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The Rhetoric of the Modern Hijab.

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The Rhetoric of the Modern Hijab.

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Abstract

The goal of this research is to obtain data about the rhetoric of the modern hijab. This research wants to prove that the hijab is dynamic and not static by looking at the new styles of the hijab in Amman, Jordan. It wants to disprove the idea that the hijab is one of the many examples of the outdated practices of the hijab. The study has three hypotheses: (1) the hijab is dynamic and not static, and it has changed in style because of modernization and westernization. (2) The new styles of the hijab are not absolutely religious. (3) Lastly it hypothesizes that the new rhetoric of the hijab and the new styles of the hijab give Muslim muhajabe women agency instead of taking away their agency. The study collected data from 4 interviews, 47 surveys, and two male and female focus groups, composed of 5 participants in each group. In total it collected data from 61 respondents. This research also contains a literature review of a diverse group of works on topics related to the study. This study has found that indeed the new styles of the hijab found in Jordan in combining modern Western styles and fashion with the religious requirements of Islam prove the dynamic nature of the hijab. Also the fact that most of the participants in this study wear what they themselves consider the wrong or half hijab proves that the reasons for wearing these new styles is beyond religion. Furthermore, although religiously the new styles of hijab give women agency, according to the culture and traditions the new styles of the hijab do not give women agency. Finally it is important to note that due to the small sample size and other limitations these contents and findings of this study should not be generalized.

ISP Topic:
507 Gender Studies
521 Regional Studies: Middle East
403 Religions
Keywords: Hijab, Modernization, Fashion, Styles, Jordanian Woman.
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Introduction:

Before studying abroad in Turkey last summer, one could say I was pretty ignorant about the hijab. I knew that it was something religious but also that it was a choice for Muslim women. When we arrived in Turkey I was surprised to see that most women did not wear a hijab. I was also surprised to learn that there were laws that kept women from wearing a hijab in public offices and school. Thus of course it was important to discuss the hijab in Turkey.

One of the new and exciting things that I learned was that the hijab had modernized. It hadn’t just modernized but “fashionized.” Everywhere in Turkey there were billboards of women wearing chic fashionable clothing with the hijab. The hijab it seemed was not a hindrance to looking fashionable but instead was a fashionable look. We also went to the hijab district in Turkey where there were brand named hijab stores. Women were spending ridicules amounts of money in order to wear brand names when they could spend $¼ and buy any scarf to cover their hair. All of these sparked by interest in the hijab as more than just a religious clothing.

I thought that this interest would simply stay an interest until I came to Jordan. On the first weekend that I spent with my host family my five years old sister kept putting a hijab on me. Whenever she put a hijab on she would also put lipstick and whatever other make up she could fine on me. Also when I picked my simple black scarf to put on she would say that it wasn’t pretty and would pick a prettier, more colorful scarf. In addition, every time she played dress up she would immediately wear a hijab, as well as lipstick and eye shadow. Each time she did this she would say “I am a big girl.” My five years old sister is too young to understand the religious reason behind the hijab. For her it seems that the hijab was a fashion accessory and more than that it symbolized an initiation to being a young woman. This again sparked my interest in the “fashionization” of the hijab and the rhetoric of this new modern hijab.
Before going to Turkey or Jordan I had this view of the hijab as this static and traditional religious clothing. Now I view it as a dynamic and modern object that is part religious but also goes beyond that to have new social and cultural implications. This topic fits perfectly into the theme of my program in Jordan because as much as the hijab is the symbol of Islam, I find that it can also be the symbol of modernization and social change in Jordan. The hijab is one of the most controversial clothing pieces in the modern world today. In secular France and Turkey the hijab has been banished from some public spaces. The hijab and its wearers have been seen by some, as a hindrance to modernity, women’s development, and threats to security. “The media demonizes Islam, portraying it as a threat to Western culture with its described backward and uncivilized way of life where women are being dominated by the religion of Islam and the hijab seen as a way to oppress and attack women…” (Hassan). As misunderstandings and mistrusts of Islam continue to grow, the hijab, a clear Islamic representation, has come under attack by many, as symbol for the backwardness of Islam. However, I will use the theory by Lelia Ahemed that claims the styles that emerged after the 1980s in Egypt “are quite new, neither the traditional of Egypt nor the dress of any other part of the Arab world, or the West, though they often combine features of all three” (Ahmed, 220). This paper will prove this theory to be true for the hijab in Amman, Jordan in 2012 and will prove through this that the hijab is indeed dynamic.

The study:

This study aims to explore the rhetoric of the modern hijab. This research tries to prove the dynamic nature of the hijab, through the fashion of the hijab and the rise of new styles of the hijab. This research aims to refute against the argument that the hijab is a clear example of the outdated practices of Islam. In the modern world “Islam is depicted as an obsolete religion with
outdated practices and not applicable to the twenty first century….. The hijab is seen as a way
to oppress and attack women…”(Hassan). Instead this project will to prove the hijab is not an
example of the static nature of Islam but an example of the dynamism of Islam. What one
wears can say something about where one comes from, our society, our culture, our political
beliefs, and our religious beliefs. By looking at the rhetoric of the modern hijab this project
wants to uncover the new styles of the hijab and what they imply? What messages are
conveyed by the modern hijab and its wears? What does it say about the culture, the society,
the political beliefs and the religious beliefs of its wearer? This project will look at the styles of
the hijab that modernization has brought. It will look at the modern social and cultural values
and implications of the hijab beyond just religion. It tries to answer the question does the hijab
have a modern or new rhetoric that goes beyond just the pure religious meaning? As well as
how these new forms of hijab give covered Muslim women in Amman, Jordan, agency. The
scope of this research will limit itself to look at the modernization of the hijab through the
styles. It collected data from 4 interviews, 47 surveys, as well as two focus groups, and
observations. However, this research will not aim to generalize its findings. It will not stretch
its finding to the whole Amman, Jordan, or the Middle east and especially not all Muslim
women. The scope of the findings will only reveal information about those who participated in
the research. The researcher hypothesizes that the hijab is not static and that it has evolved with
modernization. The researcher hypothesizes that the hijab has changed in style because of
modernization and westernization. However, these new styles are a way of keeping with
tradition, culture, and religion while at the same time being apart of the modern world marked
especially by fashion. In addition, the researcher hypothesizes that the new styles of the hijab
are not just worn for religious reasons alone. Finally, I hypothesize that instead of taking away women’s agency, the new styles of the hijab give women agency.

