



# What Is Veiling? (Islamic Civilization and Muslim Networks)

*Sahar Amer*

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Ranging from simple head scarf to full-body burqa, the veil is worn by vast numbers of Muslim women around the world. *What Is Veiling?* explains one of the most visible, controversial, and least understood emblems of Islam. Sahar Amer's evenhanded approach is anchored in sharp cultural insight and rich historical context. Addressing the significance of veiling in the religious, cultural, political, and social lives of Muslims, past and present, she examines the complex roles the practice has played in history, religion, conservative and progressive perspectives, politics and regionalism, society and economics, feminism, fashion, and art.

By highlighting the multiple meanings of veiling, the book decisively shows that the realities of the practice cannot be homogenized or oversimplified and extend well beyond the religious and political accounts that are overwhelmingly proclaimed both inside and outside Muslim-majority societies. Neither defending nor criticizing the practice, *What Is Veiling?* clarifies the voices of Muslim women who struggle to be heard and who, veiled or not, demand the right to live spiritual, personal, and public lives in dignity.

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