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2020

Von Schöneman , K 2020 , ' "Confine your women!" : Diachronic development of Islamic
interpretive discourse on the creation of woman ' , Hawwa , vol. 3 , no. 12 , pp. 1-45 . <https://doi.org/10.1163/15692086-BJA10010>

<http://hdl.handle.net/10138/335650>

<https://doi.org/10.1163/15692086-BJA10010>

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“Confine Your Women!” – Diachronic Development of Islamic Interpretive Discourse on the Creation of Woman

Abstract

This article explores the diachronic development of Islamic interpretive discourse on the Quranic passage *khalaqakum min nafsin wāḥidatin wa-khalaqa minhā zawjahā*, present in the first verse of *Sūrat al-Nisā*’ and conventionally understood as the creation of the primeval couple, Adam and Eve. The analyses, performed with a theoretical framework of feminist discourse analysis, focus on ten medieval Sunnī commentaries (*tafāṣīr*) from the late 9th to the 15th centuries. The study reveals that the concept of *nafs wāḥida*, single soul, was interpreted as the first man, Adam, and the mate created from this soul, *zawj*, as Eve, the latter being created from the former’s rib in all the exegetic accounts examined. These elaborated exegetic suppositions on human creation were strengthened throughout the classical period of *tafāṣīr*. Interpretive information both accumulated and transformed in Islamic interpretive tradition through three discursive stages characterised as normativisation, consolidation and expanding the concept.

Introduction – Creation of Woman in the Qur’ān and Islamic Interpretive Tradition

The matter of creating the first woman, along with her role in the early events, differs not only in details but also by nature between the Quranic and Biblical texts.¹ In the Bible, Eve is created out of Adam’s rib while he is sleeping to accompany Adam since he is lonely (Genesis 2:18-23), whereas the other Biblical story of creation (Gen. 1:26-7) depicts a simultaneous creation of Adam and Eve. The former is a part of the so-called “Garden narrative” (Gen. 2:4b-3:24) which describes the beginning of humanity and the primeval couple’s life in the garden of Eden, also containing a description of the so-called “Fall” of human. The Qur’ān, however, portrays the connection between the first two human beings quite differently.² In fact, there is no continuous passage describing either the creation of the world or that of the humankind in the Qur’ān. Nevertheless, one may attempt to compose a somewhat chronological narrative of the early events from several separate verses, *āyāt* (sg. *āya*), within several chapters, *suwar* (sg. *sūra*), representing scenes from the story of the primordial human beings, Ādam (Adam) and his spouse.

In the Quranic text, there are several different passages concerning human creation,³ many of which do not have parallels in the Bible. The Qur’ān describes humankind being created from clay, dust, mud, or fluid,⁴ after which God blows his spirit into him (Q 15:29; 32:9; and 38:72). There is no categorical statement that the first human was Adam – the name might be even used as a collective noun for humankind.⁵ Furthermore, the given passages do not specify the creation of the primordial woman. However, the Qur’ān portrays a contemporaneous creation of the first couple in five verses (Q 4:1; 7:189; 35:11; 39:6; and 49:13).

Perhaps the best-known passage, conventionally understood as a description of the creation of the first couple, is in the beginning of *Sūrat al-Nisā’* (i.e. “Chapter of women”). It presents people being created from a single soul, *nafs wāḥida*, from which God created its mate, *zawj*, so that they would

multiply into numerous men and women.⁶ It is noteworthy that the word *nafs*, soul, used in the verse is grammatically feminine whereas the word *zawj*, mate, is masculine. Thus, according to this passage, God created a feminine soul and from her he created her masculine mate.⁷ A total of five verses in the Qur'ān (Q 4:1; 6:98; 7:189; 31:28; and 39:6) mention human beings having been created from a single soul, *min nafsīn wāḥidatin*, and some verses (Q 4:1; 7:189; 30:21; 39:6; and 42:11) also mention the creation of its mate, *zawj*.⁸

The Qur'ān does not specify either the exact way or the substance of which the first woman was created. The purpose of her creation remains vague, as well. One potential reason is that the primordial couple could repose in each other's company (Q 7:189; and 30:21), the need being mutual (Q 2:187). Although the name of Adam's spouse is not mentioned in the Qur'ān, his mate is addressed in several verses (Q 2:35; 7:19; and 20:117). Subsequent Islamic tradition identifies the first woman as Eve, arabicized as Ḥawwā'. In the Qur'ān, Adam and his mate can be depicted as the first couple, also admitted into paradise simultaneously (Q 2:35). However, unlike in the Hebrew Bible (Gen. 2:23), the spouses are not mentioned to have become one flesh. Nevertheless, Adam and his spouse are the parents of all human beings (Q 4:1; and 49:12). Pairing is, indeed, essential to all creation in the Qur'ān.⁹ Both male and female seem to be significant in the creation of humanity, based on which they can also be understood to represent complete equality.¹⁰

The development of Islamic interpretive tradition was a multidimensional process that happened during the first centuries of Islam. Prophetic traditions, *aḥādīth* (sg. *ḥadīth*), only form a minor part of the commentary material on the Qur'ān.¹¹ In addition to the diverged other sources of exegetic information, various surrounding traditions had a remarkable influence on the developing Islamic exegetical corpus and *ḥadīth* literature.¹² There was obvious cross-cultural communication between the early Muslim community and the *ahl al-kitāb* ("People of the Book", i.e. Jews and Christians), the need for which was, in part, the endeavour for narrative coherency due to the ellipticity of Quranic

passages.¹³ The assimilation of their material during the early history of Islam has been suggested to have been pervasive and fundamental.¹⁴ This can be seen specifically in terms of the discourse on the creation of the primeval woman.¹⁵

Many of the early exegetes had some familiarity with Biblical tradition.¹⁶ Besides the Hebrew Bible, a number of the narrative details, conveyed to Islamic exegetic works, were adopted from rabbinic literature and/or the Syriac *Cave of Treasures*, a Christianised salvation history retelling the Biblical narrative from creation to Pentecost and further elaborating the Garden narrative.¹⁷ This extraneous material rapidly introduced the “rib story”, as well as the name of Eve, to early Muslim understanding as well as exegetic accounts on the matter.

Ḥadīth literature, being compiled and discussed with a growing tendency during the formative period of Islam, adopted the concept of rib as the substance from which the woman had been created. It also found its way into the most authoritative two canonical collections of *ahādīth* – *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (i.e. the *ṣaḥīḥān*) – compiled during the 9th century.¹⁸ There are three accounts in each reporting woman being created from a crooked rib, albeit not specifying the rib being one of Adam. In spite of being conventionally understood as *ṣaḥīḥ* in terms of their *asānīd* (sg. *isnad*), i.e. chains of transmitters, these *ahādīth* have been lately claimed as *gharīb* (i.e. the lowest grade based on a number of single reporters as transmitters) and *ḍaʿīf* (weak) based on a number of unreliable transmitters. Furthermore, they are all cited by an allegedly controversial authority, Abū Hurayra.¹⁹ As *ḥadīth* literature favoured the rib story, it also shaped the Islamic version of the creation narrative: the first woman was made derivatively out of man’s rib, secondarily to Adam, therefore also inferior to him.²⁰

During the classical period of its development, Quranic exegesis, *tafsīr* (pl. *tafāsīr*), became highly divergent as a genre. However, medieval commentaries have been characterised by a tendency

towards proliferating meanings and the exegetes, *mufasssīn*, building upon the past. Thus, interpretative information both accumulated and transformed in their works. Moreover, the material selected for *tafāsīr* was always a matter of individual choice, reflecting the author's personal interests.²¹ The creation of the first woman was not an exception to this.

Aim and Execution of the Study – Feminist Discourse Analysis of *tafāsīr* on Q 4:1

Material – Selection and Description of the Exegetes

This article examines the diachronic development of the discourse regarding the passage *khalaqakum min nafsin wāḥidatin wa-khalaqa minhā zawjahā*, present in the first verse of *Sūrat al-Nisā'* (Q 4:1) and being one of the best-known Quranic accounts on human creation among Muslims, in medieval Sunnī *tafāsīr*. I chose ten commentators representing the era from the end of the formative period of Islam onwards, however, being clearly restricted to pre-modern time. Thus, the time frame of the study is between late 9th and 15th centuries, concerning the writing process of the analysed exegetic accounts. Although it is of interest to study the interpretations of the selected passage from a gender perspective, as will be done in this study, focusing on this specific verse also provides a tool for a crosscut of medieval *tafāsīr*.

Medieval exegetes were well aware of the variety of potential sources for their exegetic works. They utilized previous interpretations, prophetic *aḥādīth*, other early traditions, poetry, and philology, as well as their knowledge on jurisprudence and theology. Importantly, the material based on which the explication was reasoned was a personal choice depending on various factors.²² Thus, the process necessarily contained an individual opinion which, in turn, reflected the multidimensional cultural contexts, including its all-encompassing patriarchy. However, my hearty presumption is that each of

the *mufasssīn* represented faith-based Islamic scholarship in their eras. They seem to have been multitalented and prominent figures in their communities contributing compendiously to Islamic education, science, and religious matters. It is a foregone conclusion that the medieval writers do not share mores with modern readers which makes it unjust to coarsely accuse them of misogyny. Their attitude could rather be classified as patriarchal. I argue, however, that some statements and interpretative choices they made can be depicted as misogynous.

Due to the intention to study diachronic development and accumulation of exegetic information, as described in more detail below, it is rational to focus on one Islamic tradition. Since the Sunnī denomination has dominated the big picture of Islam, my selection of the exegetes is restricted to representatives of this branch, also assuming – and as will be shown to be correct – some circulation of exegetic material between medieval Sunnī scholars. Although limited to Sunnī exegesis, the spectrum of the chosen exegetes is wide in terms of their geographical location, law school affiliations, and theological orientation. Furthermore, they represent diverged views on the very basis of *tafsīr*: most of them supported *tafsīr bi-l-ma'thūr*, exegesis based on tradition which can be depicted as the core of exegesis within the Sunnī orthodoxy,²³ but some were advocates of *tafsīr bi-l-ra'y*, opinion-based exegesis.²⁴ This heterogeneity, however, seems appropriate noting that the development of interpretation is not straightforward but rather a mixture of manifold parameters.

The ten Sunnī exegetes, *mufasssīn*, finally chosen for the present study are al-Ṭabarī (d. 923), Ibn Abī Ḥātim (d. 938), Abū l-Layth (d. 983), al-Wāḥidī (d. 1076), al-Zamakhsharī (d. 1144), al-Rāzī (d. 1210), al-Qurṭubī (d. 1273), Abū Hayyān (d. 1344), Ibn Kathīr (d. 1373), and al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505). In addition, al-Suyūṭī's collaborative work with his teacher, al-Maḥallī (d. 1459), is included. The individual exegetic accounts seem to be independent on their geographical locations or juristic affiliations. There is a clear majority of Shāfi'ī scholars, enabling diachronic observation particularly within this school of jurisprudence, *madhhab* (pl. *madhāhib*). However, the circulation of their *tafsīr*

is not restricted solely to advocates of the Shāfi‘ī school of law: for example, al-Rāzī, a Shāfi‘ī scholar, used identical phrasings with those of a Ḥanafī, Abū l-Layth. Furthermore, al-Zamakhsharī as a Ḥanafī was widely commented by later exegetes, such as Abū Hayyān, first a Zāhirī and then a Shāfi‘ī.

It is obvious that there have been exegetic works in the course of time which have not survived until the modern day. This is a natural limitation a reader should be aware of. A more disputable limitation is that mainly due to the limited extent of this study not all still-known Sunnī exegetes from the time period can be included. Therefore, the selection is made focusing on the ones most often mentioned in academic or contemporary Muslim discussions concerning medieval *tafāṣīr*. There is, however, a volitional intent to assemble a temporally, geographically, and confessionally representative set of Sunnī exegetes whose works are still well known by contemporary Muslims. Furthermore, the dependence of some scholars on each other is taken into consideration.

All of the chosen exegetes wrote in Arabic – this was actually a selection criterium for the study. None of the individual *tafāṣīr* chosen to the study have been fully translated into English, and only one, that of Ibn Kathīr, has been partly translated. In addition, al-Suyūṭī’s collaborative work with his teacher, introduced briefly after his personal work, has been translated into English. In every case, all the primary sources were read in Arabic and the analyses are based on the Arabic text. In addition, Genesis (i.e. the first book of Moses in the Hebrew Bible) was read in Hebrew.

Theoretical Framework

The exegetic accounts concerning the passage of interest in this paper are analysed with a theoretical framework of feminist discourse analysis (FDA). The loosely defined concept of discourse analysis

(DA) has been heavily influenced by the movements of post-structuralism and social constructionism,²⁵ both of them being easily identifiable in the principles of discourse studies. One of the most important premises in social constructionism is that the ways in which people mainly perceive the world, including the categories and concepts used, are historically and culturally specific, products of the culture and history in which they occur.²⁶ This contextuality is an important stance in the present study focusing on text among Muslim communities hundreds of years ago.

