

ISTANBUL BILGI UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE PROGRAMS
CULTURAL STUDIES MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

**AN ANALYSIS OF ISLAMIC HOLY SCRIPTURES IN TERMS OF
PATRIARCHY**

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ISTANBUL

2020

AN ANALYSIS OF ISLAMIC HOLY SCRIPTURES IN TERMS OF PATRIARCHY

İSLAMIN KUTSAL METİNLERİNİN ATAERKİLLİK YÖNÜNDEN ANALİZİ

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Tezin Onaylandığı Tarih :18/12/2020.....

Toplam Sayfa Sayısı:265.....

Anahtar Kelimeler (Türkçe)

- 1) Ataerkillik
- 2) Analiz
- 3) Kuran
- 4) Kronoloji
- 5) Ayet

Anahtar Kelimeler (İngilizce)

- 1) Patriarchy
- 2) Analysis
- 3) Qur'an
- 4) Chronology
- 5) Verse

Acknowledgements:

Firstly, I am grateful to **Istanbul Bilgi University** for fostering an environment of free thinking in which I could complete my master's thesis. I also thank Istanbul Bilgi University's Social Sciences Institute for their rich, enlightening and dogma-breaking master's programmes.

I could not be more thankful to my supervisor, an exemplary scientist with her patience and eminent scientific approach, Bogazici University's estimable faculty member **Professor Dr. Hayat Kabasakal**, for her contributions and counsel during every stage of this thesis.

I am indebted to Bilgi University's **Doç. Dr. Serhan Ada**, whose assistance in evaluating my thesis by agreeing to join the judging panel I can never forget, for his encouragement and support in my joining this programme;

to Bilgi University's **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zeynep Talay Turner**, who at all times humanely and lovingly supports all her students and enables this programme to be run perfectly, for joining the judging panel and all her assistance;

to Bilgi University's **Prof. Dr. Arus Yumul** for her help in methodology for which I will always be grateful.

I would also like to thank the entire Cultural Studies faculty, all of whom are invaluable and uncompromisingly and exemplarily scientific, and the Institute Director **Dr. Deniz Kantur** and the Executive Assistant **Dilay Muran** for enabling us to sidestep bureaucracy with their patient and selfless work.

Lastly, I am grateful for my darling wife Hidayet, my daughter Yasemin and my son Emre for their unsparing support, patience and help throughout the whole programme.

Mustafa Serdar Erkan

Istanbul 29.10.2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
ABSTRACT.....	ix
ÖZET.....	x
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 1.....	5
PATRIARCHY.....	5
1.1. THE DEFINITION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PATRIARCHY.....	5
1.2. GERDA LERNER'S SUMMARY OF PATRIARCHY.....	9
1.3. SYLVIA WALBY'S SIX MAIN PATRIARCHAL STRUCTURES.....	13
1.4. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FEMININE AND MASCULINE SOCIETIES.....	16
CHAPTER 2.....	21
PRE-ISLAMIC PERIOD.....	21
2.1. FEMALE GODDESSES.....	21
2.2. STORY OF HAGAR.....	27
2.3. FEMALE INFANTICIDES.....	31

2.4. MATRILINEAL AND PATRILINEAL SYSTEMS.....	32
CHAPTER 3.....	42
DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO PATRIARCHY IN THE QUR'AN.....	42
CHAPTER 4.....	48
THE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF THE VERSES IN THE QUR'AN.....	48
CHAPTER 5.....	54
METHODOLOGY.....	54
CHAPTER 6.....	59
FINDINGS.....	59
6.1. CONTENT ANALYSIS.....	59
6.1.1. Content Analyses of the Verses during the Mecca Period in Chronological Order.....	59
6.1.2. Content Analyses of the Verses during the Medina Period in Chronological Order.....	94
6.1.3. Summary of Content Analyses.....	135
6.2. DATA ANALYSIS.....	138
6.2.1. Creation.....	138
6.2.2. Male and Female Behavior Patterns and superiority.....	146

6.2.3. Marriage and Family.....	169
6.2.4. Concubinage.....	184
6.2.5. Divorce.....	191
6.2.6. Polygamy.....	201
6.2.7. Women’s veiling.....	209
6.2.8. Adultery.....	224
6.2.9. Testimony.....	231
6.2.10. Inheritance.....	235
7. SUMMARY OF PATRIARCHY IN THE QUR'AN.....	239
CONCLUSION.....	250
REFERENCES.....	256

LIST OF THE TABLES

Table 1. Differences between Feminine and Masculine Societies	15
Table 2. The difference between matrilineal and patrilineal systems	32
Table 3. The categorization of the Mecca verses in chronological order according to content analysis	86
Table 4. The categorization of Medina surahs/verses in chronological order according to content analysis	126

ABSTRACT

In this thesis, after the definition, structure and foundations of patriarchy were explained according to various sources, the patriarchal nature of the Qur'an was investigated with the help of a content analyses by reading the Qur'anic verses revealed in Mecca and Medina, and whether this patriarchy gradually and systematically changes according to the chronological revelation order of the verses was examined.

Whether Islam at its core is a masculine religion is a controversial subject with differing views. As there are those who argue that Islam is an egalitarian religion that liberates women, there are also those who claim it to be a patriarchal religion which considers women to be second-class compared to men. According to the latter view, men are deemed superior to women in Islam and are given the right to rule over them, leaving women with the duties of giving birth and obeying men. Proponents of both views base their claims on the Qur'an itself.

By examining these different views, I tried to reach a conclusion in the second part of thesis about the structure of patriarchy in the Qur'an by analyzing the Qur'anic verses qualitatively on certain issues such as creation, male and female behavioral patterns, marriage, divorce, concubinage, polygamy, veiling of women, testimony, and inheritance by tracing the social events that might affect the formation of patriarchy.

ÖZET

Bu tezde, ilk bölümde ataerkilliğin tanımı, yapısı ve oturduğu temeller çeşitli kaynaklar eşliğinde açıklandıktan sonra, Mekke ve Medine’de inen ayet okumaları ve analizleri üzerinden Kuran’ın ataerkil niteliği kantitatif yönden araştırılmış ve bu ataerkilliğin ayetlerin kronolojik iniş sırasına göre sistematik olarak değişip değişmediği incelenmiştir.

İslam’ın özünde ataerkil bir din olup olmadığı tartışmalıdır. İslam’ın kadınları özgürleştiren, eşitlikçi bir din olduğunu iddia edenler olduğu gibi, kadınları erkeklere göre ikinci sınıf olarak gören ataerkil bir din olduğunu savunanlar da vardır. Bu ikinci görüştekilere göre erkekler İslam’da kadınlardan üstün kabul edilir ve kadınların sadece çocuk doğurma ve erkeklere itaat etme görevleri vardır. Erkeklere ise kadınları yönetme hakkı verilmiştir. Her iki görüşü savunanlar da iddialarını Kuran’a dayandırmaktadır.

İkinci bölümde ise bu farklı görüşler incelenerek Kuran ayetleri ataerkillik yönünden, yaratılış, erkek ve kadın davranış kalıpları, evlilik, boşanma, cariyelik, çok eşlilik, kadınların örtünme zorunluluğu, tanıklık ve miras gibi konularda kalitatif yönden analiz edilmiş ve bu ataerkilliğin oluşumunu etkileyen sosyal olayların izi sürülerek Kuran’daki ataerkil yapı hakkında bir sonuca ulaşılmaya çalışılmıştır

INTRODUCTION

Religions have functioned throughout human history to inspire and justify various actions. The power of religion remains strong at the dawn of the 21st century. Understanding the complex religious influences is a critical dimension of understanding modern human relations in local and global arenas.

It is important to make a distinction between the claims of certain religious expressions and devotional beliefs and the study of various beliefs and practices. It is also important to point out how internally diverse religions are, how they have evolved and changed as living traditions, and how they shape and are shaped by the historical and cultural context of adherence. It is also necessary to understand religions and religious influences in context and inextricably intertwined with all dimensions of human experience. The rich and diverse dimensions of religion should be explored through expressions of its holy scriptures. Scriptures might mean different things within and among different religious traditions and include, but not limited to, texts.

Religions are collections of ideas, practices, values, and stories embedded in cultures and are not isolated in a discrete private or separate sphere. In this sense, religion and culture are inseparable. Therefore, religion cannot be understood in isolation from its cultural context.

Religious claims based on cultural studies are not different from other forms of interpretation in that they arise from specific contexts that represent certain assumptions as opposed to absolute, universal and ahistorical truths. Furthermore, normative cultural assumptions about gender roles and sex, especially in a social and historical context, are always shaped by various religious approaches and influences.

The cultural studies approach assumes that each source of information is rooted in a specific context. The historical and cultural place in which this

information is created shapes this perspective. The cultural studies approach acknowledges how fluid and structured, and therefore malleable, cultures themselves are. This method also assumes that all knowledge claims arise from specific social and historical contexts and therefore represent particular claims rather than being universal one.¹

This applies to the texts and materials studied, the scientific translators of these materials and all researchers regardless of their positions. It can be stated for the method of cultural studies that they are the interpretations of all forms of inquiry filtered by certain lenses.²

I will focus on the multi and interdisciplinary cultural studies approach in this thesis that introduces religious frameworks to understand issues related to womanhood/manhood in the Qur'an. My aim on this subject is to analyze if a deep-rooted patriarchy found ground in the Qur'an.

In this study, following a general definition of patriarchy, the grounds on which it resides will be described. Following that, the structures that have made up patriarchy as a social system will be explained. Finally, how women are exploited in a patriarchal system will be shown.³

The pre-Islamic period will be examined under a separate title. The role of Hagar in the founding mythology of Islam will be examined.⁴ The origins of the female goddesses worshiped in the Arabian Peninsula during this period, and their importance for the people of the region will be analyzed⁵. The reasons given in the Qur'an for the destruction of these goddesses will be explored, and the relationship between patriarchy and their replacement with an omnipotent god will be highlighted.

¹ HarvardX HDS3221. *Religious Literacy: Traditions and Scriptures*, Methodological Assumptions

² Ibid

³ Sylvia Walby, "Theorizing Patriarchy" *Sociology*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (May 1989), 213-234

⁴ Fethi Benslama, *Psycoanalyses and Challenge of Islam* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 103

⁵ Fetna Ayt Sabbah, *İslamın Bilinçaltında Kadın* (Istanbul: Ayrıntı yayınları, 1995) 140-144

The characteristics of matrilineal and matrilocal structures seen in this period will be explained, and the reasons why they have been replaced by patrilineal and patrilocal structures will be discussed through examples.

Furthermore, the authors who approach this issue differently will be mentioned; and the opinions of the those who claim that the Qur'an is egalitarian^{6,7,8} as well as those who argue that the Qur'an suppresses and restricts women^{9,10,11,12} will be provided.

As cultural studies method assumes that all knowledge claims arise from specific social and historical context, the theoretical and historical background of the chronological revelation order of the verses in the Qur'an will be examined under a separate title with the support of the literature.¹³

Examining male dominance and its sociological, psychological, and theological causes throughout the history of Islam is a very comprehensive study and exceeds the scope of this thesis. Therefore, in order to narrow down and contain the subject matter of the thesis within reasonable limits, the verses related to manhood/womanhood will be examined by revising only the Qur'an in a chronological order. The first objective is to investigate patriarchy in the Qur'an by subjecting the relevant verses to a content analysis and revising them. The second objective is to understand how the structure of the patriarchy in the Qur'an changed during the period following the migration of Muhammad and his followers

⁶Amina Wadud, *Quran and Woman* (Canada: Oxford University Press, 1999), 1-3

⁷ Asma Barlas, *Believing Women in Islam* (London: University of Texas Press,2019), 1-10

⁸ Elizabeth S. Leo, "Islamic Female Sexuality and Gender in Modern Feminist Interpretation", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, April 2011:132

⁹Fatma Mernissi, *Peçenin ötesi* (Istanbul: Yayınevi Yayıncılık, 1995)43,94

¹⁰ Nawal El Saadawi, "Woman and Islam", *Women's studies Int. Forum*, Vol. 5, No.2, 1982:193-206

¹¹ Kecia Ali, *Sexual Ethics and Islam: Feminist Reflections on Qur'an, Hadith and Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications,2006),240

¹² Aysha Hidayatullah, "Claims to the Sacred" *Journal of feminist studies in Religion*, Vol.32 No.2,2016, 136,152

¹³ Montgomery Watt, *Kur'an'a giriş*, (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları,2006), 130-135

from Mecca to Medina. In addition, the verses before and after this migration will be compared to each other to investigate whether the verses revealed in Medina served to the institutionalization of patriarchy.

When investigating the institutionalization of patriarchy, external factors such as the social events of the period will be examined as well since the Qur'an verses were often revealed as a response to a given situation that the Muslim community was experiencing at the time. The relationship between the revelation of the verses promoting patriarchy and the actual institutionalization of patriarchy will be discussed.

The establishment of patriarchy in the Qur'an will be traced along the chronological order of the verses revealed during the Medina period according to subjects such as creation, male and female behavioral patterns and superiority of men, marriage, divorce, concubinage, polygamy, veiling of women, testimony, and inheritance. These topics will be examined through qualitative data analyses under separate sections. The social, economic, psychological, and religious external factors that acted as the causes behind this patriarchal structure will be investigated.

Findings will be summarized, and the patriarchal structure of the Qur'an will be examined in a separate section. Women's status will be explored by tracing the factors that constitute it. By providing some examples from the verses explained in detail, the paper will try to reveal how patriarchy finds ground in the Qur'an.

CHAPTER 1

PATRIARCHY

1.1. THE DEFINITION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PATRIARCHY

The question of who created life is the basis of all religious belief systems. Creation involves both creating something out of nothing and then perpetuating the lineage. According to the first religious explanations of the power of creation during the Paleolithic era, this power belonged to the Mother Goddess, who was the principle of universal fertility.¹⁴ Life was created by the Mother Goddess, and by the woman who embodied her, in the hunting/gathering societies. Cave paintings and sculptures from that period show a deep reverence for the Mother Goddess. In those societies, women were equal to men. Later, during the Neolithic era, when the male-dominated form of agriculture replaced horticulture, and with increasing militarism, the transition to the omnipotent male storm god took place. Over time, this storm god transformed into a male Creator God. Thereby, the power of creation and fertility was transferred from goddesses to one god who holds all power.

However, according to Saime Tuğrul, female earth goddesses actually emerged in the Neolithic period as the cultivation of the earth evoked fertility. The existence of these goddesses was not the result of women's power, but the glorification of plentifulness and fertility.¹⁵ A relationship was established between women's womb/motherhood and the earth. This is also a metaphorical relationship between germination and the growing of seeds planted in the soil, and the fertility capacity of a mother and the growing of a child. This in turn led to a connection between the earth and female goddesses. As a matter of fact, in many creation myths, the earth is symbolized by female goddesses. In Greek mythology, Gaia is the goddess of the earth, and in Anatolia, Kybele is the goddess of fertility. Many

¹⁴ Fatmagül Berktaş, *Tek Tanrılı dinler karşısında kadın* (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 1995), 35-36

¹⁵ Saime Tuğrul, *Ebedi Kutsal Ezeli Kurban*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları: 2010) 55,56

societies during this period had myths in which the image of the world was related to the womb. For example, the ritual of burying the dead led to the emergence of tombs resembling the womb. Within the same framework, male priests would sacrifice their genitals for goddesses who still held metaphysical power. The circumcision ritual is a remnant of such a ceremony. Through such rituals, male priests would have the privilege of coalescing with the goddesses.¹⁶

Moreover, ancient cultural studies show the supremacy and high status of goddess figures in Mesopotamia, Elam, Egypt, and Crete, as well as among the Phoenicians.¹⁷

The development of plow agriculture in the fourth and third millennium BC and the emergence of male power that developed with it led to significant changes in kinship and gender relations. Kinship arrangements began to shift towards paternity as the concept of private property developed. The development of physical labor-based plow farming in many parts of the world has resulted in increasing subordination of women.¹⁸ Plow farming made it easier for men to control resources and women. As men plowed their land with more and more resources, they established an inheritance system that allowed their land and other property to pass on to the next generation. Within this patriarchal heritage system, men began to control women's sexual acts more so that properties could be inherited by their own children.¹⁹ In this way, women's access to resources has decreased over generations.

With the introduction of weapons, a new social order came into being. The growth of mixed urban societies and the increasing importance of military competitiveness further consolidated male domination, and thus began gender discrimination. Men who seized power at the end of this discriminatory period

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*, (London: Yale University Press, 1992), 12

¹⁸ Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (Newyork; Oxford University Press, 1986) 49-51

¹⁹ Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Tarihte Toplumsal Cinsiyet*, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2020), 30,31

dominated the world, which then led to intertribal exchanging of women and their gradual objectification.²⁰ While the concept and image of mother began to represent love and inner environment, the concept of father became the representative of the outside world and killing. Women, who were stripped of their religious power, could no longer preside over religious ceremonies or participate in wars. Men who seized power and gained more and more experience in the act of killing outperformed women. It is believed that women's reduction to this secondary status was simultaneous with the emergence of city-states.²¹

This transition was from the vulva of the goddess to the seed of man, and from sacred marriages to biblical covenants.²² There was a change in the concept of creation in religious thought. The mysterious power of female fertility, which had long represented the feminine principle, and which had previously been considered to be the creator of all life and worshiped as the source of life, now left its place to an act of conscious creation. This element of consciousness, which would find its expression in the name of what would be created, reflected the change conceived in human consciousness by the radical transformations that took place in society. In terms of the development of patriarchal gender signs, it could be said that the symbolization of the ability to create that is reflected in the concept of naming has led to moving away from the Mother Goddess as a creative feminine principle.²³ With the development of monotheism, women were excluded from the creation of symbol systems all together.

However, based on the archaeological works of Johann Bachofen, matriarchal and egalitarian societies did exist before men took power. He stated that matriarchal order belonged to a cultural period prior to patriarchy and was mostly observed among the Pre-Greek tribes. According to him, hunter-gatherer societies were less

²⁰ Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, 212

²¹ Fatmagül Berktaş, *Tek Tanrılı dinler karşısında kadın*, 37

²² Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, 146

²³ Ibid

hierarchical; and it was agriculture that created the patriarchal order.²⁴ Based on the works of Bachofen, Frederick Engels argued that the historical defeat of the female sex in the world was an event that resulted from the development of private property.²⁵ According to Engels, the development of animal husbandry led to trade activities and male ownership of herds. The surpluses from the herd trade were captured by men and turned into private property. Men who wanted this private property to pass on to their successors institutionalized the monogamist concept of family. Men who controlled the sexuality of women through pre-marital virginity guaranteed the legitimacy of their offspring. Men also took the command at home. Women were humiliated and brought down to slavery; they became slaves of men's lust and were turned into mere vehicles for birthing their children.

Gerda Lerner concluded that during the agricultural revolution, the exploitation of human labor and the sexual exploitation of women became inevitably linked.²⁶

The structuralist anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss claimed that women's exchange was the first form of commerce in which women were turned into a commodity and were objectified. According to him, the starting point of women's obedience resulted from the act of exchanging women. The exchange of women took many different forms, including the forced removal of women from their tribe, deflowering, rape or bargained marriages. Levi-Strauss accepted that incest taboo was the mechanism behind the exchange of women and saw it as a positive and necessary step for carrying human culture forward.²⁷

With the decrease of women's roles in food production, their status also declined, and women began to be deemed as second class. However, this decline did

²⁴ J.Jakob Bachofen, *Söylence, Din, Anaerki* (İstanbul; Payel Yayınları, 2019), 99-108

²⁵ Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, (New York: International Publishers Co, 1972), 218

²⁶ Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, 52

²⁷ Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 481

not occur simultaneously in all societies. It differed by location and time. It is understood that the Mother Goddess cult continued until the 2000s BC.²⁸ Later, even within the patriarchal order, Mother Goddesses were mysteriously able to maintain their power among the people by evolving into a separate entity and identity. This could be regarded as the preexisting feminine culture' resistance. Women continued their existence as subjects who maintained the relationship between humans and supernatural powers.

The role played by man in reproduction in patriarchal order is like the reflection of God's power to create the mortal world. This connection between God and man created the power behind the patriarchal system. Just as God is the creator of the universe, men are the creator of children. The female body is considered only as the fertile soil that carries and feeds the seed. Fathers' authority symbolizes God's authority on earth.

1.2. GERDA LERNER'S SUMMARY OF PATRIARCHY

Gerda Lerner summarized the creation of patriarchy under the following headings.

“1. The appropriation of the sexual and reproductive capacity of women by men preceded the formation of private property and class society. 2. Archaic states were organized in a patriarchal way. Therefore, from its beginning, the state had a fundamental interest in maintaining patriarchal families. 3. Men have learned to dominate and have hierarchies over women. This has resulted in the enslavement of women. 4. Women's sexual obedience was institutionalized with the first laws and enforced with full force by the state. 5. For men, class is based on their connection to means of production. For women, class happens through their sexual ties to a man. The segregation of women as respectable and non-respectable has been

²⁸ Fatmagül Berktaş, *Tek Tanrılı dinler karşısında kadın*, 45

institutionalized through the laws on women's veiling. 6. The deposition of powerful goddesses and their replacement by a dominant male deity occurred in most Near Eastern societies. 7. The emergence of the Judeo-Christian and Islamic monotheism resulted in the destruction of widespread cults of various fertility goddesses. Creativity in the writing of the scriptures was attributed to the omnipotent God. 8. In the establishment of a community of faith, in the basic symbolism, and in the de facto contract between God and humanity, women have been accepted as secondary beings and have been excluded from social life. 9. The symbolic devaluation of women is related to Aristotle's founding metaphor, which assume that women are lacking in their nature and have a completely different constitution than men.”²⁹

Some modern anthropologists such as Kay Martin and Barbara Voorhies argued that matrilocality and matriliney rather than matriarchy prevailed in egalitarian societies where usually women's brothers or uncles controlled economic and familial decisions.³⁰ According to them, matrilineal descent did not indicate matriarchy because the decision-making power within the society was nevertheless in the hands of old men. Since matrilineal communities were not able to adapt to competitive and exploitative capitalistic systems over time, they have given their places to patrilineal societies.

Although patriarchy has many different interpretations, it can be considered as father's law. It is used as a type of dominance of man over women. Jean Bethke Elshtain described the historical form of patriarchy as a mode of production based on landholding where all religious ideology was patriarchal in nature. An omnipotent father whom no one could question would owe his terrible glory and legitimacy to no one but God. All lesser fathers had wives and children, or, as in patriarchal ideology,

²⁹ Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, 9-10

³⁰ M.Kay Martin and Barbara Voorhies, *Female of the Species*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), 187

God's obedient and believing servants became faithful and obedient subjects.³¹ In its religious and traditional forms, patriarchy is supposed to have a real and symbolic continuity between the Father, that is, a patriarchal view of God as Father/man and a theory of paternal right that extends to the claim that husbands can rule over their wives and children. Gail Ramshaw referred to Martin Luther's claim that "God Father is the model of all father figures who require obedience." He stated that such a representation of God determined the type of relationships between women and men.³²

Zillah Eisenstein defines patriarchy more broadly as a politics of sexual differentiation, which gives privileges to males over females, and in which women are defined as unequal and as the Other. According to Eisenstein, men are associated with knowledge, truth, and sovereignty while women are considered to be different, inferior and the Other. Thus, designed patriarchy is based on an ideology that defines the social inequalities in biology. It assumes that there are basic ontological and moral differences between men and women, which is a function of nature.³³

Toril Moi argues that the phallogocentric sexual difference appoints men as subjects and women as the others. She is represented not only as the opposite of men but also as lesser than men.³⁴

It is accepted universally that it is more important for men to enjoy sexual acts and represent family dignity. Women's sexuality, autonomy, reproductive abilities, and economic rights in patriarchal societies are often controlled by their fathers, husbands, brothers as well as other men.

³¹ Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Women: Women in Social and Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 213

³² Gail Ramshaw, *God beyond Gender: Feminist Christian God-Language* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 77

³³ Zillah Eisenstein, *Feminism and Sexual Equality* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1984), 90

³⁴ Toril Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (New York, Methuen, 1985), 134

In her article referring to Bamberger, Ellen Gruenbaum states that boys' rite of passage to masculinity is a process in which patterns of masculinity are taught, including long and grueling physical sessions that take weeks or even months, under the supervision of adult men. On the contrary, girls' transition to womanhood covers their first menstruation and does not go beyond explanations longer than fifteen minutes. Thus, Gruenbaum emphasizes how men who grow up in a patriarchal culture learn how to control and dominate women. Another way that girls are being prepared for womanhood through this transition process is by helping their mothers in their housework and by taking care of their younger sisters and brothers. Of course, it is necessary to add that as they mature, girls learn new roles with regards to sexuality. It is important to remind that patriarchy is not simply the domination of men over women. It is a complex set of relationships which include the dominance of older men over younger men, such as the dominance of male family elders over younger relatives; older women over younger girls, as in the case of mothers-in-law or sisters-in-law over young brides; as well as the dominance of older adolescents over younger boys, as is the case with senior students and their dominance over juniors in schools.³⁵

It is also anthropologically speculated that there was a matriarchal period before the emergence of a patriarchal period, especially based on the research on the Amazons.³⁶ Matriarchy is not the opposite of patriarchy; rather, it is a more egalitarian order; however, examining this falls beyond the scope of the study. Yet, it should be noted that in *The Creation of Patriarchy*, Gerda Lerner disputed that historical and archaeological evidence does not support the existence of matriarchy as the perfectly symmetrical counterpart of patriarchy at any point in history.³⁷

³⁵ Ellen Gruenbaum, *Patriarchy in the Female Circumcision Controversy* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press: 2001), 41

³⁶ Simone De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (Knopf: Doubleday Publishing 1949), 70-86

³⁷ Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (New York; Oxford University Press, 1986), 109

So, it would be appropriate to describe patriarchy as a social system of structures and practices in which men oppress, dominate and exploit women.

1.3. SYLVIA WALBY'S SIX MAIN PATRIARCHAL STRUCTURES

Sylvia Walby argues that there are six main patriarchal structures that combine and form a system. These six structures constitute the most important elements of social relations based on gender differences. These are the patriarchal production model, where husbands exploit women's labor, patriarchal relationships in paid jobs, patriarchic state, male violence, patriarchal relationships in sexuality, and patriarchal culture. Each of these is defined within the framework of social relations.³⁸

Patriarchal production model: Here, women undertake household chores and childcare, providing a free service to the man in exchange for just food and shelter. Women do these works for their husbands who expropriate them; they are not paid for the housework they do. It is simply accepted as a part of the marital relation between husbands and wives. However, women get a smaller share in this production model and spend less time for leisure, which in turn also excludes them from social life.

Patriarchal relationships in paid jobs: Here, men prevent women from accessing paid work, or they have a discriminatory attitude towards women in the workplace. In this case, women's labor is valued less, and they are paid less. This occupational segregation is most engraved in capitalist production models. Patriarchal relations in paid jobs cannot exist in communities where there are no paid jobs for women, which has been the case in most feudal societies, just like it was during early Islam.

³⁸ Sylvia Walby, "Theorizing Patriarchy" *Sociology*, 213-234

Patriarchal state: The fact that the state's own structure is also patriarchal has led women to be excluded from access to state resources and power. Patriarchal state determines the rules on marriage, divorce, inheritance, and on religion parameters. Women are prevented from taking critical decision-making positions in the state because of gender policies. As a result, women have no say in legalizing issues such as abortion, birth control, female harassment, homosexuality, assisted reproductive techniques.

Male Violence: This is not an issue that can be explained by psychological disorders. Men use violence as a force practice on women. Male violence has been accepted as a regular social attitude or a routine nature of behavior by men towards women. It involves rape, wife beating, father-daughter incest, sexual assault, or harassment, which have remained hidden because of this power relationship. In fact, male violence is partially tolerated and connived at in patriarchal states.

Patriarchal relationships in sexuality: Sexuality is an important part of the patriarchal structure and is one of the most important areas where women are subordinated. Men suppress and objectify women through sexuality. Through moral and religious values, women are excluded from sexual practices with people other than their legal husbands. As a result, monogamy is supported wherever men are dominant in determining the relationship, and women are directed towards marriage, while the extramarital affairs of men are mostly condoned. Furthermore, homosexuality and transgenderism are excluded in this structure, and there is a compulsory heterosexuality in its most oppressive forms. The patterns of patriarchal male and female models are constructed based on gender discrimination.

Patriarchal culture: The discourse of masculinity and femininity is shaped by the patriarchal culture. Education in patriarchal cultures is designed for giving more credentials to men. Discourses about male dominance are organized systematically in

all parts of social life. In these discourses, religion also has a significant impact. Religious culture imposes a male and female model according to its own model of morality, which constitutes the main point of interest in this thesis.

Girls in classic patriarchies are married off at young ages. In such systems, the head of the house is the groom's father. Brides obey not only all the men in the house, but also their sisters-in-law and mothers-in-law who are older than they are. Women cannot inherit anything from their fathers. Their husbands' families also directly own the dowry money paid. There are no property rights for women. They are often obliged to do the work given to them at home and outside; they cannot object. They are exposed to unwanted pregnancies; they cannot use birth control. It seems that in a patriarchal system, women pay a very heavy price for their gender.

In addition, stereotypically masculine societies allocate social roles between sexes based on patriarchal role models. While assertiveness, toughness, earning money, recognition, advancement, success, competition are associated with masculine traits; nurturing, cooperation, caring, and modest and tender behaviors are stereotypically related to feminine characteristics.

1.4. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FEMININE AND MASCULINE SOCIETIES

Table 1 lists the ten differences between feminine and masculine societies.³⁹

Table 1:

Feminine Societies
Minimum emotional and social role differentiation between the genders
Men and women should both be modest and caring
Balance between family and work
Sympathy for the weak
Both fathers and mothers deal with facts and feelings
Both boys and girls may cry but neither should fight
Mothers decide on the number of children
Many women in elected political positions
Religion focuses on fellow human beings
Matter-of-fact attitudes about sexuality; sex is a way of relating
Masculine Societies
Maximum emotional and social role differentiation between the genders
Men <i>should</i> be/women <i>may</i> be assertive and ambitious
Work prevails over family
Admiration for the strong
Fathers deal with facts, mothers with feelings
Girls cry, boys do not; boys should fight back, girls should not fight
Fathers decide on the family size
Few women in elected political positions
Religion focuses on God or gods
Moralistic attitudes about sexuality; sex is a way of performing

In patriarchal societies, women are given the role of childbearing as well as nurturing and raising them, whereas men are responsible for economic matters. The more a society tries to maximize the differences in gender roles, the more inequality can be expected in the participation of women and men in positions of authority and

³⁹ Geert Hofstede, Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context, *Online readings in psychology and culture*, Article 8, 2011, 12

competence⁴⁰. Researches show that men's parental investments are positively correlated with women's prestige and power in societies but negatively correlated with women's obedience to men, the dominance of husbands over wives, and the mentality of women being accepted inferior.⁴¹ In patriarchal societies such as Islam, the responsibility related to the care and nutrition of children is given only to mothers, as we will see later in the relevant verses.

Reşit Ergener points out that there are three dominance systems which differ qualitatively from each other. One is based on sex, another is based on age, and the other one includes those based on arbitrary characteristics. In gender-based systems, men disproportionately control more social, political and military power than women.⁴² Referring to Pratto⁴³, Ergener explains that gender-based social domination can be an integral part of understanding social hierarchy because it is the essence of both social and material well-being and social reproduction. Women in almost all patriarchal societies cook, clean the house, and care for children; and women who belong to secondary classes may be employed by men to do housework, but not vice versa. Moreover, Ergener argues that religion has provided the institutional and theological framework that established male domination as well as the hierarchical set up that placed women in a status of obeying. According to him, religion is a powerful tool to support and consolidate existing social structures. He argues that all religions paved the way to gender based inequalities. Religions helped to establish familial patriarchy in which women and children submit to men, who identify themselves as the head of their families.

⁴⁰ Cynthia G. Embrich, Florence L. Denmark, Deanne N. Den Hartog, “Cross –Cultural Differences in Gender Egalitarianism, in *Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies* edited by Robert J. House, Paul J. Hangens and acc. (New York: Sage Publications, 2014) 344, 345

⁴¹ Scott Coltrane, “Father-child relationships and the status of women: A cross-cultural study” *American Journal of Sociology*, Volume 93 (5) 1988 ,1060-195

⁴² Reşit Ergener, *Religion and Economics* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 132-137

⁴³ Felicia Pratto, Jim Sidenaus and Shana Levin, “Social Dominance Theory and the Dynamics of Intergruop Relations” *European Review of Social Psychology*, Vol 17 No 1, 2006, 271-320

In addition, Van de Vliert found a positive correlation between the temperature of land and the masculine characteristics of societies. According to de Vliert, the higher the temperature is, the more patriarchal the culture is. He suggests that extreme temperatures are the key factor for male leaders of a society to manifest patriarchy.⁴⁴ His theory based on, that compared to cold countries, hot countries can attract large populations as they offer climates more suitable for human life. Larger populations can be more heterogeneous, increasing the potential for violence between groups and giving men a privileged power. Furthermore, paternal investment in the families in hot climates is less critical as it is easier to meet basic survival needs. As a result, men are freer to have children from more than one partner expecting many of them will survive (Paternal Investment Theory).⁴⁵ The fundamental conclusion of his research is that there is a higher level of patriarchy in warmer climates than there are in colder ones.

His opinion might be an explanation as to why patriarchy prevails in all Abrahamic religions originating from the Mesopotamia. Similarly, a study conducted by Emrich et al. shows that the lower the daytime temperature of a society, the greater the gender equality is in that society.⁴⁶

Monotheism has been related to the inferior status of women in these communities.⁴⁷ In all monotheistic religions, including Islam, people worship an omnipotent God who rules over everything whereas in polytheistic cultures, there are a variety gods and goddesses worshipped by people. Durkheim claimed that monotheism was the reflection of the prevailing low status of women. As such, the Qur'an may have continued the old patriarchal customs of the Arabian Peninsula by

⁴⁴ Evert van de Vliert, Shalom H. Schwartz, Sipke E. Huisman, "Temperature, Cultural Masculinity, and Domestic Political Violence: A Cross-National Study", *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 30, 1999, 291-314

⁴⁵ Ibid; 301, 302

⁴⁶ Cynthia G. Emrich et al. *Cross-Cultural Differences in Gender Egalitarianism*, 374

⁴⁷ Ronald G. Stover and Christine A. Hope, "Monotheism and Gender Status: A Cross-Societal Study" *Social Forces*, Vol. 63, No. 2, 1984, 335-348

producing an almighty God. Gray argues that women have low social status in Mesopotamia, Africa, and in East Eurasian and South American regions where high active Gods prevail. In contrast, North America and the Insular Pacific regions lack high Gods, and women have higher status.

Furthermore, in the matriarchal shaman belief among ancient Turks, “God Woman Spider” was hung on houses as a symbol of reproduction and plentifulness in the form of a spider web. The night-working spider represented matriarchal traits such as fruitfulness and reproductivity, as in moon cult. Children were told that these were dream catchers, and that they would destroy bad dreams, and show them good dreams. This item was believed to protect the house from evil, and bring abundance, plentifulness, and continue the lineage of the house. This belief still exists in the Turkmen traditions in Anatolia and in Indian American customs.⁴⁸

The religious leaders of all Abrahamic religions are always male, whereas in other religions, female religious leaders could also emerge, including the protestant sect which prevail in North America and West Europe. This fact shows that geographical differences can play a role in the emergence of female leaders.

In the Middle East, where religious male leaders hold political power, the Qur’an might have paved the way for a patriarchal order in line with the will of men. However, the presence of matriarchal communities in the Arabian Peninsula as well as patriarchal communities shows that the patriarchal structure cannot be explained only by climate and geographical differences. It is necessary to associate the existence of masculine social structures with economic reasons. While Mecca, where patrilineal relations were dominant, was an economically developing trade center, Medina was a place where different tribes led more authentic lives, and matrilineal relations dominated.

⁴⁸ Fatma Ateş, “Kızılderili Mitolojisinde Mitik Hayvanlar”, *Turkish Studies, International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*, Volume 11/10 Spring 2016

The claim that the social norms of a society related to femininity and masculinity affect religious thought, rather than the other way around makes the relationship between religion and gender equality more complicated.⁴⁹ In masculine communities, God is an omnipotent figure that plays a key role in a believer's daily life. In feminine cultures, relations are more important than positions. Verweij argues that differentiated gender roles proceed before society's religious beliefs and practices⁵⁰. More feminine cultures result in fewer religious communities. Therefore, patriarchal religions always try to impose bigoted religious rules and annihilate the female traces of old cultures to serve the needs of patriarchal orders. While matrilocality promote more gender egalitarianism where women use more economic and familial resources, patrilocality aims to decrease women's financial and inheriting resources so that men's domination is achieved. Moreover, women's control of property is negatively correlated in masculine societies.

⁴⁹ Johan Verweij, Peter Ester and Rein Nauta, "Secularization as an Economic and Cultural Phenomenon: A Cross-National Analysis", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* Vol. 36, No:2, 1997, 309-324

⁵⁰ Ibid

CHAPTER 2

PRE-ISLAMIC PERIOD

2.1. FEMALE GODDESSES

In the pre-Islamic era, each tribe had its own local god, often referred to by an appropriate name. Thus, each tribe may have meant God in the sense known by their local idol.⁵¹ The tribe of the Prophet was the guardian of a temple dedicated to a God named Hubel in Mecca, which gave his family power.⁵² In the pre-Islamic period, the name Al Ilah (Allah) was used for Hubel, which is associated with Baal, a deity commonly worshiped in Mesopotamia⁵³. Hubel was seen as the father of the trio of Lat, Uzza and Menat, worshiped by the Meccans as daughters of God.

These three goddesses' origins can be found in the three Roman goddesses called Nona, Decima and Morta, and the three Greek goddesses called Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos, who were believed to have watched the destiny of human beings from birth to death.⁵⁴ Astrologically, Lat is associated with Venus, Uzza (which means strong) with moon, and Menat, who cut the threads of destiny with scissors, with Sirius.⁵⁵ Later, the Hellenized Arabs identified Lat with the Greek goddess Athena. This goddess was the equivalent of the Northern Semitic Astarte or the Eastern Semitic Ishtar or the Sumerian Inanna.⁵⁶ These goddesses represent three

⁵¹ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Kuranda Tanrı ve İnsan*, (İstanbul: Pınar yayınları, 2014) 153-154

⁵² Orhan Gökdemir, *Din ve Devrim* (İstanbul: A7 Kitap, 2020), 48

⁵³ Christian Julien Robin, *Arabia and Ethiopia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 304-305

⁵⁴ Sami A. Aldeeb Abu Sahlieh, *Tuhe Koran in chronological order Arabic-English* (Centre of Arab and Islamic Law, Great Britain by Amazon, 2016), 23

⁵⁵ Fetna Ayt Sabbah, *İslamın Bilinçaltında Kadın*, 144

⁵⁶ Maxime Rodinson, *Muhammed* (İstanbul: Doruk Yayımcılık, 2017), 46

distinct faces of Arab divinity. All of these are an indication that matriarchal order existed in the pre-Islamic period, although there might have been local differences.

These goddesses, who adorned the Arab skies, were also important during the Mecca period when Mohammed tried to spread Islam. Tribal members visited the temples of these idols, offered gifts to them, and sacrificed animals in their honor. The goddesses, who symbolized fertility and reproduction as in the cult of Demeter, were believed to dominate the souls of the people of the region. Therefore, they were posing a great obstacle for the messenger of God to lay the foundations of a monotheistic religion. Mohammad rejected the claim that these goddesses worshiped by the Arabs were the daughters of God; then he also cursed the worshipping of Jesus and Mary as “lords” and scolded the Jews for using the name “rabbi” for their religious teachers.⁵⁷ These fertility and sexual reproduction goddesses had to be annihilated; in this way, Islam could establish monotheism as a form of male domination both in heaven and on earth.⁵⁸

It can be claimed that Islam’s 500-year history that followed this era is actually the history of this tribe's reaching power throughout the world. The temple had a black stone of meteorite origin named *Hacer-i Esved*, which has later become of great importance in Islam. Pilgrims made it a part of their ritual to touch this stone during their Kaaba visits. Perhaps, Muhammad destroyed the old goddesses and instead identified the god of his tribe with Allah. At the time, Mecca was becoming a relatively important industrial center where traders from all nations were meeting; and more and more pilgrims were showing interest to this cube-shaped sacred temple. Therefore, the god of this temple had to take over the throne by destroying all other local gods and goddesses. Such an omnipotent god was also necessary for the establishment of patriarchy.

⁵⁷ Hamilton A.R.Gibb, *Mohammedanism*, (New York: Oxford University Press,1958),49

⁵⁸ Fetna Ayt Sabbah, *İslamın Bilinçaltında Kadın*, 140

The process of annihilation took place both as an ideological discourse and through the physical destruction of the temples of these goddesses. The goddesses had to be turned into mere names with no power, because it was only God who could give power to words. It was during this period that the relevant verses of the 23rd Surah An-Najm (The Star) were revealed.

“19 Have you considered El-Lat and El-‘Uzza 20 and Manat the third, the other? 21 What have you males, and He females? 22 That were indeed an unjust division. 23 They are naught but names yourselves have named, and your fathers; God has sent down no authority touching them. They follow only surmise, and what the souls desire; and yet guidance has come to them from their Lord”.

Tabari interpreted these verses in his book of Qur’an commentary as follows: “Did those who claimed that Lat, Uzza and Menat were daughters of God observe their condition? Did you claim that the men you liked belonged to you and the females you did not liked belonged to God? Such a sharing was not fair at all, because you reserved what you liked to yourself.”⁵⁹

However, Tabari argued that the two following verses intervened here: “These are the swans exalted, Whose intercession is to be hoped for ”⁶⁰ Muhammad abrogated these verses as satanic verses which were thrown upon his tongue by the Satan . These verses show that even the prophet encountered difficulties in his efforts to eliminate the goddesses worshiped by the people and in the transition from a matricentric to a patricentric society.

These verses confused the Arabs very much. They could not perceive how God was not born from a goddess. Then they thought since God was not the son of these Goddesses, he had to be their father. So, these three goddesses became to be

⁵⁹ Tabari Tefsiri, cilt 5, 420

⁶⁰Abu Ja`far Muḥammad bin Jarir al-Ṭabari, *Tarih al-Ṭabari*: (Volume I, Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1997) 550

seen as the daughters of God. God had a lot of trouble getting rid of these girls that Arab tribes ascribed to him. To eliminate this confusion, verses began to be revealed in a row.

The 15th and 16th verses of the 63th surah Az-Zukhruf (The Embellishment) goes as follows:

“15 Yet they have assigned to Him a part of His own servants!
Man is dearly unthankful...16 Or has He taken to Himself, from that
He creates, daughters, and favored you with sons?”

The 57th and 58th verses of the 70th surah An-Nahl (The Bee):

“57 And they assign to God daughters; glory be to Him! -- And
they have their desire. 58 and when any of them is given the good
tidings of a girl, his face is darkened, and he chokes inwardly.”

The 39th verse of the 76th Surah At-Tur (The Mountain):

“39 Or has He daughters, and they sons?”

The meaning of these words has been discussed greatly. Saying that it is an unfair sharing to give God girls and reserve boys for themselves is very confusing. In order to understand the mystery of these words, it is necessary to examine what female goddesses appeal to in people's subconscious. These goddesses were symbols of fertility and fruitfulness and were related to mother earth. Their roots go back to the Mother Goddess cult in matriarchal societies. Implying that a single omnipotent god would have daughters was incompatible with the basic principles of the patriarchal society that was intended to be established. For this reason, these goddesses were described only as meaningless names from ancestors, and it was emphasized that God did not reveal any evidence of them.

The way to remove fertility and plentifulness from women's hands was to eliminate the symbols of their power in the sky, which the Qur'an did by completely destroying the symbolism of these goddesses. It was then only God, the sole ruler of the celestial sphere that now determined all symbolisms. However, demolishing the temples of these goddesses and forbidding people from worshipping them was still not enough. When these goddesses rose to the sky, they became bright stars. Therefore, it was necessary to conquer the stars that made up their essence. However, it was not so easy to eliminate these symbols of stars that were set in the subconscious of the people completely. Hind bin Utba, the wife of Abu Sufyan, who played central role in the Meccan opposition to Mohammad, danced among the dead bodies of Muslims on the battlefield of Uhud and sang these words: "we are daughters of the morning star. We trample cushions underfoot. Our necks are adorned with pearls...."⁶¹

Thus, surah An Najm (The Stars) begins with a prayer to the stars:

The 1st to 4th verses of surah An Najm read as follows:

"1 By the Star when it plunges, 2 your comrade is not astray,
neither errs, 3 nor speaks he out of caprice. 4 This is naught, but a
revelation revealed,"

Tabari explained that people were swearing by the Pleiades star as it disappeared at dawn. When this star was not visible to people, it was believed that there were no stars in the sky and that people would lose their way. However, by supporting his messenger, God would make sure that he did not deviate from the right path.⁶² Through these verses, the Qur'an commands people not to rely on the stars. In this way, they aim at eliminating all the remains of the Mother Goddess culture.

