

THE LAST STRAW!
DESTROYING A ‘STRAW-MAN’
ARGUMENT
REFLECTIONS ON THE STATEMENT
“I WOULD PREFER MUSLIM WOMEN NOT
TO WEAR THE NIQĀB” (!?)
- 16th RAMADĀN 1427 AH
- 8/10/06 -

Indeed, all praise is due to Allāh, we praise Him, we seek His aid, and we ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of our actions and from the evil consequences of our actions. Whomever Allāh guides, there is none to misguide and whoever Allāh misguides there is none to guide. I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship except Allāh and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allāh.

To proceed:

In light of the recent remarks that have been expressed by a member of the British government that he considers it a hindrance to ‘communication’ when Muslim women wear the *niqāb*, the salafimanhaj.com team feel the need to clarify the ‘straw-man argument’, as it were and expose its more sinister and disturbing aims. The ‘Straw-mans’ argument is just one of a long line, of no doubt many more, attempts to shake, disturb and attack Islām and the Muslims in the UK. It follows on from a list of high-profile attacks on the *deen* by a variety of elements who all of a sudden are becoming much bolder in revealing what is truly in their hearts about Islām. Indeed, Allāh says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بَطَانَةً مِّن دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ خَبَالًا وَدُّوا مَا
عَنِتُّمْ قَدْ بَدَتِ الْبَغْضَاءُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَمَا تُخْفِي صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ
الْآيَاتِ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

“O you who have believed, do not take as intimate confides those other than yourselves (i.e. believers), for they will not spare you (any) ruin. They wish you would have hardship. Hatred has already appeared from their mouths, and what their breasts conceal is far greater. We have certainly made clear to you the signs, if you will use reason.”

{*Āli-Imrān* (3): 118}

This noble verse of the Qur’ān is particular pertinent to those thousands of Muslims who voted for the individual, via ‘democratic elections’ (!) who has now attacked the *niqāb* and he has repaid their servitude to him in this way!

In Islām modesty in dress and not wearing tight-clothing has to be adhered to by both men and women and in Islām although women and men are equal, they are different and different things attract each one to the other, hence the injunction of the *niqāb*.¹

¹ So for example, the clothing for Muslim men should cover the area between the navel and the knee; it should be not be tight-fitting; it should not be see-through; it should not be specifically women’s clothing; it should not be specifically the clothing of non-Muslims; it should not be ostentatious; it should not be silk; the lower garment should be raised above the ankle; gold it not permitted for men; beards must be grown; moustaches trimmed; shaving of facial hair in the area wherein the beard usually grows should not shaved.

THE NIQĀB AS A BEING ‘INTIMIDATING’ AND ‘A CLEAR INDICATION OF SEPARATION AND DIFFERENCE’

What is also sinister is the way in which the ‘Straw-man’s argument’ claims to merely aim to ‘facilitate debate on the issue of the necessity of *niqāb* in Britain’ and this is false. If anyone was sincere in talking to the Muslims about the issue then why did he not approach Muslims about the issue instead of airing the issue to the tabloid press in the UK, which is not exactly the best way to ‘facilitate discussion’ with Muslims! So in keeping with the recent implication of Muslims with all that is evil in the West, ranging from accusations that Islām was spread by the sword and discussions about Muslim ghettos, Muslims have been accused by a senior British government minister of being the main culprits in eroding ‘community cohesion.’ He knows that his position commands influence and as a result he has certainly used it to this effect. This whole issue was also brought up as a careful strategy in order to defer any blame from those who have been responsible for going to war against Muslim countries without *daleel* and manufacture a situation wherein Muslims are being isolated as being the primary concern in the UK.

This time however, the dress-code of the Muslim woman is now the main focus and has been singled-out, whereas the filthy dress-codes of others which equally make people feel “uncomfortable” are not being assessed, discussed or targeted at all! There was no reference made whatsoever to those who pierce their tongues, lips, brows and privates (!), to those who tattoo themselves all over, to those who have outrageous hair-dos, and nothing at all was said regarding about those women who prance around on roads and streets and on advertisements wearing nothing more than underwear and stilettos or clear-heels!!² Indeed, within the ‘Straw-mans’ argument, he made no mention of the Jewish communities of the UK and their codes of dress, clearly singling out the Muslims for being those who make ‘clear indications of separation and difference.’

