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## 4

# Amina Wadud's hermeneutics of the Qur'an: women rereading sacred texts

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THE inclusion of Amina Wadud in this book on contemporary Muslim intellectuals and the Qur'an is fitting for several reasons. Firstly, her work conclusively establishes the Qur'anic basis of gender equality in Islam, and thus raises questions about patriarchal (mis)readings of the scripture. This has garnered her not only acclaim, but also criticism from those who have been unsettled by her work. Secondly, Wadud is the only woman in this group, a fact that powerfully illustrates her own achievements in a male-dominated field and her charge that, historically, women have been excluded from Muslim interpretive communities and, consequently, from the field of Qur'anic exegesis, or *tafsir*. This exclusion, she believes, explains why traditional *tafsir* is restrictive to women. Lastly, of the scholars included in this volume, Wadud is the only (African-American/Western) convert to Islam. She thus brings to her engagement with the religion not only a specific consciousness shaped by her identity, but also a spirit of critical inquiry that leads her to raise questions about Islam that people who are born Muslim often do not consider asking. As a result, she is often able to offer fresh insights into the Qur'an's teachings.

Since Wadud is the first to acknowledge that people always read from specific sites and that they always bring specific forms of subjectivity into their readings<sup>1</sup> – reading for her is an interpretive

activity while interpretation is always subjective – it is appropriate to begin an analysis of her work by first situating her as a reading subject. This is followed by an overview of the salient features of her thought, analytical framework and methodology, and, finally, her *tafsir* of the Qur'an. Throughout this discussion, the aim is to identify the possibilities inherent in her work for re-theorising sex/gender<sup>2</sup> relationships in Islam in light of the Qur'an's own radically egalitarian ethos and teachings.

### 'On Belonging as a Muslim Woman'

For Wadud, born in 1952 in Bethesda, Maryland to a compassionate but 'disillusioned' Methodist minister and his young and eventually itinerant wife, the spiritual journey that brought her to Islam began as a search for 'transcendent tranquillity in the midst of storm',<sup>3</sup> conducted in the initial stages under her father's guidance. Of 'storms' Wadud has indeed had many, on account of being born Black in a society based on assumptions of White supremacy, poor in a society that confuses value with material wealth, and female in a society that, in spite of its sexual revolution, continues to objectify and discriminate against women.

Wadud's childhood was short-lived. It was marred by poverty, and her mother's early abandonment of the family and the foreclosure of their family home propelled them into a brief period of homelessness. It is, therefore, understandable why Wadud speaks of this phase of her life as one of displacement, loneliness, and above all, of 'betrayal'. Yet she says that she managed to survive it, albeit only through playing the right sorts of 'games' demanded by social conventions, and at the cost of learning to mask her 'inner' self.

Notwithstanding the lack of intellectual support from her family, Wadud's precocious talent for reading – for creating meanings out of words – sparked her initial interest in education. Bright enough to be placed above the 95th percentile in national tests, she nonetheless did badly in elementary school on account of having internalised the idea that 'learning was not important'.

While her grades improved dramatically at her mostly White high school, her self-worth plummeted proportionally as she discovered what it meant to be 'Black and female in America'.<sup>4</sup> If race is what defined her in the eyes of her White peers, gender is what seems to have defined her in the eyes of her Black ones, especially males, when she joined college. For a while, she sought to fit in with the Black community, at first assuming that it meant 'belong[ing] to a Black man'. However, as she was soon to discover, this form of belonging was not for her.<sup>5</sup>

Wadud came to Islam during her university career but how exactly is unclear; all she will say is that one of the doors into Islam for African-American women is 'Muslim men' and that this door opened for her by accident.<sup>6</sup> This does not mean, however, that she passed through it unthinkingly. Not only was her passage enabled by a religious upbringing that had cultivated in her a yearning to seek the Divine, but equally important is the fact that she came to Islam by asking critical questions of it about the purpose of life and her own role in it. Happily, she found the answers she had been looking for. Of course, as Wadud admits herself, this does not suggest that her questions were answered literally; rather she found in the Qur'an 'a vision of the world, and beyond, with meanings and possibilities for self that lead to certainty'.<sup>7</sup> Since 1972, when she took the *shahada* (the declaration of faith), Wadud has been studying the meanings and possibilities inherent in the Qur'an for the self, in particular, the female self. Some three decades later, she can testify that what she has found in the Qur'an is an overwhelming 'confirmation of women's equality' which is, however, at odds with Muslim practices. This realisation has deepened Wadud's commitment to what she calls the 'gender jihad', a moral struggle that, for her, means retrieving the Qur'an's egalitarianism as a means of challenging and reforming Muslim attitudes towards women.<sup>8</sup>

Wadud's endeavours have been warmly received for the most part, particularly by women, who realise the liberatory potential of her work and hence its significance for their own lives. However, perhaps because of its very ability to dislocate existing notions of gender and, along with these, unequal gender relationships,

Wadud's work also has been sharply criticised. She has found that 'disagreement with the status quo is treated as though it were disagreement with Islam', and while her critics have not branded her a heretic, many have reacted to her work by 'name calling and character assassinations' rather than by offering a 'substantive, critical, or coherent refutation of [its] limitations'. She finds this singularly troubling in light of Islam's call to all believers, both men and women, to seek knowledge. Perhaps 'as a woman, of African origin, and an American convert to Islam, I was not supposed to seek beyond what others hand[ed] down to me', she says candidly, referring to her ostracisation by conservative segments of the Muslim community.<sup>9</sup>

The hardest lesson Wadud has had to learn as a Muslim, then, is that as long as she continues to engage in her gender jihad, there will be no place for her in mainstream Muslim communities. However, rather than being discouraged by this realisation, she has come to appreciate the differences between Islam and Muslims on the one hand, and the rectitude of her own ethical and intellectual choices on the other. She now knows that tranquillity and belonging can only be found in God, and that strength lies in recognising that as God's *khalifa*, or vice-regent on earth, a person 'cannot stand on the sidelines in the face of injustice and still be recognised as fully Muslim'.<sup>10</sup> She has chosen to claim a fully actualised Muslim identity by arguing against the injustice of projecting sexual oppression and inequality into the Qur'an, regardless of the personal cost to herself.

