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Articulating the Optimal Features of a Good Muslim Wife: Some Qur'anic expressions that Affiliate with the Woman's Perfect, Metaphysical and Real Worlds

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ABSTRACT

This small-scale study investigates the optimal features of good Muslim woman. It aims to describe, interpret, and explain the rhetorical features of the properties the Qur'anic discourse (QD) maintains for both sexes and those it excludes for the good Muslim woman. The study benefits from corpus, i.e. text, linguistics for data collection. It also applies a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to the Quotes collected from the Noble Qur'an (NQ). The paper builds on Van Dijk's 1998 model of analysis at the syntactic, semantic and schematic levels of the properties identified for a good Muslim woman. It has been found that the QD assigns ten properties to describe a good Muslim man and woman; they include submission, belief, obedience, truthfulness, faithfulness, humbleness, alms giving, fasting, chastity, and turning to Allah. Among these, the QD exclusively and inclusively lists 'being resigned, believing, always turning to Him, being devoted to worship, fasting', and 'being a widow or a virgin' as general semantic features for a good Muslim wife. It has been concluded that the properties identified for a good Muslim woman have directive, informative, meta-linguistic and affective functions. They are part of the sociology of Islam which accommodates the ontological principle of creating women as a different sex having other roles to play with the deontological theory of moral obligation to obey freely the other sex. The Qur'anic engineering tactfully goes beyond reconciling both sexes' needs and roles to repair some social norms established and entrenched against the woman who has already experienced marriage before.

Introduction

In the last few decades, the image of Muslims, whether males or females, has been presented negatively on all aspects of life, on the broadest level and internationally. For example, Ata (1984, pp. 207-217) investigated the general features of Moslem Arabs and their culture as mirrored by the press and in social science textbooks. The researcher surveyed (4) of the most widely circulated Australian newspapers as well as (15) of the most commonly used textbooks in civic and social sciences. It has been found that the portrayal of Muslims, in general and Muslim Arabs, in particular," was predominantly negative, involving overstatements, baseless charges and evaluative perceptions".

The portrayal of the veiled Muslim woman from a western perspective, often stands for oppression in the Muslim as well as the Arab world. This stance makes it almost impossible to think about the Muslim world without referring to the issue of woman. Anthropologist Abu-Lughod (2006) exclaims that this viewpoint usually reflects an out-group of 'them' and an in-group of 'us' relationship with Muslim women. It also disregards the various ways of life practiced by women in different parts of the

Muslim world. Abu-Lughod contends that the Islamic attire should not be mixed with the lack of power, representation and tradition. Abu-Lughod also adds that feminists who take it upon themselves to speak out on behalf of 'oppressed' Muslim women accept that both the social convention and the individual desire are necessarily in conflict as if it were something not restricted by the experience of Islamic society.

The Islamic head cover has been a debatable issue in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Vakulenko (2007, pp. 183-199) checks the legal construction of 'Islamic headscarves' from the perspective of inter-sectionality, focusing on the ECHR jurisprudence. The researcher also sketches out the trends which have been beneficial in the earlier decisions taken in the EU. The researcher argues that the view of inter-sectionality has been broken into pieces because of ECHR's Article No. 9 'Right to Friedom of Religion'. The scholar contends that fragmentation is necessarily unsatisfactory.

By the same token, the Islamic face-veil in the Netherlands has turned into a threat at the national scale within less than a decade. Moors (2009, pp. 393-408) argues that Dutch politicians tend to use a strong discourse of dislike that addresses a wide range of people and that produces a sense of national belonging, but it, however, excludes face-veiling women. Such a political discourse does not only negotiate the act of face-covering but also speak of the fact that Muslim females who engage in these acts can cause worry, tension, and anger to others; they are the very same Muslim women who are referred to as oppressed citizens, turn out to challenge the Dutch cultural norm of gender.

An Overview of the Previous Studies

Acculturation among Muslim women living in western cultures is unlikely. In a PhD thesis submitted to Ohio State University, Hend (2006) explored the cultural mobility that might be experienced by a Muslim woman living in the USA. The researcher checked certain indicators related to women's religion and their choice of establishing some relationships with non-relatives, of living alone, of making decisions, of drinking alcohol and of smoking cigarettes. It has been found that Muslim woman in the USA was not acculturated to the American culture. Acculturation among these women was significantly related with the period of time that women spent in the USA, contact with American people and their culture, and contact with Arabs and their culture. Acculturation was not, however, affiliated with women's level of education.

Participation rates of Muslim woman coming from south Asian countries to do a degree in the British higher education institutions are steadily increasing. Ahmad (2001, pp. 137-152) explored Muslim woman's influences and motivation for entering higher education in the UK to consider how those factors may contribute to current discourses addressing Muslim women on the British Islands. The researcher aimed to check if the variable of education might have any impact on women's future lifestyle and choices. The findings of the research clearly indicate that young South Asian Muslim women continually tended to negotiate and renegotiate their religious, cultural and personal identities and that the processes of negotiation function in both a complex and contradictory way.

The agency of women (also known as minor guardianship) among individualization, self-reflection, market forces, public spaces and social media sounds a transformative force enriching modernity and Islam. Göle (2017, p. 95) argues that the experience of modern Islam cannot be simply seen as an adaptation of the modern patterns of consumption or rationality of market but as "individually lived experienced" and "self-reflexive" approaches to modern life in Islam. Thus, the allegations of a covered Muslim woman challenging the secular premises of a public sphere and the autobiographical novel written by a young Muslim girl giving a critique on political Islam or carrying a public debate on religious marriages probably stem from the sociology of Islamic doctrine itself.

The representations of Muslims in Western discourse clearly reflect the attitude of the people of one society towards another or one individual towards other individuals. Zoon, Abdullah and Buriro (2019) mind the Western discourse to check how fundamentalists and extremists are usually tagged in these discourses. They theorize that the discourse that the discourse must be dominant and leading because of the influence and popularity of the media that produces that discourse. Building on Van Dijk's notion of ideology, the researchers have analyzed Sally Kohn's tweets which tend to reflect a high degree of bias as those tweets often label people according to their faith and ethnicity. The critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to the posts has thrown some light on the way the Blacks, Muslims, and their doctrine are misrepresented. The critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to the structural and lexical choices employed in the posts has shown a high degree of bias. The critical analysis of those discourses has satirically pointed out to the ways such category of people is negatively stereotyped in Western (social) media.

