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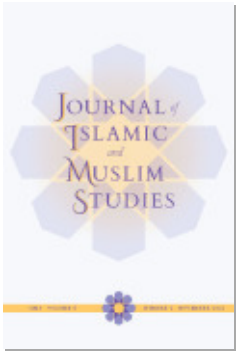

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Abstract: Women's dress in Islam remains a contentious issue. Despite various perspectives on dress prescriptions, rarely are they based solely on the Qur'ān. This is also the case with exegetical works as highlighted in the works of contemporary Muslim feminists. However, these authors also fail to underscore the Qur'ān's own prescriptions on dress, preferring instead a general focus on modesty that is not explicitly linked to the Qur'ān. Responding to this trend in secondary scholarship, this paper undertakes a synchronic intratextual reading of what is arguably the key term in the Qur'ān's prescription of dress, *zīna* (adornment). This article argues that the Qur'ānic text lends itself to a paradigm of women's dress prescriptions that values certain general principles, such as not being sexually alluring or tempting, invoking desire and drawing visual focus.

Key words: *Zina*, Qur'anic dress prescriptions, intratextual readings

Introduction

No issue provokes more controversy in contemporary Islamic discourse than the subject of women's dress. Although Islamic legal literature does not generally include specific chapters devoted to dress, unlike other topics such as purification or alms, legal manuals often include the topic of dress prescriptions in chapters on prayer, specifically with regard to what should

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be covered in the act of prayer. Examined in isolation, this literature gives the impression that there is no room dissent or disagreement from what is presented as the established legal consensus.[1] Khaled Abou El Fadl argues that women's dress prescriptions tend to be seen as rooted in the fundamentals of Islam (*uṣūl*), rather than in its branches (*fūrūʿ*). For this reason, modes of dress have often been politicized in the modern era, with certain countries opting to legally regulate particular aspects of women's dress.[2] This is largely because discussions of women's dress carry wider implications related to questions of gendered space and social roles.[3] Due to the significant effect such prescriptions have on the lives of its adherents, Abou El Fadl therefore makes the important point that the burden of proof for such prescriptions must be equally rigorous.[4] The reality, however, is more ambiguous, given the wide number of factors that determine particular opinions on women's dress. Rulings are rarely based on the Qur'ān alone. Instead, they often include auxiliary sources such as the *hadīth* (traditions concerning the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad), legal mechanisms, and consideration of a particular social context. Although traditional Muslim religious opinion maintains that the Qur'ān and *hadīth* are in complete conceptual and legal harmony, questions have been raised on how the *hadīth* alter and inform readings of the Qur'ān.[5] This is further complicated by questions and debates surrounding the authenticity of *hadīth* literature.[6]

In the context of these broader interpretative and legal discussions, this article seeks to focus solely on the Qur'ānic text to elucidate the specifically Qur'ānic stance on women's dress prescriptions. As such, this article avoids some of the interpretive complications that emerge when analyzing the Qur'ān alongside supporting sources of Islamic law.[7] This article argues that Qur'ānic dress prescriptions function as underlying principles of broader Islamic attitudes toward women's dress, and that they include the following prescriptions: not being sexually alluring or tempting, not invoking desire, and not drawing visual attention. Such principles are largely intended as a means of averting sexual attraction and, by extension, illegitimate sexual relations. These conclusions are the product of a close synchronic analysis of what is arguably the key root word subtending dress prescriptions, namely *zīna* (adornment). This article is composed of three parts. The first begins by establishing *zīna* as the key term in Qur'ānic prescriptions of women's dress, and the shortcomings of both classical and modern analyses of this word. This is followed by a detailed intratextual analysis of its triliteral root, which provides a better understanding of its meaning in the semantic field of the Qur'ān. Finally, this article examines instances of the term *zīna* in the Qur'ān and how these cumulatively establish what can be called specifically "Qur'ānic principles" concerning women's dress prescriptions.

Zīna: A Key Term in Qur'ānic Dress Prescriptions

The main Qur'ānic verse relevant to women's dress prescriptions is found in Ṣūrat al-Nūr, verses 30 and 31:

> And tell believing women that they should lower their glances, guard their private parts, and not display their *zīna* beyond what [it is acceptable] to reveal (*wa lā yubdīna zīnatahunna 'ilā mā ẓahara minhā*); they should let their headscarves fall to cover their necklines and not reveal their *zīna* (*wa la yubdīna zīnatahunna*) except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their womenfolk, their slaves, such men as attend them who have no sexual desire, or children who are not yet aware of women's nakedness; they should not stamp their feet so as to draw attention to *zīna* (*wa lā yadribna bi arjulihinna liyaʿlama mā yukhfīna min zīnatihinna*) (Q 24:30-31).[8]

Phrased as a command, these verses consist of various prescriptions surrounding women's dress and modes of behavior. Broken down into discrete components, we see the following commands for believing women:

i. Lowering the gaze.

ii. Guarding their private parts.

iii. Not showing *zīna* beyond what is acceptable.[9]

iv. Letting their headscarves fall to cover the neckline.

v. Not revealing their *zīna*, except to certain persons.

vi. Not drawing attention to *zīna*, in particular by stamping their feet.

In this list, the first two items do not relate specifically to dress prescriptions, but rather to modes of behavior and modesty. Of the four items that directly prescribe how women should dress, the first stipulates that women should "let your headscarves fall to cover your necklines." The phrasing of this command implies that it stipulates a higher degree of modesty from what was a customary practice in the historical context of the Qur'ān's revelation. Classical Islamic exegetical literature interpreted this verse to mean that pre-Islamic Arab women would wear a headwrap (*khimār*) that draped and trailing behind them, leaving the neckline and chest exposed.[10] Alongside this, there are another three generic commands that all revolve around the key word *zīna*, namely (1) not showing *zīna* "beyond what is acceptable," (2) not showing your *zīna*, and (3) "not stamp[ing] your feet to draw attention to *zīna*." All these commands revolve around a crucial factor, namely not showing or drawing attention to *zīna*. The importance of this term *zīna* is further underscored by a special dispensation that the Qur'ān affords to post-menopausal women, while still ordering that they not display their *zīna*: "No blame will be attached to elderly women who are not hoping for sex if they take off their outer garments without flaunting their *zīna*

(*ghayra mutabarijātim bizīna*), but it is preferable for them not to do this: God is all hearing, all seeing" (Q 24:60).

It is therefore clear that an examination of the precise meaning of the term *zīna* is necessary to fully understand how the Qur'ān envisions women's dress prescriptions. English translations of the Qur'ān differ in their translations of *zīna*. For his part, Muhammad Abdel-Haleem prefers to render *zīna* as "charms," which is too ambiguous. Marmaduke Pickthall (d. 1936) and Mustafa Khattab instead prefer the word "adornment," whereas Yusuf Ali opts to translate *zīna* as "beauty." While translation is an essential first step to understand concepts in a foreign language, it is clear from the variety of translations available that translation alone is insufficient. As Toshihiko Izutsu (1914–1993) reminds scholars, translations are at best "partial equivalents" of the original terms, and at worst inadequate or even misleading.[11] This is because a translation cannot fully encapsulate and reflect the worldview of another culture, or in this case, even a specific text. Even when read in their original language, our understanding of a given text is informed, albeit even unconsciously, by our own understanding of words in our native language. In this regard, Izutsu gives the example of the phrase "to do good." The concept of "doing good" greatly differs across societies and cultures, and so the corresponding semantic of "good" will also differ. Moreover, in a certain sense the exact meaning of "good" in English cannot be reflected in Arabic, because there is no exact equivalent.[12] This is because there is no inherent relationship between words and the reality they seek to describe. Rather, objects exist in themselves, and are only subsequently assigned linguistic equivalents. Izutsu gives the example of the word "table," which coincides with a specific type of object in an English-speaker's mind. There is, however, a process of subjective elaboration between the word "table" and the object seen in the mind, which skews the understanding of "table" in a certain direction. The single word table may subsume multiple types of tables Thus, both square and round tables can be classified under the term table, since in English the term table involves the utility of the object, as opposed to its form. This does not negate the differences between round and square tables, however, which factually exist as two distinct objects despite being classified as the same thing.[13] This type of thinking is not universal, as has been demonstrated by Benjamin Whorf's work on Indo-European languages and American Indian languages. The speakers of these language groups experience and categorize the world in distinct ways. In certain non-Indo-European languages, objects are classified and categorized according to their forms. In this case, differentiating between round, square, or rectangular objects. In such linguistic systems, a round table and a square table are two distinct things and are designated under two different names.[14]

