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The Image of Woman in Creation Account of the Holy Scriptures: A Comparative Study between the Qur'an and the Bible

Malihe Maghazei[1], Ali Muhammad Valavi[2], Sadegh Aeinevand[3], Susan Bastani[4]

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Abstract:

A critical analysis of reader-text, especially the sacred texts as the important topic of hermeneutic, is one of the focal points of attention among scholars of humanities. This paper, through a comparative study between the Bible and the Qur'an, concentrates on the image of woman in the account of creation. The paper first shows that there are deep differences between these two sacred texts concerning the image of woman. Then it argues that throughout the Judaea-Christian history and the Islamic traditions multi and contradictory interpretations and understandings of the account have been produced by religious authorities, scholars and critics. The main purpose of the paper is to show that despite the differences between the two texts, there is a common paradigm between Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions regarding the image of woman. This paradigm is that the authoritative discourses of both traditions have used the creation story, as a theoretical tool to downgrade women. Certainly, many factors are influential in producing this paradigm including disposition of the authors, extratextuality (the context of reading) and intertextuality (relationship of texts). In this paper, the notion of intertextuality will be emphasized, as an important factor in bringing about this paradigm.

Keywords: Intertexuality, Creation Account, the Bible, the Qu'ran, Islamic classical texts, Judeo-Christianity tradition.

1. Ph.D. Student of History, Al-Zahra University,Tehran
2. Associate Professor of History, Al-zahra University, Tehran
3 . Professor of Islamic History, Faculty of Humanities, Tarbiat Modares University
4 . Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Al-Zahra University, Tehran

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Introduction

Over the psat few decades, interdisciplinary, cross-cultural methodologies and inter-textual studies have launched new and highly controversial issues and have challenged past paradigms and assumptions. These studies and challenges have given rise to fresh and interesting academic fields and impacted field studies, particularly the impact of gender studies on theology and religious studies. Deep roots of gender patterns in many religions affects these academic fields indispensable. In fact, religion can be considered as one of the important and even the foremost source of shaping theoretical and practical directions toward women and gender roles. Throughout the sacred texts, passages, proverbs, myths and narratives have been used to draw ontological and epistemological premises that have led to developing normative rules for gender relations. This is especially true with Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions. One of the essential narratives in this heritage is the account of creation which has been used by the religious authorities to define human nature and gender positions. The creation narrative, along with the sacred, religious and mystical texts of the *Talmud*, *the Bible, Life of Adam Eve and the Holy Qur'an have also* appeared in may analytical works by scholars and critics of various fields.

The persistence and intensity of interest in these stories, besides scientific and religious curiosity, is because serious practical implications have often been drawn from them, which has had enduring effects on people's attitudes. Thus, a comparative and analytic study between these two texts on this story is imperative. The analytical and critical works on this religious narrative must be considered as part of larger area of critical thinking and feminist discourse which has questioned the very foundations of conventional and authoritative knowledge and has tried to move beyond the normative thinking and values.

The Image of Woman in the Biblical Creation Account

The Judeo-Christian account of creation, in which the first woman was made from man, committed sin and tempted the man into sin has shaped a metaphorical and philosophical basis for degradation of women. The narrative is recounted in the book of Genesis, Chapters 1, 2 and 3 and further aspects in Chapters 4 and 5. There are two narratives of creation. First, a grand cosmological account of the genesis of the universe is recounted. It states that God created the whole universe and humankind in six days and rested on the seventh day. The creation began with day and night and then respectively God created sky, lands, seas, vegetation, luminaries, living creatures in the

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sea and sky. Finally on the sixth day animals and mankind were emerged. "God created man in the image of Himself, male and female he created them" (Gen, 1:27). In fact, as this account says human was the last creature that God created. Then Adam as the peak of a series of Divine creative acts was given supremacy over all other beings (Gen, 1: 28–30).

