

Introduction  
reformists the colonial  
reformists were  
looking at



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## **Introduction**

Islamic women have worn the veil since time immemorial. The debate on whether the use of the veil does any good to the society has always existed since prehistoric times and it exists even today.

This paper discusses how the veil became the symbol of Muslim civilization, what the veil meant to Islamic reformists and the clarity of the authors arguments.

## **The veil and Muslim civilization**

It can be argued that the veil was introduced by early Greek priests due to their faulty interpretation of the Islamic law. The earlier perception about women was so negative to the point that some people were quoted claiming that women were without soul. The veil portrayed the Islamic woman as inferior and without much purpose in the society in the old days. Since the civilization of any society is largely dependent on how all members of the society treat each other, then the cruel treatment of Islamic woman by the <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-reformists-the-colonial-reformists-were-looking-at/>

society as was usual in Egypt was a good measure of the pace of Muslim civilization. Most of the modernists and reformists that campaigned for fair treatment of the woman in the Islam community based most of their arguments on the use of the veil. This was due to the fact that the veil was associated with oppression of women. One of the reformists was quoted arguing that the Muslim woman was poorly mistreated in terms of empowerment through education, important roles in the society, her role in the family and most importantly the veil which was seen as a tool of alienation of the woman from the society.

The veil was associated with all the bad things such as dirt, unattractiveness and other negative things. The plight of Islamic women was attributed to Islamic religion which people saw as burying the woman alive behind the veil. The Islamic woman also looked at the other societies of the world especially Christians who treated their women with respect and dignity. They were the only community in the world that covered their women inside a veil. Since the veil was associated with oppression then with time it became the symbol of Muslim civilization (Ahmed 1).

### **What the veil meant to colonial reformists**

The colonial reformists were looking at liberating the Islamic community from the traditional setting to a more modern society that could fit with the other communities of the world. They saw that the biggest barrier to reforms was the way the Islamic community was treating their women.

The veil was associated with all the degradation to women and as such they saw that the best way to liberate the society was to put pressure on the

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issue of the veil. The reformists saw the veil as a symbol of oppression. By comparing the veiled Muslim woman with other liberated societies there was clear evidence to support their argument so that they would be successful in their reforms (Ahmed 1).

### **Clarity of the authors' arguments**

I agree with the way the author argues about the issue of the plight of the Muslim woman in the historic times and how the reformists handled the reform agenda by focusing on the treatment given to the Muslim woman. The author was able to clearly link the origin of the veil, the oppression of the Muslim woman and how the reformists handled the reform of the Muslim society by focusing on the veil.

### **Conclusion**

The veil issue is a very important aspect of the Muslim community for a very long time. The veil was used as a reform tool by early reformists especially in Egypt due to its relationship with oppression of women. The author was able to show clearly the way reformists viewed and argued about the veil and oppression of women and how the Islam community could be reformed by focusing on the issue of the veil.

### **Work Cited**

Ahmed, Leila. Women and Gender in Islam.

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