² And with regarding this, there is no doubt that this is in fact what the likes of those who utter the likes of the ‘Straw-mans’ argument, actually want to see and hence they have no problem with this whatsoever, yet a women wearing a *niqāb* poses a ‘communication problem’?! The reality is that there is an increase in porn and the use of women as sex objects in the West and Muslim women should not be singled out for opting out of all of this.

Moreover, let's see the fruits of 'Straw-mans' argument and what it has led to, it has led to every ignorant disbeliever all of a sudden becoming an expert on the *deen* of Islām and putting forward their foolish ideas about *niqāb*.

1. Even neo-Nazis supported the outburst of the 'Straw-man' argument saying it **"quite rightly, observing the problems of communication arising from the wearing of veils by Muslim women"** by not **"allowing the country's native majority to descend headlong into a state of dhimmitude."**³
2. In one report: A 49-year-old mother's veil was torn from her at a bus stop in Liverpool. Her daughter Ilham Ali said: **"The man was shouting, "Pull that scarf off your head, you Muslim!" I'm 100 per cent certain the racist attack on my mum was a direct result of the comments Jack Straw made."**⁴ The 49-year-old, from Toxteth, was at the junction of Kensington and Holt Road when her veil was snatched by a tall white man in his 60s. Inspector Sa'eed Mostaghel, of Merseyside Police, said: "This was a despicable attack, which has left the victim feeling extremely shocked and upset."⁵
3. In another report: "A young Muslim girl wearing a veil in Blackburn was confronted by three youths on Friday night. One threw a newspaper at her and shouted: **"Jack has told you to take off your veil."**"

So here we have it, all of this is as a result of the 'Straw-man' argument as he claimed to want to **"open up a national debate on the issue of niqāb."**⁶ One ignorant journalist stated in the aftermath of the attack on the *niqāb* that "the issue of women has to be addressed if Islām is to move forward." As if the *deen* of Allāh has to succumb to the invented *bātil* that changes with time in accordance to the desires of some.

وَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَاءً

³ From the 'Islamophobia-watch' website quoting an article by the BNP dated 6 October 2006 CE. The quote also indicates that even the far-right are utilizing the arguments of the likes of Bat Ye'or (the Egyptian Jew) who coined the term 'dhimmitude.'

⁴ Mentioned in an article in *This is London* (7 October 2006 CE)

⁵ BBC, 6 October 2006 CE

⁶ See 'Straw blamed for 'racist' backlash' in The Independent on Sunday (8 October 2006 CE): <http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/politics/article1819668.ece>

“They wish you would disbelieve as they disbelieved so you would be alike.”

{*an-Nisā* (4): 89}

The issue of the *niqāb* was mentioned by a disbelieving female journalist earlier in the year wherein she stated that “the sight of veiled women offends” her.⁷ She stated that the *niqāb* for her represented **“physical manifestations of outdated, cruel and degrading traditions”** and this is akin to ‘Straw-mans’ argument, they have no reason to be concerned as Muslim women who wear the *niqāb* cause absolutely no harm to anyone within the society, they neither raise their voices in an abusive manner nor wreak havoc within communities, they mind their own business so why don’t others just mind their’s too! The Muslim women who cover their faces are not infringing upon the ‘rights’ or beloved ‘freedoms’ of any non-Muslims. The article reinforced the stereotypes that were noted in light of the recent ‘Straw-man’ argument, that the *niqāb* is associated with oppression. The journalist also made the gross error of thinking that the *niqāb* is about being “ashamed of being a woman” and there is nothing within the Islamic source texts at all which indicate that this is the intent of *niqāb* and *jilbāb*. Some non-Muslims commentators also over-emphasize women’s issues as if this is what Muslim women are frantic to be ‘liberalised.’⁸ The reality is that in many cases husbands do not want their wives to wear the *niqāb*! But some people need to think that all these factors are the real case and reasons for wearing the *niqāb*.

Some non-Muslims even incorrectly say that **“non-Muslim women have to cover their hair in Saudi”** when the reality is that non-Muslim women do not have to cover their hair, but they do have to put on an *‘ayaba!* Let’s turn to the author, a Muslim woman and a western convert to Islām, who wears the *niqāb*, Naima B Robert in her superb book *From My Sister’s Lip’s*, she states:

“The first effect that the hijab, the headscarf, seemed to have on us was to encourage modesty – in dress and in conduct. After a life-time spent showing off our clothes and our bodies, we suddenly felt shy to flaunt ourselves in public. The hijab reminded us of the standards of behaviour that were expected of us as Muslims, and more specifically, as Muslim women. We became more

⁷ *The Independent*, Saturday 8 July 2006

⁸ See an interesting article at: <http://www.islambradford.com/ib/jsp/body/78>

aware of upholding Islamic manners – trying not to be rude or to lie, to be kind and generous. When it came to the opposite sex, we no longer felt comfortable having conversations that were too personal or familiar and the hijab made flirting a definite no-no. although we were only wearing scarves at this point, we grew to feel less comfortable about showing the other parts of our body and, consequently, our style of dress began to change...