Creation of man and woman is repeated in the second account, but in different way. In the first account the creation of plants and animals preceded the creation of man and woman, but in the second account all beings were created instantly along with the forming of mankind (Gen.2:5, 6, and 7). God created Adam from the dust of the earth and breathed life into his nostrils and then he became a living being (Gen, 2:7). Adam gave names to all creatures, but found among them no suitable partner for himself (Gen.2:20, 21). In contrast to the first narrative, God put Adam to sleep to create a helpmate for him, "he took one of his ribs and enclosed it in flesh and built the rib he had taken from the man into a woman" (Gen, 2. 22). Then, Adam cried out: "this is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh, this is to be called woman for this was taken from man" (Gen, 2:23). Then, both were ordered by God not to eat from the forbidden Tree in the Garden of Eden (the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil). But the Serpent, after some conversation with Eve, succeeded to tempt her into eating it and she also tempted Adam to eat from the forbidden tree (Gen.3:2-7). Afterward, God, because they disobeyed, his command expelled them from Eden and cursed them. The serpent is cursed crawl on his belly and eats dust every day (Gen, 3.14). The man is cursed to labor, with sweat on his brow to eat bread (Gen, 3.19) and woman is cursed to submit to her husband, and to bear children in pain (Gen, 3.16).

Thus, the first creation narrative of the Bible implies simultaneous creation of Adam and Eve, whereas the second indicates that God created woman from man and she is the origin of sin. Jesus in Mathew 19.5,6 referred to the first account when he was responding to some Pharisees regarding divorce he said that since "the Creator from the beginning made them male and female" they should not separate but keep united. In Genesis Chapter 5 under the title of *the patriarchs before the flood,* Adam is at the top of a genealogy and all his descendents are described in detail including their ages. Also, in *Luke II*, the genealogy of Jesus traces to Adam.

Regarding discrepancy between the two accounts, different views were forwarded. Medieval Rabbis maintained that Eve and the woman in the first narrative were two separate individuals. The first woman was identified in the Midrash as Lilith (night demon) and in the *Talmud a* demonic entity is mentioned. But in the *Torah,* there is no reference to any woman

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other than Eve. In Judeo-Christianity there is a belief that this statement "male and female he created them" in the first account is a summary statement which is explained in more detail in the second account and emphasizes the historicity of the biblical account. However, some biblical scholars interpreted the story as allegorical with the purpose of sending a massage to people or teaching a lesson about sin and human disobedience regardless of historical truth. Some like Philo, the Jewish scholar of the 1st century, argued that the story of Adam and Eve has both literal and allegorical meanings. He said that Adam through eating the forbidden fruit caused "a life of mortality and wretchedness in lie of that immortality and bliss" ("Philo, Op.53", Encyclopedia of Judaica, 1972). In fact, this, act of Adam, as Philo argued, is giving way to physical passions and caused Adam to descend from the higher level of knowledge to the lower level of opinion. He considered Adam to be the symbolic representation of mind; Eve as the representation of sense-perception; the serpent, as the representation of passion and the tree of knowledge, as the representation of prudence or opinion (Ibid).

Although some groups including Evangelical Christians, Roman Catholics and Orthodox Jews still hold to be literal creation story and consider Adam and Eve to be real historical people, we can hardly highlight a single stand point on woman and gender relations in the classical writings and also in the thinking currents of the modern times in the Judeo-Christianity.

Whether we rely on the first story or take the second as complementary or infer the account as literally or allegorical, the narrative is identified by the Fathers of Church and their later Christian followers as the basis for the Christian doctrine of original sin and Eve played a key role in introducing disobedience into the Garden of Eden, though, as mentioned above, Jesus himself referred to the first account. In other words, Eve is considered by authoritative sources as cause of the Fall of Humanity. Eve, a corrupting temptress and who pulled human kind into a condition of sin, now is representative of all women. The reason for menstruation and pain of child labor of women, as some sages said, "is a punishment for the sin of Eve who brought about the death of Adam" ("Gen R. 17:13", Encyclopedia of Judiaca). In other words, Early Fathers of church believed that since Eve had tempted Adam to eat the forbidden fruit, she and all subsequent women are the cause of the Fall. This is especially true with Paul, the early organizers of Christian church. He, in his pronouncements on church policy, to the first Christians in 58 A.D. emphasized the original sin and said: "Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin, death, and thus death has spread

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through whole human race because everyone has sinned" (Roman, 5:12). Paul understands the creation woman from man to be the case for superiority of men over women, and therefore a husband should rule his wife. He said: "Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11:3-6). Paul argues creating Adam in the "image of God" means that "man reflects God's glory, but woman is the reflection of man's glory. For man did not come from woman, no woman came from man and man was not created for the sake of woman, but woman created for the sake of man (1 Corinthians, 11: 7-10).

