, K. Aleisa (June 20, 2013). "5 lesser-known benefits of having a beard."

<http://www.foxnews.com/health/2013/06/20/5-lesser-known-benefits-having-beard/#ixzz2XvedwMNK>

of his beard, i.e. one half of his face (he had a full grown beard before this experiment).⁶⁶ He decided to shave the right half of his beard. The author concluded from his experiment that it feels warmer with a beard and also more comfortable. Conversely, he felt colder on the side of his face without the beard. Even though there would be need to do more research on this subject but the author of this research was nonetheless able to make his point.

The people who frequently travel by the sea are quite aware of the harmful effects of sea weather. The sea winds contain small quantities of salt. In addition to that, sometimes there are strong winds in oceans. That is the reason, in the past, most of the people who traveled by sea used to wear the beards in order to protect their faces from harmful effects of weather. It is interesting to note here that scientific research has shown that compared with the hair of the head (scalp hair), the hair of the beard have faster swelling rate and higher reaction rate with a variety of reagents due to the less extensive disulfide bonding in them.⁶⁷ This may suggest that the hair of the beard have more capacity of absorb harmful vapors in the air before they would affect the face.

The skin on a man's face can become delicate if they go against the nature. According to Dr. Shannon C. Trotter, a dermatologist at the Ohio State Wexner Medical Center, the sebaceous glands on our face secrete natural oil which keeps our facial skin moisturized. However, daily shaving destroys the hydrolipidic film on the face and rubs it off the

66 "Beard Research." <http://mudhead.uottawa.ca/~pete/beard.html>

67 Tolgyesi, Eva, Cobble, D.W., Fang, F.S., et al. (1983). "A comparative study of beard and scalp hair." *J. Soc. Cosmet. Chem.* 34: 361-382.

face, leading to redness, dryness and loss of natural lubrication.⁶⁸ In addition, daily shaving also causes scraping and nicks which can make men's skin sensitized. However, if men follow the laws of nature and let the hair on their face grow, they will not suffer from such problems.

Razor bumps (medical name: *Pseudofolliculitis Barbae*) is a disease, which is caused by shaving. In this disease, the curly hairs of the face penetrate the wall of the hair follicle before exiting the skin. This results in inflammation which raises the skin hence producing the bump. When people having this disease shave, those bumps are cut. The easiest solution to this disease is to stop shaving. When people suffering from razor bumps stop shaving and grow a beard, this disease disappears from their face. In fact, there is an organization in the United States with the name PFB Sufferers of America, Inc. The purpose of this organization is to make sure that people suffering from razor bumps are not forced to shave their beards and allowed to keep their beards at the companies and places where they work. All this discussion shows that in the beard there is **attraction** and **protection**.

Medically incorrect information about growing the beard

When a Muslim decides to grow his beard, sometimes

68 Fetters, K. Aleisa (June 20, 2013). "5 lesser-known benefits of having a beard."

<http://www.foxnews.com/health/2013/06/20/5-lesser-known-benefits-having-beard/#ixzz2XvedwMNK>

Shaitaan comes in the form of humans (e.g. parents or family members or friends) to that Muslim and starts to put obstacles in his ways. Some of the objections raised by people are already discussed in this chapter and have been shown to be wrong scientifically. There are some other myths about the beard as well. Some people say that, if we grow our beard, we feel itching on our face. This is only partially true. Some people feel itching on their faces when they grow their beards but that feeling of itching remains only for about two weeks. After two weeks, the itching due to the newly grown hair of the beard completely disappears. However, if someone feels itching in his beard for longer than a month then that could be a result of the neglect of proper cleaning and washing the beard with 'Wudu' (ablution) and 'Ghusl' (shower).

Another piece of information that is incorrect from a medical point of view is that if someone has scanty beard hair growth, they should shave their beard so that the beard hair (which would grow next time) will be heavy and dark. In order to make their beard hair thick, some Muslim youth start to shave their beard and then they become so much addicted to the habit of shaving that they keep on shaving their beards for the rest of their lives. It is important to mention that what those Muslim youth do to make their beard hair thicker is fruitless. The thickness or the density of the hair of beard is determined genetically. Dr. Herbert Mescon, professor and chairman of the department of dermatology, Boston University, told the American Medical Association as follows:

"There are a number of myths about shaving. It is not true, for example, that shaving makes whiskers [hair of

the beard] darker or coarser or grow faster." ⁶⁹

Total time wasted in shaving by a man in his whole lifetime

What is the total amount of time spent in shaving by a man in his whole lifetime? Dr. Herbert Mescon from Boston University did research to give an answer to this question. Dr. Mescon calculated that if a teenager begins shaving at the age of 15, then in his 55 or so years of shaving, he is likely to spend about 3350 hours (which are equivalent to about 139 full days) in this task in his lifetime. ⁷⁰ That is an incredible amount of time that literally goes down the drain. The only way we can prevent this time from going down the drain is by preventing ourselves to daily shave our beards. If we spend 10 hours in reading one Islamic book, we can finish reading 335 Islamic books in that time we save from wasting in the practice of shaving the beard. Beard hair grow naturally on men's faces. Then, why fight nature? In fact, why fight a losing battle? The total time spent in shaving our faces and fighting the nature is not simply worth it.

Conclusion

It is interesting to note that all these researches have been done by non-Muslims. All these scientific researches reveal that the presence of beard on a man's face helps him in

69 Snider, Arthur J. (April 1972). "On beards, no beards and other hairy problems." *Science Digest*: 51-52.

70 Ibid.

getting more positive ratings from the people (males and females) as compared to the man who is clean-shaven. In addition, wearing a beard tends to increase judgments of qualities that are usually attributed to men, such as masculinity, dominance, strength, self-confidence, etc. The presence of beard of men's face imparts an aura of erudition and nobility on people around them. Therefore, these scientific research studies are an eye-opener for those Muslim parents who refuse to give the hand of their daughters to a Muslim youth who has grown a beard, thinking that the presence of a beard makes the youth unattractive! Similarly, some young Muslim men are afraid to grow their beards because they fear that their wives or future-wives may dislike them in beard. Contrary to their whimsical ideas and figments of imagination, the modern research has shown that, in general, the presence of a beard makes a man more attractive to women. In the words of the University of Chicago (U.S.A.) researcher, Daniel G. Freedman:

"It appears, then, that beards make men more appealing [attractive] to women and perhaps help love to blossom. They give men more status in the eyes of other men..."⁷¹

71 Freedman, Daniel G. (1969). "The Survival Value of the Beard." *Psychology Today* 3: 36-39.

Chapter 3

Reasons for the Rise of Beardless Culture among Muslims

THE BEARDLESS CULTURE appeared among the Muslims along with the Western imperialism on the Muslim countries. Neil Postman, in his book *Conscientious Objections*, states:

"Every age has its own special forms of imperialism. And so does each conqueror. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the British mastered the art, their method of invasion was to send their navy, then their army, then their administrators, and finally their educational system."⁷²

This is a very profound observation by Neil Postman. It means that the Great Britain first sent its navy to colonize the countries (most of which were Muslim countries), then it sent its army which was followed by their administration. Once the British established their educational system in the colonized countries, they gave political freedom to those countries. The British knew it very well that, once they have

⁷² Postman, Neil, *Conscientious Objections: Stirring up Trouble about Language, Technology and Education* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992)

established their educational system in those Muslim countries, those educational institutions will produce such kind of people who will be Muslims only by their names but, intellectually, these people will be slaves of their European masters. That is precisely the reason why European colonial powers completely dismantled the prevailing Islamic educational system of that time in the Muslim countries after capturing those countries. The lame excuse presented by the European colonizers for destroying the classical Islamic educational system was that that educational system had become ineffective. The question to ask those colonizers is that if they were so sincere to the Muslims, then why did they colonize those Muslim countries in the first place? The western educational system imposed upon the enslaved Muslim countries gave a secular world-view instead of Quranic world-view to the Muslims who were indoctrinated in them. That secular educational system has Darwinian thought at its basis.

