



# Generation M: Young Muslims Changing the World

*Shelina Zahra Janmohamed*

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What does it mean to be young and Muslim today? There is a segment of the world's 1.6 billion Muslims that is more influential than any other, and will shape not just the future of Muslims, but also the world around them: meet 'Generation M'. From fashion magazines to social networking, the 'Mipsterz' to the 'Haloodies', halal internet dating to Muslim boy bands, Generation M are making their mark. Shelina Janmohamed, award-winning author and leading voice on Muslim youth, investigates this growing cultural phenomenon at a time when understanding the mindset of young Muslims is critical. With their belief in an identity encompassing both faith and modernity, Generation M are not only adapting to Western consumerism, but reclaiming it as their own.

## **Generation M: Young Muslims Changing the World Details**

Date : Published November 30th 2016 by I.B. Tauris (first published April 30th 2016)

ISBN : 9781780769097

Author : Shelina Zahra Janmohamed

Format : Paperback 352 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Religion, Islam, Feminism



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## From Reader Review Generation M: Young Muslims Changing the World for online ebook

### Lailaturrahmi says

Buku yang segar, membahas mengenai generasi muda muslim di seluruh dunia dan tantangan yang mereka hadapi, mulai dari menjalani hidup sebagai minoritas dengan pilihan terbatas, isu-isu yang mendiskreditkan muslim, hingga kemudahan hidup yang ditawarkan oleh gawai pintar dan internet. Sebagian besar menarik, meski ada yang menurut saya terlalu bebas. Sayangnya mendekati halaman-halaman terakhir saya mulai jemu, entah karena terlalu banyak contoh dan nama-nama yang hadir dalam waktu bersamaan (ya, buku ini merupakan kumpulan kisah berbagai muslim) atau apa.

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### Matty-Swytla says

This is a fluff piece about the power of muslim consumerism or better yet about muslims finally entering the modern world of advertising and branding through sheer exposure to western style of living. No tackling of uncomfortable facts about rights of other religious minorities in muslim countries or the tribalism still inherent in muslim societies; no, the focus is on western countries offering their (increasingly vocal and entitled) muslim minorities halal goods and services. Yay, progress... Let's celebrate the rise of global trade in halal goods and muslim apparel, and forget the oil used during the long transportation cycles. While eco-minded people go local and reduce their spending on frivolous things, muslims are taking over the conspicuous consumption of luxury goods, showing with them just how prosperous and muslim they are. Materialism much?

Let's just gloss over that islam is predominantly a totalitarian political doctrine that enforces its laws and mores on all people regardless of their religion or non-belief, and one that plundered goods and knowledge of conquered people to further its own cause. Let's also indulge in the fantasy of muslim merchants trading in exotic goods (disregarding heavy taxation and monopolies) and forget about the slave trade from both Africa and European countries. No - that never happened. It's time of the female muslim entrepreneur selling halal cosmetics, ready-made meals, and vitamin D supplements for those fully-veiled women who never get a whiff of sun exposure. Progress, I guess.

And yes, according to the author, women are sooooo liberated in their 'modest' clothing. Please, there's a difference between modest and hiding-behind-a-cloth-wall. If everyone has to wear a hijab or niqab to signal their religious belief, how is that liberating? Aren't we supposed to be more focused on people's merits than their religion? So why put it front and centre? And please don't try to say exercising in sports hijabs is more comfortable than the usual sports gear. Not all sports clothes are revealing - there's some implied stereotyping of western fashion and clothes as super revealing and sexy right there. No, atheist women as well wear what you'd call 'modest clothing'. A nice euphemism for sharia-compliant, but hey, it's all about rebranding things to make people swallow the rest of the religious bull as well. Like child-brides for example - so progressive.

What I get from the book is only this: muslims saw some things they liked in the west and modified them to fit their religious requirements. Now its hailed as some new invention, something revolutionary (when it already existed before - like animal cruelty free products, vegan options, bio products). I'm still waiting for something original here; and no, a new fashion store for muslim clothes or a prayer app do not count.

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### **Megan Sanks says**

An informative and interesting read!

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### **Lauren says**

This is a timely and really important work, in an age when most mention of Islam in mainstream discourse is tied with fear of radical Islamism, terror, war and far too often tinged with Islamophobia. Seeking to broaden this narrative and focus on the majority of Muslim people, Shelina Janmohamed has created a positive profile of some of the main players on the global stage - millennial Muslims, or, as she has named them, Generation M.

In this study, she passionately paints the picture of what it is like being a young Muslim today, particularly a young Muslim consumer. In each chapter (that can be read as stand-alone essays), Janmohamed introduces and explains different facets of the millennial Muslim experience, such as the birth of a digital ummah through social media, Muslim entrepreneurship in diverse sectors such as fashion, tech and catering, and booming areas like the halal industry (and not just the meat one).

Generation M is seriously readable, Janmohamed writes with passion, fervour and pride of the demographic she wants to introduce, regularly incorporating their voices through case studies and quoting their own words and opinions.