This account and its interpretations have been developed into the basis for the image of a fixed woman nature and have connected woman's assumed "physical nature" with her social function. Paul says that he does not give permission to a "woman to teach or to tell a man what to do" (1 Timothy 2:12). Continuing, he emphasizes prohibition of women to speak in the instruction meetings and again mentions that this prohibition is because "Adam was formed first and Eve afterwards, and it was not Adam who was led astray but the woman who was led astray and fell into sin" (1 Timothy 2:12-15). He commands women to sit quietly and if they have question they must ask their husbands at home, because it is not good for women to raise their voice in public (1 Corinthians, 14:34-35). Pirke R. El.XIV says that as a result of Eve's curse, a woman must go about covered as mourners. As he says: "The insubordination of women in refusing to acknowledge the authority of their husbands would offend angels who under God guard the created universe" (Colossians 1:16, Ephesians 1:21).

As a whole, the biblical law has been interpreted that wife is inferior to her husband, who will "rule over her" (Gen. 3:16). In fact, throughout history gender inequality and deprivation of women from some areas has been connected to the creation narrative and Divine law. In other words, the classical Judeo-Christianity statements, teachings and principles, have been used by the following theologians and thinkers of this tradition to form the doctrine of the innate corruption of human nature. According to these understandings, women's inferiority was determined by nature, and on the basis of natural law, human laws should be formulated.

The Image of Woman in the Qur'anic Creation Account

In the Qur'an elements of the creation are expressed throughout the text, some repeat in different ways and contexts. The largest version of the Creation narrative is stated in Nahal (Bee) Verses 1 to 17. This (chapter) was revealed in the late Meccan period and

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expresses the Signs of creation of God and the benefits for humans to remind them glory of God. These signs include rain causing growth of vegetation, the cattle giving milk, bees producing honey, and so on. In this and other places, when the Qur'an speaks of human beings in biological sense - by using the word sperm-drop, clotted blood, fetus, etc. - speaks about creation of human species in the language of natural science. But, the account of Adam and his wife is expressed in allegorical language.

In contrast to the Bible, the creation of Eve in the Qur'an is not described in detail, however, as the essence of Qur'anic epistemology, it clearly says that "spouse" or partner was created with Adam, from a single Self or Being (4:1). In fact, in the Qur'an there is no such name as Eve, she always identified as Adam's wife, but in the classical Islamic texts she is known as Hawwa. The Qur'an holds that, while biologically men and women are different, they are created from the same origin which implies ontologically, they are endowed with the similar natures and potentials. This theme is repeated many times in various contexts throughout the Qur'an. "It is He Who created you from a single Self and made his mate of the like nature" (7:189) and the Qur'an addresses mankind regarding common ancestor "O'man kind we created you from a single pair of a male and female and made you unto nations and tribes. (49:13).

The main part of Adam and his wife's story is stated in five Surah (15, 38, 20, 7, and 2) in which the woman appears in three. The Qur'an describes that the God created Adam "from putrid clay, mud moulded into shape" (15:26; 38:17) and fashioned him with his hands in due proportion and breathed into him of his spirit" (38: 72, 75; 15:29). In this story, Adam as a collective noun represents the whole human species or the essence of human race, in metaphorical and symbolic meaning.

As the Qur'an indicates God's purpose in Adam's creation or human race, is God's vicegerent on earth (2: 30) "He taught Adam the nature of things" (2:31) and "said to the angles to bow down to Adam and they bowed not so Satan: he refused and was haughty" (2: 34). In fact, by not prostrating before Adam he did not admit the human's ascendancy and disobeyed God's command (20:116; 15:30; 7:11-12; 2:34). Satan said:" I am better than he: Thou dist create Me from fire, and him from clay" (7:12; 38: 76). For this disobedience, God cursed and banished Satan but released him until the Day of Judgment, continuing to tempt and assault all humankind except for those who believe in God and resist Satan (15:34-43; 38:77-85; 7:13-18).

Except in one Sura (20: 117-121) in which Adam is mentioned, it implies that Adam is

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responsible for expulsion from Eden; the Qur'an always uses dual form to tell how Satan tempted both and how both disobeyed God. Woman is mentioned as Adam's partner in God's injunction to "dwell you and your wife in the Garden and so eat from where you desire but do not approach this tree," (7:19; 2:35) but both did not obey and therefore both were culpable for original sin.