But we were not the only ones affected by our decision to cover. Because we were sending out such a clear message to the outside world – ‘I do not want to be bothered, I do not want to be approached sexually, I am off limits for you’ – men could not help but change the way they related to us.⁹ They would no longer observe our movements, watch the way we walked, size us up or compare us. The old ways of relating to women’s bodies were no longer applicable because our bodies were not on display.¹⁰ This endowed our interaction with men with a new level of respect and courtesy, however begrudgingly it was granted. We were clearly no longer sexual objects – we had to be treated differently.”¹¹

Then she states:

“I think that, around this time, I came to the realization that wearing the niqāb was the least I could do as thanks to Allāh who had done so much for me...

The niqab was not something I disliked – in fact, I quite liked it; it was not difficult for me to wear it – I was living in the East end, after all, and my husband was supportive. Wearing the niqab, choosing to cover in that way, seemed the least I could do to thank my Lord, to show my gratitude, to enact my submission. I didn’t have the time to waste on petty concerns – I had been given this chance to do something better, and I decided to take it. And, at that

⁹ This is what the likes of the ‘Straw-man argument’ are totally frustrated with in reality, the fact that they, as disbelieving men and women, are not able to judge and intrude.

¹⁰ This is what has confused many non-Muslims and led to their recent attack on the *niqāb* in the UK.

¹¹ Naima B Robert, *From My Sister’s Lips*, (London: Bantam Press, 2005 CE), pp.114-15

moment, other people's opinions, their hand-ups and points of view, faded into the background; my eyes were fixed on the pleasure of Allāh."¹²

She also mentions:

“But how is it that we desired a thing that so many consider to be the ultimate symbol of oppression? How could the hijab ever be liberating? As a woman in this society, as in most others, one grows to expect certain things: to be judged by one's appearance, to have fashion trends dictate one's style and ideal body shape, to get both welcome and unwelcome attention from men, among other things. There is the woman who enjoys all of these things, considering them an essential part of her femininity – many of us felt this way too. But then, the charm begins to wear off – the constant preening and maintenance becomes tedious, the rush to acquire the latest Manolo Blahniks or dress from Ghost seems empty and futile, the seasonal shift towards and away from the hourglass figure and heroin chic begins to sour and appear as it really is: shallow and meaningless. And you begin to wonder, am I not more than the sum of my parts? What will be the consequences if I drop out of this race? What about when my body starts to change – from age¹³, illness or pregnancy? It is from these and other concerns that covering, with the hijab and everything else, liberates the Muslim woman. In our society, as in so many, women are judged by their appearance in a way that men are not. But the covered woman cannot be judged on her appearance because nothing personal about her can be seen. She has, in effect, taken her looks out of the equation. She does not feel the need to live up to society's changing expectations of women's bodies. Nor is she a victim of the various pressures to conform to the latest looks or project a 'cool' image. So whoever relates to her must relate to what she has presented – be it what she says, does or thinks...

It is natural for men to want to look at women: we are beautiful after all! And many women find it flattering and fun sometimes. But undoubtedly, there are

¹² Ibid. pp.120-21

¹³ In the West 'age reversal' and 'anti-aging' 'remedies', techniques and therapies are big business, along with horrific facial cosmetic and plastic surgery which is utilised by non-Muslims in order to stay 'younger-looking.'

other times when it is unnecessary and bothersome, stares, wolf whistles, catcalls, comments, phone-number missiles, advances – there is a thin line between flattery and sexual harassment. The covered woman is not available for this type of exchange. She is clearly not interested in men’s advances, nor in being seen as attractive or sexy – she retains ultimate control of her body and how it is seen by others. The pressure on women and girls to look a certain way is immense and leads to all sorts of hang-ups and crises. Eating disorders such as over-eating, excessive dieting, bulimia and anorexia are some of the effects of this pressure. Dissatisfaction with our bodies can result in low self-confidence and increased anxiety about body shape.”¹⁴

On pages 127-133 she goes on to explain the implications of wearing the *niqāb* and non-Muslim’s reactions to her wearing it in British society, indeed, the whole book is valuable on this issue and the fact that it was written in 2005 demonstrates that while Muslims were openly and seriously discussing the issue of *niqāb* anyway, the likes of ‘Straw-man’s argument’ were busy conniving about how to make political gain from the issue.