In reality, those European colonizers wanted to intellectually enslave the Muslim populace. The scholars of history know this fact very well that, of all the forms of slavery, the worst kind is the intellectual slavery. Hence, the colonization of the Muslims and the implementation of the secular educational system in Muslim countries in the nineteenth century marked the beginning of the loss of Muslim identity, i.e. beardless faces became common in the Muslim societies. There is a psychological reason behind it. Those Muslims had the desire to look like their conquerors. Albert Memmi, in his book *The Colonizer and The Colonized*, mentioned that the colonizer accuses the colonized of all kinds of negative traits (such as laziness, being timid, unpunctual, inferior) and this disturbs and even worries the colonized person "because he admires and fears

his powerful accuser".⁷³ In describing the psychological state of the colonized people, Albert Memmi further writes:

"The colonized does not seek merely to enrich himself with the colonizer's virtues. In the name of what he hopes to become, he sets his mind on impoverishing himself, tearing himself away from his true self. The crushing of the colonized is included among the colonizer's values. As soon as the colonized adopts those values, he similarly adopts his own condemnation. In order to free himself, at least so he believes, he agrees to destroy himself."⁷⁴

Hence, Albert Memmi states that the mentality of the colonized nation is humiliated by the colonizer to such an extent that the colonized people suffer from an inferiority complex. The educational system and the political system established by the colonizer serve to reinforce those ideas in the minds of the colonized. As a consequence, **the colonized people want to look like their conquerors** because they see power in their conquerors. In this case, the Muslims were the colonized people who **wanted to look like** their European conquerors.

Beard in Various Human Cultures: Its History

As it is mentioned in the hadeeth of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that growing a beard is the 'fitrah' or the inherent natural state of human beings (see Chap. 2),

73 Memmi, Albert, *The colonizer and the colonized* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991)

74 Ibid.

growing the beard was the practice of all human cultures throughout the history. In all the Eastern cultures including ancient Egypt, Turkey and India, the beard was considered a sign of wisdom, status and dignity.⁷⁵ Only slaves and jokers used to shave. To pull a man's beard was to invite death.⁷⁶ In ancient China it was a predominant belief that the beard signifies wisdom.⁷⁷ Similarly, in the Middle East, much attention was given to the beards. Beards were common in the Greek civilization until 4th century B.C., when Alexander the Great ordered and forced his soldiers to shave their beards. When the Romans came after the Greeks, they were the first ones to actually introduce the practice of regularly shaving the beard.⁷⁸ In Christianity, the religious tradition absorbed many of the ideas and practices of the Hellenistic, pagan Roman tradition under the influence of Emperor Constantine the Great as well as due to other historical factors. Hence, the Roman clergy were influenced by the Roman culture and, consequently, adopted the practice of shaving the beard. On the other hand, the Christian clergy of the East acted upon the actual teachings of the Bible and kept the beards.⁷⁹ The Eastern clergy resisted against the Roman practice of shaving the beard. It is for this reason that beards were once an issue of the Great Schism (1378-1417) between the Roman clergy and the Eastern clergy. However, the religion of Christianity had accepted so much of the Roman culture that modern day Europe is predominantly a beardless culture, both at the level of clergy as well as the public.

75 *The Columbia Encyclopedia* 2001 (web version) Sixth edition

76 Grosswirth, Marvin, *The Art of Growing a Beard* (New York: Jarrow Press, Inc., 1971)

77 *The Columbia Encyclopedia* 2001 (web version) Sixth edition

78 *Ibid.*

79 Grosswirth, Marvin, *The Art of Growing a Beard* (New York: Jarrow Press, Inc., 1971)

Consequently, Muslims have been affected by this culture, both at a conscious and unconscious level.

It is very interesting to note that the commandment of not changing the creation of Allah occurs in Surah Ar-Rum, which in translated into English as the chapter titled “The Romans” in which Allah says:

"Follow the state of 'Fitrah' on which Allah has created mankind. Do not change the creation of Allah. That is the straight religion, but most of men know not."

(Surah Ar-Rum [**The Romans**]: Ayah 30)

The reason for giving the commandment of not changing the creation of Allah (and shaving the beard is a form of changing the creation of Allah) in Surah “The Romans” is obvious since the Romans were the first ones to actually introduce the practice of shaving the beard. In the modern age, the practice of shaving the beard has been practiced and promoted by the inheritors of Romans, that is, the Europeans.

Alexander the Great was not the only one in power who ordered and forced his subordinates to shave their beards. Peter the Great of Russia imposed a tax on his people and anybody in his kingdom who wanted to grow his beard had to pay that tax. Moreover, he did not allow anyone in his royal court to wear a beard. In ancient Persia, the fire-worshipping Zoroastrian kings adopted the practice of shaving their beards. Consequently, the people of ancient Persia started to shave their beards to please their kings. In many of the states of the former Soviet Union, Muslims were not allowed to grow their beards. In Turkey, people are not allowed to wear a beard in many institutions even though the Turkish government claims that it is a secular

state, in imitation of its European masters. But the truth of the matter is that Turkey is an anti-religious state (or more precisely, anti-Islamic state) and not a secular state. In the European countries, Muslims have much more freedom to practice Islam.