In the Qur'an not only is woman not the origin of sin and disobeyer, but, as mentioned above, in 20 the Qur'an addressed Adam to the warning that Satan was his and his wife's foe and if they obey Satan, both will be expelled from the Heaven (20:117). Also it was to Adam that Satan whispered his persuasion concerning "the Tree of immortality and everlasting kingdom" (20:120.). And finally it was Adam who disobeyed God and was seduced (20:121).

Woman's participation in the process of disobedience and repentance appeared in the middle of the story when Satan whispered to them and caused their fall with deception (7:21-22). Both man and woman asked for God's forgiveness and mercy (7:23) and God bestowed (on mankind) the garment of righteousness. (7:26). Then the Qur'an gave the warning to all of humanity that "let not Satan cause you affliction as he expelled your parents from the garden, we made the Satan to be the guardians of those who do not believe" (7: 27). The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes individual and collective responsibility for what people do and there is no change without their will and effort:"God does not change the condition of a people until they change it themselves" (13:11, 8:53).

Chronologically, the story reflects a progressive process. Chapters 20, 15 and 38 revealed in the Middle Maccan period, 7 in the late Meccan period and 2 in the early Medina period. In 20 the earliest one, God's warning, Satan's enticement, and God's forgiveness are all addressed to Adam, while both Adam and his wife disobeyed and were ejected. s 15 and 38 also revealed in the Middle Meccan period and talk about Adam's creation, Satan's rebellion, and expulsion but not mentioning of disobedience. In 7 which revealed in the late Meccan period both Adam and Eve were tempted by Satan. The final version of the story in 2, revealed in Medina, emphasizes the purpose of Adam's God-given higher knowledge. In this God addresses to both Adam and his wife and stresses on Satan as cause of the Fall and finally ends with assurance of guidance for all people (Stowassar, 1993, 27).

The vigorousness of the narrative progresses from a focus on Adam (Sura 20) to one involving both Adam and his wife (Sure 7) in the final version of the story. It surpasses both by way of introducing the additional notions of man's vicegerency on earth, higher knowledge,

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inspiration and the promise of (spiritual) happiness of all humans who follow God's guidance (Stowasser ibid). In other words, the main theme has shifted away to the issue of human's purpose on earth and the God's guidance. This theme, as the important part of the Qur'anic meaning is developed in the late Medinan period that mentioned that "the Trust" (al-amana) which God offered "to the heavens and earth, and the mountains, but they refused the burden, but the human undertook to bear it. So that God punishes the male and female hypocrites, and the unbelievers, but God turns in Mercy to the believers" (33: 72-73). *Trust* is defined in various ways. For instance, Jalal ad-Din Rumi, a Persian classical mystic poet, described it as free will of human kind. This concept is accepted by some contemporary Muslim intellectuals such as Ali Shari'ati, the Iranian Muslim thinker (Shari'ati 1979, 76).

Thus, the Qur'an declares that humans, male and females, are free, responsible agents with equal potentialities called upon to take the righteousness path and fight against Satan as the symbol of unjust and wrong doings. Adam and his wife's slip, the banishment did not include the burden of the curse of the original sin. Man and woman may have some negative dispositions but the Qur'an forgives them as long as they change themselves and continue to believe in God and take the religious path. In this story, there is no ontological difference between Adam and his wife in terms of their origin of creation, the dynamic relationship between the Creator and His creature, blowing His spirit into both man and woman , His guidance in the struggle against the evil and also resist's temptation of Satan (Waddud 1999, 62).

In short, the Qur'an by not highlighting idea of the Fall, does not interiorize the rift symbolized by the Fall between divine and human and among human based on their sex. Rather, the expulsion of the human pair from Garden of Eden discloses the possibility for all human kind to receive infinitely of God's mercy and to acquire permanent salvation through their own choices and efforts.

Intertextuality

In general, intertextuality is defined as shaping and influential of texts' meanings by other texts. In other words, transformation or impact of one author or group of authors from the past or present on other readers or texts is called intertexuality (Kristeva, 1986). Since 1966, when Julia Kristeva first coined this term, various meanings and implications have been used from it. Some hold to the original meaning, while some even apply it in terms of influencing on or referring texts from each other (Irwin 2004, 228). But, in this study, the intertextuality notion in its original meaning is applicable.

