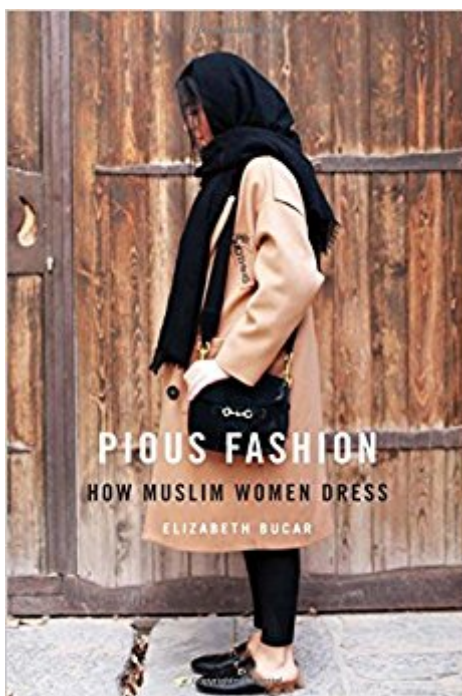


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Pious Fashion: How Muslim Women Dress



Synopsis

For many Westerners, the Islamic veil is the ultimate sign of women's oppression. But Elizabeth Bucar's take on clothing worn by Muslim women is a far cry from this older feminist attitude toward veiling. She argues that modest clothing represents much more than social control or religious orthodoxy. Today, headscarves are styled to frame the head and face in interesting ways, while colors and textures express individual tastes and challenge aesthetic preconceptions. Brand-name clothing and accessories serve as conveyances of social distinction and are part of a multimillion-dollar ready-to-wear industry. Even mainstream international chains are offering lines especially for hijabis. More than just a veil, this is pious fashion from head to toe, which engages with a range of aesthetic values related to moral authority, consumption, and selfhood. Writing in an appealing style based on first-hand accounts, Bucar invites readers to join her in three Muslim-majority nations as she surveys how women approach the question "What to wear?" By looking at fashion trends in the bustling cities of Tehran, Yogyakarta, and Istanbul and at the many ways clerics, designers, politicians, and bloggers try to influence Muslim women's choices she concludes that pious fashion depends to a large extent on local aesthetic and moral values, rather than the dictates of religious doctrine. Pious Fashion defines modesty in Islamic dress as an ever-changing social practice among Muslim women who much like non-Muslim women create from a range of available clothing items and accessories styles they think will look both appropriate and attractive.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A smart, eye-opening guide to the creative sartorial practices of young Muslim women who live in Tehran, Istanbul, and Yogyakarta. Bucar's lively narrative illuminates fashion choices, moral aspirations, and social struggles that will unsettle those who prefer to stereotype rather than inform themselves about women's everyday lives in the fast-changing, diverse, and historically specific societies that constitute the Muslim world. (Lila Abu-Lughod, author of *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?*) Islamic dress is in the news. Either as a symbol of female oppression or as a new, colorful statement on the global fashion stage, Islamic dress can be misunderstood because it seems singular and monolithic. This book offers first-person observations from the stores and streets of three cities in Muslim-majority countries. Through vivid descriptions of styles and shoppers, readers realize that Muslim women dress in as many varied ways as non-Muslim women do. (Carla Jones, University of Colorado Boulder)

Elizabeth Bucar is Associate Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Northeastern University.

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