These observations have implications for the present purpose of understanding women's dress prescriptions in the Qur'ān, where mere translation

is an insufficient means to understand the word *zīna* within the Qur'ān's linguistic framework. A more nuanced approach may attempt to understanding *zīna* by turning to Islamic exegetical literature (*tafsīr*). Here too there are also problematic issues, primarily stemming from the fact that such literature does not confine itself to interpreting the Qur'ān alone. Previous scholarship has also underscored the issues surrounding the use of *tafsīr* for interpreting women's dress prescriptions. Valerie Hoffman highlights how Muslim exegetes are more likely to be influenced by their prevailing social situation and its sexual mores than the actual text of the Qur'ān, and argues that it is social practice, rather than the Qur'ān itself, which shapes authoritative doctrines of dress in *tafsīr* literature.[15] This is clear when comparing *tafāsīr* from the earlier period, which are generally far less stringent, to that of the later medieval period, in which exegetes interpreted verses on dress far more strictly. This change coincides with social changes, in which Muslim societies increasingly adhered to stronger modes of sexual segregation and female modesty.[16]

As an example of this, consider the monumental *tafsīr* of Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī (d. 923 CE), one of the earliest extant works of the genre, which includes opinions from some of the earliest commentators on the Qur'ān. Many of his sources maintain a distinction between two kinds of *zīna*: the "hidden *zīna,*" which should not be shown, and the "apparent *zīna*," which can be shown. The latter type is purportedly alluded to by the later portion of the verse from Sūrat al-Nūr, which states: "and not display their charms beyond what [it is acceptable] to reveal (*illa mā zahara minhā*)." Abdallāh Ibn ʿAbbās (d. ca. 687 CE), a cousin of the Prophet Muhammad, stated that such "apparent *zīna*" includes the face, as well as the use of kohl, henna, and rings. Qatāda ibn Di'āma al-Sadūsī (d. ca. 736 CE) similarly agrees that kohl, bracelets, and rings can be shown, whereas Mujāhid ibn Jabr (d. ca. 722 CE) only includes kohl, henna, and rings. On the other hand, authorities such as Al-Dahhāk ibn Muzāhim (d. ca. 724), ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-ʿAwzāʿī (d. ca. 774 CE), Saʿīd ibn Jubayr (d. 714 CE) and ʿAtā' ibn Abī Rabāh (d. ca. 733 CE) limit what can be shown to the face and hands. Further still is an opinion attributed to ʿAbdallāh ibn Masʿūd, who states "apparent *zīna*" only includes clothing.[17] Ultimately Al-Tabarī himself states his opinion on the matter: "The most correct opinions are the opinions of those who said that it [apparent *zīna*] was the face and hands, and what comes under this if it so includes kohl, rings, bracelets and henna." For al-Tabarī, these were the parts of the body that can be shown, whereas his concept of "hidden *zīna*" included "anklets, bracelets, earrings and necklaces," an opinion he adopts from ʿAbdallāh ibn Masʿūd (d. ca. 653 CE).[18]

This changes with later commentaries, such as that of Imām Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Qurtubī (d. 1272 CE), where one finds a significant divergence as to what is understood as *zīna*. After citing many of the opinions included previously

by al-Tabarī, al-Qurtubī argues that the face is also included in what should be covered, considering it to be the natural basis of all *zīna*.[19] In a similar way, Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Baydāwī (d. 1319 CE), a later exegete, also held that the whole body of a woman should be covered, excepting the hands only in the context of prayer. He maintained that a woman is not allowed to uncover her face except with her close relatives (*mahram*) or for a necessity such as for "medical treatment or for giving testimony."[20] This is far more stringent than what al-Tabarī mentions since, in his view, the face is excluded. This is unsurprising given that during the period in which al-Qurtubī was active, attitudes toward women's dress were considerably stricter than they had been in the earlier period, and this is reflected in his interpretation of dress prescriptions.

The influence of social context on exegesis and the ensuing wide range of interpretative opinions on these verses indicates the high significance of extraneous factors for interpretations of Qur'ānic dress prescriptions. While this may suggest that a solely Qur'ānic approach to dress prescriptions may result in a narrower range of interpretations, nonetheless the text itself still raises room for a diversity of opinion. Other historical exegetes have understood the use of the word *zīna* as a rhetorical device, considering the word to be used as a figure of speech (*majāz al-mursal*). Hence, the term *zīna* here does not refer to literal ornaments, but instead to the parts of the body beneath them. Read in this way, these verses enjoin Muslim women to cover the parts of the body where these ornaments are worn.[21] One notable adherent to this interpretation is the Mu'tazilite scholar and exegete Abū al-Qāsim Mahmūd al-Zamakhsharī (d. 1143 CE), who maintained that the Qur'ān utilized this figure of speech as a mode of rhetorical emphasis.[22]

The influence and implications of extraneous factors on Qur'ānic exegesis has been emphasized in recent scholarship. In dismissing or marginalizing the particularities of women's dress prescriptions from medieval jurists and exegetes, there is a tendency in contemporary scholarship to instead focus on generalizable abstract traits such as modesty. This, however, is not a helpful strategy to actually understand what women's dress prescriptions are in the Qur'ān. For example, Amina Wadud argues that the concept of *zīna* and related dress prescriptions should be determined contextually, rather than by the norms of seventh-century Arabia:

> In Arabia at the time of the revelation, women of wealthy and powerful tribes were veiled and secluded as an indication of protection. The Qur'ān acknowledges the virtue of modesty and demonstrates it through prevailing practices. *The principle of modesty is important, not the veiling and seclusion which were manifestations particular to that context. They were culturally and economically determined demonstrations of modesty*. Modesty is not a privilege of the economically advantaged only: all believing women deserve the utmost respect and protection of their modesty *however it is observed in various societies*.[23]

She upholds a distinction between veiling and seclusion, manifestations of modesty in a particular historical context, and the principle of modesty itself, which she considers to be the primary intent of Qur'ānic dress prescriptions. She does not however further substantiate this by situating the concept of modesty within a Qur'ānic paradigm. A similar sentiment is found in a more recent work by Asma Lamrabet:

> Concerning women, the general and subtle wording regarding appearance is proof of the great flexibility offered to them by the spiritual message to enable them to balance their spiritual beliefs and respective social contexts. The Qur'ān does nothing to legislate a uniform that would be strictly Islamic, as some are trying to do at present. *The spiritual objective was not to lay down rigid rules regarding a "dress code" that would be fixed, once and for all, but rather to recommend an attitude, or an ethic of both body and mind.*[24]

Like Wadud, Lamrabet argues against a specific mode of dress or an "Islamic uniform." Instead, she argues for a more generic Islamic approach to women's dress, a view adopted by other contemporary scholars writing on this topic, such as Asma Barlas.[25] This approach has its advantages, as it does not limit the applicability of the Qur'ān to the socio-cultural context of medieval exegetes and jurists. In their preference for a general concept of modesty, however, these scholars fail to take the necessary step of linking the concept of modesty to textual paradigm explicitly derived from the Qur'ānic text. The concept of modesty can vary widely across time and space and can encompass a whole spectrum of ideas based on the idiosyncrasies of various societies. Hence, by not examining the concept of modesty within a Qur'ānic context, contemporary scholars fail to provide a truly substantive account of the Qur'ānic approach to dress prescriptions.[26] It is therefore vital that the principles of modesty are further refined with reference to the Qur'ānic text itself.