_Literary Terms:_

There are many terms that need to be defined in order to make this researcher easier to understand. Some of these terms are complex terms like modernization and agency and others terms are related to the hijab. This paper will define modernization in two ways. One is simply to mean contemporary and the other is to mean modernization in the sense of technological and material progress, as well as in some ways westernization, especially socially. Agency is defined in simple terms here as the power that a thing or a person has to produce particular result. In terms of this research it is the power that is given to women or taken away from women by the hijab, the object that acts to give them power. The following terms are not complex terms but terms that are important to define for this research. The hijab in this research is referred to in two ways. When referring to the hijab in general terms this research is referring to the whole practice of the hijab, including the clothes that are worn with it and not just the practice of hair covering. When not referring to it in general terms this research is using it to address the practice of covering the hair. When referring to the veil this research is addressing the practice of hair covering as well. The niqqab refers to the practice of covering the whole face except the eyes. The abaya is long and loose black dress that originates from the gulf. The thobe is also a long loose black dress with some sort of design in going down the middle and it is the traditional dress of Jordan. The jilbab is the long and loose jacket that has become very popular. Finally, muhajeba refers to the women who wear the hijab in general term. This study will keep consistent with the meaning of these terms given here.
Literary review

To hijab or not to hijab:

The most basic debate over the hijab is over the requirement of the hijab. This debate is also the bases, the beginning, for the rhetoric of the modern of the hijab. This is an issue that is debated by many Muslim scholars. First in order to understand why there is an issue it is important to understand the power of the Quran. The Quran is the word of G-d brought by his messenger the Prophet Muhammad(PBUHN). Islam is the total submission to Allah and obedience to Allah, as the Quran is his word then it also means total submission and obedience to Quran. The first issue with the requirement of the hijab come from whether the hijab, in this case referring to the covering of the hair, is in the Quran or not. There are two sides to this argument; there are those who say that the hijab is a requirement because it is in the Quran and those who say that it is not because it is not part of the Quran. Amr Khaled is one of the major scholars and voices in Islam today. His lectures have greatly influenced the Muslim youth, especially Muslim female youth on the topic of the hijab. He represents the school of thought that considers the hijab to be directly in the Quran and thus a requirement for Muslim women. In one of his lectures about the hijab he says “Some people argue that this Hijab is not obligatory and that it was not mentioned in the Quran. Let's refer to the Qur'an's verses that make the Hijab obligatory to Muslim women.

“O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies. That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And - ALLAH - is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (33:59)” (Amr Khaled).
Here in this verse women are told to cover their bodies so that they should be known as immodest women and are not harassed. Here is a quote directly taken from the Quran that says for Muslim women to veil their bodies according to this school of thought. However, in this verse although it says to draw the cloak all over their bodies, it does not specifically say the hair. In addition, it does not specify in what way, to what extent, and in what fashion women should cover themselves.

However, there are alternative views to this idea that the hijab is mandatory because it is in the Quran. Many of these alternative views are modern and most of the scholars in the school of thought have been women. For example, Reza Alsan is one of the leading scholars in the alternative view that considers the hijab not an obligatory aspect of being a Muslim woman. Rezan claims, “although long seen as the most distinctive emblem of Islam, the veil is, surprisingly, not enjoined upon Muslim women anywhere in the Quran” (Alsan). Instead she claims that the veil was in Arab culture before the arrival of Islam, through contact with Syria and Iran, where the veil was the sign of the upper class women. According to Lelia Ahmed and those who fall in the second school of thought like Rezan, the only places that the hijab is applied to women is when it is addressing the wives of Muhammad (Aslan). Thus the veil was only associated with the prophets wives and his daughters not all women of Islam. This school thought does not deny that modesty was expected of all believers. Women should “guard their private parts... and drape a cover (khamr) over their breasts” when in the presence of strange men (24:31-32)” (Aslan). Here specific parts of the body are named that women should guard and cover including the private parts and the breast but the hair is not mentioned. Thus those in this school of thought like Leila Ahmed and Rezan Alyson do not believe that the hijab in mandatory for Muslim women because it is not mentioned in the Quran.
I do agree with this school of thought that although modest is mandatory, the veil does not seem compulsory by the Quran. However, I don’t believe that this means that there is no justification for wearing the veil. In this school of thought the compulsoriness of the hijab comes from the Quam and since it is not in the Quran in is not compulsory. However, the modesty that is written in the Quran can be interpreted in many ways and thus the hijab can be one interpretation of modesty. In addition, many Jordanian women and men in this study have coupled the Quran to the Sunnah and thus consider the hijab mandatory. For them even if it is not clearly stated in the Quran, the Sunnah clarifies this point. The hijab for some is mandatory and for some it is not, for some it is in the Quran and for some it is not, and for some it is in the Sunnah and that is enough. However, for women who do cover there are not direct instructions over how, to what extent, with what, and in which fashion women should carry out modesty. Although there are some instructions in the Sunnah, the Quran left modesty up to interpretation of the culture and society of the believers. This is why there are varying styles from culture to culture and place to place although they all are the hijab. By not setting up specific instruction the Quran, also allowed the hijab to be able evolve, which means that contemporary things could be used to meet the requirement of the hijab. These two things are the basis of the rhetoric of the modern hijab.

The Feminist rhetoric of the modern Hijab:

“who respects the woman more? Islam or the one who cannot even sell matches without painting a nearly naked woman on it? Are they the ones who have respected the woman or exploited the woman? Or Islam, who has respected the woman and covered her and liberated her from exploitation?” (Amr Khaled).
Referring to westerners here Amr Khaled tries to make a case to women who don’t want to wear the hijab because they want to be like westerners. The case being made here by Amr Khaled is one made by some feminists who argue that the hijab is feminist. By asking women to cover up “Islam stresses out that a woman is not judged by her body but her intellect, her manners, her emotions, and so on” (Amr khaled). The sexual objectification of women has been both in the West and in the East for ages, but Amr Khaled points to the sexual objectification of women in the West in modern times to make a case for why the hijab and Islam respects women more than the West. In a sense he encourages women to wear the hijab as a reaction to the Western objectification of women. This new rhetoric of the hijab has a feminist approach that encourages modesty and veiling of the hair because they allow for better, more equal treatment of women, especially in comparison to the West. The second argument is that the veils can be a form of “…empowerment through the reclaiming the female body from the public gaze, from determining what may be observed (Coslovich 08)” (Hassan 4). In addition, empowerment also comes from determining who can see the body. According to Hassan the feminist argument against the hijab has lacked an understanding of women that wear the hijab “to represent their own movements of liberation” (Hassan 4). In wearing the hijab women gain power over themselves but also over the outside world. The female body has been in the public gaze and has been scrutinized and objectified for centuries. Through the hijab women can take their bodies from the public gaze and are the ultimate deciders of what is seen and who sees it.

However, there are also those who argue against the hijab as a feminist article of cloth. There are feminist who argue that the hijab including other forms of covering for women are cannot be interpreted as feminist in any way. This is because “they are all symbolic ways of
hiding women's sexuality, deemed to be aggressive and dangerous, and as such are stigmatizing: they punish women for being women”(Winter). This argument is based on the pure conservative Islamic interpretation of the hijab. The hijab and the modesty are a way for a woman to keep righteousness and purity in view of lustful and sinful men. Amr. Khaled said “therefore it is obligatory for the woman, since she is the source of attraction and influence.” This interpretation, however, lacks to hold men unaccountable for their actions. Instead women are made to hold the sole responsibility for the morality of the men and society by covering their sexuality, as it is dangerous and will tempt men. In addition, male oriented groups, who don’t really have the best interest of women at heart, have used the hijab for politics and power in the past and continue to use today. Rezan Aslan claims that the hijab was a creation of men in order to restore the patriarchal order that was lost due to the reforms of the Prophet. The hijab was not “widely adopted until generations after Muhammad's death, when a large body of male scriptural and legal scholars began using their religious and political authority to regain the dominance they had lost in society as a result of the Prophet's egalitarian reforms”(Aslan). Thus according to this argument, even in its creation the hijab is not feminist but instead something created by men in order to repress women. In modern times “the hijab issue has been to a large extent engineered by Islamist groups in order to hijack the ‘race debate’ while reasserting their role as the deciders of what is ‘appropriate’ behavior for women”(Winter). This gender based politicization of the hijab, where men are the deciders of women’s action is also another argument against the hijab as a feminist article of clothing.

Although both sides make valid points, to blindly say that it is or is not feminist is problematic. Instead the hijab needs to be contextualized. As Asma Afsaruddin says, “it is not the hijab itself as its contextualization and the discourse around it that announces or suppresses
Muslim women’s agency” (Af saruddin 178). Depending on the context, how and why women wear it, and in what discourse the hijab can either have a feminist rhetoric or be a symbol of a patriarchal order.