The formation of identity within Muslim woman had emerged in the last few decades in response to national identities established and normalized in the twentieth century. Naber (2005, p.479) addressed the one specific identity category 'Muslim

first, Arab second Muslim first' among Arab American Muslims in the United States. The scholar argued that the racialization of Islam within the Arab community, especially in the aftermath of the 1978 Islamic revolution in Iran, determined a socio-cultural context in which a collective identity of 'Muslim First' has emerged and established. The researcher also examined how Muslim students utilized of this new emerging identity as a strategy for expressing their Islamic identity clearly in their daily life. This inclination to 'Muslim First' was also gendered and used by young Muslims as a broad ideological framework for challenging their family relationships and parents' thoughts of masculinity, femininity and marriage. They also employed this new emerging but collective identity as a vehicle for opposing parents who used to discourage their own daughters from marrying across racial lines.

More recently, virtual reality —thanks to modern technology and social media programs, has become a potential space in which Muslim woman might be gaining some new religious and social roles through accepting the expression of Jihad in Islam. Carvalho (2014) concerned the Spanish Muslim Women engaging online Jihad. The researcher claimed that most of the studies conducted on Jihadism had already addressed the question of Jihad online from a male's perspective. The scholar argued that it was so important to analyze women's participations and comments on Jihadism in the virtual world in order to examine how Muslim females can understand Jihad in general, how they live and enact Jihad on Facebook, how they embrace the Jihadist recruitment online, in particular, and most importantly how they transfer this role from online to offline reality.

In an attempt to understand how a Muslim woman can be a good wife, Thompson (2011, pp. 427-448) examined the performance of females authorized by Islam in the Swahili wedding ceremonies. The researcher claimed that most of the previous studies had largely focused on some women's activities that were often referred to (by both scholars and Swahili male figures) as non-Islamic or secular. However, the researcher presumed —based on the fact that Islam often plays an important role in its followers' behaviors— that Islam must bring about some knowledge that women should bear in mind during their participation in the wedding rituals. The researcher addressed women's role as sex instructors in modern Swahili marriages. Contextualizing the participants' observations of the existing literature on Swahili puberty rituals, sex education, wedding ceremonies and language ideologies, the researcher found that these rituals has already involved a discursive performance of Islamic knowledge which, in turn, can offer women who acted as instructors a *potential* form of religious authority.

Research Problem, Objectives, and Questions

An overview of the previous studies conducted on the behaviors of Muslims, whether males or females, have already focused on the impact of Islam on its followers. The findings of those studies have also implicated that Islam is rooted deeply among Muslim communities mostly living in the western countries. However, none of these studies (up to my best knowledge) has already examined thoroughly the general features of a good Muslim that the teachings of Islam, derived mainly from the Noble Quran or Prophet Muhammad's sayings, attempt to foster within Muslims, in general and Muslim woman, in particular. Despite this void, there is also a wide inclination among scholars to refer to as well as to accuse Islam as a motor of violence without examining the real reasons that bring about any violent activity.

This small-scale study examines the extent to which the teachings of Islam have already equipped Muslims with some traits that he or she should always show to reveal one's character as Muslim. Therefore, the study aims to quantify the potential but general properties, traits and ideologies meant for any Muslim to show and follow. Then, the study continues to list the specific features that Islam meant for a Muslim woman as a good wife to consider. The study also furthers to navigate the nature of the worlds that the Qur'anic Discourse (henceforth, QD) selects and uses to describe the optimal Muslim wife. Thus, the study addresses the following questions:

1. What are the general features and properties that the QD maintain for a good Muslim?
2. How does the QD manipulate and process these characteristic features in regard to gender?
3. What general features and properties does the QD exclusively sustain for a good Muslim wife?
4. What are the forces lying behind the QD's selection of certain properties to refer to the optimal wife?

Significance and Limitations of the Study

The study counts for some good reasons. It is among the first studies attempting to exploit a religious discourse to reflect on both the pragmatic as well as the stylistic processes the holy Script of Islam employs to argue for specific members. The study is, therefore, expected to contribute to linguistics, in general, and both domains of pragmatics and stylistics, in particular. The study is also supposed to contribute to Arabic language because it deals with some Qur'anic verses sound semi identical at the syntactic level. This symmetry in form and structure (except for a few changes here and there) has encouraged some oriental scholars who study Asian languages and subjects, to suggest that the QD is probably featured by either redundancy or

discrepancy. Thus, the study fits into cross-linguistic, but cognitive studies that benefit from recent denotational theories of language. As the study deals with a debatable topic related to Islam-phobia, it is expected to contribute to sociology of religion, in particular, and geopolitics, in general.

The study will be limited to the holy Script of Islam, i.e. the Noble Qur'an (NQ) for some good reasons. The NQ is the first resource of legislation in Islam. All Muslims, regardless of their sect or creed, agree that the NQ is the first reference in Islam, though some reject other sources next to the NQ. Besides, the NQ is also the most frequent text most Muslims are often exposed to either audio-visually or textually during their daily life. Muslim also recite some verses of the NQ during their daily prayers. Furthermore, there is a full agreement among Arab linguists throughout history that the NQ is characterized by linguistic precision and concision.

Materials and Methods

As shown in the previous section, the present study benefits from the holy Script of Islam. Thus, it utilizes 'corpus linguistics', i.e. large bodies of texts, to collect data exclusively from the NQ (Schmitt, 2002, pp.92-111). To address the questions raised in the study, certain key words in context (KWIC) will be searched. Concordance will include specific words, such as '*al-muslimi:na wa al-muslima:ti, al-mu'mini:na wa al-mu'minati, al-mutasadiqi:na wa al-mutasadi:qa:ti*', and '*al-hafithi:ina furu;jahum wa al-hafithati*', the Arabic for Muslim males and Muslim females, male believers and female believers, and those who keep away from adulterous acts whether males or females. Concordance also includes the term '*azwa:jun*', the Arabic for female couples. It is important to note here that the term 'azwa:jun' (singl. zawjun) meaning 'couples' is not marked for gender. The Arabic for couple is only used to include two mature, capable, and sane people from both sexes united officially in a marriage bond. As most nouns and adjectives in Arabic are marked for gender, concordance also includes indefinite, but marked phrases that refer only to female figures, such as '*muslima:tin, mu'minatin*', and '*abida:tin*' glossed in English as 'any Muslim woman, any faithful woman', and 'any worshipper woman', respectively.