An Intratextual Reading of The Root *Z-Y-N* in the Qur'ān

In order to resituate the discussion of women's dress prescriptions firmly within a Qur'ānic paradigm, it is crucial to undertake an in-depth analysis of what the key term *zīna* means. This can be achieved by employing an intratextual semantic analysis that scrutinizes the term and its triconsonantal root within its own relational field of the Qur'ānic text to ascertain a more accurate understanding of this term, and hence of Qur'ānic dress prescriptions. What this means is to carefully analyze the conditions of the root's usage in the Qur'ān or, as Izutsu states, "what are the features of the environment that are necessary if the word is to be used properly."[27] Underlying this methodology is the assumption that all concepts in the Qur'ān are mutually interdependent and that the meanings of specific concepts are thereby best understood by uncovering their relation to the text as a whole. To that end, Izutsu also differentiates between a word's

relational meaning and its meaning when taken in isolation, the former being dependent on the context or semantic field in which it appears. In this case, the field of semantic analysis is the Qur'ān.[28] As Izutsu states, this method is similar to the way children initially learn languages. A child learns a word, such as apple, based on its different contextual uses that help establish a relationship between the word and a kind of fruit. By being exposed to the word in multiple contexts, various properties, such as those of color, size, and shape, are incorporated into the child's understanding of the word.[29] This process is more accurate and comprehensive representation of a concept than a literal dictionary definition and, and so "by gathering them [all the terms] in one place, comparing them, checking them against one another, we would be reasonably able to reach an original word-thing definition of this Arabic" term.[30] Although Izutsu uses this methodology with regard to ethico-religious concepts throughout the Qur'ānic, it can also be as a means of understanding the precise intratextual meaning of the term *zīna*.

An example of this method can be seen in the usage of the word *jāhilīyya*. While familiar to European Orientalists before him, the Hungarian scholar Ignaz Goldziher (1850–1921) was the first to undertake an extensive study of the term's usage in early Islamic sources. Prior to Goldziher's study, the Arabic word *jahl* was understood by philologists as the exact opposite of knowledge (*ʿilm*), and consequently the word came to be defined as "ignorance."[31] Goldziher's study was significant because he opted to collect various uses of the word as it appeared in pre-Islamic poetry. On careful examination of its pre-Islamic poetic usage, he concluded that *jahl* was not in fact the opposite of *ʿilm*, but rather of *hilm*, a term used to indicate "the moral reasonableness of civilized man,"[32] which included such qualities as forbearance, patience, clemency and freedom from passion. An important element of these qualities is the sense of moral or psychological power, and hence it refers to a combination of a subject's consciousness of power and superiority.[33] Goldziher's work therefore demonstrated that rather than being the antithesis of *ʿilm*, which also occurs in pre-Islamic poetry, *jahl* was instead used as only by means of a secondary or derivative meaning. Therefore the "primary semantic function [of *jahl*] is to refer to the implacable, reckless temper of the pagan Arabs."[34]

This assessment of the term *jahl* can be observed not only in the Qur'ān itself, but also in auxiliary literary sources. Muhammad ibn Isḥāq's (d. 767 CE) *Ṣīra* (biography of the Prophet Muḥammad) contains an account of one Shās ibn Qays, an old man who was stubborn in his aversion to Islam. One day, on seeing men from the tribes of the Khazraj and Aws, previously bitter enemies, getting along amicably, Shās encouraged a young Jewish boy to remind them of their earlier blood feuds. As the members of the two tribes began to quarrel, the Prophet Muḥammad rushed to them and said, "O believers, how dare you forget

God? Are you tempted by the call of *jāhilīyya* (*bidaʿ wa al-jāhilīyya*) when I am here among you, when God had guided you to Islam, honored you, and cut off thereby the bond of *jāhilīyya* from you, (*qataʿa bihi ʿankum amr al-jāhilīyya*) delivered you from disbelief and made you friends of each other." It can be seen from this context that what is characterized as *jāhilīyya* in this particular narrative, is not so much ignorance per se, let alone a period of sacred history, but rather a sense of tribal honor and rivalry stemming from a passionate temper, one that the nascent Islamic movement sought to oppose.[35]

This same understanding of the term *jāhilīyya* is also found consistently in the Qur'ān. One such example appears in Qur'an 48:26: "When those who disbelieved had put into their hearts the characteristic disdain of *jāhilīyya* (*hamīyyat al-jāhilīyya*). But God sent down His tranquility upon His Messenger and upon the believers and imposed upon them the formula of self-restraint, and they were more deserving of it and worthy of it. And ever is God, of all things, knowing."[36] In connection with this verse, Izutsu observes that *jāhilīyya* refers to the overbearing haughtiness of the pagan Arabs, characterized by a spirit of resistance to anything that impinged upon their sense of honor and way of life. Crucially, this spirit is rhetorically contrasted with the calm self-control that the Qur'ān mentions as a divine favor. It is therefore clear from this text that *jāhilīyya* is not just a type of ignorance, but moreover a kind of passion that contributed to intertribal feuds and violence.[37] A derivative of this word appears in another context, in connection to the story of the Prophet Joseph, which confirms this interpretation of Qur'an 48:26: "Joseph said, 'My Lord! I would prefer prison to what these women are calling me to do. If You do not protect me from their treachery, I shall yield to them and become one of the *jāhilīn*" (Q 12:33). Here, the use of the word *jāhilīn* involves the reckless behavior of one who succumbs to lust or makes himself knowingly ignorant of moral distinctions between right and wrong. This again demonstrates that the Qur'ān presents *jahl* as an antithesis to *hilm*, a term with the combined meanings of patience, moral reasonableness, and rationality, rather than knowledge itself.[38]

The above example of an intratextual and intertextual reading of the term *jahilīyya* provides a model for a similar approach that can be used for understanding the Qur'ānic concept of *zīna*. To that end, the following sections of this paper examine all instances of the term *zīna* in the Qur'ān and investigate how its contextual usage informs contemporary attempts at interpreting its meaning. At the outset it is important to ask precisely how and in what form does the word *zīna* occur in the Qur'ān. In total, there are forty-six instances of this word or its derivatives. As a noun (*zīna*), it appears nineteen times. In verbal Form II (*zayyana*), it appears twenty-six times, ten of which in its passive form as *zuyyina*. Finally, it only appears once in verbal Form V (*tazayyana*).[39]

The following analysis examines all such occurrences of the word *zīna*, both as a noun and as its form II root. This is because, as Kees Versteegh highlights, both classical philologists and modern linguists unanimously agree that there is a pivotal semantic relationship between the root of a word and its derivatives, due to the genesis of almost all Arabic words in a triconsonantal root. For classical lexicographers, it was evident that all words derived from the same root had a common semantic signification, with a particular word's deviation from the more general meaning of its root indicating its status as a loan word.[40]