Modern Christians are not interested in Prophet Jesus Christ with a beard

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in one of his traditions said that growing the beard was the practice of all of the prophets of Allah. This is true because every prophet sent from Allah was the spiritual leader of the nation to which he was sent. One of the qualities of a leader is his charismatic and attractive face. Prophet Jesus Christ (Esa peace be upon him) is one of the prophets of Allah. He also had a very charismatic personality. Marvin Grosswirth in his book *The Art of Growing a Beard* quotes from Christian Iconography by A.N. Didron that Publius Lentulus (who was the governor of Judea before Herod became its governor) sent a report to the Roman Senate in which he described the following:

"... At this time appeared a man who is still living and endowed with mighty power; his name is Jesus Christ ... the hair of his head is the colour of wine ... His beard is abundant, the same colour as the hair, and forked ..." ⁸⁰

Hence, one of the earliest historical records show that Prophet Jesus Christ (Esa) had a beard, in addition to the

80 Didron, A.N., *Christian Iconography* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1886) quoted in *The Art of Growing the Beard* (Grosswirth, Marvin)

fact that the Bible orders its followers to grow the beard. However, some of the modern day Christians are not satisfied with the paintings of Jesus Christ with a beard (Islam is against the paintings of any living thing, let alone the painting of a Prophet). Recently, it has been reported that *The National Catholic Reporter*, an American Roman Catholic newspaper, was launching a competition for artists all over the world to provide new images of Jesus Christ in any visual medium "to replace the Renaissance depictions which still dominate popular perceptions."⁸¹ Michael Farrell who is the editor of this weekly newspaper is emphasizing on his desire to find a new face of Jesus which best represents Jesus in the 21st century. Mr. Farrell stated that "he is not interested in bearded Jesus look-alikes, but rather 'an image of Christ consistent with our times' ".⁸²

This shows that the Christians, despite their claim of love for Jesus Christ, are not willing to act upon the teachings of such a mighty Prophet of Allah. This contrast in words and actions has reached to such an extent that some Christians have taken a step ahead and they want to present Jesus according to their own actions, that is, clean-shaven Jesus (May Allah guide everybody to the right path, Ameen!).

81 Delves, Philip (1999). Modern image of Christ sought for Millenium.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/et?ac=000271261842766&rtmo=fMwwqras&atmo=99999bJ9&pg=/et/99/8/19/wjes19.html>

82 Ibid.

Shaving Industry and Fashion Industry promote the 'Beardless-face' Culture through Advertisements and TV

The beardless-face culture is also promoted by the multibillion-dollar shaving products industry. These industries spend a bulk portion of their money on the research to invent better types of shaving products, which includes razor blades, shaving machines, shaving creams and gels, after-shave lotions, etc. The major companies in the world that produce shaving systems include Gillette Company, Warner-Lambert Company, and American Safety Razor Company, Inc. One of the major goals of these companies is to attract more people who would use their shaving products. Obviously, if men decide to grow their beards, this would not go in favor of those companies. These companies will go out of business. For this purpose, these companies spend millions of dollars on advertisement of their shaving products. For example, in the September 27, 1989 issue of the *Advertising Age* magazine, Gillette Company was ranked 59 in the 100 leading national advertisers in the U.S. in terms of spending money on advertisement of its products (the most important of which are blades and razors) in the year 1988.⁸³ According to the report, Gillette Co. spent \$160.5 million U.S. dollars on advertisement in 1988. This includes advertisement in the magazines, newspapers, network TV, Spot TV, Network Cable, Network radio, Spot radio, etc. As expected, the highest percentage of advertisement money was spent on TV commercials by Gillette Co. Moreover, according to the above report, Gillette boosted its total advertisement budget

83 The Staff (1989). "100 Leading National Advertisers." *Advertising Age* 60(42): 70-75.

for shaving systems 45.5% in 1989 to \$80 million U.S. dollars and another \$90 million U.S. dollars in promotional activities which included \$10 million U.S. dollars in advertisement expenses in 1989 for disposables. Similarly, immense amount of wealth is spent in advertisements by other shaving product companies. One of the purposes of advertisements promoting the shaving products is to "win back younger customers." ⁸⁴

Let us take the example of a typical TV commercial of shaving products. In the first scene of the commercial, they might show a young man shaving his beard and, in the next scene, they would show the same clean-shaven man enjoying the company of a beautiful woman. Such a TV commercial will leave the impression on the minds of its viewers that women love men with clean-shaven faces. Similarly, in print media advertisements such as in magazines or billboards, a shaving company may display a clean-shaven man hugging a young beautiful woman and right next to them will be found a shaving product such as a razor or shaving cream or an after-shave lotion. The readers of this book must have observed that, in the recent times, there has been an increase in the TV and print commercials depicting clean-shaven men with their muscular bodies. Such commercials imply that such a physique of males is a norm in our societies. The reality is that the man who has been depicted in the commercials may have been an idiot who spends 8 hours or more daily in body-building to build his muscles. He may have to be on hyper-nutrition and may be taking steroids so that he could get the job of a model in the advertisement industry. Doing a normal exercise daily is not a bad thing but to deceive the society through media is certainly not good act.

84 Ibid.

To sum up, the above-mentioned kind of advertisements are unnatural but owing to the seductive power of television, printed commercials and other forms of media, they have the potential of completely disfiguring the inherent nature ('Fitrah') of men and women who, after watching such TV commercials, start to think that the beard should be removed from a man's face. The TV commercials are so powerful that they have the ability to alter “the meaning of both consumership and religiosity”.⁸⁵ The problem is that the images are depicted on the television screen with such celerity and speed that each picture lasts for less than 1/8th of a second on the screen. American social critic Neil Postman writes in his book *The Disappearance of Childhood* that “watching television requires instantaneous pattern-recognition, not delayed analytic decoding. It requires perception, not conception.”⁸⁶ It means that due to the way the information is presented on the television, the viewers lose their analytical abilities and absorb whatever they see without questioning and analyzing its content. Hence, the people are mesmerized and hypnotized in front of television.

In addition to that, we have to understand that many of the people working in the advertising agencies have their Ph.D. degrees in the field of Psychology. These experts in the fields of advertisements have done deep studies on how to control the minds of people. Therefore, they know how to manipulate the minds of people through the media. Neil Postman in describing the influence of TV commercials writes:

85 Postman, Neil, *The Disappearance of Childhood* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994)

86 Ibid.

*“TV commercials do not use propositions to persuade; they use visual images, as for every other purpose. Such language as is employed is highly emotive and only rarely risks verifiable assertions. Therefore, commercials are not susceptible to logical analysis, are not refutable, and of course, do not require sophisticated adult judgment to assess. Ever since the graphic revolution, Commercial Man has been taken to be essentially irrational, not to be approached with argument or reasoned discourse.”*⁸⁷

We should bear this fact in mind that the predominant image of the “Commercial Man” shown in the commercials is the clean-shaven man. Hence, the inherent nature (‘Fitrah’) of the people is profoundly affected after watching commercials.

Similarly, majority of the actors in movie industry are clean-shaven. The film industry cameras depict those clean-shaven faces as the idols of show business. This profoundly affects and alters the perceptions of the viewers, especially when those clean-shaven actors are portrayed in movies as heroes and saviors of the world.

Another important industry that promotes the clean-shaven culture is the Fashion Industry. People in the fashion industry, most of who are homosexuals, try to blur the difference between males and females. By doing so, they might be expecting that their products will have a wider range of consumers. In addition, by blurring the difference between males and females, they want to spread their own ideology of homosexuality. It is clear that a beard is a big

87 Postman, Neil, *The Disappearance of Childhood* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994)

obstacle in the way of homosexuality because a beard is an apparent indication that men and women are different sexes. The reality is that men and women are different biologically as well as psychologically. Again, to achieve these goals, the fashion industry takes the support of advertisements through television and print media. As someone stated, "a picture is worth a thousand words", it appears that the fashion industry advertisements depicting clean-shaven men have the capability to deeply influence the perception of their viewers.

