

Are there any differences between different branches of islam as per what a woman...

[Religion](#), [Islam](#)



First of all, before even trying to look into the very dispute to be discussed in this paper, I'd like to state that in my opinion the following questions are the ones that anyone willing to debate has to be able to answer.

What are the precise prescriptions of Islam and shariah laws regarding women's garments? Are there any strict rules that are not ambivalent or ambiguous?

Why is it so that in different Muslim states women are granted different level of liberalism (if any at all) in what touches upon their clothes? For instance why is Egypt so liberal about the issue compared to Saudi Arabia or Iran?

What legal basis (and not just discussions about values and other things) is there in Western states to make the discussion about burqa and niqab legal in its essence? Where do freedom of religion and ban of certain clothes legally collide? What basic human rights does this collision affect?

What are possible ways out of the collision? Are there known practices as per how such a problem may be solved?

Now, getting to respond to Margaret Wente's article I can definitely say that I completely agree with the arguments and the bottom line provided in the text: "Should we have a law against the burka? No. Not in Canada. But that doesn't mean we have to like it" (Wente, 2009). I like the fact that in spite of not understanding how women in Islam can be subjected to what looks to many like a humiliation and suppression the author of the article still emphasized that such misunderstanding does not entitle Canadian authorities consider themselves as someone who can impose any regulation on the issue as that will create inequality and sense of exclusiveness on the part of the non-Muslim part of the society. Another thing I like very much

about this article is that the author clearly understands that the issue is far too ambiguous than many prefer to think. It is not just a dispute between secularism and Islam. In different states Muslim part of the population is embodied in political forces of different trends, and in different states there is a different level - and nature - of tolerance or intolerance of the issue. So that is not so easy to draw a clear line. Therefore the bottom line of my analysis of the article consists in the statement that I agree with it completely.

Now, the situation with the letters to the editor is quite another story. The thing is that these letters are quite miscellaneous and they cannot therefore present a single coherent or logical array of arguments leading to a solid conclusion. However, I cannot but highlight several good points made by authors of these letters that have to be kept in mind when considering the discussed issue.

First of all, the author of one of the letters, Fatehia Saleh says that her mother has been wearing her garments covering her entire body not because of it being imposed on her by Islam but because of her free will to do so - it is just her system of values, her worldview and her choice (Letters, 2012). For some reason, the vast majority of people in the West always see women in this case as victims - but what if they worship principles obliging them to wear burqa themselves?

A good point made by another author consists in the statement that Islam prescriptions about women's clothes have to be told apart from state prescriptions about the same matter. Obviously enough, Islam is a single coherent religion though with many branches. Therefore obvious difference

in how women wear clothes in Lebanon and Iran or Saudi Arabia points out to the fact that it is not Islam that has to be blamed (if something has to be at all) for the “oppression” of women. State and Islam are not identical things even in religion-based states, because a state is still a political entity and religion – a spiritual one.

References

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