From Construction of Gender to Discursive Representations of Power

Since the rise of the women's movement in the 1960's, feminist thought has become a widely used perspective in academic scholarship. Among a variety of other issues, feminist theory has provoked an interest in the concept of gender. Gender has become understood as a social construct – something that people also do in spoken and written discourse.²⁷ Thus, gender theories are built upon the basis provided by social constructionism. Although according to queer theories sex and gender do not necessarily match with cultural expectations,²⁸ the concept of gender was most likely simply a dichotomous choice for the *mufasssirrūn* whose writings I explore in this paper. Gender ideology is, indeed, often hegemonic so that it is considered consensual and widely accepted by most people in a given community.²⁹

According to social-constructionist theory, language is an essential parameter in human thought. People are born into a world of pre-existing conceptual frameworks and categories which are determined by language, an essential form of social action. Thus, language can be seen as a constructive force which is at the focus of the studies motivated by social constructivism.³⁰ In addition, it shapes the concept of gender.³¹ In post-structuralist thought, meanings carried by language are never fixed – instead, they are contestable and temporary, even changing over time.³² Language is, indeed, tightly connected with the social context of its use.³³ Existing interpretations of reality can, in turn,

shape language use.³⁴ It inevitably provokes causal effects on people, their social relations, and actions. This process of meaning-making establishes, maintains, and changes representations of power and domination,³⁵ most likely also in the form of gender hierarchy.

The concept of “discourse” has been defined almost as many times as it has been used in academic scholarship.³⁶ It can, for example, be characterized as a way of seeing the world which is (re)produced by language use.³⁷ Discourse has been described essential in constructing ideas, social processes, and features of our lived reality.³⁸ It can also affect the normalisation of concepts regarding sex and gender.³⁹ Discourse can, in fact, be both gendered and gendering.⁴⁰ Its structures establish and maintain inequality and injustice,⁴¹ also sustaining unfair dichotomies dividing people into hierarchical categories of which the “men” are seen as a dominant group whereas the “women” remain a subordinate ensemble. Furthermore, power relations – an essential parameter in discourse studies – tend to systematically disempower women as a social group.⁴² As the use of language is always located in a given time and space, this discourse is also historically produced and interpreted.⁴³ In this paper, I address these dimensions by examining a trajectory of discourse(s) representing, maintaining, and constructing gender asymmetry among Muslims based on a specific mode of language use, the genre of *tafsīr*.

Discourse Analysis and Genealogy

Discourse analysis, addressing the multidimensional concept of discourse, is not a rigid theory providing concrete analytical tools. Instead, it offers an interdisciplinary approach inside which each researcher can choose the emphasis most suitable for the study in question. Discourse analysis, examining discursive praxes affecting or representing social structures and ideologies,⁴⁴ combines textual analysis with other modes of social studies.⁴⁵ The methods and specific analytical tools within DA are diverse, but the primary units of these analyses are texts. The objective of DA can be

associated with linguistic features or interaction with other texts in the discursive field. The focus might also be on what is excluded from the text.⁴⁶ In addition, it is worth noting that all discourse is intertextual by nature,⁴⁷ and every new text is influenced by other texts produced before it.⁴⁸ These premises are an important starting point for the present study, as well.

The term “discourse analysis” actually comprises a wide variety of approaches. For example, it can be further divided into constructivist (i.e. interpretive) and critical ways to address the primary interest in question. The former produces ample explorations of the way in which a particular social reality has been constructed, whereas the latter focuses more explicitly on the dynamics of power, knowledge, and ideology surrounding discursive processes.⁴⁹ However, choosing between them is mainly a matter of stress on either side.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the critical approach in DA can be subdivided based on micro or macro levels as the main focus of the analyses performed. The macro level (critical discourse analysis, CDA) concentrates on the context whereas the so-called micro level (critical linguistic analysis) focuses more on the actual text. It should be noted, however, that the levels serve as a continuum, not necessitating a dichotomous choice between them.⁵¹ Therefore, this study does not take a tightly defined stance regarding these divisions. Although the basis of my own approach is clearly in detailed textual examination of the interpretative passages, they have not been born in a vacuum but in the middle of vivid interaction between lived reality and Islamic interpretive tradition.

Discourse analysis is a framework in which the focus is often on how power, dominance, and inequality are present in and created by the discourse of each context.⁵² The data is approached with the purpose to uncover what has been written or said – and what the social implications of these actions are.⁵³ Discourse analysis also strives to address hidden structures in language, which is particularly momentous as discursive, cultural, and social changes are not always explicitly observable.⁵⁴ Thus, DA can also function as a tool in identifying detrimental gender discourses.⁵⁵ This is of importance since dominant structures often stabilize conventions, even naturalize them.⁵⁶ Power networks are also an essential parameter in the present study in which I examine the role of language

in maintaining gender-based social asymmetry in medieval Muslim scholarly discourse. Furthermore, as this paper deals with the Muslim scholars' all-inclusive understanding of the matter at focus, it inevitably pays attention to the shrouded knowledge referred to above.

A wide set of scholarly fields, including gender studies, have recently utilized the theoretical framework provided by DA. For instance, the disciplines of Study of religion and Exegetics have begun to use discourse analysis, a number of the works being based on linguistic and textual analyses of religious discourse.⁵⁷ Furthermore, DA has been used to examine the ways in which Biblical interpretations are compounded, shaped, and negotiated in a particular community. The subjectivity of the interpreter, as well, has been acknowledged.⁵⁸ This scholarship can be depicted as “textually oriented discourse analysis”, a concept introduced by Norman Fairclough, a trailblazing scholar on the field.⁵⁹ Attention paid to linguistic and intertextual matters is, indeed, likely to improve discourse-analytic research.⁶⁰ Therefore, it may serve as a *de facto* method in the present study, thoroughly dealing with textual tradition.

In addition to its adherence to DA, the present study has a special interest in the diachronic development of the interpretations present in *taf̣sīr*. This trajectory, i.e. potential changes over time, can be traced using a genealogical approach. The term “genealogy” was originally introduced by the German philosopher (and philologist) Friedrich Nietzsche in the 1880's,⁶¹ and it was later made famous by the French sociologist Michel Foucault who used it for reconstruction of historical development.⁶² Genealogy attempts to examine the pluralistic past and discover how power has affected the formation of understanding. Genealogical ethos is likely to extend and improve the tools provided by DA, especially in conjunction with historical textual sources.⁶³ It can also be seen as a form of writing history.⁶⁴

Due to the discursive connection of each new commentary to previous tradition, *taf̣sīr* has been suggested to represent a genealogical tradition as it is.⁶⁵ Thus, the framework of genealogical DA most

likely suits the discourse presented in the commentary material examined in this paper. As a matter of fact, this combination has been successfully used in connection with both Islamic and Jewish interpretive tradition.⁶⁶ Thus, it is likely to provide a salutary tool in assessing the evolution of Islamic exegeses on the creation of woman, as well. This hypothesis forms the ground of my analyses based on which, as will be shown, the diachronic development of medieval Islamic interpretive tradition on the creation of woman actualised through three distinctive discursive stages.

Feminist Discourse Analysis of *tafsīr* on Q 4:1

As this article aims at pointing out misogynous attitudes representing gender-based hegemony in the interpretive accounts of the Qur'ān, it is fair to avow FDA as the theoretical framework of the analyses. In fact, applying *discourse* analysis – specifically with a feminist and genealogical ethos – to the genre of *tafsīr* creates something that can be named as “discourse” in them to begin with: I *assume* these texts to represent a history of gendered discourse sustaining patriarchal social order. In addition to obvious manifestations of gender hierarchy, I will address different implicatures which are likely to contribute to the patriarchal ethos typical for many interpretative accounts. This presumption generates a novel concept of *Islamic interpretive discourse* which is examined here with the theoretical framework of FDA from a genealogical perspective.

Since the study examines the role of language in the maintenance of gender-based social asymmetry, it would be possible to classify it as feminist *critical/DA*, which became better known along Michelle Lazar’s pioneering volume on the subject. Critical discourse studies with a gender focus present a critical view on gender relations so that they are motivated by the need to change them,⁶⁷ focusing on the ways in which analyses of institutionally produced discourse can be used to create change within those institutions.⁶⁸ This activist agenda, however, cannot be directly taken into account in the present

study dealing with texts produced more than half a millennium ago. Furthermore, multidimensional dynamics of the discourse also taking the potential female voice into account cannot be reached in texts written exclusively by men. Instead, my intention is to acknowledge the variety of discourse-analytic perspectives so that the emphasis is on linguistic and textual analysis of the commentary accounts.

The *tafāsīr* regarding the creation of woman are approached from several perspectives in this paper. First, I analyse the interpretative accounts in terms of their content and linguistic features. This takes into account details in diction and phrasing, potentially representing gender aspects and attitudes. Second, as an individual exegesis is always a matter of material selection, the choices of inclusion and/or exclusion made by the *mufasssīrūn* are discussed in connection with previous commentary accounts within the genre. Personal interpretative notions are pointed out and their potential repetition in later accounts is noted. Third, the paper aims at tracing the accumulation of potential misogynous elements in the exegetic discourse along the trajectory.

Concise Review of Literature

The development of formative Sunnī exegeses on the creation of woman has been previously studied, also noting the potential Biblical influence on the content.⁶⁹ In addition, the diachronic development of medieval *tafāsīr* concerning the matter has been described with a scope on exegetes' interpretations of women's status and roles.⁷⁰ Sporadic exegetic accounts in connection with the creation of woman have been cited in various studies,⁷¹ and Eve – the primeval woman – has been studied from diverged perspectives, also focusing on exegetic material.⁷² Interpretive accounts on other gender-related Quranic passages have been discussed diversely, but methodologically in a somewhat unspecified manner.⁷³ Diachronic development is considered in only a few such studies.⁷⁴ To my knowledge, this

article is the first to apply FDA to the Islamic exegetic material concerning the creation of woman. In addition, it aims at exploring the evolution of this interpretive discourse.

Commentary Accounts on Q 4:1 by Ten Medieval Sunnī Exegetes and the Evolution of the Interpretive Discourse

The interpretation of the Quranic passage of interest in this study is clearly understood as the creation of the primordial couple in the medieval Sunnī *tafāsīr* examined. *Nafs wāḥida*, the single soul mentioned in the passage, is interpreted as the first human creation, named Adam, in all the interpretative accounts analysed. Furthermore, the mate created from this soul, *zawj*, is interpreted as Eve, although the Qur'ān does not specify the name of Adam's spouse. These elaborated exegetic suppositions on human creation – already evident during the formative period of *tafāsīr* – are further strengthened throughout the 600 medieval years covered in the study. Based on this, the diachronic development of Sunnī exegesis can be divided into three consecutive discursive stages, as follows.

The First Discursive Stage (10th century): Normativisation

The first discursive stage in medieval Sunnī exegesis regarding Q 4:1 is characterised by normativisation of the concept so that *nafs wāḥida*, single soul, becomes established as Adam and the mate created from this soul, *zawj*, as Eve. This is done along with al-Ṭabarī's, Ibn Abī Ḥātim's and Abū l-Layth's interpretative accounts, presenting early traditions, often with meticulous *asānīd* and, thus, comparable to highly valued *ḥadīth* material. During the first discursive stage, the first woman is interpreted as being created from Adam's rib, adding details somewhat equivalent to the Biblical

Garden narrative. As a whole, the three exegetes depict Eve being extracted from Adam's back and left side rib, which was also the lowest and shortest, while he was asleep. She was created *for* the man and with a suspicious characteristic of craving for men and, therefore, she should be kept indoors. She is derivative of man as even her proper name is dependent on him, the exegetes argued.