As a non-Muslim, I also found it deeply informative (Janmohamed succinctly explains the Islamic concepts she then presents and analyses) and intensely thought provoking - dipping in and out since I received the reading copy I have learnt so much and confronted so many internalised assumptions.

It's a fantastic book and everybody should read it!

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### **Samantha C says**

I work in consumer insights and found this a fascinating book to read! Very detailed with lots of examples that Brands can learn from.

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### **Papatia Feauxzar says**

A must read! Shelina Zahra Janmohamed, British author of award winning Love in a Headscarf and vice president of the Islamic Branding consultancy Ogilvy Noor, has just released her new title Generation M. Generation M is a textualized documentary, exposing the diverse nature of young Muslim entrepreneurs of the 21st century. We could also say that it's an exposé by a Muslim insider who knows what it is like to be born Muslim, raised Muslim, and go through life as a Muslim with seemingly limited choices. The book nails the depiction of contemporary young Muslims: innovative, entrepreneurial, trend catchers and setters, steadfast in faith, and very passionate about improving their lifestyle because they believe that faith and modernity go hand in hand.

In my opinion, Generation M, the people, walks the fine line between innovation that adds to Islam and

innovation that doesn't add to our faith. Along the way, the lines get blurred a bit and this is where only the future will tell how Generation M handles these challenges. For now, their achievements are celebratory and really good PR.

Generation M the book is composed of 15 chapters split into five main parts. Part one introduces "Salaam, Generation M." Part two is about "The Global Muslim Lifestyle" while part three is "Culture: The New Muslim Cool". Part four is titled "The New Twenty-First Century Ummah" and finally part five is about "The Faithful Future."

In part one, Janmohamed says, "If publishers are guilty of monolithic misery memoirs, then Muslims must also take some of the blame for not sharing our universal experiences in a language and context that everyone can relate to." This spoke to me because it's true. Our narrative is still lacking, and we must all make the effort to be the curators of our time, of our true history.

In Part two, Janmohamed highlights how important halal and tayyab (organic and wholesome) are to Generation M. These concepts are matters that they don't play with. Be a shady vendor and you will not get away with it when they find out because they always do. We also see that halal and tayyab don't stop at meat consumption, they cover a wider radius of seeking out 'good' things.

In part three, we find out about Donna Auston and the reasoning behind #BlackMuslimRamadan, amongst other interesting Generation M happenings, while in part four, we see that Generation M is dedicated to changing the hijacked Muslim narrative and telling their own stories. They are global citizens and while there are disagreements and minority doctrines within the ummah, Generation M does not despair, they do their part within the community. Finally in part five, we get the full picture of Generation M. For them, Islam is a complete way of life. It's about living a balanced life that affects the societal, financial, and political sectors. It's not only about praying five times a day.

A few years ago, when I took a class on International Business as a requisite for my accounting degree, I learned that non-Muslim companies loved to package their products in green if they intend to sell them in Muslim countries especially the Middle East. When I learned that, being an African Muslim, it didn't bother me at all. It made sense. Muslims love green. I didn't even think, 'Wait a minute, this can raise issues of profiling, unintended stereotyping, etc.' After reading Generation M, I realize that young Muslims will not settle for this ready-made perception of them and it's their right to want the finer things the world has to offer. There are other colours in the colouring clip board they find attractive. They don't want just green, yellow or black. And this is to say that we are humans, just like non-Muslims, we aren't that different from anybody, like many think, and we aren't monolithic.

Generation M doesn't chronicle all the building blocks of Generation M, but it certainly snaps an accurate picture of the composition of this generation. In this book, I came across many Muslims changing the world, some new and some I already knew of. Truly, Generation M is so diverse they can't all fit in one book!

Above all, Generation M are very creative and crafty individuals masha Allah. They give new meanings to just about everything. The Muslim version of sushi was new to me... Start reading the book today to discover new Muslim inventions.

Generation M is available on Amazon and all major book sellers.

Originally published at SISTERS MAGAZINE

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## **Dharma Agastia says**

Pros:

- Extensive business insight on the new trends of young Muslims in developing and developed countries, especially related to the halal industry.
- Useful for gaining insight into the emerging Islamic purchasing trends.

Cons:

- It is often dull, as it repeats one idea ad nauseam throughout the book's numerous sections. Yes, Generation M is more progressive, more tech-savvy, and more assertive when it comes to their beliefs. The first 100 pages were enough to establish that. Beyond that, the book becomes repetitive.

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## **Amy Layton says**

Before I get started on my review, I have to tell you that my review is going to be affected by 2 things: 1) I'm white, and 2) I'm not Muslim. So, while this affects my reading of this book, I'd also take a look and see what Muslims have said in order to get a full feel for this book, and whether you should read it or not. That being said, I was thoroughly impressed by this book. I originally bought this book in London, at the ALEF bookstore (which is next to 221B Baker Street!), and decided on a whim that I needed to broaden my book horizons. What better way to do that than read a book on something I know next to nothing about?