### Wadud's career, works, and thought

Wadud completed her Ph.D. in Islamic Studies and Arabic at the University of Michigan in 1988, having previously obtained a Master's degree in Near Eastern Studies at that institution. She also has a B.Sc. in Education from the University of Pennsylvania. Wadud's first appointment after graduating was in the Department of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage in the International Islamic University in Malaysia, where she taught

until 1992. It was here that she became involved with the Sisters in Islam<sup>11</sup> and published several pamphlets underscoring the Qur'an's support for sexual equality. It was also here that she published her seminal work, *Qur'an and Woman*, currently in its fifth printing and second edition, as *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective* (the book has to date been translated into Turkish, Persian, and Indonesian). Since returning from Malaysia, Wadud has been teaching in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at the Virginia Commonwealth University (where she is an associate professor), having spent a year in between on a fellowship at the Harvard Divinity School.

Although her writings are extensive, Wadud's scholarship has a common thematic and hermeneutic focus. The theme she has most consistently explored is the Qur'an's conceptualisation of gender and gender relationships, while her hermeneutic focus has been on how best to read the text itself, in particular in order to discover 'a woman's voice' therein. In fact, one of Wadud's most crucial contributions to Muslim religious discourse has been to show the connections between the theoretical and methodological questions, specifically between Qur'anic exegesis (what we understand the Qur'an to be saying) and the means of its production (who reads the Qur'an, and how). Thus, she has concentrated on examining *what* the Qur'an says, *how* it says it, *what* is said about the Qur'an, and *who* is doing the saying'. These concerns have been supplemented in recent years by an interest in 'what is left *unsaid*: the ellipses and silences [in the Qur'anic text]'.<sup>12</sup> Thus, instead of confusing the Qur'an with its (patriarchal) exegesis and viewing certain exegetical practices as sacrosanct and hence beyond criticism, Wadud has opened up to enquiry both Muslim exegesis of the Qur'an, and the textual strategies used to generate it. Of necessity, this has meant critiquing traditional *tafsir* as the first step in moving beyond it. In that context, she has endeavoured to show, first, that the method Muslims traditionally have employed to read the Qur'an is, by nature, 'atomistic'.<sup>13</sup> As she notes in this context, most exegetes of the classical era (whose methodology and *tafsir* Muslims generally

consider canonical), 'begin with the first verse of the first chapter and proceed to the second verse of the first chapter – one verse at a time – until the end of the Book. Little or no effort is made to recognise themes and to discuss the relationship of the Qur'an to itself thematically'. Even when some exegetes do refer to the relationship of two *ayas* (verses) to one another, they do so, she contends, without applying any 'hermeneutical principle' since a method for 'linking similar Qur'anic ideas, syntactical structures, principles, or themes together is almost nonexistent'.<sup>14</sup>

Wadud believes that reading the Qur'an piecemeal and in a decontextualised way not only ignores its internal coherence, or *nazm*,<sup>15</sup> but it also fails to recover the broad principles that underlie its teachings, as Fazlur Rahman<sup>16</sup> also argues. As a result, most exegetes end up generalising specific Qur'anic injunctions, a practice Wadud believes is particularly oppressive to women in that some of the most harmful restrictions against them result 'from interpreting Qur'anic solutions for particular problems as if they were universal principles'.<sup>17</sup> She gives several examples of this, including the example of how exegetes have interpreted the Qur'anic provisions on dress(ing). As she clarifies,

the Qur'an establishes a universal notion regarding matters of dress and asserts that 'the dress of piety is best'. However, shari'ah (Islamic law) uses the Qur'anic references to particular 7th century Arabian styles of dress as the basis of its legal conclusion regarding modesty. Consequently wearing a particular item of dress (for example, the headcovering) is deemed an appropriate demonstration of modesty.<sup>18</sup>

Universalising the veil, argues Wadud, thus also universalises the 'culturally and economically determined demonstrations of modesty' in seventh-century Arab society, thereby imparting a cultural specificity to the Qur'an's teachings. To her, this actually limits the application of these teachings inasmuch as cultures do not necessarily have identical ideas about modesty. Wadud thus believes that we need to understand that what the Qur'an teaches is the 'principle of modesty ... not the veiling and seclusion which were manifestations particular to [the Arab] context'.<sup>19</sup> After all, she argues, even though the Qur'an offers universal moral guid-

ance, the 'mere fact that [it] was revealed in seventh-century Arabia when the Arabs held certain perceptions and misconceptions about women and were involved in certain specific lewd practices against them resulted in some injunctions specific to that culture'.<sup>20</sup>

Wadud, of course, is not alone in emphasising the relationship between the Qur'an (text) and the circumstances of its revelation (contexts). As Faruq Sherif also notes, many *ayas* 'relate to a particular time and place' and several of the Qur'an's penal provisions were aimed at the conditions of seventh-century Arabia such that it would be 'a lamentable anachronism' to treat them as binding today.<sup>21</sup> Thus, the challenge for every new generation of Muslims is to 'understand the principles intended by the particulars [since the] principles are eternal and can be applied in various social contexts'.<sup>22</sup> In fact, the Qur'an itself 'provides, either explicitly or implicitly, the rationales behind [its] solutions and rulings, from which one *can deduce general principles*'.<sup>23</sup> Yet, historically, exegetes have not attempted to do so in part because of their failure to read the Qur'an as a textual unity, and in part because they do not recognise that, in the Qur'an, content and context possess one another.<sup>24</sup> Wadud, on the other hand, favours reading the Qur'an as a textual whole, while also historicising/contextualising its teachings (see below).