Al-Ṭabarī – Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Yazīd (d. 923)

Al-Ṭabarī is by all means one of the best-known Muslim exegetes in the Islamic history. He was born in Āmul, Ṭabaristān, located in Northern Persia. Muslim sources state that he already became a *ḥāfiẓ*, a person who knows the Qur'ān and prophetic tradition by heart, at the age of seven. He first studied in al-Rayy and continued to the intellectual centre of the Islamic world, Baghdad. Al-Ṭabarī was from a wealthy background which enabled him to travel widely for education and research purposes and subsequently work quite independently. He first practised *fiqh*, Islamic jurisprudence, according to the Shāfi'ī school of law, but later on, his views developed into a separate *madhhab* of Jarīriyya, however, very close to Shāfi'ī principles.⁷⁵

Al-Ṭabarī was a polymath, also known as a respected teacher. Perhaps most notably, however, he produced a huge magnitude of literature, e.g. juridical and theological manuscripts. Two of his literary works are even more fundamental: a history of the world, *Tārīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, as well as a gigantic commentary of the Qur'ān, *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān*.⁷⁶ The commentary was already regarded remarkable during his own life. Apparently, it is the first major *tafsīr* surviving until today after that of Muqātil ibn Sulaymān (d. 765) whose material, however, al-Ṭabarī did not use.⁷⁷

The basis of al-Ṭabarī's encyclopaedic commentary is a large number of exegetic traditions. Thus, it represents a prototype of *tafsīr bi-l-ma'thūr*. Besides being a compilation of traditions preserved by

early exegetic authorities, *ahl al-ta'wīl*, it takes into account many methodological aspects. Al-Ṭabarī made exegesis as synthesis from literary, grammatical, judicial, dogmatic, and theological factors. He opted for highlighting the semantic aspects as well as analysing linguistic and syntactic features. He is also acknowledged for his precise use of *asānīd*. Al-Ṭabarī discusses his material multifacetedly, for instance, questioning the doings of *tafsīr bi-l-ra'y*.⁷⁸ However, he often gives his own opinion on the validity of the interpretative material.⁷⁹ Although his work is highly valued on the basis of early authoritative information, he is seldom referred to as a source himself. Nevertheless, he can be seen as the establisher of the discipline of exegesis which provided a long-standing forum for Islamic intellectual discourse.⁸⁰

At the beginning of his interpretation of the passage at the focus of this study, al-Ṭabarī lengthily emphasises the brotherhood of man based on his creation from a single father and mother. He states that the single soul, *nafs wāḥida* is, indeed, Adam to which he gives evidence from three traditions credited to al-Suddī (d. 745), Qatāda (d. 736), and Mujāhid (d. 722), all of whom belong to the repeatedly cited spearheads of exegetical knowledge based on their positions as *ābi'ūn*, successors, of either one of the two influential members of the *ṣaḥāba* (i.e. companions of the Prophet), Ibn 'Abbās (d. 687) and Ibn Mas'ūd (d. 653).⁸¹

Next, al-Ṭabarī explains the grammatical discrepancy between the feminine gender of the word *nafs* – and its subsequent attribute *wāḥida* – and the masculinity of Adam by citing a poem: *abūka khalīfatun waladathu ukhrā*, your father is a successor whom another bore, referring to the grammatically masculine “father”, *abū*, being a feminine-looking (i.e. *ā' marbūṭa* at the end of the word) “successor”, *khalīfa*. Interestingly, he points out that a masculine attribute, *wāḥid*, in the Quranic text would have been correct, as well.⁸²

In regards of the following part of the passage of interest, *khalaqa minhā zawjahā*, al-Ṭabarī states,

referring generally to *ahl al-ta'wīl*, that the mate, *zawj*, mentioned in the verse is Eve.⁸³ To support this notion he presents six traditions. The first two traditions, attributed to Mujāhid, report that Eve was created from the shortest rib, *quṣayrā*,⁸⁴ of Adam when he was sleeping, *wa-huwa nā'imun*. As he woke up, he said “woman”, *aththā*, in Syriac.⁸⁵ The third tradition, attributed to Qatāda, states that Eve was created from Adam, *khuliqat min Ādama*, and from one of his ribs, *min dīl'in min aḏlā'ihī*.⁸⁶

On the authority of al-Suddī, the fourth tradition presents Adam living in the Garden and wandering without a mate, *kāna yamshī fihā waḥshan wa-laysa lahu zawj*, in the company of whom to repose,⁸⁷ *li-yaskuna ilayhā*. Adam woke up after sleeping and saw a woman, which God had created from his rib, sitting beside his head. He asked what she was and why she was created, and she replied “a woman”, *imra'atun*, and “for you to repose in my company”, *li-taskuna ilayya*.⁸⁸ This tradition marks the creation of woman *for* man, in addition to the claim that she was created from the man.

In the fifth tradition, attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, i.e. a companion of the Prophet and perhaps the most influential source of traditions,⁸⁹ and “others”, *ghayrihi*, al-Ṭabarī cites *ahl al-kitāb* and specifically the People of Torah (i.e. Jews), describing God taking one of Adam's left-hand ribs, *dīl'an min aḏlā'ihī min shaqqihī l-aysari*, and healing its place while Adam was sleeping. He did not wake up, *lam yahubb min nawmatihī*, until God had created his spouse, Eve, from his rib.⁹⁰ God fashioned her into a woman for him to repose in her company: *fā-sawwāhā imra'atan li-yaskuna ilayhā*. Al-Ṭabarī is the only one of the exegetes selected for this study to use the verb *sawwā*, potentially alluding to straightening of a crooked rib mentioned in *aḥādīth*, for the process from this particular substance into a woman.⁹¹ It seems possible that the selection of this particular verb insinuates the crooked nature of women for the exegete.

The narrative continues by Adam waking up. When he saw Eve in the Garden he said “my flesh and my blood and my wife”, *lahmī wa-dammī wa-zawjaī*, and he reposed in her company, *fā-sakana*

ilayhā.⁹² Notably, al-Ṭabarī states that this is only what they claim and “God knows best”, *wa-llāhu a‘lam* – in classical Arabic, this statement can be interpreted as the author’s uncertainty in terms of the reliability of the source.⁹³ Although al-Ṭabarī refers to the Jews, the narration slightly differs from that of the Hebrew Bible.⁹⁴

On the authority of al-Suddī, already mentioned in conjunction with other narrations, the sixth tradition claims abruptly: God made Eve from Adam, *ja‘ala min Adama Ḥawwā’*.⁹⁵ The verb *ja‘ala* means creating something from a pre-existing thing and, thus, it can be interpreted as extraction in this context: the first woman was extracted from the man.⁹⁶ The trope well suits the rib story, narrated by many of the early exegetic authorities.

Ibn Abī Ḥātim – ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Rāzī (d. 938)

Ibn Abī Ḥātim was born in al-Rayy, Khurāsān, an area located in north-eastern Persia, including parts of Central Asia and Afghanistan. He became a scholar of *aḥādīth*, starting his career studying with the *ḥadīth* transmitters of his hometown. His career was further shaped by opposing views of other scholars, and in response, he wrote perhaps his best-known work, *Taqdīm*, building a genealogy which connects *ḥadīth* criticism with earlier authoritative scholars. In terms of his *fiqh* affiliation, Ibn Abī Ḥātim was a Shāfi‘ī. He was a voluminous writer and biographical information on him is abundant as well.⁹⁷

Another of the works Ibn Abī Ḥātim is famous for is his commentary, currently known by the name *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘azīm*. The part of it surviving today covers a total of 20 Quranic chapters, including *Sūrat al-Nisā’* and the passage at the focus of this study. Like al-Ṭabarī, he is known for his meticulous *asānīd*. Although Ibn Abī Ḥātim reports numerous traditions, he does not usually give his

own preference over contradictory material, which is probably the most momentous difference in comparison with al-Ṭabarī's work.⁹⁸

Concerning the passage of interest in this study, Ibn Abī Ḥātim first cites a tradition, attributed to several early exegetes mostly already mentioned by al-Ṭabarī, that the single soul, *nafs wāḥida*, is Adam.⁹⁹ He then moves on to the interpretation of *khalaqa minhā zawjahā*, by specifying, on the authority of al-Suddī, the verb: *ja'ala*.¹⁰⁰ As previously mentioned, this verb may indicate that the first woman was extracted from a pre-existing substance, the man, so that the woman was only created secondarily to the man. Ibn Abī Ḥātim also reports, on the authority of al-Suddī, that the mate, *zawj*, is Eve and, on the authority of al-Daḥḥāk,¹⁰¹ that she was created from Adam's back side rib, *min ḍil'i l-khalli*, which was [also] the lowest, *min asfalī l-aḍlā'i*.¹⁰²

Ibn Abī Ḥātim continues by presenting a tradition, credited to Ibn 'Abbās, according to which the woman was created from the man, *khuliqata l-mar'atu mina r-rajul*, which made her crave for men, *fa-ja'ala nahmatahā fī r-rjāl*. Similarly, the man was created from earth, *mina l-aṭṭ*, which made him crave for the earth. Ibn Abī Ḥātim concludes with a command: *fa-ḥbisū nīsā'akum*.¹⁰³ The verb *ḥabasa* can be translated as to obstruct, confine or even imprison – thus, the meaning of Ibn Abī Ḥātim's order seems to be “So confine your women!”. Notably, the details concerning human creation already provided legitimacy for the oppression of women in the Islamic scholarly discourse more than a millennium ago.

Lastly, Ibn Abī Ḥātim reports a tradition attributed to Mujāhid according to which Eve was created from a short rib, *qaṣīr*, of Adam when he was sleeping, and when he woke up, he said *aththā* which is “woman” in Syriac, corresponding to the equivalent tradition in al-Ṭabarī's commentary.¹⁰⁴ He adds that the woman is Eve, as reported by several earlier exegetes.

Ibn Abī Ḥātim worked with his *tafsīr* only a few decades after that of al-Ṭabarī. In fact, he relied on many of the same sources. He also used quite meticulous *asānīd* indicating the transmission process. However, the two share only a few of the interpretations in respect of this passage: the mate being made using the verb *jaʿala* and identified as Eve (al-Suddī) as well as Adam speaking Syriac (Mujāhid). In addition, Ibn Abī Ḥātim brings up a new element – and certainly a misogynous one from contemporary perspective – which justifies laws allowing men to keep women indoors. It has been speculated, though, that both of the above accounts might be later enhancements attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās.¹⁰⁵ However, the command “Confine your women!” included in Ibn Abī Ḥātim’s account, is repeated by several influential exegetes later on: for example, Ibn Kathīr (d. 1373) and al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505) referred to this tradition almost half a millennium later.

Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī – Naṣr b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm (d. 983)

Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī, also known as Imām al-Hudā, was born in Samarqand which was an important centre of commercial affairs as well as Muslim scholarship of Central Asia. Later, Abū l-Layth continued his studies in Balkh, Khurāsān. He was a Ḥanafī jurist and an influential person in his society. In addition, Abū l-Layth was a productive writer of pervasive religious and ethical material. His commentary, *Baḥr al-ʿulūm*, is one of his most consequential works. Abū l-Layth relied on traditions ascribed especially to Ibn ʿAbbās and the second caliph ʿUmar (d. 644), both belonging to the *ṣaḥāba* of the Prophet. He uses earlier explications as his methodological tool of exegesis.¹⁰⁶ Abū l-Layth’s work has been cited by later exegetes – for example, al-Qurṭubī (d. 1273), discussed later, often quoted him.¹⁰⁷

The Garden narrative, containing the creation of the first woman and already presented by al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Abī Ḥātim, was further developed in Abū l-Layth’s commentary. In his interpretation of the

passage of interest, he first notes that *nafs wāḥida* means Adam, and his spouse, Eve, was created from Adam's soul, *min nafsī Adama*. The author continues by reporting that when God created Adam, and he was placed in the Garden, God imposed a sleep on him. He was between asleep and awake when God created Eve from one of his left-hand ribs, *min ḍil' in min aḍlā'ihī l-yusrā*.¹⁰⁸

The narrative goes on with Adam waking up and being asked who she was. He replies “a woman because she was created from the man”, *imra'atun, li-annahā khuliqat minā l-mar'i*. The word *imra'atun*, translated as “a woman”, can be read as a derivative of the word *al-mar'* used, in this sentence, for “the man”. He was then asked about her name and Adam's reply was “Eve, because she was created from a living being”, *li-annahā khuliqat min ḥayy*. Abū l-Layth further describes what has been said about the colour of Eve's lips and its relationship with her name.¹⁰⁹

Eve's derivative status is evident in this explication – even her proper name is dependent on the man. However, it is possible that Abū l-Layth does not agree with this explication himself as he often uses the passive form of the word “to say”: *qīla*, it is said. Although he mentions one source, Ibn 'Abbās, in the beginning of his interpretation of the whole verse, the link between this elaborated narrative and earlier exegetical sources remains vague. It is also remarkable that his account is not further cited by later commentators included in this study.¹¹⁰ It is possible that the peculiarity of this narrative reflects his geographical location at the border area of the 'Abbāsīd Empire. In fact, historical conditions have been suggested to have played an important role in his distinctive literary work.¹¹¹

The Second Discursive Stage (11th–13th century): Consolidation

The second stage in the development of exegetic discourse on the Quranic passage provided in Q 4:1 consolidates the normative concept described above. Al-Wāḥidī, for example, seems to take the

earlier accounts for granted, adding evidence from a prophetic tradition, *ḥadīth*. Although al-Zamakhsharī and al-Rāzī generally introduce a more philosophical tone to the genre of *tafsīr*, they both conclude – despite being from somewhat opposite dogmatic backgrounds – that *nafs wāḥida* refers to Adam and *zawj* to Eve, created from his rib. With only a few exceptions, they do not cite early exegetes, and al-Rāzī, for example, gives his interpretation based on the “opinion of Muslims”.