The study also benefits from discourse analysis. As a research method, discourse analysis (DA) conceives life as a continuous discourse. According to Schmitt (2002, pp.55-73), DA studies texts whether spoken or written, whether long or short. It concerns the relationship between texts and contexts in which they arise and operate. Unlike other approaches to linguistics, DA (also known as text linguistics) examines language independently of the notion of the sentence. It typically studies longer passages of texts. Thus. DA considers 'utterances', i.e. sequences of word written or spoken in specific context. In this sense DA is best defined as "DA is the analysis of language in its social context".

Theoretically, the study applies a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to the data collected from the Noble Qur'an. Generally speaking, a CDA approach to discourse analysis – according to Fairclough (2010, p.131), is meant to make the reciprocity between properties of the text and processes of power or ideology relations more visible. This reciprocity is quite foggy or rather blurred to those who interpret the text. The effectiveness of the text, however, depends on this cloudiness. In its essence, CDA is multi-disciplinary (Bloor and Bloor, 2013; Van Dijk, 1998); thus, it should be 'trans-disciplinary' in analysis. This multiple approach can help the analyst attract the dialectical relations between the genre's discourse and other intricate discursive moments, elements, and objects in addition to the discourse internal relations (Fairclough, 2003; 2010). Therefore, CDA is applicable for any research geared towards checking any religious ideologies and self-concepts, as it clearly digs for and systematically delves into the links entrenched, whether intentionally or unintentionally, between language and social practice. From a CDA approach, data analysis should be perceived from an essential, post-structuralist's lens confirming the notion that reads: "There is nothing outside of the text" (Rivkin, 2017, p.511).

Methodologically, the study builds on Van Dijk's 1998 theory of discourse and ideology. Van Dijk (1998, pp. 203-209) displays discourse as a fundamental component of particular ideologies. He refers to some discourse structures that can carry some important functions of our ideology. At the *syntactic* level of the discourse, the subject of one sentence, for instance, mirrors what interlocutors holding certain ideologies want to emphasize. Pronouns, such as 'we' and 'them', also echo some in-group and out of group ideologies. At the *semantic* level, ideological discourses are inclusive in nature. This means that people often express their opinions of certain historical or social events positively, negatively or even neutrally. At the discourse or *schematic* level, people often tend to reflect their ideologies clearly. For example, the selection of certain words in a newspaper title can show the ideology of the journalist who wrote it.

Van Dijk (1998, pp.149-156) argues that discourse analysis should provide some important functions. He lists membership, action, value, belief, relationship with others and resources; our memberships suggest identifying who we are and how we

define ourselves in terms of gender, race, socio-economic class, religion, age, language and culture; our actions highlight what we do in a specific group; our values stress what we like to do most; our beliefs sustain any thought or doctrine we believe in; our relation with others stresses where we have to stand on specific issues; and our realistic and symbolic symbols confirm whether we already possess or just miss them.

Van Dijk (1998, pp.211-228) also points out that the context of discourse plays an important role in understanding the texts. Therefore, analysts should check first the domain, as the conservative ideology for instance, always manifests itself in certain topics, such as 'birth control', sex 'education and life', 'birth and death' but not 'organic food'. Analysts also need to examine the settings, including timing and location, as where and when the discourse is given adds to the context. They should also explore the social, ethnic and economic backgrounds of the discourse writers. Finally, they have to inspect the affiliations related to the discourse writers' potential roles and agendas.

Analysis and Discussion

This section is dived into two section. The first addresses research question (RQ) 1 and RQ 2. The second addresses RQ3 and RQ4. Both RQ1 and RQ2 are respectively geared towards quantifying and qualifying the general features the QD sustains for both sexes in the Muslim communities. RQ3 and RQ4 only evaluate the properties of a good Muslim wife.

Properties of a good Muslim

In one verse, the QD lists ten general characteristic features of a good Muslim from both sexes. They include namely (1) men who submit themselves *to God* and women who submit themselves *to Him*, (2) believing men and believing women, (3) obedient men and obedient women, (4) truthful men and truthful women, (5) men steadfast *in their faith* and steadfast women, (6) men who are humble and women who are humble, (7) men who give alms and women who give alms, (8) men who fast and women who fast, (9) men who guard their chastity and women who guard *their chastity*, and (10) men who remember Allah much and women who remember *Him* (see Quote 1). In the Arabic script, the speech address form is equally endorsed between both sexes throughout the verse. It is, however cut down or rather curtailed for language politeness and linguistic ellipses once the context is related to woman's chastity and voice.

Quote 1: Properties of a Good Muslim

Surely, men who submit themselves *to God* and women who submit themselves *to Him*, and believing men and believing women, and obedient men and obedient women and truthful men and truthful women, and men steadfast *in their faith* and steadfast women, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their chastity and women who guard *their chastity*, and men who remember Allah much and women who remember *Him* — Allah has prepared for *all of* them forgiveness and a great reward.

AL-AHZAB 33:35

On the syntactic level, Quote 1 applies a nominal style in which certain meanings are packaged and endorsed. It also selects and uses the Semitic endorsement element marker 'inna' glossed roughly as 'surely' or 'certainly' in modern English (see Table 1, column 1). This marker often allows for an endorsed argument and predicator to proceed at the syntactic level. Thus, the verse also uses the coordinator 'wa-', glossed as 'and' to add some other plural noun phrases (NPs) all functioning as arguments for the endorsement marker 'inna'. Grammatically, the endorsed arguments are used either internally as a subcategory marked for gender or externally as new fresh category. Once endorsed by 'inna', these NP categories are always marked for accusative case in Arabic. The predicator, i.e. what is said about the argument. In the verse, the predicator is sentential. It applies a verbal style in which one clause is used (see Table 1, column 2). The clause uses another VP as a predicate to argue internally for other arguments including namely (Allah, forgiveness,, a great reward).