All these factors play a role in creating a society in which shaving is considered the normative practice. However, this is not the culture of Islam. The values of the Islamic society run contrary to the values of Western society. As the English poet, Rudyard Kipling, said in *The Ballad of East and West*:

OH, East is East and West is West, and never the twain
shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great
Judgment Seat.

It is important to understand that the culture of clean-shaven faces is the Western culture. Daniel G. Freedman noted that "an emphasis on shaving creates a culture that worships youth, neglects the elderly and places less importance on differences between the sexes."⁸⁸ It is interesting to note that all the aspects of "a culture with an emphasis on shaving" are in stark contrast to Islamic culture. In a real Islamic society, the one who deserves the most respect is the one who has the most 'Taqwa' (fear) of Allah. In an Islamic society, there is no worship of the youth. That is

88 Freedman, Daniel G. (1969). "The Survival Value of the Beard." *Psychology Today* 3: 36-39.

precisely the reason that when a woman gets older (and consequently less attractive sexually), she is given more respect in the Muslim society. In the Western culture, woman gets more attention from the society when she is at the peak of her youth and, hence, beauty. These days it is common in the Western culture to see twelve and thirteen year old girls displayed on the TV commercials as sexual commodities.⁸⁹ Similarly, Islam teaches us to give more respect and importance to the elderly as compared to the youth because of the wisdom and experience of the elderly people. In addition, in Islam there is no free intermingling of sexes. Men and women are considered different from each other. That does not mean that women are inferior to men. Islam believes more in the equality and freedom of women than any other religion or culture can even think of, no matter how much the Western media try to tarnish the image of Islam. It is because of the equality of men and women in Islam that 4 out of every 5 persons who accept Islam are women.⁹⁰

89 Postman, Neil, *The Disappearance of Childhood* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994)

⁹⁰ Berrington, Lucy. (Nov. 9, 1993). "The spread of a world creed" Times (London).

Chapter 4

Why Grow a Beard?

"If God had wanted you to have a hairless chin, He would have given you one."⁹¹ (Marvin Grosswirth)

"He that hath a beard is more than a youth, and he that hath no beard is less than a man."
(William Shakespeare - Much Ado About Nothing, act 2)

LOGICALLY SPEAKING, the question to ask the people is 'why not grow a beard?' The growth of the beard on a man's face is a natural state. It is those people who shave their faces that need to explain the reason why are they shaving their beard. The doctor does not ask his patients for the reason why are they healthy. He asks his patients for the reason of their disease, not their health. Similarly, when a tree bears fruits, no one asks the reason. It is only when the tree is not producing the fruits that we ask the reason. Growth of hair on men's face is natural and there is no reason to fight the inevitable growth of hair. In this age, since the 'fitrah' (inherent nature) state of many people has been disfigured due to the overwhelming effects of various factors (see Chapter 3), people think that the practice of growing the beard is an exception. In regard to that, an American, Dr. Charles Homer, gave a very interesting remark about the attitude of people who consider shaving as a norm:

91 Grosswirth, Marvin, *The Art of Growing a Beard* (New York: Jarrow Press, Inc., 1971)

"A correspondent has asked me to invent some sort of electronically operated needle to reduce the time wasted daily on shaving. I do not understand why people dread and tremble at the thought of having a beard. People grow hair on their heads, so why do they regard it as incorrect, defective and unacceptable to have hair on their face. When the hair fails to grow on the head then that baldness is regarded as a defect, and a cause of shame. Every effort is made to hide it. Yet, it is surprising that a man will daily remove the hair from his face; depriving himself from that which is the most evident sign of manhood, without a bit of shame."

92

These remarks by Dr. Homer are very profound. There has been immense amount of capital invested in the research to cure male baldness of the head. Presently, in the U.S.A., one of the ways doctors try to cure the male baldness is by surgically implanting the hair on the head. It has been shown in the previous chapter that the hair of the head and the hair of beard are different in every respect. In addition, the hair of the beard are about four times as thick as the hair on our head. Based on all these facts, it is very strange, as Dr. Homer has pointed out, that people grow hair on their head and consider it normal but they consider it odd to grow their facial hair.

The beard is a distinctive aspect of the Muslim culture which distinguishes it from other nations. Even non-Muslim intellectuals accept this fact. Marvin Grosswirth, in describing the history of the beard, writes:

92 Kandahlawi, Zakariyah The Beard of a Muslim and its Importance, Muhammad Desai (transferred to Web).
<http://www.islam.tc/beard/beard6.html>

"To this day, the beard carries great distinction among Muslims." ⁹³

The beard is such a distinguishing feature of Muslims that one of the prophecies in the religious books of Hindus about the coming of Prophet Muhammad states that the prophesized Prophet and his followers (sahaabah or companions) will have a beard and their purification will be done through Jihad. "Bhavishya Puran" comprise of the 3,500 years old religious books of the Hindus and they consist of 18 volumes. In "Bhavishya Puran", it is written:

"A malicha (foreigner) will come.... His followers will be men circumcised, without a tail (on the head), **keeping the beard**, creating a revolution announcing the Azaan (the Muslim call for prayer and also Muslims make takbeer (Allahu Akbar) during Jihad) and will be eating all lawful things. They will eat all sorts of animals except swine. They will not seek purification from the holy shrubs, but will be purified through warfare (Jihad). On account of their fighting the irreligious nations, they will be known as Musalmaans."

(Bhavishya Puran, Pratisarag Parv III, Khand 3, Adhay 3, Slokas 10 - 27)

Commandment of growing the beard in Jewish & Christian Religious Books

Shaving the beard has been prohibited in the Jewish as well as Christian scriptures. In Bible, in the book of Leviticus, it is written:

93 Grosswirth, Marvin, *The Art of Growing a Beard* (New York: Jarrow Press, Inc., 1971)

"They shall not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh."

(Leviticus 21:5)

Similarly, in Talmud, it is mentioned:

"The glory of a face is its beard." *(The Talmud)*

Jews act upon the commandment of their religion and many of them grow the beards. They are not ashamed of following their religion (unlike many Muslims who are ashamed of following their religion by growing their beards). They hold prestigious positions in many professions in the U.S.A. and European countries.

Among the Christians, most of them do not grow their beards despite the commandment in Bible, probably because of their emotional association with the Roman civilization. It has been discussed before that the Romans used to shave their beards. However, there is a group among Christians that is worth mentioning here. These are the Amish people.