The rib of this discursive stage becomes crooked, like women. In spite of al-Qurṭubī’s legalistic and precise style, his account concerning the passage of interest remains short and it does not add to the narrative elements of the interpretation. This may reflect the self-evident way *nafs wāḥida* is understood as Adam and the mate, *zawj*, as Eve. His phrasing further consolidates the inalienable connection between the rib and the woman.

Al-Wāḥidī – Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Naysābūrī (d. 1076)

Al-Wāḥidī was a Shāfi‘ī scholar from Nīshāpūr, Khurāsān, representing the Nīshāpūrī school of *tafsīr* and being the last of its three famous exegetes.¹¹² He attended classes of *adab*, various areas of humanities, and *naḥw*, Arabic grammar, as a boy. Eventually, he became a student of a well-known exegete, al-Tha‘alabī (d. 1035), in many parts continuing his teacher’s work.¹¹³ Al-Wāḥidī seems to have been at the centre of the intellectual life of his time, also producing significant literary works.¹¹⁴

Al-Wāḥidī wrote three different Quranic commentaries: *al-Wajīz* (a short commentary), *al-Wasīṭ* (a middle commentary), and most importantly *al-Basīṭ*, his most comprehensive commentary. In addition, he is acknowledged for his work on the occasions of Quranic revelations, *Asbāb al-nuzūl*. *Tafsīr al-basīṭ*, chosen for this study, is one of the earliest extensive philological commentaries on the Qur’ān still known today. Al-Wāḥidī himself lists his education in grammar, literature, prosody, and

lexicography in the introductory chapter of his *tafsīr*. He completed his work in the atmosphere of flourishing Sunnī and Ash‘arī thought. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210), discussed later in this study, used *al-Basīt* as a major source for his own exegesis. Similarly, al-Zamakhsharī (d. 1144), discussed next in this paper, was influenced by al-Wāḥidī’s exegesis.¹¹⁵

Al-Wāḥidī begins his commentary on the passage of interest by referring to the poem, earlier presented by al-Ṭabarī, as an explanation to the grammatical mismatch of the feminine *nafs* and the masculine Adam.¹¹⁶ He further states that the single soul is Adam, as also mentioned by al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Abī Ḥātim in the form of three traditions attributed to early transmitters. Al-Wāḥidī seems to take their authority for granted as he does not refer to them by name.¹¹⁷

Next, al-Wāḥidī writes that the created mate, *zawj*, is Eve who was created from one of Adam’s ribs, *min ḍil‘in min aḍlā‘i Adama*, corresponding to the tradition previously cited by al-Ṭabarī.¹¹⁸ However, al-Wāḥidī adds evidence ascribable to the Prophet himself: the woman is created from a rib, *inna l-mar’ata khuliqat min ḍil‘in*, so if you attempt to straighten her, *fa-in dhahabta tuqīmuhā*, you break her, *kasartahā*, but if you leave the crookedness in it, *wa-in taraktahā wa-flhā ‘iwajun*, you enjoy her, *istamta‘ta bihā*. This seems like a slightly modified version of an authoritative *ḥadīth* found in the compilation of *Saḥīḥ Muslim*, concluding correspondingly that you should enjoy her as crooked.¹¹⁹ Of the studied exegetes, al-Wāḥidī is the first to attest his interpretation of this verse with a prophetic tradition. At the same time, he inextricably integrates the idea of female crookedness into the Islamic interpretive discourse.

Al-Zamakhsharī – Abū l-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar (d. 1144)

Al-Zamakhsharī, also known by the honorific title of Jār Allāh, was a well-known Ḥanafī scholar. His

life was shadowed by being lame as his left foot had been amputated. Nevertheless, he became proficient in the area of Arabic linguistics and Quranic exegesis. He was born in Khwārazm, western Central Asia. Although al-Zamakhsharī was of Persian origin, he mastered Arabic language which he also used in his work. In fact, he considered Arabic as the language chosen by God, and he also produced literary works on Arabic grammar.¹²⁰

Al-Zamakhsharī visited Mecca several times. It was there where he started to write his linguistically orientated Quranic commentary, *al-Kashshāf ‘an ghawāmiḍ ḥaqā’iq al-tanzīl wa-‘uyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-ta’wīl*. The author emphasised the esthetic values of the Qur’ān offering semantic and rhetorical analyses and avoiding too many details.¹²¹ In spite of representing Mu‘tazilīs, one of the most important theological schools of Islam giving primacy to reason as opposed to revelation, al-Zamakhsharī’s commentary has been depicted quite traditional.¹²² However, regarding its dogmatic framework, *al-Kashshāf* represents Mu‘tazilī exegesis.¹²³

Al-Kashshāf was commented extensively by subsequent generations. Many of these scholars opposed its Mu‘tazilī approach whereas some annotated its lexicographical, grammatical, and eloquent style in a positive light. One of the most influential responses was that of an Ash‘arī-affiliated scholar, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210), introduced next. Of the exegetes included in the present study, Abū Hayyān al-Andalusī (d. 1344) and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505) criticised al-Zamakhsharī’s work. However, a well-known exegete, al-Bayḍāwī (d. 1286), summarises al-Zamakhsharī’s exegesis with an Ash‘arī tone in his own commentary, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta’wīl*.¹²⁴

Concerning the passage of interest in the present study, al-Zamakhsharī first states that all humans descend from the same father, the first human being, Adam. From the single soul from which God created it, he created its mate. He clarifies that God subdivided you (pl.) from this single soul, which

was created from dust, *turāb*, and he created its mate, Eve, from one of its ribs, *min ḍil'in min aḍlā'ihā*.¹²⁵ It is noteworthy that al-Zamakhsharī uses a feminine possessive suffix *-hā* (translated here as “it”), most likely referring to the feminine noun, *nafs*. However, as he was an expert in Arabic grammar, it seems surprising that he does not give a more explicit explanation with respect to the use of the feminine adjective *wāḥida* in case of a man, Adam. This multidimensional account can be seen to reflect a philosophic turn in the genre of *tafsīr*. Nevertheless, al-Zamakhsharī utilises the rib story – without reference to any textual sources – to attest his interpretation.

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī – Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Umar b. Husayn (d. 1210)

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī was from al-Rayy, Khurāsān. His father, representing the Shāfi‘ī school of jurisprudence and the Ash‘arī view of theology, was a local *khāṭib*, preacher, hence his other name, Ibn al-Khāṭib. Al-Rāzī studied with his father and adhered accordingly in terms of legal and theological schools. He travelled widely in Persia, India, and Central Asia, associating with other religious scholars. He particularly opposed the Mu‘tazilīs of Khwārazm. The literary work of al-Rāzī is extensive and outstandingly manifold: it comprises religious disciplines – theology, exegesis, philosophy, and jurisprudence – as well as medicine and astronomy.¹²⁶

Al-Rāzī’s Quranic commentary, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, also known as *Maḥāṭib al-ghayb*, is a lengthy philosophical rumination representing *tafsīr bi-l-ra’y*, having been seen as a response to al-Zamakhsharī’s Mu‘tazilī-considered work. However, his commitment solely to Ash‘arī views has been questioned.¹²⁷ Al-Rāzī often presents his interpretative ideas in the form of a question, *mas’ala*, offering different opinions in the answers following each question.¹²⁸ His textual output greatly influenced later Islamic interpretive tradition, notably also that of the Shī‘ī branch of Islam.¹²⁹

Concerning the passage of interest in the present study, al-Rāzī suggests, based on the “opinion of Muslims”, that the concept of *nafs wāḥida* refers to Adam.¹³⁰ He presents the *khaḥfā* poem, previously cited by al-Ṭabarī and al-Wāḥidī, to confirm that the feminine word *nafs* and its subsequent attribute *wāḥida* can encompass a masculine meaning, Adam.¹³¹

Al-Rāzī’s explication of *khalaqa minhā zawjahā* is more complicated. He states several points regarding the matter. Firstly, according to al-Rāzī, the majority view is that the mate, *zawj*, is Eve and she was created from one of his (Adam’s) left-hand ribs, *min ḍil’ in min aḍlā’ ihī l-yusrā*, the phrasing being identical to that of Abū l-Layth. Accordingly, this was done when Adam was asleep. When he woke up and saw her, he liked Eve because she was created from a part of him, *min juz’ in min ajzā’ ihī*.¹³² In fact, al-Rāzī is the first one of the commentators examined in this study to describe Adam’s feelings towards Eve. However, his feelings were strong based on the fact that there was something from himself in the woman, not due to any her original characteristics.

To support the above notion, al-Rāzī presents a prophetic tradition according to which the woman is created from a crooked rib, *min ḍil’ in a’ wajīn*, so if one tries to straighten it, he will break it, but if one leaves it crooked, he enjoys her. The *ḥadīth* is similar to that previously presented by al-Wāḥidī, and it correspondingly resembles a narration available in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. However, al-Rāzī does not mention other sources but a saying by the Prophet.¹³³ This seems to be a widespread feature in citing *ahādīth*, supposedly considered common knowledge.

Secondly, al-Rāzī presents an interpretation which he indicates being preferred by Abū Muslim al-Iṣfahānī, a Mu’tazilī scholar. According to it, the meaning of *khalaqa minhā zawjahā* is comparable to that of *min jinsihā*, from its type, equivalent to *min anfusikum*, translatable as “from among yourselves” in several Quranic passages (16:72; 42:11; 3:164, and 9:128).¹³⁴

Next, the author quotes al-Qāḍī, “Judge”, identified by Karen Bauer as the Ash‘arī theologian and jurist al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013),¹³⁵ who claims that the first of the two remarks above is “better” since it confirms God’s saying *khalaqakum min nafsīn wāḥidatin*. He goes on by pointing out that if Eve had been created initially, people would have been created from two souls, *min nafsayn*, and not from one. He writes that it is possible to respond to this so that the preposition *min* is not to mark the original point of departure, *li-ibtidā’i l-ghāya*, and if the beginning of creation comprised Adam, it is true that people were created from a single soul. Furthermore, God is capable of creating Adam from dust so he must be capable of creating Eve from dust, as well. He wonders what the benefit of creating Eve from one of Adam’s ribs would be.¹³⁶ The last point is novel in Sunnī exegesis and previously presented only by Shī‘ī commentators.¹³⁷ This might, in part, explain the subsequent popularity of al-Rāzī’s work among the Shī‘ī denomination.

Al-Rāzī answers the aforementioned rhetorical question by citing Ibn ‘Abbās: Adam was created from the surface of the earth, *min adīmi l-aḍi*, therefore, named as Adam. Likewise, the woman was created from one of his ribs, i.e. from a living substance, *min shay’in ḥayyin*, thus, she is called Eve.¹³⁸ The overall impression is that al-Rāzī tends to settle to this interpretation which does not, however, bring further development to the Garden narrative.

As al-Rāzī shared his geographical and juridical background with Ibn Abī Ḥātim, deceased almost 300 years earlier, he was influenced by the work of this predecessor of his. However, regarding the Quranic passage of interest, he does not refer to Ibn Abī Ḥātim as a source, nor does he cite identical traditions. This may be due to the changing methodology of *tafsīr*. Indeed, he presents fresh philosophical elements to the debate over the details of creation.

Al-Qurṭubī – Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr al-Anṣārī (d. 1273)

The well-known Andalusian religious scholar al-Qurṭubī was, in accordance with his name, from Cordoba. After the capture of Cordoba by the Christians in 1236, he left for Egypt to study *tafsīr* and *aḥādīth*, and he also died there. Al-Qurṭubī followed the Mālikī school of jurisprudence – he is actually the only commentator discussed in this study to represent this affiliation – and he had his main scholarly interest in legal issues. This can also be seen in his Quranic commentary *al-Jāmi‘ li-ahkām al-Qur’ān* which discusses the legal effects of each verse, even when not directly obvious.¹³⁹ Concerning the passage of interest in this study, however, this is not quite as evident.