Although conservative Muslims balk at any attempt to contextualise the Qur'an on the grounds that such an approach undermines its universalism by historicising it, this is not really so.<sup>25</sup> For one, the Qur'an itself acknowledges the 'necessarily periodic and contextual nature of its contents'.<sup>26</sup> For another, as Rahman argues, the Qur'an 'occurred in the light of history and against a social-historical background [and is] a response' to it.<sup>27</sup> In fact, it is 'God's response through Muhammad's mind (this latter factor has been radically underplayed by the Islamic orthodoxy) to a historical situation (a factor likewise drastically restricted by the Islamic orthodoxy in a real understanding of the Qur'an)'.<sup>28</sup> As such, 'to make the Qur'an immune from history would be to make its own history irrelevant', and would also impede the process of its 'creative repossession' by later generations of Muslims.<sup>29</sup>

If traditional *tafsir* fails to take the Qur'an historically, as Wadud shows, it also fails to consider the role of language in creating gendered meanings, often in ways not intended by the Qur'an itself. As a speaker of both classical and standard Arabic, she knows that every term 'whether referring to inanimate or animate things, physical or metaphysical realms or dimensions – is expressed in gendered terms'. But how, she asks, can 'ideas that transcend gender be expressed in a gendered language?'<sup>30</sup> For instance, Muslim references to God as 'He' linguistically masculinise God even although, as Wadud argues, language cannot express 'what cannot be uttered in language', and even though the Qur'an expressly forbids using similitudes for God.<sup>31</sup> At the very least, therefore, she says, Muslims should realise that language about God 'cannot be interpreted empirically and literally'.<sup>32</sup> (As scholars argue in other contexts, masculinising God also underwrites theories of male privilege in religious patriarchies in so far as it allows men to posit a false affinity between themselves and God.)<sup>33</sup>

Wadud's third criticism of traditional *tafsir* thus has to do with how the Qur'an's teachings are reframed through the lens of sex/gender, both in terms of *how* we interpret its language about sex/gender (see below), and in terms of *who* interprets it. The fact that historically men have interpreted the Qur'an, she believes, explains both the masculinist nature of *tafsir* and its anti-woman bias. As she notes, missing from the 'basic paradigms through which we examine and discuss the Qur'an and Qur'anic interpretation', are women and their experiences, which either have been excluded, or interpreted 'through the male vision, perspective, desire, or needs'.<sup>34</sup> This tendency, of course, is not specific to Muslims since men have interpreted the foundational texts of all religions; nor is it hard to explain given that the Qur'an 'happens against a long background of patriarchal precedent'.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, the gaps that result in *tafsir* from excluding women's voices cannot be overcome by resorting to the 'rhetoric of equality in Islam', counters Wadud.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, silencing women's voices not only prevents them, but also the men, from developing a 'holistic understanding of what it means to be Muslim',<sup>37</sup> thereby

keeping both from experiencing the full breadth of 'Islamic potentiality' since it allows only men to 'determine legitimacy'.<sup>38</sup> As she points out, just as 'women and men are equal in Islam, so are they distinct from one another'; hence their experiences also are distinct. Yet, this unique experiential component is missing from *tafsir* because men have usurped the right to 'tell women how to be women! Men have evaluated what it means to be Muslim not only for the Muslim male but also for the Muslim female'.<sup>39</sup> While Muslims generally do not protest this practice, Wadud can find no justification for it in the Qur'an or the traditions (hadith) of the Prophet's life and praxis. On the contrary, she argues, not only does silencing women's voices and treating them as taboo, or 'aura, violate their own dignity as human beings, but it also undermines the Qur'an's designation of men and women equally as God's *khalifa*. As she clarifies, the purpose of

human creation was revealed when God said, 'Verily, I am going to create a *khalifah* (caretaker, viceregent, or trustee) on the earth' [Q. 2: 38]. *Khalifah* (trusteeship) on the planet is the responsibility of each human. In the Qur'anic worldview, fulfillment of this trust constitutes the *raison d'être* of human existence. [Hence, to] deny full personhood to women is to deny them the full capacity of *khalifah* and to thwart the possibility of their fulfilling the basic responsibility decreed by God for all of humankind.<sup>40</sup>

Given this Qur'anic view of human creation and agency, how – asks Wadud<sup>41</sup> – can the 'Islamic intellectual ethos develop without giving clear and resounding attention to the female voice, both as a part of the text and in response to it?'<sup>42</sup>

Wadud's critique of traditional *tafsir* is meant not only to reveal the flaws in patriarchal readings of the Qur'an, but also to get Muslims to realise what is at stake in rethinking their textual strategies, in devising new interpretive methods, and in including women in the processes of knowledge creation. She believes this will not only allow the women to develop a more authentic Muslim identity, but also will reflect 'new levels of understanding and human participation' in religious life.<sup>43</sup> She remains hopeful that, as Muslims come to appreciate the need continually to reread the Qur'an – after all, a 'key hypothesis of hermeneutical

philosophy is that interpretation is an open process which no single vision can conclude.<sup>44</sup> – they also will come to accept a more egalitarian *tafsir* and certainly one that is inclusive of women's voices.

### Towards a hermeneutics of equality

What might such a *tafsir* entail? Even more significantly – given that the content of knowledge is never independent of the methods by which it is produced – what kind of a hermeneutic approach might generate it? Before considering Wadud's *tafsir*, therefore, it would be useful to examine her conceptual and methodological framework more closely.

Wadud begins her critique of traditional *tafsir*, as well as her own exegesis of the Qur'an, by clarifying that what 'proceeds from the text ... in the name of *tafsir*, is not one and the same as the divine will'.<sup>45</sup> This distinction between 'divine speech and its earthly realisation'<sup>46</sup> is an old one in Muslim theology and one that the Qur'an also makes.<sup>47</sup> Yet, over the course of time, Muslim interpretive communities have come to see their own *tafsir*, hence their own interpretive authority, as being on a par with revelation. For example, the Hanafi legal school – which trains its adherents in the time-honoured method of reading "backward" through the scholarship of previous generations in an attempt to ensure "continuity with the past" – holds that 'the authority of the practice defined by later generations [is equivalent to] the authority of revelation'.<sup>48</sup> While equating their own authority with that of revelation allows legal and interpretive schools to claim legitimacy, it also collapses divine discourse with its human interpretations, thus permitting the displacement of biases onto the Divine. This confusion of the Qur'an with its *tafsir* also discourages new readings of the Qur'an since it allows interpretive communities to misrepresent critiques of *tafsir* as critiques of the Qur'an and to marginalise new readings in the name of adhering to a religiously sanctioned tradition. They then are able to protect not only their own hegemony, but also the hegemony of the religious knowledge (on which they draw) produced by a small number of male

scholars in the early years of Islam. While not all these scholars were misogynists of course, the sexual ethos of the times in which they wrote (the Middle Ages) was, and they could not but be influenced by it to varying degrees.<sup>49</sup> This is why Wadud's distinction between God's Speech and human renditions of it is so crucial.

