

# Praises the Modest Attire Worn by Muslim Women

By Abdul Basit Naem

The latest in "European" (white) feminine fashions is the "Look-Again" look. If you look (or "look again") at some of the recent magazine and newspaper ads featuring women's wear—dress, undergarments and bathing attire—you will agree that a more apt term for the newest trend in female fashions in this country is "nudity."

In fact, even garments made of almost completely transparent or thin, gauze-like fabrics that "reveal considerably more than they conceal" do not seem to satisfy the "tremendous natural urge in young American beauties to display their physical loveliness." That is indeed why such little furor was raised when, about a year ago, the "topless bathing suit" was introduced. Only last week a score of young women were arrested in San Francisco who were sporting this novel outfit. When surprised by the police they were not sunning themselves at the beach but working in the city's nightclubs as performers of a dance called "The Swim."

While the new—or "Nude"—look in women's fashions may be attributed to the fertile (and I daresay, filthy) minds of European and American designers, I cannot say that only the Caucasian (white) women seem to have succumbed to the temptation of adopting it. I have been told, for instance, that there are at least two Afro-American "social" organizations—both located in New York City—which had recently sponsored "fashion extravaganzas" where several "top Negro mannequins" were reportedly employed to model the "newest in topless swimsuits." (It goes without saying that many more affairs of this nature have probably been held in other parts of the United States—reflecting, in turn, the Afro-American woman's enthusiasm for the "Look-Again" styles.)

essential features of a Muslim woman's clothes.

Why does the revered Messenger advocate "such extreme modesty" in dress?

The answer to this question does not necessarily lie in the notion, though it bears an element of validity, that that an "immodest-appearing woman is an immoral woman." The Muslim leader's verdict on this issue is based, instead, on his strong belief that a "black or Muslim woman knows that she is, by nature, infinitely more beautiful than any female member of the devil (white) race . . ." In other words, a Muslim woman feels "perfectly secure" in this knowledge and does not need to "reveal her incomparable charms and solicit compliments" from those around her in order to "reassure herself" of her unexcelled good looks.

#### Muhammad's Philosophy

This same Nature-endowed beauty of the black woman is why the Honorable Elijah Muhammad advises and urges his female followers—our sisters in Islam—to shun the use of all chemically-prepared cosmetics and other "false" beauty aids.

"You are so beautiful just the way you are and the way our All-Wise God (ALLAH) has made you," says the Muslim leader, "that to use artificial make-up on your face or other parts of your body would mean you are dissatisfied with your Maker, as well as being foolish and extravagant."

It is, of course, understood that the Honorable Elijah Muhammad's concept of true black beauty includes a genuine appreciation of the "innate righteousness of a Muslim woman."

Thus, a Muslim woman is respected, loved and cherished by the male members of her family and immediate household. As a matter of fact, she is so highly regarded and held in such high esteem by her (Muslim) husband, father, brother or son that he would "instantly" lay down his very life to protect her honor.

It may not be out-of-place to mention here an incident which I had actually witnessed one late afternoon a few months ago in Harlem (in New York): A well-intoxicated "lost-found" so-called "Negro" standing on the corner of 118th Street and Lenox Ave. was loudly cursing, swearing and making "passes" at every wom-



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an—young or not-so-young—who walked by. Presently, along came a Muslim woman (recognized readily by all Harlemites today on account of the particular "Arabian or Oriental costume" worn by the women followers of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad) who was on her way to attend a class at Mosque No. 7. The "drunkard Christian" attempted to follow her. Then, all at once, two black men, who happened to be standing nearby, reached out and grabbed the "lost-found" by his arm and pulled him over to their side. "What ya tryin' to do, git yer head bashed?" one of the two men asked him. "Didn't ya know that was one of them Muhammad people's women? You just don't touch one of their kind, man!"

#### 'Gods of World Fashion'

My personal opinion is that, were it not for the rather strict legal bars in many states against "indecent exposure," thousands upon thousands more U.S. women would gladly oblige the gods and goddesses of Fashion's World and carry out their wicked whims.

Compare this, now, with the Muslim women's attitude towards their personal attire: Not a trace of immodesty here!

Under instructions of their wise leader and teacher, Honorable Elijah Muhammad, female members of the "Nation of Islam in North America" have adopted a garb—both for formal and informal wear—that calls for a complete departure from the "beast's" fashion edicts. High neckline, full sleeves, long, ankle-deep hemline and a plain kerchief as headdress comprise the

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