

Chapter 1 : The Veil and a New Muslim Identity | Facing History and Ourselves

Fadela Amara believes that for many, the veil is a marker of identity, but she says that others wear the veil to express their militancy and to show support for Islamic extremism. In her writings she suggests that it is also a sign of male dominance over women—a symbol of a society that does not respect the equality of women.

Their priorities are more basic, like feeding their children, becoming literate and living free from violence. Headlines in the mainstream media have reduced Muslim female identity to an article of clothing--"the veil. The use of the term borders on the absurd: Perhaps next will come "What Color is Your Veil? In some cultures, it refers to a face-covering known as niqab; in others, to a simple head scarf, known as hijab. Other manifestations of "the veil" include all-encompassing outer garments like the ankle-length abaya from the Persian Gulf states, the chador in Iran or the burka in Afghanistan. Like the differences in our clothing from one region to another, Muslim women are diverse. Stereotypical assumptions about Muslim women are as inaccurate as the assumption that all American women are personified by the bikini-clad cast of "Baywatch. In Qatar, women make up the majority of graduate-school students. The Iranian parliament has more women members than the U. Throughout the world, many Muslim women are educated and professionally trained; they participate in public debates, are often catalysts for reform and champions for their own rights. At the same time, there is no denying that in many Muslim countries, dress has been used as a tool to wield power over women. As an expression of their opposition to his repressive regime, women who supported the Islamic Revolution marched in the street clothed in chadors. Many of them did not expect to have this "dress code" institutionalized by those who led the revolution and then took power in the new government. In Turkey, the secular regime considers the head scarf a symbol of extremist elements that want to overthrow the government. Accordingly, women who wear any type of head-covering are banned from public office, government jobs and academia, including graduate school. Turkish women who believe the head-covering is a religious obligation are unfairly forced to give up public life or opportunities for higher education and career advancement. Dress should not bar Muslim women from exercising their Islam-guaranteed rights, like the right to be educated, to earn a living and to move about safely in society. Unfortunately, some governments impose a strict dress code along with other restrictions, like limiting education for women, to appear "authentically Islamic. Nevertheless, these associations lead to the general perception that "behind the veil" lurk other, more insidious examples of the repression of women, and that wearing the veil somehow causes the social ills that plague Muslim women around the world. Many Muslim men and women alike are subjugated by despotic, dictatorial regimes. Their lot in life is worsened by extreme poverty and illiteracy, two conditions that are not caused by Islam but are sometimes exploited in the name of religion. Helping Muslim women overcome their misery is a major task. The reconstruction of Muslim Afghanistan will be a test case for the Afghan people and for the international community dedicated to making Afghan society work for everyone. To some, Islam is the root cause of the problems faced by women in Afghanistan. But what is truly at fault is a misguided, narrow interpretation of Islam designed to serve a rigid patriarchal system. Traditional Muslim populations will be more receptive to change that is based on Islamic principles of justice, as expressed in the Koran, than they will be to change that abandons religion altogether or confines it to private life. Given the opportunity, Muslim women, like women everywhere, will become educated, pursue careers, strive to do what is best for their families and contribute positively according to their abilities. How they dress is irrelevant. It should be obvious that the critical element Muslim women need is freedom, especially the freedom to make choices that enable them to be independent agents of positive change. Choosing to dress modestly, including wearing a head scarf, should be as respected as choosing not to cover. Accusations that modestly dressed Muslim women are caving in to male-dominated understandings of Islam neglect the reality that most Muslim women who cover by choice do so out of subservience to God, not to any human being. The worth of a woman--any woman--should not be determined by the length of her skirt, but by the dedication, knowledge and skills she brings to the task at hand. Suite Los Angeles, CA

Chapter 2 : Women > Veiling > History of the Hijab - Arabs in America

The veil is also a principal marker of Muslim identity, but in this context Islam is less open to local variation and hence appears more fundamental. The role of religious institutions.