With regards to the view that **“Muslim women talk about the dress-code of other women, so why can’t society talk about the dress-code of Muslim women”** then this is also akin to ‘Straw-man’s’ argument. It is a false assertion, as Muslim women do not possess anything like mass-circulation media or positions of political power in a non-Muslim country! One of these ignorant journalists even tried to claim that the *niqāb* merely developed out of protecting women in the desert from sand-storms!![?] This is again false, as in countries where Muslim women wear *niqāb*, men do not wear it! The fact is that the *niqāb* is not associated with terrorism or extremism in the UK and even those Muslim women who have been implicated in terrorism, none of them wore *niqāb*!¹⁵

¹⁴ Ibid pp.123-125

¹⁵ Then there is the argument of “when in Rome, do as the Romans do (i.e. be like them)” however, the English throughout history have never applied this! In fact, during the epoch of British colonialism, they exported to Africa and Asia, the likes of cricket, English language and other aspects of British culture, they did not begin to implement aspects of the cultures which they found themselves in at all. Furthermore, many people from England when they go on holiday to countries such as Spain, Turkey, Morocco, Egypt and the likes, people from England generally make no attempt whatsoever to even speak the languages of the countries they are going to! So much for “when in Rome...”!

THE ISLAMIC BASIS OF THE NIQĀB

The first issue that we have to address is the Islamic justification for wearing the *niqāb*, which is clear in the Islamic source texts, despite the foolish rantings of the token Muslim sell-outs!¹⁶ In fact the same proofs that are used as proofs for covering the hair are the same (but with additional proofs) for covering the face. Scholars have differed over the *niqāb* being an obligation, yet the evidence for the *niqāb* is very strong indeed.¹⁷ ‘Ā’ishah (*radi Allāhu ‘anha*) said: ‘Male riders would pass by us while we were in the state of *ibram* with the Messenger of Allāh. When they would approach us, each one of us would let her *jilbāb* fall down from (the top of) her head over her face. And when they had passed on, we would uncover our faces.’¹⁸ It is also authentically reported that ‘Ā’ishah covered her face with the *khimār* when she heard the voice of Safwān bin Mu’attal as-Sulamee. She stated that he used to know her (i.e. what she looked like) before the *hijāb* was obligated.¹⁹ This proves that after the verse was revealed women were unrecognizable due to the *niqāb*.

Allāh says,

وَقُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَعْضُرْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ

¹⁶ What is very unfortunate with this is that there have been a number of ignorant statements and ‘polls’ which allegedly show ‘Muslim opinion’ on the issue of *niqāb* and that it should be outlawed in the UK!! Not only are such ‘polls’ and ‘surveys’ *bātil* due to the lack of verification and also due to the utter ignorance of Islām that such Muslim participants have. Furthermore, the issue has been exacerbated by the token Muslim sell-outs who seek to justify every single statement, even if it is against the *deen*, of a non-Muslim politician.

¹⁷ Therefore, as Muslims we need not pay any heed to the likes of the socialists who claim to ‘champion the Muslim cause in the UK’ when the reality is that they have openly and boldly claimed that the Qur’ān “**does not mention the niqāb**”?! as was stated by a well-known member of the socialist *Respect Party* in the UK, as if *kuffār* opportunists are now an authority on the verses of Allāh’s Book!

¹⁸ Reported by Ahmad, Aboo Dāwood and Ibn Mājah

¹⁹ Reported by Bukhāree, Muslim, Ahmad and Ibn Jareer

“And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their private parts and not to expose their adornment except that which is apparent and to draw their khimārs over their chests and not to expose their adornment (i.e. beauty) except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands’ fathers, their sons, their husbands’ sons, their brothers, their brothers’ sons, their sisters’ sons, their women, that which their right hands possess (i.e. servants) or those male servants who have no physical desire or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women...”

{*an-Noor* (24): 31}

This part of the verse:

وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا

“...not to expose their adornment except that which is apparent...”

...is where there is a difference of opinion amongst Muslim scholars, as some scholars hold that the face is from that which is apparent and thus does not have to be covered. However, regarding the basis of covering the face then the verse can still apply because the verse states that Muslim women are,

وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ

“...not to expose their adornment (i.e. beauty)...”