If adhering to this distinction marks Wadud as a traditionalist, it also allows her to embrace the modern hermeneutic insight that reading is subjective and incomplete, a fact Muslims overlook when it comes to traditional *tafsir*. This view allows her to free the Qur'an of its (anti-women) misreadings while also permitting her to argue in favour of some readings and against others. Thus, recognising the role of subjectivity in reading does not keep Wadud from arguing that some interpretations are in fact better than others. This is not a contradictory position in that the Qur'an itself recommends reading it for its best meanings (and also specifies some principles for doing so),<sup>50</sup> establishing both that it is open to multiple readings and that not all readings may be equally good. Hermeneutics as a discipline also rests on the premise that while 'multiple readings are not per se mutually exclusive, not all interpretations are thereby equal'.<sup>51</sup> Belief in textual polysemy thus does not render one a moral relativist; nor does embracing monosemy (the idea that there is only one correct reading of a text) signify great virtue.

Secondly, although Wadud does not put it in these terms, she reads the Qur'an as both a 'historically situated'<sup>52</sup> text and as a 'complex hermeneutic totality'.<sup>53</sup> That is, she explains the Qur'an's teachings in terms of the social and historical contexts Islam sought to reform and also in terms of the linguistic, grammatical, and syntactical structures of the text itself. Although, as noted, conservatives reject a 'historicising understanding' of the Qur'an,<sup>54</sup> many contemporary Muslim scholars argue in favour of it. Mahmud Mohamed Taha, for instance, held that such an approach was essential for deriving general principles from the Qur'an. The difference is that Taha held that the distinction between the universal and the particular was built into revelation itself, specifically, into its historical periodisation into two phases:

the Meccan and the Medinan. To him, the Meccan *suras* embodied the more universal and egalitarian aspects of Islam's message, and the Medinan its more specific and restrictive one (since according to him the Medinans were not ready to live by the higher ideals encoded in the Meccan *suras*). And yet, Muslim jurists, who believed that the Meccan *suras* had been abrogated by the Medinan, drew on the latter in drafting the shari'a (law). The solution as Taha saw it, therefore, was to shift some aspects of the shari'a 'from one class of texts [the Medinan] to another [the Meccan, by] examining the rationale of abrogation' itself. In effect, what was needed, argued Taha, was a second message of Islam generated by means of new critical reasoning, or *ijtihad*.<sup>55</sup>

However, while Wadud also favours *ijtihad*, she rejects the tendency, as Rahman puts it, to view the 'career of the Prophet and the Qur'an in two neatly discrete and separate "periods" – the Medinan and the Meccan – to which most modern scholars have become addicted'.<sup>56</sup> Instead, she regards revelation as being both historically and textually continuous. Further, as she notes, not all the Meccan *suras* are universal in nature, or the Medinan specific. To her, the indecidability of the universal and the particular can be resolved only *hermeneutically*, by means of a 'model which derives basic ethical principles for further developments and legal considerations by giving precedence to general statements rather than particulars'.<sup>57</sup> If this seems like a contradictory view – given Wadud's emphasis on the need to historicise the Qur'an – it is not, since she rejects a historicist approach to it as implicit, for instance, in a certain interpretation of the concept of the *asbab al-muzul*. Although exegetes translate this term as 'reason(s) for revealing (a particular verse or verses)', she says, the more accurate rendition is 'occasions upon which (or, sometimes, because of which) a certain verse was revealed'. This is a crucial distinction because it 'broadens the application of underlying principles' in the Qur'an inasmuch as viewing certain events as the 'reason for' a verse undermines the doctrine of the Qur'an's trans-historicity and turns it into 'a history book in the limited sense of a record of events'. To Wadud, the aim of recalling the historical contexts of the revelation of an *aya* is to understand the context itself and not

to imply 'a restriction of the Qur'anic principles to that context'.<sup>58</sup>

Wadud's position thus is a complex one. On the one hand, she holds that Muslims need to contextualise (historicise) the Qur'an in order to recontextualise it, suggesting that, to her (and to Rahman, on whose work she draws), what makes revelation pertinent to humans is its location *within* history. At the same time, and on the other hand, however, she also refuses to treat the Qur'an as a record *of* history. As she states, the Qur'an is a 'moral history' whose purposes are 'extrahistorical and transcendental' such that their location in time does not exhaust their impact or meaning. Indeed, she believes that it is the Qur'an's goal of providing 'universal guidance' that accounts for the brevity of 'historical details' in it. As such, 'if the reader assumes he is reading a record, what he reads may be insignificant to his own life'. But if readers understand that the historical details, of which the Qur'an gives just enough – but not too [many]', are meant to illuminate universal precepts, then they can see its relevance to their own lives.<sup>59</sup>

If the idea of a text's historical situatedness is essential to Wadud's reading of the Qur'an, so too is her view of the text itself as a 'cumulative, holistic process' rather than as 'a linear succession of sentences'.<sup>60</sup> Respect for the Qur'an's textual holism thus leads her to read it intratextually, that is to interpret the Qur'an by the Qur'an, *tafsir al-Qur'an bi al-Qur'an* – a method the Qur'an itself recommends<sup>61</sup> and one that exegetes also have favoured historically. However, as Wadud points out, not only do intratextual approaches to the Qur'an remain 'rare', but not all intratextual readings of it are in fact holistic.<sup>62</sup> Instead, this method is often 'reduced to using a single term or verse to interpret another term or verse' rather than to determine the 'Qur'anic ethos or spirit'. Wadud believes that such narrow literalism not only serves no hermeneutic purpose, but that it undermines the Qur'an's ethos, and she draws on historical precedent to argue against it. She recalls that following a war campaign, the second Caliph, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, refused to take 'the booty explicitly prescribed in the Qur'an, citing that to do so would violate the

spirit of the Qur'an in the existing situation of hardship'. As she says, if anyone were to depart from the Qur'an's letter in order to adhere to its spirit today, they 'would be considered a heretic', and she believes this is because Muslims 'lack faith in the possibility that the Qur'anic whole could yield something greater than its parts'.<sup>63</sup> Wadud's own reading of the Qur'an, then, is meant to arrive at an understanding of its ethos and spirit and not merely its letter.