On the semantic level, Quote 1 packages certain meanings related to both Muslim men and women. They include namely (*submission to* and *believing in Allah*), (*obedience*, *truthfulness, faithfulness* and *humbleness*), and (*giving alms, fasting, guarding chastity* and *remembering Allah*). These senses are first endorsed, coordinated and conveyed as the potential properties of a good Muslim man and woman. Then, they are selected and used to argue for what ALLAH HAS PREPARED for Muslims having these semantic properties. The verse closes with the predicate HAS PREPARED to argue for the grammatical, unstated subject (Allah), the Prep-P (for them) referring to Muslims characterized by the properties referred to above, and (forgiveness and a great effort). The three-place predicate HAS PREPARED are meant to show who, i.e., for whom and what (see Table 1, Column 2)

Column 1		Column 2		Column 3
Syntactic Level		**Semantic Level**		**Schematic Level**
Language		*Predicates*	*Arguments*	
Elements	*Processes*		Both [1]**submitted** men/women	
inna	Endorsement		Both [2]**believing** men/women	*Certainly* Allah has **PREPARED** *for men and women* who are:
	Nominalization		Both [3]**obedient** men/women	
-i:na / -a:ti	Reflection for gender	ALLAH HAS **PREPARED** FOR ALL OF THEM **FORGEIVENESS** AND A **GREAT REWARD**	Both [4]**truthful** men/women	• **submitted** to Him,
			Both [5]**faithful** men/women	• **believing** in Him, • **obedient**, • **truthful**, • **steadfast in faith**,
wa-	Coordination, listing & sub-listing		Both [6]**humble** men/women	• **humble**, • **giving alms**, • **doing fast**,
			Both men/women who [7]**give alms**	• **Keeping their chastity**, • **and always referring to Allah**
			Both men/women who [8]**fast**	
			Both men/women who [9]**guard their chastity**	**FORGIVENESS** and
			Both men/women who [10]**remember Allah**	a **GREAT REWARD**.
Sentential patterning	Verbalization	HAS **PREPARED**	Allah, for them, forgiveness & a great reward	
Table (1) Realizing the General Features of a Good Muslim from a Qur'anic Perspective				

Affiliations of the good Muslim's properties

On the discourse level, the properties the QD in Quote 1 identifies for any good Muslim man or woman can be contextualized in a verbal style to model the meanings loaded in the NPs selected and used (see Table 1, column 3 and Table 2 column 1). Contextualization has resulted in identifying 10 properties for a good Muslim. Necessarily, a good Muslim:

- submits himself/herself to Allah,
- believes in the existence of Allah,
- obeys Allah's orders,
- tells the truth,
- and tolerates his/her faithfulness.

A good Muslim should also:

- be humble,
- give alms,
- do fasting,
- guard his/her chastity,
- and keep in contact with Allah.

It is important to note here that the process of realizing the meaning satisfied here as a 'necessity' or a 'possibility' is determined by the relevance to either the general principles of faith or these of Islam (Kearns, 2000, pp. 25-58). In this sense, it sounds that the semantic properties assigned for a good Moslem fit into three categories (see Table 2, column 2). The first category, which includes namely 'submission, belief, obedience, truthfulness' and 'faithfulness', affiliates directly with 'Lordship', the first principle of faith itself. The second including 'humbleness, alms giving, fast doing', and 'chastity keeping' relates mainly with the theme of 'worship' (also known as principles of Islam). The third represents the interface between motif of 'Lordship' and 'worship' as it provides or rather recommends strongly keeping a channel between worshippers and their Lord as in the case of saying prayers or supplication.

De-contextualizing the implicated meanings for each property to construe, i.e. help realize, the forces lying behind the selection of these properties, has shown a clear-cut but gradual shift from ontological and deontological to biological needs. Ontology, i.e. the philosophy that explains the purpose of creating the universe, is very clear in the selection of both properties of 'submission to' and 'belief in' Allah. Deontology, i.e. obeying rules, is (surprisingly) opened with 'obedience', and also included the traits of 'faithfulness, truthfulness', and 'humbleness'. Biological needs are met in giving 'alms'. keeping 'chastity' and doing 'fast'. One final trait, 'Referring to Allah', meets the criteria of biological, deontological and ontological needs of both humans and their Creator as it keeps a channel between the various worlds that man experiences (for full details, see Table 2, column 3.

Explanation of the worlds that each property relates to suggests that the QD integrates the various kinds as well as the specific nature of the worlds that a human being might live in. Generally speaking, we live in our own realistic, possible, perfect, spiritual, and maybe virtual worlds nowadays. These worlds do not overlap for a normal being, and each includes some necessities and possibilities. A real world resides in our heads whereas a metaphysical one should (regardless of disagreement between believers and non-believers) dwell in our hearts. A possible world includes any other world that we do not belong to or familiar with in the surroundings or the universe. A perfect world is simply the ethical world in which people are expected to follow certain instructions and obey specific rules. A virtual world is not a real one, though it manifests itself for us as a real one.

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Properties	**Meaning assigned:** Muslims must / should always:	**Affiliations:** The implicated meaning affiliates with:	**Type of the world Addressed:** The implicated meaning addresses mainly the:
Submission	Submit themselves to Allah.	Ontology	Metaphysical world

Belief	Believe in (the existence of) Allah.	Ontology	Metaphysical world
Obedience	Obey Allah's orders.	Deontology	Metaphysical> perfect worlds
Truthfulness	Tell the truth.	Deontology	Perfect> real & possible worlds
Faithfulness	Tolerate their faithfulness.	Deontology	Perfect> real & possible worlds
Humbleness	Be humble.	Deontology	Perfect> real & possible worlds
Alms giving	Give alms.	Biology	Perfect> real & possible worlds
Fasting	Fast.	Biology	Perfect> real & possible worlds
Chastity	Avoid illegal sexual relations.	Biology	Perfect> real & possible worlds
Turning to Allah	Keep in touch with Allah	Biology & De-ontology	Perfect> metaphysical worlds
Table (2) Interpreting the Semantic Features of the Properties identified for Good Muslims			

In Quote 1, there is a clear shift or rather a full linkage between the various types of worlds a Muslim might dwell (see Table 2, column 4). The quote opens with addressing the metaphysical world. This linguistic dominance helps explain the nomenclatures of 'Islam' and 'Iman', the Arabic for 'submission' to and 'faith' in Allah, the only Creator of the universe. Then, the QD moves from the metaphysical world to the perfect one in which a reasonable human being always follows the instructions of the Creator for his own sake. The QD also continues with addressing the perfect world of a good Muslim by stepping into both the real and any possible worlds in which one Muslim might live. Here, it maintains that in a perfect world, good Muslims and believers should (anywhere) show a high degree of truthfulness, faithfulness, humbleness and consideration to themselves and others. This collective outlook of sameness and otherness to one's self and others' clearly manifests itself in the selection of giving alms to the poor, keeping chastity for the sake of the family, and doing fast for personal health. Finally, the QD closes with re-navigating from the Muslim's potential world to the metaphysical one. The words selected and used in Quote 1 denotes a strong linkage between the potential worlds in which Muslims live; they also denote the positive feelings of spirituality or meditation into the metaphysical world.