This approach is rooted in the two methods of word derivation in the Arabic language. The first of these is what modern morphological theories call root and pattern morphology, where the primary lexical meaning embedded in the root consonants gains morphological meaning through the addition of a vowel pattern. This is distinct from another means of Arabic word derivation, which is stem-based. This second method assumes that the information contained within the consonant root is insufficient and that vowels of the consonantal roots are needed in order to explain derivational forms. This latter approach was the approach of classical Arabic grammarians who did not derive words from their roots but saw the base of a word stemming from the *masdar* (action noun) of a triliteral verb. Because of this, verb-related nouns were derived from the imperfect, and especially the active and passive participles.[41] In the case of the word *zīna*, classical Arabic dictionaries derive it from the form II verb *zayyana*, meaning "he or it adorned, ornamented, decorated, decked, bedecked, garnished, embellished, beautified or graced."[42] A close intratextual reading will better refine this meaning as well as crucially underscore the meaning of the word within its own relational field of the Qur'ān. All of the occurrences of the root *z-y-n* can be grouped in the table below:[43]

Table 1: Occurrence of the Root z-y-n in the Qur'ān

	Occurrence in the Qur'ān	**Total**
Women's dress prescriptions	24:31*, 24:31*, 24:31*, 24:80*	4
Permissibility of *zīna*	7:31*, 7:32*	2
In making deeds alluring	6:43, 6:108, 6:122, 6:137, 8:48, 9:37, 10:12 13:33, 15:39, 16:63, 27:4 27:24, 29:38, 35:8, 40:37, 41:25, 47:14	17
Association with this world	2:212, 18:7*, 18:28*, 28:60*, 3:14, 16:8*, 18:46*, 33:28*, 11:15*, 20:87*, 10:88*, 28:79*, 57:20*, ***10:24***	14
In relation to celestial objects	15:16, 37:6, 41:12, 50:6, 67:5, 37:6*	6
As a feeling in the heart	48:12, 49:7	2
As a day	20:59*	1

Up to this point, this article has examined the use of the word *zīna* in the context of Ṣūrat al-Nūr, which instructs Muslim women not to reveal their *zīna*. However, this can be directly contrasted with another verse, which commands the opposite:

> Children of Adam, take up your *zīna (khudhū zīnatakum)* whenever you are at worship and eat and drink but do not be extravagant: God does not like extravagant people. Say: "Who has forbidden the adornment (*qul man ḥarrama zīnat Allāh*) and the nourishment God has provided for His servants?" Say: "They are [allowed] for those who believe during the life of this world: they will be theirs alone on the Day of Resurrection" (Q 7:31–32).[44]

One immediate observation concerning this verse is that it does not present *zīna* as something that is intrinsically and categorically forbidden. Rather, it is presented as something restricted in a particular aspect, namely in avoidance of extravagance. This is further emphasized by the injunction that not only allows *zīna* but encourages and orders it (*khudhū zīnatakum*). The onus in this verse therefore falls on extravagance, which this verse specifically condemns. It can be argued concomitantly that instances of *zīna* that are not extravagant are permitted and can be shown. This principle that *zīna* is not intrinsically forbidden is supported by the following verse, which uses a rhetorical question to chide those who claim that it is in fact forbidden: "Say [Prophet], 'Who has forbidden the adornment (*qul man harrama zīnat Allāh*)?" On the contrary, the verse states that "they are [allowed] for those who believe during the life of this world."[45] These verses therefore collectively demonstrate that *zīna* is not categorically forbidden, but instead possesses aspects that permitted and even encouraged. This is connected with dress when read within the wider context of this chapter (*sūra*), where they are preceded by four verses that narrate how Satan tricked Adam and his spouse into revealing their nakedness, a fact which the polymath and Islamic scholar Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1209 CE) highlights in his exegesis.[46] This has implications for women's dress prescriptions, insofar as it implies that the command to not show *zīna* does not indicate that *zīna* as a whole is absolutely forbidden, but only in some of its particular aspects, which will be examined in further detail below by examining instances where the word appears in the Qur'ān.

Instances of *Zīna* in the Qur'ān

Throughout the text of the Qur'ān, the root *z-y-n* is most commonly found in reference to making something or some action attractive. Usually, the agent of this is identified as either God or Satan,[47] with the majority of verses identifying the latter as the immediate agent.[48] In most cases, the word *Shaytān* is used, while others use the name Iblīs.

> If only they had learned humility when suffering came from Us! But no, their hearts became hard and Satan made their foul deeds alluring to them (*wa zayyana lahumu al-shayṭānu mā kānū yaʿmalūn*) (Q 6:43).
>
> Satan made their foul deeds seem fair to them (*zayyana lahumu al-shaytānu aʿmālahum*), and said, "No one will conquer you today, for I will be right beside you," but when the armies came within sight of one another he turned on his heels (Q 8:48).
>
> By God, We have sent messengers before you [Muhammad] to other communities, but Satan made their foul deeds seem alluring to them (*fazayyana lahumu al-shaytānu aʿmālahum*) (Q 16:63).
>
> I found that she and her people worshipped the sun instead of God. Satan has made their deeds seem alluring to them (*wa zayyana lahumu al-shaytānu aʿmālahum*) and diverted them from the right path (Q 27:24).
>
> In the same way, their partners have induced many of the pagans to kill their own children (*kadhālika zayyana li kathīrin min al-mushrikīna qatla awlādihim shurakā'uhum*), bringing them ruin and confusion in their faith (Q 6:137).

These verses explicitly identify Satan as the one who makes immoral deeds seem alluring or attractive. In Qur'an 6:43, disbelievers are commanded to humble themselves before God. Satan, however, entices (*zayyana*) them to resist, and so their hearts remain hard. In Qur'an 8:48, Satan makes the actions of the nonbelievers alluring by promising them aid in battle, saying that he would defend them and that they would not be overcome.[49] The moral turpitude of this promise is further emphasized by the tradition that instead of providing aid, Satan fled in battle. In Qur'an 27:24, *zayyana* is used to describe how the Queen of Sheba's (*Bilqīs*) people were seduced by Satan to worship the sun, and thus were diverted "from the right path." In Qur'an 16:63, the text describes the relationship between various peoples and prior prophets. Again, the Qur'ān identifies Satan that makes their deeds alluring (*zayyana*) to them. The verse does not mention what these exact deeds are, but from the context, it is clear that such deeds are foul as it is due to these deeds that "a painful punishment awaits them."

Among these verses, Qur'an 6:137 is unique because it does not identify either Satan or Iblīs as the agent, but rather refers to "partners" (*shurakā'uhum*). Certain exegetes saw "partners" as a reference to pre-Islamic deities, which are often pejoratively characterized as "partners" with God in Islamic religious discourse.[50] Other commentators, such as al-Tabarī and al-Zamakhsharī, assert that "partners" should be interpreted as a reference to Satan.[51] This is based on the similar narrative construction of this verse to the preceding verses of this type, referenced above. Like verses that explicitly reference Satan, these "partners" induce the pagans to kill their children, in order to "bring them ruin and confusion in their faith," in keeping with the acts of Satan as highlighted in other verses.[52]

Making deeds seem alluring is not only associated with Satan. In other verses, God is portrayed as the agent. One crucial difference, however, is that while Satan is always explicitly mentioned as enticing people to foul or immoral deeds, this is not the case with God. Rather, instances of associating deeds with God, only two such cases out of ten present God in this way:

> As for those who do not believe in the life to come, We have made their deeds seem alluring to them (*zayyannā lahumu aʿmālahum*), so they wander blindly (Q 27:4).
>
> [Believers], do not revile those they call on beside God in case they, in their hostility and ignorance, revile God. To each community We make their own actions seem alluring (*kadhālika zayyannā li kulli ʻummatin ʿamalahum*), but in the end they will return to their Lord and He will inform them of all they did (Q 6:108).