⁶¹ Fatima Mernissi, *Women and Islam, -An Historical and Theological Enquiry* (Padstow, Cornwall: T.J. Press Ltd, 1991), 117

⁶² Tabari Tefsiri, cilt 5, 416

Verses of surah An Najm state:

“7 being on the higher horizon, 8 then drew near and suspended hung, 9 two bows’ length away, or nearer, 10 then revealed to his servant that he revealed.11 His heart lies not of what he saw; 2 what, will you dispute with him what he sees? 13 Indeed, he saw him another time... 14 by the Lote-Tree of the Boundary ...15 nigh which is the Garden of the Refuge.”

In these verses, it is stated that Muhammad and Gabriel were together at the highest rising place of the sun. The sun being the brightest, most sublime star⁶³, the practice of worshipping it dates back to old times. Although worshipping the sun was forbidden, it continued to exist subconsciously.

Tabari interpreted the following verses by saying that there were so many angels in the heavens that their intercession was of no use. Indeed, God Almighty would allow them to intercede. Only then could their intercession benefit. Those who did not believe in resurrection after death gave the angels of God the names they gave to the female goddesses, arguing that they were the daughters of God. They reckoned on this matter without relying on any information. They had no good knowledge; they were swearing and adding partners to God in worship.

“26 How many an angel there is in the heavens whose intercession avails not anything, save after that God gives leave to whomsoever He wills and is well-pleased. 27 Those who do not believe in the world to come name the angels with the names of females. 28 They have not any knowledge thereof; they follow only surmise, and surmise avails naught against truth.”

The best thing to do was to tame the goddess stars at the service of the great God. So, the Qur’an is decorated with stars and celestial bodies. To indicate the power

⁶³ Ibid,418

of God, these stars are filled with divine light. According to the Qur'an, stars are ornaments of the sky and tools that protect it against the devil.

The 6th and 7th verses of surah As-Saffat (The Rangers) prescribe:

“6 We have adorned the lower heaven with the adornment of the stars 7 and to preserve against every rebel Satan; 8 they listen not to the High Council, for they are pelted from every side, 9 rejected, and theirs is an everlasting chastisement.”

These exile goddesses have continued to live on in the stars, hiding under the subconscious of people.

There were also female oracles and female prophets who played important roles in the religious lives of people during pre-Islamic periods. According to Abbot, during the years when Muhammad emerged as a prophet, these female figures continued to exist in communities where matriarchal features were also observed.⁶⁴

Serra bint, for example, was a temple nun who is still known with her other name Nephan. Seccah, on the other hand, was a prophet who lived in the same period, and who wanted to spread a religion between Islam and Christianity and had many supporters. These indicate that in some parts of Arabia, women were sacred and were not yet reduced to secondary status.⁶⁵

2.2. STORY OF HAGAR

As it is told in the Torah, Hagar was the slave of Abraham. Abraham had a son from Hagar, named Ishmael. Later, his son Isaak was born as a miracle of God

⁶⁴ Nadia Abbot, “Women and the State on the Eve of Islam” *American Journal of Semitic Studies*, c.58,1941, 260-262

⁶⁵ Fatmagül Berktaş, *Tek Tanrılı dinler karşısında kadın*, 117

from Sarah, who was too old to conceive. When Sarah was jealous of Hagar, Abraham exiled Hagar to a desert with her son Ishmael. Seeking water for her son in the desert, Hagar found water in the well of Zamzam. Although this event is important enough in Islam to be repeated in the pilgrimage ritual, Hagar's existence has almost been erased from the Qur'an. The reason why father and son are featured while Hagar is erased from the founding text is that "Hagar was "intransmissible through the Qur'an."⁶⁶

In the Qur'an, Abraham and Ishmael meet again in Mecca, and they build a temple to God called Kaaba. This story is not found in the Torah. While remembering the father and son and considering them among the founders of the religion, the Qur'an does not mention the mother at all. According to Muhammad, holiness was not in the family, but in the construction of the temple by the father and son. However, the fact that Hagar traveled between the hills of Safa and Marva seven times in search of water for his son is an indispensable part of every pilgrimage ritual. This event shows that no matter how hard it is tried; women cannot be erased completely from the subconscious of Islam. The obvious recall of Abraham and his son in the Qur'an cannot change this fact. Hagar, the abandoned woman, have influenced and formed the spiritual experience of Islam beyond the consciousness we have today.

Hagar was the one who saw God, who had direct access to Him, and as such, has been a mystical feminine symbol for the truth. According to the myth, Abraham's second son Isaac was the promised one, whereas his first son Ishmael was a natural descendent. In other words, Abraham's wife Sarah could get her child only after Hagar got hers. Zizec points out that as a phallic-patriarchal woman, Sarah was initially infertile because of her phallic power until Hagar entered the scene. Sarah

⁶⁶ Fethi Benslama, *Psycoanalyses and Challenge of Islam*, 103

had to be humiliated through Hagar in order to get a child. “In order to choose the spirit, we have to choose the flesh first.”⁶⁷

Because Islam was born from a female foreigner (Hagar) who remained alienated, her story represents the denial of origin that presents a source of refused truth for the entire religion. Here, truth is understood as a repressed core that constantly repeats.

Like other monotheistic religions, Islam is a religion that gives women symbolic dignity only when they become pregnant with a son, or more precisely, when it sees a woman as an intermediary carrying a son in her body, who will later take the form of a father. But the act of erasing the ancestral mother's name and presence from the founding text, while all other leading actors are kept on stage, lead us to the conclusion that Islam was originally built on the rejection/denial of Hagar. However, what was initially eliminated cannot be restored so easily. On the contrary, it has continued to haunt the Islamic institution throughout history. According to Benslama, the origin of Islam goes back to this foreign woman at the root of monotheism, which to this day, has remained foreign in Islam.⁶⁸ The story of Hagar is the story of abandonment at the origin of monotheism, but it was rejected completely at the beginning of Islam. However, the ghost of the woman who was abandoned in the original story and then rejected in Islam continues to haunt the Islamic mind.

While the wife of Abraham, the wife of Zachariah, and Mary were blessed and deemed Divine Mothers, the *other woman* - Hagar - who symbolized femininity was ignored because she represents the value of pleasure. It should be kept in mind that except for Hagar, these women were all from the same tribe. On the other hand, Hagar – a foreigner – who was in a subordinate position could not reach sacred maternity status and did not achieve a status of a respectable mother even though she

⁶⁷ Slovaj Zizec, “A Glance into the Archives of Islam, The Antinomies of Tolerant reason” Lacan.com: zizarchives (last updated November 6, 2019)

⁶⁸ Ibid, 170

delivered a child. This why Hagar is absent in the Qur'anic text according to Benslama.⁶⁹ He argued that the womb of Hager is borrowed; that is it can circulate among men. This caused her to be considered on the same level as a prostitute. However, the other women were not deprived of power; on the contrary, their power was hidden, worrying, even shocking. This makes the other woman a disturbing, feared even seductive figure with the knowledge that she captured the seed and caused the proliferation of progeny by pushing the official wife aside and forces her to undergo symbolic castration. "She is both a woman and a female threat for any women."⁷⁰

In the Bible, Hagar also sees God, does not die, and names him.⁷¹ This power was an exceptional power that no woman in the Bible had. It was a visionary power, a mystical power, a clairvoyance through which she was able to access that which was obscure and hidden in the earth and in the skies. Spinoza attributed prophetic acts to Hagar and respected her for those features.⁷²

This was also the desire that allows seizing the seed and reproducing the lineage. This desire was seductive and hence perverse. The other woman threatened the real woman, i.e., the sacred mother, with these features.

Saint Paul reminded Abraham's sons and declared:

"22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, and the other by a free woman. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman, was born *according to the flesh*: but he of the free woman, was *by promise*. 24 Which things are said by an allegory. For these are the two testaments. The one from mount Sina, engendering unto bondage; which is Agar: 25 For Sina is a mountain in Arabia,

⁶⁹ Fethi Benslama, *Psychoanalyses and Challenge of Islam*, 110

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 111

⁷¹ Kutsal Kitap, *Yaratılış*, 16/13.14

⁷² Fethi Benslama, *Psychoanalyses and Challenge of Islam*, 81

which hath affinity to that Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. 26 But that Jerusalem, which is above, is free: which is our mother. 28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. 29 But as then he that was born according to the flesh persecuted him that was after the spirit; so also it is now. 30 But what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. 31 So then, brethren, we are not the children of the bondwoman, but of the free: by the freedom wherewith Christ has made us free.”⁷³

The phallic desire mechanism established Hagar in its power. She is a female threat for any woman.⁷⁴ Therefore, Hagar, who symbolized femininity with all her features, was erased from the holy texts of Islam. While her pregnancy and her delivery of Ishmael are never mentioned, the miraculous pregnancies and deliveries of Abraham’s and Zechariah’s wives and of Mary’s are repeatedly emphasized.

Similarly, for this purpose, all goddesses representing femininity and fertility were destroyed, and all traces of the old matriarchal structures were wanted to be eliminated.

2.3. FEMALE INFANTICIDE

It is assumed that female infanticide was a fairly common custom among Arabs in the pre-Islamic period. Montgomery Watt stated that female infanticide was practiced as a tradition in some Arab tribes just like in some other parts of the world. He argued that the underlying motive for this custom was to ensure the population in

⁷³ Ibid, *Galatyalılar*, 4/22-31

⁷⁴ Fethi Benslama, *Psycoanalyses and Challenge of Islam*,111

the tribes was kept balanced by killing girls due to poverty. He emphasized that the strength of a tribe was measured by the abundance of males in its overall population, and that the mothers of the boys also increased the strength of the tribe. Considering that the resilience of girls increases their chances of surviving in every age, we can conclude that the population of girls would be high in the Arab community. However, Watt stated that this tradition is strictly prohibited in the Qur'an. He expressed that Muhammad predicted that it was necessary for a sufficient population of women to survive for the spread of Islam.⁷⁵

Furthermore, referring to İbnü-l Kelbi, İlhan Arsel claimed that female infanticide was not a widespread tradition, and that in some tribes, even boys were killed within the same context. He argued that this custom was based on economic reasons; families practiced infanticide because of poverty. In addition, it can be seen in many verses to be mentioned later (23/19-23, 50/40, 56/149-154, 63/16-19, 70/57/59, 76/39) that these tribes were worshipping female goddesses, and it is paradoxical for a community that attributes girls to god and worships female goddesses to kill newborn girls. Qur'an's rationale for prohibiting this practice was to make sure people did not stop getting married out of fear of having children.⁷⁶

2.4. MATRILINEAL AND PATRILINEAL SYSTEMS

19th century academics, especially W. Robertson Smith and G.A. Wilken stated that based on their anthropological studies, a matriarchal order was dominant in Arabia during the time of Mohammed's youth. There was a period of transition in the family structure during the 6th and 7th centuries. In the first years of Islam, the

⁷⁵ Montgomery Watt W. *Muhammad At Medina*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press: 1956), 270

⁷⁶ İlhan Arsel, *Şeriat ve Kadın* (Istanbul: Dilek Ofset, 1994), 139

matrilineal family structure called *sadiqa* marriage and the patrilineal family structure called *ba'al* existed together. However, these two structures were in opposition to each other in the social relations network determined in terms of women's position.⁷⁷

Table 2. The difference between matrilineal and patrilineal systems⁷⁸

	Matrilineal System	Patrilineal System
Kinship rule	Child belongs to mother's lineage	Child belongs to father's lineage
Paternity rule	Physical paternity unimportant; father does not have rights over his offspring	Physical paternity important; father has social rights over his offspring
Sexual freedom of women	Extended; women's chastity has no social function	Limited; women's chastity is a prerequisite for the establishment of a child's legitimacy
Status of women	Depends on her tribe for protection and food	Depends on her husband for protection and food
Setting of Marriage	Uxorilocal	Virilocal

(If a family lives with or near the kin of the wife, the residence is said to be *matrilocal* or *uxorilocal*)

(If a woman lives with or near the kin of the husband, she follows the rule of virilocal residence or patrilocality)

As understood from the table, a child born in a Sadiqa marriage would stay with the woman and her tribe. The union between a husband and wife would take place in the woman's house, and the woman would reserve the right to leave her

⁷⁷ W. Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia* (London: A.&C. Black 1903),94

⁷⁸ Fatima Mernissi, *Peçenin ötesi* (Istanbul: Yayınevi Yayıncılık, 1995),107-108

husband. There were also polyandrous marriages. In contrast, a child born in a Ba'al's marriage would belong to the father. The father would also be the owner of the woman. In these marriages, women would lose their rights as individuals. Their husbands would have absolute domination over them, and the right to divorce would only belong to the husbands.

Fazlur Rahman claims that the Qur'an eliminated some bad practices that were valid at that time to protect women's rights in marriage. He cites secret marriages as an example, in which women have no power.⁷⁹ From this point of view, the Qur'an sees marriage as a part of the future social reforms brought about by Islam.

In contrast, Ghada Karmi suggests that there were two types of marriage traditions in the pre-Islamic period, patrilineal and matrilineal. These two systems were diametrically opposed to each other and contained fundamental differences in determining the place of women in social life.⁸⁰

Robertson Smith thought that Islam accelerated the transition from matrilineal and matrilocal societies to patriarchal societies, labeling matriarchal unions as adultery and supporting a male-dominated marriage institution. He argued that the ba'al-type marriages were done in Mecca by capture or by purchase. The marital rights of husbands gave them absolute sovereignty over their wives, and they could abandon their women at their own behest. This tradition in Mecca has continued after Islam. According to the Qur'an, marriage is a type of shopping in which the husband buys the ownership of his wife in return for a price paid to the bride (mahr).⁸¹

⁷⁹ Fazlur Rahman, "Status of Women in the Qur'an" in *Women and Revolution in Iran*, ed. Guity Nashat, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983), 37-54

⁸⁰ Ghada Karmi, "Women, Islam and Patriarchalism", in Yamani and Allen *Feminism and Islam* (New York, NYU press, 1996) 69-85

⁸¹ W. Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, 121

In contrast, in pre-Islamic matricentric marriages, women had the right to dismiss their husbands. Changing the place of entrance to the tent they lived in would mean that the woman no longer wanted her husband. The husband who saw this would understand that he was left by his wife and would not enter the tent. This method of abandonment was expressed symbolically with the words “the woman drew a curtain between herself and her husband”. It is understood that women were the dominant party in such marriages, and they were active participants and even leaders in social life. They also had greater sexual autonomy than they are allowed in Islam.⁸²

Montgomery Watt agreed with Robertson Smith that patrilineal and matrilineal systems existed in the pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula in the same period.⁸³ For example, while a patrilineal structure was prevailing in Mecca, a matrilineal system continued in Medina. The chief social units in Mecca were named after male ancestors only; and patrilineal customs could be observed in subjects such as inheritance, marriage, and blood revenge. The power of the Mecca tribes was passed from fathers to their sons, grandsons, and so on. In Mecca, if a man married a noblewoman and did not like her, he could easily leave her. He would make a contract with her that she could only remarry with his permission. And in order to get permission from him, she would have to pay a sufficient amount of money to satisfy him.⁸⁴ Maxime Rodinson claimed that the role of women among Mecca’s nomads was more subtle in the pre-Islamic period. He stated that the union of men and women was no different than a rental agreement. The woman would be hired by the man for a certain price and for a certain period of time, and they would be separated at the end of that period.⁸⁵

⁸² Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*, 42

⁸³ Montgomery Watt W. *Muhammad At Medina*, 372

⁸⁴ Fatima Mernissi, *Women and Islam*, 123

⁸⁵ Maxime Rodinson, *Muhammed* (Istanbul: Doruk Yayımcılık, 2017)

According to Muslim traditionalist Bukhari, Aisha, the wife of Muhammad, summarized pre-Islamic marriages in four groups.

1. The first was the type of marriage where a man would give his daughter or any woman of whom he was the guardian to another man in marriage in exchange for a sum of money called *mahr*. This is also the type of marriage preferred during the Islamic period.
2. The second type of marriage was the one in which a man would send his wife to another man after her menstruation period and ask her to have intercourse with him. In this type of marriages, the husband stayed away from his wife until it was certain that she was pregnant with the other man's child. The reason for this type of marriage is that the man wanted to have a child that is more noble and intelligent than his ancestry. The born child was considered to be from her husband and would be his heir.
3. Another type of marriage was the one in which more than one man would have intercourse with the same woman. If the woman became pregnant and bore a child, she would send the baby to one of the men stating that the child belonged to him. He could not refuse the child.
4. The fourth type was the one in which many men had intercourse with the same woman. These women were prostitutes. If the woman got pregnant and bore a child, they would gather and consult a physician to determine to whom the child most resembled. No one could object the decision.⁸⁶

Leila Ahmed argues that the presence of matrilineal marriages did not necessarily mean an absence of misogyny, and that women would automatically have greater power in society. In those societies, those who had the power were women's brothers. However, she states that Islam surely curtailed women's autonomy with the

⁸⁶ Fatima Mernissi, *Peçenin ötesi*, 109-110

establishment of patriarchal and patrilineal marriages.⁸⁷ According to her, Islam consolidated the change in the society, which had already returned to patriarchy with the birth of the prophet. Nevertheless, matrilineal and patrilineal marriages were practiced simultaneously during the rise of Islam. However, the commercial growth of Mecca crashed tribal values, especially on property legacy. Men now wanted to pass their property to their own children, which gave a new significance to fatherhood.

Mohammed abolished all other marriages except the first one above. Biological paternity was not important in any of the banned marriages. The honor of women could also not be mentioned, and the last two were already polyandry marriages. These features belonged to the matrilineal family structure.

Another type of marriage mentioned by Bukhari is *mut'a*, which means temporary union of man and woman, i.e., temporary marriage, for pleasure. The purpose of this marriage is not sexual reproduction or other marital expectations, but only sexual pleasure. The duration of this type of marriage is specified via a contract. The woman has a waiting period (*iddah*) of only two courses. At the end of a contract, the marriage automatically ends without getting a divorce. The woman receives a predetermined dower. Although Muhammad had condoned this marital institution, Umar abrogated the practice altogether according to Sunni commentators.⁸⁸ It is only permitted among Shiites. According to Watt, *mut'a* is not a continuation of the pre-Islamic tradition, but a modification of a custom in Islamic thought, especially in relation to *iddah* (waiting period). Watt even claimed that during the reign of Mohammed, people did not even pay attention to the waiting period, and irregular matrilocal unions were made.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*, 42

⁸⁸ Nikki R. Keddie, "The Past and Present of Women in the Muslim World", *Journal of World History*, Vol.1, No.1, 1990, 88

⁸⁹ Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad At Medina*, 279

Mut'a violates the fundamental rules of patriarchal family structure when compared to traditional marriages in Islam. Primarily, with its temporary and personal structure, it gives women the right to initiate and end marriages just as men do. The Qur'an, on the other hand, has given these rights exclusively to men. Moreover, this union contradicts the importance of fatherhood in patriarchal societies.

In short, mut'a is the last remnant of matrilineal marriages and is considered by Sunnis to be the same as prostitution. It is condemned by orthodox Islam because it does not give men legitimate offspring who will have a clear right of inheritance, which is a fundamental law in patriarchy.

As mentioned before, there were virilocal and uxorilocal marriages in pre-Islamic periods. For example, Muhammad's mother stayed with her own kin; Abdallah Muhammad's father merely visited her there. Muhammad also stayed with his mother after spending some time in the desert with a foster mother. Strong matrilineal ideas prevailed in his mother's clan – *Zuhrah*. Only after the death of his mother, did Muhammad go to the house of his paternal grandfather and uncle. Muhammad's own marriage was also uxorilocal. His wife Khadijah was a powerful and wealthy woman, and married Muhammad on her own initiative.⁹⁰

There were also examples of people in Mecca who were known by their mothers' name, such as Abu Jahl, one of Muhammad's opponents who was also known as Ibn al-Hanzaliyah after his mother Asma bint Mukharribah of the tribe Hanzallah. Asma's trade of perfumes under her own name shows that matrilineal traditions still continued in her tribe.⁹¹ It can be assumed that after the patriarchal system was established and male dominance prevailed, it would have been impossible for Khadijah and Asma bint Mukharribah to trade using their own names. There is

⁹⁰ Ibid, 375

⁹¹ Ibid, 374

surely a relationship between the expansion of patriarchal structure and full male domination in trade.

In contrast, in Medina, names in paternal genealogies were not known with certainty. Furthermore, female lineage was more important in Medina. Some clans in Medina even took the names of women. Mothers were also known as individuals. There were examples in Medina where two brothers married the same woman. Some marriages in Medina seemed to be uxori-local, in which the husbands spent a short time with their wives and children. When a man settled permanently with his wife's tribe, he would often become an ally to the tribe. An example of this would be Muhammad preferring a matrilineal principle and placing Hamzah's daughter in Medina under the guardianship of Ja'far, who was the husband of her mother's full sister.⁹² According to Kitab al Aghani, in pre-Islamic periods where matriarchal structures were observed, women, or at least some women, would have the right to dismiss their husbands if they were not pleased with them. Furthermore, the tents where the family lived together would belong to the woman or the woman's family.⁹³

The women in Medina were generally known for their jealousy and their pride in relation to their dignity and position. It was even rumored that Mohammed did not want to marry women from Medina because of their pride and because they could not tolerate other spouses.⁹⁴ Undoubtedly, there was a contrast between the social attitudes in Mecca and Medina. In Medina, the society was much less patriarchal, matriarchal customs still prevailed, and the status of women was equal to men.⁹⁵

⁹² Ibid, 381

⁹³ Ibid,381

⁹⁴ Ibid, 381

⁹⁵ Zahra Ali, *İslami Feminizmler* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları,2008), 17

There was a narrative of Umar saying: “we of Meccans used to dominate our women; but when we came among the people of Medina, we saw women dominated them; and our women began to copy the habits of women of Medina.”⁹⁶

However, it is stated that the women from Medina could not own properties, and the properties that remained in the matrilineal family would belong to their brothers or maternal uncles.

In contrast to these, the prevailing view is that before Islam, Arabs lived in ignorance and barbarism, and that the Qur’an took a big step for women and improved the previous practices in women’s favor. This view may be intended to defame the pre-Islamic matriarchal and matrilineal traditions in which women were able to choose as many partners as they wanted and freely divorce their husbands whenever they wished. Muslims believe these ancient customs were diseased and see their abolition as a development.

When we consider marriage as a reorganization of the social structure, it is certain that a change in the marriage system leads to large scale socio-economic changes. A change in kinship relations leads to the disappearance of old social and economic structures and to the creation of new networks that can rise above new units. The emerging trade economy, which began to erode the traditional common sharing practices of tribes, led to conflicts between the merchant class and tribal members. With the disintegration of the old solidarity network, women and children became institutionally unable to own property. Inheritance turned into a privilege only for healthy and strong men who took part in wars and acquired war spoils. The Prophet tried to instill a sense of responsibility in which husbands would take women under their protection. A new family institution was created in which the sexual freedom of women was under strict control of men. For the estate to stay in the same lineage, men had to be able to transfer their property to their own sons. The Qur’an

⁹⁶ Montgomery Watt W. *Muhammad At Medina*, 381

declared all maternal marriages where the father was not known as adultery, and established a strict control on women via the institution of iddah (the 3-months waiting period before women can remarry after their divorce). Since such a waiting period was not required for men, the iddah institution can be seen as one of the examples of Islamic restrictions on women's sexual rights. One might think that the Qur'an gives men the right to control women because of their insecurity to cooperate with them.

When the Qur'an was completed, a patriarchal structure replaced the old matriarchal systems in all Islamic communities as Islam encouraged patrilineal principles. Nevertheless, this transition had begun before Muhammad and was extended to all regions including Medina, resulting in the complete disappearance of matriarchal structures after *Hijrah* (migration to Medina).

The Prophet realized that he needed a tightly controlled patriarchal family structure to create a Muslim society (*Umma*) above all tribes. The controlling of women by their husbands or fathers' relatives meant that the right to control property was passed from matrilineal family to patrilineal family, resulting in the loss of wealth, prestige, pride, and even the rights of women. The fact that there were men who married two women or even two sisters from the same family was an indication of moving towards patriarchy.⁹⁷

Islam can be seen as a trigger of change in an Arab society that is already heading towards patriarchy. In this context, the Qur'an strengthens and legitimates patriarchy by putting into effect a series of regulations.

⁹⁷ Ibid

CHAPTER 3

DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO PATRIARCHY IN THE QUR'AN

Amina Wadud claims that the interpretation of the Qur'an can be made in three ways: traditional, reactive, and holistic. Wadud notes that the traditional interpretations of the verses are based on male experiences, and that they cannot be associated with the content and integrity of the Qur'an. She emphasizes that women's needs, desires, and perspectives are ignored in those interpretations; therefore, they cannot represent women. In reactive interpretations made by modern academics, it is claimed that the Qur'an destroys female individuality, taking into consideration woman's secondary place in Islamic societies. These interpretations, according to Wadud, also have some weaknesses; they are not sufficiently linked to the content of the Qur'an. On the other hand, Amina Wadud suggests that the holistic interpretation of the Qur'an includes a modern social, moral, economic, and political approach. In such an interpretation, the female point of view is at the forefront, and the Qur'an itself is focused on, not the comments of men.⁹⁸

Asma Barlas argues that initially, Islam was in fact a religion against male sovereignty/patriarchy but male-female equality was pushed aside by the interpretations and practices of male leaders that came after Muhammad.⁹⁹ Those in favor of this view argue that patriarchy and discrimination against women are not intrinsic features of Islam, but a cultural interaction. Furthermore, she claims that it is very difficult to achieve a conclusive reading of the Qur'an, because beside the verses which have clear meaning (*muhkem âyât*), there are also allegorical verses in the Qur'an (*mütesâbih âyât*), the meanings of which might not be agreed upon.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Amina Wadud, *Quran and Woman* (Canada: Oxford University Press, 1999), 1-3

⁹⁹ Asma Barlas, *Believing Women in Islam* (London: University of Texas Press, 2019), 1-10

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 28

Sachiko Murata states that the Qur'an itself points out that interpretations of some verses are not conclusive; on the contrary, they are allegorical, and only God knows their real meaning.¹⁰¹ She argues that the 7th verse of the surah *Al-Imran* emphasizes this fact.

“7 It is He who sent down upon thee the Book, wherein are *verses clear* that are the Essence of the Book, and *others ambiguous*. As for those in whose hearts is swerving, they follow the ambiguous part, desiring dissension, and desiring its interpretation; and none knows its interpretation, save only God...”

Ian Richard Netton claims that different interpretations also reflect that a text can be understood and interpreted differently according to the different conditions and cultures of its authors and exegetists.¹⁰²

In her article about Islamic female sexuality and gender, Elizabeth Leo quotes Muslim Author Abdur Rahman Doi saying: “before Islam, girls were buried alive in Arab societies, women were forced to dance naked and turned into an object of pleasure and sex.”¹⁰³ Here, Doi argues that Islam is a liberating and egalitarian religion, and it has saved women from captivity.

In contrast, writers such as Fatima Mernissi examined the Qur'an more within the framework of historical events. According to Mernissi, Islam is an egalitarian religion at its core, but even in the time of Muhammad, men resisted the verses that favored women. She claimed that patriarchal verses that compromise female-male equality were revealed to soften men's reactions. Moreover, Mernissi stated that according to the Qur'an, women are equal to men in terms of obligation to worship

¹⁰¹ Sachiko Murata, *The Tao of Islam: A Source-book on Gender Relationships in Islamic Thought* (Albany NY:Sunypress, 1992),127

¹⁰² Ian Richard Netton, *Text and Trauma: An East –West Primer* (London:Routledge Curzon,1996), 132

¹⁰³ Elizabeth S. Leo, “Islamic Female Sexuality and Gender in Modern Feminist Interpretation”, *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, April 2011:132

Allah and avoiding his prohibitions; that heaven is promised to all men and women who do not deviate from the way of Allah, and that disbelievers will burn in hell regardless of their gender. In terms of obligation, responsibility and rights, she stressed that male/female inequality arose especially through the later verses revealed in Medina, which clearly show male superiority.¹⁰⁴

Some contemporary academics, such as Leila Ahmed, evaluate Islam within the context of its relationship with other religions and cultures. They argue that although the Qur'an has some egalitarian aspects, Islam is intrinsically patriarchal because it was initially revealed to a patriarchal society. On top of this, following the first period of Islam, Muslims created more masculine values and institutions over time. Wars and jihads gradually increased male dominance, pushing women to a secondary position even more.¹⁰⁵

Deniz Kandiyoti points out the irony in the fact that unveiled woman in rural areas who contributed to the livelihood of their homes lacked property rights, whereas women in cities who had to be covered and who were excluded from social life had the right to acquire property. She notes that this situation was rooted in tribal life traditions.¹⁰⁶ Kandiyoti thinks that it is more accurate to explain women's position based on their role in reproduction rather than their contribution in production.

Nawal el Saadawi postulates that while female goddesses prevailed in many areas in ancient Egypt, they collaborated with male gods in determining the fate of people. The improvement of women's status in society was a reflection of the high status achieved by goddesses. On the contrary, the systems characterized by patriarchal families, land ownership and social class divisions emerged after the

¹⁰⁴ Fatima Mernissi, *Peçenin ötesi* (Istanbul: Yayınevi Yayıncılık, 1995)43,94

¹⁰⁵ Elizabeth S. Leo, "Islamic Female Sexuality and Gender in modern feminist interpretation", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, April 2011:133

¹⁰⁶ Deniz Kandiyoti, *Islam and Patriarchy; A Comparative Perspective in Women in Middle Eastern History* written by Nikki Keddie and Beth Baron (New Haven, Yale University Press:1991),26

appearance of the single and all dominant god figure. However, the widespread worshipping of the goddesses (Lat, Uzza, Menat) mentioned in the satanic verses was a reflection of the matriarchal tradition that was still prevailing in these tribal communities. Saadawi argues that the Prophet's era was a period of transition from matrilineal and matrilocal communities to a patriarchal society, and that the pre-Islamic goddesses were destroyed by the Prophet's male God as mentioned in the related verses (An Najm:19-22). During this transition period, men controlled religion and economy. On the other hand, according to Nawal Al-Saadawi, women used to be freer and stronger in the pre-Islamic period called *Jahiliyya* (ignorance period).¹⁰⁷ It should be noted that the word *Jahiliyya* is used here in the sense of not knowing Islam. The term has nothing to do with being ignorant and unilluminated in general. During this period, many important women with high social status participated in the wars, either alongside the prophet or against him, with the swords they hid in their pregnant waists. Saadawi also adds that in matriarchal tribes such as Khandak and Jadila, children could carry the name of their mothers.¹⁰⁸ The women in these tribes could even practice polyandry. According to her, with the advent of the patriarchal system, the status of women gradually declined, especially after the institutionalization of Islam. The female goddesses disappeared, and women lost all their rights and freedoms.

In her research, Alya Baffoun investigated the North African Berber societies in pre- and post-Islamic periods and concluded that women enjoyed much wider sexual freedoms before Islam just like they did in Arabic tribes. She argued that there was no asymmetry in the relationships between women and men. According to her, after Islam, this equality disappeared and the pressures on women started.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Nawal El Saadawi, "Woman and Islam", *Women's studies Int. Forum*, Vol. 5, No.2, 1982:193-206

¹⁰⁸ Ibid

¹⁰⁹ Alya Baffoun, "Women and Social Change in the Muslim World", *Women's Studies International Forum* Vol. 5, Issue. 2, 1982, 227-242

Kecia Ali says that God has a basic asymmetric approach because he addresses only men about women. She describes the Qur'an as a purely androcentric text because it prioritizes male experiences while drawing attention to male agenda. While she concludes that the Qur'an treats women as sexually passive beings and see female bodies as "the Other", she points out that according to the Qur'an, male bodies are normative, and men are active actors.¹¹⁰ She interprets these findings as the privileges of male sexual agency and sees the Qur'an as a completely androcentric text.¹¹¹ She adds that the androcentric language of the Qur'an is a structure that prevents mutual harmony and peace between spouses.¹¹² According to her, the fact that the Qur'an speaks only to men about women, and not vice versa, shows that in the divine discourse, men are subjects and women are objects.

Aysha Hidayatullah claims that the Qur'an itself is responsible for its segregating, discriminative and sexist reading. She also accuses feminist commentators such as Amina Wadud and Asma Barlas of showing the Qur'an as a book that promotes gender equality by manipulating the text and resorting to interpretation maneuvers. She states that these hypocritical efforts will only lead women to a dead end. She emphasizes that the Qur'anic text is incorrigibly and unmistakably non-egalitarian.¹¹³

Farid Essack claims that the Qur'an is essentially only addressed to men. According to him, women are mere objects that men deal with rather than being subjects that are directly addressed.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Kecia Ali, *Sexual Ethics and Islam: Feminist Reflections on Qur'an, Hadith and Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2006), 240

¹¹¹ Kecia Ali, *Sexual Ethics and Islam: Feminist Reflections on Qur'an, Hadith and Jurisprudence*, 132

¹¹² Kecia Ali "Timeless Text and Modern Morals" In *New Directions in Islamic Thought*, ed by Kari Vogt, Lena Larsen, and Christian Moe (London: I.B.Tauris, 2008), 97, 98

¹¹³ Aysha Hidayatullah, "Claims to the Sacred" *Journal of feminist studies in Religion*, Vol. 32 No. 2, 2016, 136, 152

¹¹⁴ Farid Essack "Quranic Hermeneutics: Problems and Prospects" *The Muslim World*, 83, No. 2, 1990, 180-189

These are the views of different authors about the patriarchal structure of Qur'an. As it is understood, while there are those who maintain that the Qur'an has an egalitarian approach to the relationship between men and women, there are also those who claim the opposite by arguing that the Qur'an shows men as dominant and superior.

CHAPTER 4

THE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF THE VERSES IN THE QUR'AN

It is assumed that the verses in the Qur'an were revealed to Muhammad in 23 years. By combining the verses according to their subjects, surahs have been formed. In total, there are 114 surahs and 6236 verses in the Qur'an. Although it is a common discourse among the public that the number of verses in the Qur'an is 6666, this number is actually 6236 according to the Presidency of the Religious Affairs Supreme Board.^{115, 116}

During the Mecca period, which lasted 13 years, 86 surahs and 4613 verses were revealed; and during the Medina period, 28 surahs and 1623 verses were revealed over a period of 10 years.

The method used in the exegesis (*tafsir*) tradition since the first centuries of Islam starts with the *Fatiha* surah and ends with the *Nâs* surah in accordance with the *mushaf* setup of the *tafsir*. This version of the Qur'an was officially established during the lifetime of the third caliph named Utman. However, the order of the surahs in Utman's version does not follow the original chronology of the revelations as this version was a response to the pedagogical need of the time. Despite being revealed at a later time, the longer verses from the Medina period comes first in the Qur'an, because at the time, the holy book was being addressed to the Muslim community, and not to pagans.

The chronological interpretation of the Qur'an, which was previously an unknown method in Islamic cultural accumulation, began in the early 19th century when Western researchers brought up this issue. After that, the Islamic scholars began focusing on interpreting the Qur'an through this method. In order to evaluate

¹¹⁵ Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulu: <https://kurul.diyamet.gov.tr>

¹¹⁶ Ayet, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/kuran>,

the social environment in which the Qur'an was revealed, they began trying to follow the historical events that took place. The chronological order of the revelations is important for distinguishing two contradictory verses related to the same issue, which is men's attitude towards women. The experts on the abrogation of these contradictory verses posit that the verses that should be taken into consideration are the ones that were revealed later. It is well known that the first surah revealed in Medina was Al-Baqarah (the Cow), which is verse no 87 according to the chronological order, but no 2 in the textual reading (Utman's version) (*mushaf*). Thus, it can be concluded that the chronological order of the surahs correspond to the sequence of the historical events of the period.

When the Qur'an is examined, it is seen that it consists of surahs revealed in Mecca and Medina. The early verses revealed in Mecca are short and terse expressions and refer to universal problems such as the concept of God, creation, heaven and hell, which are not on the everyday agenda of ordinary people. These verses were meant to deal with a polytheistic order. In contrast, the Medina surahs were revealed to an established Muslim community, and they were an answer to this community's questions about the practical details of daily life. After the prophet's migration to Medina in 622 (*Hegira*) until the end of his life, he received the Medina verses, which regulated the daily life affairs of people. In these verses, the internal structural problems of the Muslim community and the concepts related to the social system are discussed in great detail. These concepts are related to the rules and regulations that govern human relations within Islamic society.¹¹⁷ These verses were usually much longer. For example, the number of words in the surahs from the first year (610) was 388, while in the second year, it was 1572, and in the third year, it was 5340. On the other hand, the first year after the migration, the number of words in the

¹¹⁷ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Kuran'da Tanrı ve İnsan*, 131-132

surahs increased to 42039, the second year, it was 45707, and finally, the number of words of surahs from the last year was 75051.¹¹⁸

As people's needs increased, the number of words in the surahs also increased to address the changing conditions of the era and the environment.

While determining the chronological order of the verses, the historical events were reviewed, and the links between these events and the verses were examined. For example, it is known that Jafar bin Tayyar read the surah *Mary* during the 2nd Ethiopian emigration to Najashi of Abyssinia. This incident, which took place in the 5th (627) year of Hijri, was also a recording for this surah's date of revelation. Another example is the deduction that the "Rum" chapter, which describes the Sassanid's recent victory over the Byzantines, must have been revealed in the 6th or 7th Hijri year (628-629). More examples can be found. However, it is difficult to determine the exact chronological order of the Qur'an verses precisely. Yet, there is a consensus among Islamic scholars about which verses were revealed in Mecca and which verses were revealed in Medina.

Another issue that needs to be emphasized is that the revelation of the Qur'an verses that contain prohibitions was spread over a wide period of time with new verses being revealed to explain the previous ones. In this way, people were given time to adapt to these prohibitions. For example, while the prohibition of alcohol (*haram*) was limited only to when people were praying in the first verses, it was later extended to all the time. Therefore, making precise comments without knowing the order of the verses might cause misconception.

When Islamic scholars try to determine the order of the verses and surahs, the main sources they refer to are the hadiths about Muhammad and the biographies about him. They review the life of the Prophet and interpret the Qur'an by revising it

¹¹⁸ Yaşar Kurt, "Kuran'ın Nüzul süreci ve Nüzul sırasını esas alan tefsir üzerine" *19 Mayıs Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi dergisi*, sayı 33,2012: 1-35

in chronological order. Most Islamic commentators base their opinions about the life of the prophet on the biography written by Ibn Hisham in the 9th century. The book is a chronological record of the events starting from the birth of Muhammad in 572 in Mecca until his death in 632 in Medina. Although there are some controversies, there is a general consensus on the chronological framework of the Qur'an.

Determining and interpreting the Qur'an in its chronological order started in the West in the second half of the 19th century. The most important book on this subject is the "History of the Qur'an" (Die Geschichte des Qur'ans) published in 1860 by Theodor Nöldeke. Nöldeke chronologically determined that the Qur'an went through a stylistic change from the exuberant poetic passages of the early years to the long revelations in plain writing in later years. In accordance with the Islamic tradition, Nöldeke distinguished the verses revealed in Mecca and the verses revealed in Medina from each other. He also divided the verses that were revealed in Mecca into three periods. In the first period, surahs are short and full of symbols, and oath statements are often at the beginning of the passages.¹¹⁹

In the second Mecca period, surahs have a transition from the enthusiastic rhetoric of the first period to the calm of the second period. Its basic teachings were supported by elements taken from nature and history. During this period, oaths were not used so much; the surahs have begun to be longer. The expression "kul!" (say!) as an order to Muhammad was emphasized often.¹²⁰ During the third Mecca period, the stories and parables of the prophet were repeated frequently and with minor changes.

Since the Muslim community accepted Mohammed as their prophet during the Medina period, the revelations included the necessary laws and regulations for the society. The verses from this period often address the public directly. They provide

¹¹⁹ Montgomery Watt, *Kur'an'a giriş*, (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2006), 130-135

¹²⁰ Ibid,

accounts of some of the events that occurred during that period and explain their importance. The words *fesad* (mischief), *fetna* (sedition), and *küffar* (unbelievers), which are frequently mentioned in the Qur'an, also belong to the Medina period. In addition, the verses from this period demand obedience for the prophet.

In 1939, Richard Bell, who worked diligently to discover the main units of revelation in the Qur'an and to put them in historical order, stated that the main units of revelation, which were also accepted by Muslim scholars, were short passages. He was also of the opinion that these passages were collected as surahs under the supervision of Mohammed himself. Bell agreed with Nöldeke that the verses revealed in Mecca and Medina are different from each other in terms of style.¹²¹

Western authors' interpretations of the verses in chronological order have also been reciprocated in the Islamic world. A considerable number of commentators have emerged in this area. One of them is the Iranian philosopher Mohammad Abid al-Cabiri. In his work *Fehmü'l- Qur'an-hakim*, this author tried to understand and interpret the Prophet through the Qur'an, and the Qur'an through the Prophet.¹²²

Abdurrahman Hasan Habenneke al-Meydani, who lived between the years of 1927-2002, interpreted the Qur'an in chronological order and made an important contribution to the field of tafsir (exegesis) by making a breakthrough in the field. He examined the verses within the framework of the integrity of the Qur'an and listed all relevant verses available on each subject. Likewise, while explaining the meaning of a word, he tried to base his explanations on other verses and prove its meaning through them. The author, who tried not to stray from the historical context when interpreting the Qur'an, thought it was absolutely necessary to know the reason

¹²¹ Ibid

¹²² Yaşar Kurt, "Kuran'ın Nüzul süreci ve Nüzul sırasını esas alan tefsir üzerine" 1-35

behind the revelation of each verse, and he made his interpretations in accordance with this idea.¹²³

According to the Islamic Encyclopedia, eighty-six of the surahs belong to the Mecca period, and twenty-eight of them belong to the Medina period. The passages and verses that were revealed during the Mecca period mostly consist of short prophetic poems; and they focus on the subjects of beliefs, the contradictions that the polytheists had, the moral and human values came upon the ummah who did not respond positively to the calls of the previous prophets. There is a great deal of similarity among them. The verses revealed during the Medina period, on the other hand, focus on the construction of the society, the brotherhood of Islam, and the civil and legal issues in Islamic community. The narrative style is dominant, and the verses and surahs are longer.¹²⁴

While the exact date and chronology of the verses are not available, there is a general consensus about their chronological order and sequence. Furthermore, it is known with almost full certainty which surahs were revealed in Mecca and which surahs were revealed in Medina. There are minor differences of opinion among translators regarding the exact chronological order of the Medina surahs; however, this does not affect the overall framework of the Qur'an.

¹²³ Necmettin Çalışkan, "Nüzul sırasına göre yeni bir tefsir: Abdurrahman Hasan el-Meydani ve Mearicü't-Tefekkür", *Toplum Bilimleri*, Temmuz • 7 (14), 2013,364-368

¹²⁴ Abdülhamit Birişik *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, sure

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

First, a content analysis of Qur’anic texts will be made in order to examine the extent of patriarchal structures through the verses in a systematic and replicable manner according to the rules defined by Alan Bryman.¹²⁵ “Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use.”¹²⁶ As a scientific tool, content analysis provides new insights into a researcher's focus area, increasing their understanding of specific phenomena.

Through this content analysis, a classification was carried out about how many verses are directly related to women and men, and how many of the verses that are related to manhood/womanhood can be considered patriarchal or non-patriarchal according to the coding system adapted by Sylvia Walby’s six main patriarchal structures¹²⁷ and Gerda Lerner’s summary of creation of patriarchy¹²⁸, both of which were explained before. Inconclusive verses where a definitive patriarchy cannot be clearly documented and the verses which are not about patriarchy will be pointed out separately. The verses that deal with topics from the dimension of womanhood/manhood according to the patriarchy codes determined by Sylvia Walby and Gerda Lerner will be evaluated by two different judges to increase their validity.

The approaches that fall under the patriarchy coding are as follows:

1. Prioritizing the desires and needs of men, ignoring women's desires and needs

¹²⁵ Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press,2016)289-306

¹²⁶ Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis, An Introduction to its Methodology*, (London: Sage Publication,2004),18

¹²⁷ Sylvia Walby, “Theorizing Patriarchy” *Sociology*, 213-234

¹²⁸ Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, 9-10

2. Showing men as superior, active, and dominant; accepting women as incompetent, passive, and obedient
3. The asymmetry of gender in marriage and divorce processes
4. Presence of a concubinage institution
5. Asymmetric punishment of women under the pretext of their traps and tricks
6. Violence against women
7. Attaching importance to virginity
8. Condemnation of homosexuality
9. Punishment for adultery

There are five categories used in this content analysis, i.e. patriarchal, non-patriarchal (protecting and supporting women), non-patriarchal (egalitarian), inconclusive, and not about patriarchy.

