

The Trends of “Women in the Quran” in the Study of Gender Verses (Barbara F Stowasser's Reinterpretation Study)

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Abstract

This paper aims to present the urgency of the reinterpretation of female figures narrated in the Qur'an. The debates that emerged in the contemporary era became social claims which had implications for grouping groups based on social perceptions obtained from the time. This paper then tries to collect things related to Barbara F. Stowasser to answer her thoughts on women's work. The method used in this paper is a qualitative method with a library research approach. Therefore the data in this paper is sourced from the literature documentation. The results of this tracking prove that, although the debate regarding the story in the Qur'an has yet to be completed to date, it still provides relevance to the social construction that one wants to build on the status of women in society.

Keyword: Barbara F Stowasser; gender relation; nature; nurture; women in the Quran

Introduction

The decline experienced by women in society has been going on for a long time. This is due to the patriarchal culture adopted by the community. The patriarchal system gives men dominance over women. This system makes women's movements shackled and helpless because their lives seem to be prisoners of male domination. An example of some of the powerlessness of men is the existence of women and their freedom to move and play a role in the public space where their position is not very involved. Because women are always considered only fit to play in the domestic area, while men are primarily involved in the public space, seeing this phenomenon, female figures tend to accept destiny always to be busy with family and household chores. (Djajaneegara, 2000, p. 5)

The development of gender issues in the public space has turned into a study that has become a subject of much discussion and has become material for discussion by Western scientists, especially in the debate on the scientific discipline of interpretation. This creates a new awareness and statement regarding gender equality so that the context in the interpretation study is obliged to look at how later explanations occur, especially in women and campaigning for the values of justice. (Dozan, 2020, p. 138)

This makes women have a strong desire to grow and develop and express themselves freely without obstacles, and their existence begins to be considered involved in society. One scientific study revealed that the presence of women must be given a platform to appear in public places. Even far from that, Widiyanti argues that for women to be maximally involved in the public space, an individual must understand the appropriate language in the glllll area. Due to patriarchal culture, the language used so far tends to support male domination, called masculine language. (Widiyanti, n.d.)

Islamic thought also tries to understand gender-based verses and matters concerning women so that they use texts in the critical reflection phase; texts are needed to sharpen conscience in seeing human problems because texts are not the only reference in making essential reflections. Texts must be reconstructed to be reconstructed and new methodologies to be understood, especially in observing texts that intersect with humanity, must be reviewed critically, and analysis of the interpretation of the Qur'an (n.d., p. 24). This indicates an effort in deconstruction efforts to reffortwomen's understanding. Women also deserve to be involved vitally in society because women also have rational and conceptual abilities. So women must also be given a place to express their ideas appropriately. (Dozan, 2020, p. 33)

In defence of women, contextualised interpretacontextualisedhe interpreter to pay attention to the hierarchical nature of the values found in the Qur'an (Saeed, 2015). Of course, these values are seen from a gender perspective so that they pay attention to a woman's rights, and there is no discrimination in interpretation. Viewed from the perspective of the Qur'an, it has discussed the nobility of women through privilege and honour. (Qardawi, 2004, p. 33)

These basic assumptions create anxiety in the minds of the authors who want to conduct studies and build arguments developed by western and Islamic scholars regarding how much attention is paid to women, especially gender issues. This reference is answered by various thoughts on western and Islamic feminism, especially in the trajectory of the study of interpretation. So that in this paper, we will raise the theme of the study of "Women in The Qur'an" in the Study of Gender Verses (Reinterpretation Review of Barbara F Stowasser.

Literature Review/Analytical Framework

Gender Studies in Islam

It should be understood that the term gender does not exist in classical Islamic literature. This term comes from the western world, from the movement of a group of Western women activists (Kania, 2018, p. 1); the word gender seems foreign. Therefore, the notion of gender analysis is often misinterpreted. This is because people often associate it with male and female gender issues. No wonder some people say that men and women are equal. It arises because they think in terms of the biology of sex. Of course their opinion is correct because it is impossible to equate the male and female sexes.

But gender has its meaning. Gender is not talking about gender (sex) but more about the concept of gender, such as how to be a woman; what is appropriate and inappropriate to do; and so on so, form cultural ideas/behaviour of a woman and a man, such as masculine and feminine attributes (Kania, 2018, p. 31). The question arises whether her concepts are fixed and cannot be changed, whether the idea is eternal, apocalyptic or a dead mind. Gender is defined as a sociocultural construction that distinguishes masculine and feminine characteristics. Gender is different from sex or sex, differentiating between men and women.

Research with a feminist methodology will produce an analysis that shows how women are accepted by society and how women perceive society. Research with feminist methods is expected to have an in-depth study that involves women's experiences and voices, where feminist awareness will choose attitudes and take sides for women. Research with a feminist methodology will place women's experiences equally and as important as men's experiences – a thing that is difficult to do in a positivist paradigm – is expected to contribute more in-depth data with more women-friendly considerations in public policy making.