Properties of a Good Muslim Wife
By the same token, the following sub-sections address the properties of a good Muslim wife, in particular. They attempt to address RQ3 and RQ4: *What general features and properties does the QD exclusively sustain for a good Muslim wife? What are the forces lying behind the QD's selection of certain properties to refer to the optimal wife?*

Quote 2: Properties of an Optimal Muslim Wife

It may be that, if he divorce you, his Lord will give him instead wives better than you — resigned, believing, obedient, always turning to God, devout in worship, given to fasting, *both* widows and virgins.

عَسَىٰ رَبُّهُۥٓ إِن طَلَّقَكُنَّ أَن يُبْدِلَهُۥٓ أَزْوَٰجًا خَيْرًا مِّنكُنَّ مُسْلِمَٰتٍ مُّؤْمِنَٰتٍ قَٰنِتَٰتٍ تَٰٓئِبَٰتٍ عَٰبِدَٰتٍ سَٰٓئِحَٰتٍ ثَيِّبَٰتٍ وَأَبْكَارًا

At-Tahrim 66:5

Quote 2 displays a subjunctive, i.e. an imaginary, case in which Allah warns Muhammad's wives (also known as Believers' Mothers) that if Prophet Muhammad divorced them, only then his Lord would replace instead of them some better wives having specific features (see Quote 2). Syntactically, Quote 2 manifests itself as an imaginary case. Thus, the QD selects the Arabic deficient, i.e. uninflected, VP 'asa:' roughly glossed as 'might be' or 'perhaps… will' in modern English. This VP belongs to a category of deficient verbs including mainly 'la'ala' and 'layta' which are meant to express a strong desire of change towards the best (see Table 4, column 1). The verse also selects and uses the conditional marker 'in' glossed as 'iff' and interpreted as 'if and only if' in modern English. The verse sounds bi-conditional, as it maintains only two true values at the logical level (see L1 & L4 in Table 3). Both values come true, as that of L1 only mirrors the imaginary case whereas L4 reflects the real case. Thus, the verse can be interpreted as "If and *only* if Muhammad divorces his wives, then his Lord will give him some better wives instead' or If Muhammad divorces his wives, only then his Lord will give him better wives instead.

Interpretation of the preposition (p) and the consequence (q)	p	q	p&q
L1 Muhammad divorced his wives, and his Lord give him better wives instead.	T	T	T
L2 Muhammad divorced his wives, but Allah didn't give him better wives.	T	F	F
L3 Muhammad didn't divorce his wives, but Allah gave him better wives.	F	T	F
L4 Muhammad didn't divorce his wives, and Allah didn't give him better wives.	F	F	T
Table (3) Truth Values in Quote 2 as Bi-conditional			

On the syntactic level, QD 2 also selects a verbal style to show how the proposed suggestion will further. It tends to use the inflectional marker '-kunna' to direct speech to the old wives in regard to divorce. As divorce is irreversible, the infinitive marker 'an' is used to head the VP 'yubdilahu' meaning 'He will give him instead' to eliminate the impact of past time (see table 4, column 1). The QD also selects the phrase 'khayran min..' glossed as 'better than' to compare and contrast old and new wives. In Arabic, the NP 'khayer' glossed as 'good' is an evaluative term. This basic, adjectival form can be used as a superlative element if used alone; it can also be used as a comparative form if followed by 'min' glossed as 'than' in modern English. In Arabic, the specifications that come next 'khayran' and 'sharran' meaning 'good' and 'bad' are often realized functionally as 'recognized objects'. That is to say, they are marked with '-an' syntactically to manifest the accusative case, and realized as perfect or imperfect elements.

In listing the properties of the proposed perfect wives, the QD in Quote 2 tends to use euphonies and asyndetic coordination. Euphony is carried out through the use of the Arabic marker '-a:tin'. This inflectional morpheme is used to mark indefinite, feminine, plural NP in Arabic (see Table 4, column1). More frequently, coordination in Standard Arabic (SA) is achieved by 'wa-' glossed as 'and' in English. In general, Arabic tends to coordinate ideas together rather than subordinating them within one another. Thus, it inclines to repeat the coordination marker 'wa-' largely and frequently. Nevertheless, the QD in Quote 2 avoids coordination. Instead, it exceptionally flavors listing without repeating the linking word 'wa-' meaning 'and'. Here, it lists eight items in which the linking word 'wa-' is only inserted once just before the last one. Insertion of the linking word is not, however, intended to break listing. It is meant to both quantify and qualify the item listed. Quantification accelerates the insertion of "wa-'post item No. 8" whereas qualification necessitates this insertion to mirror any difference or variation between the last two items (see Table 4, column 1).

On the semantic level, the QD in Quote 2 opens with the predicate 'ASA:, glossed as MIGHT BE, to argue for both (Lord) and the possessive pronoun (-hu 'his') referring to Prophet Muhammad. As a predicate is often referred to what is said about the subject, this two-place predicate has an exophoric, nonlinguistic reference. That is to say, it is used only to refer to as well as realize the argumentation under discussion as an imaginary case (see the English interpretation for Quote 2). The predicate DIVORCE is also used to argue for (he) referring to Prophet Muhammad and (his wives). This two-place predicate is both constrained by the fictitious idea under discussion and conditioned for the scheduled proposal to come. The predicate GIVE INSTEAD is used to argue for the unstated subject (He) referring to Allah, (him) referring to Prophet Muhammad, and (you) referring to Prophet Muhammad's old wife. This three-place predicate is used not only to show all the parties under discussion but also to introduce the alternatives. BE BETTER THAN is used to argue for (you) referring to Prophet Muhammad's wives and the (them) referring to the proposed wives (for predicates and arguments, see Table 4, column 2).