After classifying the verses in accordance with the patriarchy coding, the paper explored – using qualitative data analysis – how this patriarchy was constructed and established through the relevant verses by referring to different interpretations of the Qur’anic verses made by different Islamic commentators. Qualitative research emphasizes words and meanings rather than quantification when analyzing data. Its strategy is to construct, induct, and interpret the subject matter that is being researched. Qualitative data analysis does not revolve solely around numbers, and achieves more than what can be done through quantitative research.¹²⁹ The research method used in the thesis consists of collecting and qualitatively analyzing the relevant verses and related documents.

Qualitative data analysis may be controversial in researching the hidden and disputable meanings of the verses. In such cases, we will examine which comments

¹²⁹ Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, 565-575

can be more reliable about patriarchy by reviewing the social events of the period which could be the reason behind the revelation of those verses.

The study will focus on the following research topics while tracing patriarchy in the Qur'an through qualitative data analysis: dominance of men over women, subordination of women to men, marriage and divorce regulations, polygamy, compulsory veiling, the guiles of women, validity of women's testimony, sharing of inheritance, cursing of homosexuality and adultery, virgin maidens (*houris*) promised to men in heaven, and rejection of any signs and remnants of matriarchal culture such as female goddesses.

The main steps of this qualitative research consist of the following in accordance with the study published by Foster¹³⁰:

Research topics (creation, male and female behavior patterns and superiority, marriage, divorce, concubinage, polygamy, women's veiling, witnessing, inheritance)

Selecting relevant verses

Collecting relevant data

Interpreting the data

Writing the findings and conclusion

The thesis will also examine whether the patriarchal structure was changed and transformed into an institution during the migration from Mecca to Medina, according to the chronological order of the verses on the subjects researched.

Another point that needs to be emphasized is that in this thesis, only the Qur'an and its different interpretations will be reviewed mainly for guidance, not

¹³⁰ Janet Foster, Informal social control and community crime prevention, "*The British Journal of Criminology*", Volume 35, Issue 4, 1995, 563–583,

other Islamic sources, such as hadith, sunnah, and fiqh. Hadith and sunnah are commentaries on the life, tradition, and words of the prophet; and fiqh is the study of religious, moral and legal provisions of Islam.

For the Turkish translation of the Qur'an, Yasar Nuri Öztürk's "Qur'an's Meaning in Order of Chronological Revealing of Surahs", Ali Bulaç's "Turkish Meaning of the Qur'an in Chronological Order", Turkish Religion Foundation's "The Meaning of Holy Qur'an", and Elmalı Hamdi Yazır's "Qur'an and Turkish Meaning" will be used. For the English translations, Arthur Arberry's "Holy Koran", Sami Aldeeb's "The Koran in chronological order Arabic-English", and Abdullah Yusuf Ali's "The Holy Qur'an" will be used as reference.

Although there are minor differences among these translations regarding the chronological order of the verses in the Qur'an, there is a consensus among almost all commentators as to which surahs belong to Mecca days, and which to Medina days. In all the interpretations of the Qur'an arranged in the chronological order of the surahs, the order of the surahs on the relationship between men and women is almost the same. The verses about womanhood/manhood will be reviewed according Ali Bulac's chronological order, which is based on the orders of al Suyuti and Ibn Hazm, and according to Sami Aldeeb's Qur'an in chronological order.

For the interpreted translations of the Qur'an, Tabari's Interpretation (Tafsir) and İhsan Eliaçık's "Living Qur'an" will be used.

Tabari was an important Islamic commentator who lived between the years 839-923. His works, "Islamic History" and "Qur'anic Interpretation" are the most referred sources in this field. His works have paved the way for many Qur'an commentators and became their predecessor.

Turkish author and theologian İhsan Eliaçık made a contemporary interpretation of the Qur'an. He thinks that the Qur'an should be re-read for the living

and reinterpreted in a way that will appeal to the perceptions of every age. He believes that doing the opposite would be reading the Qur'an for the dead.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS

6.1. CONTENT ANALYSIS

According to the content analysis conducted by reviewing all the verses of the Qur'an revealed during both Mecca and Medina periods by following Tabari's¹³¹ and Elmalı Hamdi Yazır's¹³² classifications, I found 185 verses in 47 surahs revealed during the Mecca period, and 151 verses in 15 surahs revealed during the Medina period with references to men and women. These verses are summarized in chronological order in the following section.

6.1.1. Content analyses of the verses related to women's/men's issues in the surahs revealed during the Mecca period in chronological order

2. Al-Qalam (The Pen): (about infidels who were proud of their possessions and sons)

“14 because he has wealth and sons.”

This verse from the surah Al-Qalam refers to the praising of sons. The fact that women were not mentioned as a source of pride seems to support patriarchy.

6. Al-Lahab (The Flame): Verses 4-5 are about the punishment of Ebu Leheb and his wife. He was the uncle of Muhammed and tormented him.

“4 and his wife, the carrier of the firewood, 5 upon her neck a rope of palm-fibre...”

¹³¹ Tabari *Tefsiri*, cilt 6, 436-450

¹³² Elmalı Hamdi Yazır, *Kur'an-ı Kerim ve Türkçe Anlamı*, 615

These verses are not about patriarchy.

7. At-Takwir (The Cessation): Verses 8-9 criticize female infanticide practiced in the pre-Islamic period.

“8 when the buried infant shall be asked 9 for what sin she was slain...”

The verses mentioned above from the 7th surah At-Takwir, where female infanticide is condemned, are against old patriarchal customs of paganist periods and protect women.

9. Al-Layl (The Night): Verse 3 of this surah is about creation and is not related to patriarchy.

“3 and That which created the male and the female,”

20. Al-Falaq (The Daybreak): Verse 4 (about witchcraft and the evilness of women)

“4 from the evil of the women who blow on knots,”

In this verse of surah Al-Falaq, men are warned against the seductions and provocations of women and are advised to enter God’s protection from all kinds of evil and witchcraft of women. The association of women with witchcraft goes back to old times. This accusation, which has long been shown as an excuse for fearing women, would result in the oppression of women in patriarchal order. This verse should be accepted as patriarchal.

23. An-Najm (The Star): Verses 19-22 (about cursing of female goddesses)

“19Have you considered El-Lat and El-’Uzza 20 and Manat the third, the other? 21 What have you males, and He females? 22That were indeed an unjust division.”

The patriarchal order began to be imposed by removing the culture of the matriarchal period as seen in the relevant verses of the surah above. These verses are related to the rejection of female goddesses, and they curse those who attributed girls to God and reserved men to themselves. Here, the Prophet regarded as an insult to God that the Arabs accepted girls as the angels of God and reserved boys for themselves. These verses can be regarded as promoting patriarchy.

Verses 45-47 are about creation; they state that all men and women are created from sperm droplets.

“45 and that He Himself created the two kinds, *male and female*, 46 of a sperm-drop, when it was cast forth, 47 and that upon Him rests the second growth,”

The term “second growth” mentioned in verse 47 is usually explained as “resurrection after death”. However, there are also those who claim that this second formation is a woman. Therefore, these verses can be considered as inconclusive with regards to having a patriarchal approach.

27. Al-Buruj (The Constellations): The 10th and 11th verses say that those men and women who persecute believers will be punished, and those who believe and do righteous deeds will be rewarded in heaven.

“10 Those who persecute the believers, *men and women*, and then have not repented, there awaits them the chastisement of hell..., 11 *Those who believe*, and do righteous deeds, for them await gardens underneath which rivers flow...”

In these verses, it was promised that believer men and women will enter heaven and have good lives there forever. It can be said that these verses are not patriarchal; they are egalitarian because both sexes are treated equally.

31. Al-Qiyamah (The Resurrection): Verses 37-39 are about creation.

“37 Was *he not a sperm-drop* spilled? 38 Then *he was a blood-clot*, and He created and formed, 39 and *He made of him two kinds, male and female.*”

These verses indicate that humans are conceived with a male sperm in the form of a clot and are later created as male and female. These verses are inconclusive for patriarchy as it is not clear whether the embryo is a co-formation of male and female cells.

38. Sad (Sad): The 52nd verse, which is about maidens who will accompany believing men in heaven, can be regarded as patriarchal.

“52 and with them maidens restraining their glances of equal age.”

39. Al-A`raf (The Elevated Places): In verses 26 and 27, God directly addresses humans prescribing that he has sent down on them a garment to cover their *shameful parts, and feathers*; and warns them against the temptations of the devil.

“26 *Children of Adam!* We have sent down on you a garment to cover your shameful parts, and feathers... 27 *Children of Adam!* Let not Satan tempt you as he brought your parents out of the Garden, stripping them of their garments to show them their shameful part.”

These verses from the surah Al-A`raf directly address men and women by stating that Adam and his female partner were punished for not following the instructions of God by being deceived with the temptations of Satan and were expelled from heaven. In the original of this narrative, which was taken from the story of expulsion from heaven in the Torah, it was stated that it was Eve who

deceived Adam in heaven.¹³³ However, no patriarchal association can be made for this story's version in the Qur'an, although it was certainly patriarchal in the Torah. We can also say that the Qur'an abolishes this existing patriarchal narrative and turns it into a story of disobedience to God by men and women. It is however interesting that the first man and woman, originally named in the Torah as Adam and Eve, were defined in the Qur'an as Adam and his wife. Why the Qur'an neglected the name Eve is a mystery.

Verses 80 and 82 are about the cursing of the homosexual people of Sodom.

“80 And Lot, when he said to his people, ‘What, do you commit such indecency as never any being in all the world committed before you? 81 See, you approach men lustfully instead of women; no, you are a people that do exceed. 82 And the only answer of his people was that they said, ‘Expel them from your city...’”,

It is explained in the above-mentioned verses that the people of Sodom were condemned because of their homosexual habits and that they were destroyed by God. The original version of the story is from the relevant chapter of the Torah, which tells the story of the cursing of the people of Lot because of their homosexuality.¹³⁴

The institutionalization of the concept of compulsory heterosexuality is imperative in patriarchal societies because social gender must be produced as performative¹³⁵, and performance is related to male gender socially. In this context, in order for male domination to be determinative, homosexuality had to be excluded. As in the holy books of all monotheistic religions, homosexuality is also found immoral in the Qur'an. In the story of the prophet Lot taken from the Torah, the people of

¹³³ Kutsal Kitap, *Tevrat, Zebur, İncil, Yarattılış* (Seul: Korean Bible Society, 2011)

¹³⁴ Kutsal Kitap, *Tevrat, Zebur, İncil, Yarattılış*,

¹³⁵ Judith Butler, *Cinsiyet Belası* (Istanbul:Metis Yayıncılık, 2019),77

Sodom, who were homosexual, were cursed. These verses can be said to be in support of patriarchy in this context.

Verse 83 is about Lot's family and his wife.

“83 So We delivered him and his family, except his wife; she was one of those that tarried.”

In the related verse of the surah Al-A`raf, it is told that the wife of Lot was punished. In the original story in Torah, God turned Lot's wife to a column of salt because she did not follow God's command and looked back when God demolished the city of Sodom. It was not clear why she looked behind his husband. According to a Torah interpretation under the chapter of Bereshit, the wife of Lot was not at a level to survive after witnessing the death of others. Another comment is that Lot could not have children from his daughters if his wife survived.¹³⁶ Why the Qur'an refers to the wife of Lot as an excluder 7 times in 4 surahs is an enigma. A probable reason could be that during the Mecca period, biblical quotations were still being made. The punishment of Lot's wife with an unexplained excuse can be considered as a patriarchal approach.

Verse 127 is about the persecution of the Pharaoh for the people of Moses.

“127 Then said the Council of the people of Pharaoh, 'Wilt thou leave Moses and his people to work corruption in the land, and leave thee and thy gods?' Said he, 'We shall *slaughter their sons and spare their women*; surely we are triumphant over them!'”

Verse 141 is a reminder from God to the people of Moses that he saved their life from the Pharaoh.

¹³⁶ Morşe Farsi, *Tora, Türkçe Çeviri ve Açıklamalarıyla, Bereşit*, (İstanbul, Gözlem Yayın,2002),131

“141 And when We delivered you from the folk of Pharaoh who were visiting you with evil chastisement, slaying your sons, and sparing your women -- and in that was a grievous trial from your Lord.”

These Qur'an verses are originally from the Torah, and they are not about patriarchy.

Verse 189 states that Adam's wife was created from him/for him so that he could go to her in order to taste her and meet his own needs.

“189 It is He who created you out of one living soul, and made of him his spouse that he might rest in her. Then, when he covered her, she bore a light burden and passed by with it;”

This verse can be considered patriarchal as it points out that Adam's spouse was created to meet his needs.

41. Ya Sin (Ya Sin): In verse 56 of this surah, God promises a comfortable life in heaven to believing men and their wives.

“56 they and their spouses, reclining upon couches in the shade;”

Here, God promises that believer men and women will enter heaven and have good lives there forever. It might be said that this verse is not patriarchal but egalitarian because of the equal treatment of both sexes.

43. Al-Fatir (The Creator): Verse 11, which denotes that God created people from a sperm droplet and formed them as pairs, can be accepted as inconclusive in

terms of patriarchy since the role of women in the formation of man is not clear in this verse.

“11 God created you of dust then of a sperm drop, then He made you pairs. No female bears or brings forth, save with His knowledge...”

44. Maryam (Mary): Verses 5, 7, 8, 16-20, 22, 23, 27-29, 32, 34. (Verse 5 is about the infertility of Zacharias’ wife, and verses 7-8 are about heralding Zechariah that he will have a son, verses 16-34 are about the son that was bestowed upon Mary, about her miraculous pregnancy with Jesus, and the birth of Jesus)

“5 And now I fear my kinsfolk after I am gone; and my wife is barren...7 “O Zachariah, We give thee good tidings of a boy, whose name is John...” 8 He said, ‘O my Lord, how shall I have a son, seeing my wife is barren, and I have attained to the declining of old age?’...”

“16 And mention in the Book Mary when she withdrew from her people to an eastern place, 17 and she took a veil apart from them; then We sent unto her Our Spirit that presented himself to her a man without fault. 18 She said, ‘I take refuge in the All-merciful from thee! 19 If thou fearest God ... He said, ‘I am but a messenger come from thy Lord, to give thee a boy most pure. 20 She said, ‘How shall I have a son whom no mortal has touched, neither have I been unchaste?’”

“22 So she conceived him and withdrew with him to a distant place. 23 And the birthpangs surprised her by the trunk of the palm-tree. She said, ‘Would I had died ere this, and become a thing forgotten!’”

“27 Then she brought the child to her folk carrying him; and they said, ‘Mary, thou hast surely committed a monstrous thing! 28 Sister of Aaron, thy father was not a wicked man, nor was thy mother a woman

unchaste.’ 29 Mary pointed to the child then; but they said, ‘How shall we speak to one who is still in the cradle, a little child.. 32 and likewise to cherish my mother; He has not made me arrogant, unprosperous. 34 That is Jesus, son of Mary, in word of truth, concerning which they are doubting.”

All the stories in these verses were originally told in the New Testament, and they are not about patriarchy.

45. Ta Ha (Ta Ha): Verses 115-120, and 122 are about God speaking to Adam, blaming him for his forgetfulness, not finding him determined, and warning him against the devil, and describing the heaven to him.

“115 And We made covenant with Adam before, but he forgot, and We found in him no constancy. 116 And when We said to the angels, ‘Bow yourselves to Adam’; so they bowed themselves, save Iblis; he refused. 117 Then We said, ‘Adam, surely this is an enemy to thee and thy wife. So let him not expel you both from the Garden, so that thou art unprosperous. 118 It is assuredly given to thee neither to hunger therein, nor to go naked, 119 neither to thirst therein, nor to suffer the sun.’ 120 Then Satan whispered to him saying, ‘Adam, shall I point thee to the Tree of Eternity, and a Kingdom that decays not?’ 122 Thereafter his Lord chose him, and turned again unto him, and He guided him.”

In the mentioned verses of the 45th surah Ta Ha, God criticizes Adam for his indecisiveness and forgetfulness and tells him about the beauty of heaven. These verses are not about patriarchy

In verses 121 and 123, it is told that Adam and his female partner ate the forbidden fruit with the incitement of the devil, opened their genitals, and God expelled them from heaven.

“121 *So the two of them ate of it, and their shameful parts revealed to them...* 123 Said He, *'Get you down, both of you together, out of it, each of you an enemy to each...*”

The 121th verse of the surah Ta Ha directly addresses men and women by stating that Adam and his female partner were punished for not following the instructions of God by being deceived with the temptations of Satan and were expelled from heaven. These verses can be considered non-patriarchal.

The words “you will be the enemy to each other” in the 123rd verse of the surah Ta Ha might be regarded inconclusive for patriarchy because it only creates hostility between men and women.

46. Al-Waqi`ah (That Which is Coming): Verses 22, and 35-40 are about the houris heralded to believer men in heaven.

“22 and wide-eyed houris”

“35 Perfectly We formed them, perfect, 36 and We made them spotless virgins, 37 chastely amorous, 38 like of age for the Companions of the Right. 39 A throng of the ancients 40 and a throng of the later folk.”

In these verses, faithful men are promised flirty virgins, all at the same age, and who have not any sexual relation with any man in heaven. These verses that are about the houris that are heralded only to believer men might be considered patriarchal.

47. Ash-Shu`ara' (The Poets): Verse 86 is about Abraham's invoking for forgiveness for his paganist father. In verse 88, it is explained that on the Day of Judgment, neither properties nor sons will be of any use.

“86 and forgive my father, for he is one of those astray.” This verse is **not about patriarchy.**

“88 the day when neither wealth nor sons shall profit.”

Verse 133 is about God gracing his believers with sons and cattle.

“133 succored you with flocks and *sons,*”

In these verses, it is as if there were no women on the stage. It is only men who are questioned and called out. These discourses might be signs of patriarchy.

Verses 165 and 166 are about God's condemnation of the people of Sodom for their homosexual acts and for leaving their wives.

“165 What, do you come to male beings, 166 leaving your wives that your Lord created for you? Nay, but you are a people of transgressors.”

By quoting the Torah, it is explained in these verses that the people of Sodom were condemned and destroyed by God because of their homosexual acts. These verses can be considered patriarchal because compulsory heterosexuality is essential for patriarchal societies.

Verses 170 and 171 are about saving Lot's family and leaving his wife behind.

“170 So We delivered him and his family, 171 Except an old woman who lingered behind;”

It can be considered as a patriarchal approach that God saved Lot and his daughters but punished his wife with an inexplicable excuse.

48. An-Naml (The Ant): Verses 23, 29, 32, 34, 42, 44 are about the Queen of Sheba, her discussions with king Salomon, and finally her conversion to Islam.

“23 I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given of everything, and she possesses a mighty throne. 29 She said, ‘O Council, see, a letter honourable has been cast unto me. 32 She said, ‘O Council, pronounce to me concerning my affair; I am not used to decide an affair until you bear me witness.’ 34 She said, ‘Kings, when they enter a city, disorder it and make the mighty ones of its inhabitants abased. Even so they too will do. 42 So, when she came, it was said, ‘Is thy throne like this?’ She said, ‘It seems the same.’ ‘And we were given the knowledge before her, and we were in surrender, 43 but that she served, apart from God, barred her, for she was of a people of unbelievers.’ 44 It was said to her, ‘Enter the pavilion.’ But when she saw it, she supposed it was a spreading water, and she bared her legs. He said, ‘It is a pavilion smoothed of crystal. She said, ‘My Lord, indeed I have wronged myself, and I surrender with Solomon to God, the Lord of all Being.’”

The above Qur’an verses telling the story of the Queen of Sheba and King Salomon, which are originally told in the Torah, are not about patriarchy.

Verse 55 tells the story of God cursing the people of Sodom because of their homosexual behaviors.

“55 What, do you approach men lustfully instead of women? No, you are a people that are ignorant. ”

In the story of the prophet Lot, which is originally from the Torah, the homosexual people of Sodom were cursed as illustrated in the above-mentioned verse

of the surah An-Naml. This verse can be said to be in support of patriarchy within this context.

Verse 57 is about the family of Lot and his wife:

“57 So We delivered him and his family, except his wife; We decreed she should be of those that tarried.”

Saving Lot and his family but punishing his wife can be regarded as a patriarchal approach by God.

49. Al-Qasas (The Narrative): Verses 7 and 10-13 are about the mother of Moses leaving him in the river, and Moses being found by the wife of the Pharaoh.

“7 So We revealed to Moses’ *mother*, ‘Suckle him, then, when thou fearest for him, cast him into the sea... 10 On the morrow the heart of Moses’ *mother* became empty, and she well-nigh disclosed him had We not strengthened her heart, that she might be among the believers; 11 and she said to his *sister*, ‘Follow him,’ and she perceived him from afar, even while they were not aware. 12 Now We had forbidden to him a foretime to be suckled by any *foster-mother*; therefore she said, ‘Shall I direct you to the people of a household who will take charge of him for you and look after him?’ 13 So We returned him to his *mother*, that she might be comforted and not sorrow, and that she might know that the promise of God is true; but most of them do not know.”

These verses, which the Qur’an took from the Torah, are not about patriarchy.

50. Bani Isra’il (The Israelites): The 32nd verse of the surah Bani Isra’il bans adultery.

“32 And approach not fornication; surely it is an indecency, and evil as a way...”

In order to ensure male dominance in patriarchal societies, the institution of marriage must be strengthened by the sovereignty of husbands over their spouses. Since adultery is considered as a threat to the institution of marriage, it is banned in the Qur'an, as it also has been in all patriarchal communities. Although adultery seems to be forbidden for both men and women, the fact that men can take four wives and have as many concubines as they want to satisfy their sexual needs shows that there is an asymmetry in this approach. Therefore, this verse might be interpreted as supporting patriarchy.

Verse 40 is about cursing of the female goddesses.

“40 What, has your Lord favored you with sons and taken to Himself from the angels females? Surely it is a monstrous thing you are saying...”

This verse is about female goddesses. It curses the people who attributed girls to God and reserved boys for themselves. The verse explains that angels are not created from females, and to impute females to God is to underestimate him. The Qur'an tries to eliminate this belief which bears the traces of matriarchal culture. The patriarchal order began to be imposed by rejecting the culture of the previous matriarchal period mentioned in this verse.

52. Hud (Hud): Verses 71 and 72 are about the heralding of Isaac's birth to the wife of Abraham who had claimed that she was too old to be pregnant.

“71 And his wife was standing by; she laughed, therefore We gave her the glad tidings of Isaac, and, after Isaac, of Jacob.”

It can be considered patriarchal that God always bestows boys on prophets.

“72 She said, ‘Woe is me! Shall I bear, being an old woman, and this my husband is an old man? This assuredly is a strange thing.’”

A definitive conclusion about patriarchy cannot be reached in this verse.

Verses 78, 79 and 81 are about Lot, who offered his daughters to pervert infidels, and about the punishment of his wife.

“78 And his people came to him, running towards him; and erstwhile they had been doing evil deeds. He said, ‘O my people, these are my daughters; they are cleaner for you. So, fear God, and do not degrade me in my guests. What, is there not one man among you of a right mind?’ 79 They said, ‘Thou knowest we have no right to thy daughters, and thou well knowest what we desire.’”

“81... so set forth, thou with thy family, in a watch of the night, and let not any one of you turn round, excepting thy wife; surely she shall be smitten by that which smites them...”

By quoting the Torah, it is explained in these verses that the people of Sodom were condemned because of their homosexual behaviors and were annihilated by God for this reason. In addition, his wife, who was left behind, was also punished.

Since the rejection of homosexuality is an indispensable element of patriarchy, these verses can be considered as patriarchal. The punishment of Lot’s wife for unknown reasons might also be regarded as patriarchal.

53. Yusuf (Jonas): Verses 23-32 are about Joseph and Potiphar. These verses tell the story of how Joseph refused Potiphar’s wife's desire to have intercourse with him.

“23 Now the *woman* in whose house he was solicited him and closed the doors on them. ‘Come,’ she said, ‘take me!’ ‘God be my

refuge,' he said...24 For *she desired him*; and he would have taken her, but that he saw the proof of his Lord...25 They raced to the door; and *she tore his shirt from behind*...'26 ...If his shirt has been torn from before then she has spoken truly, and he is one of the liars; 27 but if it be that *his shirt has been torn from behind*, then she has lied, and he is one of the truthful 28 When he saw his shirt was torn from behind he said, '*This is of your women's guile; surely your guile is great.* 29 Joseph, turn away from this; and thou, *woman*, ask forgiveness of thy crime; surely thou art one of the sinners.' 30 *Certain women* that were in the city said, 'The Governor's wife has been soliciting her page; he smote her heart with love; we see her in manifest error. 31 When she heard their sly whispers, she sent to them, and made ready for them a repast, then she gave to each one of them a knife. 'Come forth, attend to them, ' she said. And when they saw him, they so admired him that they cut their hands, saying, 'God save us! This is no mortal; he is no other but a noble angel.' 32 'So now you see, she said. 'This is he you blamed me for. Yes, I solicited him, but he abstained. Yet if he will not do what I commend him, he shall be imprisoned, and be one of the humbled.'"

Originally from the Torah, these verses tell the story of Joseph and Potiphar, through which men are warned against the seductions and provocations of women, and it is emphasized that men should avoid the traps of women. These verses can be regarded as **patriarchal** since they illustrate women trapping and provoking men.

54. Al-Hijr (The Rock): Verses 60 and 71 are about Lot and his family, and about Lot's presenting his daughters to perverts.

"60 altogether, excepting his wife -- we have decreed, she shall surely be of those that tarry..."

“71 He said, ‘These are my daughters, if you would be doing.’”

It might be regarded as a patriarchal approach that God ordered Lot to save the other members of his family by leaving his wife behind for an uncertain reason, and Lot's offering his daughters to perverts against their will.

55. Al-An`am (The Cattle): Verse 98 is about the critical points during the formation of an embryo.

“98...then a deciding on-place, and then a repository. We have distinguished the signs for a people who understand...”

In this verse, it is emphasized that embryos are placed in the womb of mothers based on men’s decisions. This verse can be accepted as patriarchal because mothers are seen as passive depositories while men are active in decision-making.

Verse 139 criticizes pre-Islamic society’s practice of banning women - alongside infidels- from eating certain animals, and it can be accepted as non-patriarchal, i.e. as supporting women.

“139 And they say, ‘What is within the bellies of these cattle is reserved for our males and forbidden to our spouses; but if it be dead, then they all shall be partners in it.’ He will assuredly recompense them for their describing;..”

56. As-Saffat (The Rangers): Verses 48 and 49 describe heaven as being full of virgin houris heralded to believer men.

“48 and *with them wide-eyed maidens restraining their glances* 49 as *if they were hidden pearls.*”

Faithful men are promised fruit gardens, delicious drinks, disease-free lives, and big-eyed girls lying on sofas in heaven. Virginity is a problem for men in their

relationships, where women only play the role of silent objects. Like the concept of honor, virginity is purely a manifestation of male domination in societies where women's humiliating subjugation to men is carried out by controlling women's actions by violence or marriage, and by banning any contact with foreigner men. As these verses explain the advantages offered to men with the patriarchal order in heaven, they can be considered as patriarchal.

Verses 101, 112 and 113 about God heralding to Abraham a son, i.e. his son Isaac.

“101 Then We gave him the good tidings of a prudent boy.
“112 Then We gave him the good tidings of Isaac, a Prophet, one of the righteous. 113 And We blessed him, and Isaac; and of their seed some are good-doers, and some manifest self-wrongers.”

These verses, originally from the Torah, describe God's grace and blessing to male prophets. However, they are inconclusive in terms of patriarchy.

Verse 114 is about Moses and his brother.

“114 We also favored Moses and Aaron.”

This verse is **not about patriarchy**.

Verse 133-136 are about Lot and his wife who was left behind.

“133 Lot too was one of the Envoys; 134 when We delivered him and his people altogether, 135 Except an *old woman* who was among those who lagged behind: 136 then We destroyed the other.”

As explained before, these verses might be accepted as patriarchal.

Verses 149, 150, 153, and 154 are about female goddesses.

“149 Now ask them their opinion: Is it that thy Lord has (only) *daughters*, and they have sons? 150 Or that We created the *angel’s female*, and they are witnesses 153 Did He (then) *choose daughters rather than sons*? 154 What ails you then, how you judge?”

These verses are related to female goddesses who should be rejected in order to eliminate the matriarchal culture. According to the Qur’an, the people of this culture were condemned because they attributed girls to God and hid boys for themselves. These verses can be regarded as promoting patriarchy as they favor men.

57. Luqman (Lukman): Verse 14 is about the troublesome pregnancies of *women*.

“14...his mother bore him in weakness upon weakness...”

This verse is not about patriarchy; it is about pregnancy and how women endure pain and suffering by carrying children.

The 16th and 17th verses are about the advices of Lukman to his son saying that he should not attribute a partner to God, that he should pray to God, and be patient and not be evil.

“16 O *my son*, if it should be but the weight of one grain of mustard-seed, and though it be in a rock, or in the heavens, or in the earth, God shall bring it forth; surely God is All subtle, All-aware. 17 O *my son*, perform the prayer, and bid unto honor, and forbid dishonor. And bear patiently whatever may befall thee; surely that is true constancy.”

These verses addressing to the sons of Lukman are not about patriarchy.

Verse 33 prescribes humans to be afraid of God. On the Day of Judgment, the father will not be beneficial to his child, and the child to the father.

“33 O men, fear your Lord, and dread a day when no father shall give satisfaction for his child, and no child shall give satisfaction *for his father whatever...*”

In this verse, it is as if there were no mothers on the stage. It is only fathers who are questioned and called out. These discourses might be signs of patriarchy.

59. Az-Zumar (The Companies) Verse 6 remarks that the female was created from the male as his spouse. Therefore, this verse might show traces of patriarchy.

“6 He created you of a single soul, then from it He appointed its mate...”

60. Al-Mu'min (The Forgiving One): Verse 25 is about the people of Moses, and it tells the story of the pharaoh killing the sons while keeping the women alive.

“25 And when he brought them the truth from Us, they said, ‘Slay the sons of those who believe with him, and spare their women’...”

This verse is not about patriarchy.

Verse 40 states that men and women who do righteous things will enter heaven.

“40 Whosoever does an evil deed shall be recompensed only with the like of it, but whosoever does a righteous deed, be it *male or female*, believing -- those shall enter Paradise, therein provided without reckoning.”

In this verse, it is promised that believer men and women will enter heaven and have good lives there forever. It might be said that this verse is not patriarchal, but egalitarian.

62. Ash-Shura (The Counsel): Verse 11 points out that God created spouses from human's souls.

“11 The Originator of the heavens and the earth; He has appointed for you, of yourselves, pairs,”

This verse can be considered patriarchal as it points out that women are created for men.

Verses 49 and 50 describe that if he wills it, God can bestow upon a couple either daughters or sons, or that he can grant them both boys and girls.

“49...He creates what He will; He gives to whom He will females, and He gives to whom He will males 50 or He couples them, both males and females...”

These verses that support an egalitarian approach are not patriarchal.

63. Az-Zukhruf (The Embellishment): Verses 16-19 are about female goddesses.

“16 Or has He taken to Himself, from *that He creates*, daughters, and favored you with sons? 17 And when any of them is given the good tidings of that he has likened to the All merciful, his face is darkened, and he chokes inwardly. 18 What, one who is reared amid ornaments and, when the time of altercation comes, is not to be seen? 19 And they have made the angels, who are themselves servants of the *All-merciful, females*. What, did they witness their creation? Their witness shall be written down, and they shall be questioned.”

The people were cursed because they worshipped goddesses and attributed girls to God and hid boys for themselves.

These verses can be considered patriarchal as they reject matriarchal elements such as worshipping goddesses.

Verses 68-70 address men and women and promise them paradise if they surrender to God.

“68 ‘O My servants, today no fear is on you, neither do you sorrow’ -- 69 even those who believed in Our signs, and had surrendered themselves. 70 ‘Enter Paradise, you and your wives, walking with joy!’”

These verses might be regarded as non-patriarchal as they reflect an egalitarian approach.

64. Ad-Dukhan (The Evident Smoke): Verse 54 is about God’s promise to believing men about the big-eyed girls in heaven.

“54 Even so; and We shall espouse them to *wide eyed houris*,”

This verse is about the houris heralded to believer men; therefore, it can be considered patriarchal.

66. Al-Ahqaf (The Sandhills): Verse 15 is about the painful process of pregnancy women go through.

“15...*his mother bore him painfully*, and painfully she gave birth to him; his bearing and his weaning are thirty months...”

It is told in this verse that mothers endure pain and suffering when carrying their children; they deliver them with great effort and raise them by breastfeeding for two years. However, there might be an indirect approach of patriarchy in this verse by

reducing women to motherhood. Considering all these aspects, this verse is inconclusive for patriarchy.

67. Adh-Dhariat (The Scatterers): Verse 29 is about Abraham's wife's complaining about being too old to conceive.

“29 Then came forward his wife, clamoring, and she smote her face, and said, '*An old woman, barren!*'”

This verse is not about patriarchy.

70. An-Nahl (The Bee): Verse 43 declares that all prophets sent *were man*.

“43 We sent not any before thee, except men to whom We revealed...”

It is emphasized in this verse that God has only sent male prophets. The absence of female prophets can be considered as a sign for patriarchy.

Verses 57-59 are about female goddesses.

“57 And they assign to *God daughters*; glory be to Him! -- and they have their desire; 58 and when any of them is given the good tidings of a *girl*, his face is darkened and he chokes inwardly, 59 as he hides him from the people because of the evil of the good tidings that have been given unto him, whether he shall preserve it in humiliation, or trample it; into the dust. Ah, evil is that they judge!”

People who worshipped female goddesses were condemned because they attributed daughters to God and reserved boys for themselves. These verses can be accepted as patriarchal since they refuse matriarchal elements.

Verse 71 is about men being superior to the concubines they own, and therefore, might be considered patriarchal.

“71 And God has preferred some of you over others in provision, but those that were preferred shall not give over their provision to that their right hands possess, so that they may be equal therein. What, and do they deny God’s blessing?”

Verse 72 states that God created wives from men, and sons and grandsons from wives.

“72 God has appointed for you of yourselves wives, and He has appointed for you of your wives sons and grandsons...”

This verse can be considered patriarchal because it states that women are created from men and for men, and it only refers to the sons and grandsons that women give birth to without mentioning daughters.

Verse 78 is about God letting people be born from their mothers’ womb.

“78 And it is God who brought you forth from your mothers’ wombs, and He appointed for you hearing, and sight, and hearts, that haply so you will be thankful.”

This verse reminding people to be grateful to God for allowing them to be borne by their mothers is not about patriarchy.

“97 And whosoever does a righteous deed, be it *male or female*, believing, We shall assuredly give him to live a goodly life; and We shall recompense them their wage, according to the best of what they did.”

This verse, which explains that both female and male believers will enter into heaven if they do righteous deeds might be considered as egalitarian and non-patriarchal.

71. Nuh (Noah): In verse 12, it is stated that God will strengthen people with sons and goods.

“12 and will succor you with wealth and sons, and will appoint for you gardens, and will appoint for you rivers.”

This verse can be considered patriarchal as it shows men as more valuable.

Verse 28 is about how Noah prayed to God for forgiveness for all believing women and men.

“28 My Lord, forgive me and my parents and whosoever enters my house as a believer, and the believers, men and women alike...”

This verse, which depicts Noah praying to God to forgive men and women for their sins, might be defined as non-patriarchal and egalitarian.

72. Ibrahim (Abraham): This verse tells the story of how the Pharaoh slaughtered sons and spared women.

“6...slaughtering your sons, and sparing your women -- and in that was a grievous trial from your Lord.”

This verse is not about patriarchy.

73. Al-Anbiya' (The Prophets): Verse 7 states that God has only sent male prophets.

“7 And We sent none before thee, but men to whom We made revelation -- question the People of the Remembrance, if you do not know -- prophets.”

The absence of female prophets and the appointment of male prophets only can be considered patriarchal.

Verse 90 is about how Zechariah's wife was made fertile by God, and the birth of John.

“90 So We answered him, and bestowed on him John, and We set his wife right for him; truly they vied with one another, hastening to good works ...”

This verse is not about patriarchy.

Verse 91 is about the appreciation of Mary's virginity.

“91 And she who guarded her virginity, so We breathed into her of Our spirit and appointed her and her son to be a sign unto all beings.”

Attaching great importance to virginity supports patriarchy.

74. Al-Mu'minun (The Believers): Verses 5-7 are about believing men who should not have any sexual relationship with anyone other than their wives and concubines.

“5 and guard their private parts 6 save from their wives and what their right hands own then being not blameworthy 7 (but whosoever seeks after more than that, those are the transgressors)”

Adultery is condemned and legal relationships with wives and concubines are recommended in the relevant verses. Promoting polygamy and concubinage for men was a requirement of the patriarchal structure. In addition, banning adultery was one of the necessary steps to establish a patriarchal system, because in order for

inheritance to be shared properly, it was necessary to know who the father of a child was. For these reasons, these verses can be accepted patriarchal.

76. At-Tur (The Mountain): Verse 20 is about the houris with big eyes heralded to believer men in heaven.

“20 Reclining upon couches ranged in rows; and We shall espouse them to wide-eyed houris.”

This verse should be regarded as patriarchal since it only considers the needs of men and reduces women to sexual objects that give pleasure to men under the name of houris.

Verse 39 is about infidels’ attributing daughters to God and keeping sons for themselves.

“39 Or has He daughters, and they sons?”

This verse might be accepted as patriarchal as it denies the traces of matriarchal culture and as the rejection of matriarchal elements such as female goddesses is essential for male dominant communities.

79. Al-Ma`arij (The Ladders): Verses 29-31 condemn adultery and recommend legal sex.

“29 and guard their private parts 30 save from *their wives* and what their right hands own, then not being blameworthy 31 (but whoso seeks after more than that, they are the transgressors),”

As mentioned before, forbidding adultery is imperative in patriarchal systems. The gender-based asymmetrical approach to adultery can be accepted as patriarchal.

80. An-Naba' (The Tidings): Verses 31-34 mention the young girls with budding nipples, the gardens, and the overflowing cups promised to believer men in heaven.

“31 Surely for the Godfearing awaits a place of security, 32 gardens and vineyards 33 *and maidens with swelling breasts*, like of age, 34 and a cup overflowing.”

These verses that are about the houris heralded to believer men should be considered patriarchal because they only care about men's happiness and lust, and reduce women to sexual objects.

84. Ar-Rum (The Romans): Verse 21 is about creation.

“21 And of His signs is that He created for you, of yourselves, spouses, that you might repose in them, and He has set between you love and mercy...”

In this verse, it is not clear which gender was created first. Therefore, it can be assumed to be non-patriarchal and egalitarian.

Verse 28 decrees that the female slaves and concubines owned by men cannot be equal to men and be their partners.

“28 He has struck for you a similitude from yourselves; do you have, among that your right hands own, associates in what We have provided for you so that you are equal in regard to it, you fearing them as you fear each other?..”

This verse can be regarded as patriarchal since it is about concubinage and supports female/male inequality.

85. Al-`Ankabut (The Spider): Verses 28-31 curse the homosexual people of Sodom and state that they would be destroyed.

“28 And Lot, when he said to his people ‘*Surely you commit such indecency as never any being in the entire world committed before you.*’ 29 What, *do you approach men, and cut the way,* and commit in your assembly dishonor?’ ... 30 He said, ‘*My Lord, help me against the people that work corruption.*’ 31 And when Our messengers came to Abraham with the good tidings, they said, ‘We shall destroy the people of this city, for its people are evildoers.’”

Since homosexuality is not tolerable in patriarchal societies as mentioned before, it can be appropriate to accept these verses as supporting patriarchy.

Verses 32 and 33 describe Lot's wife being punished along with the people of Sodom.

“32 He said, ‘Lot is in it.’ They said, ‘We know very well who is in it; assuredly We shall deliver him and his family, *except his wife; she has become of those that tarry.*’ 33 When that Our messengers came to Lot he was troubled on their account and distressed for them; but they said, ‘Fear not, neither sorrow, for surely we shall deliver thee and thy family, *except thy wife; she has become of those that tarry.*’”

As explained before, punishment of Lot's wife without a clear reason can be assumed to be in support of patriarchy.

88. Al-Hajj (The Pilgrimage): The following verse is about pregnant and lactating women who will be shocked when they see God.

“2 on the day when you behold it, every suckling woman shall neglect the child she has suckled, and every pregnant woman shall deposit her burden...”

This verse is not about patriarchy.

95. Muhammad (Muhammad): Verse 19 concerns both women and men asking forgiveness from God for their sins.

“19 Know thou therefore that there is no god but God, and ask forgiveness for thy sin and for the believers, men and women...”

This verse can be accepted as non-patriarchal and egalitarian as it addresses both men and women.

96. Ar-Ra`d (The Thunder): Verse 8, which is about God’s knowledge on women’s pregnancies, cannot be accepted as patriarchal.

“8 God knows what every female bears, and the wombs’ shrinking and swelling...”

“23 Gardens of Eden which they shall enter; and those who were righteous of their fathers, and their wives, and their seed, shall enter them, and the angels shall enter unto them from every gate:”

This verse, which harbingers the heaven to believers, is not patriarchal and can be accepted egalitarian.

97. Ar-Rahman (The Merciful): Verses 56, 70, 72, 74, 76 are about the houris in heaven who have not been touched before.

“56 *therein maidens* restraining their glances, *untouched before them by any man or jinn...*”

“70 therein maidens good and comely” – “72 houris, cloistered in cool pavilions” – “74 untouched before them by any man or jinn.”
“76 reclining upon green cushions and lovely druggets”

These verses should be considered patriarchal as they promise girls to believer men in heaven while ignoring women’s needs.

98. Ad-Dahr (The Man): Verse 19 promises young and handsome men to serve believers in heaven.

“19 Immortal youths shall go about them;when thou seest them,thou supposes them scattered pearls,”

This verse might be accepted as inconclusive for patriarchy since it is not clear to which gender these young boys will serve in heaven.

There is no single verse revealed during the Mecca period that directly address women. On the contrary, the following 19 verses from this period directly address men.

- 39. Al Araf: 80, 81
- 44. Maryam: 7, 19
- 45. Ta Ha: 117-119
- 47. Ash-Shu’ara: 165, 166
- 48. An Naml 55
- 57. Luqman: 16, 17, 33
- 70. An Nahl: 5-7
- 79. Al Ma’arij 29-31

In addition, there are 2 verses (26 and 27) from surah Al-Araf that address women/men directly at the same time.

The only woman mentioned with her name in the Mecca period was Mary. Other women were implicitly referred to as men's mothers, wives, or sisters.

Table 3: The categorization of the Mecca verses in chronological order according to content analysis

Nr	Surah/verses	Patriarchal	non-patriarchal; protecting women	non-patriarchal; egalitarian	inconclusive	not about patriarchy
2	Al Qalam/14	+				
5	Al-Lahab/4-5					+
7	At-Takwir/8-9		+			
9	Al-Layl /3					+
20	Al Falak/4	+				
23	An Najm/ 19-22 45-47	+			+	
27	Al Buruj/10-11			+		
31	Al-Qiyamah/ 37-39				+	
38	Sad / 52	+				
39	Al Araf/26,27, 80,81,83 127 141	+				+

	189		+		
41	Ya Sin/	56		+	
43	Al-Fatir/	11			+
44	Maryam /	5-8			+
		16-20,			+
		22,23,27-29			+
		32,34			+
45	Ta Ha /				
		115-120, 122,			+
		121,	+		
		123		+	
46	Al-Waqi'ah	22	+		
		35-40	+		
47	Ash-Shu'ara' /				
		86,			+
		88,133,165,166	+		
		170,171	+		
48	An-Naml	/			
		23,29,32,34			+
		42,44,			+
		55,57	+		
49	Al-Qasas/				
		7,10-13			+
50	Bani Israil /				
		32,40	+		

52	Hud /71	+			
	72				+
	78,79,81	+			
53	Yusuf /23-34	+			
54	Al-Hicri /60,71	+			
55	Al-An'am /98	+			
	139		+		
56	As-Saffat/				
	48-49	+			
	101,112,113	+			
	114			+	
	133-136,	+			
	149-154	+			
57	Luqman/				
	14,16,17				+
	33	+			
59	Az-Zumar/ 6	+			
60	Al-Mu'min/ 25				+
	40		+		
62	Ash-Shura/				
	11	+			
	49,50		+		
63	Az-Zukhruf/				
	16-19	+			
	68-70		+		

64	Ad-Dukhan 54	+		
66	Al-Ahqaf/ 15			+
67	Adh-Dhariyat			+
	29			
70	An-Nahl / 43	+		
	57-59,71,72	+		
	78			+
	97		+	
71	Nuh / 12	+		
	28		+	
72	Ibrahim/ 6			+
73	Al-Anbiya / 7	+		
	90			+
	91	+		
74	Al-Mu'minun/			
	5-7	+		
76	At-Tur / 20,39	+		
79	Al-Ma'arij/			
	29-31	+		
	39	+		
80	An-Naba/			
	31-34	+		
84	Ar-Rum / 21,		+	
	28	+		
85	Al-Ankabut			
	28-33	+		
88	Al-Hajj/ 2			+

95	Muhammad/ 19		+	
96	Ar-Rad /8			+
	23		+	
97	Ar-Rahman /			
	56,70,72,74,76	+		
98	Ad-Dahr/ 19			+

6.1.2. Content analyses of the verses related to women's/men's issues in the surahs revealed during the Medina period in chronological order

87. Al-Baqarah (The Cow):

Verse 25 indicates that for believers, there will be pure spouses in heaven, and they will stay there together forever.