That Wadud regards the Qur'an as the 'primary arbiter'<sup>64</sup> of its own meanings, confirms that she views revelation as being self-sufficient. Although this doctrine is rooted in Muslim tradition, she nonetheless has been criticised by those who interpret the Qur'an by way of the Prophet's Sunna or praxis, and therefore by way of secondary religious texts like the hadith (which record the Sunna). The criticism has been severe enough to elicit a defence from her in the second edition of her book. She clarifies that, unlike the hadith, the Qur'an is inerrant, that she cannot believe that the Prophet would have removed its stipulation of 'equality between women and men', and that even if she were faced with contrary evidence, she 'would choose in favor of the Qur'an' because it is of 'greater significance'.<sup>65</sup>

Although Wadud also adheres to the doctrine of the Qur'an's invariability, she believes that our understanding of its teachings can, and indeed must, remain subject to change. As she argues, what changes in its readings is not the Qur'an itself, but how it is understood within and by a community, and – like other modern scholars – she views this changing understanding as a function of how Muslims engage the text itself, specifically, of the kinds of questions they ask of it. Referring to the disciplines generated by *tafsir*, she argues that 'they satisfied particular needs or answered particular questions that had arisen' at a particular point in time. However, 'certain questions did not arise. Consequently, the answers to these were not sought out. Obviously, the answers to these were not found'.<sup>66</sup> The implication is that Muslims also have not asked certain questions of the Qur'an thus far, in particular about its position on equality and gender – perhaps because the need to do so has not arisen, or perhaps because they have not

risen to the level of the Qur'an. As such, they also have not found answers to some questions. In this way Wadud not only justifies her own rereading of the Qur'an, but she also leaves open the possibility for Muslims continually to ask new questions of it, a practice that is integral to all interpretive processes but which conservative Muslims regard with distrust.

However, many Muslim scholars now admit that our understanding of the Qur'an depends on our faculties and methodologies and must therefore always be a changing and incomplete one. For instance, Abdolkarim Soroush also holds that while 'the last religion is already here ... the last understanding of religion has not yet arrived'.<sup>67</sup> As he argues, Islam may be complete and perfect but our knowledge of it is not. Indeed, religious knowledge 'as a branch of human knowledge [is bound to be] incomplete, impure, insufficient and culture-bound'.<sup>68</sup> This is why 'revivalists' periodically need to rehabilitate religious thought, correct misreadings, and redirect 'religion towards its essence'.<sup>69</sup> However, in spite of his support for such processes Soroush does not examine women's role in them, while Wadud regards it as being crucial inasmuch as gender is 'a category of thought' and not just a subject of discourse.<sup>70</sup> She thus sees as one of her own tasks 'to articulate ways of reading for gender and then to advocate how such a reading is central to comprehensive Qur'anic analysis'.<sup>71</sup>

Wadud's concern with sex/gender manifests itself at two levels. At the first level, as noted, she argues in favour of including women in interpretive processes on the grounds that the Qur'an advocates sexual equality, that only women can represent themselves, and that their participation is essential for developing a holistic knowledge of Islam. At the second level, she emphasises the need to examine the Qur'an's language, especially in view of the absence of a neuter in Arabic. As she says, while this means that every word is 'designated as masculine or feminine, it does not follow that each use of masculine or feminine persons is necessarily restricted to the mentioned gender'. To her, therefore, it is only possible to discover the Qur'an's meanings accurately by studying the 'language act, syntactical structures, and

textual context' in which a specific term is used, both the immediate contexts of its usage and also its 'larger textual development'.<sup>72</sup>

In sum, Wadud reads the Qur'an as a discursive unity and in terms of its own truth claims, paying attention to both the historical contexts of its teachings as well as to its linguistic and syntactical structures. Underlying these conceptual and methodological principles is an ethical and moral concern that Muslims learn to read the Qur'an for its best meanings, even though she does not frame it in these terms. Wadud herself chooses to do so in order both to claim a fully authentic Muslim identity and also 'to challenge the arrogance of those men' who, while demanding respect and dignity for themselves deny it to women simply because they are women. She particularly rejects 'the false justification of such arrogance through narrow interpretations or misinterpretations of the Qur'anic text, namely interpretations which ignore the basic social principles of justice, equality, and common humanity' that the Qur'an teaches.<sup>73</sup> As she notes, rather than being elevated by the Qur'an, many interpreters bring it 'down to their level when they project [into it] narrow or negative meanings which suit their individual whims, perceptions, and prejudices about women. This is most often done on the basis of a single word! Some of these words do not even exist in the text'.<sup>74</sup> Unfortunately, such tendencies have fostered a 'witch-hunting mentality' among Muslims that 'looks for "inherent" evil in woman, and then justifies constraints on her every move'.<sup>75</sup> Wadud finds this execrable not only because the Qur'an rejects such notions, but because it commands respect and equality between the sexes. Had Muslims learned to extend such Qur'anic principles to their lives, she observes, they could 'have evolved into leading examples of humane and just social systems'.<sup>76</sup> Perhaps, in the end, it is this ethical vision – that justice, equality, and dignity are the God-given right of every human being – that most clearly sets apart Wadud's hermeneutics from those of many other scholars.

### 'Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective'

If one half of Wadud's project is to lay 'the groundwork for non-traditional *tafsir* from a scripturally legitimate perspective',<sup>77</sup> the other half of it is to offer an egalitarian exegesis of the Qur'an itself. (In view of the complexity of her *tafsir* and also constraints of space, it is only possible to consider it in broad outline here.)