The primary source for al-Qurṭubī’s exegesis are *aḥādīth*, but he also refers to classical poetry.¹⁴⁰ Although generally providing an extensively detailed exegesis with only little indications of what should be preferred,¹⁴¹ al-Qurṭubī discusses the passage of interest quite briefly. First, he pays attention to the grammatical fact that the attribute *nāḥida*, following the noun *nafs*, is dependent on the grammatical gender, although the meaning in this context is masculine. Next, al-Qurṭubī suggests that it is also permissible to use the attribute in its masculine form, *nāḥid*, as the single soul refers to Adam – this has also been done by earlier exegetes and transmitted by Mujāhid and Qatāda, al-Qurṭubī writes. In fact, al-Ṭabarī introduced this idea almost 400 years earlier.¹⁴²

Al-Qurṭubī cites a tradition, attributed to Mujāhid, that Eve was created from the shortest rib (of Adam), *min quṣayrā*. The diminutive term *quṣayrā* is the same as used by al-Ṭabarī, who also attributed a similar tradition to Mujāhid. Furthermore, al-Qurṭubī quotes an unspecified prophetic *ḥadīth* according to which the woman was created from a crooked rib, *min ḍil‘in ‘awjā’*. Interestingly, the attribute “crooked” is here in its feminine form, ‘*awjā’*’, unlike in a comparable *ḥadīth* reported by al-Rāzī who uses a masculine form of the word, *a ‘wāj*, in an identical context.¹⁴³ This discrepancy is hardly explainable by syntactic details so the feminine form may symbolise the inalienable connection which he saw between crookedness and women. Otherwise, al-Qurṭubī’s explication does not add to

the Garden narrative. His sententious way of interpreting the passage might, instead, reflect the self-evident way in which *nafs* was understood as Adam and *zawj* as Eve, enriched by the notion of the crooked rib, a symbol of male-dependence and the derivative status of women.

The Third Discursive Stage (14th-15th century): Expanding the Concept

The third discursive stage in medieval Sunnī exegesis is characterised by expanding the concept already normativised and consolidated, as described above. This is, indeed, evident in Abū Hayyān's lengthy elaboration of the passage, clearly adding misogynous notions to earlier interpretations. Although he refers to early Muslim sources of exegesis, his terminology contains new elements with negative connotations in conjunction with the primordial woman. He gives a prophetic *ḥadīth* representing, in his opinion, the turmoil of the female character, unstable state, and stubbornness. Abū Hayyān refers specifically to the crookedness of the rib indicating that women have precarious nature.

Similarly, Ibn Kathīr states – without any references – that *nafs wāḥida* is Adam and *khalaqa minhā zawjahā* means creation of Eve whom Adam found entertaining. This explication confirms the previous concept of Eve's creation for the man. Already when phrasing her creation, Ibn Kathīr links negative nuances to her. He also repeats Ibn Abī Ḥātim's reasoning, presented 400 years earlier, to confine the women because of their natural weakness to crave for men. Ibn Kathīr, a master of *ḥadīth*, gives a selectively modified prophetic tradition on woman being most crooked as the rib she was created from, neglecting the beginning and the end of these traditions containing advice to take care of women.

Ibn Kathīr's style is further developed in al-Suyūṭī's explication of the passage. He expands the

creation of woman to contain also an identical creation of a she-devil. It is impossible to avoid an impression that al-Suyūṭī draws a parallel between women and all kind of abyss and perdition. This linkage becomes even clearer as he concludes with the command – *fā-ih bisū nisā’akum!* – indicating that you should keep your women indoors, thus, sealing the misogynous trajectory of the Islamic interpretive discourse.

Abū Hayyān al-Andalusī – Athīr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Gharnāṭī (d. 1344)

Abū Hayyān was a versatile scholar born in Granada, al-Andalus. He was a philologist as well as a religious scholar of *tafsīr*, *aḥādīth* and *fiqh*. He specialised in Arabic grammar and wrote a total of 65 manuscripts. Abū Hayyān travelled around the Islamic world for a decade and settled in Egypt to teach Quranic science – he taught at the biggest mosque of Cairo.¹⁴⁴ The exegete first followed the Zāhirī school of *fiqh*, according to the geographical area of his birth. Later in his life, however, he adhered to Shāfi‘ī jurisprudence. He is known to have opposed Mu‘tazilī views, especially those of al-Zamakhsharī, discussed earlier in this paper. In his extensive commentary, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, Abū Hayyān seems to slightly prefer literal reading of the Quranic verses.¹⁴⁵

Abū Hayyān elaborates lengthily the explication of the passage of interest. He declares evident that Eve was created, in the beginning, from his (Adam’s) soul, *min nafsihi*, representing the origin from which she was produced, *unshi’at minhu*.¹⁴⁶ Like many other exegetes from al-Ṭabarī onwards, Abū Hayyān names Ibn ‘Abbās, al-Suddī and Qatāda as his source. Still referring to these early narrators, he specifies that God created Adam solitary in the Garden. When he was sleeping, God pulled out one of his short ribs from his left side, *adlā‘ahu l-quṣrā min shimālihi*, or from the right side, and created Eve from it.¹⁴⁷ Abū Hayyān is the first one of the commentators selected for this study to use the word *shimāl* for the left side – all the other ones use a derivative of *yasira*, a verb meaning “to be

easy” and consequently having a potential positive connotation. This is likely to indicate that the substance of female creation becomes even more negligible in the course of time.

Abū Hayyān continues by citing Ibn ‘Aṭīyya who has confirmed the narrative above by referring to a prophetic *ḥadīth* according to which the woman was created from the most crooked rib, so if one straightens her, he will break her, and breaking her indicates divorce, *wa-kasruhā ṭalāquhā*. The given narrative resembles a *ḥadīth* in the collection of *Saḥīḥ Muslim* – however, Abū Hayyān only quotes the end of it. He concludes that this is likely to be a representation of the turmoil of their (f.) character, *idṭirāb akhlāqihinna*, and unstable state, *kawnihinna lā yathbutna ‘alā ḥālatin wāḥida*, which is stubbornness, *ṣa‘bātu l-mirās*.¹⁴⁸ This is the most evident account of the studied ones to link dubious characteristics of women to the creation story.

Next, Abū Hayyān presents a citation by Abū Muslim according to which the meaning of *khalaqa minhā zawjahā* is comparable to that of *min jinsihā*, from its type. This interpretation has been previously introduced by al-Rāzī in his philosophically orientated commentary. In fact, Abū Hayyān also gives another deliberation included in al-Rāzī’s commentary: that of al-Qāḍī, claiming that if Eve had been created initially, people would have been created from two souls, *nafsayn*, and not from a single one. The quote, looking like a direct extract from al-Rāzī’s commentary, ends with a conclusion that God is capable of creating Eve from dust, as well.¹⁴⁹

Abū Hayyān takes a direct quote from al-Zamakhsharī’s commentary, too, borrowing the concept of a single soul, created from dust, *tuwāb*, and subdividing people from this single soul from which God created its mate Eve, from a rib.¹⁵⁰ It seems that the intention of the commentator is to explain the controversies over the matter, but, nevertheless, he concludes that the most apparent opinion, *zāhiru qawlin*, is the one attributed to Ibn ‘Abbās, according to which Eve was created in the Garden. Thus, Abū Hayyān seems to take the crooked rib narrative for granted.

Ibn Kathīr – ‘Imād al-Dīn Ismā‘īl b. ‘Umar b. Kathīr (d. 1373)

Ibn Kathīr was a Shāfi‘ī scholar born in Bosra, Syria. He moved and studied in Damascus where he also died. He was a student of the famous scholar Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), sometimes even accused of being the teacher’s spokesperson in his own works. Due to the turbulent political situation in the Middle East, they both attempted to revive the Islam they considered as original.¹⁵¹ Ibn Kathīr had a long career in the Syrian ‘*ulamā*’, i.e. religious scholars. He was a diligent writer, one of his most influential works being the great history of Islam, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*. He also contributed remarkably to the science of *aḥādīth*.¹⁵²

Ibn Kathīr’s traditional Quranic commentary, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘aẓīm*, can be depicted as a reaction to his Shāfi‘ī–Ash‘arī fellows, immersing theological and figurative quiddity into their works – he engages particularly with likewise affiliated Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1209) discussed above.¹⁵³ The work exemplifies the author’s wide knowledge of *aḥādīth*. Ibn Kathīr investigated al-Ṭabarī’s and Ibn Abī Ḥātim’s traditions, carefully selecting the ones he considered as the most authentic and theologically sound ones.¹⁵⁴ His attitude is conservative which can be seen in many parts of his commentary. However, it has been influential for centuries.

In his *tafsīr*, Ibn Kathīr uses intertextual style of exegesis also providing details on legal matters. Unlike many other exegetes discussed in this study, Ibn Kathīr does not use grammatical analysis or classical poetry.¹⁵⁵ This can be seen also in his explication of the passage of interest. He begins with statements without any references. First, *nafs wāḥida* is Adam. Next, he interprets *khalaqa minhā zawjahā* as the creation of Eve, created from Adam’s left and back side rib, *min ḍil’ihi l-aysari min khalfihi*, when Adam was sleeping. As he woke up and saw her, she pleased him and he found her

entertaining: *fa-a‘jabathu fa-ānasa ilayhā*. Notably, Ibn Kathīr uses a derivative of the verb *yasira*, previously interpreted – and translated – with regard to left side. However, *aysar* can also be translated as “negligible” giving a potential negative nuance attributable to women.¹⁵⁶

Ibn Kathīr does not give sources for the previous statement. However, he continues by referring to Ibn Abī Ḥātim (d. 938) who had earlier transmitted a tradition ascribed to Ibn ‘Abbās according to which “the woman was created from the man which made her crave for men, whereas the man was created from earth which made him crave for the earth”. As did Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Ibn Kathīr concludes with a command to confine women: *ihbisū nisā’akum!*¹⁵⁷ This deduction is brought up again after 400 years – it was not mentioned, for example, by previous Shāfi‘ī scholars discussed in this paper, al-Wāhidī (d. 1076) and al-Rāzī (d. 1149). After the centuries-long development of Islamic interpretive discourse, this order remains and further strengthens the subordinate status of women.

Next, Ibn Kathīr cites a *ḥadīth* according to which the woman is created from a rib, and the most crooked part of the rib is its upper portion, *inna a‘waja shay’in fī ḍ-ḍil‘i a‘lāhu*, so if one tries to straighten it, he will break it, and if one is to enjoy her, he should do so even though she has crookedness, *istamta‘ta bihā wa-flhā ‘iwajūn*. He announces the given *ḥadīth* being *ṣaḥīḥ*, authentic, but does not specify it any further. In fact, the quote seems to be a mixture of two narrations included in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from which the author seems to have taken selective material. For example, he has dropped the beginning and the end of the latter one containing an advice to take care of women.¹⁵⁸ This might well reflect his patriarchal views.

Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī – Abū l-Faḍl ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr (d. 1505)

Al-Suyūṭī was a polymath born in Cairo, Egypt, where he grew up in an academic and religious

environment. Like his Persian father, he was a Shāfi‘ī, widely studying religious sciences and Arabic. Al-Suyūṭī was a teacher as well as a productive writer and he gained popularity all over the Islamic world. He might have written almost a thousand manuscripts, composing also a well-known Quranic commentary, *al-Durr al-manthūr fī tafsīr al-ma‘thūr*.¹⁵⁹

Al-Suyūṭī’s *al-Durr* was aimed to comprise solely traditions and *aḥādīth* without his own comments. Thus, it clearly represents the style of *tafsīr bi-l-ma‘thūr*. He advocated his choice by stating that the traditions are an essential basis for reason-based exegesis. Al-Suyūṭī collected his material from a manifold of sources. Of the four exegetes, emphasised in his own description of the commentary, two are included in the present study: al-Ṭabarī (d. 923) and Ibn Abī Ḥātim (d. 938).¹⁶⁰ This is, indeed, also evident in the case of the passage of interest. Naturally, his choice over the material picked to compile his commentary contains a personal tone.

In terms of *nafs wāḥida* in the passage of interest, al-Suyūṭī quotes two traditions. The first, attributed to Ibn ‘Abbās, states briefly *min Adama*, from Adam, and the second one, ascribed to Mujāhid, is even more concise: *Adam*. The author mentions that the latter was transmitted by al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Abī Ḥātim.¹⁶¹

For the interpretation of *khalaqa minhā zawjahā*, al-Suyūṭī lists several traditions. First, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās, al-Suyūṭī states that God created Eve from the shortest rib of Adam’s, *quṣayrā adlā‘ihi*. The same term was earlier used by al-Ṭabarī and al-Qurṭubī, both of whom, however, attributed the tradition to Mujāhid.¹⁶² As a matter of fact, al-Suyūṭī’s second tradition, indeed attributed to Mujāhid, gives the same terms. In addition, just like quoted by al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Abī Ḥātim, he mentions this having been done while Adam was sleeping, and when he woke up, he said “woman”, *aththā*, in Syriac.¹⁶³

The third tradition, attributed to Ibn ‘Amr, reports that Eve was created from the left side of Adam’s back, *min khalfi Adama l-aysar*. Like al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr, al-Suyūṭī uses the term *aysar* which may be interpreted with a negative nuance attributable to women. Most interestingly, he adds that a demonic woman, *imra’atu iblīsā*, was [also] created from his back and left-hand side.¹⁶⁴ The narrative does not mention a rib, but anatomically it is equivalent to the rib story. As a whole, this tradition adds remarkably to the Garden narrative as it seems to juxtapose the creation of Eve and a she-devil. It is noteworthy that neither this tradition nor its source, Ibn ‘Amr, has been mentioned in any of the other commentaries discussed above.