“25... there for them shall be spouses purified; therein they shall dwell forever.”

Since the gender of those spouses heralded to believers in heaven is not known, this verse can be accepted as inconclusive in terms of patriarchy.

In verses 31 and 34, it is stated that God instructed Adam the names of all creatures and told the angels to prostrate to Adam. All prostrated except Satan, and in failing to do so, he became an infidel.

“31 And He taught Adam the names, all of them; then He presented them unto the angels and said, ‘Now tell Me the names of these, if you speak truly.’” 34 And when We said to the angels, ‘Bow yourselves to Adam’; so they bowed themselves, save Iblis; he refused, and waxed proud, and so he became one of the unbelievers.”

In these verses, God teaches the names only to Adam and orders the angels to prostrate only to him. As Eve is not mentioned at all, these verses might be accepted as patriarchal.

In verses 33, 35 and 36, God directly addresses Adam and orders him to give things their names; after that, he prescribes Adam and his wife to live in peace in the green lands of the Garden, and he instructs them not to approach a specific tree. However, they fail to obey God’s orders, and are therefore sent down to earth where they turn hostile to each other.

“33 He said, ‘*Adam*, tell them their names.’ ... 35 And We said, ‘*Adam*, dwell thou, and thy wife, in the Garden, and eat thereof easefully where you desire; but draw not nigh this tree,... 36...We said, ‘Get you all down, each of you an enemy of each; and in the earth a sojourn shall be yours, and enjoyment for a time.’”

These verses can be accepted as egalitarian and non-patriarchal because they are related to both genders. However, it is not clear why men and women should become enemies to each other on earth. It is a mystery why God chose the path of enmity instead of love and peace between females and males. In the original version of the story taken from the Torah, God gets angry at Adam and his wife because they did not follow His orders, but the name of Eve is not pronounced.

Verse 49 reminds the people of Moses that God saved them from the punishment of the Pharaoh who was killing their men and sparing their women.

“49 And when We delivered you from the folk of Pharaoh who were visiting you with evil chastisement, slaughtering your sons, and sparing your women...”

This verse is not about patriarchy.

In verses 168, 169 and 172, God directly addresses people by commanding them to eat clean food on earth and to stay away from the path of the devil.

“168 *O men*, eat of what is in the earth lawful and good; and follow not the steps of Satan;... 169 He only commands you to evil and indecency, ... 172 *O believers*, eat of the good things wherewith We have provided you,...”

These verses can be considered to be not about patriarchy.

In the 187th verse, it is stated that in the evenings when fasting period ends, men are allowed to have sex with their women until dawn. It is also emphasized that God knows men’s weakness in this matter, and that men and women are like dresses for each other.

“187 Permitted to you, upon the night of the Fast, is to go into your *wives*; -- they are a vestment for you, and you are a vestment for them. God knows that you have been betraying yourselves and has turned to you and pardoned you. So now lie with them, and seek what God has prescribed for you...”

This expression about sexual activities in Ramadan can be regarded as patriarchal as it appeals to men; it emphasizes men’s active role and women’s passive role in the process of initiating sexual intercourse.

Verse 221, which orders male and female believers to not to marry infidels, can be regarded as non-patriarchal and egalitarian since it addresses both sexes.

“221 Do not marry idolatresses, until they believe; a believing slave girl is better than an idolatress, though you may admire her. And do not marry idolaters, until they believe. A believing slave is better than an idolater, though you may admire him...”

Verse 222 prohibits sexual intercourse with women during menstrual periods. Since God considers women as smelly and dirty during this period, he commands men not to approach them. This approach should be regarded as patriarchal.

“222 They will question thee concerning the monthly course. Say: ‘It is hurt; so go apart from women during the monthly course, and do not approach them till they are clean. When they have cleansed themselves, then come unto them as God has commanded you...”

Verse 223 allows men to have intercourse with their women as they wish.

“223 Your women are a tillage for you; so, come unto your tillage as you wish, and forward for your souls; ...”

This verse, which states that men can use women in any way they want, should be regarded as patriarchal.

Verse 226 states that if a man swears not to have sex with his wife, he should wait 4 months before doing so. The Qur’an uses the word *ilâ*, which means "to vow," in relation to this prohibition of husband to have sex with his wife.

“226 For those who forswear their women a wait of four months...”

This approach that ignores women's wants and needs can be regarded as patriarchal.

Verses 227-232 are about divorce. Verse 227 orders divorced women to wait for three menstrual cycles to remarry. This 3-month waiting time is called *iddâ* in

Islamic terminology. This period is meant for seeing whether the divorced women are pregnant or not. If their husbands try to get remarried during this time, they are more entitled than other men. At the end of the divorce process, men either fix the dispute and remarry their wives or leave them by giving their rights. If husbands and wives want to remarry, they should not be prevented by their guardians. If the man divorces his wife after that, he can no longer marry her unless the woman marries someone else.

“227 but if they resolve on divorce, surely God is All-hearing, All-knowing. 228 Divorced *women* shall wait by themselves for three periods; and it is not lawful for them to hide what God has created in their wombs;... *Women* have such honorable rights as obligations, but their men have a degree above them;... 229 Divorce is twice; then honorable retention or setting free kindly. It is not lawful for you to take of what you have given them unless the couples fear they may not maintain... 230 If he divorces her finally, she shall not be lawful to him after that, *until she marries another husband*. If he divorces her, then it is no fault in them to return to each other... 231 *When you divorce women*, and they have reached their term, then retain them honorably or set them free honorably... 232 *When you divorce women*, and they have reached their term, do not debar them from marrying their husbands, when they have agreed together honorably...

All the above-mentioned verses allow men to use their wives as sexual objects while ignoring women's needs. These verses destroy women's freedom to act on their own and reduce them to mere commodities. Only men, not women, control sexual relationships, and matters of marriage and divorce, because it is the men that are considered as active participants in determining these issues. As these verses do not offer women any say in marriage and divorce, and accept men as superior to women, they should be accepted as patriarchal.

Verse 233 is about 2 years of breastfeeding and cannot be considered as patriarchal; it actually protects women.

“233 *Mothers* shall suckle their children two years completely, for such as desire to fulfil the suckling. It is for the *father* to provide them and clothe them honorably...”

Verses 234 and 235 are about widows whose husbands have died. According to these verses, they should wait 4 months and 10 days to remarry. During this time, they are not allowed to dress up and meet other men. If they are pregnant, this limitation lasts until they give birth. As long as men do not marry these women or commit adultery with them during this period, it is acceptable to flirt with them and offer marriage proposals to them. This waiting period, which is thought to be for mourning the loss of a husband, is not applied to men whose wife has died. Men are given the right to marry immediately after their wife dies.

“234 And those of you who die, leaving wives, they shall wait by themselves for four months and ten nights; when they have reached their term then it is no fault in you what they may do with themselves honorably... 235 There is no fault in you touching the proposal to women you offer, or hide in your hearts; God knows that you will be mindful of them; but do not make troth with them secretly without you speak honorable words...”

These verses ignore women’s wishes and demands. Due to their asymmetrical approach to spouses, they can be seen as patriarchal.

In verse 236, it is stated that unless sexual intercourse occurs after marriage and a certain bride wealth is determined in advance, there is no obstacle for men to divorce their wives. Verse 237 explains that if a certain bride wealth has been pre-determined, and if a sexual activity has not occurred, then men should pay at least

half of the pre-determined amount to get divorced. This bride wealth is called *mehr* in Islamic terminology.

“236 There is no fault in you, if you divorce women while as yet you have not touched them nor appointed any marriage-portion for them...”

“237 And if you divorce them before you have touched them, and you have already appointed for them a marriage-portion, then one-half of what you have appointed, unless it be they make remission...”

These verses can be regarded as patriarchal as they do not take into account the wishes and needs of women.

In verses 240 and 241 of the Qur'an, men are commanded to leave their wives enough money to live for one year if they die. However, women are required to stay at home for that one-year period. If women leave their house, no sin will be attributed to their dead husbands.

“ 240 And those of you who die, *leaving wives*, let them make testament for their wives, provision for a year without expulsion; but if they go forth, there is no fault in you what they may do with themselves honorably; God is All-mighty, All-wise.

This verse can be accepted as patriarchal as it commands that the widows should not leave their house for one year.

“241 There shall be *for divorced women provision* honorable -- an obligation on the Godfearing...”

This verse is not patriarchal; it protects women, as it supports women's rights.

In the 282th verse, it is explained that two male witnesses are necessary for writing debts. However, if one man is missing, then two women are required to testify in his place. The testimony of two women was deemed appropriate on the basis that if one woman forgets, the other would remind her.

“282 O believers, when you contract a debt one upon another for a stated term, write it down... And call in to witness two witnesses, men; or *if the two be not men, then one man and two women*, such witnesses as you approve of, that if one of the two women errs the other will remind her...”

Since it is stated here that only two women can fulfill the capacity of one man when testifying, this verse should be accepted as patriarchal.

89. Al-Imran (The Family of Imran):

Verse 14 tells how passions of long of life, *women*, sons, jewelry, horses, sheep, and pleasant fragrances are temporary felicities of life.

“14 Decked out fair to men is the love of lusts -- *women*, children, heaped-up heaps of gold and silver, horses of mark, cattle, and tillage. That is the enjoyment of the present life...”

This verse can be considered patriarchal as it accepts women as temporary passions of life, like precious commodities.

Verse 15 is a harbinger of a better eternal life for believers and their spouses.

“15 Say: ‘Shall I tell you of a better than that?’ For those that are god-fearing, with their Lord are gardens underneath which rivers flow, therein dwelling forever, and *spouses purified*, and God’s good pleasure..

This verse can be regarded as patriarchal as it promises pure and clean wives for men.

Verses 35-37 are about Mary's mother dedicating her child to God. Here, she says that she gave birth to a girl and that girls are not like boys. In addition, verse 37 is about Mary's feeling of gratitude to God for giving her livelihoods.

“35 When the wife of Imran said, ‘Lord, I have vowed to Thee, in dedication, what is within my womb... 36 And when she gave birth to her she said, ‘Lord, *I have given birth to her, a female.*’ (And God knew very well what she had given birth to; the *male is not as the female.*) ‘And I have named her *Mary*...37... Whenever Zachariah went into her in the Sanctuary, he found her provisioned. ‘*Mary*,’ he said, ‘how comes this to thee?’ ‘From God,’ she said...”

Verses 35 and 37 are not about patriarchy. However, in verse 36, the wife of Imran states that women are not like men. Yet, this verse is inconclusive for patriarchy as it is not clear what his wife meant with these words.

In verse 40, Zachariah tells God that he is old and that *his wife* is infertile.

“40 ‘Lord,’ said Zachariah, ‘how shall I have a son, seeing I am an old man and *my wife is barren?*’”

This verse is inconclusive in terms of patriarchy.

Verses 42-45 and 47 are about Mary and her explanation to God that she cannot conceive a child because nobody has touched her.

“42 And when the angels said, ‘*Mary*, God has chosen thee... 43 *Mary*; be obedient to thy Lord... 44 which of them should have charge of *Mary*... 45 When the angels said, ‘*Mary*, God gives thee good tidings of a Word from Him whose name is Messiah, Jesus, son

of *Mary*... 47 Lord,' said *Mary*, 'how shall I have a son seeing no mortal has touched me...'"

These verses are not about patriarchy.

In verses 195 and 198, God pledges paradise to men and women fighting on the path of faith.

"195 I waste not the labor of any that labors among you, be you *male or female* -- and I shall admit them to gardens underneath which rivers flow.' A reward from God... 198 But those who fear their Lord - for them shall be gardens underneath which rivers flow, therein dwelling forever.."

As these verses address both women and men, they can be regarded as non-patriarchal and egalitarian.

90. Al-Ahzab (The Allies):

In verses 4-6, God warns men that their divorced wives cannot be their mothers when they say "you are like my mother's back!" Similarly, their adopted sons are not counted as their real sons. God also informs people that the wives of the prophet are the mothers of believers.

"4 God has not assigned to any man two hearts within his breast; nor has He made your wives, when you divorce, saying, 'Be as my mother's back,' truly your mothers, neither has He made your adopted sons your sons in fact... 5 Call them after their true fathers; that is more equitable in the sight of God... 6 The Prophet is nearer to the believers than their selves; his wives are their mothers..."

Verses 4 and 5 can be regarded as patriarchal because they open the way for men to marry the wives of their adopted sons by not counting them as their own sons.

Verse 6 is inconclusive for patriarchy.

Verses 30-34 are about the wives of Mohammad. God commands that the wives of the prophet should not behave indecently, they should not behave coquettishly, or expose themselves; instead, they should live in their homes properly and worship.

“30 Wives of the Prophet, whosoever among you commits a flagrant indecency, for her the chastisement shall be doubled; ... 31 But whosoever of you is obedient to God and His Messenger, and does righteousness,... 33 Remain in your houses; and display not your finery, as did the pagans of old. And perform the prayer, and pay the alms, and obey God and His Messenger. People of the House, God only desires to put away from you abomination and to cleanse you... 34 And remember that which is recited in your houses of the signs of God and the Wisdom...”

These verses are aimed at controlling the behaviors of the prophet's wives and secluding them inside their home. As such, they should be considered patriarchal.

Verses 35 and 36 state that believers will be rewarded with obedient, praying, fasting and honest spouses, and that they should not behave against the will of God and his messenger.

35 Men and women who have surrendered, believing men and believing women, obedient men and obedient women, truthful men and truthful women, enduring men and enduring women, humble men and humble women, men and women who give in charity, men who fast and women who fast, men and women who guard their private parts, men and women who remember God oft -- for them God has prepared forgiveness and a mighty wage. 36 It is not for any believer,

man or woman, when God and His Messenger have decreed a matter, to have the choice in the affair. Whosoever disobeys God and His Messenger has gone astray into manifest error.”

Since these verses are directed at men and women equally, they should be accepted as non-patriarchal and egalitarian.

Verses 37 and 38 are about Muhammad’s hesitation to marry his adopted son’s (Zaid’s) wife and the consent of God to this marriage.

“37 When thou said to him whom God had blessed and thou hadst favoured, ‘Keep thy wife to thyself, and fear God,’ and thou wast concealing within thyself what God should reveal, fearing other men; and God has better right for thee to fear Him. So when Zaid had accomplished what he would of her, then We gave her in marriage to thee, so that there should not be any fault in the believers, touching the wives of their adopted sons, when they have accomplished what they would of them; and God’s commandment must be performed. 38 There is no fault in the Prophet, touching what God has ordained for him -- God’s wont with those who passed away before; and God’s commandment is doom decreed;”

Verses 37 and 38 can be regarded as patriarchal as they allow the prophet to marry the women he wanted; and within this framework, they support polygamy.

Verse 40 is about God’s declaration that Muhammad is not the father of all men.

“40 Muhammad is not the father of any one of your men, but the Messenger of God, and the Seal of the Prophets...”

This verse, which states that Muhammad is the messenger of God and not the father of any believer, is not about patriarchy.

Verse 49 is about divorce. God informs believers that if they divorce their wives without engaging in sexual activity, there is no need for a waiting time (iddah).

“49 O believers, when you marry believing women and then divorce them before you touch them, you have no period to reckon against them; so make provision for them, and set them free with kindness.”

This verse might be evaluated as inconclusive for patriarchy since it reflects only the perspectives of men, but at the same time, it seems to protect the rights of women.

Verses 50 and 51 give the prophet the freedom to marry the women he wished, and to divorce those he no longer wanted.

“50 O Prophet, We have made lawful for thee thy wives whom thou hast given their wages and what thy right hand owns, spoils of war that God has given thee, and the daughters of thy uncles paternal and aunts paternal, thy uncles maternal and aunts maternal, who have emigrated with thee, and any woman believer, if she give herself to the Prophet and if the Prophet desire to take her in marriage, for thee exclusively, apart from the believers -- We know what We have imposed upon them touching their wives and what their right hands own -- that there may be no fault in thee; God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate. 51 Thou mayest put off whom thou wilt of them, and whom thou wilt thou mayest take to thee; and if thou seekest any thou hast set aside there is no fault in thee. So it is likelier they will be comforted, and not sorrow, and every one of them will be well-pleased

with what thou givest her. God knows what is in your hearts; God is All-knowing, All-clement.”

These verses promote polygamy and therefore can be regarded as patriarchal.

Verse 52 is about God’s restrictions on the extreme polygamist desires of the Prophet. However, it might be still regarded patriarchal because it looks at the issue from a man's perspective only.

“52 Thereafter women are not lawful to thee, neither for thee to take other wives in exchange for them, though their beauty please thee, except what thy right hand owns...”

Verses 53 and 55 are about the veiling of the prophet’s wives, and the restrictions on who they can see unveiled. These verses can be considered patriarchal.

“53...And when you ask his wives for any object, ask them from behind a *curtain*; that is cleaner for your hearts and theirs. It is not for you to hurt God’s Messenger, neither to marry his wives after him, ever; surely that would be, in God’s sight, a monstrous thing.”

“55 There is no fault in the *Prophet’s wives* touching their fathers, their sons, their brothers, their brothers’ sons, their sisters’ sons, their women, and what their right hands own...”

Verse 58 is about the sins of those who slander believing men and women. These verses can be regarded as non-patriarchal and egalitarian.

“58 And those who hurt believing men and believing women, without that they have earned it, have laid upon themselves calumny and manifest sin.”

Verse 59 is also about the veiling of the Prophet's wives as well as other believing women; and it should be regarded as patriarchal because veiling is a tool that erases women's individuality and reduces them to a body, to an object.

“59 O Prophet, say to thy *wives and daughters and the believing women*, that they *draw their veils* close to them; so it is likelier they will be known, and not hurt...”

Verse 73 explains how non-believer men and women will be punished and how the repentance of believer men and women will be accepted. Because of its egalitarian approach, this verse is non-patriarchal.

“73 That God may chastise the hypocrites, men and women alike, and the idolaters, men and women alike; and that God may turn again unto the believers, men and women alike...”

91. Al-Mumtahanah (She Who is Tested):

Verses 10-12 state that believer men should test women to see if they are infidels or not and specify to the prophet under what conditions he can accept their allegiance.

“10 O believers, when believing *women* come to you as emigrants, test them. God knows very well their belief. Then, if you know them to be believers, return them not to the unbelievers. They are not permitted to the unbelievers, nor are the unbelievers permitted to them. Give the unbelievers what they have expended; and there is no fault in you to marry them when you have given them their wages. Do not hold fast to the ties of unbelieving *women*, and ask what you have expended, and let them ask what they have expended. That is God's judgment; He judges between you; and God is All-knowing, All wise. 11 And if any of your *wives* slips away from you to the

unbelievers, and then you retaliate, give those whose wives have gone away the like of what they have expended. And fear God, in whom you believe. 12 O Prophet, when believing *women* come to thee, swearing fealty to thee upon the terms that they will not associate with God anything, and will not steal, neither commit adultery, nor slay their children, nor bring a calumny they forge between their hands and their feet, nor disobey thee in aught honourable, ask God's forgiveness for them; God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate."

These verses are about questioning women's beliefs, and since such an inquiry is not applied to men, there is an asymmetrical attitude. Therefore, these verses that show women in an inferior position than men might be considered as patriarchal.

92. An-Nisa'(Women):

Revealed in the years of 625-626 in Medina, this surah is about women, as the name reveals. After determining that it is permissible for men to marry more than one woman, the surah continues with the verses regarding the sharing of heritage and the measures to be taken to prevent illegitimate sexual relationships. It is stated that the man in charge of the family is accepted as the head of the family. The surah continues by demanding fair treatment for women, orphan girls, young children; it then recommends that disputes arising between spouses should be resolved peacefully.

Verse 1 explains how women were created from men, and it can be regarded as patriarchal.

"1 Mankind, fear your Lord, who created you of a single soul, and from it *created its mate, and from the pair* of them scattered abroad many men and women..."

Verse 3 allows men to marry up to four women, or to take as many concubines as they can. However, the verse also recommends for people who cannot provide justice to marry a single woman.

“ 3 If you fear that you will not act justly towards the orphans, *marry such women as seem good to you, two, three, four*; but if you fear you will not be equitable, then only one, *or what your right hands own...*”

This verse, which addresses only men and promotes polygamy, should be accepted as patriarchal.

Verse 4 is about the dowries that husbands should give to their wives.

“4 And *give the women their dowries* as a gift spontaneous; but if they are pleased to offer you any of it, consume it with wholesome appetite...”

Dowry, which is called *mehr* in Qur’an, is the money that husbands are required to pay for their brides. In the patriarchal communities before Islam, it was paid to the families of the bride. However, the Qur’an seems to have changed this practice in favor of women. Therefore, this verse can be considered as non-patriarchal and as protecting women.

Verse 7 is about sharing the inheritance of parents and relatives. Since there is no certainty in this verse about how inheritance will be shared between women and men, we can accept it as inconclusive.

“7 To the men a share of what parents and kinsmen leave, and to the women a share of what parents and kinsmen leave, whether it be little or much, a share apportioned;”

However, verse 11 abrogates the above-mentioned verse by stating that a man should receive from an inheritance what two women receive in total. This verse can be considered patriarchal.

“11 God charges you, concerning your children: to *the male the like of the portion of two females*, and if they be women above two, then for them two-thirds of what he leaves, but *if she be one then to her a half*; and to his parents to each one of the two the sixth of what he leaves, if he has children; but if he has no children, and his heirs are his parents, *a third to his mother*, or, if he has brothers, *to his mother a sixth*, after any bequest he may bequeath, or any debt...”

Although this verse seems to be improving the inheritance issue of the old patriarchal order, which completely ignored women, a patriarchal approach can still be observed as men are given twice the amount that women are given. Moreover, it should be noted that during the same period, there were also matriarchal practices in which all inheritance were given to women.

Verse 12 is about sharing the inheritance of a spouse when he or she dies. Similar to the verse above, this verse gives men the right to receive twice the share of women. Therefore, it can be appropriate to consider this verse as patriarchal.

“12 And for you a half of what your wives leave, if they have no children; but if they have children, then for you of what they leave a fourth, after any bequest they may bequeath, or any debt. And for them a fourth of what you leave, if you have no children; but if you have children, then for them of what you leave an eighth, after any bequest you may bequeath, or any debt.”

Verses 15 and 16 are about the cursing of female prostitution.

“15 Such of your women as commit *indecenty*, call four of you to witness against them; and if they witness, then detain them in their houses *until death takes them* or God appoints for them a way. 16 And when two of you commit *indecenty*, punish them both; but if they repent and make amends, then suffer them to be; God turns, and is All-compassionate.”

These verses prescribe punishment to women who are found guilty of fornication in the presence of four witnesses. However, according to the verses, they will be forgiven if they repent. These verses evaluate women from a male point of view, and there is an asymmetry in the way they approach both sexes. Therefore, they can be regarded as patriarchal.

Verse 19 advises that men should not take the inheritance of women by force unless the women in question engage in prostitution. It is also inappropriate for men to take back the goods they have given to women, even if they decide to remarry with other spouses.

“19 O believers, it is not lawful for you to *inherit women against their will*; neither *debar them*, that you may go off with part of what you have given them, except when they commit a *flagrant indecenty...*”

Seizing women's inheritance and property under any circumstances might be considered a patriarchal approach.

“20 And if you desire to exchange a wife in place of another, and you have given to one a hundredweight, take of it nothing. What, will you take it by way of calumny and manifest sin? 21 How shall you take it, when each of you has been privily with the other, and they have taken from you a solemn compact?”

These verses protect divorced women's rights and can be accepted as non-patriarchal and as protective of women.

Verses 22-25 describe women that men are forbidden to take as their wives. The forbidden relationships described in these verses were originally taken from the Leviticus Chapter of the Torah, but the Qur'an also forbids getting married to nephews.¹³⁷

“22 *And do not marry women that your fathers married... 23 Forbidden to you are your mothers and daughters, your sisters, your aunts paternal and maternal, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your mothers who have given suck to you, your suckling sisters, your wives' mothers, your stepdaughters who are in your care being born of your wives you have been in to... and the spouses of your sons who are of your loins, and that you should take to you two sisters together,... 24 and wedded women, save what your right hands own...*”

Since these taboo relationships came into play with the transition to the patriarchal period, it may be appropriate to consider these verses as the steps of the patriarchal signs that are coming.

Verse 25 recommends men to marry the concubines that they own if they have no financial means to marry free women, provided they stay away from adultery. If these concubines committed adultery, they would receive half the punishment that free women would receive.

“25 Any one of you who has not the affluence to be able to *marry believing freewomen* in wedlock let him take believing handmaids that your right hands own... ...So marry them, with their

¹³⁷ Kutsal Kitap, *Levililer* 18:6-18, 20:11-21

people's leave, and give them their *wages honourably as women in wedlock*, not as in licence or taking lovers. But when they are in wedlock, if they *commit indecency*, they shall be liable to half the chastisement of freewomen..."

Owning concubines is a patriarchal custom, just like avoiding adultery is a prerequisite of patriarchy. Furthermore, it is a discriminatory attitude in the internal logic of the Qur'an that concubines receive less punishment for adultery than free women do.

Verse 32 explains that men and women can both have a share of what they earn and advises them not to question who is superior to whom; everyone must accept the fortune God has given to them. This verse is non-patriarchal and egalitarian.

"32 Do not covet that whereby God in bounty has preferred one of you above another. To the men a share from what they have earned, and to the women a share from what they have earned..."

However, verse 34 abrogates verse 32 and claims that men are superior to women by emphasizing they should rule over women. Moreover, it even proclaims that if a wife disobeys her husband, the husband can beat his wife after separating their beds. This verse is possibly the most patriarchal verse in the Qur'an.

"34 Men are *the managers of the affairs of women* for that *God has preferred in bounty one of them over another*, and for that they have expended of their property. *Righteous women are therefore obedient*, guarding the secret for God's guarding. And *those you fear may be rebellious admonish; banish them to their couches, and beat them...*"

Verse 34 lists a set of punishments for women if they are disloyal or rebellious to their husbands. This non-egalitarian approach should be accepted as patriarchal.

Verse 35 suggests that when men and women dispute, they should have peacemakers to solve the issue. Because of its egalitarian approach, this verse is non-patriarchal.

“35 And if you fear a breach between the two, bring forth an arbiter from his people and from her people an arbiter, if they desire to set things right...”

Verse 43 implies that touching women is a dirty act by likening it to going to the toilet, getting sick, or returning from a travel.

“43... if you are sick, or on a journey, or if any of you comes from the privy, or you have touched women, and you can find no water, then have recourse to wholesome dust and wipe your faces and your hands...”

This verse insults women and is therefore can be regarded patriarchal.

Verse 57 describes the heaven to believers. It promises virtuous spouses to believers.

“57... We shall admit to gardens underneath which rivers flow, therein dwelling forever and ever; therein for them shall be spouses purified...”

Since the gender of the spouses promised to believers in heaven is unknown, this verse might be considered inconclusive for patriarchy.

Verses 98 and 99 state that the men and women who have no skill will be forgiven by God.

“98 except the *men, women*, and children who, being abased, can devise nothing and are not guided to a way; 99 haply them God will yet pardon...”

These verses are not about patriarchy.

Verse 117 is about worshipping female goddesses.

“117 Instead of Him, they pray not except to female beings; they pray not except to a rebel Satan accursed by God.”

This verse can be regarded as patriarchal as it curses worshipping the goddesses of matriarchal culture.

Verse 124 announces that believing men and women will enter into heaven if they do righteous deeds.

“124 And whosoever does deeds of righteousness, be it male or female, believing - they shall enter Paradise...”

Because of its egalitarian approach, this verse can be regarded as non-patriarchal.

Verse 127 is about men who should give their rights to orphan girls they want to marry. It is non-patriarchal- protecting women

“127... what is recited to you in the Book concerning the orphan women to whom you give not what is prescribed for them, and yet desire to marry them...”

Verse 128 recommends women to make peace with their husbands if they suspect that their husbands cheat on them.

“128 If a woman fear rebelliousness or aversion in her husband, there is no fault in them if the couple set things right between them; right settlement is better...”

Due to the asymmetry in this verse’s approach to suspicions of infidelity, it can be appropriate to accept it as patriarchal.

Verse 129 states that it is impossible for men to be completely just among their wives, and thus seems to invalidate the third verse of the same surah, which allows men to marry up to four women.

“129 You will not be able to be *equitable between your wives*, be you ever so eager; yet do not be altogether partial so that you leave her as it were suspended...”

Although it seems to be supporting monogamy, this verse, which ignores women's desires and focuses only men, can be considered patriarchal because of its asymmetrical approach to the issue.

Verses 156, 157 and 171 are about Mary, but they are not patriarchal.

“156 and for their unbelief, and their uttering against Mary a mighty calumny... 157 and for their saying, ‘We slew the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the Messenger of God’...171... The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him...”

In verse 163, God announces that He sent revelations to Muhammad as he did to other male prophets by listing their names.

“163 We have revealed to thee as We revealed to Noah, and the Prophets after him, and We revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, Jesus and Job, Jonah and Aaron and Solomon, and We gave to David Psalms,”

Since all the prophets mentioned here are men, it would be appropriate to accept this verse as patriarchal.

Verse 176 suggests a non-egalitarian sharing of inheritance between men and women; therefore, it can be regarded as patriarchal.

“176 They will ask thee for a pronouncement. Say: ‘God pronounces to you concerning the indirect heirs. If a man perishes having no children, but he has a sister, she shall receive a half of what he leaves, and he is her heir if she has no children. If there be two sisters, they shall receive two-thirds of what he leaves; if there be brothers and sisters, the male shall receive the portion of two females...’”

94. Al-Hadid (The Iron):

Verse 12 heralds the heaven to believer men and women, and it can be accepted as non-patriarchal and egalitarian.

“12 Upon the day when thou seest the believers, men and women, their light running before them, and on their right hands. ‘Good tidings for you today! Gardens underneath which rivers flow, therein to dwell for ever...’”

99. At-Talaq (The Divorce):

Revealed in the middle of the Medina period, this surah got its name from the verses mentioning some aspects of divorce law.

In verse 1, God commands the prophet - and through him, all men - not to expel his divorced wives from the house during the three-month waiting period unless they have committed an obvious immorality.

“1 O Prophet, when you *divorce women*, divorce them when they have reached their period. Count the period, and fear God your Lord. *Do not expel them from their houses*, nor let them go forth, *except* when they commit a flagrant *indecenty*...”

This verse directly addresses men but restricts women during divorce process. Therefore, it can be considered patriarchal.

Verse 2 orders men to either leave their women peacefully or to keep them in accordance with customs.

“2 Then, when they have reached their term, retain them honourably, or part from them honourably...”

As men control the decision-making process in this verse, it can be regarded as patriarchal.

Verse 4 is about the waiting period for women who no longer go through menstruation or who have never menstruated in their lives.

“4 As for your women who have despaired of further menstruating, if you are in doubt, their period shall be three months; and those who have not menstruated as yet...”

This verse, which controls women over their menstrual period, can be considered as patriarchal.

Verse 6 reminds husbands about their responsibilities during their wives' waiting or breast-feeding periods.

“6 Lodge them where you are lodging, according to your means, and do not press them, so as to straighten their circumstances. If they are with child, expend upon them until they bring forth their burden. If they suckle for you, give them their wages, and consult together honorably. If you both make difficulties, another woman shall suckle for him...7 Let the man of plenty expend out of his plenty. As for him whose provision is stinted to him, let him expend of what God has given him...”

These verses seem to support women during their waiting and breast-feeding periods. Therefore, they are nonpatriarchal and protective of women.

102. An-Nur (The Light)

This surah draws attention to the moral principles to follow in establishing a family and social life.

Verses 2 and 3 are about the penalties given to those who engage in fornication; those people only have the permission to marry other fornicators/fornicatresses.

“2 The fornicatress and the fornicator -- scourge each one of them a hundred stripes,... 3 The fornicator shall marry none but a fornicatress or an idolatress, and the fornicatress -- none shall marry her but a fornicator or an idolator; that is forbidden to the believers.”

As mentioned before, banning adultery and fornication is one of the most important steps for establishing patriarchy. However, the equal punishment of men and women here can be considered as inconclusive for patriarchy.

Verse 4 is for those who fail to bring forth enough number of witnesses when slandering honest women with adultery.

4 And those who cast it up *on women in wedlock*, and then bring *not four witnesses*, scourge them with *eighty stripes*, and do not accept any testimony of theirs ever; those -- they are the ungodly.

This verse can be considered to be protective of women. Therefore, it can be accepted as non-patriarchal.

Verses 6-9 are about the testimonies of husbands who accuse their wives of adultery.

“And those who cast it up on their *wives having no witnesses* except themselves, the testimony of one of them shall be to *testify by God four times* that he is of the truthful, 7 and a fifth time, that the curse of God shall be upon him, if he should be of the liars. 8 It shall avert from her the chastisement if *she testify by God four times* that he is of the liars, 9 and a fifth time, that the wrath of God shall be upon her, if he should be of the truthful.”

It can be accepted as an egalitarian approach that in these verses, both the men who accuse their wives of adultery and the women who are accused of adultery can prove themselves right or innocent by taking an oath to God as their witness. However, the verses only mention men accusing women of committing adultery, not the other way around. Therefore, it would be appropriate to accept these verses as inconclusive for patriarchy.

Verses 11-17, and 23 illustrate God's anger at the slander of Aisha, the wife of the prophet, and his condemnation of those who gossiped about her.

“11 Those who came with the slander are a band of you; do not reckon it evil for you; 12 Why, when you heard it, did the believing men and women not of their own account think good thoughts, and say, 'This is a manifest calumny'? 13 Why did they not bring four witnesses against it? But since they did not bring the witnesses, in God's sight they are the liars. 14 But for God's bounty to you and His mercy in the present world and the world to come there would have visited you for your mutterings a mighty chastisement. 15 When you received it on your tongues, and were speaking with your mouths that whereof you had no knowledge, and reckoned it a light thing, and with God it was a mighty thing – 16 And why, when you heard it, did you not say, 'It is not for us to speak about this; glory be to Thee! This is a mighty calumny'? 17 God admonishes you, that you shall never repeat the like of it again; if you are believers.” 23 Surely those who cast it up on women in wedlock that are heedless but believing shall be accursed in the present world...”

These verses curse the acts of slander and gossip; and as they address only women, they can be accepted as inconclusive for patriarchy.

Verse 26 orders indecent women to be with indecent men, and chaste women with chaste men.

“26 Corrupt women for corrupt men, and corrupt men for corrupt women; good women for good men, and good men for good women -- these are declared quit of what they say...”

This verse shows an egalitarian approach; therefore, it is non-patriarchal.

Verses 30 and 31 state that men and women should not harass each other.

“30 Say to the believers, that they cast down their eyes and guard their private parts; that is purer for them...”

This verse protects women, making it nonpatriarchal.

However, verse 31 is about women's veiling.

“31 And say to the *believing women*, that they cast down their eyes’ and guard their private parts, and reveal not their adornment save such as is outward; and let them cast their veils over their bosoms, and not reveal their adornment save to their husbands, or their fathers, or their husbands’ fathers, or their sons, or their husbands’ sons, or their brothers, or their brothers’ sons, or their sisters’ sons, or their women, or what their right hands own, or such men as attend them, not having sexual desire, or children who have not yet attained knowledge of women’s private parts; nor let them stamp their feet, so that their hidden ornament may be known...”

Controlling the female body through veiling is a patriarchal mechanism. The veils that cover women without leaving a piece of skin uncovered anonymize them, stripping them from their individuality. Therefore, verse 31 should be accepted **as** patriarchal.

Verse 32 dictates believers to marry those around them if they are suitable.

“32 Marry the spouseless among you, and your slaves and handmaidens that are righteous...”

This verse is not patriarchal.

Verse 33 declares that believer men should maintain their honor until they get married. This verse also commands men to not force concubines into prostitution.

“33 And let those who find not the means to marry be abstinent till God enriches them of His bounty. Those your right hands own who seek emancipation, contract with them accordingly... And constrain not your slave girls to prostitution, if they desire to live in chastity...”

As this verse states that men should take care of women, not force them into prostitution, and be generous to them, it can be considered as non-patriarchal, and protective of women.

Verse 60 explains that women who are too old to marry no longer need to be veiled.

“60 Such women as are past child-bearing and have no hope of marriage -- there is no fault in them that they put off their clothes, so be it that they flaunt no ornament...”

Veiling is a mechanism that erases women. It is assumed that uncovered women will prevent men from turning to God by seducing them. Beyond being patriarchal, this verse demonstrates a degrading discourse about women by stating that they are no longer attractive when they get old.

105. Al-Mujadilah (She Who Pleaded):

Verse 1 of this surah is about women complaining to God about their husbands.

“1 God has heard the words of her that disputes with thee concerning her husband, and makes complaint unto God...”

This verse has a non-patriarchal approach as it lets women use God as an arbitrator in their disputes with their husbands.

Verses 2-4 are about the price that men who want to leave their wives by saying “you are like my mother's back” should pay.

“2 Those of you who say, regarding their wives, ‘Be as my mother’s back,’ they are not truly their mothers; their mothers are only those who gave them birth... 3 And those who say, regarding their wives, ‘Be as my mother’s back,’ and then retract what they have said, they shall set free a slave, before the two of them touch one another... 4 But whosoever finds not the means, then let him fast two successive months, before the two of them touch one another. And if any man is not able to, then let him feed sixty poor persons...”

The statement “you are like my mother's back to me” is an old patriarchal saying that men use to easily divorce their wives. In relation to this, the Qur'an stipulates certain costs to prevent husbands from leaving their wives so easily. However, all these rules are aimed at men; and since the opposite is not the case, these verses should be regarded as asymmetrical in terms of the relationship between men and women. Therefore, these verses are considered inconclusive for patriarchy.

106. Al-Hujurat (The Chambers):

Verse 11 proclaims that women should not make fun of other women. The reason for this verse was that the prophet's wives were fighting each other.

“...neither let women scoff at women who may be better than themselves...”

Verse 13 states that God created humans as male and female.

“13 O mankind, We have created you male and female, and appointed you races and tribes...”

These verses are not about patriarchy.

107. At-Tahrim (The Prohibition):

Verses 1 and 2 tell Muhammad that he should not refrain himself from whom he desires. These verses are related to the story of the Prophet getting caught with his concubine Maria by his wife Hafsa in her house on the day assigned to her. The details of this story will be explained later.

“1 O Prophet, why forbiddest thou what God has made lawful to thee, seeking the good pleasure of thy wives? And God is Allforgiving, All-compassionate. 2 God has ordained for you the absolution of your oaths. God is your Protector, and He is the All-knowing, the All-wise.”

These verses can be regarded as patriarchal as they were revealed to show God’s consent in relation to the prophet’s desire to be with his concubine.

Verses 3-5 are about the prophet’s wives who gossiped. These verses announce that if the Prophet were to divorce them, God would give him much better wives.

“3 And when the Prophet confided *to one of his wives a certain matter*; and then, when she told of it, and God disclosed that to him, he made known part of it, and turned aside from part; then, when he told her of it, she said, ‘Who told thee this?’ He said, ‘I was told of it by the All-knowing, the All-aware.’ 4 *If you two repent to God, yet your hearts certainly inclined*; but if you support one another against him, God is his Protector, and Gabriel, and the righteous among the

believers; and, after that, the angels are his supporters. *5 It is possible that, if he divorces you, his Lord will give him in exchange wives better than you, women who have surrendered, believing, obedient, penitent, devout, given to fasting, who have been married and virgins too.*

These verses may promote patriarchy because they focus on men's desires and ignore women's needs.

Verse 10 is about the wives of Lot and Noah, who were punished for betraying their husbands.

“10 God has struck a similitude for the unbelievers -- *the wife of Noah, and the wife of Lot*; for they were under two of Our righteous servants, but *they betrayed them*, so they availed them nothing whatsoever against God; so it was said, ‘*Enter, you two, the Fire with those who enter.*’”

As mentioned earlier in the study, Lot's wife was punished for an uncertain reason. There is no information about Noah's wife, neither in the Old nor in the New Testament. Arbitrary punishment of these women might be regarded as a patriarchal approach.

The 11th verse of this surah is about the wife of the pharaoh, who was rewarded for her faith.

“11 God has struck a similitude for the believers -- the wife of Pharaoh, when she said, ‘My Lord, build for me a house in Paradise...’”

This verse can be accepted as non-patriarchal and as protective of women.

The 12th verse is about rewarding Mary, who preserved her virginity.

“12 And Mary, Imran’s daughter, who guarded her virginity, so We breathed into her of Our Spirit, and she confirmed the Words of her Lord and His Books, and became one of the obedient...”

Virginity is a hallmark of patriarchy. The rewarding of virginity in this verse can be considered as a patriarchal approach.

108. At-Taghabun (The Cheating):

Verse 14 is about believers’ wives and children who are considered to be their enemies.

“14 O believers, among your wives and children there is an enemy to you; so beware of them...”

According to Sami Aldeeb, this verse is based on the 13:7-12 in the Deuteronomy section of the Torah, and on Matthew 10:37 and Luke 14:26 in the gospels, which state that infidel wives, mothers, fathers and children should be killed.¹³⁸ This verse is inconclusive in terms of patriarchy.

111. Al-Fath (The Victory): Verses 5 and 6 explain how believers will be rewarded in heaven and how infidels will be punished in hell.

“5 and that He may admit *the believers, men and women alike*, into gardens underneath which rivers flow, therein to dwell forever...6 and that He may chastise the hypocrites, men and women alike, and the *idolaters men and women alike*, and those who think evil thoughts of God; against them shall be the evil turn of fortune...”

Since these verses demonstrate an egalitarian approach, they can be considered as non-patriarchal.

¹³⁸ Sami A. Aldeeb Abu-Sahlieh, *The Koran in chronological order Arabic-English* (Great Britain, printed by Amazon, 2016), 424

Verse 25 is about the men and women of faith who stayed in Mecca. The verse states that in order to prevent these believers from being killed even by accident, God prevented war.

“25... If it had not been for *certain men believers and certain women believers* whom you knew not, lest you should trample them, and there befall you guilt unwittingly on their account (that God may admit into His mercy whom He will), had they been separated clearly, then We would have chastised the unbelievers among them with a painful chastisement.

This verse is non-patriarchal and egalitarian but it suggests violence.

112. Al-Ma'idah (The Food):

Verse 5 proclaims that free and chaste women are halal unless believing men commit adultery with them.

“5...Likewise believing women in wedlock, and in wedlock women of them who were given the Book before you if you give them their wages, in wedlock and not in license, or as taking lovers...”

This verse can be accepted as inconclusive for patriarchy as there is an asymmetrical approach.

Verse 38 is about cutting the hands of thieving men and women, and it would be appropriate **to** accept it as non-patriarchal and egalitarian, albeit with a violent approach.

“38 And the thief, male and female: cut off the hands of both, as a recompense for what they have earned...”

113. At-Taubah (Repentance): Verse 24 is a warning to people who want to refrain from holy wars (*jihadi*) and stay as infidels.

“24 Say: ‘If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your clan, your possessions that you have gained, commerce you fear may slacken, dwellings you love -- if these are dearer to you than God and His Messenger, and to struggle in His way, then wait till God brings His command; God guides not the people of the ungodly.’ “

This verse is not about patriarchy.

Verse 72 is about God's promise of heaven to believing men and women. Because of its egalitarian approach, it can be considered as non-patriarchal.

“72 Allah hath promised to Believers, men and women, gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein, and beautiful mansions in gardens of everlasting bliss...”