And there is no doubt that the face is something which is part of a women’s beauty, and hence the view that it should thus be covered.

Imām Muhammad bin Sālih al-‘Uthaymeen (*rahimabullāh*) stated:

And there is no doubt for one who has common sense that from the means that lead toward guarding the private parts is the veiling of the face. This is since exposing it is a cause for drawing looks towards it, reflecting on its attractive features and finding pleasure in that.²⁰ And consequently this leads to a man trying to communicate and get in touch with a woman.²¹

²⁰ Indeed, even non-Muslim scientists and ‘sexologists’ have to admit that visual perception and facial attractiveness is one of the primary motivators and preludes to sexual relationships in humans especially males who are more stimulated by visual perception (also expressed in the idea of the male gaze), this is along with audition (how the opposite sex sounds) and olfaction (how the other smells). Scientists have noted that a sexually attractive visual appearance involves: a high degree of mirror symmetry between the left and right sides of the body, **particularly of the face**. Cunningham in his experiments (1986) regarding male response found that men were particularly attracted to women’s faces. The main determinants of female beauty involve assessing most of the face: hair, wide eyes, full lips, cheeks, teeth, forehead, dimples etc. men are stimulated by all of these characteristics. According to Devendra Singh in a piece of research she conducted for the *Journal of Sex Research* in February 2004 (entitled ‘*Mating Strategies of Young Women: The Role of Physical Attractiveness*’) she herself poses the question “**Why do males assign so much importance to attractiveness that when constrained (limited mating budget), they ignore personal attributes that appear to be critical for the viability of a long-term romantic relationship?**” she also states, in a definitive proof that uncovered beautiful faces can lead to strong physical attraction and then to promiscuity:

Indeed, a meta-analysis of studies in attractiveness and behavior revealed that attractive females date more frequently, have more sexually permissive attitudes, engage in a greater variety of sexual activity, and have sexual intercourse at an earlier age than do unattractive females (Feingold, 1992). Some studies have also reported a positive relationship between physical attractiveness and number of sexual partners (Mikach & Bailey, 1999; Stelzer, Desmond, & Price, 1987; Wiederman & Hurst, 1998).

She then stated:

To explore this possibility, I examined some mate attraction tactics used by females differing in attractiveness. Data from young U.S. females show that compared to less-attractive females, attractive females report higher frequencies of using attractiveness enhancement tactics (e.g., wearing makeup), flirting with other males to make a date jealous, and acting possessively.

Also see:

The Imām continued:

Regarding the statement of Allāh,

وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ

“...and to draw their khimārs over their chests...”

The khimār is that which a woman uses to cover and veil her head, such as a head cloth. So if she was commanded to place the khimār over her jayb (bosom), the she was also commanded with covering the face, whether it is because wearing the khimār necessitates that or because it is understood from general reasoning. This is since if covering the neck and bosom are obligatory, then veiling the face is an obligation for all the more reason, since it is the source of beauty and enticement. Indeed, when people seek the beauty of a figure, they do not ask except concerning the face. If it is beautiful, they do not look towards anything else in the same manner as possessing importance. This is why when it is said such and such woman is beautiful, one doesn't understand from these words anything except the beauty of the face. So it is clear that the face is the place of beauty that is asked about and informed of. And if it is this way, then how can we come to understand that this religion,

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1. Perrett, D. I., May, K. A., & Yoshikawa, S. (1994). 'Facial shape and judgments of female attractiveness' in *Nature* (journal), 368, 239-242 and
 2. Johnston, V. S., & Franklin, M. (1993). 'Is beauty in the eye of the beholder?' In *Ethology and Sociobiology* (journal), 14, 183-199.
 3. Cunningham, M. R. (1986). 'Measuring the physical in physical attractiveness: Quasi-experiments on the sociobiology of female facial beauty' in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 50, 925-935.

²¹Abou Maryam Ismā'eel Alarcon (trans.), *Four Essays on the Obligation of Veiling* (New York: al-Ibānah Publishing, 1426 AH/2006 CE), pp.28-29.

Some non-Muslims use the excuse that “**we are not perverts...**” which in itself is a statement that is questionable for anyone from the west to even have the audacity to state: “**...but we just want to get to know you better by seeing your face...**”, yet what business is it for a strange man to “get to know another woman better” if not to formulate designs in his confused psyche, and the examples of this are daily, do they not contemplate?

which is based upon wisdom, would obligate the covering of the neck and chest and then allow the exposure of the face?”²²

With regards to other textual proofs for covering the face then there is the verse,

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لَلزَّوْجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ

ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

“O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves (part) of their outer garments. That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused. And ever is Allāh Forgiving and Merciful.”