On the authority of al-Daḥḥāk, transmitted by Ibn Abī Ḥātim, the fourth tradition specifies that God created Eve from Adam, from the lowest rib at the back: *min Adama, min ḍil’i l-khalfi, wa-huwa min asfalī aḍlā’*. The fifth tradition, attributed to Ibn ‘Abbās and similarly transmitted by Ibn Abī Ḥātim, states that the woman was created from the man, *khuliqata l-mar’atu mina r-rajul*, which made her crave for men, *fā-ja’ala nahmatahā fī r-rjāl* – to this he adds a command to confine women: *fā-ih bisū nisā’akum!* Only after this the author compares this feature to that of the man: he was created from earth which made him crave for earth.¹⁶⁵ Although the sequence of the details included in the tradition is different, the overall message is exactly the same as transmitted earlier by Ibn Abī Ḥātim and Ibn Kathīr: you should keep your women indoors.¹⁶⁶

Tafsīr al-Jalālayn

In al-Suyūṭī’s other commentary work, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, composed together with his teacher, Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Maḥallī (d. 1459), the passage of interest concerning the present study is interpreted laconically: “*khalaqakum min nafsin wāḥidatin*, Adam, *wa-khalaqa minhā zawjahā*, Eve,

from one of his left ribs”.¹⁶⁷ As by far the shortest and easiest to read, this commentary remained at the centre of Sunnī religious education for centuries, and it is still often referred to. It symbolises, by its meager simplicity, the essence of the metamorphosis of Islamic interpretive tradition: a single (f.) soul (f.) and its (f.) mate (m.) made from it (f.) became firmly Adam, his rib and Eve.

Conclusions

In the present study, I have used discourse analysis, concentrating on questions of power and injustice as well as how they are formatted through discourse, as the methodological framework in scrutinising medieval Sunnī *tafāṣīr* on the creation of woman. Since this paper also focuses on interpretations of gender categories and hierarchy, I have operated with feminist strands of the discourse-analytic approach, in particular. Furthermore, the diachronic development of the Islamic interpretive discourse, dividable into three consecutive discursive stages with distinct characteristics, was examined utilising a genealogical perspective.

The first discursive stage in the development of Islamic interpretive discourse was characterised as normativisation of the concepts regarding the creation of woman: *nafs wāḥida*, single soul, became established as Adam and the mate created from this soul, *zawj*, as Eve. The woman was interpreted being made from Adam’s rib, adding details somewhat equivalent to the Biblical Garden narrative. Many linguistic features of the *tafāṣīr* represented gender-based hegemony already at this stage of the trajectory. This patriarchal ethos was further strengthened throughout the evolution of the interpretive discourse.

The second stage in the evolution of exegeses on the passage of interest consolidated the normative concept described above. This reinforcement was done by taking earlier notions for granted and using intertextual references in a selective way which shaped the interpretive discourse. These elaborated

exegetic perceptions on the creation of woman comprised, for example, a shift in which the rib, i.e. the substance of female creation, became crooked – as did the women. This, in its part, interacted with the status of women by representing, sustaining, and generating gender hierarchy and inequality which are, indeed, at the very focus of discourse-analytic research.

The third discursive stage, in turn, was characterised by expanding the concepts concerning the creation of woman which had already been normativised and consolidated during the earlier phases in the diachronic development of the interpretive discourse. This was done, for example, by adding misogynous notions to earlier interpretations on the creation and even parallelizing the creation of the first woman with that of wickedness and evil. The conclusive command to keep women indoors, already mentioned during the first discursive stage, was repeated – and eaten into Muslim understanding of gender relations. Many textual details present during this discursive stage in the evolution of *tafāsīr* sealed the misogynous trajectory of Islamic interpretive discourse until modern times.

The interpretation of the Quranic passage of interest in this paper has recently been addressed specifically in terms of its potential gender-sensitive reading.¹⁶⁸ In addition, some modern exegetes read it in a more abstract manner.¹⁶⁹ Nevertheless, contemporary Muslims tend to have unquestionably accepted the potentially biased piece of long-lived interpretive tradition, according to which the first woman was created out of Adam's rib, hence secondarily to him. This dominant interpretation has most likely been shaped by early exegetic traditions reflecting the religio-cultural milieu, its religious texts and folklore – especially Jewish and Christian traditions played an important role in the formation of *tafāsīr* on the matter. The subsequent development of the discourse, during which these ancient conceptions became a patriarchal construct of gender hierarchy among Muslims, has not changed the big picture.

Although gender-related interpretations of the Qur'ān have previously been studied diversely, the

present study is the first one to specifically address the diachronic development of the Islamic interpretive discourse on the creation of woman as presented in medieval Sunnī *tafāṣīr*. The three discursive stages identifiable in the commentary accounts probably reflect the changing context of the exegetes. As this study focused mainly on linguistic features of this discourse, further studies are needed to evaluate, in more detail, the underlying context-dependent factors and their potential influence on the interpretations. Furthermore, the diachronic development of Islamic interpretive discourse could also be studied in connection with the Shīʿī denomination. Perhaps most thrilling, however, would be to apply the theoretical framework described in this paper to the latter part of the so-called Garden narrative: in the Qurʾān (Q 2:36; 7:22-3; and 20:121), the primordial pair is equally accused of eating from the forbidden tree – nevertheless, in later Islamic interpretive tradition,¹⁷⁰ Eve became blamed for this incident as well as the subsequent sorrowful turn in the fate of humankind.

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¹ Muhammad Abdel Haleem, *Understanding the Qur’ān: Themes and Style* (London: Tauris & Co, 1999), 123; and Ruth Roded, "Human Creation in the Hebrew Bible and the Qur’an: Feminist Exegesis," *Religion Compass* 6 (2012): 277-82.

² For a comparison, see Torsten Löfstedt, “The Creation and Fall of Adam: A Comparison Between the Qur’anic and Biblical Accounts,” *Swedish Missiological Theme* 93 (2005): 455-7; and Haleema Sadia, “The Creation of Man in the Bible and the Holy Quran,” *International Journal of Asian Social Science* 6 (2012): 962.

³ Samuel Haas, “The ‘Creation of Man’ in the Qur’ān,” *Muslim World* 31 (1941): 268-9; and Jane Smith and Yvonne Haddad, “Eve: Islamic Image of Woman,” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 5 (1982): 136.

⁴ Quran 6:2 (clay); 7:12 (clay); 15:26 (clay, mud); 15:28 (clay, mud); 16:4 (drop); 22:5 (dust/drop); 23:12 (clay); 25:54 (water); 32:7 (clay); 35:11 (dust/drop); 38:71 (clay); 40:67 (dust/drop); 55:14 (clay); 40:67 (drop); 76:2 (drop); and 86:6 (water).

⁵ Riffat Hassan, “Made from Adam’s Rib? The Issue of Woman’s Creation,” in *The Issue of Woman-Man Equality in the Islamic Tradition*, ed. L. Grob *et al.* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1991), 71.

⁶ *O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed Allah is ever, over you, an Observer.* (Q 4:1; translation according to *Saḥīḥ International* – available at <https://quran.com/4/1>).

⁷ For a thorough description of the grammatical details, see Riffat Hassan, “Made from Adam’s Rib? The Woman’s Creation Question,” *Al-Mushir* 27 (1985); the creation mentioned in this verse is generally understood as being described in gender-neutral terms.

⁸ It is noteworthy that the word *zawj* (pl. *azwāj*) appears in the Qur’ān and other classical texts only in its masculine form even though a feminine singular, *zawja*, would be theoretically possible.

⁹ Etin Anwar, *Gender and Self in Islam* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), 70; and Hatice Arpaguş, “The Position of Woman in the Creation: A Qur’anic Perspective,” in *Muslima Theology: The Voices of Muslim Women Theologians*, ed. Ednan Aslan *et al.* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH, 2013), 132.

¹⁰ Anwar, *Gender and Self*, 70; and Amīna Wadud, *Qur’an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman’s Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 11.

¹¹ Michael Pregill, “Exegesis,” in *Routledge Handbook on Early Islam*, ed. Herbert Berg (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 102.

¹² Mahmoud Ayoub, *The Qur’an and Its Interpreters*, vol. 1, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 32; Karen Bauer, *Room for Interpretation: Qur’anic Exegesis and Gender* (PhD Dissertation: Princeton University, 2008), 29-31; Catherine Bronson, *Imagining the Primal Woman: Islamic Selves of Eve* (PhD Dissertation: University of Chicago, 2012); *id.*, “Eve in the Formative Period of Islamic Exegesis: Intertextual Boundaries and Hermeneutic Demarcation,” in *Tafsir and Islamic Intellectual History: Exploring the Boundaries of a Genre*, ed. Andreas Görke and Johanna Pink (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Hassan, “Made from Adam’s Rib? The Woman’s Creation Question”; *id.*, “Made from Adam’s Rib? The Issue of Woman’s Creation”; Jane McAuliffe, *Qur’anic Christians: An Analysis of*

Classical and Modern Exegesis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 29-30; Pregill, "Exegesis," 105-6; and Andrew Rippin, "Tafsīr," 85.

¹³ Bronson, *Imagining the Primal Woman*, 124; and *id.*, "Eve in the Formative Period," 30-4.

¹⁴ Pregill, "Exegesis," 110.

¹⁵ Bronson, *Imagining the Primal Woman*, 124; *id.*, "Eve in the Formative Period," 30-4; Hassan, "Made from Adam's Rib? The Woman's Creation Question"; and *id.*, "Made from Adam's Rib? The Issue of Woman's Creation".

¹⁶ Bronson, "Eve in the Formative Period," 30-4.

¹⁷ For further information on the extraneous material contributing to the early tradition on Eve, see Bronson, *Imagining the Primal Woman*, 124; *id.*, "Eve in the Formative Period of Islamic Exegesis," 30-4; Eisenberg, "Ḥawwā"; Hassan, "Made from Adam's Rib? The Woman's Creation Question"; and *id.*, "Made from Adam's Rib? The Issue of Woman's Creation".

¹⁸ The two sound compilations which received a canonical status among Muslims later on, as described more detailedly in Jens Scheiner, "Hadīth and Sunna," in *Routledge Handbook on Early Islam*, ed. Herbert Berg (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 79-97. In addition, the rib is mentioned as a substance of female creation in two other canonical compilations of *ahādīth*, those of al-Tirmidhī and Ibn Māja, belonging to the authoritative "Six Books", *al-Kutub al-Sitta*.

¹⁹ Hassan, "Made from Adam's Rib?" 77-80.

²⁰ For example, Anwar, *Gender and Self in Islam*, 46, 70-1; Arpaguş "The Position of Woman in the Creation", 132; Roded, "Human Creation in the Hebrew Bible and the Qur'an," 277; and Zohreh Sadatmoosavi, Wan Ali, and Mohammad Shokouhi, "Woman's Status in the Creation Narratives in the Qur'an and Torah," *Jurnal Syariah* 25 (2017): 82.

²¹ McAuliffe, *Qur'ānic Christians*, 29; Pregill, "Exegesis," 108; Rippin, "Tafsīr," 84-6; and Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an: Towards a Contemporary Approach* (London: Routledge, 2006), 10.

²² *Id.*

²³ Sometimes referred to as *tafsīr bi-l-riwāya*; Ayoub, *The Qur'an and Its Interpreters*, 22-3; McAuliffe, *Qur'ānic Christians*, 19-21; Pregill, "Exegesis," 105-7, and Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an*, 42.

²⁴ Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an*, 59.

²⁵ These theories are thoroughly introduced by James Williams, *Understanding Poststructuralism* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014); and Vivien Burr *Social Constructionism*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2015), respectively.

²⁶ Burr, *Social Constructionism*, 1-4.

²⁷ Jane Sunderland, *Gendered Discourses* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 11.

²⁸ Paul Baker, *Sexed Texts: Language, Gender and Sexuality* (London: Equinox Pub, 2008), 5.