On the discourse level, Quote 2 suggests that it is very probable that if Muhammad divorced his wives, his Lord would only then compensate him for his loss with some good wives. These wives are best referred to as 'resigned, believing, obedient, always turning to God, devout in worship, given to fasting', both 'widows and virgins' (see Table 4, column 3). It is important to note here that the speech is directed to the old wives on behalf of Prophet Muhammad. This linguistic manipulation suggests that the addresser, i.e. Almighty God, maintains an in-group outlook towards the addressees. This language processing is also in line with the Islamic or rather the Qur'anic general look at the Prophet's wives as 'Mothers of all Believers' in spite of the warning given in the verse.

Column 1		Column 2		Column 3
Syntactic Level		**Semantic Level**		**Schematic Level**
Language		*Predicates*	*Arguments*	It is very PROBABLE that IF and ONLY IF Muhammad divorced you, his Lord would give him instead some better wives than you ⸺having the qualities of being: • **Resigned,** • **Believing,** • **Obedient,** • **Always turning to God,** • **Devout in worship,** • **Both widows,** • **And virgins.**
Elements	*Processes*			
'asa:	Subjunctive marker meaning 'maybe' or 'perhaps will'	MIGHT BE	(Lord, the pronoun referring to Muhammad)	
'in	Condition Bi-conditional stamen	DIVORCE	(he/ Muhammad, you / his wives)	
'an	Infinity	GIVE INSTEAD	(He/His Lord, you/Muhammad's wives)	
Khairay-an min ..	Comparison			
-unna	Plural direct speech			
-tin	Feminine indefinite syntactic marker	BE BETTER THAN	(from you , new ones ⸺'distinguished as:' Resigned Believing, Obedient, Always turning to God, Devout in worship, Given to fasting, Both Widows and virgins	
wa-	Concision asyndetic marker			
Pattering	Verbalization			
Table (4) Realizing the General Features of a Good Muslim Wife from a Qur'anic Perspective				

Properties of a Good Muslim Woman

In Quote 2, the QD proposes eight properties for an optimal Muslim wife. Regardless, of the English interpretation provided for Quote 2, the QD literally selects and uses the Arabic terms for total 'submission, faith, obedience, reference to Providence, devotion in worship, travelling for pleasure, widowhood' and 'virginity' (see Table 5, column 1). To interpret the meaning conveyed for each linguistic term used, contextualization of the properties selected has shown that the QD opens with the Arabic term for *submission* to satisfy —according to: www.merriam-webester.com, certain meanings related to "yielding oneself to the authority, power or will of another". Submission also entails "resigning or giving up oneself over without resistance". It may also involve "accepting something as inevitable. If these meanings are likely, then the QD in Quote 2 encourages the Muslim woman to accept peacefully herself as a woman (see Table 5, column 2). De-contextualization of the meaning assigned suggests that the potential submission affiliates with ontological factors related to the notion of creating woman as a female (see Table 5, column 3). Explanation of the forces lying behind this Qur'anic selection suggests that a good Muslim woman accepts the Creator's will when he has created her as a female (see Table 5, column 4).

In Quote 2, the QD advances to select and use the Arabic term for *faith.* According to: www.merriam-webester.com, faith means "allegiance to duty or a person. Thus, faith entails loyalty, fidelity to one's promises and sincerity of intentions". It can also mean "belief and trust in and loyalty to God and the traditional doctrines of a religion". In the Quote, the meaning assigned in the Arabic phrase for 'believing women' must convey a full trust in God in regard to not only the causes but also the effects of creating them as females (see Table 5, column 2). This cause-effect process of creation notionally affiliates with the ontological philosophy of Islam which maintains creating both sexes from one another for the purpose of mating, peacefulness of mind, love, and mercifulness (see Table 5, column 3). Variation in both sexes triggers new or different social roles for women to play. In short, good believing women is expected to trust the maternal roles governed by the divine rules (see Table 5, column 4).

In Quote 2, the QD also selects 'qanita:tin', the Arabic term for *obedience* to refer to a good Muslim woman. In general, the QD generally uses the terms 'ata'a' and 'qanata' both meaning 'He obeyed' interchangeably and stylistically. The former is used to obey Allah, his messenger, and leaders. The latter is selected when addressing women or Allah in a prayer. According to: www.dictionary.com, obedience, however, "implies compliance with the demands or requests of one in authority". It also suggests *amenability* which implies "a willingness to yield or cooperate because of a desire to be agreeable or because of a natural open-mindedness" (see Table 5, column 1). De-ontologically, the term affiliates with yielding to the demanding of someone in authority, though it connotes the positive feelings of flexibility, conformity or harmony (see Table 5, column 2). The interpretation suggests that the QD selects the term 'qanita:tin' to confirm not only a full correspondence between couples building their own families but also a good distribution of the social responsibilities to be given to each partner, especially that of leadership. This social engineering is in concord with the theme of *guardianship* in Islam (also known as minor leadership) which is kept elsewhere in favor of Muslim male figures for some pure fiscal and physical reasons (see Table 5, column 4).

The QD also selects the term 'ta'iba:tin' glossed as 'repentant women'. *Repentance* is an expressive act in which someone shows feelings of "regret for something said or done" (www.dictionary.com). In Islam, experiencing repentance necessitates referring directly to Almighty God, expressing humble or regretful sorrow for sins or offenses, promising Him and one's self not do faults and finally asking forgiveness. However, the selection of this property has already shifted the function of speech from referential and directive ones (as in resigned and believing, and obedient, respectively) to more expressive one. This change has resulted in shifting affiliations of the properties from a deontological one attempting to address the perfect world in which rules should be followed to more ontological, i.e. spiritual one (see Table 5, column 2 and 3). Thus, the property selected and used suggests a good Muslim wife always turns to her Lord to atone for her mistakes and to ask forgiveness (see Table 5, column 4). It is important to note here that repentance in Islam is often carried out through an individual but direct journey which triggers a full linkage between real and metaphysical world.