*The historical rhetoric of the hijab:*

The veil not only fits into feminist or religious discourse but also the discourse of history. It is important to talk about this historical discourse because it still affects present discourse of the hijab. This discourse is one that comes from the colonial period of history. Colonialism was justified by proving the inferiority of all colonized societies, whether it is Africa, India, or the Middle East. The discourse that was used for the Middle East targeted Islam and with in it the discourse attacked Islam’s treatment of women. Islam “was innately and immutably oppressive to women, that the veil and segregation epitomized that oppression and that these customs were fundamental reasons for the general and comprehensive backwardness of Islamic societies...” (Ahmed 152). On its attack on Islam and women in Islam the colonial discourse used the culture of the veil as its proof of Islam’s oppression of women and the inferiority of Islam. The veil was used as an instrument to clearly demonstrate the subjugation of women and the inferiority of the Islam. "Veiling---- to the Western eyes, the most visible marker of the differentness and inferiority of Islamic societies ----became the symbol now of both the oppression of women …and the backwardness of Islam …it became the open target of colonial attack” (Ahmed 152). The veil was chosen by the colonial discourse to become the object that symbolized the oppression of Muslim women by the “other” men. This was then used to justify colonization so that the veiled women could be saved from the oppression of the “other” men. In all of this, feminism was used in the colonial discourse against Islam. “The victorial colonial paternalistic establishments appropriated the language of feminism in the service of its assault
on the religions and cultures of other men and in particular on Islam in order to give an aura of
moral justification to that assault at the very same time as it combated feminism within its own
society” (Ahmed 152). The hypocrisy of colonial feminism is that while colonial men used
feminism discourse to justify colonialism they did not support feminism within their own
countries or even within the colonial states.

Thus since the veil and women were the target of colonial discourse, the unveiling of
Muslim women became a goal of colonialism. The target of the colonial strategy became to
persuade the Muslim women to unveil (Steele 413) However, instead it caused an opposite
reaction. “It strengthened the attachment to the veil as a national and cultural symbol and gave
it a new vitality” (Steele 413) It became a form of resistance and it gave the veil more
importance as a symbol of the nation and culture and it became a way to challenge colonial
rule. In recent times the hijab again has been the vital point through which the West has
criticized Islam. The increased interest about Islam especially after of 9/11 has led to many
misconception and misinterpretations about Islam. “The representation of Muslims in media
and in common discourse is often fraught with violent and oppressive images and
connotations. Islam is depicted as an obsolete religion with outdated practices and not
applicable to the twenty first century” (Hassan). One of its outdated practices is the hijab. “The
hijab is seen as a way to oppress and attack women…”(Hassan). However, although negative
images of the hijab and in a way the continuation of the colonial discourse on the veil has not
deterred women from wearing the hijab. Instead some women “are donning it in reaction to
Western racism, as a visible identity politic”(Winter). It is not surprising that some women are
wearing it in reaction to view and representation of Islam and specifically the veil in the West
if one looks at the colonial history of the veil, which is in a way repeating itself again. This also
shows how the veil evolves to fit its time. The veil during colonial times and even now increases in vitality when it becomes the center of Western criticism of Islam and the cultures and nations of the Muslim countries.

*The rhetoric of the modern styles of the hijab:*

Although in the past such traditional dresses as the abaya and the thobe were used to meet the modesty requirements, in modern days there are new forms of Islamic dress that meet the Islamic requisites for modesty. In discussion of the reappearance of veiling in Egypt Leila Ahmed gives us a basic description of the new styles of the Islamic dress “neither the traditional dress of Egypt nor the dress of any other part of the Arab world or the West, though they often combine features of all three” (Ahmed 220). Although Leila Ahmed is specifically addressing Egypt this notion of the new Islamic dress styles, including the hijab, combining both the west and tradition can be applied to other places in the Middle East like Amman, Jordan. It is not just that this new Islamic dresses combine tradition and the West but they also combine fashion, tradition, and religion. In a market place report about head scarves in Jordan Lowei a scarf shop owner says “there are a lot more hijab -----or head scarf--- stores than there used to be in Jordan not because people are more religious, he says but because it’s the style…. headscarves keep up with cloth fashion” (Roth). The hijab has become part of fashion and style. It is interesting that he comments on the fact that there are more scarf shops not because of an increase in religiousness but because it has become part of the local style and fashion. In an article by Khatri Shabina called hijab Hits the Runway she even makes a comment on this. “From Egypt to Indonesia, fashion is playing a role in not only attracting women to wear hijab, but also motivating them to continue doing so” (Khatri). Although culture and religion are traditionally seen as driving forces for hijab, fashion is also now entering as one of the forces
driving Muslim women to hijab. For women who like to follow fashion the hijab in some ways may seem unattractive because it can keeps women from being able to follow trends. However, that is not the case instead “the market responded by producing more fashionable clothing choices…fashion shows demonstrating the latest in Islam chic”(Khatri). This has led to the “fashionization” of the hijab. What this has meant is that muhajabe women can cover in the latest styles and be as much of the fashion world as non-covered women. In addition, muhajabe women know have begun to fashionize and customize the veil as well as traditional clothes like the abaya.

“Today young women and women in general are customizing them. They wear them differently. …and sometimes turn them into fashion accessories…now days in the middle east women like to design their own abayas…they have them embroidered…sometimes they customize them wearing more tight fitting versions…they have really become fashion items.” (Eaasm, Clech).

Although older women wear the more traditional abaya and the more traditional veil, younger women are remodeling the hijab. “Older Muslim women often choose a style of headscarf that reflects their cultural heritage, younger women are mixing techniques from all over the Muslim world with newly created styles to complement Western clothes” (Burns) Not only is there a cross cultural sharing of styles from West to East but also with in the East. Hijab styles are shared across Muslim women all over the world. The sharing of hijab styles from all around has created new styles of the hijab that have interconnected women in the Muslim world. Muslim women are using modern Western fashion and other styles from the Muslim world to meet the requirements of their traditions and religion. In addition, they are taking the requirements and traditions and fashionizing them, making them more modern and stylish.
This is the rhetoric of the modern fashion hijab. The modern fashion hijab says that although the women wearing it will respect the traditions, cultures, and religion, they will also be part of modern fashion and style.

However, this raises the question of whether these styles really meet the Islamic requirements. On the counter argument are those who say that eye-catching attire, even if concealing, defeats the purpose of covering. They also worry that chic application of the hijab will be misconstrued as a less rigid and more acceptable take on the Islamic dress code (Benlafquih). The counter argument contains with it two concerns. One is that the fashion hijab or the stylish hijab even though it might cover everything does not really meet all the requirements of the hijab. Although modesty and the hijab can be interpreted in different ways according to the Sunnah, there are some guidelines for Muslim women to follow. For example, one of these requirements is that the hijab in general terms be “loose and covering your body and nor revealing the shape of your body” (Benlafquih). This is an overall accepted definition of modest clothing. Some of the new styles do not meet this and thus do not fit the requirement. In addition, fashionable attire can attract attention instead of deferring it. This is also against the basic idea of the hijab, which keeps modesty by deterring the attention of men.