These two verses are the only places where the doer of making deeds alluring is explicitly identified as God. It should be noted here that in both places (the only two places where God is identified as an agent of *zayyannā)* people whose deeds are made alluring are already in a state of disbelief.

There are also an additional eight verses that speak of deeds being made alluring, but the verb is left in the passive form (*majhūl*), making the identity of the doer ambiguous. Like the previous examples, all of these passive constructions involve making bad deeds alluring. Read contextually, however, it becomes clear that God is again the agent. For example:

> But the things they devise are made alluring to the disbelievers (*bal zuyyina liladhīna kafarū makruhum*) and they are barred from the [right] path: no one can guide those God (*wa man yuḍlil Allāhu*) leaves to stray (Q 13:33).

In this verse, the phrase "no one can guide those God leaves astray" implies that it is in fact God who makes deeds alluring, while maintaining an element of ambiguity. This connects to the trope of God guiding whomever He wills, which appears throughout the text. This reflects other verses where the word *zayyannā* is found in the passive:

> What about those whose evil deeds are made alluring to them (*afaman zuyyina lahu sūʼu ʿamalihī*) so that they think they are good? God leaves whoever He wills to stray and guides whoever He will (Q 35:8).
>
> Postponing sacred months is another act of disobedience by which those who disregard [God] are led astray: they will allow it one year and forbid it in another in order outwardly to conform with the number of God's sacred months, but in doing so they permit what God has forbidden. Their evil deeds are made alluring to them (*zuyyina lahum sūʼu ʿamālihim*): God does not guide those who disregard [Him] (Q 9:37).
>
> In this way the evil of Pharaoh's deed was made alluring to him (*kadhālika zuyyina lil-fir ʿawna sūʼu ʿamalihi*) and he was barred from the right path, his scheming led only to ruin (Q 40:37).

Both Qur'an 9:37 and Qur'an 35:8 follow a similar pattern to what has already been discussed in Qur'an 13:33. They both end with phrases that state that it is God who guides and leads people, thereby identifying God as the agent of the passive verb *zuyyina*. Like all the other examples, it is evil deeds that are made alluring. The former explicitly describes the deeds as evil (*sūʾu*), while the latter mentions the actual deed, which involves postponing the sacred months. Qur'an 40:37 is about the Pharaoh whose deeds are also made alluring (*zuyyina*). Again, God can be seen as the motivator of *zuyyannā* since, like the previous verses, Pharaoh was not guided and "barred from the right path."

If the sentiment "God guides whom he wills" is not used to identify God, then the Qur'ān uses juxtaposition in order to do so. Such can be seen in the following Qur'anic suras 6:122, Qur'an 10:12 and Qur'an 47:14. The first of these reads:

> Is a dead person brought back to life by Us, and given light with which to walk among people, comparable to someone trapped in deep darkness who cannot escape? In this way the evil deeds of the disbelievers are made to seem alluring to them (*kadhālika zuyyina lil-kāfirīna mā kānū yaʾmalūn*) (Q.6:122).

This verse contrasts a dead person brought back to life by God, who is then given a light to walk among the people, with a person trapped in darkness.[53] What is pertinent here is that the use of the first-person plural explicitly identifies God. This is then subsequently followed by the statement of deeds being made alluring (*kadhālika zuyyina lil-kāfirīna*). The connective phrase "in this way" (*kadhālika*) is used to link this with the previous phrase where God is directly identified. This therefore subtly identifies God as the agent who makes such deeds alluring to human beings. The same sense of juxtaposition is also found in Qur'an 10:12:

> When trouble befalls man, he cries out to Us, whether lying on his side, sitting, or standing, but as soon as We relieve him of his trouble he goes on his way as if he had never cried out to Us to remove his trouble. In this way the deeds of such heedless people are made attractive to them (*kadhālika zuyyina lil-musrifīna mā kānū yaʾmalūna*) (Qur'an 10:12).

Again, God is directly identified in the beginning part of the verse: "When trouble befalls man he cries out to *Us*." This then serves to also identify God in the latter part in relation to deeds with the use of the same connective phrase: "in this way the deeds of such heedless people (*kadhālika zuyyina lil-musrifīna*) are made attractive." Finally, the verse in Qur'an 47:14 reads: "Can those who follow clear proof from their Lord be compared to those whose foul deeds are made to seem alluring to them, those who follow their own desires?" This verse assumes the form of a rhetorical question (*jumla inshāʾīyya*), and the juxtaposition is also clear here. "Those who follow clear proof from their Lord" is contrasted with

those whose "foul deeds are alluring." God is identified clearly as the doer in the former phrase, which thereby serves as a parallel to the latter phrase that speaks of deeds.

The syntactic contrast between verses that depict Satan or God making foul deeds alluring begs the question as to its significance. Particularly, it is important to ask why such references to God are often left in passive form. One interpretation involves reading this as a way of introducing rhetorical distance between God and the deeds of the disbelievers, and hence their eschatological consequences. The disbelievers themselves have agency and blame in this regard. This interpretation is supported by the two verses that explicitly mention God as the doer of deeds, both of which are explicitly predicated by the disbelievers' disbelief.

Despite the sense of distance that these passive constructions place between God and the alluring quality of foul deeds, the Qur'ān still maintains God's principal agency and omnipotence. This is emphasized by explicitly diminishing Satan's agency. This can be illustrated in the final two places where the root *z-y-n* appears in connection with such deeds:

> Iblis said, "My Lord, give me respite until the Day when they are raised from the dead." "You have respite," said God, "until the Day of the Appointed Time." Iblis then said to God, "Because You have put me in the wrong, I will lure mankind on earth (*la'uzayyinanna lahum fi'l ʿard*) and put them in the wrong, all except Your devoted servants." God said, "[Devotion] is a straight path to Me: you will have no power over My servants, only over the ones who go astray and follow you" (Q 15:36–42).

This verse refers to the moment when, following the creation of Adam, the angels, including Satan, were commanded to prostrate before him, an order which Satan arrogantly refused. It is for this reason that Satan requests respite from damnation. This highlights God's ultimate authority, in that Satan must first gain God's approval for respite. It is only after being granted this reprieve that Satan states his intention to tempt humanity (*la'uzayyinanna lahum fi'l ʿard*), implying that without divine sanction Satan would be unable to do so. A similar sentiment also appears in Qur'an 41:25, which reads: "We have appointed, for the disbelievers, companions (*quranā'*) who make their past and present seem fair and right to them (*wa qayyadnā lahum quranā'a fazayyanū lahum*)." This verse mentions that God appoints "companions" (*quranā'*) among the disbelievers who make their past and present deeds seem alluring. The verse itself does not explicitly say who these "companions" are, but comparing it with Qur'an 43:46, it is clear that the use of the term "companion" is intended as a reference to Satan: "We assign Satan as a companion (*qarīn*) for whoever turns away from the revelations of the Lord of Mercy" (Q 43:36). Here the verse clarifies that Satan is indeed the one who is appointed by God as a "companion." The fact that it is God who appoints Satan in the first place upholds God's supreme authority and agency.

This initial survey of the root *z-y-n* in the Qur'an already points to several implications for dress prescriptions. First, considering that this group of verses all involve cases of making immoral or foul deeds seem alluring, it is clear that *zīna* in the Qur'ānic context indeed relates to the quality of being alluring and attractive. Related to the injunction "do not reveal your *zīna*," (Q 24:31), one can reasonably interpret it to mean that women must not reveal what is alluring. This is of course thus far an underdetermined command, as the specific identification of what is considered alluring is not yet specified. A more precise understanding of what this means exactly can be gathered from a further reading of this triliteral root in other contexts, which will further refine our understanding of women's dress prescriptions within a purely Qur'ānic framework.