The QD also selects the term 'abida:tin' roughly glossed as 'devoted to worship'. According to: www.merriam-webester.com, *devotion* refers to the "the act of dedicating something to a cause, enterprise, or activity". It also entails "giving over or directing time, money, and effort to a cause, enterprise, or activity". In Islam, *worship* as an act is "a form of religious practice with its creed and ritual". It includes mainly a five-time daily prayer, a one-month yearly fasting, a two-and-a-half percentage of zakat and alms yearly and in Ramadan, and two-week visit of Mecca once in Life. Each of which has its rituals and events, but all redirects the proxemics, i.e. nature, degree, and amount, of time, place and physical effort (see Table 5, column 3). The use of this property suggests that the QD implicitly redirects women to concern not only the main Principles of Islam but also these of Worship, which affiliate with all aspects of Muslims' life including time, place, money and effort (see Table 5, column 4).

The QD also selects the Arabic term 'sa'iha:tin' roughly glossed as 'touring women'. In general, a *tour* —according to: www.merriam-webster.com, is a "round or journey for business, pleasure, or education often involving a series of stops and ending at the starting point". Thus, tourism is the practice of *traveling* for recreation and entertainment. Elsewhere, the QD uses the root 'sa:ha' to direct people to 'spread or travel' on earth, for instance. In relevance to the use under discussion, there is a good agreement between the first linguists who interpreted the various meanings of the Noble Qur'an that the term must negotiate the worship of *fasting* only and exceptionally. Based on the Holy Saying that reads "All the worships are people's except fasting; it mine..". Interpreters have concluded that the Arabic term 'sa'hitan' must also exclude for Muslim women who do fasting (see Table 5, column 2). Whether the term is used exclusively to refer to 'fasting' or inclusively to refer to the other 'worships', it connotes the positive feelings of pleasure obtained from that spiritual travel (see Table 5, column 3). It also sustains a spiritual rapport between the physical world of the Creator and the real world of Muslim women (see Table 5, column 4).

Column 1		Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
PROPERTIES		**Meaning assigned: T**he proposed wives must /might be:	**Affiliations:** The implicated meaning affiliates with:	**Explanations of the senses conveyed in the properties used:** Good Muslim women must strongly believe in:
Resigned		Resigned to (X)	Deontology	(X) the concept of creating them as a **female**, so they **accept being females.**
Believing		Believing in (X)	Deontology	(X) the role that they could play as **women**, so they **trust their maternal roles.**
Obedient		Obedient to (Y)	Deontology	(Y) the idea of obeying their husbands as **a wives,** so they **obey their husbands.**
Always turning to Allah		Referring to (Z)	Ontology	(Z) the notion of being good **Muslim women,** so they always **turn to Allah** to ask forgiveness for their faults, to **worship Him**, and to **tour the spiritual world** for pleasure.
Devout in worship		Worshipping (Z)	Ontology	
Given to fasting		Touring the metaphysical world of (Z),	Ontology	
Both…	**Widows**	Experience (A) before.	Biology	(A) the probability of being **a good Muslim wife many times or just once.**
And	**Virgins**	Not experience (A) before .	Biology	
Table (5) Interpreting the Semantic Features of the Properties identified for Good Muslim Wives				

The QD closes with the biological, i.e. physical, world of Muslim women. Here, it first selects the Arabic term for women who got married before. Actually, Arabic uses the term 'armalah' to refer to a woman who lost her husband because of death. It also uses the term 'thayyeb' to refer to a woman who experienced marriage before but got divorced. Then, it selects the Arabic for 'virgins' who have not experienced marriage before (see Table 5, column 2). On the discourse level, the QD minds 'widows' first. This processing, however, shows a good degree of linguistic tactfulness. It also reflects a high degree of communal care in favor of the woman who has already faced some social difficulties and might have encountered some psychological problems

before. The linguistic manipulation itself fits into the sociology of Islam attempting to mobilize, moralize and reform some social norms, normalized and established against Arab women experienced marriage before. In this sense, the QD rehabilitates them as optimal Muslim women (see Table 5, column 4).

Proximity of the Properties Identified for Both Sexes and Muslim Women
A juxtaposition of the properties assigned for both sexes in Quote 1 and those assigned only for the Muslim woman in Quote 2 has revealed that semantic features of the first three Qur'anic properties are symmetrical in form but not in focus. For Muslim both sexes, 'submission' is intended for Allah as Creator whereas the denotation of Arabic for 'submission' is meant to convey Allah's well for creating woman as a different sex. Similarly, the denotations of 'believing' is geared towards the existence of one Creator for all the sexes while it denotes Allah's wisdom in creating women to play different roles. For both (and probably all sexes), 'obedience' is meant only for Allah; However, women's 'obedience' is also meant (inclusively and de-ontologically) for their husbands (for these interpretations, see Table 6 for items 1, 2 & 3 depicted in Columns A and B).

Proximity of the properties presented in both quotes has also revealed that the characteristic features of 'truthfulness', 'faithfulness' and 'humbleness' assigned for both sexes have been excluded for good Muslim women (see Table 6, Column A, items 4,5 and 6). One explanation for the exclusive deletion in addressing women is the focus and coverage. For both sexes, all of these properties are meant to address Lordship which is met not only explicitly in urging women to accept Allah's will and wisdom but also implicitly in directing them to 'worship' Him. Besides, both properties of 'alms giving' and 'fast doing' assigned for both Muslim sexes are integrated in that of 'worship' assigned only for good Muslim women (see Table 6, items 7 & 8 in column A and item 5 in column B). The property of 'fast doing' assigned only for Muslim women is excluded due to the fact that the doing 'fast' is third worship in Islam. As the QD uses the Arabic term 'touring women', to follow that of 'worshiping women', it is very probable that it indicates for the pleasure obtained by women when going on a tour of worship, such as saying prayers, doing fast or giving alms (see Table 6, item 6, column B).

Bringing the properties of 'guarding chastity' assigned for both sexes and those of 'both widows and virgins' together suggests the QD necessarily minds virtuousness (see Table 6, item 9 displayed in column A and items 7 & 8 displayed in column B). However, paraphrasing when speaking about women in regard to marriage is intended to help manifest virtuous monogamy, i.e. marriage with only one male person at a time. Central to the Islamic doctrine is polygamy only for men. Finally, the property of 'turning to Allah' is kept for both sexes (see Table 6, item 10 in column A and item 4 in column B).