Adherence of the Amish people to the commandment of Growing the beard in the Bible

The Amish people strictly follow the injunction of the Bible against shaving. They are expected to let their beards grow when they marry. The origin of the Amish sect can be traced back to Switzerland when, in 1690, Jacob Ammann led the

breakaway because of his disagreements over church discipline. Ammann and his followers migrated to the U.S.A. in 1728 and founded settlements throughout Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Today the Amish communities can be found in twenty-three states of the U.S. and also in Canada and Mexico.⁹⁴ Marshall A. Dussinger in his book *Amish Country: Land of Buggies, Beards, Barns, Bridges, Bonnets, and Barefeet* states that most of the Amish are farmers because farming is the main occupation in their religious doctrines, but they have other trades as well. However, they do not use modern machinery. If a visitor happens to go there, he will find that the Amish people are very friendly and peace loving. They are the epitome of the pacifists. It could probably be due to the fact that the Amish people do not use modern machinery and they stay away from the modern materialist industrial culture.

The visitor to an Amish community will be amazed to see that all married Amish men have beards. The Amish men do not seem to suffer from any kind of inferiority complex in terms of growing their beards. The Amish people do not watch television. They are also against the photographs. Hence, they have saved the integrity of their religious values and their communal identity from the onslaughts of media which include television industry, advertisement industry, film industry, etc. Their youth are as much devoted to the teachings of the Bible as their elderly.

94 Dussinger, Marshall A., *Amish Country: Land of Buggies, Beards, Barns, Bridges, Bonnets, and Barefeet* (Lancaster: Stel-Mar, 1976)

Significance of growing the beard in Sikh religious scriptures

Sikh people have been commanded in their religious teachings not to cut hair from any part of their body. Today majority of the Sikh people wear the beards in obedience of their religious teachings and they are proud of their religious traditions. This is the sign of a living nation. Many of the Muslims, on the other hand, are ashamed of following their religious injunctions and do not grow their beards. That is the sign of a dead nation. Sikh people have reached the highest posts in the Indian government because of their hard work. The Indian government looks at the hard work of bearded Sikh people, not at their beards.

Increasing trend of growing the beard among Japanese men

There has been recently an increasing trend of growing the beard among the Japanese men.⁹⁵ Majority of those men are in their teens and twenties (which is quite remarkable because in the Western or Roman culture to grow a beard in teenage is considered an awkward act). Six prominent factors have been accounted for the increasing trend of growing the beard among Japanese men which are given as follows:

1. This trend shows the increasing desire among Japanese men to display their individuality. Hence, by growing a

95 (1997). "Bearded Communications." *From The Hill* 3(3).
http://www.athill.com/english/English/no5/5_hill4.html

beard, Japanese try to show that they are different from each other.

2. This trend shows the desire of Japanese men to demonstrate that they are men.
3. Many Japanese men consider "beards as one form of fashion statement". They can color their beard. They can shape it according to the way they want it.
4. For some Japanese men and women, the beard has become "a source of feelings and memories". For example, a 56-year old Japanese woman recalled: "When I see a beard, I recall the time my father returned from the war. He had a beard and I remember touching it." ⁹⁶
5. In this age when the whole world is connected, Japanese observe that there are men in other countries who have beards and those men are working at different capacities in different kinds of jobs. This acts as a source of inspiration for Japanese men to grow their beards.
6. At the places of work and at schools, there has been a relaxation in rules and regulations in Japan. Therefore, many white collared workers and even students of high school grow their beards.

The beard can correct facial flaws of a person

The beard has a tremendous capability of correcting facial flaws. It also significantly enhances facial features of a person. For example, a man who has a weak, receding chin can improve his physiognomic (facial) features by growing a beard. Similarly, the presence of any mark of a wound on

96 Ibid.

the face can be diminished with the presence of a beard. A person with a prominent and well-defined jaw-line can enhance his facial features by growing a beard.

Insights of a converted Muslim regarding the growing of beard

Syed Abul A'la Maudoodi in his book *Rasaail-o-Masaa'il* narrated the story of a converted Muslim who had accepted Islam after thoroughly studying about Islam.⁹⁷ That person started to grow his beard right after he accepted Islam. One of the by-birth Muslims who thought that he had enough knowledge of Islam (which is, by the way, mentality of many modern Muslims today) asked that converted Muslim: "Growing the beard is not the most important commandment in Islam. Then why did you stop shaving your beard?" The converted Muslim replied: "I do not know the differentiation between important and not important. I only know one thing which is that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has commanded us to grow our beards. The subordinate has to obey each and every order of his higher authority. The subordinate has no right to say which order of his higher authority is important and which is not important."

In fact, that new Muslim who is mentioned in the above mentioned story was able to understand the message of Qur'an which most by-birth Muslims do not seem to understand. That message is that we have to follow Islam holistically, not partially. Qur'an tells us to enter into Islam

97 Maudoodi, Syed Abul A'la, *Rasaail-o-Masaail* (Lahore: Islamic Publications Pvt. Ltd., 1992)

completely. We have not authority to regard some commandments of Islam as important and some as unimportant. In Qur'an, Allah says:

يَتَّيِبُهَا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَدْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَافَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا
خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٠٨﴾

“O you who believe! Enter into Islam completely, and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Verily, he is to you a clear enemy.”

(Surah Al-Baqarah; Ayah 208)

Concept of Deviance & Norm in society - Islam vs. Modern Sociology

Today, we commonly see that many Muslims not only have no regard for the Sunnah of growing the beard but also we see many Muslims (which includes Muslim parents) who forbid other Muslims from observing the Sunnah of growing the beard. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) due to his deep prophetic vision has described, in one of his traditions, this phenomenon of the change of the criteria of evil and good. There is a hadeeth narrated by Abu Umama al-Baahili and part of that long hadeeth is given as follows:

قَالَ كَيْفَ أَنْتُمْ إِذَا لَمْ تَأْمُرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلَمْ تَنْهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ؟ قَالُوا وَكَأَيُّنَ ذَلِكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ نَعَمْ وَاللَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ وَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ سَيِّئُونَ، قَالُوا: وَمَا أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ كَيْفَ أَنْتُمْ إِذَا رَأَيْتُمُ الْمَعْرُوفَ مُنْكَرًا وَرَأَيْتُمُ الْمُنْكَرَ مَعْرُوفًا؟ قَالُوا وَكَأَيُّنَ ذَلِكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ نَعَمْ، وَاللَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ وَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ سَيِّئُونَ، قَالُوا: وَمَا أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ كَيْفَ أَنْتُمْ إِذَا أَمَرْتُمُ بِالْمُنْكَرِ وَنَهَيْتُمُ عَنِ الْمَعْرُوفِ؟ قَالُوا وَكَأَيُّنَ ذَلِكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ نَعَمْ، وَاللَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ وَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ سَيِّئُونَ، يَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: بِي حَلَفْتُ، لَا تَيَحَنَّ لَهُمْ فِتْنَةً، يَصِيرُ الْحَلِيمُ فِيهِمْ حَيْرَانًا .

(عن ابى أمامة الباهلى، رواه ابن ابى الدنيا و ابويعلى

وغيرهما)

[Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said to his companions: “How will you be when you will not enjoin the good and forbid the evil (in the society)?

The companions asked him: “Will that happen, O Prophet of Allah?”

He (peace be upon him) said: “Yes! By Allah in whose Hand my soul is! Even worse than that will follow.”