Volume 26 - Issue But not the issues the veil has raised, especially in Europe, the U. Its fatwa on the veil may be dismissed. But not the issue the veil has raised; especially in Europe, the United States and indeed in South Asia. But it has crept back as a wave of religiosity prompted many to embrace a more distinctively Muslim look. Is the veil, then, a symbol of identity or a protection of modesty? The reason he gave is noteworthy: This is not enough. The crucial question remains to be answered. Precisely what does the Quran say on this subject? She has interviewed women widely and done careful research. In this context, any Muslim woman who takes cheap shots at Islam and crudely indicts Muslim cultures is perceived as speaking the truth and is elevated to stardom. Neither is known for learning. The soft-secularist or, if you prefer, the soft Sanghi shares the approach. The author was born to a Muslim family in a predominantly Muslim country, Algeria, and is proud of her heritage. Relevant to all; She decided to write these letters to women whose religion is Islam and who either have taken up the veil or are thinking or wearing it. However, writing about women necessarily means writing about men. But perhaps such individuals need to resolve the apparently unimportant issue of veiling before they can defend themselves more effectively. These letters are also relevant to all people, women and men, seeking to understand the human experience. I have reached a point in my life when I can no longer keep quiet about an issue, the veil, that has in recent years been so politicised that it threatens to shape and distort the identity of young women and girls throughout the Muslim world as well as in Europe and North America. Turkey reinforced a long-standing prohibition against veiling in public educational institutions and compels faculty members to report and expel from their classes female students wearing headscarves. The attempt was overturned by the Turkish High Court as unconstitutional. The veil has become politicised. Shunning extremist positions, her letters are an invitation to reflection based on the Quranic texts: Nevertheless, at present, four words are commonly used to refer to major styles of veiling: It comprises a headscarf wrapped in more or less intricate ways covering the neck but not the face, atop a long skirt, long baggy pants, or combination of both. The reason he gave: And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And turn unto Allah together, O believers, in order that ye may succeed. Marnia Lazreg cites are important: The author poses questions few dare to ask and demands answers. She must bear the body she was born with, just as a convict must bear the ball and chain. Concealment of the body is thus a form of punishment as well as an apology for having been born female, when it is not a means of redemption. But if they avoid this, it would be better for them. God is all hearing and all knowing. But commentators do not quite agree on its precise meaning. Al Azhar University acknowledged that poor women are not under the obligation to wear the veil or refrain from work outside the home. Many a woman took to the veil to escape sexual harassment, which is the subject of an entire chapter. Often, advocates of veiling ground their view that it protects women in the following sura: They will thus be recognised and no harm will come to them. God is forgiving and kind. They are based on Islamic teachings, as well as the history of Muslims. The veil rose and fell depending on local political circumstances. The current revival of the veil, often in a style imported from Egypt a headscarf and long overcoat coincided with a failed development policy, a civil war that pitted the government against a radical and splintered Islamist movement, and the emergence of an intraregional movement of cultural identity inflicted by geopolitical events. What goes on in Baghdad and Cairo, Washington, D. In the history of domination, resistance, and protest in Middle Eastern societies, the veil has been an enduring symbol and fertile ground for dramatising political ideologies. It carried no heretical connotation or penalty. Going out without it is not a prohibition, as usury or drinking alcohol is. However, even the most liberal among them fell short of declaring the veil a non-religious practice in its essence. Advocates as well as opponents of the veil cite the West in support of these views, albeit for opposing reasons. Similarly, the veil is no protection from sexual harassment. In reality, it may even stimulate more harassment as a number of men are not sure that a woman is not wearing a veil because she is seeking greater freedom

from her family rather than out of religious conviction. Besides, men themselves may be ambivalent about the religious status of the veil; they may not see it as an impediment to making sexual advance to a woman or even committing rape. For example, a veiled Saudi woman was raped as she was sitting in a car with a former boyfriend. The veil for this woman signifies the appropriation of a sign that has been so politicised as to mean the rejection of French society. To the use of French culture as a weapon with which she was bludgeoned, this woman uses an equally powerful cultural weapon to defend herself. By the same token, she finds comfort in acknowledging and assuming her Islamic heritage, which she may have repressed for the sake of assimilation into the dominant value system of her society. She revels in her new visibility as a wearer of a reviled custom. A woman veiling herself in New York also makes a statement about the positivity of her culture in a social climate strained by the Iraq and Afghan wars. Women face a political as well as intellectual challenge. They have to fight the recent trends as well as the perversions of centuries past. For it, too, needs to confront the power nexus that sustains the repetition of the history of the veil. No one is entitled to turn the veil into a political flag, and no one should derive satisfaction from its removal except women themselves.

Chapter 3 : An Identity Reduced to a Burka - latimes

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Please contact mpub-help umich. I spoke my name in religion. He asked me for my family name as well. I spoke it out loud without shame because In such an encounter, When I want to renounce it for Him, Is like speaking the name of God. This essay analyzes both the symbolic and material aspects of this moment in which identity is transformed. Taking the veil is a rite of passage whose every aspect, including both gesture and speech, has been carefully formalized. The traditional ceremony has origins dating back to the beginning of monastic institutions, but it assumed its present form during the Counter Reformation. Vatican II sought to return religious life to the simplicity of early monasticism, but the Tridentine ceremony of taking the veil remains in use in some communities. Using the methods of historical anthropology, this essay analyzes a set of practices that have existed since the fifteenth century by bringing together archival material and ethnographic interviews with nuns who have undergone this process of identity transformation. Private collections have also contributed to this analysis. The drama of the veil After a probationary period of a few months during which both the postulant and the monastic community assess her vocation, the assembly of nuns decides whether or not to receive her. If the vote is favorable, the community sets a date for the ceremony. The highly scripted ritual seeks both to represent and to affirm the cohesion of the group, whose very existence is guaranteed by the unchanging nature of its practices. After her last visit to the world outside the convent, she returns to the community and dedicates her last days as a laywoman to meditating on her spiritual future. At the same time, the convent begins its preparations: She consults with the bursar and cook about the meal following the ceremony. Josette, a sister of Saint-Joseph, recounted her own experience of the ceremony: She recalled, My aunt helped me because at first it was complicated. I went down to the room where my mother was waiting for me. She looked at me without saying anything and pointed at the mirror. I went to it, and when I saw myself all in black I broke down in tears and then I went back up to my room. On the day for offering the veil. During the Old Regime individual ceremonies seem to have been most common; thus, in the convent of Notre Dame de Carentan in Normandy received five postulants in separate ceremonies between July and December. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, collective reception was more common, probably because of the large numbers of vocations. Families also take part in the celebration. Josette, for example, remembers her father escorting her to the altar to take the veil in August at Villecomtal, a village near Rodez: They began with the joyous trappings of a wedding, as in May when "Anne Le Roux. On the day of her profession, every Hautefort was in the church, because she was close kin. Mademoiselle de Guignes carried her candle and acted as godmother, and the comte de Hautefort was her escort. She looked lovely; she started out in the outside chapel kneeling on a prie-dieu and wearing a dress of white crepe embroidered in silver and covered in diamonds. After the sermon the comte de Hautefort took her hand and led her to the gate of the cloister. As soon as she had gone through, the gate shut with a bang and they shot the bolts noisily, because they never miss this last little touch. She was more dead than alive when she went in. The Sisters of Saint Elizabeth of Toulouse, for instance, specified that "the Postulant, at the gate of the convent, knocks with all her family and friends around her to ask that she be received. There is a dialogue between the postulant and the priest, punctuated by prayers and liturgical chant. The use of Latin, a language for men and for sacred occasions, renders the moment even more solemn and represents the break between the world that these women leave and the one that they enter. The abandonment of lay dress is the first stage of the process. The priest emphasizes the link between "the sacred habit" and the requirement that its wearer "be dead to the world, to your parents, to your friends and to yourself. She was dressed in the robe of the order, with a veil and a wreath of white roses; then they opened the grille and presented her to the priest who blessed her. Her veil remains white; she wears neither a medal of the Virgin, nor a silver ring, nor a white robe. This initial step toward religious dress proves only. Many orders used two wreaths, one made of flowers and the other of thorns, and some rituals asked the novice to choose between them: Formerly, taking the veil and the profession took place. Before she [the novice] receives the white veil, she approaches the communion