This research topic is essential for explaining the understanding of gender phenomena related to the treatment and role of women in society in all aspects of life. One study that deserves attention is Amina Wadud's research which seeks to make a breakthrough to break down the unfairness of women's interpretation. This effort is essential to eliminate the imbalance in gender relations between men and women among Muslims. It is this inequality that overwhelms the extraordinary potential of women. (Saeed, 2015, p. 225)

The research method used by Amina Wadud is to use a linguistic-hermeneutic approach with philological or holistic content analysis. Wadud uses Fazlur Rahman's double motion theory and thematic approach to practice in verses about women. Wadud also uses interpretations of the Koran with the Koran. Wadud analyzes the texts of the verses of the Qur'an by focusing on several compositions of the meaning of the Qur'an by describing the text by the importance of the previous text (perceptions, circumstances, background) of women's interpretations.

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Apart from Amina Wadud's thoughts, various analyses still apply to the issue of gender relations in the realm of Islamic scholarship. Therefore, the relationship between men and women is still an exciting topic to discuss. Because religion covers all aspects of the life of Islamic society and is also involved in the problem of gender relations. Many thoughts have been expressed by Islamic thinkers related to the above topic. But what's interesting is when we try to restore the concept of gender relations from the point of view of the Qur'an itself. Reviewing the methodology of this research conducted at the source level is interesting. As the first and foremost so primary of Islamic teaching, the Qur'an discusses the relationship between men and women in its many sacred texts. As the first source of Islamic teachings, the Al-Qur'an is information that is clear from the interpretation of human thought so that the results will feel more original.

Scope of Gender Studies

After previously we discussed gender studies from an Islamic perspective, now is the time for us to get into the scope. The scope of gender studies addressed in this paper is about nature and nurture.

First, Nature.

Etymologically, nature is defined as an inherent characteristic or innate condition of a person or thing, also interpreted as a natural condition or human nature. In gender studies, the term nature is defined as a theory or argument which states that differences in characteristics between genders are inseparable and are even determined by biological differences (sex). It is called the theory of nature because it states that the differences between men and women are natural. From these natural differences arise innate differences in masculine and feminine attributes attached to them naturally. So, addressing differences that exist, not by eliminating them, but by eliminating discrimination and creating harmonious relationships. (Khuza'i, 2013, p. 106)

Second, Nurture

Etymologically, nurture means care/maintenance activities, training, as well as the accumulation of environmental factors that influence the habits and characteristics that appear. The terminology of gender studies interprets it as a theory or argument which states that differences in masculine and feminine traits are not determined by biological differences but by social construction and the influence of cultural factors. Named nurture because social and cultural factors create gender attributes and form stereotypes of a particular; this occurs during the upbringing of parents or society and is repeated from generation to generation. Because of its cultural factor, this argument is often referred to as the concept of culture. Tran



traditional continues to be repeated, forming the impression in society that this is natural. (Khuza'i, 2013, p. 108)

In simple terms, the word nature is understood as *fitrah*. Meanwhile, nurture is a social construction built through a socio-cultural process. Indeed, the terms nature and nurture still seem to overlap among feminists. However, Islam does not separate gender from sex; religion should not be equated with culture. According to feminists and gender activists, religious doctrines in the governing relations between genders or provisions between men and women must be adapted to the perspective of gender equality. Not infrequently, these demands are accompanied by accusations that the sharia that has come down to us today is not what God wills, but rather the end engineering of patriarchy through *mufassir* and *fuqahâ'* to perpetuate its hegemony. (Wadud, 1999, p. 2)

Only some people can become a *mujtahid*; there are strict requirements in the form of knowledge also morals, which is why in previous Islamic traditions, even though there were sometimes differences of opinion between *mujtahids*, there had never been such accusations before. Finally, because feminists and gender activists did not meet these conditions, it is not surprising that the results of "*ijtihad*" under the pretext of the reforms they carried out, apart from deviating from the *ijtihad* of the previous scholars, were also more loaded with interests, too much to impose religious arguments as justification for the discourse of feminism and humanism that they promote.