One caveat to be made, however, is that all verses examined thus far have been in reference to making *foul or evil* deeds alluring. In these verses, deeds such as killing children, associating partners with God, or violating the sacred month, are not presumed to be negative, but in fact are qualified in the text by either adjectives or context that highlight the foulness of the deed. Thus, one can more specifically say that the uses of this root yet examined have not referred to making something alluring generally, but specifically to making foul deeds and things alluring. This factor needs to be considered when attempting to understand Qur'ānic dress prescriptions and establishes the caveat that dress prescriptions generally involve not revealing and making alluring that which is intrinsically foul.

What would this mean, more specifically? One potential interpretation involves the relationship between *zīna* and prohibited sexual relations. The Qur'ān unequivocally condemns any such relations that it itself does not sanction.[54] This is further illustrated on examination of the relatively few instances where the text specifically outlines punishments for certain immoral acts, the so-called *hudūd* ordinances, of which there are only four: *hirāba* (highway robbery), *sariqa* (theft), *zinā* (adultery) and *qadhf* (slandering a chaste person with the accusation of adultery).[55] It is immediately apparent that two out of the four are related to sexual relations. The gravity of the deed is emphasized by the Qur'ān's declaration that those who commit such actions are only fit to marry others who have done so.[56] This emphasis is all the more apparent given that the Qur'ān also prohibits behavior even approaching such relations: "And do not go anywhere near adultery (*wa lā taqrabū al-zinā*): it is an outrage, and an evil path" (Q 17:32). At this juncture it is therefore reasonable to assume that the use of *zīna* in verses related to dress prescriptions involves making something sexually alluring, with the potential danger of illicit sex.

Proceeding to the second most common occurrence of *zīna* in the Qur'ān, there are a series of verses that refer to *zīna* in relation to this world. This collection of verses exhibits a greater degree of variety than those examined above, which

were concerned with moral standards. Nonetheless, this second set of verses features some common traits that have implications for interpretations of dress prescriptions. The following three verses are significant:

> The life of this world is made to seem glamorous to the disbelievers (*zuyyina li'l adhīna kafarū al-hayāt al-dunyā*), and they laugh at those who believe (Q 2:212).
>
> We have adorned the earth with attractive things so that We may test people (*jaʿalna mā ʻalā ʿal-ʿard zīnatan lahhā linabluwahum*) to find out which of them do best (Q 18:7).
>
> Whatever things you have been given for the life of this world are merely [temporary] gratification and vanity (*wa mā ūtītum min shay'in famatāʿu al-hayāt al-dunyā wa zīnatuha*): that which is with God is better and more lasting - will you not use your reason? (Q 28:60).

All three of these verses connect *zīna* with "the life of this world," understanding which can provide a better meaning of *zīna*. Specifically, all these verses relate *zīna* to a warning that the world should not be chased nor sought after. Instead, life on earth is framed as a form of temptation intended to test people, a sentiment which is explicitly stated in the second verse cited above (Q 18:7). In addition, Qur'an 2:212 specifies disbelievers as being especially susceptible to the temptation and seduction of the world. Together, this series of verses associates *zīna* with a form of temptation or trial, a theme which also appeared in the context of dress prescriptions. This also relates to the theme, discussed above, about sexual temptation, and in particular the temptation toward illicit sexual relations. In fact, Qur'an 28:60 subtly alludes this connection by associating *zīna* with ephemeral enjoyment: "Whatever things you have been given for the life of this world are merely [temporary] gratification and vanity (*wa mā 'ūtītum min shay'in famatāʿu al-hayāt al-dunyā wa zīnatuha*)." This verse begins by characterizing the word as a domain of gratification and *zīna*. This is directly contrasted, however, with what is with God, which is characterized as "more lasting (*abqā'*)," implying that *zīna* is fundamentally ephemeral. This can allude to illegitimate sexual relations, where a gratifying act is short-lived compared to the Qur'ān's eschatological and moral horizon.

A contextual reading of *zīna* in the Qur'ān further indicates that the term is particularly associated with desire or wanting. In several passages, *zīna* occurs alongside the verb *arāda* (to want). The following is one such example:

> If any[one] desires [only] the life of this world with all its finery (*yurīd hayāt al-dunyā wa-zīnataha*), We shall repay them in full in this life for their deeds - they will be given no less but such people will have nothing in the Hereafter but the Fire (Q 11:15–6).[57]

This verse is primarily understood as an address to the disbelievers, who deny the existence of the hereafter. Pertinent to this study is that this verse characterizes *zīna* as something to be desired. However, desire is not attributed only to

disbelievers. Instead, another verse attributes desire to the Prophet's wives, who are inclined to desire the *zīna* of the world: "Prophet, say to your wives, 'If your desire is for the present life and its finery (*turidna al-hayāt al-dunyā wa-zīnatahā*), then come, I will make provision for you and release you with kindness'" (Q 33:28).

Traditionally this verse is understood to refer to aftermath of the Battle of the Trench, in which some of the Prophet's wives saw the spoils of battle and began to ask for a larger share for themselves. This verse thus presents them with the choice between gaining the *zīna* of the world or remaining married to the Prophet. Crucially, this verse presents *zīna* as something to be desired even in the context of otherwise praiseworthy figures such as the Prophet's wives. The Qur'ān goes so far as to associate the desire of *zīna* with the Prophet himself, instructing him: "Content yourself with those who pray to their Lord morning and evening, seeking His approval, and do not let your eyes turn away from them out of desire for the attractions of this worldly life (*turīdu zīnata al-ḥayāt al-dunyā*)" (Q 18:28). The verse directly addresses the Prophet and warns him by contrasting contentment with God with the attractions (*zīna*) of life.[58]

The fact that the text associates Muhammad himself with the desire induced by *zīna* strongly further reinforces the interpretation that *zīna* is associated with want or desire generally, and not just in the specific context of disbelievers or the morally dubious. It is clear, however, that mere "want" or "desire" do not adequately translate the intensity of this aspect of the word. In another set of verses, *zīna* is spoken of in more concrete terms, where it is used to describe specific things:

> The love of desirable things is made alluring (*zuyyina li'l nāsi hubbu al-shahawāti*) for men, women, children, gold and silver treasures piled up high, horses with fine markings, livestock, and farmland (Q 3:14).
>
> Horses, mules, and donkeys for you to ride and use for show (*tarkabuhā wa zīnatan*), and other things you know nothing about (Q 16:8).
>
> Wealth and children are the attractions of this worldly life (*zīnatu al-hayāti al-dunyā*), but lasting good works have a better reward with your Lord (Q 18:46).

The three verses in conjunction list various things that are representative of *zīna* such as women, children, livestock and precious metals. An important question then arises: what is the intrinsic quality that causes all of these various things to be described as or related to *zīna*? What binds them together? One possible answer can be found in verse 3:14, the first of the three cited above, which is more comprehensive than the following two from Qur'an 16:8 and 18:46. The first verse specifically states that "the love of desirable things is made alluring (*zuyyina li'l nāsi hubb al-shahawāt min*)," and proceeds to offer a list of those

various things (women, children, precious metals, livestock, land). These specific things are predicated with the participle *min*, often translated as "from," indicating that they logically stem from what precedes them, or that they are commonly related in terms of the preceding quality, in this case *shahawāt* (s. *shahwa*). As a word, *shahwa* (lust or desire) is thematically aligned with the aforementioned characterization of *zīna* being something that is wanted or desired. It is distinguished, however, by being more intensive and "not commendable," and as such is frequently associated with carnal lust and hunger.[59] This contributes to this reading of Qur'ānic dress prescriptions involving *zīna*, insofar as it evokes an intense want or desire semantically associated with strong feelings such as lust.