window, and the Superior General cuts a lock of her hair. Then he presents her with two wreaths, one of flowers and the other of thorns. The novice chooses the latter. Traditionally the crown of thorns is placed on the body of a dead nun as she awaits burial in the chapel, an element from an earlier rite of passage repeating itself in this final ritual. Mademoiselle de Rastignac "had long blonde hair. She shuddered at the moment when the mistress of novices put the scissors to her hair. They put her hair on a big silver platter. The moment when the novice offers up her hair and renounces this instrument of feminine seduction was always central to veil-taking ceremonies. It represented a rejection of the body "that abominable garment of the soul" that had to be denied before it could be disciplined. The novice leaves behind her former appearance as she leaves the secular world, and the veiling completes the ritual of retreat from the world. But the ceremony also expresses rebirth as the novice is rebaptized with the name of a patron saint. The Capuchin Nicolas de Dijon explained this passage in his sermon to brothers taking their vows: Proficiere anima christiana de hoc mundo. Go, Christian soul, escape the prison of your body, because heaven offers you freedom. Moving beyond the ritual that cuts the novice off from the world and prepares her for the final profession and vows, I turn now to understanding how women experience this rupture and live their transformed identity. Names and transformed identities Dress always features in the religious life, but the renunciation of baptismal names has never been a requirement for entry into a female religious community. The Cistercians, for instance, retain their original family names. There is no canonical text establishing a name-changing ritual; each community makes its own choice in the matter. The practice of taking a new name in religion became increasingly common from the late fifteenth century and peaked after the Revolution during the nineteenth-century expansion of female religious orders. Beyond its spiritual meaning, the religious name functioned as a sign of ideological commitment, a statement of militant opposition to a secular world that had attempted to destroy monastic institutions. Monastic rules never formally regulate naming practices, and some do not even raise the question of names. Neither canon law texts nor theological dictionaries explain what role names play in the entry into the spiritual perfection of the religious life. Rather, it is a go-between, even a stage name for the performance of religious devotion enacted in a theatre hidden behind the convent walls. Nuns themselves testify to the importance of receiving a new name. According to Josette, "You change your name along with your clothing; they go together. You leave behind your old clothes and your baptismal name! They remember entering the religious life as about making choices, about the conscious renunciation of what previously defined their lives in response to an interior voice. Describing the new name as a "pseudonym" seems inadequate to capture their experience. Early modern texts similarly bind leaving behind family, ordinary clothes, and name into an indivisible ensemble: Entering the convent, a young woman leaves her old clothes at the door along with the name that at her baptism had brought her into the larger Christian family: Those who profess and who enter the religious life and are dressed in the habit should have a name that reflects the holiness of their life and their dress. The name given to us at our profession, which is our second birth, must be received with respect, borne with veneration and we must strive faithfully to live up to the virtues that it represents. Francis de Sales considered clothing a sort of "symbol that penetrates to the interior of our soul and whose exterior manifestations signal our disposition, whether serious or frivolous. The Carmelites, as part of a discipline of spiritual self-annihilation, adopted it early, while the Visitandines were much slower. Thus the Clares in Milleau en Rouergue began adopting religious names at the very end of the seventeenth century, while their sisters in Castenlau de Magnoac near Toulouse maintained their baptismal names and secular forms of address well into the eighteenth century, suggesting the continued importance of secular forms of sociability to this house. Scholastica, Mechtilde, or Benedict. Of these, thirteen incorporated a masculine name into their religious name, perhaps out of respect for the dictates of the Council of Trent, which condemned the feminization of the names of male exemplars of piety. There were no references to particular dogmas of the Church, but the early fathers and episodes in the life of Christ both showed up occasionally. This practice of double naming placed the nun under the protection of a specific saint while also linking her to a transcendent form of spirituality, and it suggests a clear process of identity-formation well beyond the simple change of civil status. It would be interesting to know more about how religious naming reflected the social origins and educational levels of the individuals concerned; the small sample in the Carentan records offers some hints but