{*al-Abzāb* (33): 59}

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radi Allāhu ‘anhu*) said about this verse that “Allāh commanded the believing women that when they come out of their homes for a necessity, they cover their faces from the top of their heads (downwards), with *jilbābs*, and that they expose (only) one eye.”²³ Umm Salamah (*radi Allāhu ‘anha*) said that when the above verse was revealed “The *Ansārī* women came out of their homes, walking as if they had crows upon their heads due to the tranquility, and they were dressed in black garments.”

Abū ‘Ubaydah as-Salmānī and others mentioned that:

The believing women used to cast their *jilbābs* from (over) the top of their heads downward, to the point that nothing was visible except their eyes, for the purpose of seeing the road.

Ibn al-Jawzī (*rahimahullāh*) stated about the above verse:

It means that the women must cover their heads and faces so that they may be known as free women.²⁴

Abū Bakr al-Jassās al-Hanafī said about the above verse that:

²² ibid

²³ *Mukhtasar Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, vol.2, p.114

²⁴ Ibid. p.80

In this ayah is evidence that a young woman is commanded with: 1) covering her face in front of male strangers, 2) remaining covered and 3) refraining from going out (without it) so that the people will not place any doubt upon her.²⁵

Imām al-Alūsī (*rahimabullāh*) stated regarding the verse in Sūrah al-Ahzāb:

The apparent meaning of the word “alayhinna (over themselves)” is clearly to cover one’s body completely. Some have interpreted this ayah to mean the covering of the face and the head since in the Days of ignorance, the women usually left their faces uncovered.²⁶

Jalāuddeen as-Suyūtī (*rahimabullāh*) stated:

This is the ayah of hijāb which applies to all women. There is proof in it that covering the head and the head face is obligatory.²⁷

Al-Qurtubī (*rahimabullāh*) stated:

Since open displaying of oneself was the custom of the Arab women , i.e. they would expose their faces just as the slave-women did, this served as a means for a man to look at them and would increase the man’s desire for them. So Allāh ordered His Messenger to command the women to place their jilbābs over themselves whenever they want to go outside to fulfill a necessity. The word ‘jalābeeb’ is the plural of ‘jilbāb’ and it is a garment that is bigger than the khimār. Ibn ‘Abbās and Ibn Mas’ood have reported that it is a ridā (loose outer garment). It is also said that it means a veil. The correct view is that it is a garment that covers the entire body.²⁸

Al-Hādīfī Ibn Katheer (*rahimabullāh*) noted:

Muhammad ibn Seereen said “I asked ‘Ubaydah as-Salmānee about Allāh’s statement

يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيْبِهِنَّ

“...to bring down over themselves (part) of their outer garments...”

²⁵ *Ahkām ul-Qur’ān*, vol.3, pp.371-372

²⁶ *Rooh ul-Ma’ānee*, vol.22, pp.88-89

²⁷ *Al-Ikleel*, p.180

²⁸ *Al-Jāmi’ li-Ahkām il-Qur’ān*, vol.14, pp.243-244

So he covered his face and his head (with a garment) and exposed his left eye.²⁹

Jalāluddeen al-Mahallī (*rahimabullāb*) highlighted:

It means that they should let some of it (*jilbāb*) fall over their faces...when they go out for their necessities,

ذَلِكَ أَذْنَى

That is more suitable

...or more closer to the fact,

أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ

that they will be known

...as free women,

فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ

“...and not be abused.”

...by abuse against them, contrary to slave women, who do not cover their faces.³⁰

Jamāluddeen al-Qāsimī (*rahimabullāb*) commented:

This ayah refers to the free women in that their dress should be different from the dress of the slave women, by them wearing loose outer garments (*ardiyah*) and cloaks (*malāhif*) and by covering their heads and faces so that they can guard and protect their chastity and no one will look at them with desire.³¹

Muhammad Ameen ash-Shanqīṭī (*rahimabullāb*) said about the verse above from Sūrah al-Ahzāb:

From the Qur’anic evidences that indicate that a woman must wear hijāb and cover her entire body, even her face, is Allāh’s saying

²⁹ *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, vol.6, no.470, also see English translation of *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 2002 CE), volume explaining Soorah Ahzāb.