They asked him: “What could be worse than that?”

He (peace be upon him) replied: “How will you be when you will see the good as the evil and evil as the good (in the society)?

The companions asked him: “Will that happen, O Prophet of Allah?”

He (peace be upon him) said to them: “Yes! By Allah in whose Hand my soul is! Even worse than that will follow.”

They asked him: “What could be worse than that?”

He (peace be upon him) replied: “What will happen to you when you will enjoin the evil and forbid the good (in the society)?

The companions asked him: “Will that happen, O Prophet of Allah?”

He (peace be upon him) said to them: “Yes! By Allah in whose Hand my soul is! Even worse than that will follow. Allah will say: You have sworn by Me. I will give those people a tribulation (‘fitnah’ or test) and even the one who has patience will become confused in it.”]

(Narrate*d by Abu Umamah in Kinz ul Ummaal*)⁹⁸

There is a deep sociological understanding of human societies presented in this hadeeth. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was quite aware of the fact that in human societies that do not follow the divine revelation, the criterion of deviance and norm is relative. Deviation in sociology does not mean the same as it means in the Qur’an. According to Sociology, actions that offend ‘conventional’ norms are deviant. Similarly, norms are the normal ways of behaving in society. However, the criteria of deviance (wrong) and norm (right) are relative according to sociology. When the good is prevailing in the society, it is considered norm and in that case evil is considered deviant. But when evil becomes the predominant practice in the society then, evil is considered norm in the society and good

98 Ali Muttaqi, Sheikh al-Hindi. (1401 A.H.) Kinz ul Ummaal fi Sunan al-Aqwaal wal Af’aal. Beirut, Mu’assisa ar-Risala. Vol. 3, pg. 688, Hadeeth # 8468. This hadeeth has also been narrated by Ibn Abi Dunya al-Baghdadi (died 281 A.H.) in his “*Kitab Amr bil Ma’ruf wa nahee anil munkar*” and Abu Ya’laa al-Mawsili (d. 307 A.H. / 918 C.E.), in his “*Musnad Abu Ya’laa*” with a chain of narration which has some weakness in it.

becomes deviant. According to the Qur'an, the reason Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) was chased out of his city was because he was pure. The nation of Prophet Lot was so sick spiritually that impurity (homosexuality in that case) became the norm among those people and purity became deviance to them. On the other hand, Qur'an and Sunnah present the absolute standards of right and wrong. In this tradition, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was telling his companions that a time would come when the actual criterion of good and evil in society will turn upside down. The hearts of Muslims will become accustomed to the evils of society. So the acts of righteousness will be considered a deviance. That is happening in the Muslim societies today because Muslims have turned their backs towards the absolute criterion of right and wrong given to them in Qur'an. Hence, the moral decadence of Muslims has reached to such an extent that, when a youth begins to grow his beard, many Muslim parents consider it as an act of deviance. Those parents do exactly what had been prophesized in the tradition of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), which is "to forbid the good and command the evil". The result is obvious. Today Muslims are in a state of tribulation and living in an age of confusion.

Perhaps it would be appropriate here to refute the claim of some modernist Muslims who say that the reason Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) kept his beard was because it was an Arab custom in those days to grow the beard. Since shaving is a normative practice these days, we have to follow the custom of this age. We have to bear in mind that there were several customs, which were prevalent among the Arabs at the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). For example, the Arabs used to bury their daughters alive, perform the *tawaaf* (circumambulation)

around the Kaabah completely naked, braid their beards, drink blood of animals, gamble and drink alcohol. However, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) did not accept any of those practices and, instead, commanded his followers to forsake those practices. Similarly, he commanded his companions to grow their beards and trim their moustaches on various occasions. For example, one occasion, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said to his companions:

"Be different from the Mushrikin (those who attribute partners with Allah); trim your moustaches and save your beards."

(Narrated by Ibn Umar in Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim)^{99,100}

Growing a beard does NOT prevent a Muslim from solving the important problems faced by the Muslim nation today

Some Muslims argue that in this age and time we are living in today, the Muslim ummah (nation) is facing much important problems than the problem of shaving the beard. Therefore, we should spend our time in solving more important problems. But we have to remember that if a Muslim grows a beard, the beard does not prevent that Muslim from solving the problems of other Muslims. No time is wasted in growing a beard. In fact, the real time is wasted during shaving. As we know that an average person who starts to shave at an age of 15 spends about 3,350 hours

99 Bukharee, Imam Abu Abdullah Mohammad bin Ismael, *Sahih Bukharee* (Lahore: Khalid Ihsan Publishers, 1981)

100 Muslim, Imam Ibn al-Hajjaj al-Qushaaree, *Sahih Muslim* (Lahore: Khalid Ihsan Publishers, 1981)

in shaving during his total lifetime. Thus, if a Muslim grows a beard, he can save those 3,350 hours of shaving and, instead, spend those 3,350 hours in solving the problems, which the Muslim ummah is facing today.

Chapter 5

Interesting Stories and Historical Facts Related to the Beard

IF WE LOOK AT the style of Qur'an, one of the ways in which the Qur'an presents its message is through narration of real stories. One of the reasons is that a story can convey a message in such a simple form that may be hard to convey in the form of dry exposition. Another reason is that a story is a part of history. The Qur'an tells us to learn from the history and learn from the stories of others. In Qur'an, Allah (the Most Exalted One) says:

فَأَقْصِبْ أَلْقَصَبَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧٦﴾

"So relate the stories, perhaps they may reflect."
(Surah Al-A'raf, ayah 176)

Human beings by their nature like to listen to stories in which meanings emerge. Hence, in this chapter, some interesting real stories as well as historical facts are mentioned related to the beard to further clarify and accentuate the points made in this book.

Personal Story

When I started to grow my beard, a Christian lady, who happened to be my colleague at the university, said to me as a joke: "Do you want to become like Ayatullah (Khomeini)?" I replied to her with a smile: "No, actually I want to become like Jesus Christ. That is why, I have grown a beard." When she heard this reply, she was dumb-stuck. She could not say anything further.