The second concern is that if this new style become associated essentially as the less fundamental forms of Islamic dress, it makes them more accepted and in turn makes the burkah or niqab more unacceptable (Benlafquih). However, wrong or right they are in form the hijab and the Islamic dresses are stylizing and becoming more fashionable. In addition, although there are women who voice this concern over the new styles of the hijab women who done on these new styles are increasing especially in modern Jordan.
Methodology:

My first methodology was observation. It was through observations done upon arrival to Amman, Jordan and time spent in Amman before the research project began that, the I noticed the different styles of the hijab. I also observed the increasing fashionization of the hijab in Amman, Jordan. It seemed that although most women here wore the hijab they were as fashionable if not more fashionable than women who did not wear the hijab. Thus, the main focus of this study was Jordanian Muslim women who are muhajabes between the ages of 18 and 40 in Amman. This age group was chosen because of the fact that they were the age group that for the most of my observation wore the new style of the hijab. In addition, most of the women in this age group and in this research are coming of age in contemporary time and are more likely going to be affected by modernization. They are the group that is part of and impacted more by the social change that is being brought by modernization.

My methodology was based on four components: interview, focus groups, surveys, and observations. First method was interviews with four Muslim women ages 30-40. While three of the interviews were formal interviews, one interview was an informal interview. Each interview had an approximate length of thirty minutes to an hour and a half. All the women that were interviewed wore the hijab although all wore it in different way. Two of the women wore the jilbab with the head covering and the two other women wore the head covering with trousers and long shirts or long sweaters. I met with these women at their work place, the University of Jordan, at the SIT building, or their homes. I only met with one interviewer at their home and she was a trusted acquaintance of my advisor. In addition, this was the only interview that I needed an interpreter for and the interviewee arranged for her cousin to also meet us at her home so that she could translate. Although my interview herself spoke some
English I was thankful that she had her cousin to interpret because it reduced the language barrier. However, it also felt like I was doing my interview with both women. Sometimes my translator would answer my question without even interpreting it to my interviewee. However, I feel like this does not really pose a problem for my research. I feel she only did this when she knew for sure what my interviewees answer was going to be. However, this was the only interview where I needed translator. In my other three interviews I was able to conduct the interviews fairly adequately without having a translator. I did not use a recording device for any of my interviews. I felt that from what I heard from the SIT staff, as well as other students, using recording devices usually added discomfort to the interview and interviewees became suspicious of the interviewer. Although my questions were not personal or sensitive in my opinion I felt like people would be less open about this subject and less open in their answers if I were recording them. Thus the best way to collect my data for the interviews was to write down thorough notes or take notes on the parts of the discussion that pertain to my topic. Sometimes the interviewees would go off on a tangent did not relate to my topic. Whenever this happened I would not interrupt the interviewee but would let them finish in order to be respectful but then bring them back to topic by repeating the question.

I received my contact information for all my interviewees through my advisor at SIT or through the SIT network. I adhered to the ethical standard of consent and had all of my interviews sign a consent form. The only one I don’t have a consent form for was the one informal interview that I conducted and for this I received an oral consent. From all the formal interviews I received permission to be able to use their names in my research paper and thus I will be using their names. However, for the one informal interview where I received an oral
I enjoyed the interviews because I could ask more open-ended questions. It also meant that I could ask more questions based on their answer and inquire more into their answers. Overall the interviews gave me good data and were an enjoyable process.

My second method of collecting data was through focus groups. Although I had not originally thought of conducting focus groups I find them to be a really important aspect of my research. I conducted two focus groups one for women and one for men. All the participants of my focus groups were college students between the ages of 18-25. My advisor organized both my focus groups for my research. The focus group for men was really important because it would be the only data I would collect on men’s perspective about the hijab. My male focus groups included five participants. Although all my participants spoke some English, it was necessary to have an interpreter. So my advisor acted as the interpreter for my male focus group. I thought that because my advisor is one of my participant’s older sister and a muhajabe herself it would change the men’s answers. However, to my surprise the men gave what seemed like candid answers and were not afraid to speak their minds because of my advisors presence. Although there is no way that their answers were not impacted by my advisor’s presence, their answers seemed honest and direct, and did not seem highly impacted by the
presence of my advisor. I conducted this focus group at the SIT building. Written consent was
taken from the participants of my male focus group, however, none of their names will be used
in my study. My second focus group for the women was conducted at the University of
Jordan the next day. After having such a candid and honest conversation with men I expected
an even more candid discussion with the women. There were also five women ages 18-23, they
were all students at the University of Jordan and spoke enough English that an interpreter was
not needed. The girls were very excited to discuss the hijab and were very open in their
answers. The only problem that arose was once when one of the girls did not agree with the
statement being made by the other girls, however, she was not going to voice it until I
specifically called on her. Thus it was important to pay attention not only to what the girls were
saying but also what they were not saying. Although the discussion within the time allocated
for the focus group provided great data my observations and discussions with the girls before
and after the focus groups also provided important data for my topic. Again in both of my
focus groups I did not have a recording device for the same reason mentioned above, instead I
took thorough notes. I enjoyed the focus groups the most because it had all the qualities of my
interview and it was more open and forthright, it was more personal.

My third methodology was surveys. I created a survey of 21 question and just two pages.
Although this might seem short, from what I had read from former students the shorter the
survey the better. My original draft of the survey was in English however I had my survey
translated to Arabic by a volunteer at SIT. Having a short survey and having it Arabic were
very helpful in conducting my survey. The only obstacle in this was that some of the
translations of the questions were not the exactly the same in the Arabic. For example, the
word fashionable was translated just to mean fashion. Another problem with the translation
was that between having somebody translate my survey and another person type up the translation, one question was completely omitted from the survey. I did not notice this until it was too late and although it was a very important question, the omitted question should not affect my data in any way. In addition, some of my questions were left unanswered by some participants. I do not believe this to be for any reason that will skew my data but just accidental and so these surveys were excluded from the data analysis for those certain questions but not from the entire data analysis. I conducted my surveys at the University of Jordan at one of the classes of an SIT staff who is a professor at the university. My method in collecting data was not completely random instead my surveys were given just to the girls in the class who wear the hijab. This might have some influence in my data because these girls were not a random sample but girls who wear the hijab in a psychology lecture class. In order to adhere to the ethical requirements oral consent was taken from the participants before the surveys were handed out.

Finally observations, I conducted observations at six hijab store. Two of the hijab stores were small shops near the University of Jordan. The other four shops were larger shops located in one of the more high-in shopping areas in Amman. I had a translator with me at each of the six hijab stores. The translator asked oral permission for me to be able to take pictures of the mannequins and the scarves found in these shops. I did not want to bother or interrupt the regular flow of the stores so I asked two to three key questions from the vendors but did not have interviews with the vendors. I also conducted observations of muhajabe girls at the University of Jordan. I recorded my observations by sketching the styles and did not take photos of any human subjects. I have also found that the best time to observe is while I am in a taxi going to different places because this way I can observe the different styles in different
places in Amman. Again I did not take any photos of any of the women that I observed but only sketched or wrote out my observations. Also in addition to taking pictures of the mannequins at the different hijab stores in order to record my data, I found that it is also helpful to record in writing what I observed. So I always carried around a little notebook with me when I went to observe these shops in order to jot down. Observations were one of the easiest, because there was minimal language barrier, and most enjoyable method of collecting data.

Findings:

This research investigated the rhetoric of the modern hijab. It did this by looking at whether the hijab is dynamic or static. It explored this question by looking into the new styles of the hijab brought by modernization and westernization of the hijab. It also tried to investigate the agency that is this new style of the hijab gave to women. This research hypothesizes that: (1) the hijab is dynamic and not static, and it has changed in style because of modernization and westernization. (2) The new styles of the hijab are not absolutely religious. (3) It hypothesizes that the new rhetoric of the hijab and the new styles of the hijab give Muslim muhajabe women agency instead of taking away their agency. Through my findings and my research I also try to disprove the idea that the hijab is one of the many outdated practices of the Islam. The research collected data from 47 surveys of Muhajabe women, 4 interviews of muhajabe women, and 2 focus groups. The findings of this research in some ways proved my hypotheses right while in other ways disproving some parts of my hypothesis. However, it has to again be noted that this findings come only from 61 human subjects and should not be used to generalize to all of Jordan or to all Muslims.