provides an inadequate basis for generalization. Clearly, the choice of a name in religion varies both by religious order and across time. At the other extreme were houses that allow novices free choice of a name, although the convent authorities did seek to discourage overly mystical or imaginative names. Many houses maintained a tradition of having the postulant propose a list from which her superiors made the final choice. Rejecting the nineteenth-century notion of taking the veil as a "cowardly retreat" for women incapable of facing the world, J. Peterson suggests that we consider their act as "a strong, although unusual, affirmation of the self. It is like a rejection even a revolt against a humiliating status, although it takes the form of a radical annihilation of self, an absolute humility, but this time in the name of God alone. The new name serves not only to identify a specific nun, but to place her both within her new community and with regard to the world that she has left behind. There are many nineteenth-century examples of women who founded religious orders and whose name in religion served them as a sort of standard in their combat for a spiritual ideal. Far from being a peaceful retreat, the convent served these women as a site for the full expression of self. Among my interview subjects, some seem to consider their name in religion as conferring a certain social status, although they were not entirely comfortable with this idea. Daughters of modest rural families, they had often experienced their entry into the convent as upward mobility, and their new name was part of this social achievement. We know very little about what the secular world, notably political authorities, made of religious names. Even though no text in canon law specifically describes name changing, the French monarchy did regulate the practice beginning in 1662. Royal edict required all monastic orders to keep records of all entries and professions and to turn over one copy to the bailliage clerk every five years. Occasionally, political authorities, even under the Old Regime, objected to the use of religious names on the grounds that they tended to exempt part of the population from the law. At the time of the foundation of Saint-Cyr, Louis XIV required the new order to reject officially any use of religious names.

Chapter 4 : Confronting Prejudice Against Muslim Women in the West - United Nations University

For centuries the veil's purpose has been to smother the individual woman's identity. The prolixity of official descriptions of nuns' habits - they linger over fabrics, colors, shapes, and lengths - clearly demonstrates the desire to create a person without identity who will melt into the community.

Antiquity[edit] Elite women in ancient Mesopotamia and in the Greek and Persian empires wore the veil as a sign of respectability and high status. A wife-of-a-man, or [widows], or [Assyrian] women who go out into the main thoroughfare [shall not have] their heads [bare]. Whoever sees a veiled prostitute shall seize her, secure witnesses, and bring her to the palace entrance. They shall not take her jewelry; he who has seized her shall take her clothing; they shall strike her 50 blows with rods; they shall pour hot pitch over her head. And if a man should see a veiled prostitute and release her and not bring her to the palace entrance: Slave-women shall not veil themselves, and he who should see a veiled slave-woman shall seize her and bring her to the palace entrance: Between and B. E respectable women in classical Greek society were expected to seclude themselves and wear clothing that concealed them from the eyes of strange men. Caroline Galt and Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones have both argued from such representations and literary references that it was commonplace for women at least those of higher status in ancient Greece to cover their hair and face in public. In BC, consul Sulpicius Gallus divorced his wife because she had left the house unveiled, thus allowing all to see, as he said, what only he should see. Veils also protected women against the evil eye, it was thought. The veil was a deep yellow color reminiscent of a candle flame. The flammeum also evoked the veil of the Flaminica Dialis , the Roman priestess who could not divorce her husband, the high priest of Jupiter , and thus was seen as a good omen for lifelong fidelity to one man. The Romans apparently thought of the bride as being "clouded over with a veil" and connected the verb nubere to be married with nubes, the word for cloud. Only in the Tudor period , when hoods became increasingly popular, did veils of this type become less common. This depended greatly from one country to the other. In Italy, veils, including face veils, were worn in some regions until the s. Sometimes a veil of this type was draped over and pinned to the bonnet or hat of a woman in mourning , especially at the funeral and during the subsequent period of "high mourning". Coptic Christian woman wearing a veil In Judaism , Christianity , and Islam the concept of covering the head is or was associated with propriety and modesty. Most traditional depictions of the Virgin Mary , the mother of Christ , show her veiled. During the Middle Ages most European married women covered their hair rather than their face, with a variety of styles of wimple , kerchiefs and headscarfs. Veiling, covering the hair, rather than the face, was a common practice with church-going women until the s, Catholic women typically using lace , and a number of very traditional churches retain the custom. Bonnets were the rule in non-Catholic churches. Lace face-veils are still often worn by female relatives at funerals in some Catholic countries. In Orthodox Judaism , married women cover their hair for reasons of modesty; many Orthodox Jewish women wear headscarves tichel for that purpose. Christian Byzantine literature expressed rigid norms pertaining to veiling of women, which have been influenced by Persian traditions, although there is evidence to suggest that they differed significantly from actual practice. Veiling of Arab Muslim women became especially pervasive under Ottoman rule as a mark of rank and exclusive lifestyle, and Istanbul of the 17th century witnessed differentiated dress styles that reflected geographical and occupational identities. Although religion is a common reason for choosing to veil, the practice also reflects political and personal conviction, so that it can serve as a medium through which personal character can be revealed. Male veiling was also common among the Berber Sanhaja tribes. This is a male veil covering the whole face and neck. The sehra is made from either flowers, beads, tinsel, dry leaves, or coconuts. The most common sehra is made from fresh marigolds. The groom wears this throughout the day concealing his face even during the wedding ceremony. In Northern India today you can see the groom arriving on a horse with the sehra wrapped around his head. Veiling and religion[edit] This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. July Biblical references[edit] Biblical references include: Hebrew mitpachat Ruth 3: The word denotes something spread out and covering or concealing