³⁰ *Qurrat ul-‘Aynayn ‘alā Tafseer il-Jalālayn*, p.560

³¹ *Mahāsin ut-Ta’weel*, vol.13, pp.4908-4909

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ

جَلَابِيهِنَّ

“O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves (part) of their outer garments.”

This is because several scholars have stated that the meaning of

يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيهِنَّ

“...to bring down over themselves (part) of their outer garments.”

...is that a woman must veil her whole face and not reveal anything from it except for one eye with which she can see. Among those who held this opinion were Ibn mas'ood, Ibn 'Abbās, 'Ubaydah as-Salmānee and others. If it is said “The wording in the noble ayah does not necessitate the understanding that a woman must veil her face, linguistically and there is no text from the Book, Sunnah or ijma' (consensus) that says that this is required. Furthermore, the sayings of some of the scholars of tafseer are that hold that it is required is contradicted by the sayings of other scholars who say that it is not required. So because of this, using this ayah as evidence for the obligation of veiling the face becomes nullified.”

The response is: There is a clear implication in the noble ayah, that what falls into the phrase

يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيهِنَّ

“...to bring down over themselves (part) of their outer garments.”

...is the understanding that women must veil their faces by placing a jilbāb on themselves and letting it fall downward. This implication is found in His saying

قُلْ لَأَزُوجِكُمْ

“...tell your wives...”

There is no disagreement amongst the Muslims on the fact that Prophet’s wives were obligated to wear the hijāb and veil their faces. So Allāh’s mentioning of the Prophet’s wives and daughters, along with the believing women indicates that it is an obligation for all women to veil their faces by placing the jilbāb over themselves, as you have seen...

As for the one who says that there is a Qur’anic implication in Allāh’s saying

يُذْنِبْنَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيهِنَّ

“...to bring down over themselves (part) of their outer garments.”

That indicates that covering the face does not enter into the understanding of this verse, and that this implication is found in His words:

ذَلِكَ أَذْنَىٰ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ

“...That is more suitable that they will be known...”

So the words,

أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ

“...that they will be known...”

...is proof that the women exposed their faces, since someone who veils her face cannot possibly be known (or recognized). Know that this statement is false and incorrect, and the futility of it is quite clear since the context of the words in the verse restrict that absolutely, since Allāh’s words,

يُذْنِبْنَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيهِنَّ

“...to bring down over themselves (part) of their outer garments.”

...clearly restrict that (i.e. uncovering the face)...”³²

So with all of this, the ‘Straw-mans’ argument, and vain searching to deny this Islamic basis, or the claim that the wearing of *niqāb* is a ‘contemporary political fashion statement in order to be rebellious’, is all demolished and exposed! Some ignorant and pathetic Muslims (and hypocrites)³³ in the UK have even stated that the *niqāb* is only an ‘Arab cultural dress’ or an ‘Ottoman cultural mode of dress’ or a “desert storm protection” (!!!) which has no basis in Islām!

DOES HE HAVE THE RIGHT TO ASK MUSLIMS TO REMOVE THE NIQĀB?

He does have the right to ask Muslims, particular in the context of living in a non-Muslim country, however in the same way a Muslim woman has the right to say “no!” especially within an abode which constantly claims to represent ‘freedom, equality and liberty.’ But the question remains is, if the Muslim woman does not take it off, does that mean that he is not going to help her in his surgery?³⁴ If so, then this is clear discrimination and prejudice as he

³² *Adwā ul-Bayān fī Īdāh il-Qur’ān bi’l-Qur’ān*, vol.6, p.586

³³ On another note it is worth noting how certain countries which have Muslim majorities have outlawed and made illegal the wearing of the *hijāb* within schools, colleges and universities. In one of these sell-out North African countries, whose leader in the 1980s drank on TV during Ramadān claiming that the economy was doing too well for fasting to be permitted, even had the nerve to say that the *hijāb* is “not from the cultural traditions of our country”!! Recently, in another country which has a Muslim majority, all references to covering have been removed from Islamic textbooks under the *bātil* pretext that the *hijāb* and the beard are ‘political symbols’, see: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/5413808.stm>

There is no doubt that these lands merely wish to pander to other *kuffār* states for recognition and are even willing to sell out their *deen* in order to do it. In Morocco they even removed from the Islamic studies textbooks the verse from Sūrah al-Ahzāb regarding the *jilbāb*.