The right or wrong hijab:
If one goes to the University of Jordan or looks into the streets of Jordan, one can see many different styles of the hijab. Women wear the veil in all kinds of manners and wear many different kinds of styles of the hijab in general terms, including the abaya, the veil with jeans and shirts, and the jilbab, etc. Even with in jeans and shirts there are girls who wear tight shirts with tight jeans and the veil, while some wear looser longer shirts, with looser jeans, and the veil. One can even find a difference in the way the abaya is worn, there are girls who wear the loose abaya and those who wear tight the fitted abaya. Even with the jilbab there are those who were a loose and long jilbab and those who wear a tight fitting or shorter jilbab. In my first observations in Amman I had already come to find that there is diversity in the forms of hijab. I wanted to know whether this was because of modernization and fashionization. In my first interview with Dr. Dua I learned that it was not just because of modernization and fashionization that the hijab has so many different forms instead it was a religious reason as well. The reason being that there is “no certain model for modesty, you can be fashionable.” So although the reasons for the new styles could be modernization or fashionization, it had religious implications as well.

However, religiously there is the right and wrong kind of hijab and some of the new styles that I had observed were not the right kind of hijab. All of my participants including the men admitted to there being a right and wrong kind of hijab. Dr. Dua, an expert on Islam and a women who wears the loose jilbab, said that although there is no certain style for modesty there are some key requirements. These are the three that she mentioned; making sure what you wear is not tight, that it is not see through, and covering your hair and wearing long clothe and garments to cover your hair. Dr. Khaloud, another interviewee also said that there is not one style but there are two main proponents. It cannot be see through and it cannot be tight,
describing the shape of the body. One of the examples that she gave as an example of the wrong type of hijab was the tight jeans and short shirts. However, this style is one of the many styles that I observed at the University of Jordan. I saw many girls who wore tight jeans and tight tops while at the same time covering their hair. Before having this discussion and doing more research on this I had assumed that because they were covering their hair and were wearing long sleeves and long jeans that they met the requirements of the hijab but this was not the case.

In addition, it is not just the general hijab that has a right and wrong but also the veil itself. One of the styles that I had seen frequently in Jordan that I had never seen before was the hijab with the big bumb in the back. This bumb is created either by a flower clip or by using a yogurt jar. Furthermore, I had seen girls wear all very colorful veils. According to Reem, who wears loose trousers with long shirts or long sweaters, when it comes to these styles of the hijab. “what is the point of the hijab if you are attracting men’s attention.” The point of the hijab according to all of my participants was to show modesty and not to attract men’s attention. According to Reem really colorful or stylish veils attracted attention and thus defeated the purpose of the hijab. In addition, Dr. Khaloud and Reem believed that the veil with a big bump was wrong because the Prophet had prophesized that there will come women with humps on their heads like a camel and these women will not enter heaven. So this style of the veil although donned on by many women that I had observed in Jordan was wrong and even in a way sinful.

Most of the women I had seen that donned on these false or wrong styles of the hijab were young. So I though that my focus group which included University of Jordan students, ages between 18-23, would have a differing opinion about this right or wrong hijab. However, when
I conducted my focus group for the women at the University of Jordan, the first thing that the women did was pull a girl wearing the abaya and say “this is the right kind of hijab.” They also pulled in a girl that was wearing a loose jilbab as an example of the other right kind of hijab. Four of the girls in my focus group had on tight jeans and a long shirt or long cardigans with a tight shirt underneath. One girl had on loose cargo pants with a loss top, and a long cardigan. All their veils matched with their shirts or cardigans. One had one a blue veil, another light purple, the other what they described as Burberry styled veil, and another a red veil. From what I saw I thought that they met the requirements of the hijab while being very stylish. They were the perfect examples of the new style of the hijab that combined both the West and East. However, the second thing they did after telling me that the abaya or the jilbab were the right hijab was to tell me that they were wearing the wrong hijab. They then went to say that what they were wearing was the half-half hijab. Step by step they wished to move to the correct forms of the hijab, like the abaya or the jilbab. Four of the girls agreed with this, however, one girl said that although she knows hers is not the correct form of hijab she does not wish to move to the abaya or the jilbab.

In addition, they also remarked on the veil with the bump as harem (meaning forbidden or sinful in Arabic). When they see the girls wearing this style, one of the girls in my focus group said that they think, “her style or her fashion is not good.” When we walked out of the focus group two girls walked past one of the girls in my focus group and myself. This girl had on tight jeans and tight short shirts with the veil with the bump. As soon as she saw them one of the girls in my focus group turned around to me and said, “you see that, that is the wrong hijab, how can you wear the hijab but wear tight things like that.” This kept happening during all the two hours that I spent after my focus group with two to of the girls from my focus
group. They would point out a girl and snicker, laugh, or tsk tsk a girl walking by that they did not believe had the right kind of hijab. They did this not only to girls wearing tight jeans and tight shirts but also to girl who were wearing the more fitting abaya. Although the girls did not give me specific requirements for the hijab, what they thought was the wrong and the right hijab matched the specific requirements given to me by my interviewees who were older or I would assume more religious from our conversations.

Even in the survey, although 43% of my participants marked that they wore the colorful hijab with jeans and blouse, most of them did not choose colorful and stylish with jeans and blouse as the most acceptable form of the hijab. Instead 68% choose that the most acceptable hijab form was covering your hair and wearing loose clothing. Although the small difference in wording, adding the stylish part, might have led them to choose the loose clothing option. I believe that it was not a matter of wording because of the results from the focus group. Although all of them wore stylish or colorful hijab with jeans and blouse they said that the more acceptable hijab was loose clothing like the abaya or the jilbab, or even dresses and skirts. So even within the younger generation, which I have observed follows the new styles and wears the jeans and blouse style more according to my survey, they know the difference between the right and wrong hijab. More than that all the girls in my focus group and majority of the girls in the survey identify as wearing the less acceptable form of the hijab, which I consider is the major new style.

For me this proves that the hijab is not static, it is not this traditional piece of cloth that is in its own bubble and is not affected by what is going on around it. If it were an absolute religious clothe there would not be so many women that wear what they consider to be the less acceptable form of the hijab. Instead the fact that most in my study wore what they considered
to be the less acceptable form of the hijab shows that, although religion and tradition are important, other forces affect the hijab. I believe that if it were just this absolutely religious clothing most of my participants would have worn loose clothing with the veil instead of jeans and blouse with the veil. It proves my hypothesis that the reasons behind these new styles are beyond just religion; I believe that some of the reasons for these new styles are modernization, westernization, and fashion.