something else comp. This verse should be read, "And when Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face," as in the Revised Version. When Moses spoke to them he was without the veil; only when he ceased speaking he put on the veil comp. In the temple a partition wall separated these two places. In it were two folding doors, which are supposed to have been always open, the entrance being concealed by the veil which the high priest lifted when he entered into the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. This veil was rent when Christ died on the cross Matt. Rebekah "took a veil and covered herself. Hebrew women generally appeared in public with the face visible The word probably denotes some kind of cloak or wrapper. Masak, the veil which hung before the entrance to the holy place Ex. Thus, the general view is that this passage has nothing to do with material veils. Praying Jewish woman wearing Tichel Judaism[edit] After the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem , the synagogues that were established took the design of the Tabernacle as their plan. The Ark of the Law , which contains the scrolls of the Torah , is covered with an embroidered curtain or veil called a parokhet. There is also a maniple sitting to the right of the chalice. Altar cloth Veiling of objects[edit] Among Christian churches which have a liturgical tradition, several different types of veils are used. The purpose of these veils was not so much to obscure as to shield the most sacred things from the eyes of sinful men. According to the New Testament, this veil was torn when Jesus Christ died on the cross. Tabernacle veil Used to cover the church tabernacle , particularly in the Roman Catholic tradition but in some others as well, when the Eucharist is actually stored in it. The veil is used to remind worshipers that the usually metal tabernacle cabinet echoes the tabernacle tent of the Hebrew Scriptures , and it signals that the tabernacle is actually in use. It may be of any liturgical color, but is most often white always appropriate for the Eucharist , cloth of gold or silver which may substitute for any liturgical color aside from violet , or the liturgical color of the day red, green or violet. It may be simple, unadorned linen or silk, or it may be fringed or otherwise decorated. It is often designed to match the vestments of the celebrants. Ciborium veil The ciborium is a goblet-like metal vessel with a cover, used in the Roman Catholic Church and some others to hold the consecrated hosts of the Eucharist when, for instance, it is stored in the tabernacle or when communion is to be distributed. It may be veiled with a white cloth, usually silk. This veiling was formerly required but is now optional. In part, it signals that the ciborium actually contains the consecrated Eucharist at the moment. Chalice veil During Eucharist celebrations, a veil is often used to cover the chalice and paten to keep dust and flying insects away from the bread and wine. Often made of rich material, the chalice veils have not only a practical purpose, but are also intended to show honor to vessels used for the sacrament. In the West, a single chalice veil is normally used. It covers the chalice and paten when not actually in use on the altar. In the East, three veils are used: The veils for the chalice and diskos are usually square with four lappets hanging down the sides, so that when the veil is laid out flat it will be shaped like a cross. Humeral veil The humeral veil is used in both Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches during the liturgy of Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament , and on some other occasions when special respect is shown to the Eucharist. It is worn only by bishops , priests or deacons. Vimpa A vimpa is a veil or shawl worn over the shoulders of servers who carry the miter and crosier in Roman Catholic liturgical functions when they are not being used by the bishop. Chancel veil In the early liturgies, there was often a veil that separated the sanctuary from the rest of the church again, based upon the biblical description of the Tabernacle. In the Byzantine liturgy this veil developed into the iconostasis , but a veil or curtain is still used behind the Royal Doors the main doors leading into the sanctuary , and is opened and closed at specific times during the liturgy. In the West, it developed into the Rood Veil, and later the Rood Screen , and finally the chancel rail, the low sanctuary railing in those churches that still have this. In some of the Eastern Churches for instance, the Syrian liturgy the use of a veil across the entire sanctuary has been retained. Lenten veiling Some churches veil their crosses during Passiontide with a fine semi-transparent mesh. The color of the veil may be black, red, purple, or white, depending upon the liturgical day and practice of the church. In traditional churches, there will sometimes be curtains placed to either side of the altar. The Veil of our Lady is a liturgical feast celebrating the protection afforded by the intercessions of the Virgin Mary. Veiling by women[edit] Traditionally, in Christianity, women were enjoined to cover their heads in church, just as it was and still is customary for men to remove their hat as a sign of respect. This practice is based on 1 Corinthians Any man who prays or prophesies with

his head covered brings shame upon his head. But any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled brings shame upon her head, for it is one and the same thing as if she had had her head shaved. For if a woman does not have her head veiled, she may as well have her hair cut off. But if it is shameful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, then she should wear a veil. A man, on the other hand, should not cover his head, because he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; nor was man created for woman, but woman for man; for this reason a woman should have a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels. Woman is not independent of man or man of woman in the Lord. For just as woman came from man, so man is born of woman; but all things are from God. Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears his hair long it is a disgrace to him, whereas if a woman has long hair it is her glory, because long hair has been given her for a covering? But if anyone is inclined to be argumentative, we do not have such a custom, nor do the churches of God New American Bible translation In many traditional Eastern Orthodox Churches , and in some very conservative Protestant churches as well, the custom continues of women covering their heads in church or even when praying privately at home. In the Roman Catholic Church , it was customary in most places before the s for women to wear a headcovering in the form of a scarf, cap, veil or hat when entering a church. The practice now continues in isolated parishes where it is seen as a matter of etiquette, courtesy, tradition or fashionable elegance. The Declaration Inter-Insigniores by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has made it clear that the practice of headcovering for women was a matter of ecclesiastical discipline and not of Divine law. The wearing of a headcovering was for the first time mandated as a universal rule for the Latin Rite by the Code of Canon Law of , [23] which code was abrogated by the advent of the present Code of Canon Law. A veil over the hair rather than the face forms part of the headdress of some orders of nuns or religious sisters; this is why a woman who becomes a nun is said "to take the veil".