The Entry of Gender Studies in Islam

Before entering into the discussion of Gender studies as part of Islamic studies, we need to know that there is a shackle that makes it challenging to integrate religion and feminism. Faith and feminism have equally complex themes of area. Both belief systems are conflicting and full of emotions directly affecting people's lives. On the other hand, there is an obstacle in carrying out the women's studies curriculum (internationalization of the gendered curriculum) due to the difficulty in deciding gender issues for women worldwide. (Shalahuddin, 2020, p. 201)

Even though there are obstacles, gender integration in Islamic studies tends to get a place. Gender studies in Islamic studies aim to rearrange the understanding of religious texts accused of being a source of violence against women. Not a few groups have fought by accusing it of being the leading cause of injustice and sexual violence against women. (Santosa, 2002, p. 201)

The inclusion of a gender perspective in Islamic studies was initially full of intrigue and strategy. Using the term, women's views in religion changed to feminist theology. The reason is that feminist theology will lead to rejection by Muslims in Indonesia. Theology is synonymous with Christianity, while feminism has the ideology of western women's liberties, such as human rights and anti-family institutions. (Dzuhayatin, 2002, p. 2)

Nonetheless, the integration of gender in Islamic studies in several PTKI tends to use an extreme Western feminist perspective. Religion and scriptures are considered to teach hatred

of women and legitimize privileges for men. Some of the notes in the gender-based lecture guidebook at a PTKI include the following:

First, it tends to impose a link between course material and a gender perspective. This impacts shifting the character of Islamic studies, which is based on revealed texts. Now it has changed towards social reality and modernity.

Second, there is a change in the fundamental character and objectives of the course, where the initial focus is on achieving language skills, turning into just an obseThere the aim of Arabic material is to achieve proficiency in reading, speaking, and writing. They are forced to learn things outside of the purpose of learning, such as discussing Arab patriarchy and gender bias in the rules of the Arabic language.

Third, the lack of human resources who can understand the field of Islamic studies and gender comprehensively has an impact on the determination of reference books. As a result, if gender gender-responsiveness is a mandatory government program that must be implemented, these lectures should not target counterproductive things. Hence, it is better to focus on strengthening family institutions, health insurance for pregnancy, and issues of broad benefit for the nation and state.

In addition, don't let the mindset of Western feminists as a focus for gender studies be a fundamental mistake. Because in Islam and the traditions of Indonesian society from the beginning, women have been placed in an honourable position as servants of Allah who are equal in status to men, even though they have different roles. (Shalahuddin, 2020, p. 94)

Research Method

Research, in general, can be carried out in two forms: library research and field research (Baidan & Erwati, 2016, p. 103). So that in this study, using qualitative research (descriptive-analytical) describes the object that is critically examined and looks for the roots of thought, especially the discourse on the interpretation of gender verses (Mustaqim, 2015, p. 51). This research focuses on books and literature related to the topic of discussion, such as the Al-Qur'an, interpretation of gender issues, and several references that support it. So this study uses a relevant approach to the related themes. (Anwar & Muharram, 2005, p. 178)

Analysis

The Trend of "Women in the Quran" by Barbara F. Stowasser

The inclusion of gender studies in Islam provides its treasure in the methods and interpretations of the Qur'an. Many observers of Islamic feminists have promoted this to reconstruct an understanding of gender relations, which has already been understood as "cynical" by classical scholars, so its urgency is being debated to this day. However, the interpretation of verses that directly intersect with gender relations, as claimed by modern feminists, urges the urgency of a fundamental understanding of gender relations carried by



the Qur'an without being affected by patriarchal social situations, which makes interpretations more inclined to the subject of the interpreter.

As a response to the above phenomenon, Muslim scholars and scholars who focus on the field of Islamic studies have begun to produce literacy works that offer methods, reinterpretation and contextualization of verses. From this, several literacy trends emerge, which researchers divide into two categories. First, literacy generally discusses normative verses that intersect with gender relations in social situations, such as household verses, women's social affairs, etc. Works classified as literate include *The Qur'an and Women* by Aminah Wadud and *Believing Women in Islam* by Asma Barlas. Second, literacy approaches the verses of stories that describe the image of women in the Qur'an by the social history of the prophets. Works classified as literate include *Women in The Qur'an, Traditions, and Interpretation* by Barbara Freyer Stowasser and *Women in The Qur'an: Emancipatory Reading* by Asma Lamrabet. In this article, the researcher tries to read Barbara F. Stowasser's *Women in The Qur'an* as an offer to the relevance of story verses in the Qur'an with the construction of women's views in contemporary society.

The urgency of selecting researchers for Barbara's work is Barbara's efforts to review traditions and interpretations so that the views of women held by mufassir from time to time can only be considered reasonable by looking at the social perceptions that existed at the time. To clarify his views, the researcher describes them in the following sub-chapters.

The Scientific Authority Barbara F. Stowasser

Barbara Regine Freyer Stowasser is a leading scholar of "Women in Islam" and the former MESA (Middle East Study Association) president. She was born in Leipzig, Germany, on May 22, 1935. He studied at the University of Muenster, Germany and earned a master's degree in 1959 from UCLA through a Fullbright scholarship at the University of California at Los Angeles (Shapiro, n.d.). Then, he completed his doctorate in 1961 at the University of Muenster, Germany. After completing his education, she made a career out of being a member of the faculty at Georgetown University from 1966 until her death. In addition, she is also one of the rulers of the Sultanate of Oman in the field of Arabic and Islamic Literature and a core administrator of the Center of Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS). She has been the director of CCAS three times. Two of her outstanding achievements are the academic ideas he conveyed at the national celebration of the sovereignty of the Republic of Turkey in 1988, to which the president of the Republic of Turkey invited her. Second, she received an honorary degree from Georgetown University in 1991 (Ryding, 2012, p. 285). Her works have been appreciated by scholars in the field of Islamic studies, especially *Women in The Qur'an, Traditions and Interpretation* (1994), *Islamic Law and The Challenges of Modernity* (2004), and *The Islamic Impulse* (1987).