In light of the preceding verses, it is clear that the Qur'ān generally presents *zīna* as a quality capable of stimulating basic instincts such as lust. It is not merely superficial, but rather has the power to influence people's conceptions of what is correct or true. This concept of a direct influence connects to the most common use of of *zīna* throughout the text, namely making something alluring and attractive. This is expressed in a more general sense in Qur'ān 10:88, which reads: "and Moses said, 'Our Lord, You have given Pharaoh and his chiefs splendor and wealth (*zīnatan wa-amwālan*) in this present life and here they are, Lord, leading others astray from Your path (*yudillū ʿan sabīlik*)." Here, Moses' prayer specifically mentions *zīna* as something that the Pharaoh and his chiefs were given, and with which they lead others astray.[60]

In addition to the characteristics of *zīna* discussed above, it has additional features that can be derived through examination of another set of Qur'ānic verses. In particular, there are a set of verses that present parallels between *zīna* and natural cycles of growth and decay:

> The life of this world is like this: rain that We send down from the sky is absorbed by the plants of the earth, from which humans and cattle eat. But when the earth has taken on its finest appearance, and adorns itself (*wa zzayyanat*), and its people think they have power over it, then the fate We commanded comes to it, by night or by day, and We reduce it to stubble, as if it had not flourished just the day before (Q 10:24).

In this particular verse, the world is compared with its beautification when rain is sent from the sky resulting in the growth of plants and vegetation. In this state, humans mistakenly assume a sense of their own agency over the earth. This is belied, however, by God's capacity to destroy everything to such an extent that it appears as though this initial process of growth and beautification never occurred. This rhetorically reinforces God's power through juxtaposition with the lack of human power over the natural world. It is important here to observe the exact occurrence of *z-y-n* in this instance. In this case, the root is linked with the phrase "when the earth has taken its finest appearance" by use of a conjunction (*wa*). The use of a conjunction here

indicates that the finest stage of the earth's beautification is here semantically represented by *zīna*. One can therefore understand the word *zīna* to refer not merely to a degree of beauty, but instead to the highest level of beautification. This interpretation is supported by a similar use of this natural metaphor in another verse, which reads:

> Bear in mind that the present life (*al-hayātu al-dunyā*) is just a game, a diversion, an attraction (*laʿibūn wa lahwun wa zīnatu*), a cause of boasting among you, of rivalry in wealth and children. It is like (*kamathali*) plants that spring up after the rain: their growth at first delights (*aʿjaba*) the sowers, but then you see them wither away, turn yellow, and become stubble (Q 57:20).

As in previous verses, this verse preserves the strong relationship between the root *z-y-n* and the world. It begins by explicitly comparing the life of the world (*al-hayāt al-dunyā*) to three things: a game (*laʿib*), a diversion (*lahw*), and *zīna*. It then proceeds to utilize the metaphor described above, concerning the generation and decay of plants. The world is like (*ka-mathali*) "plants that spring up after the rain: their growth at first delights the sowers, but then you see them wither away, turn yellow, and become stubble." The comparative phrase "it is like" (*ka-mathali*) serves to solidify the relationship between *zīna* and this parable. Unlike the previous verse that utilizes this metaphor, in this case the growth of the plants is explicitly said to elicit feelings of delight in observers, implying that these plants represent a high standard of beauty, which was also implied in the previous verse. This has implications for our understanding of women's dress prescriptions in the text. By positively characterizing *zīna* as a form or degree of beauty, these verses indicate that the caution against *zīna* observed elsewhere in the text is not specifically a warning against aesthetic enjoyment itself. Rather, the Qur'ānic use of *zīna* specifically warns against the response that extreme beauty can elicit in the observer.

The third most common occurrence of *zīna* in the Qur'ān involves references to the heavens. The creation of the cosmos appears as a motif throughout the text, which variously discusses the creation of human beings, the earth, the sea, and the animals. Additionally, the Qur'ān frequently mentions the creation of the heavens and celestial bodies, and it is in this specific context that the root *z-y-n* consistently appears. The following verses are worth examining in some detail:

> We have set constellations up in the sky and made it beautiful for all to see (*jaʿalnā fī al-samā'i burūjan wa zayyannāha li'l-nāzirīn*) (Q 15:16).
>
> We have adorned the lowest heaven with stars (*zayyannā al-samā'a al-dunyā bi-zīnatin al-kawākibi*) (Q 37:6).

> In two days He formed seven heavens and assigned an order to each. We have made the nearest one beautifully illuminated and guarding (*wa zayyannā al-samā'a al-dunyā bi-masābīha*). Such is the design of the Almighty, the All Knowing (Q 41:12).
>
> We have adorned the lowest heaven with lamps (*zayyannā al-samā' al-dunyā bi masābīha*) and made them [missiles] for stoning devils for whom We have also prepared the torment of a blazing fire (Q 67:5).
>
> Do they not see the sky (*afalam yanzrū ilā al-samā'i*) above them – how We have built and adorned it (*wa zayyannāhā*), with no rifts in it (Q 50:6).

Of the celestial bodies mentioned in these verses, some are so intimately related to the root *z-y-n* that whenever they are mentioned the root appears as well. These include the sky (*samā'*), the stars (*kawākib*), the constellations (*burūj*), and the sun, here referred to metaphorically by the plural *masābīh* (lamps). This suggests an inherent quality linking these celestial objects to the concept of *zīna* and what it represents in the text. According to the interpretation of Qatāda, one of the earliest commentators of the Qur'ān, the stars in the heavens were created for three purposes: to be used as missiles against Satan, as a way of guiding travelers and in order to decorate the skies.[61] This is supported by the verses in Qur'an 41:12 and 67:5, cited above, which also characterize the stars as means of opposing Satan. None of these verses, however, explicitly lend themselves to the interpretation that the stars were created to guide travelers, and it is likely that this interpretation comes from their navigational function. The third purpose that Qatāda cites, however, refers to the stars which serve as a form of decoration, and therefore, finds ample support in the text. The verses cited above consistently allude to the beauty of celestial objects, and the verses which mention *zīna* in connection to the heavens emphasize the visual appreciation of these celestial objects. In particular, the notion that the stars were created simply for visual enjoyment is directly supported in the Qur'ān, where in 15:16 it explicitly states that the constellations have been placed in the sky in order to be seen (*nāzirīn*). In a similar way, Qur'ān 50:6 highlights the beauty of these creations by asking rhetorically: "Do they not see the sky?"

The association of the gaze and the faculty of sight with celestial objects is an oft-recurring motif throughout the Qur'ān. Arguably the most prominent narrative example of this involves the story of Abraham, in which he proclaims heavenly objects to be God:

> When the night grew dark over him he saw a star (*kawkaban*) and said, "This is my Lord," but when it set, he said, "I do not like things that set." And when he saw the moon (*qamar*) rising he said, "This is my Lord," but when it too set, he said, "If my Lord does not guide me, I shall be one of those who go astray." Then he saw the sun (*shams*) rising and cried, "This is my Lord! This is greater." But when the sun set, he said, "My people, I disown all that you worship beside God" (Q 6:76–8).

These verses elicited some difference of opinion with regard to the exact implication of these verses. Certain commentators interpreted them as representing Abraham's journey to monotheism by means of a deductive process that recognized the transience of these heavenly bodies.[62] This interpretation was considered problematic, however, by other exegetes because it raised questions about a Qur'ānic prophet associating partners with God. Consequently, other interpreters have understood these verses as a rhetorical device used by Abraham in order to expose the fallacy of worshipping ephemeral objects.[63] Regardless of the particular interpretation adopted, it is clear that these celestial objects are consistently presented as an eye-catching focus of visual attention. This supports the intratextual understanding of dress prescriptions. Just as in other uses examined throughout this paper, the Qur'ān characterizes *zīna* in the celestial context as a quality that is eye-catching and draws the gaze. It serves as an indicator of visual attraction, with the purpose of being looked at. This echoes the earlier part of the verses from Ṣūrat al-Nūr (24:30–31), which began with a command for men and women to restrain their gaze, before transitioning to a discussion of dress prescriptions. This injunction would therefore be consistent with the additional command to not draw visual attention.