Table 4: The categorization of Medina surahs/verses in chronological order according to content analysis

Nr	Surah/Verses	patriarch	non-patriarch protecting women	non-patriarch egalitarian	inconclusive	not about patriarchy
87	Al-Baqarah/ 25				+	
	31,34	+				
	33,35,36			+		
	49					+
	168,169,172					+

187	+			
221	+			
222,223,226-232	+			
233		+		
234-237	+			
240	+			
241		+		
282	+			
89	Al-Imran/ 14	+		
15		+		
35,				+
36			+	
37,				+
40			+	
42-45,47,				+
195,198			+	
90	Al-Ahzab/ 4	+		
5		+		
6			+	
30-34		+		
35,36			+	
37,38		+		
40				+
49			+	
50-53		+		
55			+	
58			+	
59		+		

73

+

91 Al-Mumtahanah/

10-13

+

92 An-Nisa/ 1,3

+

4

+

7

+

11

+

12

+

15,16

+

19,

+

20,

+

21

+

22

+

23,24,25

+

32

+

34

+

35

+

43

+

57

+

98,99

+

117

+

124

+

127

+

128

+

129

+

156,157,171

+

163,176

+

93 Al-Hadid/ 12,19

+

99 At-Talaq/ 1, 2, 4,
6,7

+

+

102 An-Nur / 2,3

+

4

+

6-9

+

11-17,23

+

26

+

30

+

31

+

32

+

33

+

60

+

105 Al-Mujadilah / 1

+

2-4

+

106 Al-Hujurat / 11,13

+

107 At-Tahrim / 1-5,10

+

11

+

12

+

108 At-Taghabun / 14

+

111 Al-Fath / 5,6,25

+

112 Al-Ma'idah / 5,

+

38

+

113 At-Tuabah/24

+

71,72

+

87,93

+

While there are 11 verses directly addressing women during the Medina period (Al-Imran: 42, 43, 45; Al-Ahzab: 30, 31, 32, 33, 34; An-Nur: 31; At-Tahrim: 4, 5), there are 49 verses directly addressing men in the same period (Al-Imran: 40; Al-Ahzab: 5, 37, 50, 51, 52, 59; An-Nisa: 2, 4, 7, 11, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 176; At-Talaq: 1, 2, 4, 6, 7; An-Nur: 30, 32, 33; Al-Mujadilah: 2, 3, 4; Al-Ma'idah: 5).

The number of verses addressing directly to both women and men increased during the Medina period. This may be related to the arrangements regarding the social order that was realized in Medina. The fact that there are more verses directly addressing men than there are those that address women (49 versus 11) may be the result of patriarchy being established in Medina. Moreover, while verses that directly address women impose a certain code of restrictive behavior on women, verses addressing men dictate how men can regulate women's daily lives.

6.1.3. Summary of content analyses

In summary, issues about women and men are discussed in 185 verses out of 4613 (3.98%) in 47 surahs out of 86 (54.6%) during the Mecca period. 104 out of 185 verses promote patriarchy (56.2%) whereas 15 verses are egalitarian (8%). 3 verses are protective and supportive of women (1.6%) and 10 verses are considered inconclusive for patriarchy (5.4%). Finally, 53 verses are not about patriarchy at all (28.6%)

After this initial analysis, the verses in which women or men are mentioned but the topic is unrelated to gender issues or patriarchy are excluded from the content analysis. Among the Mecca verses, patriarchy is detected in 104 out of the remaining 132 verses (78.8%). 11.3% of these verses are egalitarian, 2.2% of them are protective and supportive of women, and 7.5% are inconclusive for patriarchy. Overall, 104 out of 4613 (2.2%) verses revealed in Mecca can be considered patriarchal.

There are 151 verses out of 1623 (9.3%) in 15 surahs out of 28 (53%) revealed during the Medina period which are about women's/men's issues. Out of those 151 verses, 69 promote patriarchy (45.6. %), 20 are egalitarian (13.2%), 16 are protective and supportive of women (10.6%), 24 verses are considered inconclusive for a definitive decision (15.8%), and 22 verses are not about patriarchy (14.5%).

If the verses revealed during the Medina period in which the subject is not related to an evaluation of patriarchy are excluded from the study, then patriarchy is detected in 69 out of the remaining 129 verses (53.4%). 13.2% of those verses are egalitarian, 12.4% are protective and supportive of women, and 18.6% of the verses are inconclusive for patriarchy. Overall, 69 out of 1623 verses (4.2%) revealed in Medina can be considered patriarchal.

Finally, a total of 173 verses (104 in Mecca + 69 in Medina) out of 335 verses in the Qur'an have been found to be patriarchal (51.6 %). If I consider (132 verses in Mecca + 129 verses in Medina) a total number of 261 verses in Qur'an are related to patriarchal structures where I subtracted the number of verses that are not about patriarchy from the number of verses about female / male dimensions I searched, I can conclude $173 / 261 = 65.2\%$ of verses promote patriarchy in the Qur'an. Moreover, when the patriarchal and non-patriarchal verses are compared, the proportion of those who are patriarchal is 77.2%.

Two proportions Z-test was applied to determine if there is a significant difference between the proportions of patriarchy in the verses revealed in Mecca and Medina which are about manhood and womanhood. The Z-score was calculated as 1.92. At $p < 0.05$, there is no significant difference between these proportions.

$$Z = \frac{(\hat{p}_1 - \hat{p}_2) - 0}{\sqrt{\hat{p}(1 - \hat{p}) \left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right)}}$$

p_1 = proportion of patriarchal verses in Mecca

p_2 = proportion of patriarchal verses in Medina

p (overall sample proportion)=0.504

n_1 : number of verses in Medina related to womanhood/manhood

n_2 : number of verses in Mecca related to womanhood/manhood

Two proportions Z-test was applied once more to determine if there is a significant difference between the proportions of patriarchy in all the verses revealed in Mecca and Medina, not just the verses related to womanhood/manhood. The Z-score was calculated as -4.146. At $p < 0.05$, there is a significantly higher patriarchy rate in the verses that were revealed in Medina.

$$Z = \frac{(\hat{p}_1 - \hat{p}_2) - 0}{\sqrt{\hat{p}(1 - \hat{p}) \left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right)}}$$

p_1 = proportion of patriarchal verses in Mecca

p_2 = proportion of patriarchal verses in Medina

p (overall sample proportion)=0.026

n1: number of verses in Medina

n2: number of verses in Mecca

Patriarchy rates are not statistically different in the verses which are directly related to womanhood/manhood revealed during the Mecca and Medina periods (56.3% versus 44%). However, if all the verses in the Qur'an are taken into consideration, patriarchy rate in the verses revealed in Medina are found to be significantly higher than those revealed in Mecca (4.2% versus 2.2%).

Moreover, while the verses of the Mecca era are mostly about abstract and general issues such as creation, the houris promised to men in paradise, the rejection of female goddesses, women's tricks and traps, and the curse of homosexuality; the verses revealed in Medina cover social topics and focus on arranging all kinds of women-men relationships according to sharia, such as marriage and divorce, polygamy, men's superiority over women, the beating of women if necessary, obligatory veiling of women, the validity of the testimony of two women instead of the testimony of one man, and giving women less share of inheritance (half the amount men receive).

During the Medina era, the Islamic social order was started to be established according to patriarchal principles. Therefore, the verses revealed during this period supported patriarchy.

In the following sections, the elements of the patriarchal structure determining the social order during this period will be examined according to the chronology of the verses, accompanied by historical events.

6.2. QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

6.2.1 Creation

The topic of creation is an appropriate starting point for reviewing the verses in the Qur'an that are related to womanhood/manhood. The topic of creation is mentioned in 49 verses of 34 surahs in the Qur'an. 46 of those verses were revealed in Mecca as part of 32 surahs. The remaining 3 verses that were revealed in Medina are the first verse of the 92nd surah *An-Nisa*, the 45th verse of the 102nd surah *Nur*, and the 13th verse of the 105th surah *Al Hujurat*.

The 34 verses from 22 surahs stating that humans were created from clot, blood clot, adherences, water, clay, earth, mud, embryo, hurry, impatient, greed, passion, intolerance, love, grueling, interest and weakness are as follows:

Al-`Alaq: 2, Abasa: 18, 19, Al-Mursalat: 20-23, Al-Balad: 4, At-Tariq: 5-6, Sad: 71, 76, Al-Furqan: 54, Ta Ha: 55, Al-Hijr: 26, 28, 29, 33, Al-An`am: 2, Al-Mu'min: 2, Al-Kahf: 37, Nuh: 17, Al-Anbiya': 37, Al-Mu'minun: 12-14, As-Sajdah: 7-9, Al-Ma`arij: 19, Al-Infitar: 7, Al-Hajj: 5, Ar-Rahman: 14, Ad-Dahr: 2, An-Nur: 45

After God shaped his creation, he blew it from his soul and created humans. It is stated in some surahs that spouses were created from each other's essence or soul.

The first surah about this topic in the Qur'an is the 2nd verse of the first surah **Al-`Alaq (the Adherences)** which states that God created humans from adherences. This term has given the name to this verse.

“2 he created the human from *adherences*.”

This word is also translated as “the blood-Clot” by Arberry, as “the Clot” by Pickthall, as “the Embryo” by Rashad Khalif, or as “the Germ Cell” by Asad.

The story of how God created man from the ground, and how He breathed into his nostrils the soul of life, and how man became a living soul is a version of the second cosmogony in Torah.¹³⁹ However, in the Qur’anic surahs about creation, Adam's wife is not mentioned either by name or as a separate being.

In the following 11 verses from 8 different surahs, it is explained that God created mankind in pairs as male and female.

Verse 3 of the 9th surah Al-Layl (the Night) states:

“3 and That which created the *male and the female*,”

Verse 45 and 46 of the 23th surah An-Najm (the Star) remark:

“45 and that He Himself created *the two kinds, male and female*, 46 of a sperm-drop, when it was cast forth,

Verses 37-39 of the 31th Surah Al-Qiyamah (the Resurrection) point out:

“37 Was he not a sperm-drop spilled? 38 Then he was a blood-clot, and He created and formed, 39 and He made of him *two kinds, male and female*.”

The 36th verse of the 41th surah Ya Sin specifies:

“36 Glory be to Him, who created *all the pairs* of what the earth produces...”

The 11th verse of the 43th surah Al-Fatir (the Creator) denotes:

¹³⁹ Kutsal Kitap, *Yaratılış* 2:7

“11 God created you of dust then of a sperm drop, then *He made you pairs...*”

The 12th verse of 63th surah Az-Zukhruf (the Embellishment) expresses:

“12 and who *created the pairs*, all of them...”

The 8th verse of the 80th surah An-Naba (the Tidings) prescribes:

“And We created you *in pairs*,”

The 13th verse of the 105th surah Al-Hujurat (the Chambers) states:

“13 O mankind, We have *created you male and female*, and appointed you races and tribes...”

These different verses in which humans are said to be created as pairs are aligned with the first cosmogony in the Torah, which announces: “Let us create people like ourselves in our own image.”¹⁴⁰

Fetna Ayt Sabbah argued that according to the holy books of Abrahamic religions, including the Qur’an, man was the one who gave life to woman.¹⁴¹ But while the couple was being reconstructed, they were not created through sexual reproduction, but through asexual reproduction method called parthenogenesis. This was not a union but a division.

This way, in creation, women's capacity to give birth was taken away in order to accept the newborn into a holy universe.¹⁴² The creator is a sacred will, not the unification of men and women. The Qur’an, following the old and new testaments,

¹⁴⁰ Kutsal Kitap, *Yaratılış 1:26,2*

¹⁴¹ Fetna Ayt Sabbah, *İslamın Bilinçaltında Kadın*, 131-132

¹⁴² Ibid

tells the story of miraculous births with divine power such as the story of Mary giving birth to Jesus without having sexual intercourse with a man, or Sara giving birth to Isaak in spite of her old age. Due to their fertilization feature, living things are sentenced to the birth-death cycle. God, on the other hand, is infinite because he does not give birth and is not born and has no beginning and no end. As a potential source of pleasure, women pose a threat to believing men. For this reason, women are reduced to the level of material objects like gold; they are objectified and deprived of willpower. One of the ways of stripping women of their creative power and make them dependent on men is to keep them out of reproductive physiology. Therefore, as the above verses mention, sexual reproduction was not present at the beginning of creation; instead, man and woman were created together as a couple as a result of asexual reproduction called parthenogenesis

The other tools that reduce women to mere objects will be discussed in other topics further in the thesis.

In the following verses about creation, it is assumed that creation was started by Adam, and that his wife was created from his essence, or from his soul, as a mate for him.

Verse 47 of the 23rd surah An-Najm (the Star), which was revealed in Mecca, states:

"47 and that upon Him rests the *second growth*,"

It is assumed by some commentators that it is the first woman who is described here as the second growth.¹⁴³ The term referred to as "**the other creation (second growth)**" in verse 47 is also interpreted by some exegetes as the "resurrection after death".¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ Nadal El Saadawi, 200

¹⁴⁴ Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, *Necm Suresi Tefsiri*, kuran.diyaret.gov.tr

Based on this verse, Amina Wadud supports that it is a false assumption that human creation began with a man, which is an assumption that gives men superiority over women.¹⁴⁵ Wadud argues that this surah has been misinterpreted and that all people have been created in the womb of their mothers after creation, which does not give men any supremacy.

As there are controversial comments about this verse, whether it is patriarchal or not is inconclusive.

The 39th surah Al-A'raf (the Elevated Places) in the Qur'an, which was revealed in Mecca, states in its verse 189:

“189 It is He who created you out of one living soul, and made of him his spouse that he might rest in her. Then, when he covered her, she bore a light burden and passed by with it...”

The 6th verse of the 59th surah Az-Zumar (the Companies), which was revealed in Mecca, reads:

“6 He created you of a single soul, and then from it He appointed its mate;”

The 72nd verse of the 70th surah An Nahl (the Bee) states:

” 72 God has appointed for you of yourselves wives, and He has appointed for you of your wives sons and grandsons and He has provided you of the good things. What, do they believe in vanity, and do they disbelieve in God's blessing?”

The first verse of the 98th Surah An-Nisa (the Women), which was revealed in Medina, reads:

¹⁴⁵ Amina Wadud, 27

“1 Mankind, fear your Lord, who created you of a single soul, and from it created its mate, and from the pair of them scattered abroad many men and women...”

Amina Wadud states that the Arabic word *min*, which is translated here as ‘from’ also means the “same nature” or “same essence”. If it is used in the sense of *from*, it means that man, who was created first, was full, perfect and superior while the woman, who was created second, was inferior and lacking, because she is a derivative whereas if the word is used to mean the “same essence”, then the words “God have created spouses out of your *nafs*,” should be understood as man and woman are of the same *nafs*, the same self, the same nature.¹⁴⁶

In contrast, Nawal el Saadawi claims that the “you” in “we created her from you”, which is a quote from the Qur’an, refers to men. There are two different cosmogonies in the Torah written by different authors in two separate periods as specified above. Saadawai reminds us that the Qur’an refers to the second cosmogony as explained below.¹⁴⁷

This situation is consistent with the claim in the Torah that Eve was created from Adam. “While Adam was asleep, the Lord God took one of his ribs and replaced him with meat. He created a woman from the ribs he took and brought her to Adam.¹⁴⁸” However, in the Torah, the previous Bap declares that God said, “Let us create people like ourselves in our own image.”

However, Fetna Ayt Sabbah is of the opinion that biologically, women give birth to the humankind. Regarding the aspect of holiness, the Qur'an commanded that the woman was created after the man and from his body. According to Sabbah, the holy time dimension has reconstructed the world after subverting the biological

¹⁴⁶ Amina Wadud, 19

¹⁴⁷ Nadal El Saadawi, 200

¹⁴⁸ *Kutsal Kitap*, (Tevrat,Zebur,İncil) (Seul: Korean Bible Society ,2011),2-3

dimension.¹⁴⁹ Thus, although not being able to give birth, man became the one equipped with the power of creation. As a result of being afraid of their creative power, women were reduced to a passive object that is created. The cosmogony that is part of all monotheistic religions also determines the power relations among living things. God created men first, then He created women to serve men. So, the one who came before has come to own the one who came after him. The adult man was created to serve God. Women should also serve God, but by serving men. God endowed men, who were in direct contact with Him, with the power of authority. Women, who have no direct relationship with God, have been deprived of this power.¹⁵⁰

Ihsan Eliaçık thinks that men and women are created from the same essence and from the same spirit. He is of the opinion that as the statement in the Torah that God created Adam first, and then Eve from his rib bone, is not reflected in the Qur'an. In other words, Adam and Eve were created from one essence and they coexisted as opposite sexes.¹⁵¹

In contrast, Tabari who stated in his tafsir that Eve was created from the genus, i.e., from the essence of Adam, wrote “O People! Creating you from Adam and making Eve from one of his ribs...”¹⁵²

Hadith, *siyer* (biography of Muhammad), and history and *neseb* (ancestor) scholar Ibn Sa'd (777, Basra - 845, Baghdad), who is known in the Islamic world for his famous book *Tabakat (Kitâbu't-Tabakâti'l-Kebir)*, believed that the words “and created his wife from him” in the Qur'an should be interpreted as Eve having been created from Adam's ribs while he was asleep.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Fetna Ayt Sabbah, *İslamın Bilinçaltında Kadın*, 100

¹⁵⁰ Ibid

¹⁵¹ İhsan Eliaçık, *Yaşayan Kuran* (İstanbul: İnşaa Yayınları, 2020), 865

¹⁵² Muhammed Bin Cerir Et Tabari, *Tabari Tefsiri* (İstanbul: Sağlam Yayınevi, Cilt 1, 2019), 369

¹⁵³ İbn Sa'd , *Siyer* (İstanbul: Siyer Yayınları, 2019), 32

The interpretations of Ibn Sa'd and Tabari belong to a period about 200 years after the descent of the Qur'an and have been considered to be the oldest Qur'anic interpretations. Therefore, it is possible to think that they are more realistic in terms of reflecting the patriarchal understanding of the period.

Although there have been different interpretations regarding this subject, the interpretations of Tabari and Ibn Sa'd, and the idea of Nawal El Saadawi claiming that the spouses (women) mentioned in the related surahs of the Qur'an under the term *zawj* were created from (Ar. *min*) men, i.e., from the *nafs* of men, from the soul of men, is also in harmony with the words "Eve was created from Adam", which is mentioned in the second cosmogony in the Torah. Since Christians regard the Torah as the Old Testament, it can be thought that the Qur'an adopts this monotheistic approach by accepting the myth of creation mentioned in these verses and by talking about it in a similar way. Therefore, the above-mentioned 4 verses can be considered as patriarchal.

However, there is no significant difference between the Mecca and Medina verses which are about creation in terms of patriarchy.

6.2.2. Male and Female Behavior Patterns and Superiority

The position, rank, and behavioral patterns of men and women relative to each other are the second topic to be examined in this section.

The 21st verse of the Surah Ar-Rum, which was previously mentioned under the topic of creation, was revealed in Mecca. In this verse, which advises men and women to feel love and compassion, no gender-based superiority is mentioned.

The 21st verse of the Surah Ar-Rum says:

“And of His signs is that He created for you, of yourselves, spouses, that you might repose in them, and He has set between you love and mercy.....”

Amina Wadud argues that these sentences show the principle of equality in the Qur'an.¹⁵⁴

The other verses on this subject were revealed in Medina.

Verse 36 of surah Al-Imran states:

“And when she gave birth to her she said, ‘Lord, I have given birth to her, a female.’ (And God knew very well what she had given birth to; the male is not as the female.) ‘And I have named her Mary, and commend her to Thee with her seed, to protect them from the accursed Satan.’”

This verse is about the birth of Mary. Here, Mary's mother Anna says to God that she gave birth to a girl, not a boy and apologizes for her votive offering being a girl. According to Tabari, boys are stronger than girls in service. Women cannot perform temple services because they have menstruation and postpartum periods.¹⁵⁵

Little is written about Mary's family in the New Testament. It is stated that her father Joachim and her mother Anna did not have children despite their advanced age. Anna promised to God that if she had a child, she would devote her to the Temple of Solomon. After Mary was born, Anna gave her to the temple at the age of three under the supervision of Zechariah. In this verse revealed during the Medina period, saying that women were inadequate and apologizing for dedicating a girl to God might be related to the process of establishing patriarchy at that period.

The 223rd verse of the 87th surah Al-Baqarah says:

¹⁵⁴ Amina Wadud, *Quran and Woman*, 15-19

¹⁵⁵ Tabari Tefsiri, cilt 1, 274

“Your women are tillage for you; so come unto your tillage as you wish and forward for your souls...”

This verse was revealed in Medina when a woman asked Umm Salama, one of Muhammad's wives, to ask the prophet about a sexual position that her husband wanted.¹⁵⁶ Muhammed recited this verse and permitted the men to be free about the decision regarding sexual positions.

Ihsan Eliaçık interprets these words from the surah Al-Baqarah as anything that is legitimate in sexual life can be done. However, sodomy is cursed. The spouses must take care of each other during sexual intercourse. According to him, women are not like men. They are physically and aurally stimulated; men have to prepare them for sexual intercourse. Men should not behave in a selfish manner, and should remember that men and women must complete each other. They should also avoid actions that will anger God. That is why sodomy is forbidden.¹⁵⁷

Tabari interpreted the same verse by saying that men can have sexual intercourse with women whenever they want, however they wish, in any position other than sodomy where fertilization is guaranteed. According to Tabari, the purpose of any sexual activity is reproduction. So, as long as reproduction is achieved, which can only be done via vaginal penetration, the form of intercourse is not important.¹⁵⁸

Mernissi is of the opinion that the Qur'an supports men, gives them the right to choose the sexual positions that they wish. Women have no right to object; they should submit to men's phantasies.¹⁵⁹

Zehra Arat states that there is no equality between men and women in the Qur'an; she believes that the Qur'an shows men as superior and dominant over

¹⁵⁶ Fatima Mernissi, *Women And Islam-An Historical and Theological Enquiry* (Padstow,Cornwall: T.J. Press Ltd, 1991)145-149

¹⁵⁷ İhsan Eliaçık, *Yaşayan Kuran*,

¹⁵⁸ Tabari Tefsiri, cilt 1, *Bakara suresi*,223

¹⁵⁹ Fatima Mernissi, *Women and Islam-An Historical and Theological Enquiry*, 145-149

women, and that men are given the freedom to possess women's bodies as they please.¹⁶⁰ She also argues that the Qur'an was delivered mainly to a male population, and it addresses a male audience.¹⁶¹

Ayşegül Berktaş has a different comment about this verse. She claims that the words “women are your tillage, come unto your tillage as you wish” is a direct communication between God and men, in which women have been removed. Men are the subject in this communication whereas women are just objects. According to Berktaş, Qur'an's way of protecting women through isolation and obligatory veiling is closely linked to the anxiety of protecting the male seed. This anxiety is an integral part of the monogenetic reproduction theory. A man's power and authority rest on the assumption that he has the ability to give life. His dignity depends on ensuring that the child is born from his own seed. This is based on his ability control the body of the woman that belongs to him.¹⁶²

The seed and soil analogy is loaded with strong patriarchal meanings. According to this analogy, while the man, as a living element, is assumed to initiate the spark of life by having seed, the woman is perceived as a lifeless substance that only performs the function of nutrient feeding, just like soil.

Although there is no definite consensus on this verse with regards to discussions about sodomy, the debate is based entirely on the desires of men. The opinions and desires of women are ignored. It is completely ignored that sexual activities should be a mutual wish and decision between men and women. The

¹⁶⁰ Zehra Arat, *Women Rights in Islam: Revisiting Quranic Rights in Human Rights, New Perspectives, New Realities*, edited by Adamantia Pollis and Peter Schwab, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), 77-79

¹⁶¹ Zehra Arat and Abdullah Hasan, “Muslim masculinities: what is prescription of the Qur'an” *Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol.27, No.7, 2018, 788-801

¹⁶² Fatmagül Berktaş, *Tek Tanrılı Dinler Karşısında Kadın*, (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 1995), 65

essential question here is what principle in the Qur'an regulates the role of women during intercourse? This discussion on the female body is one of the indicators of patriarchy, which is a system that supports men and does not give women the right to voice their opinions. They can only submit to men's whims. It seems logical to agree with Zehra Arat on this matter, who argues that women's free will is not considered in the Qur'an.

Verse 228 of the same surah dictates:

“...In such time their mates have better right to restore them, if they desire to set things right. Women have such honorable rights as obligations, but their men have a degree-*darajah* above them; God is All-mighty.”

Ayesha Chaudry emphasizes that male and female inequality in the Qur'an is very clear, and that there is an asymmetric relationship between men and women in both public and private lives in the Qur'an.¹⁶³ She states that premodern Muslim academics see these verses as limiting women's participation in social life.

Fatima Mernissi suggests that the words of the 228th verse of surah Al-Baqarah in the Qur'an, which reads “men are superior to women” have economic reasons. She argues that according to the divine law, men provide women's livelihoods because women cannot access material goods directly.¹⁶⁴

Eliaçık interprets this verse as the rights of the spouses being equal to each other. He is of the opinion that the husband may have the right to choose first as he is responsible for the subsistence of the house. However, according to him, in marriages

¹⁶³ Ayesha S. Chaudhry, *Women in Islamic political Thought* edited Gerhard Bowering (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2015), 264-270

¹⁶⁴ Fatima Mernissi, “*Kadınların İsyanı ve İslami Hafıza*” (Ankara : Epos Yayınları, 1998),106

where the livelihood of the house is common, the spouses have equal rights. Couples should not try to dominate each other.¹⁶⁵

Amina Wadud claims that the statement “men are a degree above women” from surah Al-Baqarah is actually about divorce, and that it means men are more advantageous in divorce than women. According to the Qur’an, “if men want a divorce, there is no need for an arbitrator, whereas when women want a divorce, an authority should make the decision.”¹⁶⁶ According to Wadud, when the Qur’an is examined as a whole, it will be noticed that men and women have equal rights and obligations in relation to each other, and that no verse in the Qur’an says that men are physically or mentally superior to women.

In the Qur’an, there is a specific verse that is shown as an example of equality between men and women. This is the 35th verse of surah Al-Ahzab (the Allies), which was revealed after surah Al-Baqarah, and it reads:

“35 Men and women who have surrendered, believing men and believing women, obedient men and obedient women, truthful men and truthful women, enduring men and enduring women, humble men and humble women, men and women who give in charity, men who fast and women who fast, men and women who guard their private parts, men and women who remember God oft -- for them God has prepared forgiveness and a mighty wage.”

The reason behind the revelation of this verse is related to the following story.

One day, Umm Salama, one of Muhammad’s wives, asked him why the Qur’an did not speak of women as it did of men. After a while, when Umm Salama was combing her hair, she heard the prophet’s voice from the *minbar* reciting this

¹⁶⁵ İhsan Eliaçık, *Yaşayan Kuran*,

¹⁶⁶ Amina Wadud, 66

verse.¹⁶⁷ It is stated in this verse that men and women are equal in their obligations to God, such as believing in him, obeying him, being patient, giving charity, fasting and maintaining their honor. Men and women who comply with these orders will be rewarded. However, whether the rights and obligations of men and women in relation to the codes of behavior towards each other were equal or not would be clarified in later verses.

For instance, surah Al-Ahzap, which is referred to as the evidence of equality between women and men in the Qur'an, was revealed before surah An-Nisa, which states that men are superior to women.

The 34th verse of the 92nd surah An-Nisa states:

“34 Men are the *managers* of the affairs of women for that God has preferred in bounty one of them over another, and for that they have expended of their property. Righteous women are therefore obedient, guarding the secret for God's guarding...”

Tabari interpreted this verse as men being superior to women in terms of educating and disciplining. Because according to the verse, Allah created some people superior to others. Just like heads of states managing their own citizens, men manage and maintain women because God has given men the ability to reason and to manage. That is why they are superior to women. They have authority over them.¹⁶⁸

Based on the latter surah, it can be claimed that there is a gender difference in the Qur'an; and the social order of the era was structured in a patriarchal manner considering this difference.

¹⁶⁷ Fatima Mernissi, *Women And Islam-An Historical and Theological Enquiry* (Padstow,Cornwall: T.J. Press Ltd, 1991),118,119

¹⁶⁸ Tabari Tefsiri cilt 1, 396-398

Wadud states that the interpretation of the verses in a way that shows men as superior is due to the traditions of the period.¹⁶⁹ According to her, Islamic fiqh scholars Zamakshari and Mahdudi's comments were wrong. They both decreed that men could manage and direct women in their actions and with regards to the problems they faced, because Allah created men to be superior to women.¹⁷⁰

Amina Wadud insists that the word “*managers*” (Ar. *qawwamuna*) used in verse 34 of surah An-Nisa, which is interpreted in the Qur'an translations as “men's domination over women”, also has supportive, protecting connotations and can be used to mean looking after one's family. She argues that men and women should protect their families by collaborating, and that men and women have separate rights and responsibilities in marriage. She claims that as a result of their biological properties, women's responsibility is to give birth. According to her, this gives women a distinct power, privilege, endurance and wisdom.

İhsan Eliaçıkçık interprets this verse as “men should be caring, compassionate and respectful towards women; they should run to their troubles and always be with them.” He thinks that the word *qawwamun* should be understood as cherishing, protecting, and looking after. According to him, those who interpret the word *qawwamun* as showing the strength and power of men are also those who defend the idea that men do not even feel the need to listen to women, and that men should be in a profile that is hard to communicate with, one that gives continuous orders. Eliaçıkçık, however, is of the opinion that men and women have different abilities and do not have superiorities over each other. He adds that what is wanted to be explained here is the peculiarities and differences of spouses in relation to each other.

Asma Barlas also interprets the 34th verse of surah An-Nisa as men not being superior to women but being guarding and protective. She says that men are superior to women not in terms of mental capacity or physical strength and endurance but

¹⁶⁹ Amina Wadud, 66-68

¹⁷⁰ Ibid

financially, because men are given twice the amount of inheritance rights that women are allowed to receive. In other words, according to Barlas, these verses state that men should financially support women. She argues that men are obliged to care for the family; this obligation is not allowed to be given to women and that more money is given to men for this reason. So, she insists that men do not have gender-based superiority. In addition, the words *ma'ruf* (gentle, respectful) and *rahmah wa muwadah* (love and compassion) are mentioned twenty times in the Qur'an in relation to the patterns of marriage and behaviors of spouses; therefore, according to Barlas, there is no patriarchy in the DNA of Islam and the Qur'an. So, she states that such male-centric comments are only the views of medieval Islamic fiqhists.¹⁷¹

Lirong Ma argues by referring to Professor Ma Jian that women have weaker physical strength than men, and because of their physical peculiarities such as menstruation, pregnancy and suckling, they need special protection and maintenance by men. She points out that those righteous women are devoutly obedient.¹⁷²

Fatima Mernissi claims that the 34th verse of surah An-Nisa constitutes the basis for organizing the roles and relations within the Muslim family. She thinks that this verse clearly states that according to the sacred division of labor between the two genders, women cannot meet their own needs. She states that in the Qur'an, there is a gender-based inequality, which is identified through a gender-specific job description, in which women are defined as sexual objects and men as the breadwinners of the household. Women perform sexual services in patriarchal legitimacy and ensure the continuation of the human race. In order to fulfill this function, women are imprisoned in narrow spaces, in houses, which are defined to be non-economic.

¹⁷¹ Asma Barlas, *Believing Women in Islam. Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an*, (London: University of Texas Press, 2019)212-215

¹⁷² Lirong Ma, "A Culturel Analyses on Women's Issues in Islam", *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies*, Vol.2. No.1,2008, 48

.As can be seen, there are different interpretations in the Qur'an on gender equality. There are those like Islamic scholar and historian Ibn Yusuf al-Jazari claiming that there are at least seven distinctive styles of reading the Qur'an (*ahruf*). He was a scholar in the field of the qira'at (reading) of the Qur'an and wanted to legitimize the polymorphism of the text by expressing that these different readings may also include plurality of meanings resulting in ambiguities and concludes that this is a wealth of the Qur'anic text.¹⁷³

However there are also those who make up the majority of Islamic fiqh scholars like Muhammad ibn al-Uthaymeen, and Abū al-A'ālā al-Mawdūdī, arguing that just as the Qur'an was understood when it was revealed, it must be understood and interpreted now. According to them, each verse has only one correct meaning that leaves no room for a different interpretation. Therefore, it cannot be adapted to different conditions of the time.¹⁷⁴

The abovementioned verses regulating social and marital life were revealed during the Medina period, when patriarchy was being established. If the words *darajah* (degree) and *qawwamun* (manager) in these verses are interpreted with their most frequently used dictionary meanings and with their connotations in the daily language, as explained by the majority of the Islamic commentators, it would make sense to admit that in the Qur'an, men are shown to be a degree higher than women, and they have rights to dominate them. It can be argued that the Qur'an favors a hierarchical Islamic system. In this hierarchical structure, women are completely stripped of power, and they represent the lower element. They submit to the will of their husband, whose authority is established by law. To achieve this, women had to first be reduced to sexual objects. The control of this sexual object was given to men, to their husbands. Men, who dominate the female body, have the right to physically punish this body when she rebels against him.

¹⁷³ Thomas Bauer, *Müphemlik Kültürü ve İslam* (İstanbul: İletişim yayımları, 2020), 70-81

¹⁷⁴ İbid, 64,114

Muslim feminists like Amina Wadud, Asma Barlas and Zahra Ali re-examine these verses, ignore the patriarchal comments made about them and offer a new interpretation with an egalitarian approach. Comments made in light of these metaphorical assessments also differ among themselves. For instance, Amina Wadud, interprets men's superiority as being protective of and caring for the family, while Asma Barlas considers it in terms of being more financially supportive.

Naturally, metaphorical comments vary from person to person, and there is no standard. However, all these discussions are related to the verses revealed during the Medina period. Considering that the rights and responsibilities of men and women, and the behavioral patterns of spouses in relation to each other were never mentioned during the Mecca period, it would be appropriate to consider the Medina period as a time of institutionalization of patriarchy and increased male domination. Furthermore, it is also paradoxical to treat the verses that prohibit homosexuality, eating pork, drinking wine, and committing adultery as non-metaphorical, while considering the verses showing men as the superior and dominant party within male-female relationships as metaphorical.

The second part of the 34th Verse of the surah An-Nisa is more remarkable for male sovereignty

“...Righteous women are therefore *obedient*, guarding the secret for God’s guarding. And those you fear may be rebellious *admonish; banish* them to their couches, and *beat* them...”

Amina Wadud defends that the word *qanitat* (*obedient*) in the sense of obedience also means virtuous, and that the same word is used for both men and women in many verses as faithful believers to be submissive to God. This word, which refers to the characteristics of the man who believes in God, says Wadud,

should not be addressed in the sense of obedience to man. Asma Barlas refers to Wadud, noting that this word does not mean obeying the husband, and that the prophet did not even say to his wives, "Obey me!".¹⁷⁵

However, in all of the verses exemplified by both authors (2:238, 3:17, 33:34-35, 4:34, 66:5, 66:129), the word *qanitat* is used for both men and women in terms of obedience to Allah in the sense of subjugation, submission. It is difficult to understand why the word *qanitat*, which is used in the Qur'an to mean obedience to God, does not mean obedience when it comes to a wife's duty to her husband, but is instead used metaphorically to mean some kind of a virtue. It is debatable how logical it would be to interpret this word metaphorically as a virtue.

According to Tabari, good women obey Allah *and* their husbands. They keep their own desires in the absence of their husbands. They protect their bodies against prostitution. They also take care of their husbands' property to prevent it from being wasted. Tabari stated that if women try to gain superiority over men or do not follow their husband's orders, it is necessary to scare them with the threat of punishment from Allah, to stay away from their bed, not to have sexual intercourse with them, and to leave them alone at home, and finally, to beat them provided it is not tormenting. However, here Tabari stated that beating women is the last remedy and is intended to discipline them, not to injure them. He added that beating would be better than divorce, so that the family order would not be destroyed.

What to do to women if their husbands suspect them of infidelity is described in three-steps. First is giving advice, then separating the beds, and finally, beating them. Amina Wadud states that the best solution when spouses disagree is to give advice. She stresses that the Qur'an attaches great importance to harmony and peace between spouses, and to re-establishing order and fixing their relationship when it breaks down. She says that when these measures are followed, there will be no need

¹⁷⁵ Asma Barlas, 216

for the third solution and stresses that beating as a third and last resort should be in the form of hitting lightly, it should not be actual violence. In fact, the word *darraba*, which has the dictionary meaning of beating, is also used as abandonment and as departing as well as arguing. Therefore, from this perspective, the word *darraba* can be interpreted as a prohibition of violence. She claims this comment is also in line with the ban on the killing of girls in the Qur'an.

Asma Barlas says that beating and hitting was a common practice in the pre-Islamic period and that the word *darraba* restricted violence against women. She gives the 44th verse of surah *Sad* as an example, which was revealed in Mecca, saying that in that verse, Allah encourages Job to hit his wife with a bundle of bush. "Take in thy hand a bundle of rushes, and strike therewith, and do not fail in thy oath.' Surely We found him a steadfast man..."¹⁷⁶ Although not fully clear, Muslim commentators say that Eyup swore that he would hit his wife for cursing Allah. This story was taken from the Torah. (According to the Torah, Job continues to thank God patiently despite all the calamities that happen to him and is finally rewarded by God.) In the Torah, Job's wife tells him that he should reproach God for what happened to him. Job tells his wife, "You sound like stupid women. How can we accept the good from God and not accept evil?"¹⁷⁷ But he does not hit his wife. Some Islamic commentators consider hitting with a bundle of bushes to be symbolic here, not as an actual punishment. They say that it was the cost for her blasphemy against God. Some commentators even suggest that it was with a folded handkerchief. Asma Barlas points out that hitting is the last resort. She even thinks that it can be just symbolic. She believes that the word *darraba* (hit) can be used to restrict wives, to point and show them the truth and to declare the right thing to do, to show forth, and to resolve the disputes in marriages in these ways. She suggests that the Qur'an never

¹⁷⁶ *Kutsal Kitap*,567

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*

recommends violence in marriage. As a result, she claims that beating wives was a false interpretation in the first place.

Eliaçık interprets the word *nushuz* (disobedience) in the sense of severe lack of harmony caused by women. He accepts that the Qur'an offers solutions by using a patriarchal language in parallel with the structure of the society it addresses. However, he thinks that without changing the meaning, the language of the Qur'an can also be interpreted as being matriarchal due to its nature. He stresses that the Qur'an originally conveyed messages to an Arabic culture in Arabic language in the 7th century Mecca and Medina. According to him, the Qur'an makes universal statements about the primary issues of human life through the Arab society at that time.

Eliaçık states that the root of the word *darraba* comes from beating, but in Arabic, it is used with many other meanings, such as pressure, coercion, exemplify, fuss, abandon, expedition, leaving a place for a while. Therefore, he suggests that this word is aimed at abandoning beating. Stating that beating women was one of the customs of the period, Eliaçık writes that the Qur'an suggests more reasonable ways and methods to families who have severe conflicts. Eliaçık claims that Muhammad himself did not beat any of his wives; instead, he remained separate for a while as a last resort.

Fatima Mernisi believed that hitting women can only be applied if they rebel against the authority of their husbands, which is called *nushuz*. According to Mernisi, *nushuz*, a concept related to the disruptive impulses and destructive powers of women, is a word that describes the rebellious tendencies of women towards the sex-related desires of their husbands. She is of the view that the Qur'an defines *nushuz* as the wife's rejection of her husband's desire to have sexual intercourse.¹⁷⁸ Tabari, an Islamic historian, thought *nushuz* (disobedience) could be understood as women

¹⁷⁸ Fatima Mernisi, “*Kadınların İsyanı ve İslami Hafıza*” , 36

refusing their husbands in bed.¹⁷⁹ Like Tabari, most Muslim commentators argue that *nushuz* means the rebellions and refusals of women to obey their husbands in relation to sexual intercourse.

By referring to Tabari's *Tafsir*, Mernissi relayed the following event:

“During a violent dispute an Ansari (A word which used in the sense of “helpers” refers those people of Madinah who helped by hosting and protecting Muhammad and those who emigrated from Mecca with him in their homes) man slapped his wife. The injured woman hurried to the Prophet and demanded that he as -hakam- (arbiter in legal sense); apply the law of retaliation, and that he take action on the spot. Muhammad was preparing to make his decision to fulfil her request when the verse was revealed. God had decided otherwise. Muhammad realized that as an individual he could be in conflict with God. So the Prophet summoned the husband, recited the verse, and told him “I wanted one thing, and God wanted another”.¹⁸⁰

In addition, there was a disagreement between Muhammad and Umar. Muhammad advised women not to commit violence while Umar defended otherwise. It is noted in Tabari's History that Umar beat his sister and his wife. According to Mernisi, it is an incomprehensible puzzle in Islamic law that this issue was not solved according to Muhammad's wish. Regardless, Muhammad hated violence against women and never raised his hand to any of his wives. He left his home when there was a dispute and his wives rebelled, and he stayed at a room next to the mosque where he remained alone for 29 days. According to Tabari, Muhammad said, “Do not beat women.”¹⁸¹ When people stopped beating their wives upon the prophet's advice, Umar came and said, “Messenger of Allah, the women rebelled against their

¹⁷⁹ Muhammed Bin Cerir Et Tabari, *Tabari Tafsir*, Vol.8,299

¹⁸⁰ Fatima Mernissi, *Women And Islam*, 155

¹⁸¹ Ibid, 156

husbands,” then, Muhammad allowed them to beat their wives. However, Muhammad asked them not to overdo it and not to break any limb. He reminded that those who beat women with extreme violence would go to bed with the same women at the end of the day.¹⁸²

The fact that Muslims adopted the violent attitude of Omar rather than Muhammad’s advice to treat women with kindness may be due to deep-rooted traditions, the success of Umar in wars and in spreading Islam, and to his being a charismatic leader in society.

When Umar arrived in Medina, he was surprised by the freedom enjoyed by the Medina women in their speech and behavior. He complained by stating that they had come from Mecca, a society where men dominated women, whereas there in Medina, women were ruling. When he argued with one of his wives and when the wife answered him with the same tone and style, he got very angry. He asked his daughter Hafsa, who was married to the prophet, whether they reacted similarly to the prophet, as well. Hafsa explained that one of his wives got angry with the prophet one day and sulked until the end of the day. Gotten even angrier, Umar finally complained about the attitudes of women to the prophet. The messenger of God responded with a soft smile.¹⁸³ The views of these two characters on violence against women differed. However, at that time, many men thought like Umar. They adopted violence against women without hesitation, which was an old custom for them. The relevant verses of surah An-Nisa also support such behavior. Historians such as Tabari¹⁸⁴, Ibn Hisham¹⁸⁵; hadith scholars such as Bukhari¹⁸⁶, Tirmizi¹⁸⁷, Ibn

¹⁸² Sahih-i Buhari Muhtasari (Istanbul: Çelik Yayınevi,2017),218

¹⁸³ Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 381.

¹⁸⁴ Muhammed Bin Cerir Et Tabari, *Tabari Tefsiri*, 397, 398

¹⁸⁵ İbn Hişam; *Siret-i İbn Hişam* (İstanbul: Kahraman Yayınları: 2018),Vol. 3,332

¹⁸⁶ Muhammed el Buhari, *Sahih-i Buhari Muhtasari* (Istanbul: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları,1988), Cilt 10, 398

¹⁸⁷ Tirmizi Hadisleri, *Kadınlar*, (Sahih Hadisler)3277, <https://hadisci.com>

Macce¹⁸⁸, Ibn Hacer¹⁸⁹; and *fikh* scholars such as Ibn Teymiyye¹⁹⁰ interpreted these verses to mean violence against women can be applied when necessary.

It can be thought that Muhammad, who responded to Umar with a smile at that time, changed his attitude towards the verses which were revealed towards the end of the Medina period in order to constitute a patriarchal community. Thus began the construction of a social order characterized by male domination, in which female-male relationships were reorganized. This new female-male relationship format was one of the prerequisites for the establishment of patriarchy.

Fatima Mernissi agrees with Tabari's interpretation that surah An-Nisa allows men to dominate and discipline women. Because at that time, when a woman opposed her husband, who was the representative and symbol of the holy authority and the Islamic hierarchy, she became a threat to the system. A woman who rebelled against her husband was also considered to have rebelled against the *ummah* (Islamic community), the order, and eventually Allah. The rebellion of women has been associated with individuality, passion, disorder and *fitna* (sedition); and the pressure on women has been made legitimate in the name of order and harmony. Being a woman means being excluded from knowledge as a result of the dominion of God and men. To be a man is to be a master who is obeyed in the private sphere, where the man is the master of the woman. Man embodies the interests of divine power and law; he is the commander in his relationship with women. However, the authority and knowledge of masculinity cannot be envisioned without the obedience and submission of femininity. For these reasons, Mernissi thinks that it would make sense to accept this verse as a supporter of patriarchy.

¹⁸⁸ Sünen-i İbn Macce, Tercümesi ve Şerhi, *Nikâh Kitabı, Bölüm 51. Erkeklerin Karılarını Dövme Babı*, (İstanbul: Ravza Yayınları,2105)1983,1984

¹⁸⁹ İbn Hacer El-Askalani, *Fethu-l Bari/Sahih-i Buhari* (İstanbul:Polen Yayınları, 2009), cilt 10, 379,380

¹⁹⁰ Judith E. Tucker, *İslam Hukukunda Kadın, Aile ve Toplumsal Cinsiyet*, (İstanbul: Pınar Yayınları,2011),96

As it is understood, there is no consensus among Islamic commentators on issues such as women's subjugation to men and the legitimacy of male violence. Some writers tend to see the Qur'an as patriarchal, whereas mostly Muslim feminists consider it as egalitarian. Ayesha Chadhry thinks that the Qur'an can be interpreted both in an egalitarian way and in a way that supports male domination.¹⁹¹ It is acceptable that these interpretive differences can vary according to the paradigms of the age, the tendencies of opinion leaders and the expectations of their society.