³⁴ Part of the ‘Straw-mans’ argument was that at his surgery in the northern English city of Blackburn, he has asked Muslim women to remove the *niqāb* in order to “facilitate

would feel that he cannot help her as he does with everyone else. In any case a lot of work these days is largely via correspondence or the phone, most people do not use video-phones, so in order to say that it is an issue of communication is flawed. Furthermore, GPs are already accused of discriminating against people on the basis of their appearances and judging people based on their looks, which affects the type of medical treatment they receive and these are not people who are covering their faces!³⁵ In addition, many non-Muslim teachers in the UK have noted that they have no problems whatsoever in communicating with Muslim women who wear the *niqāb* and it does not prevent them from communicating in anyway whatsoever. Even they find the *niqāb* strange, in terms of communication it is something which they do not really notice when as the eyes and voice are enough to decipher basic communicative functions.

IS THE NIQĀB A HINDRANCE TO ‘COMMUNITY-COHESION’ IN THE UK?

‘Community cohesion’ includes a number of different domains and a ‘cohesive community’ can be defined, according to their own (non-Islamic) rubric, as one wherein all communities feel a sense of belonging, people’s different values are respected and positively valued, there are similar opportunities for all and there are strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

This is particularly for groups of people who live in a locality and getting together in order to defend or promote a common local interest. So if all of the above is included within the definition of ‘community cohesion’, then the individual who told Muslim women to take off the *niqāb* for ‘communication reasons’ has himself contradicted this very principle! Despite his futile assertion that the Muslims have!

Furthermore, the ‘community cohesion’ nonsense which was stated within ‘Straw-mans’ argument, is a misnomer, as if Muslim women don’t wear the *niqāb*, will we therefore all of a sudden have community cohesion? The answer is clearly no! So how can he use the few

communication” and that these women have been happy to blindly follow him and remove the *niqābs* and expose their faces to him, whilst there has been another female present in his surgery.

³⁵

http://www.lse.co.uk/ShowStory.asp?story=IF2829539A&news_headline=attractive_people_get_better_medical_help

women who wear the *niqāb* as being an hindrance to ‘community cohesion.’ So therefore, the ‘Straw-mans’ argument was sinister in the way that he knew very well that due to his position he will be listened to within the country, but we reject his *kalām* with no shame or blame.

So we can see that only the Muslims are being implicated as being those who are eroding ‘community cohesion’ within the UK, and this is a transgressing statement. There was no mention whatsoever to the likes of the Christian child-molesters, far-right neo Nazi terrorists³⁶ (who are more numerous than all of the Muslims in the UK but are not asked to

³⁶ The *BBC* reported (Wednesday July 5 2006 CE) that: a man from East Sussex (in England) sent bomb-making instructions to a member of the far-right BNP. Allen Boyce, 74, of Farington Court, Old Orchard Road, Eastbourne, admitted incitement to possess explosives. He was sentenced by Lewes Crown Court on Wednesday, by Judge Anthony Niblett who described his actions as evil. The judge suspended Boyce's sentence for two years and placed him under a two-year supervision order. The offence took place between 4 April and 15 November 2004. Boyce wrote to 27-year-old Terry Collins, also from Eastbourne, who was jailed for five years in 2005 for a campaign of attacks and abuse against Asian families. He sent Collins plans of a hotel in Eastbourne and instructions on how to mix two chemicals.

Also from the *Burnley Citizen* newspaper (4 October 2006 CE, ‘Ex-BNP man faces explosives charge’ by Andrew Hewitt):

“FORMER British National Party member has been accused of possessing the largest amount of chemical explosives of its type ever found in the country. Robert Cottage, 49, of Talbot Street, Colne, appeared before Burnley magistrates charged with possession of an explosive substance. Cottage was charged under the Explosives Substances Act 1883 on Monday night after forensic experts searched his home, allegedly discovering chemical components which could be used to make explosives. Police sealed off Cottage's home last Thursday and finished their search at the weekend. Officers claim that their find is the largest haul of chemicals of its kind discovered in someone's home in the country. However, the exact nature of the chemicals has not been revealed.”

Yet this did not make national front page news, because they were not Muslims even though they had the clear intent to bomb.

http://www.burnleycitizen.co.uk/display.var.951775.0.exbnp_man_faces_explosive_s_charge.php

‘integrate’), high crime rates, teenage pregnancy, binge-drinking and the likes! Only Muslims are mentioned in the context of the ‘erosion of community cohesion.’

وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ

“And never will the Jews and Christians approve of you until you follow their religion.”

{*al-Baqarah* (2): 120}