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Many Judeo-Christian doctrines including the theory on creation of humankind as philosophical foundation or ideological justification for ontological gender inequality can be traced to the Greek philosophers. Plato believed that the first community of souls (consisting of volition, sensation and emotion) comprised of only men and were originally implanted in male bodies but the soul of man could master his emotion and grow his intellect, therefore, he would be blessed and reborn as a man. But a man, as Plato argues, who could not dominate his emotional and irrational tendencies would be reborn as a woman (Plato 1977). The theory implicitly says that women are lower than men and could not make logical decisions , therefore they should let men to decide for them and always follow men. In *Republic*, Plato values intellect over emotion. Since intellect is associated with men, men are appropriate for political leadership (Plato 1941). Comparing these ideas with the early Christian church thinkers, text relations and strong impact of these Greek philosophical views and their binary thinking (emotion versus reason, male versus women, self versus other, etc.) becomes apparent.

In a broader perspective, sources of shaping Judeo-Christian views on women can be found in the misogynistic ideas of the region (including Mediterranean, Persia, Byzantine society and Iraq) in which the Judeo-Christian tradition was formed. In fact, in these areas, the humanity aspect of women were submerged and woman were considered to be exclusively biological and reproducing beings (Ahmed 1992, 18).

While Greek philosophers shaped the views of Judeo-Christian tradition on women's roles, this tradition shaped the views of more recent thinkers including philosophers and scientists of the nineteenth century. In fact, besides religion, philosophy and science have been among other things that have been used to define "nature of woman" and gender roles. On one hand, Judeo-Christian tradition perpetuated the views of classical Greek philosophers on gender inequality, on the other hand the descriptions of woman's body by the nineteenth century European biologists and philosophers in many ways paralleled with the Christian precepts.

The relationship of texts is also evident in the Bible and the classical Islamic texts on the issue of nature of woman and gender roles. Despite transparency of the creation account in the Qur'an, some Muslim thinkers and theologians after the death of the Prophet began to read into Islam the Biblical accounts including Eve/Hawwa's creation from Adam's rib and her role in the Fall. In other words, while views of Fathers of Church were shaped by prior texts and system of beliefs, due to the peculiar nature of inter-religiously shared worlds and text-relations, many Muslim

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thinkers (from both Shi'a and Sunni) repeat similar statement of the Fathers of Church on creations story and gender roles. Despite the fact that the Qur'an's creation story gave no indication of creation order based on gender, or coming woman from man and tempting of Adam by his wife. In other words, these scholars infer opposite meanings from the Qur'an, which have given rise to misogynistic attitudes and practical implication

In fact, throughout the Islamic classical text, there is a pattern of interpreting the verses related to creation (example 4:1; 7:198) the same as the Bible's creation story which has led to associate biological features of women to original sin (Tabari cites several of them in Vol.1 of Tarikh-e Tabari), Among them Ibn Kathir claimed that childbirth pain and menstruation are punishments for her role in the Fall (Ibn-Kathir, Vol.1, 448;).

There are many Hadiths attributing to the Prophet and Imams, in which, unlike the Qu'ran, women are degraded due to the original sin. For example according to a Hadith, attributed to the Prophet, He said: "Woman is like a crooked rib which could not be straight" (Sheikh Sadoq1401 AH, 88). A Hadith attributed to Imam Sadeq: "God created Hawwa from Adam, for this reason they are interested in men, so they should be locked at home" (Ameli 1388 AH, 40; Koliani 1401 Ah, 338).

There are even some Hadiths, in which the legal inequality between men and women are justified in terms of coming Hawwa from Adam and her role in the Fall. For example, according to a Hadith "one day the Prophet was asked: did Hawwa come from Adam or Adam from Hawwa? He responded: Hawwa came from Adam, otherwise women should have right of divorce, again he was asked: did she come from the whole body of Adam or part of his body? The Prophet responded: from a part of his, because women do not have right to be judges. Again he was asked; where did she come from? From right or left part of his body? The Prophet responded: from the left, because women's heir is half of women and two women witnesses are equal to one man. The last question was that did Hawwa come from external or internal of Adam, the Prophet responded: from his internal part, otherwise women don't have to wear veil"! (Nouri Al-Tabarsi 1401 AH, 285).