No matter which interpretation is discussed, the discussion is always based on the verses revealed in Medina, with the exception of surah Sad, which was revealed in Mecca telling Job to hit his wife with a bush handle to punish her for cursing at Allah. Mecca's period, as mentioned earlier, emphasize the importance of believing in God and describe the persecution and punishment that unbelievers will suffer.

The Medina period was a time when social issues were handled, social life was regulated, and the rules about male and female relationships were established. According to Tabari, this period is when the dispute between Omar and Muhammad occurred, and God revealed a verse legitimizing the beating of women even against the will of Muhammad. Although there are different interpretations, this event point to some kind of patriarchal crisis in Medina. Although there are those who claim that the use of violence against women existed in pre-Islamic Arab traditions and who argue that the Qur'an aims to remove violence against women with a revolutionary approach, there are also those who interpret the same verses in the Medina period differently and defend male violence.

When Aisha, the prophet's wife, was asked what the prophet did at home, she said, "He was at the service of his family, he was doing housework, the most he did was sewing. He also patched his clothes, sewed his shoes."¹⁹² She added that he never

¹⁹¹ Ayesha S. Chaudhry, 203-204

¹⁹² Ibn Sa'd, *Siyer*, 312-313

beat any of his wives or any of his concubines. It is narrated by the wives of the prophet that he loved women and their fragrance.

One day, when Aisha and Safiyya argued, they insulted each other. They used derogatory words about each other's fathers. Witnessing this debate, Muhammad warned Safiyya not to insult Abu Bakr. He also told Abu Bakr to warn Aisha, but when Abu Bakr hit hard on Aisha's chest, Muhammad said, “O Abu Bakr I did not want this.”¹⁹³

It might be argued from these narratives that when inside his own house, the prophet behaved contrary to patriarchy. According to Islamic historians, the reason for this was that Muhammad was a very kind and caring person. However, the fact that both her mother Amine and her first wife belonged to matrilineal families might have also had an effect on his behavioral patterns.

Muhammad's nephew Ali bin Abu Talib married his daughter Fatima. Ali was harsh and rude to Fatima from time to time. Once, Fatima even complained about her husband to the prophet because of those rude behaviors. Muhammad responded to Fatima as follows:

“My dear daughter! Listen and keep in mind! It is not possible to manage a woman who does not fulfill her husband's wishes.”

After listening to these conversations secretly, Ali regretted his behaviors.¹⁹⁴

Even though Ali stated that he gave up on his rude behaviors, it can still be claimed that Muhammad's attitude in this case was in accordance with patriarchal codes. Considering that his relationship with his deceased wife Hatice was not based on male domination, it appears that during his Medina years, the prophet supported the transition from matriarchal attitude to patriarchal attitude.

¹⁹³ İbn Sa'd Tabakat, *Kadınlar , Peygamberin Eşleri*, 48

¹⁹⁴ İbn Sa'd ,*Kitabü't Tabakati'l Kebir, Kadınlar* (İstanbul: Siyer yayınları, 2016), Cilt 10,13

According to Ibn Hisham quoted from Ibn Isak, what the Prophet said about women in his preaching pilgrimage was as follows:

“O People, you have a right over your women, and they have a right over you. Your right over them is not to take anyone you do not want on your bed. Another right is that they should not act exorbitantly. If they do, you are given the right to beat them, but not violently. There is a lapidating for adultery .., Treat women well because they are prisoners with you, and they have nothing for themselves.” You took them as the trust of God. Give their honor willingly to them with the word of God. ¹⁹⁵

There was a story according to Ibn Sa’d¹⁹⁶ which went as follows. During the final days of the prophet when he was severely ill, he no longer had enough strength to lead the prayer ritual, and he ordered Aisha that Abu Bakr be called upon to do it. Aisha, despite being the daughter of Abu Bakr, disobeyed Muhammad because this choice would be inadequate according to her and she called upon another companion, Umar. When the prophet heard Umar’s voice in the mosque when he was still in Aisha’s bed, he was surprised and asked where Abu Bakr was. Aisha explained to him that she deliberately called Umar, because her father’s voice was weak. Muhammad got angry at her disobedience, and grumbled “in every woman, there sleeps a traitor like the lover of Joseph.” This comment of Muhammad has led to many excuses for misogynistic attitudes towards divorcing women throughout the ages.

However, it should be borne in mind that the prophet was on his deathbed when he said these words. Nevertheless, these words are interesting in that they

¹⁹⁵ İbn Hişam, *İslam Tarihi*, Cilt 4, 348-350

¹⁹⁶ İbn Sa’d *Siyer* . (İstanbul: Siyer Yayınları, 2019),611-615

reflected the subconscious of Muhammad, who was considered the kindest, most merciful, and wisest person of that age.

The story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife in the Torah is as follows:

²The LORD was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. ³When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did, ⁴Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned....

Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, ⁷and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!"

⁸But he refused. "With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. ⁹No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" ¹⁰And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her.

¹¹One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. ¹²She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house.

¹³When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, ¹⁴she called her household servants. "Look," she said to them, "this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but I screamed. ¹⁵When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house."

¹⁶She kept his cloak beside her until his master came home. ¹⁷Then she told him this story: “That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. ¹⁸But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house.”

¹⁹When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, “This is how your slave treated me,” he burned with anger. ²⁰Joseph’s master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined.¹⁹⁷

The version of the same story in the Qur’an is as follows:

“21. He that bought him, being of Egypt, said to his wife, ‘Give him goodly lodging, and it may be that he will profit us, or we may take him for our own son.’ So We established Joseph in the land, and that We might teach him the interpretation of tales. God prevails in His purpose, but most men know not. 22. And when he was fully grown, We gave him judgment and knowledge. Even so We recompense the good-doers. 23. Now the woman in whose house he was solicited him, and closed the doors on them. ‘Come,’ she said, ‘take me!’ ‘God be my refuge,’ he said. ‘Surely my lord has given me a goodly lodging. Surely the evildoers do not prosper. 24. For she desired him; and he would have taken her, but that he saw the proof of his Lord. So was it, that We might turn away from him evil and abomination; he was one of Our devoted servants. 25. They raced to the door; and she tore his shirt from behind. They encountered her master by the door. She said, ‘What is the recompense of him who purposes evil against thy folk, but that he should be imprisoned, or a

¹⁹⁷ Holy Bible, Genesis 39 *New International Version, Joseph and Potiphar’s Wife* (by Biblical, Inc 2011)

painful chastisement?’ 26. Said he, ‘It was she that solicited me’; and a witness of her folk bore witness, ‘If his shirt has been torn from before then she has spoken truly, and he is one of the liars; 27. But if it be that his shirt has been torn from behind, then she has lied, and he is one of the truthful.’ 28. When he saw his shirt was torn from behind he said, ‘This is of your women’s guile; surely your guile is great. 29. Joseph, turn away from this; and thou, woman, ask forgiveness of thy crime; surely thou art one of the sinners.’ 30. Certain women that were in the city said, ‘The Governor’s wife has been soliciting her page; he smote her heart with love; we see her in manifest error...’”

Both the original story of the Torah and the version in the Qur'an are parables told to show that women can easily trap men. In both scriptures, God warns men against the lies and deceit of women.

When Muhammad was angry with Aisha, he referred to this story and said, “You women are like Joseph’s female friends”, and then, the related verse was revealed stating that the guile of women was great.¹⁹⁸ (surah *Yusuf*, verse 28)

According to a story that Ibn Sa’d told by citing both Ummu Fadl and Ubeydullah bin Musa, one day when the prophet took his grandson on his lap, the boy peed on him. Then the prophet wanted some water and sprinkled it on his pee-stained pants. Then he said: “If a boy urinates, sprinkle it with water and if a girl urinates, wash it thoroughly!”¹⁹⁹

One day, Umm Siba asked the prophet if an animal could be killed as a sacrifice for newborns. The prophet answered by saying two sheep for a boy and one sheep for a girl.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ Ibn Sa’d *Siyer*, 611-615

¹⁹⁹ Ibn Sa’d, *Tabakat, Kadınlar*, 5055 *Ümmü'l Fadl*, 2

²⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 5090, *Ümmü siba*,37

These stories were written by Ibn Sa'd, one of the most reliable Muhammad biographers of the period. The fact that even the prophet, who was known to be kind to women, had such views on women may be a sign that women were seen as second class during this period.

Pre-Islamic period is controversial to say the least. At that time, one could encounter both patriarchal and matriarchal approaches. Verses supporting patriarchy began to be revealed during the Mecca period. In fact, as stated before, most of the verses from this period that mention male-female relationships can be considered as patriarchal. However, the fact that the regulations about male/female relationships were based on the verses that were revealed in Medina as mentioned before suggests that it would be right to follow the establishment and legalization of patriarchy in the period of Medina.

6.2.3. Marriage and Family

Marriage and family life in Islam are determined by strict rules. These regulations are arranged according to patriarchal principles. However, according to Montgomery Watt, the social system in the pre-Islamic period was based on matrilineal principles, and children belonged to their mothers' families. Tribes were known as sons of females. Watt states that properties belonged to mothers' families and were run either by mother's brothers or by grandmothers. Marriages were structured as uxorilocal, in which women stayed with their family, and men visited them there. Watt even stated that women were visited by different men who followed each other. However, there were also marriages in which a woman only had children from one man; these are called monogamist marriages. He pointed out that divorces and successive marriages were common.²⁰¹ Such marriage forms also existed in the Code of Hammurabi where it was called *beene* marriage. In this form of marriage,

²⁰¹ Montgomery Watt W. *Muhammad At Medina*, 272-273

women had greater autonomy to divorce their husbands. Furthermore, the Code of Hammurabi prohibited beating and oppressing women, and limited the time a man could take his wife hostage to three years. However, the Middle Assyrian Law and the Bible Law have gradually replaced matrilineal marriages with patrilineal marriages and removed these protective measures. They allowed the beating of wives, piercing their ears, pulling them by hair, mutilating their ears.²⁰² In this marriage system, women reside in their husband's family houses, and they are dependent on their husband's support. Divorce at the will of the woman is almost impossible in these types of marriage. According to Gerda Lerner, modern anthropological evidence supports the transition from matrilineal marriage to patrilocal, patrilineal marriage, which occurred with plow agriculture.²⁰³

With the emergence of private property and class stratification in the market economy, male heads of households began to arrange the marriages of family members in a way that maximized family wealth. Women began to play an increasingly important role in the family economy as producers of children, caregivers, domestic workers and providers of sexual services.

It is believed that the matrilineal system was dominant in the Arab society for a long time although it is known that communities based on patriarchy also existed. However, the wide-spread emergence of the patrilineal structure was relatively new as a result of the development of market economy where men played a significant role. Many sources indicate that Mecca was the place where patriarchy was the strongest. However, it is reported that the traces of matriarchal structures were also followed in Mecca and Medina at the same period. As it is known, in a patriarchal system, families consist of the relatives of men; and children bear the names of their fathers. Tribes are known as men's children. Properties belong to the patrilocal if they are communal, but if they are owned by a private individual, they are inherited by that

²⁰² Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*, 13

²⁰³ Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, 110

individual's sons or brothers. A woman can presumably have only one husband at a time. Women are mainly considered as procreators, and their lifelong dependence on their husbands has been institutionalized.

Unions in which the child does not belong to the biological father, in which women have multiple sexual partners, and have the right to dismiss their husbands with a simple act such as lowering a veil across the entrance to their tent when they no longer want to take their husbands in are all forbidden by Islam.²⁰⁴ It is truly interesting that the customs that gave women the right to sexual self-determination could exist before Islam. Islam prohibited all these practices that gave women the right to determine their sexual destiny.

During the Battle of Badr, the prophet's uncle Hamza called a man that he fought as the son of a female circumciser.²⁰⁵ As we understand from this call, patriarchy prevailed during that period in Mecca and female circumcision was being practiced. This custom is still performed in some African and South Arabian Muslim countries.

After the Battle of Uhud, Abu Sufyan, who was one of the leaders in Mecca and was the opponent of Muhammad, addressed Hassan bin Sabit as "O Hassan, the son of a woman who eats dates..."²⁰⁶

The fact that both Umar and Abu Sufyan referred to their enemies as "the son of a woman" might be a habit from matrilineal relationships. As we understand from these stories, matriarchal habits continued to be encountered even after patriarchy began to prevail.

It is understood that matriarchal and patriarchal structures coexisted and often intermingled in the Arab society during the Migration (Hegira) period. It can be

²⁰⁴ Fatıma Mernissi, *Peçenin Ötesi*, 10

²⁰⁵ İbn Hişam, *İslam Tarihi*, Cilt 3, 98

²⁰⁶ İbn Hişam, *İslam Tarihi*, Cilt 2, 298

thought that Muhammad wanted to weaken the tribal solidarity seen in matriarchal societies and instead, develop an individualistic viewpoint that would strengthen the patriarchal system. It can be observed that during this period, there was a transition from matricentric society to patriarchal society, and because of that, individuality was strengthened. The fact that the legacy of a man was not passed on to his sister's son, but instead was inherited by his own children could only be possible if individuality was a dominant mindset.

In her comprehensive research, Gertrude Stern concluded that there was no fixed pre-Islamic marriage institution and that marriage ties were not binding. According to her, in the pre-Islamic period, there was no practice of polygamy in which a man married a number of women and had them reside in one or more houses. Gertrude Stern drew attention to the female dominant characteristic of pre-Islamic marriages. In those marriages, women had the right to polyandry.²⁰⁷

Ibn Sa'd stated that the prophet's great-grandfather Hashim also had an uxori-local marriage. His wife Salama bint Amr got married only on the condition that she would be her own master and would dismiss her husband if she did not like him. Salama was from a noble family from Medina, she valued her honor very much. She was married before and had children. She was a strong, smart and beautiful woman and wrote poems. She attached great importance to her freedom. Ibn Sa'd claimed that as Salama had such honor in her tribe, she made her own marriage decisions and immediately left men she did not like.²⁰⁸

She raised the product of this union, Abd al Muttalib, the grandfather of the prophet. After she gave birth, Hashim returned to Mecca, leaving the child with his mother. After Hashim's death, his uncle went to Medina to take the young man, who

²⁰⁷ Gertrude H. Stern, *Marriage in Early Islam*, (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1939), 62

²⁰⁸ Ibn Sa'd *Siyer*, 69

was now an adolescent. After making negotiations that took three days, the uncle told the boy that he could come with him only if his mother.²⁰⁹

Following is a story told by Ibn Hisham:

While traveling with his father Abdulmuttalib, Abdullah, the father of the prophet, met a woman named Ruqayya, the sister of Waraqa, who recognized the first prophetic signs of Muhammad's arrival. When she looked at Abdullah's face, she saw the light of prophethood on his head. The woman said to Abdullah, "I give you hundred camels, come and be with me!" Abdullah, on the other hand, did not accept the offer saying that he was with his father and could not oppose him. His father married off Abdullah to Amina bint Vehb, the daughter of the chief of Benî Zuhre tribe. When Abdullah had intercourse with Amina, Amina became pregnant with Muhammad. Abdullah then came out of Amine's place and went to the woman who had offered to be with him before and expressed that he wanted to have sex with her. However, the woman refused Abdullah saying that he lost the light that she saw the day before and she had no longer any desire for him.²¹⁰ Ruqayya knew from scripture about the coming birth of the prophet. This story is also told in the biography of the prophet written by Ibn Sa'd.²¹¹ Abdullah did not know that he carried the sign of fecundity which would produce a holy son who would be the prophet in the future. The light he had was perceived and deciphered by a woman. This clairvoyance of women has been perceived as a threat for patriarchal social order.

The accuracy of this story does not matter much. However, the fact that it was told in a book by one of the oldest Islamic historians like Ibn Hisham shows that at that time, women were able to propose to be together with a man they desired, and refuse any that they did not want to be with. This information can be considered as proof that there was a matriarchal social structure in the pre-Islamic period.

²⁰⁹ İbn Hişam; *İslam Tarihi Siret-i İbn Hişam* (İstanbul: Kahraman Yayınları: 2018) cilt 1,187

²¹⁰ İbn Hişam, *İslam Tarihi* cilt 1,208

²¹¹ İbn Sa'd *Siyer*,85

In addition, Ibn Hisham stated that Amina bint Vehbin, the mother of the prophet, was a member of an honorable and noble family. Her rank and lineage were among the highest in Qurash. When Amina became pregnant with Muhammad, she stayed with her own family, and after the death of her husband, when she gave birth to her baby, she told the prophet's grandfather that he had a grandson but she kept the baby with herself during her lifetime. As a tradition in matriarchal societies, she sent the baby to a foster mother named Halima for a while. The lineage of Halima was also mentioned; it was most likely that she came from a noble family.²¹² After this period, Muhammad remained with her mother until her death. Only after his mother died, his grandfather took care of Muhammad.

The importance given to matrilineality and the fact that children stayed with their mothers in Medina at that time show that the family structure of the era was an uxorilocal one, which can only be seen in a matriarchal order.

At the age of 25, the prophet married the widow Hatice, who had been married twice before and had children. Hatice bin Huveylid belonged to a noble family. She was a wealthy woman who owned and traded her property. All the men in her tribe would want to marry her. She gave men goods to sell and allocated shares among them from the profit. She offered Muhammad to take goods to Damascus. Muhammad, who sold the goods, returned to Mecca and gave Hatice her money. Hatice was impressed by the honest and moral attitude of Muhammad and offered to get married to him. Even her father objected to his daughter's marriage to Muhammad because he was poor. However, Hatice said that she had enough goods, that she liked Muhammad for his virtuous qualities. Despite her father's opposition, she married Muhammad and they stayed married until her death. Muhammad did not marry another woman until Hatice's death.²¹³ Perhaps, with a marriage contract that Hatice made before marrying Muhammad, she made him promise not to marry a second wife

²¹² Ibn Hişam, *İslam Tarihi*, cilt 1, 213t

²¹³ Ibn Hişam, *İslam Tarihi* cilt 1, 247

in accordance with the customs of matriarchal culture. Hatice may have made some requests based on her wealth.

Here again, a matricentric family structure in which marriage was offered by a woman can be seen. It is understood that Muhammad had a monogamist marriage until Hatice died. After her death, he turned to polygamy and made several marriages, which is a characteristic of patrilineal families.

In patriarchal Islam, marriage is defined as a contract executed with a fee (mahr) that is given to women by men for the legalization of sexual intercourse and procreation of children.

Al-Mumtahanah 10 states: "...and there is no fault in you to marry them when you have given them their wages..."

An-Nisa 4 states: "And give the women their dowries as a gift spontaneous; but if they are pleased to offer you any of it, consume it with wholesome appetite."

An Nisa 24 states: "...Such wives as you enjoy thereby, give them their wages apportionate; it is no fault in you in your agreeing together,"

An Nisa 25 states: "...So marry them, with their people's leave, and give them their wages honourably..."

Al-Ma'idah 5 states: "...Likewise believing women in wedlock, and in wedlock women of them who were given the Book before you if you give them their wages..."

This type of marriage is based on absolute male domination. The Qur'an attempted to abolish the custom of plurality of husbands at the same time and replace it with having one husband at a time. Then, with the establishment of marriages through slavery and purchasing, the transition to patriarchy started.

The construction of these marriages started with the demonstration that which men and which women cannot marry each other.

Baqarah 221 states: “Do not marry idolatresses, until they believe...And do not marry idolaters, until they believe... “

Baqarah 230 states: “...And do not resolve on the knot of marriage until the book has reached its term...”

Al-Ahzab 53 states: “...neither to marry his wives after him, ever; surely that would be, in God’s sight, a monstrous thing.

An Nisa 22 states: “And do not marry women that your fathers married...”

An Nisa 23 states: “ Forbidden to you are your mothers and daughters, your sisters, your aunts paternal and maternal, your brother’s daughters, your sister’s daughters, your mothers who have given suck to you, your suckling sisters, your wives’ mothers, your stepdaughters ...the spouses of your sons who are of your loins, and that you should take to you two sisters...”

An-Nisa: 24 states: “...Also prohibited to you are all married women except those your right hands possess.”

An-Nur 3 states:” The fornicator shall marry none but a fornicatress or an idolatress, and the fornicatress -- none shall marry her but a fornicator or an idolator; that is forbidden to the believers.”

As it can be understood from the verses above, it is prohibited for believers to marry with unbelieving women and men, women in waiting period, wives of the prophet, wives of their fathers, a variety of defined relatives, free and married women and finally fornicators and fornicatresses.

According to the verses 22-24 of surah An-Nisa (the Women), the Islamic law prohibits a man from marrying his mother, sister, daughter, aunt, nephew, his wife's mother and daughter, his father's wife, or his son's wife. Likewise, he cannot get married to a foster-mother or a foster-sister, or two sisters at the same time. Marriage between relatives closer than cousinship are all barred. Qur'anic law has banned marriages between close relatives on male side, which were not forbidden before. All these new arrangements meant the restructuring of marriage rules by Muhammad based on God's command. Patrilineal principles were added to matrilineal ones. Milk kinship began to be accounted at the same level as blood relationships. The laws prohibiting marriage with relatives are originally from the Torah. The only exception is the prohibition of marriage to nephews, which is stated for the first time in the Qur'an. Most of these marriage prohibitions are based on the incest taboo which is necessary for the establishment of patriarchy.

What is interesting is the continuation of the 24th verse of Surat an-Nisa, which states that women with whom men have been together for a temporary time should be paid as determined beforehand.

. “24Such wives as you enjoy thereby, give them their wages apportionate; it is no fault in you in your agreeing together, after the due apportionate...”

Several early Muslim scholars took these words as permission for temporary marriages called *mut'ah*, which is a union between a man and a woman for a fixed period. The wedding of “mut'ah”, a tradition from the matrilineal period, is forbidden by Sunni Muslims as it is accepted a kind of adultery. However, the infiltration of words that somehow makes us think about the marriage of the “mut'ah in the verses of the Qur'an is an indication that the matrilineal habits still continued at that time. Therefore, it can be claimed that various resistance was encountered in the transition from a matrilineal marriage structure to a patrilineal marriage structure.

All these discussions show the efforts made to establish patriarchy in this period. It seems that the transition from matrilocality and matrilineality to patriarchy was long and troublesome. It is clear that the people of Medina did not want to leave their old matrilineal habits but Muhammad needed a patriarchal structure for a new social order. As the beginning of Islam, this period is one of the most interesting periods in the whole history of Islam as it sheds light on a dramatic process in which a new system replaced the previous system of values, which had not changed for a long time.

Another point that needs to be emphasized is that the last verse about marriage is about the permission of believing men to marry chaste Jews and Christians who have been sent holy books.

Maidah 5 states: “And permissible for you in marriage are chaste believing women as well as chaste women of those given the Scripture before you...”

Here it is necessary to draw attention to the asymmetry in not granting the same right to women. In this structure, the woman must marry a single Muslim man and thus the lineage must be determined.

Another point to be noted is that the rules regarding marriage focus on the life of the prophet and his close circle.

When Muhammad asked Abu Bakr’s permission to marry his daughter Aisha, Abu Bakr told Muhammad that he had already promised his daughter to the son of Mut'im bin Adi. However, after renouncing his promise to that family, he married his daughter off to Muhammad. Aisha was 6 years old when they got married. After staying with her own family for 3 years, she moved to the house of the prophet and entered the nuptial chamber at the age of nine. During her stay with her family, she

realized that she was married after her mother did not allow her to play with her girlfriends.

Referring to the prophet's marriage to Aisha, Islamic scholars approve that a man may marry his minor virgin daughters off without consulting them or obtaining their consent. According to Ibn Hanbal, a daughter cannot object his father's choice.²¹⁴ Arguing that the prophet's action acts as an example, Ibn Hanbal argued that no minor bride should be given the chance to opt out the marriage. Al-Shafi claimed that fathers had more right over the virgin daughters than they (daughters) had over themselves. Malik gave some examples of the companions of the prophet who married their virgin daughters off without their permission. He even stated that the prophet himself married off his own daughters without consulting them.²¹⁵

According to Islamic *fikh* scholars, when a virgin maiden is asked if she would like to marry a particular man, if the girl remains silent, it would signify her consent. According to Muhammad, the girl can be embarrassed to show what she wants by answering. On the other hand, the prophet added that a non-virgin woman should be asked for her consent to marry, because there is no shame in speaking for a woman who is not a virgin.²¹⁶ Regardless of how they are interpreted, these approaches are degrading and subordinating towards women. It should be noted here that fathers have the right to marry their prepubertal sons without their consent, as well. However, this practice, which is a result of patriarchy, has not been as common as girls.²¹⁷

However, making a marriage contract did not mean that the marriage would take place immediately. Menstruation had to begin for an adolescent girl to be handed over to her husband. It was the girl's mother or female relatives who determined

²¹⁴ Kecia Ali, "The Prophet Muhammad as a Model for Muslim Husbands", *Islamic Studies*, Vol 43, No 2, 2004, 280

²¹⁵ *Ibid*, 281,282

²¹⁶ Judith E. Tucker, *İslam Hukukunda Kadın, Aile ve Toplumsal Cinsiyet*, 79

²¹⁷ *Ibid*,80

whether the girl was ready for sexual intercourse. Islamic *fiqh* scholars such as Imam Shafi even stated that a woman should not be prevented by her guardian from marrying a man who was suitable for her and paid her dowry money. Otherwise, the court could give this approval.²¹⁸

Like the prophet himself, Umar, too, married a girl who was not in puberty yet. This girl was the prophet's granddaughter, Ummu Kulsûm. They stayed married until Umar's death. In the Arab traditions of that time, marrying a girl before puberty was not regarded as odd. Indeed, the prophet and the four caliphs married each other's daughters and granddaughters.

The prophet liked Cüveyriye Bint Haris very much, one of the women who was taken prisoner during the holy war against the sons of Mustalık. She was a very beautiful and charming woman. Despite the objection of Aisha, who was with him during the expedition, he married Cüveyriye by paying the price of redemption.²¹⁹ In return, the prophet freed all the prisoners from the sons of Mustalık.

Similarly, after Cüveyriye, the prophet reserved Safiyya bint Huvey for himself, whom he had captured during the Khyber expedition, and married with a wedding ceremony. She was 17 years of age when they got married. He gave her freedom as a marriage fee (mahr). On their way back from the Khyber expedition, the prophet took a break and wanted to enter the nuptial chamber with Safiyya. He ordered Umm Sulayma, one of his wives, to arrange the construction of a tent and prepare Safiyya. Umm Suleyma made the necessary preparations, she combed Safiyya's hair, helped her get rid of her unwanted hair, wear fragrances, put the brightest ornaments, and sent her to the nuptial chamber. The prophet ordered for the veiling of Safiyya and reserved her a day just like he did for his other wives. Because

²¹⁸ Kecia Ali, "The Prophet Muhammad as a Model for Muslim Husbands", 281

²¹⁹ İbn Hişam, *İslam Tarihi*, cilt 3,404

Safiyya was of Jewish origin, Zaynab and Aisha – the other wives of the prophet – were united against him. However, the prophet defended Safiyya against them.²²⁰

Hafsa, the daughter of Umar bin Khattab and one of the wives of the prophet, was married before. When her husband died, her father offered Utman to marry her. Utman's wife Rukiyya, the daughter of the prophet, had already died. Utman refused Umar's offer because he wanted to marry the prophet's other daughter, Ummu Kulsûm. Umar later offered Hafsa to Abu Bakr, and when Abu Bakr remained silent, the prophet asked Umar to get married to her; then, he paid for her fee and married her.²²¹

When Umm Salama became a widow, Abu Bakr and Umar wanted to marry her as soon as her waiting period was over but Salama refused both. When the prophet offered to marry her, she accepted his offer. When the prophet got married to Umm Salama, he stayed with her for three nights. However, when the prophet wanted to share his days among his wives, Salama did not want him to go by holding his dress. The prophet told her that there were three days to the widows and seven days to the virgins.²²²

After Safiyya, the prophet married Meymune bint Haris, who offered herself to him.²²³ This marriage took place in 629, and it was the last marriage of the prophet.²²⁴ The 50th verse of surah Al Ahzab, which focuses on this subject, was revealed before this marriage.

Verse 50 of surah Al Ahzab (The Allies)

“50 O Prophet, We have made lawful for thee thy wives whom thou hast given their wages and what thy right hand owns, spoils of

²²⁰ İbn Sa'd *Tabakat, Kadınlar, Peygamberin Eşleri*, 123

²²¹ Ibid, 52

²²² Ibid, 62

²²³ İbn Hişam, *İslam Tarihi* Cilt 4, 391-392

²²⁴ İbn Sa'd, *Tabakat, Kadınlar, Peygamberin Eşleri*, 131

war that God has given thee, and the daughters of thy uncles paternal and aunts paternal, thy uncles maternal and aunts maternal, who have emigrated with thee, *and any woman believer, if she give herself to the Prophet and if the Prophet desire to take her in marriage, for thee exclusively, apart from the believers* -- We know what We have imposed upon them touching their wives and what their right hands own -- that there may be no fault in thee;...”

In this verse, the women whom the prophet could marry are stated. This verse would later form the basis for the rules regarding the women whom the believers might marry.

Another narrative on this verse is as follows. The Messenger of God wanted to marry Ummu Hani bin Abu Talib, his uncle’s widowed daughter. When the woman gave him the excuse “I should take care of my children”, the prophet did not accept it. Thereupon, this verse was revealed.

There were many women from the Ma’is arm of the sons of Lüey who offered themselves to the prophet, and Muhammad did enter the nuptial chamber with some of them. It is speculated that this verse was revealed about these women. It is stated in this verse that believing women who offered themselves for free were only for Muhammad, and not for other believers.

Aisha, the beloved wife of the prophet, reacted negatively to this verse. She said that women who offered themselves for free without a mahr would be of no benefit. She stated that God revealed these verses to his prophet’s desire.²²⁵

The prophet divided the days of the week among his wives to stay with them in their houses and spend time with each of them, to be just to all of them. He did not want to do injustice. Sevde, one of the wives of the prophet, was old. She wanted to give her day to Aisha because she was worried that the prophet would divorce her,

²²⁵ İbn Sa’d, *Tabakat, Kadınlar*, 8:112

and Muhammad accepted her proposal. After this event, the following verse was revealed.

The 128th verse of surah An-Nisa:²²⁶

“128 If a woman fear rebelliousness or aversion in her husband, there is no fault in them if the couple set things right between them; right settlement is better; and souls are very prone to avarice. If you do well and are god-fearing, surely God is aware of the things you do...”

This verse, which commands peace between spouses when men are being unfaithful to their wives, shows the inequality in the Qur'an as the code of attitude and behavior advised in this verse is the opposite of the 34th verse of the same surah, which prescribes warning, separation of beds, and ultimately beating of women if women are the unfaithful ones.

It is known that the prophet married 13 women in total. He did not have intercourse with two of them. When he realized that one of them had an illness, he left her, and he sent the other wife to her family because she did not want to be married to him.²²⁷

It is possibly not coincidental that most of the provisions on marriage in the Qur'an refer to the prophet's private life. In addition, behind most of the verses on this subject, there are stories about either Muhammad or his companions. It is probable that the Qur'an strengthens patriarchy that is desired to be established through the issue of marriage by giving examples from the prophet. Furthermore, the stories of his immediate social circle must be aimed at reinforcing the rules of the patriarchal order. In conclusion, we can argue that the marriage-related rules in the Qur'an are consistent and compatible with the idea of patrilineal and patrilocal marriages.

²²⁶ İbn Sa'd, *Tabakat, Kadınlar, Kendilerini Resulullah'a Bağışlayan Kadınlar*, 31

²²⁷ Ibid, 393

All these stories showed how patriarchy prevailed in society. However, it should be kept in mind that some applications came from the old patriarchal period. Because while the matriarchal order prevailed in Medina, it is known that a patriarchal structure had continued in the Mecca bourgeoisie for a long time.

In conclusion, we can argue that the rules of marriage in the Qur'an are consistent and compatible with the idea of patrilineal and patrilocal marriage.

6.2.4. Concubinage

Concubinage as a form of slavery is the first institutionalized form of hierarchical domination in human history and is linked to the establishment of the market economy and the state. The persecution of women preceded slavery and made it possible. Gerda Lerner claimed that the enslavement process was originally developed on women captures of war. These women were raped and abused sexually by their masters. She argued that enslaving women were a step in the development of the concubinage institution. By subordinating captive women, men found the symbolic power of dominance and sexual control over women.²²⁸

The practice of using female war captives as concubines started from the time of Homer and continued into modern period. Historian William Westermann described the practice of concubinage throughout antiquity based on historical and literary sources.²²⁹

²²⁸ Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, 80

²²⁹ William Westermann, *The Slave Systems of Greek and Roman Antiquity*, (Philedalphia: American Philosophical Society, 1955), 26,28,63

When concubines got pregnant, they became bound to their captors. The institutionalization of concubinage was a social instrument for integrating enslaved women into the households of their masters. In this way, they served their owners as well as contributing to the continuation of their lineage by giving birth to their children. Until Hammurabi limited their period of service to three years and allowed them to be freed afterwards, they could be held captive for a lifetime (HC: 117).²³⁰ In the Code of Hammurabi, there were regulations pertaining to slave concubines: about their rights as mothers and the inheritance rights of their children. According to this code, a father might legitimate his sons who were borne from a concubine. She and her son would become free after the father's death. This model of emancipation for the concubines who gave birth to sons has been incorporated into Islamic law and has spread throughout the world with the spread of Islam. On the other hand, according to the Hebrew Covenant Code, male slaves could be freed after serving for 6 years, whereas female slaves could only be redeemed of concubinage if they marry their masters or their sons.²³¹

The royal harems increased in size first during the Sassanid period and later following the Muslim conquest of the area.²³² The merged Muslim community in Iraq played a significant role in establishing Muslim rules and institutions.

The rules about marrying female slaves and concubines are determined by strict rules in the Qur'an. In Islam, concubinage is the only legal sexual practice outside marriage. It is a relationship between a Muslim man and an unmarried female slave whom he owns. Islamic law does not require a man to get consent from his female slave in order to have sexual intercourse with her.²³³ Islamic law legitimates sexual relationship between a man and his concubine through various Qur'anic verses

²³⁰ G.R. Driver and John C. Miles, *The Babylonian Laws* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956) Vol 1, 36

²³¹ Kutsal Kitap, *Mısır'dan Çıkış*, 21:2-11

²³² Ilse Seibert, *Woman in the Ancient Near East*, (New York: Abner Schram, 1974), 51

²³³ Kecia Ali, Kecia "Concubinage and Consent" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. Vol.49 no.1, 2017, 148-152

(An-Nahl: 71, Al-Mu'minun: 6, Al-Ma'arij: 30, Ar-Rum: 28, Al-Baqarah: 221, Al-Ahzab: 50, 55, 52, An-Nisa: 3, 24, 25, An-Nur: 31, 32, 33, 58, At-Tahrim: 1). These verses refer to men's lawful relationships through the words "*what they right hand possess*". Marriages between men and their concubines can only be possible if they are granted free status first. The birth of children changes the legal status of concubines to *umm walad* (literally, a child's mother). After that, she cannot be sold. Upon the death of her owner, she automatically wins free status, and her children are considered free and legitimate. Until a concubine obtains her freedom, she is not allowed to own property. According to Aysha Hidayatullah, her status as *umm walad* falls somewhere between a married woman and an ordinary slave.²³⁴

While Qur'an limits the number of wives with four, it does not set limits on the number of concubines with whom the men are allowed to have sex.

If the concubinage issue in the history of Islam is examined through the life of the prophet, we can notice, the first verse about this subject is about the permission given to the prophet to marry as many concubines as he wishes, after restricting the number of his marriages.

Al-Ahzab 52 states: "Thereafter women are not lawful to thee, neither for thee to take other wives in exchange for them...except what thy right hand owns..."

In addition to his wives, the prophet had two concubines. One of them was Mariyya, a Coptic-Christian. The prophet had a special affection for Mariyya. Normally, he would visit his wives in turns. But one day, when one of his wives, Hafsa, went to visit her father, Muhammad decided to have intercourse with Mariyya even though it was Hafsa's day. During the intercourse, Hafsa caught them in her own room, in her own bed and protested "You had sex with her on my day, during

²³⁴ Aysha Hidayatullah, "Mariyya the Copt: gender,sex and heritage in the legacy of Muhammad's *umm walad* " *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* " 21:3,2010,225

my turn, and on my bed.” She threatened to tell his other wives about this event. The prophet swore that he would not be with Mariyya again. However, Hafsa told Aisha about the incident. Still, the prophet could not forget Mariyya. His overwhelming attraction to his concubine led to jealousy and complaints among his wives.²³⁵ On the occasion of this domestic crisis, the following verses were revealed to the prophet, expressing that he should not deprive himself of what God made lawful to him in order to seek the satisfaction of his wives.²³⁶

Following verses of surah At-Tahrim: (The Prohibition) prescribes:

“1 O Prophet, why forbiddest thou what God has made lawful to thee, seeking the good pleasure of thy wives? And God is All forgiving, All-compassionate...” “2 God has ordained for you the absolution of your oaths. God is your Protector, and He is the All-knowing, the All-wise...” “3 And when the Prophet confided to one of his wives a certain matter; and then, when she told of it, and God disclosed that to him, he made known part of it, and turned aside from part; then, when he told her of it, she said, ‘Who told thee this?’ He said, ‘I was told of it by the All-knowing, the All-aware...’”

With this verse, the spouses of the prophet were harshly condemned for their jealousy. The Qur'an criticized the prophet for not being with his concubine, because of fear of his wives although God made him halal. All-knowing God had shown how vows could be resolved. God had again notified the Prophet that Hafsa had told this incident to Aisha.²³⁷

²³⁵ Turan Dursun, *Kuran Ansiklopedisi*, (Istanbul:Kaynak Yayınları,1994,) Cilt 7,41-43

²³⁶ Tabari tefsiri Cilt 6,105

²³⁷ Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad At Medina*,286

“4 If you two repent to God, yet your hearts certainly inclined; but if you support one another against him, God is his Protector, and Gabriel, and the righteous among the believers; and, after that, the angels are his supporters. 5 It is possible that, if he divorces you, his Lord will give him in exchange wives better than you, women who have surrendered, believing, obedient, penitent, devout, given to fasting, who have been married and virgins too.”

In the abovementioned verses from the same surah, it is explained that the jealous wives of the prophet turned their hearts towards misconduct; and therefore, they should repent to God. It is stated that God would be the supporter and friend of the prophet if their wives would behave otherwise, if they would be rebellious against him and try to torment him. It is also reported that all angels would help him against those who want to do evil to the prophet. It is declared that if the prophet were to divorce his wives, God would give him widows and virgin wives who would be more auspicious, who would obey God from the heart and would do things that God likes, and submit to the prophet.

These explanations show that God gave a special treatment to his prophet. In addition, all these verses denote jealousy as a feature of all women’s irrationalities and overemotional temperament according to Aysha Hidayatullah.²³⁸ The reason why these verses were revealed was to set limits on the prophet’s overgenerous promise and nobility.

However, it can be considered that through the story of the prophet’s wives, a message is given to all women to not be jealous of their husbands and to obey them under all circumstances. It is also known that previously, Umar complained to Muhammad about the rebellious behaviors of women in Medina.

²³⁸ Aysha Hidayatullah, “Mariyya the Copt: gender,sex and heritage in the legacy of Muhammad’s *umm walad*, 231

The prophet got angry with his spouses upon this incident and did not visit them in their houses for a month. It is also rumored that another time the prophet did not visit his wives for a month was after a dispute broke out between his spouses due to a gift sharing.²³⁹

Another concubine of the prophet was Reyhane. She was a widow from a Medina family of Jewish origin. The prophet took her as a captive concubine and offered her to accept Islam and become his wife. Reyhane accepted this offer but refused to cover her head and wear a veil like other Muslim women. For this reason, Reyhane remained as a concubine slave until her death.²⁴⁰

Islamic historians also mention the sexual prowess of the prophet bestowed upon him by God. It is stated that he said, “I was given the power of forty men in sexuality.” It is stated that one night, he was engaged in sexual activity with his nine wives.²⁴¹

Annemaria Schimmel claims that the prophet's special fondness for women was reinforced by his words. “Allah made me love women, their fragrance and prayer from your world.”²⁴²

It should be noted that the laws about the freedom of having sex with concubines is reinforced by the private life of Muhammad. This step might have been taken to impose concubinage in the Islamic community.

As mentioned earlier in the Qur'an, believing men have the freedom to marry as many concubines as they want. The Quran also recommends that those who cannot afford to marry, marrying their concubines on condition that they pay their wages

²³⁹ İbn Sa'd *Tabakat, Peyamberin Eşlerinin Kapanması*, 65

²⁴⁰ İbn Hişam ,cilt 3,256

²⁴¹ İbn Sa'd *Tabakat, Peygambere Verilen Cinsel Güç*

²⁴² Annemarie Schimmel; *Hız Muhammed*, (Ankara, Kelime Yayıncılık,2019), 38

(mahr). However, it appears that this wage is less than what would be paid to a free woman.

Verse 25 of surah An Nisa stated:

“25 Any one of you who has not the affluence to be able to marry believing freewomen in wedlock let him take believing handmaids that your right hands own...So marry them... and give them their wages honorably as women in wedlock... However, when they are in wedlock, if they commit indecency, they shall be liable to half the chastisement of freewomen. That provision is for those of you who fear fornication...”

According to the verse above if these women return to their old habits, the penalty to be imposed on them will be half the amount of monandric, free (the practice of having single husband at a time) women.

In addition, the Qur'an recommends that Muslims marry poor and single believers to their own virtuous slaves and concubines as can be seen from the following verse.

An-Nur 32 states:” Marry the spouseless among you, and your slaves and handmaidens that are righteous; if they are poor...”

Furthermore, the Qur'an orders the believers to accept the demands of their slaves and concubines who want to be free by paying its price with a contract. This arrangement can be considered as a kind of reform of old traditions.

An-Nur 33 states: “Those your right hands own who seek emancipation, contract with them accordingly, if you know some good in them...”

These attempts were always aimed at alienating Muslim men and women from the old Medina habits that did not care about fatherhood . It is noteworthy that the rules regarding the rights and freedoms of concubines are more or less on the same level with the Codex Hammurabi written in 1752 BC, but they seem to be more reformist than the Jewish law. Regardless, concubinage emerged during the institutionalization of patriarchal societies and has continued into modern times. Although the subject of concubinage is mentioned in verses from both Mecca and Medina periods, the provisions of Islamic Shari'ah on this issue are revealed by the verses from the Medina period (Al- Ahzab, An-Nisa).

6.2.5. Divorce

The Qur'an clearly defines the superior rights enjoyed by fathers and husbands and legalizes the repudiation of wives by their husbands. According to the Qur'an, men can divorce (talaq) their wives simply by saying it three times.

There are two forms of divorce through this way in Islam. In the first one, the man who wants to divorce (talaq) his wife leaves his wife by saying "be free!" and does not have sex with her for one month after the woman is cleansed from her menstrual period. In this case, if the waiting period is not over yet, the husband can return to his wife and continue their marriage. If the man still wants to divorce his wife, then, once his wife is cleansed of menstruation and they have not had sexual intercourse, he divorces her once more and begins to wait. If his wife is cleansed from menstruation for the third time, and he divorces her a third time saying, "you be free!"

without having intercourse in the meantime, this is now the last divorce and is irreversible.²⁴³

Secondly, if a husband says, “you be free!” to his wife three times in a row during one menstrual cycle, divorce happens immediately and irreversibly. In other words, this kind of divorce requires men to exercise their right to say “be free!” three times consecutively or within the same menstrual cycle. According to the prophet, the right to say “you be free!” three times all at once is a valid way to divorce women even though this is not what really sharia wants.²⁴⁴

However, in order for men to remarry their ex-wives, their wives must first have intercourse with another man. The rationale behind this is likely to make it difficult for men to divorce their wives, and prevent husbands from hindering their wives from getting married again.

Surah Al-Baqarah 229 states:

“229 Divorce is twice; then honorable retention or setting free kindly. It is not lawful for you to take of what you have given them unless the couples fear they may not maintain... 230 If he divorces her finally, she shall not be lawful to him after that, *until she marries another husband*. If he divorces her, then it is no fault in them to return to each other...”

another husband. If he divorces her, then it is no fault in them to return to each other...”

There is a story written on this subject in Ibn Sa’d’s book of *Tabakat* (women). A man named Rifa bin Semev’el divorced his wife Temime by saying “You be free!” three times. Later, Temime married another man. However, since the man

²⁴³ Hüseyin Kayapınar, *Üç Talak Sorularla İslamiyet.com*

²⁴⁴ Ibid

was impotent, he did not have sexual intercourse with Temime and divorced her. Then, her first husband wanted to remarry Temime. However, the prophet did not allow them to get married again saying, “You cannot marry her until she has intercourse with someone else.”²⁴⁵

In a matriarchal system, it does not matter who the father of a child is. As a requirement of the patriarchal system, however, men started to be interested in knowing to which father the children belonged. Supporting this approach, the Qur'an stipulates a three-month waiting period called “iddah” or “tarabbus”, which is required for women before they remarry after being widowed or divorced. The waiting period should be spent with the husband's family. The rationale behind this is to find out if the woman has become pregnant from her previous husband. In this way, there would be no doubt about the father of the child. Who the child's father is, especially if the child is a boy, has been particularly important in patriarchal societies because in those societies, family legacy passes from father to son. On the other hand, no such waiting period is requested for men before they divorce

Surah Al-Baqarah 228 commands:

“Divorced women shall wait by themselves for three periods; and it is not lawful for them to hide what God has created in their wombs...”