At the core of Wadud's reading of the Qur'an is the claim that it does not teach the concept of male ontological superiority and of female inferiority or subordination to men. Contrary to what most Muslims claim, she argues, the Qur'an does not teach that there are 'essential' distinctions between men and women reflected in creation, capacity and function in society, accessibility to guidance (particularly to Qur'anic guidance), and in the rewards due to them in the Hereafter'.<sup>78</sup> Nor, remarkably – given the rigidity of gender roles in Muslim societies – does the Qur'an 'propose or support a singular role or single definition of a set of roles, exclusively for each gender across every culture'.<sup>79</sup> Specifying such roles, she believes, would have reduced it 'from a universal text to a culturally specific text – a claim that many have erroneously made'.<sup>80</sup> In fact, Wadud believes that the Qur'an itself overcomes 'gender distinction ... in order to fulfill its intention of universal guidance'.

In this context, Wadud's most profound insight is that the Qur'an does not use the category of sex/gender to differentiate between humans, much less to discriminate against women. Indeed, there is no '*concept* of woman' or of 'gendered man' in the Qur'an.<sup>81</sup> Hence, while the Qur'an recognises 'anatomical' (sexual/ biological) differences, it does not endow these differences, or sex itself, with symbolic meaning (it does not confuse sex with gender, as this author has argued elsewhere).<sup>82</sup> However, if sex/gender is not a meaningful category in the Qur'an, then the Qur'an cannot advocate sex/gender differentiation, and if it does not advocate sex/gender differentiation, then the Qur'an also cannot sanction sex/gender hierarchies or inequalities, inasmuch as such hierarchies and inequalities presuppose the idea of sexual differentiation.<sup>83</sup>

In fact, not only does the Qur'an *not* teach a theory of sexual differentiation, it actually teaches the idea of the ontological equality of the sexes. As both Wadud's reading and that of Riffat Hassan shows, in Islam, women and men are related to one another ontologically and this relationship is based on equality and not on differentiation or hierarchy. Thus, for instance, the Qur'an does not teach that women and men were created from different substances, or that woman was created from man, or even that woman was created *after* man,<sup>84</sup> which are claims that religious patriarchies make in justifying sexual hierarchy /inequality. Rather, as Wadud and Hassan, and other scholars, point out, the Qur'an teaches that humans originated in a single self, or *nafs*, and are endowed with the same nature, capacities, and abilities. Not only does the Qur'an not 'state that Allah began the creation of humankind with the *nafs* of Adam, the man', argues Wadud, but by using words like *nafs* and *zawj* (spouse) in its account of creation [Q. 4: 1], it confirms that 'the original parents [are] irrevocably and primordially linked; thus, the two are equally essential' and essentially similar. Hence, even though God created humans 'in the male/female pair', the Qur'an 'does not attribute explicit characteristics to either one or the other, exclusively'.<sup>85</sup> Nor, for instance, does it assign the responsibility for the expulsion of this pair from Paradise to the woman, a claim made to justify representations of women as naturally lax and given to sin. Instead, 'with one exception, the Qur'an always uses the Arabic dual form to tell how Satan tempted both Adam and Eve'<sup>86</sup> and how they both disobeyed [God].'<sup>87</sup> Hence, even though Muslims represent man as the norm and woman as 'less than men', the Qur'an itself never alludes to them in this way.<sup>88</sup> The only basis on which it distinguishes between humans is on the basis of their moral personality – their ability, that is, to acquire *taqwa*, or God-consciousness – and it is in terms of their moral praxis that individuals will be judged and recompensed in the Hereafter. What matters in and to the Qur'an, then, is not sex/gender, but an individual's 'faith and deeds'.<sup>89</sup>

Although conservative Muslims reject any exegesis that claims simultaneity of creation – since that irrevocably undermines

theories of male ontological superiority – they readily admit that in the realms of faith and worship (*ibada*), men and women are equal. However, they argue that in the legal and social realms they are not, a claim that is tantamount to asserting that even though women and men are equal before God, they are not so in the sight of men. Such ideas derive in part from those *ayas* in the Qur'an that are read as stating that God has preferred (*faddala*) men to women, given them a degree (*daraja*) over women, and made them women's guardians (*qawwamun 'ala*). They also derive from assuming that the Qur'an's different treatment of women and men with regard to such issues as polygyny, evidence-giving, inheritance, and so on, establishes their inherent inequality.<sup>90</sup> Wadud, however, undermines such claims with a contextualised reading of the relevant *ayas*. She shows, for instance, that the 'degree' refers to a husband's rights in a divorce and not to male ontological superiority, or to men's rights in general, that the 'preference' refers to (some) men's greater share in inheritance (determined by their greater financial responsibilities vis-à-vis women) and not to the idea that God prefers men because they are biologically males, and the term *qawwamun 'ala* to the husband's role as a breadwinner (that is, his obligation to provide for his household) and not to the idea of men's guardianship or rulership over women.<sup>91</sup>

In much the same way, Wadud also challenges customary *tafsir* of other *ayas* that are read as establishing men's dominion over women, including the crucial *aya*, Q. 4: 34, interpreted as mandating a wife's obedience (*qanitat*) to her husband and giving the latter the right to beat (*daraba*) disobedient (*nushuz*) wives. On her reading, however, *qanitat* refers to a moral attitude of obedience on the part of both women and men to God, *nushuz* to a state of marital discord and not to a wife's disloyalty, and *daraba* to a restriction on spousal abuse, not a license for it. Similarly, with respect to polygyny [Q. 4: 3] – which also is seen as a sign of male privilege and superiority – Wadud points out that the Qur'anic reference to the practice occurs in the context of a discussion about the just 'treatment of orphans' and is contingent on a man's ability to deal justly with more than one wife. In effect, the *aya* is 'concerned with *justice*: dealing justly, managing funds

justly, justice to the orphans, and justice to the wives, etc.’<sup>92</sup> At no point does the Qur’an recommend polygyny as a way to deal with a wife’s inability to conceive, or to pander to male sexual needs, or as a right for those men who can afford to have multiple wives, all reasons that Muslims use in justifying polygyny. Wadud similarly contests *tafsir* of Qur’an 2: 282 which counsels taking two women instead of one man as witnesses, thus establishing a ‘two-for-one formula’ (the idea that two women equal one man). If this were the Qur’an’s intent, she argues, ‘four female witnesses could replace two male witnesses. Yet, the Qur’an does not provide for this alternative’.<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, she argues, this two-for-one formula also has been ‘reinforced through oversimplification of the Qur’anic discussion regarding inheritance’ which is interpreted as always giving a woman half the share of a man. But, as she clarifies, ‘if there is one female child, her share is half the inheritance’ and the principle that women get half of what men do ‘is not the sole mode of property division, but *one* of several proportional arrangements possible’.<sup>94</sup> Finally, Wadud also rereads the Qur’an’s provisions for divorce and shows them to be protective of women’s rights. The *tafsir* of each *aya* involves a careful reading of language, grammar, and syntax and as well as an analysis of its historical contexts so as to help readers understand the logic of the Qur’an’s teachings and also the universal precepts they seek to convey, even by means of ‘particulars’.