As some scholars emphasize, this was partly a result of an assimilation of the scriptural and social tradition of the Christian and Jewish population who entered to the corpus of Islamic life, after Islam had conquered the adjacent territories (Ahmed 1992, 4). In other words, the dominant official discourse in the Islamic world (including exegesis, tradition, jurisprudence, and philosophical thinking) which was formed during the early Islamic centuries, was affected deeply by Judeo-Christian tradition and

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philosophy. The formation of the official dominant discourse in the first few centuries coincided with the Western Middle Ages, as the misogynistic period. The misogyny ideas of this period entered into Islam through commentaries on the Qur'an and other secondary classical sources of Islam (Ahmed 1992; Spelberg 1994; Stowasser 1994). In fact, "it was the secondary religious texts that enabled textualization of misogyny in Islam" (Barlas 2002, 9).

Challenges

In the framework of religious rethinking movements, a number of currents of thinking (including Loyalist, Revisionist and Liberationist schools) in Judeo-Christianity questioned past assumptions on woman. They maintain that the Bible is Word of God and cannot be oppressive to woman as human kind and consider those classic understandings and male-centered doctrine to be a result of the patriarchal culture. They argue that by correct understanding of the Bible, it is possible to have a highly valuable view of women. In other words, in their views, although certain Biblical passages are oppressive to women, but they should be understood in the light of the freeing activity of Jesus Christ", who was woman's emancipator (Mary Delay 1993). This trend of Biblical interpretation, as an alternative way, from 1980's (or beginning of the third-wave feminism) "with its conscious adoption of wider theoretical tools and inclusive understanding of differences in relation to women and their myriad contexts" have been strengthened. (Sawyer 2004, 162). In other words, the positive points in the Bible are used to challenge the traditional Biblical interpretations on the creation account. In fact, these challenges have rejected the notion of ontological gender identity categories which has a deep root in the western culture.

Similarly, the with formation of the rethinking intellectual movement since the beginning of the twentieth century throughout the Islamic world misogyny Islamic classical texts began to be challenged including the old understanding of the Qur'anic historical and mythical narratives, such as creation story. One of the interesting trends among these new understandings of the Qur'anic creation account is to analyze it in terms of its deep metaphorical and symbolic meaning. Through stressing on the main points of the story, i.e. choosing of Adam as the representative of God on the earth, teaching him the names (knowledge), asking the angels to prostrate, this challenging literature, considers the creation story in the Qur'an as a metaphorical manifestation of humanism and high-valued status of Adam as the representative of human race by God. In this literature, it has been emphasized on this point that composing of man of two opposite elements putrid clay and spirit of God in the

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Qur'an symbolically means two dimensional or dual nature of every human being. The former indicates stagnation, lowness and ugliness and the latter means perfection, infinity and progress. Every human whether man or woman struggles in her/his inner being and has the freedom to choose between these two opposite poles to determine her/his destiny (Shari'ati 1979, 70-96). Moreover, this current of thinking highlights the idea of the equal nature and common origin of man and woman in the Qur'an (4:1) that implicitly rejects gender ontological binary views. Also, the image of woman as the source of temptation and sin that is stressed by the Judeo-Christian tradition and the Islamic classical authoritative religions has been denied (Barlas 2002; Waddud 1992; Ahmed 1999; Spelberg 1994; Stowasser 1994).

Concluding Remarks

The paper shows that there are differences between the creation account in the Bible and that in the Qur'an. The former recounts that God created Eve from Adam and she committed sin by disobeying the command of God and tempting Adam. However, the latter emphasizes the common origin of man and woman, and no tempting of Adam by his wife, except in one case (20) that Adam was mentioned, tempted by Satan, and disobeyed the command of God.

Despite these differences between the creation account in the Judeo-Christian texts and the Qur'an, both ended with similar interpretation by religious authorities. The Church authorities have used this narrative to degrade woman as the defective nature and the origin of human sin. Therefore, biological facts have associated with psychological, moral and intellectual quality.

In fact, interpretation of the early Church organizers strengthened the classical binary and patriarchal philosophical thinking. These religious authorities by literal interpretation of Biblical Scriptures read into the account, the cultural and social condition of the time, and their personal disposition and experiences, consequently, women in these texts are "Otherized". This way of thinking led to shape views of the orthodox Christian theologians, fundamentalist religious scholars, philosophers and even the nineteenth century European scientists concerning woman and man's position. As mentioned, the Qur'anic creation narrative contrary to the Biblical account implies that man and woman are ontologically coeval and coequal. But the classical religious authorities by borrowing from the Judeo-Christian tradition formulated gender inequality and division of labor based on biological difference between man and woman. In other words, while the Qur'an does not arrange women and men in terms of their degree of

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binary opposition, many Muslim classical thinkers institutionalized otherizing women and infer opposite understandings.