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- ²⁹ Michelle Lazar, "Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis: Articulating a Feminist Discourse Praxis 1," *Critical Discourse Studies* 4 (2007): 147.
- ³⁰ Burr, *Social Constructionism*, 10, 28, 72; for further information on the role of language in social constructionism, see Burr, *Social Constructionism*, 52-72.
- ³¹ Lia Litosseliti and Jane Sunderland, *Gender Identity and Discourse Analysis* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Pub, 2002), 5-6.
- ³² Burr, *Social Constructionism*, 61-3.
- ³³ Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language* (London: Longman, 1995), 189.
- ³⁴ Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power*, 2nd ed. (Harlow: Longman, 2001), 30-4.
- ³⁵ Norman Fairclough, *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research* (London: Taylor & Francis., 2004), 9.
- ³⁶ Norman Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 3-4.
- ³⁷ Sunderland, *Gendered Discourses*, 6-7.
- ³⁸ Nelson Phillips and Cynthia Hardy, *Discourse Analysis: Investigating Processes of Social Construction* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2002), 6.
- ³⁹ Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1993), 1; the relationship between "gender" and "discourse" is elaborately presented by J. Sunderland in *Gendered Discourses*.
- ⁴⁰ Sunderland, *Gendered Discourses*, 20-2.
- ⁴¹ Janet Cramer, "Critical Discourse Analysis," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2009), ed. Karen Foss and Stephen Littlejohn, 326.
- ⁴² Michelle Lazar, "Politicizing Gender in Discourse: Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis as Political Perspective and Praxis," in *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis: Gender, Power, and Ideology in Discourse*, ed. Michelle Lazar (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 2-7.
- ⁴³ Ruth Wodak, "What CDA Is About: A Summary of Its History, Important Concepts and Its Developments," in *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, eds. Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (London: Sage, 2001), 1-13.
- ⁴⁴ Phillips and Hardy, *Discourse Analysis*, 19-22.
- ⁴⁵ Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*, 12-36.
- ⁴⁶ Cramer, "Critical Discourse Analysis," 328.
- ⁴⁷ Ruth Wodak, *Gender and Discourse* (London: Sage, 1997), 6.
- ⁴⁸ Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis*, 2.
- ⁴⁹ Phillips and Hardy, *Discourse Analysis*, 20.
- ⁵⁰ Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*, 12; and Phillips and Hardy, *Discourse Analysis*, 19-22.
- ⁵¹ Phillips and Hardy, *Discourse Analysis*, 19-22.

⁵² This is the case specifically in *critical* discourse analysis (CDA).

⁵³ Marianne Jørgensen and Louise Phillips, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* (London: SAGE, 2002), 5-6.

⁵⁴ Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*, 9.

⁵⁵ Sunderland, *Gendered Discourses*, 11.

⁵⁶ Wodak, "What CDA Is About," 3.

⁵⁷ See, e.g. Kocku von Stuckrad, "Discursive Study of Religion: Approaches, Definitions, Implications," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 25 (2013): 5-25; and Titus Hjelm, "Discourse Analysis," in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, eds. Steven Engler and Michael Stausberg (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 134-50.

⁵⁸ Tamara Warhol, "Gender Constructions and Biblical Exegesis: Lessons from a Divinity School Seminar," in *Language and Religious Identity: Women in Discourse*, ed. Allyson Jule (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 51-52; for an illustrative case-study on the phenomenon, see the entire paper by T. Warhol.

⁵⁹ Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*, 37-61.

⁶⁰ Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis*, 188.

⁶¹ Martin Saar, "Genealogy and Subjectivity," *European Journal of Philosophy* 10 (2002): 231-3.

⁶² Gary Gutting, *Foucault: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 50-8.

⁶³ Seantel Anaïs, "Genealogy and Critical Discourse Analysis in Conversation: Texts, Discourse, Critique," *Critical Discourse Studies* 10 (2013): 123-35.

⁶⁴ Saar, "Genealogy and Subjectivity," 231-4.

⁶⁵ Walid Saleh, *The Formation of the Classical Tafṣīr Tradition: The Qur'ān Commentary of al-Tha'labī* (Boston: Brill, 2004), 14-6.

⁶⁶ Omaina Abou-Bakr, "The Interpretive Legacy of Qiṭamah as Exegetical Construct," in *Men in Charge? Rethinking Authority in Muslim Legal Tradition*, ed. Ziba Mir-Hosseini *et al.* (Oxford: OneWorld, 2015), 44-64 (examining the accumulation of gender notions in exegeses on the Quranic verse 4:34 and the evolution of the original term in it, *qawwāmūn*, into a patriarchal construct of *qiwāma*, along a chronological path of *tafṣīr*); and Katja von Schönerman, "Establishing Gender Categories and Hierarchies: The Evolution of Rabbinic Discourse on the Creation of Woman," forthcoming.

⁶⁷ Lazar, "Politicizing Gender in Discourse," 2-10.

⁶⁸ Lazar, "Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis," 152-3. Besides feminist CDA, there are a few other feministically affiliated specific research approaches addressing language and discourse (Charlotte Kroløkke and Anne Scott Sørensen, *Gender Communication Theories & Analyses: From Silence to Performance* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2006), 47-62).

For example, conversation analysis, inspired by sociolinguistics, poststructuralist discourse analysis, and transversal discourse analysis have been used in feminist research settings. In addition, feminist linguistics analyse the relationship between language and gender from its self-dependent perspective (Ruth Wodak, "Gender and Language: Cultural Concerns," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 2nd ed., ed. James D. Wright (Oxford: Elsevier, 2005), 700).

⁶⁹ Bronson, *Imagining the Primal Woman*, *id.*, "Eve in the Formative Period"; Zohar Hadroni-Allouche, "Creating Eve: Feminine Fertility in Medieval Islamic Narratives of Eve and Adam," in *In the Arms of Biblical Women*, ed. John Greene and Mishaël Caspi (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2013); Hassan, "Made from Adam's Rib? The Woman's Creation Question"; and Barbara Stowasser, *Women in the Quran: Traditions and Interpretation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

⁷⁰ Bauer, *Room for Interpretation*.

⁷¹ Arpağuş, "The Position of Woman in the Creation"; Aisha Geissinger, *Gender and Muslim Construction of Exegetical Authority: A Rereading of the Classical Genre of Qur'an Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 39-41; Hassan, "Made from Adam's Rib? The Woman's Creation Question"; Syafiq Hasyim, *Understanding Women in Islam: An Indonesian Perspective* (Jakarta: Solstice Publishing, 2006); Meir Kister, "Legends in Tafsīr and Ḥadīth Literature: The Creation of Adam and Related Stories," in *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*, ed. A. Rippin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 110-4; *id.*, "Adam: A Study of Some Legends in 'Tafsir and Hadit' Literature," *Israel Oriental Studies* 13 (1993): 143-7; Mohd Ramli, Shahidra Abdul Khalil, Mohammad Jamaludin, *et al.*, "Muslim Exegeses Perspective on Creation of the First Woman: A Brief Discussion," *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research* 13 (2013): 41-4; Roshimah Shamsudin and Aiza Baharudin, "The Creation of Women from the Perspective of Mufasssirin and Muhaddithun Between Past and Present Scholars," *MATEC Web of Conferences* 150 (2018): 05064; and Brannon Wheeler, *Prophets in the Quran: An Introduction to the Quran and Muslim Exegesis* (London: Continuum, 2002), 15-35.

⁷² Hibba Abugideiri, "Allegorical Gender: The Figure of Eve Revisited," *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 13 (1996): 518-36; Anwar, *Gender and Self in Islam*, 46-71; Georgina Jardim, *She Who Disputes: A Qur'anic Precedent for Sacral Interlocutions* (PhD Dissertation: University of Gloucestershire, 2014); Banu Khan, "Reclaiming Hawwa' in Islamic Civilization and Discourse," *Ar-Raniry International Conference on Islamic Studies* 1 (2016): 11-25; Kristen Kvam, Linda Schearing & Valerie Ziegler, *Eve & Adam: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Readings on Genesis and Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999); Roded, "Human Creation in the Hebrew Bible and the Qur'an"; Smith & Haddad, "Eve: Islamic Image of Woman"; Denise Spellberg, "Writing the Unwritten Life of the Islamic Eve: Menstruation and the Demonization of Motherhood," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 28 (1996): 305-24; and Stowasser, *Women in the Quran*, 25-38.

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- ⁷³ Bauer, *Room for Interpretation*; Ayesha Chaudhry, *Domestic Violence and the Islamic Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 29-55; Shahbaz Cheema, "The Concept of Qawama: A Study of Interpretive Tensions," *Hawwa* 11 (2014): 235-51; Murad Elsaidi, "Human Rights and Islamic Law: A Legal Analysis Challenging the Husband's Authority to Punish "Rebellious" Wives," *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights* 7 (2011): 1-25; Azizah al-Hibri, "An Islamic Perspective on Domestic Violence," *Fordham International Law Journal* 27 (2003): 195-224; Mohamed Mahmoud, "To Beat or Not to Beat: On the Exegetical Dilemmas over Qur'ān 4:34," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 126 (2006): 537-50; Hadia Mubarak, *Intersections: Modernity, Gender, and Qur'anic Exegesis* (PhD Dissertation: Georgetown University, 2014); Ruth Roded, "Jewish and Islamic Religious Feminist Exegesis of the Sacred Books: Adam, Woman and Gender," *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues* 29 (2015): 56-80; and Rachel Scott, "A Contextual Approach to Women's Rights in the Qur'ān: Readings of 4:34," *Muslim World* 99 (2009): 60-85.
- ⁷⁴ Abou-Bakr, "The Interpretive Legacy of Qiṣamah"; Asma Afsaruddin, *Contemporary Issues in Islam* (Eginburgh: Eginburgh University Press, 2015); Bauer, *Room for Interpretation*, *id.*, *Gender Hierarchy in the Qur'an: Medieval Interpretations, Modern Responses* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Bronson, *Imagining the Primal Woman*; and *id.*, "Eve in the Formative Period".
- ⁷⁵ C. Bosworth, "al-Ṭabarī," in *EF*, 11-2.
- ⁷⁶ Helmut Gätje, *The Qur'ān and Its Exegesis: Selected Texts with Classical and Modern Muslim Interpretations* (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1976), 34; and Jane McAuliffe, "Quranic Hermeneutics: The Views of al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr," in *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*, ed. A. Rippin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 47-8.
- ⁷⁷ Ayoub, *The Qur'an and Its Interpreters*, 3; Bosworth, "al-Ṭabarī," 14; and Martin Plessner and Andrew Rippin. "Muḳātil b. Sulaymān," in *EF*.
- ⁷⁸ Musa Abdul, "Historical Development of Tafsir," *Islamic Culture* 50 (1976): 146; Hussein Abdul-Raof, *Qur'an Translation: Discourse, Texture and Exegesis* (Richmond: Curzon, 1999), 176; Bosworth, "al-Ṭabarī," 14; John Cooper, "Translator's Introduction," in *Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Ja'ir al-Ṭabarī: The Commentary on the Qur'ān* (London: Oxford University Press, 1987), xii; Gätje, *The Qur'ān and Its Exegesis*, 34; and Mustafa Shah, "Al-Ṭabarī and the Dynamics of *Tafsīr*: Theological Dimensions of a Legacy," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 15 (2013): 83.
- ⁷⁹ Gätje, *The Qur'ān and Its Exegesis*, 34.
- ⁸⁰ Shah, "Al-Ṭabarī and the Dynamics of *Tafsīr*," 113-4.
- ⁸¹ Cooper, "Translator's Introduction," xvi-xvii. Al-Ṭabarī gives special credit to Ibn 'Abbās, according to McAuliffe, "Quranic Hermeneutics," 50.
- ⁸² Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān* (Cairo: Dār hijr, 2001), 6:339-40.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 340-2.

⁸⁴ A diminutive form of *qaṣīr*, “short”.

⁸⁵ Ar. *al-nabaṭiyya*, possibly referring to the language of ancient Syria which was most likely a western dialect of Aramaic in which many important early Christian texts were written.

⁸⁶ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 6:341.

⁸⁷ *Sakana ilā*, “to find peace and repose in someone’s company” in Arne Ambros, *A Concise Dictionary of Koranic Arabic* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2004), 136; this expression has also been understood as referring to sexual relationship (Bronson, *Imagining the Primal Woman*, 132-3) and it is often translated as “to dwell” or “to repose” in someone.

⁸⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 6:341.

⁸⁹ Cooper, “Translator’s Introduction,” xvi.

⁹⁰ Interestingly, the gender of the spouse is feminine, *zawjatahu*, “his wife”, although the word *zawj* usually appears in classical texts only in its masculine form independently on the context.

⁹¹ From *sawīya*, form II: “to fashion” or “to straighten”; however, the same verb is used in Q 91:7 to describe God’s creation and perfection of the human *nafs*; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 6:341-2.

⁹² Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 6:341-2. Also here the gender of the spouse is feminine, *zawjaḥī*, “my wife”.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 342. However, contemporary Muslims use it as a part of their attempt to reply to questions about Islam that are difficult to answer with absolute certainty.