Chapter 5 : * The veil: Identity or modesty? - DeedahwarNewsViews

Persepolis: The Veil and Identity The movie *Persepolis* is Marjane Satrapi's autobiography. It covers her childhood and teenage years in her hometown, Tehran; her experiences abroad while she studies at the French Lyceum in Austria; and her return to a country devastated by war and mistreated by the Regime.

Although the behavioral rules of purdah are complex and depend upon the particular context and region, purdah is generally a cultural practice that confines women within the four walls of their homes. Muslims practice this particular form of purdah, while Hindu women do not. In fact, purdah originated in the culture of Islam and is an alien phenomenon to Hindu women Singh NP. However, with the Muslim invasions came the purdah system for Hindu women to practice. Although this system was established for the protection of Hindu women just as it protects Islamic women, this purdah took a different form. As a consequence the women in Rajasthan started to cover their face to avoid attracting specifically the Muslim invaders. In contrast, in most northern states, the women are forced to cover their faces both in public and in privacy of their houses. With time women have learned to use the veil as an instrument to enhance their beauty and what has been the means of silencing them seems became the aspect of attraction. A woman in veil generates much more curiosity than the one with uncover face as it sexualizes her more. The period is known for two mainstream literatures. The one called the RitiKal which comes close to the courtly poetry in English offers images of veil in more sensual way and the other known as Bhaktikal that presents veil in a philosophic way. Following the Sufi tradition he does not see veil as an instrument for enhancing female beauty but as a barrier between the soul which is always feminine contrary to the Sanskrit tradition where it is masculine and the God; the ignorance and the knowledge. In 15th and 16th century Hindi literature such use of veil was quite common among most poets of Bhakti Movement. Concluding the debate I feel that the imposition of veil on Hindu woman specifically on the women of North India comes as a defense mechanism against the Muslim invaders but the society ended up adopting this and even forcing the women to wear a veil even when there are no invaders. Christian woman, except the nuns, are free from imposition. In current politicized atmosphere it is hard to say how many Muslim women will openly admit that veil is a religious, cultural and social imposition. The political enforcement by some European countries has got severe reaction. More Muslim women are trying to defy the law and are appearing in public with their headgear. The specific identity of a nun in Christianity is her dress that covers her head and body but she never became the target of such polemic discussion. The same law makers in European country who are fighting against the use of veil by Muslim woman never raised their voice or tried to strip of a nun of this specific identity. It is the use of psychology of fear that helps in the religious imposition of veil and makes her see unveiling as an act of disrespect. She should be given the freedom to decide and chose her dress.

Chapter 6 : Women > Veiling > What is the Hijab and Why do Women Wear it? - Arabs in America

PDF | This study compares Muslim women's views on wearing the veil in a Muslim majority society, Indonesia, with the Muslim minority in India.

Often, these young people have never formally learned about Islam, either because their parents stress the importance of assimilation or because they believed their children would pick up the tradition in the same way they did as children in North Africa. Therefore, many teenagers turn to the local mosque, the Internet, or neighborhood Islamic bookstores to learn more about Islam. Youth in France are challenging tradition and bridging divides through food, music, and sports at an unprecedented level. Souad last name not given is part of this generation. She was born in France, shortly after her parents arrived from Algeria. She was not brought up to be especially religious, nor does she speak much Arabic. As a sign of her religious commitment, she recently began to wear the veil. In the following interview, Souad describes the journey she undertook: Once I got to high school, friends told me about my religion, [and] I discovered an aspect I did not know; I studied, read books, [and] I found that enriching. It was clear to me that the headscarf was an obligation, and I felt the need to please our Creator; it was in that spirit that I wanted to wear it, but the social conditions at high school presented problems. I had to prepare to be rejected by others. But there was always that desire to go higher in faith, to go closer to the Creator, to please him. So I put on a small hair band so that people would get used to it, because before I wore mini skirts, long hair, but never drank alcohol. In effect I was a bit of a tomboy and hung out with guys, who considered me their little sister and made sure I did not veer toward drugs and night clubs. One day I decided to become a woman, not a boy, and I changed my behavior because I had been very aggressive I realized that it is hard to live in society as a woman, because there is a lot of sexism So, to return to the zigzag, my behavior as a woman, the fact that God asked me to do certain things, so I decided to go in that direction while adapting myself to the society where I live, and I succeed [in] this, for when I am at work I wear the scarf not like I have it now but on top, swirled around like the Africans [makes gesture around her head]. That seems to work. I began wearing it as an intern and it worked. This shows that there are still people who are very tolerant. They knew me before and after the foulard [the veil], and their attitude did not change. They saw that my work did not change, even got better, and one said, if anyone criticizes you let me know and I will take care of it. I found that touching. Fariba last name not given was born in France, grew up in Algeria, and returned to study in France in as a young adult. She began wearing the veil, or hijab , at age 15 as a part of her religious beliefs. Sometimes even when I have not been listening to the news, I know what has happened by watching how people regard me. On September 11th [], I returned home from work, turned on the television and saw the catastrophe. I was shocked like everyone else. The next morning, Wednesday, I had almost forgotten what had happened, I took the train to work, and the looks I got from others reminded me that it was the 12th, of what happened the day before. At first I did not understand, I looked myself over, to see if there was something wrong with my clothes, what did I do? And then I made the connection I function as a barometer of the popularity of Muslims. Amara is currently serving as the French Junior Minister for Urban Affairs and is heading several initiatives aimed at improving life in the banlieues. Many French Muslims disapprove of her strong stance against the political use of religion. Fadela Amara, an activist-turned-politician, has protested racism and discrimination against immigrants especially women in France for many years. She warns that the headscarf is becoming the symbol of a militant Islam that poses a danger to French democracy. Amara, who was born to Algerian parents and grew up in an immigrant neighborhood, offers her own explanation as to why young women wear headscarves: Among the young women in the projects there are those who seek recognition in a Some of them wear the headscarf by choice in the spirit of religious practice. But others have been subjected to pressures As someone who is very attached to fundamental freedoms, I think religious practice is legitimate when it is a personal choice, without pressure or constraint, but above all when it respects the norms of secular society. It is possible, in fact, to distinguish different categories of young women who wear the headscarf. First of all, there are those who wear it because they believe that the fact that they practice their religion affords them a legitimate existence. They wear the