Although the purpose of Wadud’s *tafsir* is to establish the scriptural basis of sexual equality in Islam, she reminds her readers that there are many different meanings of ‘equal’ and ‘equality’. She rejects those theories of equality that imply that women and men are the same. However, she also rejects those theories that view women and men as being unequal because they are biologically different. As she continually emphasises, the Qur’an does not locate human creation, agency, morality, or individuality in sex, and, to the contrary, affirms the equal humanity of women and men, in addition to advocating mutual love, honour, and guardianship between them. It is these principles – embodied in the totality of its teachings – that Wadud believes continue to make the Qur’an so relevant to Muslim women’s (and men’s)

lives today. As she states, the Qur’an can guide us ‘in whatever era, if the Qur’anic interpretation continues to be rendered by each generation in a manner which reflects its whole intent’.<sup>95</sup>

## Conclusion

Increasing numbers of Muslims around the world have begun to realise that the privileges accruing to men in Muslim societies are a function not of the Qur’an’s support for sexual inequality, but of the power that men enjoy in actually existing patriarchies, which Islam has had no hand in creating and which, in fact, it censures in different ways.<sup>96</sup> Muslim women thus also are gradually coming to accept that they do not need to reconcile their own oppression with the edicts of their faith because discrimination is not divinely ordained. On the contrary, as Wadud’s work demonstrates, the denial of autonomy and equality to women subverts the Qur’an’s intent of ‘full equality’.<sup>97</sup>

As other Muslim women scholars – notably Leila Ahmed and Fatima Mernissi – also have shown, the persistence of sexual inequality and misogyny in Muslim societies has more to do with political, social, cultural, and historical factors than with religious. However, even though sexism and misogyny exist in all societies, and not simply those that are religious, and even though Muslims are not the only people who discriminate against women, one of the most powerful ideological sources of oppression in Muslim societies today is religious knowledge, or, more accurately, knowledge about religion. Thus, it is in their capacity as ‘official interpreters of divine will’<sup>98</sup> that men have been able so profoundly to influence Muslim attitudes and practices towards women. That may be why Muslim women scholars are becoming increasingly interested in Qur’anic hermeneutics (Azizah al-Hibri and Riffat Hassan being among the better known). Even those scholars, like Ahmed, who do not themselves focus on reading the Qur’an, underscore the need for women to do so in view of the fact that different readings of the same (religious) text can yield fundamentally different understandings of Islam.

Amina Wadud remains a pioneer in this field, and the most influential. Her work, of which this essay has provided only an indicative account, goes the farthest both in challenging oppressive readings of the Qur'an and in showing the relevance of a Qur'anic hermeneutics to the project of Muslim women's emancipation. Of course, whether or not Muslims take up the challenge to retheorise their understanding of sexual equality and relationships in light of her *tafsir* remains open to question. So far, as noted and as should be expected, she has attracted both acclaim and criticism. However, if she has succeeded in anything, it is in showing that the responsibility for misreading the Qur'an in oppressive and anti-women modes lies with its readers, not with the text itself. Even those who exorcise her reading can no longer find easy refuge for their own sexism in the Qur'an after she has shown us in such caring and promising detail the possibilities inherent in it for a truly liberatory view of human equality and dignity.

## NOTES

1. I depart from Wadud in not putting 'reading' in one category and 'exegesis' in another. She seems to hold that while reading is shaped by pre-understanding and hence is subjective, exegesis relies on 'scientific' methodologies and is objective. But, her own work shows that this is not always so. Also, by her own admission, 'no exegete is able to remove the significance of the personal reading and the force of the prior text from interpretation'. I thus use the words reading/interpretation and exegesis/*tafsir* interchangeably. Amina Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective* (New York, 1999), p. 94.
2. Although sex (biology) is distinct from gender (its social constructions), I use the term sex/gender to indicate the close relationship between them and because it is not always clear that Wadud means only gender when she uses that term, since a great deal of her argument also is about sex (biology). For a discussion of the Qur'an's position on sex/gender as I understand it, see Asma Barlas, 'Believing Women' in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an (Austin, TX, 2002).
3. Amina Wadud, 'On Belonging as a Muslim Woman,' in Gloria Wade-Gayles, ed., *My Soul is a Witness: African-American Women's Spirituality* (Boston, 1995), p. 253.
4. Wadud, 'On Belonging', p. 258.
5. Ibid., p. 260.
6. Ibid., p. 263.