Shaitaan (devil) deceives (does the ‘talbees’) the human beings in very subtle ways. During my undergraduate education, Shaitaan deceived me by telling me that the beard can become an ‘obstacle’ between me and other Muslims in the path of *da’wah* (preaching) of Islam and I could present them the message of Islam in a more effective way when I give the Friday khutbaahs with clean-shaven face. Therefore, for a period of time I did not grow my beard and kept of giving the Friday khutbaahs with a clean-shaven face. However, in a couple of years I realized that that was just devil’s deception (‘talbees iblees’). Therefore, I decided to grow my beard and continued to give Friday khutbaahs as usual. I was surprised to find out that my khutbaahs became more effective on the Muslim students after I grew my beard as compared to before I had grown my beard. I realized that not growing my beard before was actually an obstacle between me and my beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Repentance (Tawbah) of Mirza Qateel

Sheikh Zakariyah Kandahlawi narrated the story of Mirza Qateel in his book *The Beard of a Muslim and its*

Importance. Mirza Qateel was a famous Sufi of his time. Because of his fame, a Persian man became impressed with him and undertook a special journey to meet Mirza Qateel. When the Persian man reached Mirza, he saw that Mirza was shaving his beard. The Persian was shocked to see this and asked him: "Aghaa! (Sir), Are you shaving your beard?" Upon hearing this, Mirza Qateel replied: "Yes. I am shaving my own hair of the face but I am not shaving anyone's heart". By saying this, Mirza Qateel was alluding to the Sufi concept that you could do to yourself what pleases you, but you must not hurt the hearts of the creations of Allah. The Persian man said to Mirza with a sad tone: *"You are definitely shaving the heart of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). How can you say that you are not hurting the heart of any person; you are surely piercing the heart of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)."*

When Mirza Qateel heard the words of the Persian man, he went into a trance and dropped unconscious. When the Mirza regained his senses, he repented to Allah for his mistake of shaving his beard and said to the man: "May Allah reward you. You have opened my eyes."¹⁰¹

George Bernard Shaw did not fall into the trap of a razor-manufacturing company

George Bernard Shaw used to wear a beard. Once the manufacturer of a famous electric razor company contacted Shaw by mail. In their letter they wrote to Shaw, they

101 Kandahlawi, Zakariyah "The Beard of a Muslim and its Importance", Muhammad Desai (transferred to Web). <http://www.islam.tc/beard/beard6.html>

mentioned that they had heard the rumors that George Bernard Shaw was soon going to shave his beard. The manufacturers of the electric razor company further wrote that they would be very happy if Shaw would choose one of their razors to shave his beard. For this purpose, they sent the latest model of their electric razor as a free gift to Shaw. In his reply letter to the company, Shaw wrote the following:

"I am returning your razor, as I have no intention of using it, or of removing my beard. I am keeping it for the reason that I grew it. I grew it for the same reason that my father grew his. I have a clear recollection of asking him that question, and of his reply. I was about five at the time, and I was standing at my father's knee whilst he was shaving. I said to him, 'Daddy, why do you shave?' He looked at me in silence for a full minute, before throwing his razor out the window, saying, 'Why the hell do I?' He never did [shaving] again."¹⁰²

Russian Empress Catherine the Great admired men with beards

Catherine the Great was the daughter-in-law of Peter the Great of Russia. Peter the Great was himself clean-shaven. In 1705, he made a law according to which he imposed a tax on his people who wanted to grow their beards. Moreover, he did not allow anyone in his royal court to wear a beard. Some of the Russians left Russia because they did not want to shave their beards. Later on, Catherine the Great became the empress of Russia. She was a very

102 Grosswirth, Marvin, *The Art of Growing a Beard* (New York: Jarrow Press, Inc., 1971)

intelligent woman and a great admirer of masculine things. In 1765, she cancelled the law against growing the beards that was previously enacted by her father-in-law.

This incident is a great example for those people who think that women do not like the beards of males. Here, in this case, we can see that it was a man (Peter the Great) who made a law against growing the beard just because he was himself clean-shaven. However, Catherine the Great was a woman who was the sole ruler of a huge country and she had all the authority in her hands. Since Catherine the Great appreciated men with beards, she gave permission to all the men in her kingdom to grow their beards.

Material Greed Resulted in a Person's Disobeying Allah and Losing his Worldly Gain

Justice Taqi Usmani in his book *Islaahi Khutbaat* narrates the story of a Muslim man who had a beard and who was looking for a job in a Muslim country.¹⁰³ Finally, he got an interview call from a company. During his interview by the hiring manager of the company (his future boss), the boss told him: "I can offer you the job but I have one requirement. You have to shave off your beard. You have a couple of days to make the decision." The man went home. He spent the whole day to make the decision and it was a hard decision for him to make because he was wearing the beard to follow Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Human brain has tremendous capability to rationalize.

103 Taqi Usmani, Justice Mufti Mohammad, *Islaahi Khutbat* (Karachi: Memon Islamic Publishers, 1993)

Human beings can easily self-delude themselves. That is why, humans are called self-delusional creatures. Material greed helped that man to rationalize that, after all, getting a job was more important and he could follow Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in other ways. He thought that not following Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in one Sunnah will not make much of a difference. Therefore, he decided to shave off his beard so that he could get the job.

The next day, the man reached the office and met his future boss. The man told the boss: "I have shaved off my beard. Can I get the job now?" The boss replied: "I was testing you. You have failed the test. If you could disobey Allah so easily, you will definitely disobey your boss at your job. If a person is not sincere to his Supreme Boss (Allah), how can that person be sincere to his boss in this world. Therefore, I cannot offer you the job. Sorry!!!" Hence, that Muslim man not only disobeyed Allah but also lost his worldly gain.

A Pakistani Cricket Player and his Beard

The name of Saeed Anwar cannot be forgotten in the history of Pakistan's cricket team (cricket is a game which is somewhat similar to baseball) as one of the most prolific run-getters. Saeed Anwar surprised the cricket world in 2001 when "he turned up with a long, thick beard in a sport dominated by men who are clean-shaven."¹⁰⁴ Saeed Anwar, a computer engineer by profession, used to be a materialist player until September 2001 when his daughter, Bisma, died which changed the whole outlook on Saeed's life. He

104 Khan, Sameem (16 January 2003). "Saeed Anwar: 'It is all from Allah'." *Arab News*. www.arabnews.com

realized the temporary nature of this world. In an interview, Saeed Anwar said the following when he was asked about the initial reaction of cricket players when he went to the cricket ground with a beard:

“People were very surprised to see me. But I was numb with pain because only recently, I had lost my daughter Bisma. I did not like anything. I felt very empty but I was surprised by people’s reaction. They came up to me and started asking me about the beard, about who I was. Also, I was respected more than ever before. Australian cricketers are famous for their rudeness and bad language. On a tour last June, the fast bowler Glenn McGrath collided with me. Normally he would hurl some abuse at me but instead he put his arms around my shoulders, and said, ‘It’s my fault, I’m sorry.’ The beard has had a strange spiritual effect on me, which I cannot describe. When you wear a sweater it gives you warmth inside. Also, my beard has affected the people around me. They never utter a filthy word in my presence. So my five senses are protected from exposure to bad things.”¹⁰⁵

Logic Used by Imam Faraahi to convince Sheikh Islaahi about the Importance of Beard in Islam

Once Imam Hameed-ud-din Faraahi was trying to convince his student, Sheikh Ameen Ahsan Islaahi about the importance of beard in Islam. Sheikh Islaahi was arguing that the beard does not hold pivotal position in Islam. Imam Faraahi explained to him the meanings of the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) related to

105 Ibid.

growing the beard. When Imam Faraahi felt that Sheikh Islaahi was still not convinced, Imam Faraahi said to him: "Let's suppose that the beard does not hold important position in Islam. But can you deny the fact that this small thing informs you of big things." Upon hearing this, Sheikh Islaahi asked: "How?" Imam Faraahi replied:

"Just as throwing a pinch of ashes in air tells us about the direction of such a huge thing as wind, similarly, based on the presence or absence of the beard on a Muslim's face, we can be informed whether that Muslim has inclination of his mind towards Islam or not."