Her knowledge of Arabic and Turkish literature made her a Foreign Service Institute (FSI) lecturer. She and her friend Karin Christina Ryding integrated language and fields of study through effective pedagogical methods. As a continuation of that project, she focused on Arabic as the target language as a way to understand academic material. This became one of her real works as a professor in Arabic and Islamic studies (Shapiro, n.d.). From various

references explaining Barbara's progress in the scientific field, it can be concluded that her expertise in Arabic, Islam, and gender issues is evidence of authority, so this article makes her views on gender issues the object of study, especially in one of her phenomenal works, *Women in The Qur'an, Traditions and Interpretation*.

The Starting Point Interpretation of Barbara F Stowasser

In initiating a reinterpretation of verses related to gender relations, Barbara focuses her research project on Qur'anic law regarding women's social rights and obligations (Stowasser, 1994, p. 3). Barbara identified the excavation of Qur'anic law regarding this matter through the model of female role models represented by the figures of the wives of the previous prophets. According to him, tracing through these routes has yet to be explored systematically. She proved this by how the Islamic teachings she encountered in the Middle East only referred to these female role models (Stowasser, 1994, p. 3), so the understanding of women described in the Qur'an needs to be completed. She explores female role models here to see what the Qur'an has told them.

Her exploration resulted in several insights that became essential in understanding what Barbara wanted to initiate in her interpretation of the concept. First is the view that the stories in the Qur'an concerning female holy figures in the past are very Islamic from various aspects, starting from social background, primordial conditions, theological doctrines, moral teachings, and tendencies. The narration used to explain the above elements is a contextual narration described explicitly as it teaches itself and simultaneously gives messages to the broader cosmic sphere. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 4)

Second, the study of the development of narrative interpretation provides more apparent historical coverage in explaining the importance of the relationship between the Biblical tradition and the performance of the Qur'an, especially at the early stages of interpretation. Muslim. Third, interpretive texts prove valuable track records for socio-political debates, dating back to past and present religious thinkers struggling to apply women's narratives in the Qur'an to specific terms. This application is implemented through the provision of gender verses which are editorially written in the Qur'an, but distinguished from their understanding which has implications for the status of women in the family and society, so that, fourthly, a view emerges regarding the use of the term "interpretation" - in the sense of investigation. Analytical and free from any tendencies - cannot be attached to either the formal interpretation from ancient times to the present or the editorial form of the Qur'an itself. Consequently, according to him, the fifth view addresses religious ideas in two meanings: ideas that are revealed and conveyed as spiritual truths and ideas that result from interpretations of these truths, which are carried out by giving up faith. This second idea, according to him, was represented by Muslim authorities and believed by society. In addition, Muslim rules themselves think that religious ideas in the form of doctrines and norms shape social reality from above. This is not in line with Barbara's views on religious ideas. In her book, she states that religious ideas are related to social reality at the level of influencing and being influenced.



The religious ideas that he conveys in his book are strengthened by Clifford Greetz's view of religion which is defined as a symbol of a cultural system, where the religious pattern (which is built from the unity of these symbols) is a perceptual frame and extended emission by which an experience can be interpreted. From this, he argues that religious concepts extend beyond specific metaphysical contexts to provide a paradigm framework within which the range of an adventure – whether intellectual, emotional, or moral – can take meaningful form (Stowasser, 1994, p. 4). The systematic view presented above is a sequence of reasons that prompted him to choose the female symbol in the Qur'an because the character can describe experiences that he can later interpret. He further emphasized that the sign, when viewed from the paradigm of faith, is a "lesson" that the Qur'an conveys through narration and legislation on the character of women in it. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 4)

If you look at Barbara's view of symbols that contain experience of religious values in the figure of female characters in the Qur'an, the focus of her study will be seen in efforts to demonstrate how Islam perceives itself as an object that is influenced by historical situations. The approach she takes to achieve her goal is to compare the formulations of female characters constructed by figures in the modern and contemporary eras and those made by figures in the Middle Ages (Stowasser, 1994, p. 5). To start her business, Barbara tries to reveal the perception of Islam from what post-colonial Muslim figures have attempted, as reflected in this contemporary era.