Surah Al-Baqarah 231 states:

“When you divorce women, and they have reached their term, then retain them honorably or set them free honorably; do not retain them by force, to transgress; whoever does that have wronged himself?”

²⁴⁵ İbn Sa'd, *Tabakat, Kadınlar*, 5454 Temime, 29

Eliaçık claims that women were in a very bad situation in the pre-Islamic Arab society, and the practice of waiting for three-months before getting married again is aimed at protecting them.

According to Amina Wadud, this form of divorce was brought about to correct the conditions of the pre-Islamic period in which the verse was revealed. However, there is no evidence that this separation and reconciliation process is based on equality. On the contrary, the way that the Qur'an determines the conditions and responsibilities of spouses for this process is based on male superiority. Furthermore, the Qur'an has not established any rules by which women can directly divorce their husbands. In a matriarchal community, on the other hand, if the woman were to change the entrance of her tent to face another direction, it would mean that she was rejecting to have a conjugal relationship with her husband.²⁴⁶ Therefore, the idea supported by Amina Wadud and Eliaçık that the Qur'an has established rules to prevent women from being abandoned and abused is disputable.

Fatima Mernissi thinks that divorce in Islam has an instinctive basis. According to her, the divorce institution in Islam regulates the unstable structure of men's sexual desires. Repudiation of women prevents men from losing their sexual drive due to monotony.²⁴⁷ It aims to offer men new sexual objects within the framework of marriage and protect them from adultery. This form of divorce, which is only granted to men, did not exist before Islam. Historical evidence reveals that there were much more diverse and less codified forms of marriage and divorce before. For example, in some marriages, women were able to make the decision to choose or leave their husbands. Even the prophet himself received marriage proposals from many women and was rejected by many, which is normal in a matriarchal order. For example, Leyla bint al Khatim, who offered her hand in marriage to the prophet, was later persuaded by her family that she could not endure polygamy even though

²⁴⁶ Montgomery Watt, *Mohammad in Medina*, 381

²⁴⁷ Fatima Mernissi, *Peçenin Ötesi*, 81

her proposal was accepted. In addition, Muhammad's marriages to Asma bint al Numan, Mūlaykea bint Ka'ab and Fatima bint al Dahhak also ended because these women wanted to leave him.²⁴⁸

These examples show that in the pre-Islamic geography, where a matriarchal order was also common, women were able to decide on their own fate. The Islamic social order strongly opposed this situation and declared that only men could divorce their wives. Fear of self-determination forms the basis of the Muslim order: if women are not oppressed, men will be drawn to adultery by their sexual attraction. This fear of women and their sexual attraction have led to numerous defensive reactions within the Islamic society. The aim behind the Qur'an's removal of all the customs that treated women as independent subjects was to establish a patriarchal social order.

Surah Al-Baqarah verse 226 prescribes:

“226 For those who forswear their women a wait of four months; if they revert, God is All forgiving, All-compassionate...”

Eliaçık says that in this verse, the Qur'an prohibits men from inflicting suffering on the wives that they do not want anymore but still try to prevent them from remarrying, as the Arabs did in the pre-Islamic period.

Tabari explains that this verse was revealed to protect women from men who divorce their wives, then remarry them before completing the waiting period, and then divorce them again. These men would have caused difficulties and harmed their wives. However, according to Tabari, in the end, it must not be very difficult for men who want to remarry the wife they previously divorced after their waiting period is finished.

Surah Bacarrat verse 232 states:

²⁴⁸ İbn Sa'd, *Kitâbü't Tabakakâti'l- Kebir* cilt 10 Kadınlar Hakkında (İstanbul:Siyer Yayınları, 2016) 154-155

“232 When you divorce women, and they have reached their term, do not debar them from marrying their husbands, when they have agreed together honorably. That is an admonition for whoso of you believes in God and the Last Day; that is cleaner and purer for you...”

According to Tabari, it is better for divorced women to marry their husbands again. This is a better behavior that is found virtuous by God. This purifies the hearts of men and women from doubt.

Eliaçık claims that the Qur'an prescribes that divorced women should not be prevented from marrying who they want; nobody should violate anyone's rights.

There are also differences between men and women with regards to the decision-making processes and implementation of divorce. Men can divorce their wives by saying “you be free” three times. While men have this power of instant repudiation, women are advised to go to an arbiter and make compromises through a peace initiative, as verse 128 of surah An-Nisa prescribes:

“If a woman fear rebelliousness or aversion in her husband, there is no fault in them if the couple set things right between them; right settlement is better; and souls are very prone to avarice...”

In Islam, in order for a woman to divorce her husband, she must prove that her husband is impotent. One way to prove this is if the woman is still a virgin. If the woman is not a virgin, the woman and the man are taken into a room. After a certain period, the man is asked to bring to the judge his semen sample on a cloth. In cases where the husband is mentally ill or have leprosy, fiqh scholars such as Imam Shafi and Imam Malik ruled that the woman can request a divorce.²⁴⁹

The Quran also sets rules on where women will live during divorce as shown in the following verse.

²⁴⁹ Judith Butler, *Cinsiyet Belası* (Istanbul:Metis Yayıncılık, 2019),146

Surah At Talaq 6 states:

“Lodge them where you are lodging, according to your means, and do not press them, so as to straighten their circumstances.”

Tabari argued that women should stay at their husbands' home and not go out during their waiting period after divorce. But he added that during this period, men should not distress women or harm them.

Verse 233 of Al-Baqarah:

“Mothers shall suckle their children two years completely, for such as desire to fulfil the suckling. It is for the father to provide them and clothe them honorably....”

However, if a new marriage is not in question, there is no need for such a waiting period before the divorce. If the woman is pregnant, this waiting period lasts until the birth of the baby. If the man divorces the woman, he is obliged to take care of her for two years, which is the period of breastfeeding. If an agreement is reached before, this period may be shorter. If her husband is dead and he has not left her a home or money, she should wait four months with her husband's family, and then she can return to her own family.

Verse 235 of Al-Baqarah:

“There is no fault in you touching the proposal to women you offer, or hide in your hearts; God knows that you will be mindful of them; but do not make troth with them secretly without you speak honorable words. And do not resolve on the knot of marriage until the book has reached its term...”

In this verse, men who want to marry women in the waiting period were recommended to explain their intentions. However, it was necessary to wait three months for the marriage to take place.

Verse 236 of Al-Baqarah:

“There is no fault in you, if you divorce women while as yet you have not touched them nor appointed any marriage-portion for them; yet make provision for them, the affluent man according to his means, and according to his means the needy man, honorably –“

Husbands who have not set a fee (mahr) for their wives but also have not had sexual intercourse with them during the waiting period have the right to divorce these women. However, men are also advised to help their divorced wives in proportion to their budget.

Verse 237 of Al-Baqarah:

“And if you divorce them before you have touched them, and you have already appointed for them a marriage-portion, then one-half of what you have appointed, unless it be they make remission, or he makes remission in whose hand is the knot of marriage...”

In this verse, men who did not engage in sexual activity during the waiting period were ordered to pay half the bride wealth previously determined to their spouses. In addition, the degree difference between men and women was also reminded.

Basically, all these verses are arrangements for men. They describe how women should be treated during the divorce period and how they should be paid. The desires and needs of women, on the other hand, do not matter; or at least, they are not addressed in these verses, and no arrangements have been made with regards to their

desires. All these verses revealed in Medina are examples that show how patriarchy has been established.

The life of the prophet was taken as a reference also for divorce. The 51st verse of the surah Al- Ahzab states the prophet to leave his wives whenever he wishes, and that he could remarry them whenever he wanted. At the same time, this verse allowed freedom for Muhammad to share his days among his wives as he wished.

Verse 51 of surah Al Ahzab:

“51 Thou mayest put off whom thou wilt of them, and whom thou wilt thou mayest take to thee...”

According to Ghazali, Hasan bin Ali bin Abu Talib, the grandson of the Prophet, was one of the most divorced and remarried men in his period. The total number of women he married was more than two hundred. Sometimes she would marry four women at once, sometimes he would divorce all four and marry new women instead.²⁵⁰

Verses 1-4 Surah At-Talaq:

“O Prophet, when you divorce women, divorces them when they have reached their period. Count the period, and fear God your Lord. Do not expel them from their houses, nor let them go forth, except when they commit a flagrant indecency...”“Then, when they have reached their term, retain them honorably, or part from them honorably...”“As for your women who have despaired of further menstruating, if you are in doubt, their period shall be three months; and those who have not menstruated as yet. And those who are with child, their term is when they bring forth their burden...”

²⁵⁰ Ghazali, *İhya ül-ulum, id-din*, 30-31 in *İslamın Bilinç Altında Kadın* by Fetna Ayt Sabbah, 160

Tabari interpreted these verses, that at the end of the waiting period, the husbands should leave their wives by giving their rights. He claimed that two trusted men should be witnessed. According to Qur'an, the waiting period of women who are suspected of going through menopause and those who have never had menstruation is three months. In pregnant women, this waiting period is until the end of pregnancy.²⁵¹

According to Eliaçık, when men divorce their wives, they must observe their special situation, and divorce decisions should not be taken at a random time. This waiting period is in place in order to be certain whether the woman is pregnant or not.²⁵² Eliaçık argues that this three-month waiting period should not be applied to those who are not pregnant because thanks to modern medical techniques, pregnancy status of women can be determined much earlier. However, none of the reformers like Eliaçık ever questioned that divorce was a man's right, and few mentioned that the right to divorce can only be given to women under certain circumstances.

Divorce is one of the precautions taken by the Qur'an to prevent a man's love for a woman getting in the way of his love for God, and prevent him from deviating from God. Men's right to divorce and remarry as much as they wish is one of the mechanisms put forward by the Qur'an to eliminate their love for women and to break up the core family consisting of a man and a woman. The plurality of sexual spouses given to the service of men by means of divorce and institutionalization of polygamy prevents men from being attached to a single woman. As a result, women are reduced to mere objects of pleasure and reproduction and become ineffective; which is one of the foundations of patriarchy. All this is to open the way for male domination under the name of obeying an omnipotent god.

In conclusion, it can be said that the divorce law in the Qur'an is discriminatory and sexist due to its different approach to women and men. While men have the right to divorce without applying to a court, women's divorce requests can

²⁵¹ Tabari Tefsiri, cilt 6,95-97

²⁵² İhsan Eliaçık, Yaşayan Kuran, 953-954

only take place under the supervision of a judge. The privilege enjoyed by men to divorce their wives in a way that cannot be intervened from outside is accepted as an innate right. It is understood that this law is fully compatible with the idea of patrilineal and patrilocal marriages. After the divorce, women leave their husbands' houses and are only entitled to temporary alimony. Their livelihood is then under the responsibility of their fathers and brothers. While men's privilege to divorce their wives as they wish is seen as an innate right, women must fight to get a divorce. This approach corresponds exactly to the patriarchal perspective, which sees women as less competent and more dependent.

6.2.6. Polygamy

As property and inheritance became important in male lineage, female virginity and loyalty became a central ideological issue. Men in many cultures are either legally allowed to be polygamous, or no restrictions are placed on their polygamous activities.

The most important reason for this is that in polygamous marriages made by men (polygyny), it is certain who the father is, whereas in polygamous marriages made by women (polyandry), the father is not known. To minimize women's chances of contact with other men, they are to be controlled. In old Babylonian period, men were free to commit adultery with slave women and prostitutes and to take a second wife.²⁵³

In the Qur'an, the concept of polygamy first started with the verses describing the women and concubines that the prophet could marry.

²⁵³ Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, 113

There is a story that all Islamic historians agree on. One day, the prophet went to the house of his adopted son Zayd to see him. When the door was opened and he entered the house, Zayd's wife Zaynab bint Jahs welcomed him with home clothes and unveiled, saying that her husband was not at home. Zaynab impressed the prophet very much, but he did not turn his head to look at her and left the house. When Zayd came home, Zaynab told him what had happened. Zayd went to the prophet and said that he wanted to divorce his wife, but Muhammad opposed. But God understood that the prophet had already lost his heart to Zaynab and revealed the following verse and allowed Zaynab and Muhammad to get married after she completed her waiting period.²⁵⁴

The 37th verse of surah Al-Ahzab (the Allies) states:

“37 When thou saidst to him whom God had blessed and thou hadst favoured, ‘Keep thy wife to thyself, and fear God,’ and thou wast concealing within thyself what God should reveal, fearing other men; and God has better right for thee to fear Him. So when Zaid had accomplished what he would of her, then We gave her in marriage to thee, so that there should not be any fault in the believers, touching the wives of their adopted sons, when they have accomplished what they would of them; and God’s commandment must be performed.”

With this verse, it is declared that sons and adopted sons are different from each other, giving men the freedom to marry the wives of their adopted sons. Aisha, the beloved wife of the prophet, was deeply sorry about this verse. However, Muhammad rebuked her saying, “Aisha, are you rejecting God's command?”²⁵⁵

After this event, Muhammad was given freedom with the following verse to marry the women he wanted and the concubines who were seized during the battles.

²⁵⁴ Tarihi Tabari, 194-196

²⁵⁵ Ibid,197

The 50th verse of surah Al Ahzab (the Allies) dictates:

“50 O Prophet, We have made lawful for thee thy wives whom thou hast given their wages and thy right hand own (concubines), spoils of war that God has given thee, and the daughters of thy uncles paternal and aunts paternal, thy uncles maternal and aunts maternal, who have emigrated with thee, and any woman believer, if she give herself to the prophet and if the prophet desire to take her in marriage...”

According to Tabari, this right given to the prophet was for the hearts of women to be pleasant and to be content with what Muhammad gave them.²⁵⁶

Tabari, citing Imam Bukhari, narrated that Aisa said: “I was envious of the women who granted themselves to the prophet, and I said, "Would a woman grant herself?". She said the following to the prophet when this verse was revealed. “I see that your Lord strives to satisfy your enthusiasm.”²⁵⁷

As it is seen, Aisha, the beloved wife of the prophet, was offended by the polygamy permitted to him and reacted adversely to this verse.

However, referring to Ibn Hanbel, Eliaçık claims that Muhammad’s wife Aisha always admired the justice the prophet established among his wives. Based on this statement, he argues that it was not possible to grant privileges to the prophet. Eliaçık’s comments are in line with today’s feminist Islamic writers. This is a reinterpretation of the Qur’an from a female perspective. Perhaps current interpretations may be more useful in adapting the Qur’an to the age we live in. However, the interpretations from the period in which the Qur’an verses were revealed are more accurate to trace the patriarchy of that period.

²⁵⁶ Ibid

²⁵⁷ Ibid

It can be assumed that the Qur'an gave men the right to possess several wives and concubines at the same time, and the right to divorce them or separate from them easily, and replace them with others within the legal framework Islamic marriage.

According to Ghazali, the number of women married to the prophet's grandson Hasan bin Ali exceeded two hundred. Sometimes he married four women at once and sometimes he divorced four at once and replaced them with new ones.²⁵⁸

The following verse states that women who were not married to the prophet or who were not his concubines were all forbidden to the prophet.

Verse 52 of surah Al Ahzab:

“52 Thereafter women are not lawful to thee, neither for thee to take other wives in exchange for them, though their beauty please thee, except what thy right hand owns; God is watchful over everything...”

It is understood that polygamy had to be limited in some way. Otherwise, it was feared that chaos might arise. Some arrangements have been put in place to ensure a healthy future for the patriarchal social order. The freedom given to men is not allowed to threaten the foundation of the patriarchal order.

Therefore, after this period, surah An-Nisa granted each man the right to marry up to four women in addition to his concubines.

Verse 3 of Surah An Nisa says:

“If you fear that you may not act justly towards the orphans, marry such of women as seem good to you, two, three or four- if you fear that you may not be fair to several wives, then one only or what your hand own; so it is likelier you will not be partial.”

According to Tabari, it is revealed that men can marry up to four women that they enjoy if they are not afraid of being unfair to their orphans. In addition, men are

²⁵⁸ Fetna Ayt Sabbah, *İslam'ın bilinçaltında kadın*, 160

given permission to marry one to four women if they are not afraid of doing injustice to the wives themselves. However, those who are not sure of behaving fairly are advised to marry one woman or settle down with their concubines who belong to them.

Fazlur Rahman argued that this verse was about orphans at the time; there was an abundance of orphans' due to frequent wars. He stated that since their guardians tended to seize the properties of female orphans, they could marry up to four of them, provided that justice among them was assured.²⁵⁹

Montgomery Watt claimed that this verse did not restrict the unlimited polygamy tradition of the past; it only allowed a man with a wife to marry up to four women. In other words, it is not a restriction on the old practice but a new approach to it. In addition, it is by no means as certain as claimed that polygamy was very common in the pre-Islamic period.

According to Eliaçık, it is necessary to interpret this verse as follows: Men who are the guardians of orphans should not marry a lot of women in order to protect the orphan's rights. In other words, the Qur'an advises men not to encroach on the properties of orphans to give to their wives. Eliaçık says, "If you cannot achieve justice in a society where polygamy is widespread, marry just one woman."²⁶⁰ He is of the opinion that the reason behind the revelation of this verse was to avoid polygamy.

Amina Wadud also thinks that this verse is about protecting the rights of orphans. The Qur'an recommends that the guardians of female orphans can marry these girls if the wealth of these girls is not fairly managed. However, it limits the

²⁵⁹ Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009) ,32

²⁶⁰ Eliaçık, *Yaşayan Kuran*,

number of these marriages to four. In addition, the money to be spent on the wives should not be taken from the orphans' right.²⁶¹

We can also assume that these marriages are virilocal. In other words we can define these polygamist marriages as multiple virilocal families which is a characteristic feature of Islamic communities and not well known by matrilineal Medina people.

In fact, it was thought that justice among women could only be achieved financially. Was a man able to support more than one woman? This was the main point of concern, and it was based on the idea of archaic marriages, where women were subjugated to men. Justice in this matter, as prescribed in Islam, does not mean the quality of time spent with women, and the spiritual, emotional, and intellectual support they are given. There is hardly any discussion among the fiqh scholars of the period regarding the *right* of a man to marry four women. Their focus is more on treating spouses fairly. The jurists argue that men should divide their time among their wives equally and should treat them fairly.²⁶²

In the Qur'an, it is emphasized in a later verse of the same surah that ultimately, justice cannot be achieved among women even though it is desired. Verse 129 Surah An Nisa states:

“You will not be able to be equitable between your wives, be you ever so eager; yet do not be altogether partial so that you leave her as it were suspended. If you set things right, and are God fearing, God is All-forgiving...”

Based on this verse, Fazlur Rahman claimed that the Qur'an actually defended monogamy; that polygamy was permitted only temporarily and for restricted

²⁶¹ Amina Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, 83

²⁶² Judith Tucker, 97

purposes. Just like the practice slavery, it was not possible to remove polygamy at once.²⁶³

It is assumed in the Qur'an that women are financially dependent on men; and they are seen as consumers, not producers. Therefore, polygamy was considered as a social solution for the economic rationale of that period. Another excuse for polygamy is that some women do not have the reproduction capacity. However, such a solution is not offered to women whose husbands are infertile. Finally, the third rationale for polygamy is when a woman fails to satisfy the lust of a man. The most important aspect of Islamic polygamy is that it is one-sided; in other words, this right is not given to women.

According to Ghazali, instincts are at the core of the institution of polygamy. Men are full of sexual desires that are too strong to be satisfied with one woman. Because of their sexual drive, men have the right to have two, three or four women. It is believed that men have to establish relationships with more than one partner in order to get rid of any spiritual and physical tension. Thanks to polygamy, men not only satisfy their sexual desires but also reach extreme satisfaction by seeing women as mere objects in this process, ignoring their needs. As it is clearly understood, the Qur'an does not take women's needs in this regard into consideration. It ignores the possibility that women might also have such desires. Women have to be content with one, and often half, spouse.

According to Fatima Mernissi, the way for a man to humiliate a woman as a sexual object is through polygamy.²⁶⁴ The Qur'an also gives men the right to have as many concubines as their right hands own. What is meant here is men's right to get as many concubines as they can take care of and provide justice among. As can be easily noticed, there is no limit on the number of marriages with concubines and female slaves.

²⁶³ Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009) ,32

²⁶⁴ Fatima Mernissi, *Peçenin Ötesi*, 80

According to Fetna Ayt Sabbah, Islam uses polygamy to prevent men from respecting the female body. In addition to being a mechanism for breaking the love between men and women, polygamy denies core families that consist of one man and one woman.²⁶⁵ The plurality of sexual partners offered to the service of men through the polygamy institution within a Muslim family structure can prevent a man from connecting with a single woman, reduce their capacity for love, and disable the woman. The number of women around male believers is increased by giving many spouses and concubines to their service, while women are reduced to an element that is centered around men and is only considered as an instrument of reproduction. Thus, while Islam reduces all sexuality to reproduction within its own structure, it also eliminates the dimension of sacred marital love. Anything that threatens to drive believers away from God is called lust.

Gertrude Stern argues that polygamist marriages were not known in Medina before Islam.²⁶⁶ However, according to Ibn Sa'd's biographies, there were examples where a man married more than one woman as well as examples where a woman married more than one man. We do not know if these were in the same period. Although it is stated that women can marry other people after getting a divorce, it should be kept in mind that these determinations in Islamic sources were written during the age of Islam.²⁶⁷

With regards to the marriages of men and women belonging to the same clan, it is explained that a man could have a second wife from another clan, and the husband of a woman might be from a foreign clan. This verse was revealed after the Battle of Uhud, in which 70 men, mostly Muslims from Medina, were killed. It was a period in the Islamic community when there were many widowed women in need of care. Moreover, it is claimed that this surah was not actually meant for the widows, but for the orphan girls who needed the guardianship of their uncles, cousins or other

²⁶⁵ Fetna Ayt Sabbah, *İslamın Bilinçaltında Kadın*, 146, 147

²⁶⁶ Gertrude H. Stern, *Marriage in Early Islam*, (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1939), 62

²⁶⁷ Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad At Medina*, 275

male relatives. The guardians of these orphan girls wanted them to stay unmarried so that they could have unrestricted control of their property.

It may also be taken into consideration that the female population would increase by banning female infanticide and the selling of female slaves abroad. It can be argued that this verse encouraged men to set up polygamist and multiple virilocal families for the procreation of children during this period in which Muhammad wanted to build up a new social system for the Islamic community. The ability of this new system to spread beyond the boundaries of the Arabian Peninsula increased male power which has resulted in the oppression of women.

In the early Medina period after the migration, Muhammad stayed in the same house only with his wife Sawdah. On the other hand, Aisha, who had gotten married to the prophet before, lived in her father's house for a while. By referring to Tabari, Montgomery Watt claimed that the prophet visited Aisha at her father's house and continued a matrilineal tradition. After the third verse of surah An-Nisa was revealed approving the practice of polygamy, Aisha and his other spouses whom he married later moved into Muhammad's houses. Thus, the prophet visited every wife in her apartments.²⁶⁸

How patriarchy was gradually established can be understood through these verses that were revealed during the Medina period. Firstly, the Qur'anic rules about male and female behavioral patterns, marriage, and divorce were introduced; after that, polygamy was allowed. From this aspect, it can be thought that Muhammad aimed at establishing the necessary social structures for transitioning from a nomadic matriarchal community to an individualist patriarchal society. He continued the polygamy tradition that had already existed in Mecca before Islam and bound it by certain rules. The relevant verses of surahs Al Ahzab and An-Nisa, which were revealed in chronologic order during this period, support the legalization of

²⁶⁸ Montgomery Watt , *Muhammad At Medina*, 284

polygamy. Polygamy was one of the conditions needed for the patriarchal social order to be designed for the needs and desires of men at that period. The theological infrastructure for this order, which was dominated by men, was also prepared through divine orders.

6.2.7 Women's Veiling

After these patriarchal structures mentioned above, women were obliged to cover themselves under the pretext of protection.

The obligation to wear a veil does not only exist in Islam. In the entire Eastern Mediterranean basin, in the ancient Greek, Byzantine and Sassanid cultures, women have always covered themselves. The veil, an element of social order and social hierarchy, is considered a sign of devotion to God among believers while it is seen as a means of oppressing women by women's rights activists.

Originating from patriarchal Mesopotamian cultures, veil is also seen as part of the social order in Sumerians, Acadians and their successors, Babylonian and Assyrian civilizations, for different purposes. For example, Sumerian nuns, i.e. Sumerian holy temple prostitutes, covered their heads to be separated from other women, while in Assyrian society, married and widowed women were forced to cover their heads.²⁶⁹ Assyrian law meticulously stated which women had to wear a veil. For instance, upper-class women were obliged to wear veils while prostitutes and slaves could not wear them. Otherwise, they would be punished by being flogged. According to Nikki Keddie, veiling was reserved for respectable women and

²⁶⁹ Muazzez İlmiye Çığ, *Kuran, İncil ve Tevrat'ın Sümer'deki Kökeni* (Istanbul:Kaynak, 2015), 35-36

it was prohibited for prostitutes, as stated in the Assyrian legal text. It was a sign of status.²⁷⁰

Women who were under the protection of men and served them sexually were designated as “respectable” and had to be veiled. In contrast, women who were not under one man’s support and were sexually independent were designated as “non-respectable”, hence unveiled. So, the veil was used for class separation. The class distinction was a result of the patriarchal order among women executed through veil. However, the class distinction among men was in terms of men’s contribution to production. This difference was of great importance for the continuation of the patriarchal filter.²⁷¹ This tradition, which was later passed on to Jews, continued to exist through the practice of shaving married women’s heads and covering them with veils as applied especially by upper-class women in all Mediterranean civilizations, such as Greek and Byzantine. The practice of veiling came to Greece from Persia via Medea, which was an area conquered by the first Muslims. Among Christian nuns, covering was seen as part of the tradition. Finally, Muslim women became obliged to cover up as a rule of the Islamic sharia.

Veiling along with seclusion is believed to protect women from any male contact outside the family. This made it easier to control women and helped establish paternity. Again, veiling was intended for husbands to protect their women from sexual advances and to prove that they were not poor enough to require their wives to work outside the home. Veiling was an overwhelmingly urban tradition; rural women who needed to work in the fields could not easily be covered.

The first verse about veiling in the Qur'an is the 26th verse of Surah Al A'raf. It states:

²⁷⁰ Nikki R. Keddie, “ The Past and Present of Women in the Muslim World”, *Journal of World History*, Vol.1, No.1, 1990, 79

²⁷¹ Fatmagül Berktaş, *Tek Tanrılı Dinler Karşısında Kadın* (Istanbul:Metis, 2019) 83-84

“Children of Adam! We have sent down on you a garment to cover your shameful parts, and feathers; and the garment of God-fearing -- that is better; that is one of God’s signs; haply they will remember...”

This Surah was revealed in Mecca. It decrees that people must cover their shameful parts. The story of the veiling of private parts is related to Adam and Eve’s expulsion from heaven as originally told in the Torah. In the interpretation of the Qur’anic Way of Turkish Religious Affairs, this verse is interpreted as protecting both body and morality. By pointing out the importance of veiling in this verse, those who circumambulated the Kaaba naked were criticized. Wearing the dress of taqwa (garment of God-fearing) mentioned in the verse is depicted as a virtue that prevent people from sinning and protect their souls. It is explained that a person wearing taqwa should not be lustful, greedy, dishonest, or nasty.²⁷²

The Qur’an recommends men and women to cover their genitalia. However, it is also important to have good morals, to be faithful, honest and virtuous, which is called taqwa clothing.

Taqwa, which can be defined as spiritual veiling, was first mentioned during the Mecca period. Later on, with the establishment of the new social structure during the Medina period, verses related to the veiling of women (only women) began to be revealed.

When Aisha heard the 32nd and 33rd verses of surah Al Ahzab commanding women to stay in their houses and not open up like they did in the pre-Islamic period, she cried until her headscarf got wet.

²⁷² Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, *Kur’an yolu, Türkçe Meali ve Tefsiri*, (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı yayımları, 2003) Cilt 2, 513-514

“32 Wives of the Prophet, you are not as other women. If you are godfearing, be not abject in your speech, so that he in whose heart is sickness may be lustful; but speak honourable words.”³³ Remain in your houses; and display not your finery, as did the pagans of old...God only desires to put away from you abomination and to cleanse you.”

These verses can be accepted as examples of the discrimination and segregation of women, their isolation at home and the need to be covered. However, Iman Hashim argues that, since the Qur’an clearly states that the wives of the Prophet are not like other women, the verses against them may not be applied to all women.²⁷³

According to Aisha's statements, veiling was not common in Arab women before the Migration. It is understood that this obligatory practice began in Medina in the 5th year of the Migration after the Battle of the Trench.²⁷⁴ The roots of unveiling were based on the ancient Arabic tribal life. Islam forbade this custom to the wives of the prophet whom it wanted to sanctify. However, the claims that there are stories about women such as the prophet's wife Khadija being covered in Mecca show that an optional veil could be used in the pre-Islamic period.

The 53rd verse of the surah Al-Ahzab states:

“O believers enter not the houses of the prophets, except leave is given you for a meal.....And when you ask his wives for any object, ask them from behind a curtain; that is cleaner for your hearts and theirs.”

There is a story narrated by Anas bin Malik shown as the reason for this verse. During the wedding feast of the prophet to celebrate his marriage to his cousin

²⁷³ Iman Hashim, Reconciling Islam and Feminism, *Gender and Development*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1999, 7-14

²⁷⁴ İlhan Arsel, *Şeriat ve kadın*, 263

Zaynab binti Jahsh, which occurred in the year of 627, some impolite guests remained too long causing discomfort. Muhammad was irritated; he left the room and went to Aisha's apartment. When he came back to his nuptial chamber, Anas bin Malik was with him. They noticed that the remaining guests had left. The prophet put one foot in the room and kept the other outside. Then, he let a curtain fall between himself and the outsider. At that moment, the hijab verse written above was revealed as a divine reaction. The verse on hijab was revealed in the bedroom of the wedded couple to protect their intimacy. The veil was God's response to a community with boorish manners.²⁷⁵

If we take the historical events of the Medina period and the chronological text of the Qur'an as reference points, we can conclude that until the revelation of this verse, women were not isolated and were not confined in their homes in the habits of being silenced. They would go out to handle their personal affairs.

It would therefore make sense to argue that the necessity of covering and isolation for prophet's wives came during the prophet's marriage to Zaynab.

According to Tabari, the second part of this verse was revealed after a man named Unayna Ibni Hisn, the chief of an Arab tribe, visited the prophet at his house. When he saw Aisha, one of the prophet's wives, he intended to marry her after the death of Muhammad. He even expressed his wish in front of the prophet and in the presence of Aisha. In another version of this story, Unayna asks Muhammad who that beautiful woman seating beside him is. Muhammad tells him that she is the mother of the believers. Unayna proposes to the prophet that in exchange for taking Aisha as his wife, he will give his more beautiful wife to Muhammad. The prophet tells him that god has forbidden such practices.²⁷⁶ This incident took place just before the revelation of the related verse mentioned above.

²⁷⁵ Fatima Mernissi, *Women and Islam*, 85- 87

²⁷⁶ Tabari Tefsiri, cilt 4,216

After the Khaybar expedition (629), Muhammad wanted to marry Safiyya, who was taken prisoner. The people around him wondered if he would marry Safiyya or take her as a concubine. They said that if he covered her with a hijab, he would marry her; if he did not, he would take her as a concubine. So, when she was veiled, they understood that the prophet got married. He also gave her freedom in exchange for a fee called *mahr* before getting married.²⁷⁷

It is understood from this story that during the Khayber expedition, only married women were required to be covered. As will be seen later, all women would be ordered to veil themselves with the 31st verse of surah An-Nur. In addition, it seems that in exchange for giving captive women and concubines their freedom, no fee would be paid to them to marry them.

Finally, in the fifth year of the migration (627), the 59th verse of surah Al Ahzab was revealed:

“O Prophet, say to thy wives and daughters and the believing women, who they draw their veils close to them; so it is likelier they will be known, and not hurt.... “

There is a narration behind this verse. Since the toilets were outside the house at that time, women had to go out at night. Faithful women, including the spouses of the Prophet, were harassed by hypocrites. It is claimed that veiling was made compulsory to save women from harassment.²⁷⁸ One day, when one of the prophet's wives Sevde went out of the house to meet her toilet need, Umar noticed her and shouted:” O Sevde! I recognized you!” Umar had previously warned the prophet to cover his wives,

Another rumor was that those who wanted to consult Muhammad asked their questions mostly through his wives. Therefore, it was found necessary to cover up

²⁷⁷ Ibn Sa'd, *Siyer*, 525

²⁷⁸ Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad At Medina*, 285

wives of the prophet so that the talks held alone did not lead to any scandal.²⁷⁹ It can be said that the insistence of Umar might have had an effect on the regulation on veiling. The reason why compulsory veiling mentioned in this verse was first imposed on the wives of the prophet is that they were not being recognized, and were being mistaken for concubines and were being harassed.

According to verse 60 of surah Al Ahzab, the hypocrites who were harassing women were considered as sick and sinful:

“60. Now; if the hypocrites do not give over, and those in whose hearts there is sickness and they that make commotion in the city, We shall assuredly urge thee against them and then they will be thy neighbor’s there only a little;...”

In the days before veiling was made obligatory for all women, the most disturbing rumor in Islamic history broke out, which is called the affair of the necklace. The Muslim *fuqaha* (the jurist) call this incident *alifk* (the lie). While returning from the Expedition of Bani Mustalik, Aisha accompanied the prophet, but failed to catch up with the caravan because she went to search for a missing necklace. She arrived in the city separately on the camel of a young commander named Safwan. The hypocrites accused Aisha of adultery. The prophet was very upset about these rumors and he sent Aisha to her father's house. Then came the verses stating that Aisha was innocent and the punishments for those who slandered her would be terrible, and that they would suffer in hell.²⁸⁰

Verse 4 of Surah An Nur (The Light)

²⁷⁹ Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad At Medina*, 287

²⁸⁰ Ebu Cafer Muhammed bin Cerir’üt Tabari, *Tarihi Tabari* (Istanbul: Sağlam Yayınevi, 2000 cilt 3), 212-216

“And those who cast it up on women in wedlock, and then bring not four witnesses, scourge them with eighty stripes, and do not accept any testimony of theirs ever; those -- they are the ungodly.”

Verse 7 of Surah An Nur

“...that the curse of God shall be upon him, if he should be of the liars.”

Verse 11-15 of Surah An Nur

“11Those who came with the slander are a band of you...12 Why, when you heard it, did the believing men and women not of their own account think good thoughts, and say, ‘This is a manifest calumny’? 13 Why did they not bring four witnesses against it? But since they did not bring the witnesses, in God’s sight they are the liars..”

After these verses were revealed, Muhammad gave the good news to Aisha and reported that God revealed a verse about her innocence. However, Aisha replied, “My gratitude and praise belongs to God, not to you.”²⁸¹

Tabari stated that those who slandered Aisha were from the Muslim community. With these verses, those people were told that they would be punished. The biggest punishment would be to the person who started the slander. The Qur'an also criticized those who believed in that slander and stated that when they heard it, they must have said it was a lie!

However, this event resulted by the veiling of Aisha. Later on, the veil, which was initially only required for the wives of the prophet, became obligatory for all

²⁸¹ Ibid, 217

married and faithful women, and finally, for all women regardless of their marital status.

Therefore, it can be said that the obligatory veiling of women became a common practice after the Bani Mustalik expedition.

Umar strongly insisted that the veil should be instituted for women. He asked the prophet why he did not order the veil for the Mothers of the believers.²⁸² Muhammad could not stand against Umar and finally accepted the confinement of women. He permitted the usage of hijab and paved the way to the establishment of male supremacy. With these verses, which separated the wives of the prophet from other men and from social life through the usage of hijab, veiling started to be institutionalized for the first time. As a result, veil actualized the separation between public and private. Women were forced to lead isolated lives inside their homes. The idea of hijab shows that the streets were under the control of those who could not restrain their desires, and that women should be kept veiled. As a result, this idea has led to the segregation of the sexes.

Verse 31 of Surah An Nur (The Light) which was revealed later ordered:

“And say to the believing women, that they cast down their eyes’ and guard their private parts, and reveal not their adornment save such as is outward; and let them cast their veils over their bosoms, and not reveal their adornment save to their husbands, or their fathers, or their husbands’ fathers, or their sons, or their husbands’ sons, or their brothers, or their brothers’ sons, or their sisters’ sons, or their women, or what their right hands own, or such men as attend them, not having sexual desire, or children who have not yet attained knowledge of

²⁸² Fatima Mernissi, *Women and Islam*, 184

women’s private parts; nor let them stamp their feet, so that their hidden ornament may be known...”

This verse commands believing women to close their eyes to things that God does not tolerate. In other words, they should stay away from people and objects that will inspire desire and lust. They also need to cover themselves, with only their hands and feet exposed, to avoid arousing lust in men. The face also needs to be veiled because face is the origin of beauty and sedition and is considered to be the source of seduction for man. Although Tabari argued that women did not need to hide their faces, the authors of the period considered it necessary, including Tabari commentators such as Muhammad Ali es Sabani.²⁸³

The interpretation from the Turkish Religious Affairs on this issue is that women should cover their heads, neck and breasts with a suitable cover.²⁸⁴ In addition, during the pre-Islamic period, women used to wear bracelets on their ankles, and they would knock their feet on the floor in a way that would attract attention while walking on the street. This wearing of ankle bracelets was also banned with the intention of preventing women from attracting men's attention sexually. According to the Department of Religious Affairs, if a woman tends to attract the attention of the opposite sex with her voice, her smell and attitude while she is covered, she will be among the “covered nude”.²⁸⁵

The 30th Verse of the same Surah states:

“Say to the believers, that they cast down their eyes and guard their private parts; that are purer for them. God is aware of the things they work...”

²⁸³ Tabari tefsiri, cilt 4 102

²⁸⁴ Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, *Kur’an yolu, Türkçe Meali ve Tefsiri*, (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı yayımları, 2003) Cilt 4, 70-75

²⁸⁵ Ibid

In this verse, men were also ordered to turn their heads when they see a naked woman and not to attempt adultery. These words are also interpreted in the sense of being virtuous and not harassing women.²⁸⁶

When the 30th and 31st verses of surah Nur are examined, it is seen that the verses recommend both men and women to avoid directing their gaze into *haram* (illicit). It might be argued that here, there is a fair attitude towards men and women. However, it should be kept in mind that veiling and other restrictive behavioral modes imposed on women to prevent them from creating sexual attraction in the opposite sex are not imposed on men. These restrictions are regulations that can be seen in a patriarchal order.

Hijab means “to hide something from sight”. The root of the verb *hajaba* means “to hide”. The second meaning of the word is “to separate”, “to mark a border”, “to establish a threshold”. The third meaning of the word is “the realm of the forbidden”. In other words, a space hidden by a hijab is a forbidden space. In this verse, *hajaba* is used to mean “hide with a stir” which literally means curtain. So, here, “stir” separates the forbidden one from communal view; the interior universe (the household) from the exterior universe (public space). Hijab in this sense expresses a spatial dimension marking a border between two distinct areas isolating the two men present at the scene, placing the prophet on one side and Anas on the other. The word is currently used in anatomy to refer to diaphragm (hijab of the stomach) and to hymen (hijab of virginity). The Qur’an uses hijab as hiding the female body from all men that are not her relatives, who are allowed to see her.

Fiqh scholars had different ideas about how women must be covered. Ibn Hanbel and later Ibn Teymiyye argued that since the whole body of a woman is considered *awrah* (private parts), she should wear a *jilbab* to cover her body from head to toe, and a veil to cover her face. On the other hand, based on his Hanafi

²⁸⁶ İhsan Eliaçık, *Kuran’da örtünme*, Interview in youtube

interpretation, El Mergani stated that women do not need to cover their hands and faces because women's business affairs could require them to have their hands and faces uncovered.²⁸⁷ In this approach, women cannot be isolated at home, and can engage in business and social activities. The relevant verse in the Qur'an does not make a clear statement regarding the covering of hands and face. The first interpretation assumed that women create a sensual desire, a spark of passion and threaten the social order.

All monotheistic religions, including Islam, have been affected by the conflict between the divine and the feminine. Islam preferred, at least symbolically, to hide and cover women by trying to veil them. It has developed a very theatrical sexual practice in which headscarf plays a central role. Fatima Mernissi claimed that hijab was just an expression of the persistence of the pre-Islamic mentality.²⁸⁸ Women are seen as a source of evil and sexual temptation; hence, they are accepted as a danger that should be controlled through veiling and seclusion.

There is a story in Islam where the veil appeared for the first time. The story, reported by all biographers of the prophet, occurred during the early revelation period when he feared he was becoming insane:

“That year the prophet, when he left the mountain came to his wife Khadija and told her that he had seen an enormous creature whose head touched the sky and whose feet touched the ground coming to him. His wife said to him “tell me when you see something like that” So one day when the prophet was at home with his wife, this creature appeared to him. Khadija calmed him, held him to her breast, and asked: “do you still see it?” “Yes “he answered. Then Khadija placed him on her lap, lifted her veil, and exposed her face and her hair, asked one more time “do you see it

²⁸⁷ Judith E. Tucker, *İslam Hukukunda Kadın, Aile ve Toplumsal Cinsiyet*, 260

²⁸⁸ Fatima Mernissi, *Women and Islam*, 81

now?” “No “answered the Muhammed. Khadija said: “be calm, it is not a demon but an angel.”²⁸⁹

Muhammad was first doubtful about the divine origin of his visions, dismissing them as hallucinations and as appearances of demonic illusions. Only after Khadija signified him the truth, he was convinced that his visual and auditory revelations came from God.

This story represents the demonstration of women using the language of origin. It shows that the history of truth in Islam started with the unveiling of women. The theological cloth hiding the body has threatened the supreme view. The final act where the woman unveiled herself and the angel disappeared has a crucial importance. It is assumed that an angel could not tolerate Khadija’s uncovered head. Had it been a demon, it would not flee from her, because what she revealed and the demon had to be the same. The demonstration of women was the demonstration of truth and an attempt against this truth. The angel who disappeared was the hidden truth that emerged when the woman uncovered her head. However, this concealment of truth has been also the confirmation of truth.

As it can be seen, the usage of veils appeared before the Islamic period, at a time when the prophet doubted his visual and auditory revelations. Similar to this story, all Abrahamic religions feel the need to cover women as they have the power to differentiate truthfulness from falsehoods. Women have been seen as a threat because it has been assumed that they have clairvoyance. The logic here was that a woman saw clearly what a man did not see, which was accepted as a threat to the symbolic masculine order; and consequently, it was ruled that women must be controlled and must not be seen.

²⁸⁹ Siyer-I İbn-i İshak. *Hz Muhammed'in hayatı*: (Istanbul:Istanbul Matbaacılık, 2012) ,193

In addition, the foundation of belief seems to depend on prohibiting the act of looking. In the story, the woman believed what she did not see, while the man did not believe what he saw. Therefore, according to Fethi Benslama, his ability to believe must have relied on her. In conclusion, if the man was to believe in God, he should have relied upon the woman who had access to the knowledge of truth, which preceded and exceeded even the knowledge of the founder of the religion himself. She was able to differentiate the truth from falsehood; in this scenario, the divine revelation from demonic possession. Her uncovered body and hair led to the embodiment of the truth. She confirmed the truth through an act of offense against it and through the failed vision of the prophet. The veil separated the truth from its denial.²⁹⁰

The veil is in the center of all these eradication methods against women to establish male sovereignty over them. It is the central element in the law that surrounds women with suspicions of sexuality and control attempts. In this sense, the veil can be interpreted as a symbol that reveals the collective fantasy of the Islamic community. It can be thought that the veil is intended to make women invisible, to exclude them from social life, to confine them to a place where they can be easily controlled, to limit their mobility, and to force them to live under a mask. Fatima Mernissi argued that the attitude of the Islamic community towards women almost reached a level of phobia.²⁹¹

Bell Hooks believes that the obligatory veiling of women in Africa, Middle East, India and Europe is one of the biggest women's rights issues beside forced female circumcision, the sex clubs in Thailand, and the killing of female children in China.²⁹²

²⁹⁰ Fethi Benslama, *Psycoanalyses and Challenge of Islam* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 152

²⁹¹ Fatimi Mernissi, *Kadınların İsyanı ve İslami Hafıza*, 71

²⁹² Bell Hooks, *Feminism is For Everybody* (Cambridge: South End, 2000), 46

However, it should be mentioned that there were women who resisted veiling even during the early Islamic period. One of them was Sakine binti el Huseyin, the daughter of the prophet's grandson Huseyin, who was murdered in Karbala. Historical documents reveal that Sakine was *barzaa*, which means unveiled.²⁹³

The other was a contemporary of Sakine called Aisha binti Talha, the nephew of the prophet's wife Aisha. She also refused to be veiled stating that God made her so beautiful and that He would not have done it so just to keep her out of sight.²⁹⁴

To summarise, it can be understood from the chronological order of the verses (90. Al-Ahzab / 33, 34, 53, 59; and 102. An-Nur / 31) that veiling was first made compulsory for the wives of the prophet, then for married women only, and finally, for all women. We can conclude that the patriarchal regulation of women's veiling in Medina was constantly getting more pressuring.