headscarf as a banner. But there are many young women who, forbidden any outward display of femininity, wear the headscarf as armor, supposed to protect them from male aggression. Indeed, women who wear the headscarf are never bothered by young [Muslim] men, who lower their eyes in front of them; covered by the headscarf, these girls are in their view untouchable. In general, these are women who attend university and These are not disturbed kids, troubled or searching for an identity, who wear the headscarf because it shows they belong to a community. No, these are real militants! They often begin their justification for wearing the headscarf by explaining that, in their view, it is part of a process of emancipation. It bothers me to hear the talk about freedom of expression because behind this symbol is a [plan to create] a different society than our own: Islam, the State, and Public Space. Excerpted from *Breaking the Silence: A process through which immigrants accept the national culture of the host country and give up their former national identity*. The Islamic Foundation, , â€” Quoted in John R. Islam, the State, and Public Space Princeton: Princeton University Press, , 76 â€” The hijab is one name for a variety of similar headscarves that cover the head and neck, and often the hair and forehead. Helen Harden Chenut Los Angeles: University of California Press, , 73â€” The modern use of the term is associated with granting civic rights to religious minorities, such as the Catholics and, especially, the Jews in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Europe. Connection Questions Why do you think so many second- and third-generation immigrants have adopted a religious identity? What does it offer them that other identities cannot satisfy? How does Souad explain her decision to wear the veil? How did she expect others to respond? What responses did she get? How do different people in this reading explain why women wear the veil? In the West, many Muslim women choose to wear the veil. In Iran and some other Islamic states, the veil is mandatory. In your opinion, does it make a difference? Do all mandatory traditions or rituals assume that the person who practices them has no choice? Have you ever embraced or chosen a commonplace tradition in your community? Fadela Amara believes that for many, the veil is a marker of identity, but she says that others wear the veil to express their militancy and to show support for Islamic extremism. In her writings she suggests that it is also a sign of male dominance over womenâ€”a symbol of a society that does not respect the equality of women. If she is correct, how should the French people and government respond?

Chapter 7 : Taking the Veil: Clothing and the Transformation of Identity

*C) Portray the veil as synonymous to identity, the denial of which is considered a form of oppression. Natan Sharansky's book *Defending Identity* falls within this subcategory. Sharansky argues that.*

Their priorities are more basic, like feeding their children, becoming literate and living free from violence. Headlines in the mainstream media have reduced Muslim female identity to an article of clothing--"the veil. The use of the term borders on the absurd: Perhaps next will come "What Color is Your Veil? In some cultures, it refers to a face-covering known as niqab; in others, to a simple head scarf, known as hijab. Other manifestations of "the veil" include all-encompassing outer garments like the ankle-length abaya from the Persian Gulf states, the chador in Iran or the burka in Afghanistan. Like the differences in our clothing from one region to another, Muslim women are diverse. Stereotypical assumptions about Muslim women are as inaccurate as the assumption that all American women are personified by the bikini-clad cast of "Baywatch. In Qatar, women make up the majority of graduate-school students. The Iranian parliament has more women members than the U. Throughout the world, many Muslim women are educated and professionally trained; they participate in public debates, are often catalysts for reform and champions for their own rights. At the same time, there is no denying that in many Muslim countries, dress has been used as a tool to wield power over women. As an expression of their opposition to his repressive regime, women who supported the Islamic Revolution marched in the street clothed in chadors. Many of them did not expect to have this "dress code" institutionalized by those who led the revolution and then took power in the new government. In Turkey, the secular regime considers the head scarf a symbol of extremist elements that want to overthrow the government. Accordingly, women who wear any type of head-covering are banned from public office, government jobs and academia, including graduate school. Turkish women who believe the head-covering is a religious obligation are unfairly forced to give up public life or opportunities for higher education and career advancement. Dress should not bar Muslim women from exercising their Islam-guaranteed rights, like the right to be educated, to earn a living and to move about safely in society. Unfortunately, some governments impose a strict dress code along with other restrictions, like limiting education for women, to appear "authentically Islamic. Nevertheless, these associations lead to the general perception that "behind the veil" lurk other, more insidious examples of the repression of women, and that wearing the veil somehow causes the social ills that plague Muslim women around the world.