In his study, he found debates among post-colonialist figures in the modern era regarding Islam's structure, function and goals in this contemporary era. The point that becomes a factor for the emergence of debate is a shared vision that places the situation of Islam in this modern era as one of crisis. In addition, the recognition that Islam is important in this contemporary era – for some, Islam is the most important or even the only one that can provide legitimacy – as a force of solidarity and cohesion is a form of resistance carried out to evoke traumatic experiences against colonialism. The West and its heritage. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 5)

According to Barbara, this debate results from a socio-political agenda that has implications for understanding the Qur'an, which further has consequences for the performance of female figures in the Qur'an. Arrangements that vary from time to time, especially after entering an era where women's issues are questioned to describe the role of Islam in the modern world, are symbolized by post-colonialist Muslim figures as the central aspect of Islamic efforts to maintain the value of Islamic originality and cultural authenticity. From here, Barbara divides the variations of this understanding into three parts according to her efforts to preserve the essence of Islam and its cultural authenticity.

The first group is the modernist group. According to him, this group distinguishes the purity of faith from the way of life of the Prophet Muhammad and the first generation from whom it resulted in the internationalization of Islam, namely when the expansion outside the Arabian Peninsula was carried out. There was much acculturation that affected Islamic values. To obtain a system of life values practised at the sacred originality level, modernists need

ijtihad and reform of legal law, which had previously been formulated as Fiqh. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 5)

To concretize the modernist concept, Barbara brings in a character with an interpretation that can be further identified; that character is Muhammad Abduh, who tries to regenerate Islamic social morality. In looking at women, Abduh emphasizes the integrity of women as human beings who have self-esteem, as the concept of Islamic welfare views men and women with the right to welfare.

The second groups are conservatives and traditionalists, according to whom this group views Islam as an inheritance, a balanced system of faith and action, judged through texts and their interpretations through seeking authority agreed upon by the community. This group is against modernization which hides behind the concept of westernization. The focus of this group is to preserve structures that have been stable in the past. According to Barbara, if it is related to women's issues, this group establishes legal laws for women that are not equal to men, as enshrined in classical Islamic law.

The transformation of classical conservatism into modern conservatism continues what classical conservatism has done by evoking medieval ideas regarding women's innate physical and mental deficiencies as evidence of justice according to their paradigm. In concretizing this view of conservatism, Barbara did not identify a figure with further identifiable interpretations; she only indicated it with the works of professional theologians, particularly those from the faculties of Al-Azhar University. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 6)

The third group is fundamentalists, who, according to Barbara, fight for the text of the Qur'an by seeing themselves as a representation of Islam as a way of life. In addition, they also consider themselves soldiers fighting for Islam against the forces of darkness. In interpretation, this group insists on interpreting the text with a literal interpretation of the text and applying it directly to contemporary thoughts and actions. In other words, they often bypass and ignore the works of experts in legal theology.

In looking at women, they try to infuse Islamic values to solve the current lack of morality and corruption they accuse the West of. They apply these Islamic values to structures and practices where fundamentalists recognize women as part of the army of truth. Women go to war using Islamic values in their behaviour, domestic sphere – as a loving wife and nurturing mother – and clothes. In other words, religion, morality, and culture can stand or even fall according to the role of women in society (Stowasser, 1994, p. 7). Barbara concretizes the interpretation of fundamentalism by making Sayyid Qutb a character whose interpretation can be further identified. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 7)

This division of groups is urgent to explain as a starting point for Barbara's interpretation through her efforts mentioned above so that in understanding female figures in the Qur'an, she takes several interpreters representing the three groups above to see the social influences surrounding the figures. The. To know how Barbara's application in interpreting the model of women in the Qur'an, the basic concepts related to the model of women in the Qur'an need to be raised to the level of shared perception. Areas that need to



be compared are how Barbara views the Qur'an, stories, and female figures in the Qur'an, both from a historical and impersonal perspective.

Basic Concepts Relating to the Interpretation of Barbara F Stowasser

The female figure in the Qur'an is narrated in the form of a story. It is necessary to study the position and authority of the Qur'an as an informant explaining these stories in Barbara's view, which has implications for her opinions on the stories she informs.

In his view, the Qur'an is the word of God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, who taught believers the doctrines that were innate to him. As a word from God, he divided the concept of the Qur'an into four images. First, his opinion that Arabic in the Qur'an is indeed a word from God and comes from Him as revealed in the form of verbatim (word for word) and seriatim (in a series that takes place from time to time) to the Prophet Muhammad Saw through the messenger of heaven named Jibril. Second, his opinion is that the Qur'an is God's holy word, a copy of what is written in al-mah}fūz}, God's sacred text (al-kitāb). Third, the Qur'an is God's final message to the world and a guide for human life. Fourth, the Al-Qur`an follows and confirms the previously revealed books, taken from the al-kitāb and passed down to various peoples in history. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 13)

In looking at the figure of the prophet as the recipient of revelation, Barbara sees that the history recorded by the Qur'an and revealed to the Prophet Muhammad acts as a metaphor that hints at the *sunnatullah* on the successes and failures of the former people, where failure is symbolized by punishment for disobedience and success are symbolized with safety as a reward for obedience (Stowasser, 1994, p. 14). In addition, the authority of the prophets, including the Prophet Muhammad SAW, is the authority given by God to erase and replace the legal control and practices made by the people at that time and their ancestral traditions (*sunnatu al-awwalīn*).