*The new styles:*

So if my participants believe that they are not wearing the most acceptable hijab, religiously, why is it that they wear these new styles? When I asked the participants in my focus group why the girls do not wear the abaya or jilbab if they thought that was the most appropriate one, they all said that it was hard to function in. When I asked the male participants they all thought that to be too fashionable and wear tight stuff was not good, however all of them agreed that the abaya wasn’t a good option either. They believed that the women will face “challenges in their daily life” if they wear the abaya especially with the niqab. This was not just the thought of my younger participants. When I asked Reem why she wears trousers she said because she feels that skirts, abayas, or thobes are not comfortable for the nature of her work. So it seems that convenience of the new styles in functioning in the outside world trumps such thing as the thobe or the abaya. In my observations, I saw many girls who wear the abaya and 26% of girls from my survey reported wearing the abaya. However, the number of girls who reported wearing the hijab with jeans and blouse was 56% and even in my observations I saw more women who wear the hijab with jeans and blouse than any other style of the hijab. In modern Jordan more girls are in the University of Jordan and more girls are working outside the house. I believe that some women have left the home as their only sphere and have joined
All the women I surveyed and all the women in my focus groups all go to school in a gender integrated campus. All the women I interviewed also worked outside the house and two of the women I interviewed wear the hijab with trousers and long shirts. These things I believe make these women part of the modernization. For these modernized women the new styles of the hijab are more functionally adequate in comparison to the other forms, like the abaya or jilbab, that are the more appropriate forms of the hijab.

In addition to modernization and function, I feel the most important reason these styles are rising is because of westernization and fashion. Westernization has meant that even styles and fashion in Amman have become dominated by Western styles. For example, in all the hijab stores that I went to or the normal non hijab stores that I went too, all the cloth that I saw were for the most part Western clothes. Of course a lot of the Islamic dress stores had the abaya and the jilbab selection however, the 3 of the 4 Islamic dress stores that I went to most of the cloth were of western style. The girls in my focus group talked about how although they have chosen to be muhajabes when they see girls wearing western cloth like, shorts skirts or dresses on tv or something they wish they can do that to but they cant. They said that it was hard to be a muhajabe because of this dilemma. The Westernization of fashion was also a topic that my male group addressed. They talked about how popular shows like Rubie from Lebanon and shows from Turkey show Muslim girls wearing Western style clothes. They said that these shows and these styles are influential in the styles of the hijab that girls in Amman wear. I believe one way these girls deal with this struggle of the Westernization of fashion is through the new styles of the hijab. They go shopping at normal stores, non-hijab stores, but they buy things that meet the requirements. They buy short dresses to wear as shirts and tank tops and halter-tops to wear under their cardigans. From my observation, I have also taken notice of this
hijabization of Western cloth. For example, things I would wear as a dress or with leggings, I have seen girls wear them as shirts with jeans or loose trousers, etc. Even Reem says that she goes shopping in London and although they are not Islamic dress stores she buys things that meet the requirements. My participants like Reem and the girls from my focus groups use Western fashion and Western styles to meet the requirements of the hijab. What is interesting about this is that new styles of hijab have formed from the mixing of these Western styles with the requirement of the hijab.

It is not surprising that Western styles and fashion have impacted the styles of the hijab. Style is very important in this new hijab. All my participants agreed that it is ok to be fashionable as long as you are meeting the requirements of the hijab. In addition, although 35 out 47 girls surveyed said that the hijab was not fashion, 43 out of 47 said that they felt stylish while wearing the hijab. In addition, 42 out of 47 of the girls surveyed said that they match their hijab to what they are wearing. 27 girls out of 47 strongly agreed and 16 girls agreed that looking beautiful with the hijab was important. Thus style and looking fashionable are a very important aspect of the new hijab. However, majority of those surveyed said that the hijab was not fashion and most of the girls in my focus group said that although some girls wear the hijab because it is fashion that is not right. Thus, conforming the hijab to fashion is not the point of the new styles but instead to conform fashion to the hijab. So although I had assumed that the fashionization of the hijab is a clear example of its dynamism, it is really the hijabization of modern and Western fashion that shows the dynamism of the hijab.

These new styles are wrong, in some ways, according to the requirements set out by the Sunnah and by many of my participants. However, I believe that this is the way that the hijab has evolved to meet the needs of modernization. The hijabization of modern and Western
fashion to meet the demands of the modernization and Westernization proves the dynamic nature of the hijab. It shows how the hijab has evolved, in order to fit more into modern Amman, through the formation of the new styles that combine both the Western fashion with the requirements of tradition and culture. The new styles prove that the hijab is not the symbol for the outdated practice of Islam but instead the symbol for the dynamism of the Islam. The new styles of the hijab are part of the social change in Amman, because they are a way to keeping with culture and religion while at the same time being apart of the modernization, marked especially by fashion.

*Agency of the new styles:*

My other hypothesis about the new rhetoric and the new styles of the hijab is that they gave agency to women. Although in the new style Western styles of fashion are hijabized, what is more is that Western rhetoric is also part of the new rhetoric of the hijab. The new rhetoric just like the style combines the Western rhetoric and Eastern rhetoric. As mentioned in the literary review the new rhetoric of hijab calls for women to veil by exposing or commenting on the objectification of women in the West. In this way the new rhetoric combines Western discourse on the objectification of women, to create a new rhetoric of the hijab. My first interview was with Dr. Dua who does research on the relationship between men and women in Islam. The first thing that she told me was that keeping modesty tells the other sex “look at my mind and my personality and not my body.” Dr. Khaloud even said that the right hijab is “a reservation for women, not to deal with as a sexual object.” Reem also commented on this aspect of the hijab saying that after she started wearing the hijab she felt “more comfortable and more respected especially by men.” In addition, Reem also said that “because I can wear whatever I want, why should I reveal my self to everybody.” None my interviews made
explicit comparison to the West and its objectification of women. However, I feel that these statements fall under the new discourse of the hijab that has formed in response to the Western objectification of women, especially in the wake of negative Western rhetoric about the hijab. This new rhetoric in turn gives Muslim women agency according to what my interviewees said. By choosing to wear the hijab women gain the agency of being able to do three things. One is to interact with men with out breaking the religious and even cultural moral obligations. Second in this interaction they are able to gain the agency by being able to interact with men on the basis of what they claim is their intellectual make up and not their physical make up. Third, women get to choose to whom they show her beauty and body too and that is agency in itself.

However, there is a counter argument to this. When I did my female focus group the first thing that one of the girls said to me was that the hijab is “not show of you body or beauty not to show your attractiveness, just one guy gets to see it, your all his and even how your look is his, your beauty, your hair is his.” All the girls in the group agreed with this statement. In my male focus group one of the boys also said, and all the others agreed, that the hijab is necessary because “the beauty of a girl belongs to her husband and her family.” The fact that women’s beauty does not belong to them but to their families and their husbands, even if she chooses him, takes away from her agency. According to the participants of my focus groups the beauty of a women does not really belong to her. It belongs to her family and her future husband. So if her beauty does not truly belong to her then she cant have agency over something that does not belong to her. Thus even if she is not sexually objectified that does not mean she has agency. Sexual objectification occurs in the West because the female body is put in the public gaze by the society. However, the “desexualization” of the female body comes from the fact that the
female body is taken out to the public gaze, according to my interviewees and focus group participants, not because it belongs to the woman but to her family and to her husband. Thus in one society the female body belongs to the public and in the other the female body belongs to private sphere but in both it is not through the agency of women that this happens, but through society.