	Column A			Column B	
	Properties *Both sexes are:*	*Properties address*		*Properties of a good Muslim women*	*Properties address*
1	Submitted to	Allah as a Creator	1	Resigned to	Allah's will for creating them females
2	Believing in	The existence of Allah as a wise Creator for all sexes	2	Believing in	Allah's wisdom of creating them for different roles to play as wives
3	Obedient to	Allah's orders	3	Obedient to	Their husbands
4	Truthful with	Allah	4	Always turning to	Allah for their own sake
5	Faithful to	Allah	5	Devout in worship to	Allah
6	Humble for	The sake of Allah	6	Given to fasting	For their own pleasure
7	Giving alms for	The sake of the poor	7	Widows as .. according to..	As they experienced marriage before or lost their

					partners in correspondence to Allah's well and wisdom
8	Doing fast for	The sake of Allah	8	Virgins as .. according to..	They haven't married before according to Allah's will
9	Guarding chastity for	The sake of themselves	**Notes:**		
10	Turning to Him	For the sake of themselves			

Notes:

1) Properties1, 2 and 3 in both columns are symmetrical with minor change in the focus.
2) Properties 4, 5, and 6 in column 1 are excluded in column 2.
3) Properties 7 and 8 in column 1 are included in 5 and 6 in column 2.
4) Property 9 in column 1 is implicitly negotiated in 7 and 8 in column 2.
5) Property 10 in column 1 is conveyed well in property 5 in column 2.

Table (6) Juxtaposition of the Qur'anic Properties Identified for Both Sexes and for Good Muslim Women

Conclusion and Implications

To conclude, a critical discourses analysis (CDA) approach to the general properties assigned for a good Muslim man and woman has resulted in identifying (10) rhetorical features. The description of the syntactic features of a good Muslim listed exclusively in one Qur'anic verse has revealed the tendency to use some linguistic processes including mainly endorsement, coordination and style shifting when certain meanings related to the themes of mainly 'submission, belief, obedience, truthfulness, faithfulness, humbleness, personal and other considerations' and 'Providence' in the process of producing meaning. The interpretation of the implicated meanings (also known as contextualization) has also shown that these senses can be consumed as ontological, deontological and biological needs for a good Muslim. Surprisingly, there is a gradual shift from ontological to deontological and physical needs. And there is a final recursive or rather integrative switch attempting to relate all the needs together. To explain the factors lying behind this Qur'anic selection, de-contextualization of the needs has clearly shown that these needs are oriented, inspired and regulated by spiritual, material and ethical proclivities. Among these, the metaphysical, i.e. spiritual, factors look less frequent, though dominant and successive. The ethical factors sound very frequent and inclusive, as they reflect on the various challenges in the real as well as the possible worlds of Muslims. Thus, they attempt to introduce a perfect Muslim.

A CDA approach to the Qur'anic properties assigned for good Muslim women, in particular, has revealed in identifying (8) properties. Syntactically, the properties are introduced in a quantified and well-qualified list. Pragmatically, it has been concluded that the QD ethically urges a good Muslim woman to accept the notion of both sexes, believe in the potential, maternal roles she could play as a mother, and obey her partner as a wife. The rhetorical features of the words used sound deontological, as they attempt to make the woman follow rules. They also have informative and directive speech functions. Moreover, it has also been found that the QD also shifts to recommend a Muslim woman to keep referring to her Creator, advocate to worship and enjoy her worship. Therefore, it has been concluded that QD strongly relates between the real world of the woman and the spiritual one. This linkage manifests itself in utilizing the proxemics of time, place, money and effort negotiated in the notion of various worships in Islam. Finally, the QD shifts to address the biological world of woman. It has been found that the QD on the linguistic level processes widowhood before singlehood. Therefore, it has been concluded that linguistic tactfulness fits into the sociology of Islam which minds not only criticizing but repairing the social norms ranking the woman who has experienced marriage before less.

Finally, nearness of the properties assigned for both sexes and those kept only for a Muslim women in both quotes referred to in this study has already revealed that the QD reinforces certain themes related to sexism, i.e. the creation of woman as a different sex, coupling and matrimony, spirituality and pleasure, and widowhood and singlehood. It has been concluded that

these motifs are in line with the general principles of Islam or rather the Qur'anic arguments explaining the forces lying behind creating Adam and Eve to both worship the Creator and build the universe. The characteristic features of the perfect Muslim wife sound de-ontologically directive, as they are intended for a woman to accept herself as a female, a wife, a different role-player as a mother, and a happy worshipper. Fluctuation between earthly roles and divine rules and expectations is intended to show the perfect world a good Muslim woman can dwell.

To imply for researcher and pedagogy, specialists in sociology of religion can check the impact of these features on modern Muslim woman living in various communities and families. It is expected that these properties are part of the schemata of a Muslim woman. They can manifest themselves as deep thoughts regardless of the geographical, geopolitical and even social impacts. A comparison of some Muslim women living in committed families and uncommitted families would shed some light on the ideologies reside deeply in a good Muslim woman's head. Describing and interpreting these thoughts will enable the researchers to have a full understanding of these ideological proclivities and needs. Explaining these tendencies would enable the analysts construe the forces, whether spiritual or social, lying behind women's selection and choice.

Educational-policy makers and politicians in foreign communities where Muslim women live for one reason or another, should reconsider what is termed as Islam-phobia and Islamic terrorism. A good Muslim woman is essentially equipped with some deep divine ideologies that often manifest themselves as proclivities and behaviors centralized around feminism, monogamy, matrimony, tranquility or peacefulness of mind, and other-worldly or spiritual tourism. Perceiving the denotations as well as the connotations of these properties would notionally help people develop a way of understanding the socio-cultural values and roles that a Muslim woman and any woman could play in the various human civilizations. Specialists in finance and economy should examine the role that a good Muslim woman plays in the domains of investment in human resources (HR). Sociologists should also investigate the role a good Muslim woman plays in building functional families. Sociolinguists can also check the impact of Muslim woman on language change, politeness and interaction.

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