⁹⁴ In the Bible, the purpose of the creation of the woman is, correspondingly, Adam’s loneliness, but God makes him an “helpmeet” (Gen. 2:18), and the rib which God uses for his creative act is not specified (Gen. 2:21).

⁹⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 6:342.

⁹⁶ See Wadud, *Qur’an and Woman*, 18.

⁹⁷ Erik Dickinson, *The Development of Early Sunnite Hadīth Criticism: The Taqdīm of Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 11-2, 41; in this context *ḥadīth* criticism refers to developing tools for evaluating the *asānīd*; see also Scheiner, “Hadīth and Sunna,” 88.

⁹⁸ Mehmet Koç, “Isnāds and Rijāl Expertise in the Exegesis of Ibn Abī Ḥātim (327/939),” *Der Islam* 82 (2005): 146-55, 163.

⁹⁹ Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Taṣīr al-Qur’ān al-‘aẓīm*, ed. As‘ad Muḥammad al-Tayyib (Mecca: Maktabat Mizār Muṣṭafā al-Bāz, 1999), 3:852.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 852; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 6:342.

¹⁰¹ Al-Daḥḥāk ibn Muzāḥim (d. 724), a transmitter from Ibn ‘Abbās whom also al-Ṭabarī used, although his transmission might be considered weak since he never met Ibn ‘Abbās in person but learned his traditions through Sa‘īd b. Jubayr

(Cooper, “Translator’s Introduction”, xvi); for detailed information, see Claude Gilliot, “Exegesis of the Qur’ān: Classical and Medieval”, in *Encyclopaedia of the Qur’ān*. ed. J. McAuliffe (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

¹⁰² Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, 3:852.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 852.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 853; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 6:341.

¹⁰⁵ Bauer, *Gender Hierarchy in the Qur’an*, 117; referring to al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 6:341-2; and Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, 3:852.

¹⁰⁶ Muhammad Haron, “Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī’s Life and Works with Special Reference to his al-Muqaddimah,” *Islamic Studies* 33 (1994): 320-3; and Abdur-Rahman Mangera, *A Critical Edition of Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī’s Nawāzil* (PhD Dissertation: SOAS University of London, 2013), 12, 41.

¹⁰⁷ Mangera, *A Critical Edition*, 41; the author refers to al-Zaqqa, the modern editor of Abū l-Layth’s commentary and the writer of an introductory chapter in it.

¹⁰⁸ Abū l-Layth, *Baḥr al-‘ulūm*, ed. ‘Alī Muḥammad Ma‘awwad *et al.* (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-‘ilmīya, 1993), 1:328-9.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 328-9.

¹¹⁰ However, a Persian commentator Maybudī (d. 1126), representing a more esoteric genre of *tafsīr*, has some similarities to Abū l-Layth’s explication, according to Bauer, *Gender Hierarchy in the Qur’an*, 118-9. Maybudī wrote his commentary in Persian and he is, therefore, excluded from this study.

¹¹¹ Haron, “Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī’s Life and Works,” 319-20.

¹¹² The other two being Ibn Ḥabīb (d. 1015) and al-Tha‘alabī (d. 1035); see, Walid Saleh, “The Last of the Nishapuri School of Tafsīr: al-Wāḥidī (d. 468/1076) and His Significance in the History of Qur’anic Exegesis,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 126 (2006): 225.

¹¹³ Rudolf Sellheim, “al-Wāḥidī,” in *EF*; this encyclopaedic article has been criticised for its potential mistakes by Saleh, “The Last of the Nishapuri School of Tafsīr,” 228. As al-Wāḥidī further developed al-Tha‘alabī’s exegesis, the latter is not discussed separately in this study – for reference, al-Tha‘alabī’s interpretation on the passage of interest only names the *nafs* as Ādam and its *zawj* as his counterpart mentioned in two Quranic chapters, as Eve.

¹¹⁴ Saleh, “The Last of the Nishapuri School of Tafsīr,” 225.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 224-31.

¹¹⁶ Al-Wāḥidī, *Tafsīr al-basīṭ* (Saudi Arabia: Wizāra al-ta’līm al-‘ālī, 2010), 6:281; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 6:340.

¹¹⁷ Al-Wāḥidī, *Tafsīr al-basīṭ*, 6:281; cf. Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, 3:852; and al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 6:341

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 282; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 6:339-40.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 282; for a quick comparison, see *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 3466 – available, for example, at <https://muflihun.com/muslim/8/3466>.

¹²⁰ Andrew Lane, *A Traditional Mu'tazilite Qur'ān Commentary: The Kashshaf of Jar Allah al-Zamakhshari* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 13; for a comprehensive dissertation study discussing al-Zamakhshari's life and specifically his Quranic exegesis, see Kifayat Ullah, *al-Kashshaf: Al-Zamakhshari's Mutazilite Exegesis of the Quran* (PhD Dissertation: Georgetown University, 2013).

¹²¹ Abdul-Raof, *Qur'an Translation*, 176-7; and Ullah, *al-Kashshaf*, 1, 48

¹²² Bauer, *Room for Interpretation*, 203; the author refers to Lane, *A Traditional Mu'tazilite Qur'ān Commentary*.

¹²³ Ullah, *al-Kashshaf*; this is the outcome of the author's dissertation study examining *al-Kashshāf* – the author presents “five principles” in terms of which he depicts *al-Kashshāf* as dogmatically Mu'tazilī work.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 12, 293-313; al-Bayḍāwī's commentary can be depicted as a synopsis of *al-Kashshāf* and, therefore, it is excluded from the present study.

¹²⁵ Al-Zamakhshari, *al-Kashshāf 'an ḡawāmiḍ ḥaqā'iq al-tanzīl wa-'uyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-ta'wīl* (Riyadh: Maktabat al-'ubaykān, 1998), 2:5.

¹²⁶ Georges Anawati, “Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī,” in *EF*, 751-3; and Ayman Shihadeh, *The Teleological Ethics of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 4-5 (constructed from large bibliographical material).

¹²⁷ Abou-Bakr, “The Interpretive Legacy of Qiwanah,” 49; and Anawati, “Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī,” 754. For a comprehensive study on al-Rāzī's exegesis and theology, see Tariq Jaffer, *Rāzī: Master of Qur'ānic Interpretation and Theological Reasoning* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). T. Jaffer argues that al-Rāzī was thoroughly influenced by the views of Mu'tazilī who had settled in Central Asia.

¹²⁸ Anawati, “Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī,” 754.

¹²⁹ Jaffer, *Rāzī*, 2.

¹³⁰ Al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr wa-maḏāb al-ḡayb* (Beirut: Dār al-fikr, 1981), 9:166.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 166; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 6:340; and al-Wāḥidī, *Tafsīr al-basīṭ*, 6:281.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 167; cf. Abū l-Layth, *Baḥr al-'ulūm*, 1:328

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 167; cf. al-Wāḥidī, *Tafsīr al-basīṭ*, 6:282. For a quick comparison with the *ḥadīth*, see *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 3466 – available, for example, at <https://muflihun.com/muslim/8/3466>.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 167.

¹³⁵ Bauer, *Gender Hierarchy in the Qur'an*, 131.

¹³⁶ Al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, 9:167.

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- ¹³⁷ Bauer, *Gender Hierarchy in the Qur'an*, 131; for a more detailed description of the female creation in Shī'ī interpretive tradition, see Rawand Osman, *Female Personalities in the Qur'an and Sunna: Examining the Major Sources of Imami Shi'i Islam* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014), 15-42.
- ¹³⁸ Al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, 9:167.
- ¹³⁹ Abduc Haq Bewley, "Preface," in *Tafsīr al-Qurtubī: Classical Commentary of the Holy Qur'an* (Norwich: The Bath Press, 2003), 1:xv; and Roger Arnaldez, "al-Ḳurṭubī," in *EF*, 512.
- ¹⁴⁰ Abdul-Raof, *Qur'an Translation*, 177; Ismail Lala, "An Analysis of the Sources of Interpretation in the Commentaries of al-Tabari, al-Zamakhshari, al-Razi, al-Qurtubi, and Ibn Kathir," *QURANICA: International Journal of Quranic Research* 2 (2012): 40.
- ¹⁴¹ Abdul-Raof, *Qur'an Translation*, 177; and Rippin, "Tafsīr," 85.
- ¹⁴² Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: al-Resalah Publishers, 2000), 6:6; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 6:339-40.
- ¹⁴³ Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi' li-aḥkām*, 6:6; cf. al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, 9:167.
- ¹⁴⁴ Sarah Glazer, "Abū Hayyān," in *EF*; and Mohd Saad, Sabri bin Mohamad, Latifah Abd Majid, *et al.*, "Abu Hayyan al-Andalusi: A Qira'at Figure of 8th Century," *Journal of Applied Sciences Research* 8 (2012): 4181-3.
- ¹⁴⁵ Saad *et al.*, "Abu Hayyan al-Andalusi," 4183.
- ¹⁴⁶ From *nasha'a*, form IV, passive: "to become produced".
- ¹⁴⁷ Abū Hayyān, *Tafsīr al-baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, ed. Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd *et al.* (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-ʿilmīya, 2001), 3:163.
- ¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 163. For a quick comparison, see *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 3467 – available, for example, at <https://muflihun.com/muslim/8/3467>
- ¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 163; cf. al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, 9:167.
- ¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 163; in comparison, see also al-Zamaḥsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2:5.
- ¹⁵¹ Younous Mirza, "Was Ibn Kathīr the 'Spokesperson' for Ibn Taymiyya? Jonah as a Prophet of Obedience," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 16 (2014): 1-2; and Pregill, "Exegesis," 109-10. For a detailed discussion on the matter, see Mirza's dissertation study *Ibn Kathir: His Intellectual Circle, Major Works and Qur'anic Exegesis* (Georgetown University, 2012) the outcome of which is that the two represented different types of traditionalism.
- ¹⁵² Henri Laoust, "Ibn Kathīr," in *EF*, 817-8.
- ¹⁵³ Mirza, "Was Ibn Kathīr the 'Spokesperson' for Ibn Taymiyya?" 1-2.
- ¹⁵⁴ Mirza, *Ibn Kathir*, 183, 191-2. Ibn Kathīr's extensive use of prophetic traditions have been suggested to mark a change in the authoritative sources of *tafsīr* (Bauer, *Gender Hierarchy in the Qur'an*, 120).
- ¹⁵⁵ Abdul-Raof, *Qur'an Translation*, 177.

¹⁵⁶ Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿaẓīm*, eds. Muṣṭafā al-Sayyid Muḥammad *et al.* (Cairo: Muʾassasat Qurṭuba, 2000), 3:333. Al-Ṭabarī also used the same term in his *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 6:342.

¹⁵⁷ Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, 3:333; cf. Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, 3:852.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 333. For a quick comparison, see *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 3466 & 3468 – available, for example, at <https://muflihun.com/muslim/8/3466> and <https://muflihun.com/muslim/8/3468>.

¹⁵⁹ Joel Haywood, “al-Suyūṭī,” in *EF*, 913-4; for a comprehensive introduction to al-Suyūṭī’s exegetic work, see Shabir Ally, *The Culmination of Tradition-based Tafsīr: The Qurʾān Exegesis al-Durr al-manthūr of al-Suyūṭī* (PhD Dissertation: University of Toronto, 2012).

¹⁶⁰ Ally, *The Culmination*, ii, 50, 60-7.

¹⁶¹ Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr fī tafsīr al-maʾthūr*, ed. ʿAbdullah al-Muḥsin al-Turki (Cairo: Markaz al-ḥajr lil-buhūth wa-l-dirāsāt al-ʿarabiyya wa-l-islāmiyya, 2003), 4:209.

¹⁶² Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr*, 4:209; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 6:341; and al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ li-ahkām*, 6:6.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 209; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 6:341; and Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, 3:853

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 209.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 209; cf. Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, 3:852, from which al-Suyūṭī presents direct quotes.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 209; cf. Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, 3:852; and Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, 3:333.

¹⁶⁷ Al-Suyūṭī and al-Maḥallī, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* (Saudi Arabia: Maktaba Madina, 2006), 268.

¹⁶⁸ See, e.g. Asma Barlas, *Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qurʾān* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), 129-33; Aysha Hidayatullah, *Feminist edges of the Qurʾān* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 90-4; and Wadud, *Qurʾān and Woman*, 42-55.

¹⁶⁹ For example, Muḥammad ʿAbduh (d. 1905), whose commentary work was edited by Rashīd Riḍā in *Tafsīr al-Manār*, published in 1927, rejected the idea of the passage representing the creation of the primeval couple. For a cross-cut of modern interpretations, see Bauer, *Gender Hierarchy in the Qurʾān*, 137-57.

¹⁷⁰ For a demonstrative example, see al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 1:560-9; for detailed information in connection with the formative period of *tafsīr*, see Bronson, *Imagining the Primal Woman*, and *id.*, “Eve in the Formative Period”.