

A Comparative Study of the Concept and Interrelations of Modesty (Hayā), Chastity (Iffah), and Protective Jealousy (Ghayrat) in Islamic Jurisprudence and Ethics

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Abstracts

Abstract

Despite the extensive discussions found in lexicons, jurisprudence, and ethical literature regarding the meanings of the three terms *hayā* (modesty/shame), *ʿafāf* (chastity/self-restraint), and *ghayrah* (protective jealousy), little attention has been paid to the relationship, boundaries, and mutual interactions among these concepts. Considerable ambiguities remain in this regard. Given the central role of these three notions in Islamic sexual ethics, clarifying their interrelations can contribute to a more precise articulation of the principles of Islamic sexual morality and provide more effective strategies for addressing many moral disorders. Accordingly, this study, employing a descriptive-analytical method and a comparative approach, seeks to delineate the conceptual boundaries and interrelations of *hayā*, *ʿafāf*, and *ghayrah* within jurisprudence, ethics, and Islamic texts. The findings indicate that *hayā* (modesty or shame) is an inner disposition that arises from the sense of being observed by others - whether divine or human - and the fear of their reproach. *ʿAfāf* (chastity) constitutes its external and practical manifestation. In other words, *hayā* functions as the inner driving force that guides an individual toward *ʿafāf*. *Ghayrah* (protective jealousy), in turn, operates as a safeguarding force that preserves both *hayā* and *ʿafāf*. These concepts are thus intimately interconnected and interwoven.

Keywords

Islamic Jurisprudence, Ethics, Sexual Ethics, Modesty, Chastity, Protective Jealousy, Sexual Abstinence.

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