In emphasizing the position of the Prophet Muhammad as a special prophet with the revelation of the Qur'an, Barbara then made a classification of prophets, in which he named the prophets before Muhammad as "pre-figurations" of the Prophet Muhammad or based on the understanding of the researcher, Nuh, , Ibrahim, Musa, and Isa As - in Western analysis, termed "typological prefigurements" consisting of Musa, Ibrahim, Nuh, Hud, Salih, Lut, and Syu'aib - are figures in the allegory of the figure of Muhammad Saw before Muhammad Saw was born in which the figure elevates and validates Muhammad Saw's mission, including anyone who performs Muhammad Saw's role as an "anti-type" of the above typology, in the end, there are more and more, and it is finished. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 16)

In explaining the Qur'an as history, moreover devoted more specifically to the stories in the Qur'an which contain female figures that he wants to raise in his study; he divides them into three typologies based on the genre of literature that Islamic scholars have produced earlier. First is the *tarīkh* (history) made by Ath-Tabari in the form of a book entitled *Tarīkh Al-Rusul wa Al-Muluk*. Furthermore, Barbara appreciates Ath-Tabari's work which also includes and is connected to the second typology, interpretation. In interpretation, the work of Ath-Tabari - which Barbara classifies as the work of traditional interpreters - is used as a

reference by figures, both as a primary source for the early periods of world history in the Middle Ages and purely as an independent scholar along with its agenda and dynamics, in explaining details relating to the chronology, time, and place of events experienced by God's prophets. The third is *Qisṣas al-Anbiyā'*, which was produced by Ibn Kathir in the form of a book entitled *Qisṣas al-Anbiyā'*. (Stowasser, 1994, pp. 16–17)

All three are being attempted by religious scholars to be integrated into work through more than one approach. Barbara considered that this idea, until now, has not been able to provide a clear picture. According to him, what is currently the focus regarding the three typologies above is the position of the three which state the figures and events narrated in the Qur'an, although with different detailed descriptions at each level.

In addition to the typology described by Barbara as a genre of literature explaining history in the Qur'an, she also describes the paradigm shifts related to account in the Qur'an that has occurred from time to time. To classify one period with another, he divided it into two periods, namely classical and modern.

In explaining the classical paradigm related to history in the Qur'an, he borrows the paradigm of fundamentalists and traditionalists who state that historical material in the Qur'an is a doctrinal teaching and legal (socio-political) paradigm, which he tries to uncover later through the search for exegesis. Towards the principles enshrined in the history of the Qur'an to be applied in the social sphere, especially historical material related to female figures in the Qur'an.

Furthermore, in explaining the modern paradigm related to history in the Qur'an, he borrows the paradigm of the modernist group, which he specifies to one of the figures, namely Muhammad Abduh, who is the turning point of the modification of the classical paradigm above. According to Abduh, as Barbara quoted, the Qur'an's history is still factual. However, what is more, important than that is the fundamental understanding that history in the Qur'an is the history of divine paradigms, lessons, examples, and signs. Furthermore, Abduh distinguishes between story and history because, according to him, history has nothing to do with religion (Stowasser, 1994, p. 17). Again, Abduh consistently emphasizes aspects of teachings and guidance as a function of stories in the Qur'an by finding aspects of *'ibrah* (examples, lessons, and warnings). Even so, Abduh did not deny that the historical elements in the Qur'an are actual.

From the description of the paradigms of the two eras above, the researcher finds Barbara's position in viewing the story in the Qur'an. He notes the interpretation made by rationalist modernists who try to read the stories of the prophets in the Qur'an as lessons that are adopted as a paradigm for the human task of making moral choices and building a virtuous society. In his notes, he considers that this effort is insufficient to reveal precisely the chronological coordinates and topography so that it remains "ageless" as part of the essence of the story in the Qur'an. However, the events in the Qur'an here are still related to the pre-Muhammad factual history, which describes all the early prophets before Muhammad, where all of these prophets historically met the perfection of their duties during the time of the Prophet Muhammad. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 18)



The historical material discourse in the Qur'an indeed continues. The roles of the three groups are grouped by Barbara, each of which has its principles that it upholds. Therefore, it is natural that Barbara is not inclined towards any of the three. Precisely here is how consistent Barbara is in her performance, which tries to show how Islam perceives itself in the modern world by reviewing the three groups as a whole, including their views on female figures in the Qur'an. From this, a big question arises, why does she prefer female figures in the Qur'an as a representation of gender verses rather than digging further information on gender verses which are normative and are much challenged by feminists? Then, if the female figure is considered a lesson, as explained above, how can it be applied in the socio-political paradigm in this contemporary era? To answer the question above, according to Barbara, female figures in the Qur'an need further attention after knowing her assessment of the historical aspects of the Qur'an above.

