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The myth of the elite male addressee and its implications for regulative verses

An overwhelming cultural-based patriarchal reading of the Qur'anic text dominated almost all available premodern commentaries and schools of jurisprudence. The masculinization of the religious text and the biased treatment of issues related to women is a natural result of the voluntary and involuntary absence of the feminine voice. Most verses that use the masculine plural subject pronoun, which is used in Arabic to address both a group of men or a mixed group, or to address the believing community or even to address the human community in general, were commonly interpreted one way: to suggest an exclusively male audience. In this paper I argue for the implications of this exegetical tendency for regulative verses. I provide a full analysis and end up proposing new readings of three examples, (Q. 4:34), (Q. 4:3) and (Q. 4:6). The result is a gender egalitarian reading that responds to both intertextual conflicts and extratextual accusations of an alleged Qur'anic endorsement of domestic violence, minor marriage, and unfair polygamy.



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Dr. Abla Hasan is an associate Professor of Practice of Arabic Language & Culture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. PhD in Philosophy of Language from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2013, MA in Philosophy as a Fulbright grantee from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2009. Dr. Hasan obtained her BA in Philosophy from Damascus University/Syria in 2000, followed by a Diploma of High Studies from Damascus University in 2001. She is a native speaker of Arabic. She teaches Arabic language and culture at UNL, and she is the Program's Coordinator. Her teaching and research focus on Qur'anic Studies, Qur'anic Hermeneutics, Islamic feminism, and Arabic studies. She has published with Brill, *Analize*, *Ar-Raniry*, *JIL*, *Disputatio*, *Al-Manarah*, *E-logos* and other peer-review international journals. She is the author of: *Decoding the Egalitarianism of the Qur'an: Retrieving Lost Voices on Gender* (Lexington: 2019), *On Pain and Suffering: A Qur'anic Perspective* (Lexington: 2022), and: *The Qur'anic Dilemma: A Hermeneutical Investigation of al-Khidr* (Routledge: 2022). A teacher, a researcher, and a public speaker. In addition to teaching for Nebraska University, Hasan's course "Women in the Qur'an" was offered to Maryland University, Rutgers University, Penn State University (Through DISC) and to Nizwa University in Oman (through Nebraska's Global Virtual Project). Dr. Hasan's scholar engagement includes numerous national and international presentations including more than 50 invited talks and more than 40 media interviews and citations.