7. Ibid., p. 265.
8. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, p. x.
9. Ibid., p. xviii.
10. Ibid., p. xix.
11. Sisters in Islam (SIS) 'is a group of Muslim professional women committed to promoting the rights of women within the framework of Islam. Our efforts to promote the rights of Muslim women are based on the principles of equality, justice and freedom enjoined by the Qur'an as made evident during our study of the holy text.' See <http://www.sistersinislam.org.my/>
12. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, p. xiii; her emphases.
13. Mustansir Mir, *Coherence in the Quran: A Study of Islahi's Concept of Nazm in Tadabbur-i-Quran* (Plainfield, IN, 1986).
14. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, p. 2.
15. Mir, *Coherence in the Quran*.
16. Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago, 1982).
17. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, p. 99.
18. Amina Wadud, 'Towards a Qur'anic Hermeneutics of Social Justice: Race, Class and Gender', *Journal of Law and Religion*, 7, 1 (1995-96), p. 44.
19. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, p. 10.
20. Ibid., p. 9.
21. Faruq Sherif, *A Guide to the Contents of the Qur'an* (London, 1985), pp. 3-4.
22. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, p. 9.
23. Rahman, *Islam and Modernity*, p. 20; his emphasis.
24. Kenneth Cragg, *The Event of the Quran: Islam in its Scripture* (Oxford, 1994), p. 116.
25. I discuss the conservative position at length in 'Believing Women'.
26. Cragg, *The Event of the Quran*, p. 115.
27. Rahman, *Islam and Modernity*, p. 5.
28. Ibid., p. 8.
29. Cragg, *The Event of the Quran*, pp. 114, 123.
30. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, p. xii.
31. Qur'an 16: 74 in Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Quran: Text, Translation and Commentary* (New York, 1988), p. 676.
32. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, p. 11.
33. See, for instance, C. Bynum, S. Harrell and P. Richman, eds., *Gender and Religion: On the Complexity of Symbol* (Boston, 1986).
34. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, p. 2.
35. Cragg, *The Event of the Quran*, p. 14.
36. Amina Wadud, 'Alternative Qur'anic Interpretation and the Status of Women', in Gisela Webb, ed., *Windows of Faith: Muslim Women Scholars-Activists in North America* (Syracuse, NY, 2000), p. 13.
37. Ibid., p. 19.
38. Ibid., pp. 14, 19.
39. Ibid., p. 18.
40. Ibid., p. 48.

41. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, p. x.
42. Wadud does not fully explain, or perhaps I do not fully understand, what she means by 'part of the text' inasmuch as the Qur'an is not a dual-gendered text, i.e. it does not have female and male voices in it since it was not written by humans. It does seem to be the case, of course, that women and men tend to read it differently.
43. Wadud, 'Alternative Qur'anic Interpretation', p. 4.
44. Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation*, trans. John B. Thompson (Cambridge, 1981), p. 109.
45. Wadud, 'Alternative Qur'anic Interpretation', p. 11.
46. Josef van Ess, 'Verbal Inspiration? Language and Revelation in Classical Islamic Theology' in Stefan Wild, ed., *The Quran as Text* (Leiden, 1996), p. 189.
47. I discuss the Qur'an's auto-hermeneutics in 'Believing Women'. My argument is that the concept of God's Unity, *tawhid*, suggests that we need to interpret God's Speech (the Qur'an) in light of what we know about God (Divine Ontology). Since what we know about God derives from how God describes God (the nature of Divine Self-Disclosure) in the Qur'an, we must begin an exegesis of the Qur'an by examining the nature of God's Self-Disclosure in it. I argue that this Self-Disclosure militates against reading the Qur'an as a patriarchal text, as do the methodological principles that the Qur'an specifies for its own reading.
48. Brandon Wheeler, *Applying the Canon in Islam: The Authorization and Maintenance of Interpretive Reasoning in Hanafi Scholarship* (Albany, NY, 1996), pp. 14, 88, 239.
49. See, for instance, Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam: The Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (Connecticut, 1992), and Barbara Stowasser, *Women in the Quran: Traditions and Interpretation* (New York, 1994).
50. See *ibid.*
51. Tribble in Gerald O. West, ed., *Biblical Hermeneutics of Liberation: Modes of Reading the Bible in the South African Context* (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, 1995), p. 149.
52. I borrow this term from Nicholas Wolterstorff who uses it in another context. Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflections on the Claim that God Speaks* (Cambridge, 1995).
53. This is from a reference to the Bible, but is no less applicable to the Qur'an or other sacred texts. C. Boff, 'Hermeneutics: Constitution of Theological Pertinency', in R.S. Sugirtharajah, ed., *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World* (New York, 1991), p. 34.
54. Abdelwahab Bouhdiba, *Sexuality in Islam*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London, 1985), p. 3.
55. Mahmud Mohamed Taha, *The Second Message of Islam* (Syracuse, NY, 1987), pp. 23-24.
56. Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Quran* (Minneapolis, MN, 1980), p. 133.
57. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, p. 30.

58. *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
60. This is Paul Ricoeur's definition of a text. *Hermeneutics and Human Sciences*, p. 212.
61. See 'Believing Women'.
62. Wadud, 'Alternative Qur'anic Interpretation', p. 44.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
64. Mustansir Mir, 'The Sura as a Unity: A Twentieth Century Development in Quran Exegesis', in G.R. Hawting and Abdul-Kader A. Shareef, eds, *Approaches to the Qur'an* (New York, 1993), p. 218.
65. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, pp. xvii-xviii.
66. *Ibid.*, pp. xx-xxi.
67. Abdolkarim Soroush, *Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam: Essential Writings of Abdolkarim Soroush*, ed. and tr., Mahmoud Sadri and Ahmad Sadri (Oxford, 2000), p. 37.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 86.
70. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, p. xi.
71. *Ibid.*, p. xiv.
72. *Ibid.*, p. xiii.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 99.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
77. Vincent J. Cornell, 'The Qur'an as Scripture,' *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, ed. John L. Esposito (New York, 1995), vol. 3, p. 392.
78. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, p. 7; her emphasis.
79. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
80. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
81. *Ibid.*, p. xxi; her emphasis.
82. *Ibid.*, loc. cit.
83. See, for instance, Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Boston, 1990); and Marshall Sahlins, *The Use and Abuse of Biology: An Anthropological Critique of Sociobiology* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1976).
84. Riffat Hassan, 'An Islamic Perspective', in Karen Lebacqz, ed., *Sexuality: A Reader* (Cleveland, 1999), p. 342.
85. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, pp. 20, 21.
86. For the record, of course, the Qur'an does not use the name 'Eve' for Adam's spouse.
87. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, pp. 24-25.
88. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
89. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
90. For a critique of the confusion of difference with inequality, see 'Believing Women'.
91. Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, pp. 66-74.
92. *Ibid.*, p. 83; her emphasis.
93. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

94. Ibid., p. 87; her emphasis.
95. Ibid., p. 104; her emphasis.
96. See 'Believing Women'.
97. Wadud, 'Alternative Qur'anic Interpretation', p. 47.
98. Ibid., p. 47.

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