The Urgency of Female Figures in the Qur'an and Their Relevance to Gender in the Contemporary Era

In explaining his views on female figures in the Qur'an, he begins by discussing prophetic attributes, which are understood to be dominantly attributed only to men. However, several opinions attribute predictive characteristics to some female figures. However, the role of women as God's agents on earth cannot be ignored, bearing in mind the association of female figures with one or more prophets. Each of these figures differs in level and complexity. Some are explained in detail along with their names; some even appear as cameos in prophetic stories.

Before detailing the historical views of Islam, the researcher examines the pictures of Islam in general towards this holy woman. Barbara more specifically mentions the Islamic idea referred to by the researcher above with the term Islamic exegesis, which classical and contemporary interpreters generally carry out. According to him, these interpreters usually have broadened the figure's symbol range to accommodate different readings. This difference in reading, according to Barbara, is motivated by the specific perspective of the interpreter.

Barbara identifies the sample of women narrated in the Qur'an through two critical points, which allow the social influence of an interpreter to take lessons from the female figure. First, a sample of female figures who come as "models". The symbolic embodiment of this figure represents human experience in the past and even encourages the formation of human reality in the present and the future (Stowasser, 1994, p. 21). As an implication, the female figure in the Qur'an, secondly, functions as a "model" of an Islamic way of life. From here, Barbara distinguishes the two points above with more specific terms, where the first point she termed "image" and the second point she termed "models". It is on this side, according to him, that each interpreter is different according to the social reflection he wants to reveal through the values that are infused in his interpretation.

In general, the urgency of female figures in the Qur'an shows their relevance at the "image" and "model" level, but this cannot be concrete evidence for the occurrence of a significant influence on the contemporary gender paradigm, so to see the relevance of the two terms in above in the modern gender paradigm, Barbara tries to analyze the paradigm

of interpretation chronologically according to the era, bearing in mind that social changes in each period certainly affect changes in the social reflections of each commentator.

Starting from a classical interpretation, the discourse of "nature" on women is exemplified by the figure of Adam As's wife, who represents cultural adaptation as the central theme of the Qur'an regarding women's ethical responsibilities and freedom. In her journey to the medieval period, Barbara found a paradigm shift influenced by Biblical scientific relations (Israiliyyat). If you look further at the figure of women in the Qur'an, which is not limited to Eve, women's spiritual freedom and moral responsibility are themes that appear in revelation, both in the form of symbols (personified in sacred stories) as well as in the form of community regulation legislation or Public. Many of the stories of women in the Qur'an contain lessons that a woman's faith and righteousness are based on her inner desires and decisions, not because of the influence of a good man or a sinful man who determines a woman's commitment to her God. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 21)

The classical interpretation above is inversely proportional to the medieval interpretation, which saw women's physical weakness (nature) even as vulnerable to regulating moral order. According to Barbara, medieval interpretations have brought out the grand theme of the Koran describing women's spiritual freedom and moral responsibility to perpetuate the exegetical propaganda "women should always follow men in everything." Furthermore, striking differences will be found in modern interpretations that differ from classical interpretations regarding paradigm formulation and "sample" applications in the Qur'an. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 21)

In essence, Barbara stated that the story in the Qur'an, which provides information about women in sacred history, is more prosperous than what is contained in Muslim theological and legalist interpretations, where the story about women echoes beyond legality born of normative efforts. Scientific knowledge is included in the imagination and images of popular piety. This, according to him, becomes clearer when looking at several cases where the parable of human nature in the Qur'an – a story about desire, love, and the effort to achieve political power – indicates a mismatch between human ambitions and God's plan. In this case, the interpretation weaves its various foundations around the protagonists in the Qur'an. Furthermore, several female figures in the Qur'an became heroes for heroic poetry echoed in medieval times, as well as folklore and romance in medieval and modern times. Particularly in recent times, the Qur'anic persona of the female figure has evolved beyond the legends of piety or even Sufi teachings and has moved towards fictional figures of love and adventure stories.

From this, researchers see that the urgency of female figures in the development of civilization in giving impressions and samples reaches a higher level than just knowing and imitating. What Barbara found indicates that regardless of the different views of the three groups mentioned earlier in viewing female figures in the Qur'an, these figures have a place in every social situation, even almost to the point of being cult. Thus, the way the Qur'an narrates these figures is relevant in every era, so the researcher considers the study that Barbara has conducted to raise the stories of female figures in the Qur'an as a representation



of gender verses in the Al-Qur'an. The Qur'an can influence the construction of the role of women in social life, considering that this figure is known in every age and civilization.