I'm really glad that Generation M was the first book about Muslims that I read. It was very general, very global, (often citing the general millennial Muslims as the titular Generation M) which is perfect for somebody who needs a crash course on what it means to be Muslim. And, what makes it truly perfect for somebody who doesn't know much on this topic is that at the end, there's a little glossary, as well as citations and additional readings.

This book stimulated my subconscious--some things that are mentioned were things that I already vaguely knew, but never really put at the forefront of my mind, such as the fact that "more than one-third of today's Muslims are under 15, and nearly two-thirds are under 30. That means they have spent most or all of their live under shadow of 11 September 2001." I knew that Muslims' lives had been seriously and negatively affected since 9/11, especially those my own age, but having Janmohamed precisely and explicitly state this fact blew my mind--and that was only at the introduction of the book.

From there, she discusses a huge array of topics, such as what makes halal products halal, how the digital world has affected Muslims, the tie between faith and music, the relationship between faith and fashion, as well as business, advertising, and accountability. Before reading this book, there were probably 3 things that I could vaguely discuss about Muslims, and that'd be the debate around headscarves (as well as niqabs and burqas), stereotyping, and Daesh. Let's get real--that's not a lot by any means. And, they're fairly overused and stale topics (they're still extremely important, don't get me wrong!). But now, thanks to this book, I know so much more about faith, ummah, and ethics.

In all honesty, this book has only bettered me as a person and my mind. It's helped to debunk stereotypes, it's added to my vocabulary, and I have an entirely new layer of understanding. In my opinion, that's a successful book if I ever saw one. I think that this should be required reading for most, if not all, white people. I've learned so much from it, and I know quite a few others who would do well to learn from it as well.

Get the full review [here!](#)

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### **Fadilah says**

Versi yang saya baca adalah versi terjemahan Bahasa Indonesia. Tapi tak mengurangi substansi yang ada di buku ini, meskipun memang buku ini dibuat dari sudut pandang seorang muslim yang hidup di Inggris.

Generasi M di sini adalah Muslim yang diprediksi bisa menjadi salah satu target pasar terbesar di dunia di masa depan (yang cukup dekat). Silakan baca bagian awal buku, yang sudah cukup menyimpulkan bagian dalamnya. Namun jika ada waktu, tak masalah juga untuk memanatkan buku ini hingga akhir.

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### **Cam says**

There's a lot of potential in this book, including in the aim to foreground respondents' voices, but unfortunately in its current form it is a highly repetitive, padded out business report aimed at clueless white executives to convince them to "invest" in the "Generation M" market (Ogilvy Noor holds the copyrights to this book so maybe it's not surprising). The recurrent "they/Generation M" as sentence subject often comes across as simplistic and the lack of information about methodology doesn't help. I learnt a handful of new examples I wasn't aware of, but if you have a basic understanding of Islam, have ever interacted with young middle class Muslims or lived in a majority Muslim country most of the contents won't be particularly new.

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### **Francesca Pashby says**

I learnt some new things. Halal has a much wider meaning than I realised and haram is its opposite (a bit like tapu and noa in Maori). Ummah is a great concept and there is much to admire in it. The tension between individuality and collectivism I find hard to deal with as a Western feminist, and the tensions within Islam itself are obviously something Muslims need to come to terms with and find solutions for.

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### **Bernard O'Leary says**

Some bits of this are fascinating, like the halal sex toy industry; other bits are shockingly evasive, like a refusal to discuss LGBT issues apart from expressing sadness about the Pulse Massacre.

Mostly though, it's just quite dull. Janmohamed is the head of Ogilvy Noor, a brand consultancy firm that specialises in marketing to Muslims, and most of *Generation M* focuses on the Muslim as consumer. So we get insights along the lines of: Islamic Millennials like quality brands, they speak to their friends on the internet, and they use apps to help organise their lives. Some of them are very fashionable, and some of them have blogs. There's a lengthy section on halal where, I swear to god, you could replace "halal" with "gluten-free" and you'd have no idea this book was specifically about Muslims.

All in all, it reads like a brand book, or an extended in-flight magazine piece. It does recommend some good blogs though, so there is that. And if you want to learn how to market ready meals in Saudi Arabia, then this

book is essential reading.

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### **Nick says**

A rather dull book, which only takes a point of view in which muslims are entering the consumer market and how to reach to them.

The book talks about the “Ummah”, which is the global brother/sisterhood of believers, but I do not think many of what the book writes paint a picture that is much nicer and more flowery than what actually is.

While there is still many oppression against non-Muslims and other minority groups in predominantly muslim countries (Malaysia, Indonesia, etc), this book choose to ignore all that and instead only choose to write about the good, progressive, and playful side of Muslims.

Not a recommended read as it is biased and do not paint a true picture of what is actually happening globally.

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