In short, these various interpretations from the same text, as well as, perceiving similar ideas from different texts (the Qur'an and the Bible) support the intertextuality concept. In other words, readers going off of their personal dispositions and experiences. They, who are affected by social and cultural settings, produce "meanings" and interpretations which lead to forming paradigms as happened in interpretation of women's positions in the sacred books. These paradigms through text-relationship enter into other texts and authors, which overshadow the original concepts and meanings.

Over the centuries the ontological gender binary views that have become the dominant Western views sustained until modern time. Though this way of thinking has gradually diminished with the development of critical theory and growth of feminist movement gradually diminished, it still exists to some extent even today. In fact, despite all challenges and rethinking, these views are found among many religious conservatives including some orthodox churches, Christian and Jewish fundamentalists and even some scholars and law makers. In other words, some still formulate their thinking in terms of literal interpretation of the Bible including the creation account, and attempt to apply the constituents of these clichés in the real world. Therefore, more effort should be done on this vital and sensitive topic.

Rethinking the classical Islamic discourse on gender in terms of inter-textuality and extra textuality as a vital and vast research topic also needs greater and deeper study and exploration. In other words, scholarly and challenging works on the Islamic classical thought concerning gender is limited. The necessity of this research becomes clearer when we notice that these texts have been one of the important sources of the Orientalists and the West in the process of formation of typical assumptions on woman in Islam.

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تصویر زن در داستان آفرینش متون مقدس: مطالعه مقایسه ای میان قرآن و کتاب مقدس

ملیحه مغازه‌ای[1]، علی محمد ولوی[2]، صادق آیینه‌وند[3]، سوسن باستانی[4]

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نگاه انتقادی – تحلیلی به متون و رابطه دو طرفه یا گفتگوی خواننده با متن بخصوص متون مقدس یکی از موضوعات پراهمیت و محوری مباحث هرمنوتیکی است. در این مباحث داستان آفرینش در قرآن و انجیل یکی از ظریف ترین, پیچیده ترین و چالش انگیزترین موضوعاتی بوده که از سوی متفکران مسیحی و مفسران مسلمان مبنای اندیشه های گوناگون در مورد تفاوت های جوهری میان زن و مرد قرار گرفته است. این مقاله با استفاده از رهیافت بین متنی نشان می دهد که علیرغم تفاوت عمیق میان این دو متن از نقطه نظر جایگاه زن در این داستان و با وجود تفاسیر متضاد و برداشت های مختلف, نظریه پردازی های جنسیتی مشابهی میان مفسرین مسلمان و صاحب نظران مسیحی بر مبنای این داستان به وجود آمده است. این مساله تاییدی است بر این نظریه که زمینه تاریخی متون, گفتمان بینا متنی و گرایش ها و پیشافهم های مفسران در تولید تفاسیر موثر هستند. مقاله نتیجه می گیرد که به علت این عوامل , که خود در عین حال موید پویایی, چند معنایی و سیالی متون مقدس بخصوص قرآن است, برخی از تفاسیر این داستان با وجود نفی نابرابری های جنسیتی ذاتی در داستان آفرینش در قرآن ابزار توجیه این نابرابری ها یا (نگاه دیگری نسبت به زن) برای پیروان هر دو مذهب شده است.

واژگان کلیدی: رهیافت میان متنی، داستان آفرینش، کتاب مقدس (شامل عهد عتیق و عهد جدید)، قرآن، گناه اولیه، منابع کلاسیک اسلامی، هبوط، سنت یهودیت–مسیحیت، درخت ممنوعه، آیین مسیحیت، دیدگاه دوگانگی جوهری

۱. دانشجوی دکتری، گروه تاریخ، دانشگاه الزهرا، تهران

۲. دانشیار، گروه تاریخ، دانشگاه الزهرا

۳. استاد تاریخ اسلام، دانشکده علوم انسانی، دانشگاه تربیت مدرس

٤. دانشیار علوم اجتماعی، دانشگاه الزهرا، تهران

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