In conclusion, veiling and seclusion are ancient Middle Eastern traditions; they are not created by Islam. They have long been practiced since 1250 B.C. and have later been adopted by the Muslim people. However, they are the characteristics of a system where men are dominant, and women must be controlled by men in order to prevent any sexual and social anarchy. From obligatory veiling to regulations on contraception and abortion, controlling women's sexual activities has been a fundamental feature of patriarchal power struggles. The sexual oppression and controlling of women underpins the formation of classes and is one of the foundations on which a patriarchal society is based.

6.2.8. Adultery

²⁹³ Ibid, 125

²⁹⁴ Ibid

Adultery refers to the forbidden sexual intercourses outside of marriage and concubine relations. Adultery covers the illegitimate relationships of both single and married people. Before Islam, adultery was not seen as a sin against religion or God. Louis Epstein summarized adultery in the ancient world, and pointed out that adultery was possible only on the woman's side, because women were their husbands' properties, and never on the husband's side. While a woman had to show fidelity to her own marriage, her husband had to show it to another man's marriage.²⁹⁵

In patriarchal societies, it is important for women to be virgins when they get married; therefore, laws that impose heavy penalties on married women have been introduced. However, the extramarital sexual relationships of husbands are not seen as adultery. In some societies, including Islam, the practice of polygamy and men's freedom to have sexual intercourse with as many concubines as they want allowed adultery to gain a legal form of disguise.

After Islam, adultery became an action that both male and female Muslims needed to avoid in order to strengthen the family institution in a patriarchal order.

Muhammad was incredibly angry with Hind bint Utbah, the wife of Abu Sufyan, one of the notables of the Quraysh, for having his uncle Hamza killed in the Battle of Uhud. She was called a liver-eating woman because she had eaten Hamza's liver. During the siege of Mecca, Hind was incredibly angry with her husband Abu Sufyan, who wanted to cooperate with Muhammad. She caught Sufyan by his mustache and shouted, "kill this oil keg!". Abu Sufyan tried very hard to calm his wife down. In order not to execute her, one of the questions that the prophet asked her was whether she would commit adultery as a married woman. The response of Hind was that a free woman would never commit adultery. One interpretation of her answer can be that a woman from a matriarchal order already had the right to dismiss her husband if she was bored or tired. In such a situation, there would be no need for

²⁹⁵ Louis M. Epstein, *Sex Laws and Customs in Judaism* (New York: Bloch, 1948), 194

adultery anyway. It might also be designated as a normal practice within the preexisting matriarchal system. The second condition of the prophet was not to kill the newborn daughters. Her answer was “We gave birth to boys, we fed them, and you killed them in the Battle of Badr!”²⁹⁶ The fact that a woman was able to give the prophet such harsh answers even in the face of a possible death penalty can be interpreted as women being freer at that time.

According to Eliaçık, after the conquest of Mecca, when men finished their allegiance to the prophet, it was women's turn. Among the women was Abu Sufyan's wife, Hind too. The Prophet considered the conditions set in this verse, and accepted her allegiance upon her acceptance.²⁹⁷

During the prophet's ascension, he saw some people eating rotten meat while he had fat and clean meat in front of him. When he asked who they were, Gabriel replied that these were adulterous men. When Muhammad asked about the women that he saw in that world hanging from their breasts, Gabriel explained that they were the ones that betrayed their husbands and had children from other men. He added that God violently curses these women.²⁹⁸

This narrative is from the Mecca period when the prophet received his first revelations. In this period when there were still no verses regulating the social life, Muhammad telling such a story might have been a sign that he wanted to eliminate the matriarchal order and establish a patriarchal order in its place. The fact that he described most matriarchal marriages as illegitimate might have been the result of this mindset.

According to Ibn Sa'd, it is rumored that Muhammad said, “²⁹⁹ “I never commit adultery since Adam!”

²⁹⁶ Tarihi Tabari, 267-268

²⁹⁷ İhsan Eliaçık *Yaşayan Kuran*, 964

²⁹⁸ İbn Hişam Ibid cild 2, 53

²⁹⁹ İbn Sa'd ,*Siyer*,51

However, it should be borne in mind that adultery was already prohibited in Judaism. In the Jewish bible, exodus chapter 20 commands.

“You shall not commit adultery.”³⁰⁰

Leviticus 20:10 subsequently prescribes capital punishment for adultery, but refers to adultery between a man and a married woman: And the man that committed adultery with another man's wife, even he that committed adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.³⁰¹

The first verse about adultery in the Qur'an was revealed in the period of Mecca period. Verse 32 Surah Bani Isra'il states:

“And approach not fornication; surely it is an indecency, and evil as a way.

The Qur'an commands that men and women who commit adultery are to be beaten and are prohibited from marrying believers.

Verse 2 of Surah An Nur prescribes:

“The fornicatress and the fornicator -- scourge each one of them a hundred stripes, and in the matter of God's religion let no tenderness for them seize you if you believe in God...”

According to Tabari, those who approved of Allah, the judgement day and the resurrection on that day should never pity those who committed adultery. A group of believers should testify while giving this punishment. The adulterous man could

³⁰⁰ Kutsal Kitap, 77

³⁰¹ Kutsal Kitap, 123

only marry an adulterous woman. This was forbidden to believers. God Almighty has forbidden those who believed in him and in his prophet to commit adultery.³⁰²

One day the Prophet asked his uncle Abbas four characteristics of him. He replied that he never worshiped idols, did not lie, did not get something illegally and did not seduce someone else's wife.³⁰³

In the 26th verse of Surah, an-Nur states that:

“Corrupt women for corrupt men and corrupt men for corrupt women; good women for good men, and good men for good women - these are declared quit of what they say; theirs shall be forgiveness and generous provision.”

Corrupt is equivalent to adhering to the old customs while good means the opposite. It is assumed that during that period all people would adopt the new principle.

Umar Ibn al Khattab wanted to punish a fornication case with execution in order to end promiscuity, which existed in the pre-Islamic period. The Qur'an has banned all sexual relationships outside marriage and concubinage institutions and labeled them as *zina* to establish a patriarchal community. The Qur'an does not recommend celibacy, either, as it may lead to all kinds of temptations. All these regulations have been put in place for the patriarchal family structure to take root in the minds of believers.

Four witnesses must be brought against women who have been charged with adultery. If those who make such accusations do not have witnesses and slander women, they are beaten up.

³⁰² Tabari Tefsiri, cilt 4, 87

³⁰³ Ebu Cafer Muhammed bin Cerir'üt Tabari, *Tarihi Tabari* (Istanbul: Sağlam Yayınevi, 2000 cilt 3), 165

Verse 4 of Surah An Nur prescribes:

“ And those who cast it up on women in wedlock, and then bring not four witnesses, scourge them with eighty stripes, and do not accept any testimony of theirs ever; those -- they are the ungodly,..”

However, if those who do not have witnesses show Allah as witness four times, they are accepted to say the truth. This rule also applies to women. In other words, if the spouses call the testimony of Allah four times, the accusation disappears.

Verses 6 and 8 of Surah An Nur states:

“And those who cast it up on their wives having no witnesses except themselves, the testimony of one of them shall be to testify by God four times that he is of the truthful. It shall avert from her the chastisement if she testifies by God four times that he is of the liars.”

There is a story behind the revelation of these verses that goes as follows. A husband and his wife applied to Muhammad as an arbitrator for adultery. The husband applied to the testimony of God four times, insisting that his wife was cheating on him. He claimed that he saw it with his own eyes. The woman, on the other hand, argued that her husband was lying and slandering her, and she showed God as her witness. When no one proved or confessed his or her guilt, the prophet divorced the couple through compulsory divorce. Although the case seems to have ended in mutual justice, the whole debate was based on the adultery of the woman. The problem was whether the claims accusing the woman of adultery reflected the truth. The testimony of God was also used in this regard. However, it is not clear what to do when men are accused of adultery. There is no verdict in the Qur'an

clarifying what to do if men are accused of committing adultery, whether there is a need for witnesses etc.

Previously revealed verses had already stated that adultery was a sin for both men and women. In this regard, the Qur'an first commanded believers to avoid adultery with the 32nd verse of surah Israel; then, with the related verses of surah An-Nur, the punishments to be applied to those who commit adultery were reported, and finally, the necessity of having four witnesses was highlighted when accusing women of adultery.

Banning adultery was a necessary step for establishing a patriarchal order. Such an order must support the sanctity of the family institution. The *capitalistique* order, where individualism is important and capital is gathered by the dominant powers, has made men strong while making women submissive. So much so that it became very difficult to impose sanctions on men, whose dominance has been strongly established with these regulations. As it turns out, the increasing patriarchy in the Qur'an has resulted in more oppression for women.

Ibn Sa'd explained that the prophet did not shake hands with women who wanted to pledge allegiance to him.³⁰⁴ Sometimes, he would put a veil on his hand. During the allegiance, he commanded women not to talk to men (except for those who were closely related), not to commit adultery, not to steal, and not to kill their children. According to İlhan Arsel's quote from Bukhari and Muslim, the prophet described shaking hands as adultery of hands and declared that men shaking hands with women will be put have their two palms on fire on the Day of Resurrection.³⁰⁵

These stipulations imposed by the prophet on women when acknowledging their allegiance are declared in the 12th verse of surah Al Mumtahanah, which was

³⁰⁴ İbn Sa'd: *Tabakat, Kadınlar*, Resulullah'ın kadınlardan biat alması, 1-6

³⁰⁵ İlhan Arsel, *Şeriat ve Kadın* (İstanbul: Dilek Ofset, 1994),93

revealed during the last period of Medina. The Qur'an proclaims that those who do not comply with these conditions and repent thereafter will be forgiven.

Al-Mumtahanah (She Who is Tested):

“12 O Prophet, when believing women come to thee, swearing fealty to thee upon the terms that they will not associate with God anything, and will not steal, neither commit adultery, nor slay their children, nor bring a calumny they forge between their hands and their feet, nor disobey thee in aught honorable, ask God’s forgiveness for them; God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate...”

According to Tabari, this verse means that a woman should not bring a child who does not belong to her husband into their marriage and claim it is his.³⁰⁶ Considering that adultery was previously forbidden with a different statement, it may be more appropriate to interpret this verse like Tabari, i.e. in relation to any claim that a child from another man was from the husband although it was not.

This was actually something that women did in matriarchal societies from time to time. When a woman said, “This child is yours,” the man had no option but to accept it. However, this was not suitable for a patriarchal structure based on the principle that family heritage should pass from fathers to their sons. Therefore, this practice of false fatherhood claims had to be eliminated.

It is understood that adultery is a crime for both men and women in Islam. If it happens, the punishment for both sexes is the same. The difference between men and women in terms of penalties for adultery seems to be improved compared to the laws of Babylon, Assyria and Hebrew. However, men’s freedom to marry up to four

³⁰⁶ Tabari tefsiri cilt 6,64

women and to be with an unlimited number of concubines is not granted to women. The asymmetry in these rules corresponds to patriarchy.

6.2.9. Testimony

Testimony in the Qur'an is another topic where gender equality is discussed. It is stated that the testimony of a man is equal to the testimony of two women.

Hebrew Codex did not consider women authorized to judge or testify. As a matter of fact, the Jewish law did not even accept the testimony of any number of women instead of one man.³⁰⁷ However, Mesopotamian law gave women the right to testify, and as such it can be accepted to have been more generous towards women than Muslim law.³⁰⁸

Oppenheim points out that the decline in women's status started after the Iranian conquest of Mesopotamia. After that, restrictions on women increased, and they could no longer testify or inherit heritage.³⁰⁹ Later on, the Hellenic, Christian and finally Islamic cultures, which resemble Persian practices, continued controlling and oppressing women. Byzantine laws also limited woman's right to testify on financial matters paralleling Islamic laws.

Based on the following verse, it appears that the Qur'an has somewhat reformed Persian laws, giving women the right to testify, although not as much as men.

Verse 282 of Surah Al-Baqarah prescribes:

³⁰⁷ Sedigheh Vasmaghi, *Women, Jurisprudence, Islam* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014), 135-137

³⁰⁸ Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*, 16

³⁰⁹ A. L. Oppenheim, *The Babylonian Evidence of Achaemenian Rule in Mesopotamia*, in the *Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 2, ed. Ilya Gershevitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 572

“And if the debtor be a fool, or weak, or unable to dictate himself, then let his guardian dictate justly. And call in to witness two witnesses, men; or if the two be not men, then one man and two women, such witnesses as you approve of, that if one of the two women errs the other will remind her; and let the witnesses not refuse, whenever they are summoned....”

God states in this verse that in cases of borrowing/lending money, either two men or one man and two women should be witnesses. The reasoning behind this, as explained in the verse, is that if one woman forgets, the other can remind her.

Amina Wadud claims that the act of witnessing mentioned in this verse is about a certain type of financial contract and do not apply to every dispute etc. where witnesses are needed. One woman should remind the other, if there is an error regarding a business contract and has to act as a corroborator. So, each woman has a different function. She indicates that this verse was an attempt to prevent corruption. If one were to give an untrue testimony, the other would be there to correct her. Another issue is that in a male-dominated society, men can easily exert pressure on women’s testimonies. The presence of a second woman can lead to support between the two women. They can form a unity against the male witness. According to Wadud, during the period of revelation, women were nevertheless considered a potential witness. These reforms laid the foundations for building a just and moral society.

Sedigheh Vasmaghi argues that the instructions of the Qur’an should be taken as guidance for believers. Therefore, the verse does not mean that one man equals to two women as witnesses.³¹⁰ According to her, this is simply in line with people’s culture, appearance and customs. This verse cannot be interpreted as rejecting a testimony just because there were only two women to testify in the absence of men.

³¹⁰ Ibid

She even claims that based on the laws and regulations regarding testimonies that prevailed among the first Muslims and based on their customs, habits, social and family laws, it is clear that a woman's testimony was acceptable in terms of achieving justice.

Fazlur Rahman took the verse literally and claimed it to be valid in our day and age, too and argued that according to the Qur'an, women were considered to be of less value than men, because they are less powerful and have weaker memory concerning financial matters. However, for the betterment of society, their testimonies should be equal to men's.³¹¹

Tabari claimed that the necessity of having two women witnessing instead of one man is related to financial matters. He commented that if a woman forgets, the other is to remind her.³¹²

In the seventh Islamic century, Al-Razi interpreted verse 228 of surah Al-Baqarah in the Qur'an as: "the nature of women is dominated by forgetfulness, owing to a predominance of cold and wetness in their physical constitution. The possibility of two women forgetting the same thing at the same time is less likely than one woman forgetting it. This is why two women are required to take the place of one man."³¹³ He stated that men are better than women. So, it seems like he explained why one man is equal to two women.

Shayk Taha and Jabir Al-Alwani argued that the dominant culture at the time of this verse's revelation was a mixture of pagan Arab, Christian, and rabbinic Jewish cultures, all of whom had little respect for women, minimizing their roles, emphasizing their natural inferiority to men, and refusing to accept them as equal.

³¹¹ Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes in The Qur'an* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982),49

³¹² Tabari tefsiri, cilt 1,249

³¹³ Shayk Taha and Jabir Al-Alwani, *Issues in Contemporary Islamic Thought*, (London:International Institute of Islamic Thought,2005), 169

According to them, the Qur'an actually tries to give a concrete form to the idea of women as participants by giving them a role in witnessing, albeit an inferior one.³¹⁴

Interpreters of the early Islamic period such as Al-Razi, Ibn Taymiyya, and Tabari regarded women as lacking rationality or as prone to forgetfulness. They thought that women did not have the judgment that men had and that women were not legally eligible for testimony.

Although some reformist authors support that the laws in question can be changed in the light of modern traditions and requirements, the majority of Islamic commentators agree that the Qur'an is universal and timeless, and that not a single letter can be changed.

As can be seen, although there are different opinions about the testimony of women, the fact that in Islam, two women's testimony combined can only equal to one man's testimony and the fact that the regulation on this issue was established in Medina is meaningful for understanding the institutionalization of patriarchy.

6.2.10. Inheritance

It is assumed that Islam has been more favorable to women than pre-Islamic societies regarding matters of inheritance. For instance, Babylonian families dignified their sons' births more than they did the births of their daughters' because they believed that sons carried the family name forward and could improve their property by inheriting the family legacy. But still, both sexes had some inheritance

³¹⁴ Ibid,164

rights. While boys inherited their family property, girls received inheritance as dowry.³¹⁵

In Mesopotamian culture, properties were passed from men to men but through women. In case of a divorce, if the woman had no sons, the dowry would be returned to her father or to her brothers. According to Jewish law, when a man dies, his inheritance is shared among his sons. The reason for this is that the inheritance that girls receive from their families is left to their husbands and their children when they die. In this way, the inheritance ends up being taken from the women's father's family.³¹⁶

In the Qur'an, verses regarding the sharing of inheritance are covered by surah An-Nisa.

Verse 7 states:

“To the men a share of what parents and kinsmen leave, and to the women a share of what parents and kinsmen leave, whether it be little or much, a share apportioned.

Abdulmajeed Hassan Bello states that this verse forms the basis of Islamic Inheritance Law. He shows this verse as a proof that sets out the general principle of social equality for men and women who have an appropriate share of the property of their deceased relatives.³¹⁷

³¹⁵ Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, 108

³¹⁶ Rabi Yehonatan Salem, *Derinliđi Keşfetmek, Peraşanın İçinden Yaşam İçin Rehberlik*, (Jerusalem, Şalom LaAm Merkezi, 2019), 100

³¹⁷ Ibid

According to Tabari, women were not given a share of inheritance during the pre-Islamic period. This is why this verse was revealed.³¹⁸

How to share the inheritance between women and men is written in the 11th verse of Surat an-Nisa.

“God charges you, concerning your children: to the male the menlike of the portion of two females, and if they be women above two, then for them two-thirds of what he leaves, but if she be one then to her a half; and to his parents to each one of the two the sixth of what he leaves, if he has children; but if he has no children, and his heirs are his parents, a third to his mother, or, if he has brothers, to his mother a sixth, after any bequest he may bequeath, or any debt....”

According to Tabari, the Qur'an allows a man to inherit as much as the shares of two women. If a deceased father did not have a son, only half of his inheritance will be given to his daughter. If he had two or more daughters, they will take two-thirds of his legacy. The reason why women are given half the amount that men receive is that men are thought to have bigger financial obligations, such as providing sustenance, accommodation, health and education of children, guaranteeing alimony to women, paying their salaries (mahr), providing food and clothing etc. Women, on the other hand, were thought to have no such responsibilities, and they were expected to only consume without contributing to production activities. The foundation of the society was constructed in a patriarchal Islamic order, where men ensured the livelihood of the family by working outside the home, and women carried out the housework and took care of the children. Giving an equal share of inheritance to men and women was therefore not justified, as their spending and responsibilities were different.

³¹⁸ Tabari Tefsiri, cilt 1,374

Amina Wadud claims that in no way the females are disinherited. This was a pre-Islamic custom. She argues this verse enumerates a variety of proportional divisions between men and women. According to her, giving women half the amount given to men might not be the only form of property division. She points out that the Qur'an actually offers various combinations for distributing inheritance.³¹⁹

We can conclude that the inheritance rules about are fundamentally patrilineal in Qur'an. The main heirs are the sons, father and brothers. The daughter's sons do not have inheritance rights, as they are not accepted as members of the patrilineal clan.

Verse 176 of Surah An-Nisa states:

“If a man perishes having no children, but he has a sister, she shall receive a half of what he leaves, and he is her heir if she has no children....if there be brothers and sisters, the male shall receive the portion of two females....”

If the deceased does not have a son, only half of his inheritance will be given to the daughter. If girls are two or more, they can take two-thirds of his legacy. The remainder goes to more distant male relatives.

Here again, we see another discrepancy; if a man or woman has no children, their legacies would be transferred unequally to male or female inheritors.

There are other examples from around the world that are similar to these unequal practices in Islam. For instance, according to real estate laws, until the early modern period in England, the firstborn boy was the heir to the family, while other children were only given alimony. In China, until the Ming dynasty, the daughters of families without any sons did not even have a share from their families' inheritance.

³¹⁹ Amina Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, 87

It was only possible for women to get a significant share of inheritance after 1930.³²⁰ This widespread model of inheritance sharing shows that all around the world, goods and properties have circulated among men in order to protect patriarchal social structures.

Furthermore, this approach even led men to abuse a verse to give themselves even more privilege in sharing money.

“But do not give to fools (*sufaha*) their property that God has assigned to you to manage; provide for them and clothe them out of it, and speak to them honorable words?”

The ambitus word *al sufaha* (the foolish) was mistakenly used for women and children, and they were ultimately tried to be excluded from inheritance sharing. It was a patriarchal custom from the pre-Islamic period. However, referring to Tabari, Fatima Mernissi pointed out that in this verse, the word *sufaha* actually means persons that are incapable of managing their finances regardless of their gender. These people must be put under someone else’s guardianship to ensure proper usage of their assets.³²¹ According to her, men who wanted a male dominated system distorted the language and used this word to refer women.

It is noteworthy to state that the Medina verses related to inheritance issues are quite comprehensive and are part of the most detailed passages in the Qur’an. This shows us that the inheritance law and regulations came into force in Medina.

In summary, we can conclude that in patriarchal societies, there are legacy laws that guarantee the inheritance rights of sons, and that male domination prevails in the transfer of properties to next generations. Although the Qur’an seems to have corrected the old Mesopotamian laws regarding inheritance to some degree, the

³²⁰ Judith E. Tucker, *İslam Hukukunda Kadın, Aile ve Toplumsal Cinsiyet*, 205

³²¹ Fatima Mernissi, *Women and Islam*, 128

sharing of heritage according to Islam can still be considered patriarchal when considered on a universal scale.

7. SUMMARY OF PATRIARCHY IN THE QUR'AN

The patriarchy in Islam is just a continuation of the Aristotle rhetoric that insults women, which actually has extended into the modern world. Aristotle argued

that women were inferior to men in his *Politics*, and claimed that by their nature, males are superior to females. Therefore, he supported the idea that men should be the rulers while women should be the subjects. Aristotle claimed that the courage of a man lies in commanding, and that it is in women's nature to obey.³²² Aristotle believed that men and women differed both physically and mentally. He stated that women were less simple, more impulsive, more easily moved to tears, more jealous, more prone to despondency, less hopeful, more false of speech, more deceptive, had more difficulty in rising to action than men. He even added that a female was an incomplete male, or rather a “deformity”.³²³

In classical Greek societies, women were usually secluded. Men and women lived separately, and while men spent their time in public areas, women stayed at home, managed household chores and cared for their children. They did not participate in the economy. They were also veiled in which a shawl was drawn over their heads.³²⁴ Sarah Pomeroy argued that while this was happening in Greek societies, women in Egypt were able to act on their own behalf. Polygamy or having concubines were forbidden. Women could divorce their spouses just as easily as men. Men were required to pay a fine for divorcing their wives. Women were not obligated to wear veils and they were not living in seclusion. They were active in the social life.³²⁵ The decline in the free status of women in Egypt came about under the influence of Christianity and continued with Islam. However, in Syria, under the influence of worshipping goddess Astarte, the Middle Eastern Christianity did not

³²² Nicolas D. Smith, "Plato and Aristotle on the Nature of Women" *Journal of the History of Philosophy*. 21 (4): 1983,467–478

³²³ Charlotte Witt, Lisa Shapiro, Edward N. Zalta, “*Feminist History of Philosophy*” (Spring 2016 ed.).

³²⁴ Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (New York: Schocken, 1975), 81

³²⁵ *Ibid*

oppress women and permitted them to have more active roles in churches than Byzantine and Roman Christianity allowed.³²⁶

However, Jewish patriarchal ideas and regulations have led to women's subordination. Jewish traditions might have caused or influenced the male domination seen in Islam. The source of the discourse that organizes the world and determines all relations in the world is always the man assigned by God in the Qur'an. İlhan Arsel argued that the Qur'an is primarily directed at men through only male prophets as the 7th verse of surah Al Anbiya states:³²⁷

Al-Anbiya': (The Prophets)

“7. And We sent none before thee, but men to whom We made revelation -- question the People of the Remembrance, if you do not know”

Outside of a few verses revealed under special conditions in Medina, only men are addressed in the Qur'an. Women are generally not regarded as interlocutors, but as mere objects of religious discourse. According to Ibn Khaldun, all the actions of women, except for worship, are under the control of men.³²⁸

In the vast majority of verses, women were excluded from discourse while discussing the problems of organization and administration of the Muslim community. The Qur'an addressed men even in laws that directly have concerned women such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance. In short, women were not on stage in these discourses, they were talked about, but not talked to them except a very few verses

³²⁶ Susan Ashbrook Harvey, "Women in Early Syrian Christianity," in *Images of Women in Antiquity*, ed. Cameron and Kuhrt; and Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels* (New York: Vintage Books, 1981).

³²⁷ İlhan Arsel, *Şeriat ve Kadın*, (İstanbul:Dilek Ofset,1994),129-130

³²⁸ Fetna Ayt Sabbah, *İslamın Bilinçaltında Kadın* (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 1995), 97

In many verses, women are described as material wealth, as properties God has created for believing men. The 14th verse of surah Al-Imran (the Family of Imran), which was revealed in Medina, states:

“14. Decked out fair to men is the love of lusts -- women, children, heaped-up heaps of gold and silver, horses of mark, cattle and tillage. That is the enjoyment of the present life; but God -- with Him is the fairest resort...”

Women were not even on the stage in the founding mythologies of Islam. Although Abraham and his son Ismail are named as the founding fathers of Islam in the Qur'an, the name of Ishmael's mother Hagar, whom the Arabs claim to be descended from, is never mentioned. Hagar who symbolizes femininity with all features was erased from Islamic holy texts. While her pregnancy and her delivery to Ismail were never mentioned, the miraculous pregnancies and deliveries of Abraham's and Zechariah's wives and of Mary's were repeatedly emphasized.

All goddesses representing femininity and fertility were destroyed. Thus, all traces of the old matriarchal structures were wanted to be eliminated.

As stated in the 46th surah Al-Waqi`ah (That Which is Coming), which was revealed in Mecca, a great pleasure and happiness is promised to believing men who are devoted to God in this world.

“11 those are they brought nigh the Throne, 12 in the Gardens of Delight 13 (a throng of the ancients 14 and how few of the later folk) 15 upon close-wrought couches 16 reclining upon them, set face to face, 17 *immortal youths going round about them* 18 with goblets, and ewers, and a cup from a spring 19 (no brows throbbing, no intoxication) 20 and such fruits as they shall choose, 21 and such flesh of fowl as they desire, 22 *and wide-eyed houris* 23 *as the likeness of hidden pearls*, 24 a recompense for that they laboured. 25 Therein they

shall hear no idle talk, no cause of sin... 35 Perfectly We formed them, perfect, 36 and *We made them spotless virgins, 37 chastely amorous, 38 like of age for the Companions of the Right.*”

As can be seen, heaven is designed according to the taste, needs and pleasure of men. Girls with big black eyes and young men will be available to serve them. Women, on the other hand, will be re-created as beautiful, coquettish dolls and virgins.

Surah An-Naba (The Tiding) which was revealed later in Mecca period prescribed:

“31 Surely for the god fearing awaits a place of security, 32 gardens and vineyards, 33 and *maidens with swelling breasts, like of age...*”

This order, which is designed to only make men happy, the existence of *houris* that will remain young, beautiful, and virgin forever etc. excludes women on earth.

Furthermore, the *houris* in heaven, which are the virgins that await those who died as martyrs in this world, represent the eternal virgins, who never lose their virginity. After every intercourse, their hymens will be made intact again. As can be seen, the verses offer very detailed description of *houris*, down to their eyes, hymens, age, and habits. According to Zizec, the visual intrusion and the enigmatic knowledge of women in Islamic view disturbs the ontological balance of the universe.³²⁹ Therefore, women should be suppressed, their self-expression should be restricted, they should be isolated from social life, and they should be kept under the control of men.

³²⁹ Slovaj Zizec, *Beneath the veil, On the Truth of Islam*. ABC Religions and Ethics, 2016

Some verses of the Qur'an are seen as egalitarian. For instance, it is promised that believing and obedient women will also enter heaven.

97th verse of surah An-Nahl (The Bee) which descended in Mecca stated:

“97 And whosoever does a righteous deed, be it male or female, believing, We shall assuredly give him to live a goodly life; and We shall recompense them their wage, according to the best of what they did.”

124th verse of surah An Nisa (women) which later descended in Medina prescribed:

“124 And whosoever does deeds of righteousness, be it male or female, believing - they shall enter Paradise, and not be wronged a single date-spot.”

However, when the paradise promised by the Qur'an is examined, it is noticed that women's needs have not been taken into consideration.

Surah Ar-Rahman (The Merciful), verses 56-74:

“56 therein *maidens* restraining their glances, untouched before them by any man or jinn.58 lovely as rubies, beautiful as coral...70 therein maidens good and comely ...72 *houris*, cloistered in cool pavilions ...74 untouched before them by any man or jinn ...”

In some verses, it is clearly expressed that *houris* will be females who will fulfill duties in Heaven.

Surah Ad-Dukhan (The Evident Smoke) verses, 51-55

“..We shall espouse them to wide-eyed *houris*, 55 therein calling for every fruit, secure.”

These *houris* are given to the believers as spouses. They will be indispensable pieces in heaven. Their most important features are their physical beauties. God bestows them upon believers as sexual objects. *Houris* are the symbol of passivity in this order, they are the ultimate embodiment of this order. In such an order, the existence of women from our world seems to ruin the harmony in heaven. The position and role of women from this world in heaven remains dark and uncertain in the Qur'an,

As explained in detail in the relevant heading in the Qur'an, the marriage rules are arranged in a way to make the man more advantages.

5th verse of surah Al-Ma'idah which was descended in the late period of Medina was prescribed:

“5...believing women in wedlock, and in wedlock women of them who were given the Book before you if you give them their wages, in wedlock and not in license, or as taking lovers.”

As can be understood from this verse, it is the men referred to. Women who were not in prostitution, honest, chaste, and did not have hidden male friends, even if they were Jews or Christians, were rendered halal to believing men. However, women, on the other hand, did not have the freedom to marry Jewish and Christian men. There is a clear asymmetry in the right to marriage given to men and women. Furthermore, only believer men were addressed. Women were objectified, such as meals offered to meet the service and needs of men.

According to Judith Tucker's extensive review about Family and Gender in Islamic Law, most of the rules governing marriage and divorce contracts as well as the very experience of marriage itself do not offer equality³³⁰. Women were given to

³³⁰ Judith E. Tucker, *İslam Hukukunda Kadın, Aile ve Toplumsal Cinsiyet*, (Istanbul: Açılım Kitap, 2015), 308

men to be a wife for a bride wealth called mahr (mehir). In fact, according to Shiite jurists, if the bride is not a virgin, the mahr (fee) is reduced by one sixth.³³¹ However, it should be reminded that there is no sanction in the Quran to lower the bride wealth (mahr) according to the virginity of the bride.

The women can only receive alimony in return not disobeying his husband and responding to her husband's need for support. Women are not allowed to organize their own marriages.

Divorce rules have also legitimized gender inequality. While men can get legal support to divorce their spouses without giving any reason, women are subject to certain restrictions in this regard. The judicial supervision stipulated these for women. However, after the divorce, financial obligations, such as taking care of ex-spouses, paying the remaining debt (mahr), and providing for the children born from the marriage belong to men

Another area where women are subjected to discrimination in Islam is the inheritance law with its one-against-two rule, which derives its source directly from the Qur'an. Establishing a patriarchal structure is essential for the sharing of heritage, land and capital. In this structure, the woman is reduced to staying at home, submissive to her husband, giving birth to children and being obliged to take care of them. Nevertheless, even if their less share of inheritance is accepted as a correction of the old patriarchal tribal laws, the fact that these laws are universal and unchangeable reveals the gender inequality in this matter.

Adultery that occurs as a result of unrestrained sexuality is banned and punishable for both sexes, but the principle of equality is violated as the rules defined in the Qur'an place a large share of responsibility on women. There are adultery

³³¹ Judith Tucker, *İslam hukukunda Kadın, Aile ve Toplumsal Cinsiyet*, 87

evidence requirements that impose special burden on women. The patriarchal impulse to control female sexuality outweighs egalitarian approaches.

Dressing codes and behavioral codes that are supposed to minimize sexual attraction are mostly geared towards women with much more severe restrictions on women than men. Accordingly, compulsory veiling and remaining at home in a dignified and virtuous manner are imposed on women. As a result, women have been explicitly excluded from society by being oppressed. Those who are expected to represent Islamic morality are women, who are called to act with chastity and stay outside the public sphere.

This situation was more pronounced in enriched capitalistic cities. In rural areas, women contribute directly to the economy without the obligation to be covered. But they had no propriety rights paradoxically in rural life, which might be associated to tribal traditions. The verses that order the woman should be covered and praise motherhood came to Medina period. The male-dominated society was established and rules were introduced accordingly. The verses to support this harmony have come in order.

In Summary, rules on marriage and divorce were put into effect, veiling was made mandatory for women, polygamy was established, adultery became punishable by beating for sexes, woman's testimony and rules of inheritance were regulated in Medina.

Another important issue is the structure of the sentences in the Qur'an that define relationships. The sentence structure is vertical in almost all of the verses that regulate the relationships between men and women. In other words, the Qur'an directly addresses male believers. It is men that implement the orders of the Qur'an on women. The relationship of men and women with God is not symmetrical, but vertical in accordance with the patriarchal social order.

In the first verses revealed to the prophet in Mecca, male domination is mostly about abstracts issues, not about social arrangements. Tribal ties were still strong at the time of the prophet's life, but they got weakened with the spread of Islam. With the emergence of the early *capitalistique* order in Mecca, as Maxime Rodinson put it, (capitalistique is a term used by Rodinson to define the production relations before capitalism) with the appearance of slavery practices and with the increased urbanization, patriarchy's footprints in social order have begun to appear.³³² Mecca was the transition zone from the nomadic, rural economy to a settled commercial economy. The transformation of the collective tribal system of values into a more individualistic and commercial system led the prophet to establish a patriarchal social order. In order to consolidate this patriarchal order, the suppression of female sexuality became an indispensable element of social order and harmony. This was strengthened by the verses that were revealed in Medina. During this period, the female body began to be hidden, women's sexuality began to be suppressed, and women were tried to be reduced to motherhood. Patriarchy elevates mothers over women who are not mothers. Because it was no longer desired for women to be active in social life, they were prevented from taking any role in society. Women were imprisoned inside the house. It was the father who became the real source and keeper of power and privilege, and was an active element of the social order.

The sexual relationship was shaped by God in accordance with the wishes of the husbands. In this context, the wishes of the woman were not taken into consideration. If God did not have a special directive, the women have always remained silent. This silence could be regarded as a sign of the ignorance of the women's will and her obedience. For this reason, to oppose a sexual relationship based on inequality could mean to break a divine design. Obedience to the strong and submission to the superior is the divine formula that brings people to happiness.

³³² Maxime Rodinson, *İslam ve Kapitalizm* (Istanbul: Hür Yayın ve Ticaret A.Ş.,1978),45-51

Psychoanalyst Wolfgang Lederer argues that extremely gender-segregated societies have always been characterized by deep sexual insecurities. Women are considered to be the embodiment of sexuality and are removed from the public, their sexuality is banned.³³³

Looking at the chronology of the verses, first of all, the general restrictive provisions for women about marriage, divorce and situation of divorced women are written in the relevant verses of surah of Al-Baqarah. Additionally, the conditions for women to be able to witness are also determined. (221-223, 226, 228-232, 235-237, 282)

Later, the relevant verses of surah al-Ahzab explain how the wives of the prophet should behave and that the wives of the prophet should be covered. The prophet was given the freedom to marry and divorce. It is also stated in this surah which women are forbidden for men to marry (22, 23, 32-35, 37, 50-53, 59, 60).

In the related verses of the following surah of An-Nisa, men are given the right of polygamy and are declared as the managers of women. Men are banned from having relationships with married women, but they are given the freedom to be with as many concubines as they want. The provision was made that women who do not obey can be beaten. The issue of inheritance is also stipulated in this surah (3, 7, 11, 24, 25, 34, 128, 129, 176).

The relevant verses of surah An-Nur, which was revealed later, explains the punishments to be applied for adultery. Later on, in the relevant verses, the horrid slander against Aisha is mentioned; and finally, all women are required to wear a veil (2, 4-11, 26, 31).

Finally, in the related verses of surah At-Tahrim, the wives of the prophet are intimidated in order to keep them from rebelling against him in solidarity. Since the

³³³ Wolfgang Lederer, *The Fear of Women*, (Newyork: Grune&Stratton, 1968),135

prophet is the model of all Muslim husbands, these verses warn all women to not oppose their husbands (3-5).

As can be seen, patriarchy was systematically established in Medina with the verses that followed one after another.

CONCLUSION

In addressing the position of women in Muslim societies, it can be argued that the Qur'an ultimately gives men status, control, and authority over women and promotes an unjust system of gender relations. The strategy for testing the validity of this argument includes going back to the Qur'an and studying the value system of women as presented in the Holy Scripture.

The first point that needs to be emphasized is that in this thesis, only the Qur'an was reviewed for guidance, not other Islamic sources, such as hadith, sunnah, and fiqh.

As early Islamic period's hierarchy was organized patriarchally, women's status was inferior to men's in terms of socioeconomic aspects. Muslim reformists argue that the socioeconomic differences that exist between men and women are related to the category of social relations that can change, while their moral and religious equality falls under the category of religious duties to God, which are unchangeable.³³⁴

Patriarchy is evident in the majority of the verses that were examined under the subjects of creation, female goddesses, male prophets, homosexuality, virgin maidens to be given to men in heaven, male and female behavior patterns, marriage, divorce, concubinage, polygamy, adultery, women's veiling, witnessing, and inheritance.

However, it should be taken into consideration that the valid paradigm of the period was also patriarchy although the traces of old matriarchal culture have survived. Male domination was evident both in other monotheistic religions such as Judaism and Christianity and in far eastern religions. The Torah is perhaps the most

³³⁴ Aysha Hidayatullah, “, Feminist Interpretation of the Qur'an in a comparative Feminist Setting”, *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, vol.30, No2, 2014, 115-129

sexist scripture that is dominated by very heavy patriarchy. However, even in the Torah, the periods when women were active can be determined, albeit rarely. In the New Testament, despite Jesus' opposition, patriarchy was later established by Paul's discourses.

The socio-economic situation and the production processes of that Qur'anic age were mainly based on male domination. However, the claim that the Qur'an is universal makes patriarchy seem valid even in our contemporary age.

There is no egalitarian structure in the majority of the verses that deal with issues from a dimension of manhood/womanhood. However, there are those such as Amina Wadud and Asma Barlas who claim that through a feminist reading, the Qur'an can be rid of from this interpretation that supports male domination. According to them, these patriarchal interpretations of the Qur'an have led to the exclusion of women from social life and prevented them from taking an active role in religion.

However, there is no consensus on whether this egalitarian interpretation should be made over words or concepts. In this sense, reinterpreting Islamic texts from a feminist perspective can be a good academic and intellectual exercise. Moreover, at the moment, egalitarian new reinterpretations of scriptures that can be used as a legal basis are relatively marginalized and limited in their scope.

The new social order that came into fruition with Islam changed the pre-Islamic moral values and made the society more male-dominated. This included the transition from a family structure that partly depended on the will of the woman to a one that is solely based on male control in matters such as polygamy, marriage, concubinage, divorce, prohibition of adultery, inheritance and testimony. While women are defined according to the needs of believing men, believing men are defined according to God who wants constant and unrivaled worship. With this triangular relationship, the union between men and women has been replaced by

woman's obedience to man; and each element of the relationship must fulfill their task and function. Founding a male-dominated family structure was vital for the establishment of Islam. To this end, the necessary changes started to take place.

In this context, women (wives) and men (husbands) have certain rights in their relationships. However, a man or a husband is somewhat superior to a woman or a wife. For instance, women do not have the right to arrange their own marriages themselves. Their marriages are subject to the examination of their male relatives. Wives are dominated by their husbands. Husbands can beat their non-obeying wives after warning them and separating their beds.

According to the verses, all believing men, with the exception of the prophet Mohammad, can take up to four wives. Furthermore, there is no limit to the number of concubines. Women, on the other hand, do not have such privileges.

Men can divorce their wives merely by saying the words "be free" three times to their wives. Meanwhile, women must go to a judge to get a divorce.

In order to eliminate the danger related to sexual interactions, severe restrictions are imposed on women in terms of dress and attitude. All women must distance their gaze and body from men; they must not open their ornaments, bosoms, hair, and even faces, but cover everything up. It is stated in the verses that women should pay attention to the way they speak and walk, and not behave in a provocative way towards stranger men. They should not use their voices in a way that can seduce men, and should not walk in a flirty way. They should not even make any sound when their heels hit the ground. The patriarchal impulse to control female sexuality overrides the egalitarian impulse.

Men will have wives, concubines, virgin maidens, and young boys to serve them in heaven as they have wives and concubines in this world. There is no limit to the number of houris promised to believing men in heaven while no such partners are promised to women.

According to the Qur'an, the testimony of women in court is not as reliable as those of men. Two women's testimony is required on financial matters in the absence of one man. This is because if one woman forgets, the other is to remind her. However, there is no problem of forgetting about the subject when it comes to men.

Regarding inheritance, the Qur'an dictates that one man should get the share of two women when sharing an inheritance as he takes care of his family and children. As women were given dowry money before marriage, and as it was assumed that they had no responsibility for financially taking care of their families, the Qur'an only gave them the right to receive half the amount that men received from any inheritance.

Due to this patriarchal society, women have turned into figures whose behavior is controlled and restricted in all spheres; thus their effectiveness in the public sphere is also reduced, and they are not considered as equal legal subjects. The assumption that all women are wives and mothers, and that their main roles are related to house chores and childcare have paved the way for discriminatory practices and have dissipated women's autonomy.

We see that this ideology would ensure the consistency of Muslim states. Therefore, the regulations that promoted this ideology started to be formed in Medina with all certainty.

The second issue that I studied in the thesis is how this patriarchy gradually shifted. While the verses revealed in Mecca were related to more abstract subjects such as creation, condemnation of female goddesses, blessing of the single and omnipotent god, cursing of homosexuality, women's traps, black-eyed virgins promised to men in heaven; the verses that were revealed in Medina were on concrete issues such as marriage and divorce rules, regulation of polygamy, arranging men's relationships with women and concubines, the laws related to inheritance sharing, and women's testimony.

Although there are a few verses that advise men to be fair to women, the majority of the verses that are related to the codes of behavior between men and women point to male superiority. Moreover, inequality between men and women is prevalent in all of the topics mentioned. The fact that these concrete issues are not dealt with in the verses revealed in Mecca suggests that there may be a correlation between gaining power and the spread of Islam and the emergence of patriarchy.

It is also necessary to mention the main limitation in writing this thesis. As the Qur'an's original language is Arabic, this study used translations of the original verses. When using these translations, in order to decrease the possibility of misunderstandings and mistakes regarding the meaning of the verses, 8 different translations/interpretations were reviewed. 5 of these were in Turkish while the other 3 were in English. However, there might still be some shifts and differences in the meaning of some words caused by the authenticity of the Arabic language.

The second limiting issue is that like in all religions, the language of the Qur'an can contain ambiguity. As I mentioned before there are at least seven different styles of Qur'an reading (*ahruf*). These different readings may also include pluralities and ambiguities in the meaning of Qur'anic verses. Therefore, in coding the verses according to patriarchy, it has been tried to avoid using precise definition as much as possible.

The third limiting issue may be the anachronism between the 20th century when patriarchy was defined and coded, and the time period when the Qur'an was revealed. However, all periods of human existence and the differences between periods have been examined by historians in terms of patriarchy and societies are classified according to their degree of patriarchy. Moreover, the claim that the Qur'an is universal makes it necessary to evaluate its patriarchal structure for our contemporary age.

In conclusion, although the Qur'an introduced some partial reforms, it can be asserted that the Qur'an actually maintains the old patriarchal structures by eliminating the older matriarchal traces and that its main structure contains an asymmetry in favor of men in the dimension of gender issues. While this patriarchal order was more abstract in Mecca, it turned into an institutional structure with the spread of Islam and with the increase of its followers in Medina.

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