**Conclusion:**
The rhetoric of the hijab in a way has stayed the same. Majority of the women that were participants in this research claimed that they wore it because it was a command from Allah. However, the rhetoric of the modern hijab shows us that indeed the hijab is dynamic. Although the researcher tried to prove this by showing the fashionization of the hijab, it turns out that the real proof of its dynamism is the hijabization of modern and Western fashion. This research has come to conclude also that the dynamism of the hijab also lays in the fact that such factors such as modernization and Westernization affect it. The new styles of the hijab prove that the hijab is not in this secluded bubble of tradition but is affected by the social change and modernization that is happening in Amman, Jordan. More than that the new styles and it wears convey the message that they are going use modernization and Westernization in their own way to meet the demands of modernizations and the demands of their tradition and religion. They convey the message that they are not in the past but they are also not in the present that is dictated by the West and has no space for them. Like their clothe, by using this new style of the hijab women are going to create a space for themselves that is neither traditional nor western. The hijab is not loosing its religious meaning or changing in its meaning but evolving in style to keep with modernization and social change. This I believe is the rhetoric of the modern hijab that goes beyond just religion. In addition the other rhetoric of the modern hijab that uses Western objectification of women as a way to vitalize the hijab as factor of agency for Muslim
women is in some ways correct but in some ways incorrect according the findings of this research. Some participants claimed that the hijab gave women agency especially when it comes to dealing with the relationship between men and women. None of the less, I believe that although the hijab can carry this agency with it, especially from the religion, socially or culturally it does not really give women agency. Instead the hijab socially is a way to take a women’s beauty out of the gaze of the public not to put it in her hands but in the hands of the private sphere of society, like her husband or her family. Thus the hijab does not culturally give women agency but religiously according to some participants it does give women agency.

These findings are important because they prove that at least within those who participated in this research, the idea the hijab is one example of the outdated practices of Islam is not true at all. Instead, this research proves the ability of the hijab to evolve and its dynamic nature. Islam and modernity is one of the major topics in the West and in the Middle East today. As the hijab has become the biggest symbol of Islam, by proving its dynamic nature this research will aid those scholars who claim that Islam and modernity are compatible. It also shows that this modernization of Islam might not be the exact same as the modernization of the West. The new styles of the hijab and the result of this research prove that Islam can create a new space in modernization that is neither Western or traditional, but something new, just like this styles, something that meets the requirements of modernization as well as the requirements of culture, traditions, and religion. Just as the women in my study have met modernization on their own terms so can Islam. However, again these are only the speculations and opinions of the researcher and not facts. There is no way that the one can generalize the findings of this small project to the whole of Jordan, the whole Muslim world or a massive topic such as Islam and modernity.
Limitation of the Study:

The first obvious limitation to this study is that it is based on a small sample of participants and was completed in a very short amount of time. Another limitation concerning the participants is that they were all recruited through the SIT staff and thus were not completely random. For example, there was not much diversity in the economic status of all my participants. Most of my participants lived in west Amman and were from middle to upper middle class. In addition, all of my survey and both focus groups included participants from University of Jordan, which also narrows down the diversity of my sample. Another limitation to my study is that most of my participants were between the ages of 18-23; only my interviews were with women that were older, between the ages of 30-45. So one of the biggest limitations of my study was the limited diversity in my sample pool of participants. Another very obvious limitation is the language barrier. Although I only needed a translator for one interview and the male focus group and all my surveys had been translated into Arabic, the language barrier still existed. Sometimes my participants did not understand my questions fully or did not get the theoretical bases of my study. I believe this might have caused some of my questions to be hard to ask and to be hard to answer. In addition, I feel that the fact that there is bad attention given to the hijab in the West and that fact that I am a Westerner might have affected the answers of my interviewees. They might have wanted to present the hijab in a positive light to me because they wanted to disprove the misconceptions about the hijab.

Further Recommendation:

The hijab and modernization is a vast topic that much research has been conducted on but still needs much more research. The first recommendation for future studies about the hijab would be to widen the sampling pool of participants in diversity. For example, further study
could be done on the differing opinions and styles of the hijab by generation. While I have
been in Amman and during my research I have noticed that older women have a different style
of hijab than the younger generation. In addition, the reasons some older women wear the hijab
was different from what I found from the younger generation. For example, one older female
aged in the late thirties that I met in Amman told me that she wears it because she does not
want to be judged by her community. She said that as a younger girl she did not wear the hijab
but now that she is older, is married, and has children she feels that she must wear the hijab.
Thus from this I feel that it would be interesting to do the difference in reasons for wearing the
hijab and the ways of the wearing the hijab between the generations. In addition, further study
can also be done comparing the badia to Amman. One of the women that I interviewed Fatima
was born and raised in the badia but now lives in Amman. When I asked her whether there was
a difference in style between the badia and Amman, she was able to list many differences. One
of the differences that she spoke of was why women wear the hijab; from what she said the
badia women wear the hijab because it is tradition or culture and that all women are expected
to wear it but in Amman it is a choice. Thus it would also be interesting to do a comparative
study on why the hijab is worn and the difference in styles between Amman and the badia. In
addition, it would also be interesting to do a study about young girls feelings towards the hijab.
As mentioned in the introduction one of the reasons that sparked my interest in the hijab is my
five years old host sister in Amman. From my observations of her and from what she says she
seems to want to wear the hijab because it looks pretty and not necessarily because it is
religious. Thus it would be interesting to study the feelings toward the hijab of the younger
generation. The fact that other ISPs or many researches have been done about the hijab should
not deter other SIT students from conducting a project on the hijab because the topic is enormous and still needs much research.

Work Cited:


Personal Interviews.
Dr. Khaloud Allozi. Personal Interview. 16 Apr. 2012.
Dr. Dua Fino. Personal Interview. 15 Apr. 2012.

Appendix A:

Graphs:

A: I WEAR THE HIJAB BECAUSE IT IS A COMMAND FROM G-D
B: I WEAR THE HIJAB BECAUSE I FEEL SAFER.
C: I WEAR THE HIJAB BECAUSE MY FAMILY

IT IS IMPORTANT TO LOOK BEAUTIFUL IN THE HIJAB.

DO YOU FEEL THAT THIS HIJAB IS FASHION?
WHEN I WEAR THE HIJAB I FEEL STYLISH.

WHAT IS THE ACCEPTABLE HIJAB?

THE STYLES OF THE PARTICIPANTS:
APPENDIX B
CONSENT MATERIALS
"FOCUS GROUPS"

THE RHETORIC OF THE HIJAB.
MIHRET WOLDESEMAIT DUKE UNIVERSITY, DURHAM N.C. USA.

You are invited to participate in a focus group for a research study by Mihret Woldesemait, an independent undergraduate researcher at Duke University in the United States. The goal of this research study is to produce a descriptive case study about the rhetoric of the modern hijab.

This focus group will take about 30min to 1 hour. You do not have to agree to be in the focus group if you do not want to.

Most of the questions I will ask are about the hijab and how you think it is perceived and used.

Although I do not anticipate any of the questions I will ask to be sensitive or personal, you have the right to refuse to answer any question and to terminate your participation at any time and for any reason. If you want to terminate your participation, please let me know at that time.

All the information I collect during this focus group will be used for research purposes only. If you terminate your participation I will not use your information.

You will not receive monetary compensation for participating in the focus group, but a copy of the final study will be made available to you upon request.

Your privacy is important to me. I will not collect or report on personal information about you, such as your name. However, I can only protect your confidentiality in my research materials. While I ask that the information shared during the focus group is kept private, I cannot guarantee your confidentiality outside of my research. Though I would like for everyone to participate openly and honestly, you are not obligated to share information about yourself that you do not want others to know.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 07898554751, or Dr. Raed Al-Tabini, Mokhtar Bouba, SIT Jordan Academic Director, at (962) 077 7176318 or raed.altabini@sit.edu.

If you agree to participate in this focus group, please indicate and sign below:

[ ] I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY

Date       Participant’s Signature

_______________________________   ________________________________
Researcher’s Signature     Participant’s Printed Name

_______________________________   ________________________________
CONSENT MATERIALS
“INTERVIEWS & SURVEYS”

THE RHETORIC OF THE HIJAB.
MIHRET WOLDESEMAIT DUKE UNIVERISITY, DURHAM N.C. USA.