When Sheikh Islaahi heard this reply, he was convinced and he became silent. He wrote afterwards:

"As far as a Muslim is concerned, the beard serves as a barometer for the preferences and predilection of his heart for Islam. Based on that there is no doubt that the beard holds very important position in Islam and it deserves that position."¹⁰⁶

Reflections of an American Muslim about his beard

Dr. Shahid Athar, an American Muslim, in narrating the story of his beard writes that twenty years ago when he came back to the U.S.A., he was surprised to observe that many non-Muslims here (including musicians, hippies, even intellectual professors) had beards.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, he

106 Sheikh Ameen Ahsan Islaahi *Biography of Imam Faraahi* quoted in Faraahi, Hameed-ud-din, *Majmooa Tafaaseer Faraahi* (Lahore: Faraan Foundation, 1991)

107 Athar, Shahid, M.D. *The Story of My Beard*.

<http://www.kuwaitonline.com/islam/story/tsomb.htm>

decided to grow his beard but later shaved his beard. When one of his old patients saw him, he said to Dr. Athar: “Doc! You look naked without your beard.” Dr. Athar writes that he did feel naked. Finally, Dr. Athar decided to grow back his beard as a result of a question, which he asked himself:

“How do I want to look when I am being laid to rest in the coffin.”?¹⁰⁸ Dr. Athar writes: “I looked at my former picture and the mirror and the answer was obvious. I am fully clothed now!”¹⁰⁹

A Yong Girl wrote a Letter to Lincoln persuading him to grow his Beard

Today when we think of Abraham Lincoln, all of a sudden an image of Lincoln appears wearing a beard. However, for many years, Lincoln did not grow his beard. Members of his own political party suggested to him to grow his beard because they were afraid of his gangly appearance. However, a young girl convinced Lincoln to grow his beard. The name of that young eleven years old girl was Grace Bedell. She was from Westfield, a village in New York State. Grace admired Lincoln but when her father brought home the picture of Lincoln during the election campaign in 1860, she was frightened to see the grotesque, clean-shaven appearance of Lincoln with a crooked jaw line. Since she was worried about the look of Lincoln, she wrote him the following letter that inspired Lincoln to grow his beard:

“I hope you won’t think me bold to write to such a great man as you are but want you should be President of the United States very much. I have got 4 brothers and part of them will vote for you any way [since they

108 Ibid.

109 Ibid.

were Republicans], and if you will let your whiskers [beard] grow I will try to get the rest of them to vote for you. You would look a great deal better for your face is so thin. All the ladies like whiskers and they would tease their husbands to vote for you and then you would be President.”¹¹⁰

Lincoln replied back to Grace and thanked for the suggestion but stated that it may be regarded as unwise since he never grew his beard before. But Lincoln acted upon the advice of Grace Bedell and a few weeks after he won the elections, he began to grow his beard. The next February when he went on a trip from Illinois to Washington for his inauguration, he stopped by at the village of Westfield in New York. When Lincoln came out of his train and addressed the cheering crowd and told them that a young girl from this town had sent him an inspiring letter. Lincoln further said:

“She asked me to let my whiskers [beard] grow, as it would improve my personal appearance. Acting upon her suggestion, I have done so. And now, if she is here, I would like to see her.”¹¹¹

After saying these, Lincoln stepped down from the train and went to the crowd where Grace was standing and thanked her for the advice she had given him to grow his beard. The bearded image of Lincoln proved important in the years to come when there was a bloody civil war. The Americans regarded their leader not as a rough, beardless leader but as a bearded statesman they called “Father Abraham”.

110 Holzer, Harold (1989). "Why Lincoln Grew a Beard." *Cobblestone* 10(1): 14-15.

111 Ibid.

Chapter 6

Concluding Remarks

IT BECOMES CLEAR from the information presented in this book that growing the beard is the natural way (way of 'Fitrah' or inherent nature) for men and the act of shaving the beard is an artificial way adopted by people due to the influence of non-Islamic ideologies. The disappearance of the beard from Muslim faces is not just a disease but it is one of the symptoms of a big disease, i.e. the inferiority complex in the hearts of Muslims because of their detachment from Qur'an and Sunnah. We will see this kind of inferiority complex in every walk of the life of Muslims. Today those Muslims, who claim to be modernists and try to present 'modern' Islam apologetically to the non-Muslims, have to reconsider their assumptions. They have to stop looking at the world through colonized eyes. Muslims have their own great history. Muslims have their own unique identity that should not be lost to please others. We as Muslims need to have a communal identity. It means that we need to have an identity of our community. Every great nation that is proud of its existence has a communal identity. The sign of the communal identity for Muslims is the beard for men and "hijab" (veil) for women. In fact, the beard can be viewed as a man's hijab. Both Muslim men and women are commanded in Islam to dress modestly. The hijab is given to women and the beard to men.

Furthermore, to follow the Sunnah of having the beard is a

very interesting one because either a Muslim obeys and follows this Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) 24 hours a day or he disobeys Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) 24 hours a day. Shaitaan has the victory right in the morning on those Muslims who start their day with disobeying Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) by shaving their faces. What can we expect from ourselves in terms of following Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) when we have already lost the first battle against Shaitaan in the morning? But this condition is not hopeless. Insha Allah, the door of repentance to Allah is still open. We can repent to Allah and start following Allah and His messenger (peace be upon him) holistically.

Another point that needs to be emphasized here is that, in addition to growing our beards, we must also engage in the purification of our inward self, i.e. purification of our hearts. We need to have intellectual as well as spiritual attachment to Islam. One of the major reasons that we see beardless faces amongst the Muslims today is because of the lack of spiritual aspect of Islam. However, if we think that first we will purify our heart from the diseases of the heart and after that we would grow the beard, then this, in itself, is a disease of the heart and a trap from Shaitaan (devil). We cannot have a pure heart, which contains two contradictory things at the same time, i.e. love of Allah and disobedience of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Above all, we should grow our beards to follow Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who is the best of the creations of Allah and remember what Allah has said in Qur'an:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ

Say (O Muhammad to mankind): "If you (really)

love Allah then follow me, Allah will love you."(Surah Al-'Imran; 3:31)

In addition, we have to remember that if we are not following the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to grow our beard because of the fear that people will blame us for this act then, we have to remember that Allah does not need us but we need to please Him. Allah can bring other people who will act upon the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and will not fear the blame of the blamers as Allah says in Surah Al-Maidah:

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَن يَرْتَدَّ مِنكُم مِّن دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ
يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٌ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ
فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن
يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

“O you who believe! Whoever from among you turns back from his religion, then Allah will bring a people, He shall love them and they shall love Him, lowly before the believers, mighty against the unbelievers, they shall strive hard in Allah's way and shall not fear the blame of any blamer; this is Allah's grace, He gives it to whom He pleases, and Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing.”

(Surah Al-Maidah: 54)

Appendix

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