Methods and Application of Interpretation in the Case of Adam and Hawwa

Barbara does not give birth to her interpretation, which produces new reinterpretation meanings and is applied in social reality. In his book, he prefers to approach objective comparison rather than an exclusive comparison which leans on one view. However, the selection of the interpretations quoted by him, in this case, can be further identified to find the inclination of his thoughts. For example, in showing the interpretation of the case of Adam and Hawwa in the Qur'an, he takes several interpretations, which can be ordered chronologically based on the time of the author's life and the social situation that surrounds him. The researcher divides the quoted interpretations chronologically into three parts: classical period, medieval, and modern. Apart from the results of the interpretation of the three periods, the use of other references such as Israiliyyat history and hadith history.

To explain the understanding of the Hawwa case in the classical period, he refers to Tafsir Ath-Tabari. According to him, classical interpretations, including Ath-Tabari himself in the case of Adam and Hawwa, depart from the references of the people of the book (Israiliyyat) in various ways. Barbara considers that the form of narration of the Hadith, which is disconnected and often comes from Biblical sources, not only expands the story but changes it drastically, especially regarding the role of women. In the case of the creation of Hawwa, Barbara found that most of the traditions contained in Tafsir Ath-Tabari place the result of women at the time when Adam was already living in heaven. In contrast, others put it before Adam is in heaven. About women's ontology, Barbara found that most of the traditions brought together with Tabari blamed women, which was already the dominant opinion lived by theologians during Tabari's lifetime. They think only the weakness and trickery of women satan can bring down Adam. Furthermore, Barbara saw that the story in the Qur'an at the time of Tabari needed to be reinterpreted because Tabari's interpretation influenced later classical interpreters through excerpts of hadith written in Tafsir Ath-Tabari, especially after the consensus of the scholars regarding women's responsibilities for the fall of Adam As. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 30)

Furthermore, to reveal the view of Adam and Eve in the medieval period, he cites the interpretation of the works of Az-Zamakhshari and Ar-Razi amid the theological contestations that occurred at that time, in which case, Az-Zamakhshari explained the concept of sin, not to prove that Hawwa was innocent, but rather to explain the concept of sin initiated by Mu'tazilah theology. Ar-Razi, for example, by consistently quoting the hadith ontology of women as previously written in Tafsir Ath-Tabari, Ar-Razi gave a different conclusion from what was written in Tafsir-Ath-Tabari. Barbara understood that the punishment inflicted on Adam was God's intention, so to bring Adam down, the devil did not need to make women intermediaries. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 32)

However, not to be forgotten, Barbara also quoted the interpretation, which was the work of Al-Baidhowi and Ibnu Katsir. The researcher sees that Barbara's sniping of both was nothing but the popularity of this interpretation, so Barbara likely wanted to see society's

tendency at that time to perceive stories in the Qur'an. Between the two, Ibn Kathir is more dominant in using Hadith and Israiliyyat narrations. From this, it can be seen that the use of hadith and Israiliyyat history did not only stop in the classical era; it even reached the Middle Ages when the dynamics of Islamic scholarship were more established and systematic than before.

Then, to reveal the view of Adam and Eve in modern times, he quoted Muhammad Abduh's interpretation of Al-Manar. In Abduh's view, Barbara understood that Abduh was here to clarify the narrations present in previous interpretations, especially those relating to the ontology of women made of ribs. Furthermore, Barbara quoted Abduh's claim that Adam and Hawwa could not be treated as history because history had nothing to do with religion. Barbara also cited Abduh's rhetoric which led to the conclusion that human nature is not flawed. This is proven by the existence of God's forgiveness and human potential to repent, so in this case, Abduh criticizes the Christian view, which states that humans continue to sin until Jesus saves them. However, Abduh's view of the perfection of human nature was not just a criticism; Abduh then connected it with his conviction that Muslim society in his time would and could move towards moral improvement. According to Abduh, as quoted by Barbara, this reform can be achieved when humans realize their freedom is not wild. Still, the freedom to act under rules that have implications for peace and tranquillity for good in this world, as Abduh reflects in this story of Adam and Hawwa. (Stowasser, 1994, p. 35)

Conclusions

The verses of the Qur'an have been sued by feminist circles, especially those that explicitly touch on gender relations. Islamic feminist figures responded to this lawsuit as a form of defence against the attack through the reinterpretation of these verses. However, the objects that are reinterpreted are not only verses that intersect with gender relations but also verses from stories that describe a woman who massively influences the views of Muslims today.

The trend of story verses as a form of impersonating women needs to be studied further, considering the mix of other sources in the product of reinterpretation from time to time, so that, although the factuality of cases in the Qur'an is still being debated, the depiction of female figures in the Qur'an -The Qur'an has a significant influence on social perceptions of women which will be built in tandem with the social construction of modern society.

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