

Muslim Culture & the Style of Hijab

It is quite probable that these so-called experts of Islam and of the Middle East have confused the basic order of the Qur'an with the style of *hijab* worn by Muslim women of various ethnic backgrounds.

The requirement of *hijab* is a Qur'anic command. The basic requirement is that a Muslim woman should cover her head and bosom with a *khimar* (a head covering), and her body with a *jilbab* (a loose over-garment). Of course, she can leave her face and hands open. ¹

When it comes to the style, colour, and material of the *khimar* and *jilbab*, each Muslim ethnic group can follow the Qur'anic injunction according to their own cultural background. The variety in styles of implementing the same Qur'anic law is so because Islam is a world religion, it is cannot be confined to one region or tribe or culture.

Therefore you see that the Muslim women in Arabia use *'abaya*; the Persian Muslim women use *chador*; the Afghani Muslim women use *burqa*; the Indo-Pakistani Muslim women use *niqab* or *pardah*; the Malaysian/Indonesian Muslim women use *kerudung*; the East African Muslim women use *buibui*; and now in the West, the Canadian Muslim women use mainstream clothes worn with a bigger scarf over the head and a loose outfit.

Islam is not concerned with the style as long as it fulfills the basic requirement of *khimar* and *jilbab*. This is where the religion and culture interact with one another, and therein lies the dynamic aspect of the Islamic *shari'a*; and this interaction might have confused some of the so-called experts of Islam who erroneously believe that *hijab* is a cultural tradition and not a religious requirement.

1. Putting a veil to cover the face is not the initial requirement of the rules of hijab. The Shi'i as well as majority of Sunni jurists say that the face should be covered only if there is a danger of fitna, a situation that could lead to committing a sin.

<https://www.al-islam.org/hijab-muslim-womens-dress-islamic-or-cultural-sayyid-muhammad-rizvi/muslim-culture-style-hijab>