Instructions:
Please read the following statements carefully and mark your preferences where indicated. Signing below indicates your agreement with all statements and your voluntary participation in the project. Please ask the researcher if you have any questions regarding this consent form.

I am aware that this interview is conducted by an independent undergraduate researcher with the goal of producing a descriptive case study about the rhetoric of the modern hijab.

I am aware that the information I provide is for research purposes only.

I am aware that I have the right to full anonymity upon request, and that upon request the researcher will omit all identifying information from both notes and drafts.

I am aware that I have the right to refuse to answer any question and to terminate my participation at any time, and that the researcher will answer any questions I have about the study.

I am aware of and take full responsibility for any risk, physical, psychological, legal, or social, associated with participation in this study.

I am aware that I will not receive monetary compensation for participation in this study, but a copy of the final study will be made available to me upon request.

I [do / do not] give the researcher permission to use my name and position in the final study.

I [do / do not] give the researcher permission to use my organizational affiliation in the final study.

I [do / do not] give the researcher permission to use data collected in this interview in a later study.

Date _______________________________ Participant’s Signature _______________________________

Researcher’s Signature _______________________________ Participant’s Printed Name _______________________________

This is the consent form that the staff here gave us and I believe it is the most culturally approriate form here.

Thank you for participating!

Questions, comments, complaints, and requests for the final written study can be directed to:
Dr. Raed Al-Tabini, Mokhtar Boubia, SIT Jordan Academic Director : Telephone (962) 077 7176318 Email: raed.altabini@sit.edu
Appendix C: Surveys

Survey in English:
Age: 18-20  21-25  26-30  31-35  36-40
Gender:  FEMALE

1- I consider myself:
   Very religious
   Religious
   Somewhat religious
   Not religious

2- I pray:
   A. I pray five times a day
   B. I pray once a day
   C. I pray on Fridays
   D. I don't pray

3- Reasons for wearing the hijab:
   A. I wear the Hijab because it is a command from G-d.
   B. I wear the Hijab because I feel safer.
   C. I wear the Hijab because my family wants me too.
   D. I wear the Hijab because my friends do.
   E. I wear the Hijab because it is my culture.

4- I believe the hijab is:
   A. Required for all Muslim women
   B. A choice for Muslim women
   C. Cultural and Religious
   D. Cultural
   E. Religious.

6- Family influence
   A. My family encouraged me to wear the hijab
   B. My family discouraged me to wear the hijab
   C. My family did not care whether I wore the hijab
   D. My family forced me to wear the hijab.

5- What kind of Hijab do you wear-
   A. I wear a subtle color hijab with a long jacket
   B. I wear a tight, colorful hijab with an abaya
   C. I wear a tight, colorful hijab with a blouse and jeans
   D. I wear a loose hijab with a blouse and jeans
   E. I wear a loose, simple hijab with an abaya
   F. I wear a loose, black, nicab with an all black abaya

8 At what age did you start wearing the hijab-
9 How often do you go shopping for a hijab:

10 How much would you pay for a hijab

Price range:

11 It is important to look fashionable (beautiful) with the hijab
Strongly Agree   Agree   No Opinion   Strongly Disagree   Disagree

12 Do you make sure to match your hijab with what you wear Yes or No

13 Do you feel that your hijab is fashionable
YES   NO

14 When I wear the hijab I feel stylish.
Yes   No

15 I feel that the kind of hijab that I wear helps be modest while at the same time modern.
Yes or no

16 I paint my nails Yes or No
17 I get my eyebrows done Yes or No
18 I put on makeup everyday Yes or No
19 I get my hair done Yes or No
20 I wear accessories with my hijab: (like hair clips under the hijab or pretty pins) Yes or No

21 I feel that the thobe is outdated? Yes or No

22 In your opinion, what is an acceptable hijab?
   a. Just covering your hair
   b. Covering your hair and face
   c. Covering your hair and wearing loose clothing
   d. Colorful and stylish with jeans and a blouse
   e. White or dark colors with the long jacket
   f. All forms are acceptable
دراسة الاستقصائية عن الحجاب

العمر: 18-20 21-25 26-30 30-36 36-40 40-45 45-55 55-65
الجنس: أنثى
1. أنا أعتبر نفسي:
   أ. أميدين جداً
   ب. متوسط
   ج. غير متدين
   2 - أنا أصلي:
   أ. أنا أصلي خمس مرات في اليوم
   ب. أصلي مرة واحدة يوميا
   ج. أصلي الجمعة فقط
   د. أتي لا أصلي
3. أسباب ارتدائي الحجاب:
   أ. أنا ارتداء الحجاب لأنه أمر من الله
   ب. أردتي الحجاب لأنني أشعر بأنني أكثر أنا
   ج. أنا ارتداء الحجاب لأن عائلتي تريدها
   د. أنا ارتداء الحجاب لأن أصدقائي والمحيط يرتدونه
   ه. أردتي الحجاب لأنه هو جزء من الثقافة
4. أعتقد أن الحجاب:
   أ. مطلوب لجميع النساء مسلم
   ب. اختيار للنساء مسلم
   ج. أمر ديني وثقافي
5. تأثير العائلة على الحجاب:
   أ. عائلتي تشجع على ارتداء الحجاب
   ب. عائلتي لا تشجع على ارتداء الحجاب
   ج. عائلتي لا يهمهم ما إذا ارتدت الحجاب
   د. عائلتي ضد ارتداء الحجاب
6. ما هو نوع من الحجاب الذي ترتديه:
   أ. أنا ارتداء الحجاب ملون مع سترة طويلة
   ب. الحجاب الملون مع العباءة
   ج. حجاب ملون مع بلوزة وبنطلون جينز
   د. حجاب فضفاض مع ملابس فضفاضة
   ه. الحجاب سبلي مع العباءة
   ونقوم فحجاب أسود فضفاض، العباءة السوداء
8. في أي سن ارتدت الحجاب؟
   40-36 35-31 30-26 25-21 20-18 17-10
9 كم مرة تذهب للتسوق للحصول على الحجاب:

10 ما هو المبلغ الذي دفع لشراء الحجاب

11 من المهم أن أظهر جملياً مع الحجاب
أوافق بشدة
أوافق
لا رأي
لا
لا نعم 12 هل تتطلب الحجاب مع ما ترتديه
لا نعم 13 هل تشعر أن الحجاب هو الموضة
لا نعم 14 عندما أرتدي الحجاب أشعر أنني أنيق.
لا نعم 15 أضع المناكير
لا نعم 16 أعطني بمشير الحجاب حاجبي
لا نعم 17 أعطني بمظهر الحجاب حاجبي
لا نعم 18 أضع الماكياج كل يوم
لا نعم 19 أعطني بشعر
لا نعم 20 أرتدي الأكسسوارات مع حجابي (مثل مقاطع الشعر تحت الحجاب أو دبابيس جميلة) نعم أو لا

21 أشعر أن ارتداء الثوب موضة قيمة
لا نعم

22 في رأيك، ما هو الحجاب مقبول؟
أ. الذي يغطي فقط شعرك
ب. الذي يغطي لك الشعر والوجه
ج. الذي يغطي شعرك وارتداء ملابس فضفاضة
د. الحجاب الملون والابيض مع الجينز وبلوزة
ه. الحجاب الأبيض أو الداكن الألوان مع سترة طويلة
و. جميع أشكال الحجاب مقبولة