Most minority women see the veil as a way of affirming their cultural identity. We argue that religious minorities are forced into constructing their cultural identity in ways that exaggerate their group belonging and difference from broader society.

Follow New York-based artist Sepideh Salehi explores identity, social relationships and cultural heritage in collaboration with her husband and partner Kamran Taherimoghaddam. Image courtesy the artist. While the woman expresses ire, vehemently ripping pieces of cloth, the man plays a daf Persian frame drum by gently brushing a plate, playing with it as it was a goblet drum and conveying a sense of comprehension and tenderness. Image courtesy the artists. Salehi and Taherimoghaddam re-propose a reflection on the notion of coercion in relationships, suggesting the ways this may be derived from gender issues in our society – regardless of religion, nation or culture. The idea of the struggle between males and females is embodied by the band of men playing a percussion instrument from Iran called tonbak – here used to reference tradition – and the women tearing pieces of cloth apart, symbolising the rebellious sentiment of becoming visible through break and possibly change. The latter often includes a layer of writing and sewing. Women in Contemporary Iranian Society , to determine the meaning of concepts such as identity, autonomy, and agency, we increasingly refer back to the experiences of individuals. Similarly, in identifying the shape of the bigger picture in society we examine the condition of the personal. The artist then uses the video recordings and the documentation of unpleasant events in Iran sourced from the social media and other digital references. The result is a combination of cruel reality and dream-like imagery, where the bodies and the surrounding space have lost their original appearances. Yet, true-to-life gestures, movements and actions keep the viewer anchored to the brutality of the real world. In the series Mohr Portrait photography and frottage on Japanese paper overlap, resulting in female figures depicted with their faces covered and a transparent pattern delicately laying upon them. As the artist further explains in the essay accompanying the exhibition, The concept of covering up, hiding and privacy are all of interest to me. These drawings emerge from a union between the immediacy of line and the direct and literal communicative properties of writing. Separation from home and family, longing and the use of traditional letter writing are all addressed in my works. Similarly, the series of paintings Memories I and Memories II depict more abstract subjects; they evoke mental projections and blurred events from the past, which are hidden in our subconscious and coming to surface through the act of rubbing and drawing. They form a pattern, or echo words that become evident through this deliberate meditative work process. Carmen Stolfi Related topics: Iranian artists , drawing , video , painting , photography , memory , identity art , feminist art , gallery shows , events in New York Related posts:

Chapter 9 : GOSHAENUR: The Veil as Ghunghat & Purdah - a Hindu & Muslim dress

affect gender identity negotiation among veiled and unveiled Muslim women living in Austin, Texas. Interviews with these women highlight how their gender identities reproduce and reformulate existing Muslim gender discourses.

Persepolis and Identity May 8th, by mbprasad Persepolis was a poignant narrative that truly showed us how the Iranian Revolution affected a child. By using a comic strip medium, Satrapi presented the reader with many channels to experience the emotions that went with the revolution. Sadly, over time society ingrains stereotypes in our head about what gender represents and how we should act in order to fit into a certain mold. Satrapi starts off the story saying that she wants to be a Prophet. This example reveals how her views of potential are not shaped by gender norms. This changes as the revolution places certain ideas of gender and the possibilities of each gender on her. Another interesting component of gender, identity, and religion is the way that Satrapi depicts the hijab. She seems to present only one view: In her images, all the women wearing the veil tend to look the same, as if putting a veil on covers up your identity and individuality. This shows that she associated the veil with being conservative and religious and the lack of veil with being modern. From the stories we have heard in class, I know that such a binary view is not correct and is regressive to discussion. For some women, the veil can be incredibly liberating. For others, it can be a political object. This is a great reminder of the cultural-studies approach applied to ideas of gender and identity – it all depends on whom we are talking to and where we are. Her identity as defined by the veil In response to Persepolis, I choose to do a photograph showing a very binary view of identity. I was inspired by an image in the book where Satrapi contemplates her identity and her views on the veil. I wanted this photo to make viewers question how they see someone who wears a veil. Whether or not my head is covered, I am still the same person. I still have the same dreams and relationships. But how does society view one side of me versus the other side? How does societal judgment shape how I feel about my identity? I then made the image black and white to equalize the two sides. I tried to maintain the same expression as well and slightly smile. I hope this gives the image a sense of mystery and contemplation. The veil and its questions of identity are complex, and I wanted to convey this complexity in the photo. Two sides of identity? This is a reminder that everything depends on context, which is why we cannot make base assumptions from the surface level. In situations like the Iranian Revolution in Persepolis, I see why Satrapi would view the veil as repressive because it was forced upon her rather than her own choice. I simply am interested in considering the other possibilities during the revolution and wonder how women who supported wearing the veil felt. Satrapi depicts these women as overly conservative and fundamentalist and only shows them as angry or rude. I just worry I hope that this photograph makes you think critically about the complex issues of the hijab and how identity is related to it. With your hand, cover up one side and then the other side. Then look at it as a whole. As you look at it, ask yourself the following questions: When you see someone, what assumptions do you make about him or her based on appearance? What does wearing the hijab signify for women who choose to be veiled? What might it represent to women who are forced against their will to be veiled? What are the different cultural contexts that play a role in the veil? How does it differ from region to region? Is the veil based on this or are there other reasons for wearing it? Posted in Uncategorized No Comments.