In addition to the verses examined above, there are also isolated instances of the *z-y-n* root that appear in the Qur'ān. In two places, this root appears in the context of a feeling or a thought in the heart. In both cases, the heart is explicitly mentioned. The first of these relates to certain Bedouins who, out of fear of the disbelievers in Mecca, refused to go with Muhammad and his companions on the pilgrimage, thinking they would not return safely. The text addresses them accordingly:[64] "No! You thought (*ẓanantum*) that the Messenger and the believers would never return to their families and this thought warmed your hearts (*wa zuyyīna dhālika fī qulūbikum*)" (Q 48:12). As a result of their evil thought, the Bedouins brought *zīna* to their hearts. The verse clearly implies that this thought is intense and deep, since it is paired with an expression referring to the warming of their hearts (*wa zuyyina dhālika fī qulūbikum*). This establishes a causal link between *zīna* and the emergence of a certain feeling in the heart. In the same way, the link with *zīna* and the heart is found in the context of the inner conviction of belief or faith (*imān*): "Be aware that it is God's Messenger who is among you: in many matters you would certainly suffer if he were to follow your wishes. God has endeared faith (*ḥabbaba 'ilaykumu al-īmāna*) to you and made it beautiful to your hearts (*wa zayyanahu fī qulūbikum*)" (Q 49:7). The verse here differs from the previous one where *zīna* was used in the context of a negative feeling. Here it is used in a positive way, establishing the supremacy of the Prophet's rulings over the opinions of the majority of Muslims. This verse then proceeds to say that it is God that has endeared faith in the believers, "God has endeared faith (*habbaba 'ilaykum al-īmāna*) to you and made it beautiful to your hearts (*wa zayyanahu fī*

qulūbikum)," again linking *zīna* with an inner feeling in the heart. Taken together, these two verses present an image of *zīna* that involves evoking deep feelings in the heart, rather than a passive or superficial feeling. This can also inform our interpretation of Qur'ānic dress prescriptions. Specifically, this characterization of *zīna* as a characteristic that evokes a deep feeling in the heart is consistent with the previous sections of this article that have examined the text's use of *zīna* as a quality that provokes intense desire.

Finally, the last solitary occurrence of the word *zīna* in the Qur'an is made in reference to a specific day referred to ambiguously as "the day of *zīna*" (*yawm al-zīna*): "He said, 'Your meeting will be on the day of the feast, so let the people be assembled when the sun has risen high' (*mawʿidukum yawm al-zīnati wa an yuhshara al-nāsu duha*)" (Q 20:59). The verse is in reference to the meeting between Moses and the Pharaoh, in which the former demonstrates his signs of prophethood. Pharaoh decries this as sorcery and exclaims that his own sorcerers could match Moses. The date set for this challenge is referred to thus as "the day of *zīna*." The obscurity of this reference and the lack of any helpful description prevents this verse alone from providing significant insight in its use of the term *zīna*. It is clear, however, that the verse presents this day as one where a large number of people gather. In his commentary on this verse, al-Razī mentions how the conjunction *wa* (and) after *yawm al-zīna* can be read as a joined particle (*waw al-atf*), meaning that the "meeting should be of the day of *zīna* and it is also the time that the people are gathered."[65] In other words, the specific significance of the day of *zīna* is such that people gather. This would follow with the context of the verse, given that the purpose of Pharaoh's challenge was to expose or humiliate Moses in front of the largest number of people possible. Again, this use of the term *zīna* includes a prominent visual element, insofar as this event involves a spectacle between Moses and the Pharaoh's magicians.

These various aspects of *zīna* discussed can be narratively linked together in one particular Qur'ānic story, namely that of Qārūn and the children of Israel. Associated with the biblical Korah, the narrative of Qārūn in the Qur'ān begins by mentioning how he was from the people of Moses and had amassed such immense wealth that even the keys to his treasures were a burden for a group of people to carry. Consequently, Qārūn is warned against being miserly and heedless of God and the hereafter. Qārūn however rejects this warning and exclaims that his vast wealth was bestowed upon him on account of his knowledge.[66] Following this, Qārūn goes out to the people in his *zīna*:

> He went out among his people in all his pomp (*fa kharajaʿalā qawmihī fī zīnatihi*), and those whose aim was the life of this world said, "If only we had been given something like what Qārūn has been given: he really is a very fortunate man," but those who were given knowledge said, "Alas for you! God's reward is better for those who believe and

> do good deeds: only those who are steadfast will attain this." We caused the earth to swallow him and his home: he had no one to help him against God, nor could he defend himself (Q 28:79–81).

Several characteristics of *zīna* that have already been discussed coalesce in this narrative. First, it is clear that like in other instances throughout the Qur'ān, the display of *zīna* is also characterized as something negative, as Qārūn and his wealth are swallowed up by the earth. Moreover, the reaction of the people illustrates the effect of *zīna*, which, as discussed above, the Qur'ān frequently cautions believers against. Seeing Qārūn's display of wealth, the people proclaim: "If only we had been given something like what Qārūn has been given: he really is a very fortunate man." It is only those select few, those who "were given knowledge,"[67] that are not attracted to this display and proclaim that God's riches to be vastly superior. This short narrative therefore synthesizes many of the features of *zīna* described above. It is presented as eye-catching, since it stirs strong emotions in the hearts of the observers, such as desire and covetousness. Consequently, the allure of *zīna* becomes a form of temptation, which is juxtaposed to the knowledge of God.

The connection between *zīna* and morally dubious displays of material wealth has resonances with another narrative in the Qur'ān involving the Children of Israel. In its retelling of the Biblical story of the golden calf, the Qur'ān describes how in Moses' absence from his people a figure known as al-Sāmirī leads them astray[68] by persuading them to place all their *zīna* into a massive fire, from which he extracts a calf and proclaims it to be God:[69] "We were burdened with the weight of people's *zīna* (*wa lākinnā hummilnā awzāran min zīnati al-qawmi*), so we threw it [into the fire], and the Sāmirī did the same but he produced an image of a calf" (Q 20:87). Most exegetes have interpreted this use of the word *zīna* as a reference to jewelry.[70] Contextually it also makes sense that the particular *zīna* in question must be a material, such as jewelry, which is malleable through contact with fire. This narrative further conforms to the tropes associated with *zīna* throughout the text, as it is something alluring and eye-catching, one which can thus serve as a source of desire and temptation, as represented here by its narrative association with idolatry, through the production of the calf.

Conclusion

This article proposed a method for understanding and interpreting Qur'ānic dress prescriptions for women by means of a close synchronic analysis of what is arguably the key term for such prescriptions, namely *zīna*. As demonstrated above, this term is crucial to understanding Qur'ānic dress prescriptions because the text explicitly uses it in three of four explicit commands related to women's dress. One of these orders women to cover their neckline, whereas the other

three prescriptions enjoin female believers not to reveal their *zīna*. Furthermore, the only dispensation concerning women's dress involves post-menopausal women. However, even here, the text reiterates the general principle that women should not reveal their *zīna*.

Given the importance of understanding the meaning of such a key term, this article therefore attempted to articulate a contextual definition of *zīna* that was not limited to the dictionary definition of the term. While *zīna* may be translated into English as "charms," "beauty," or "attraction," such translations do not fully capture the complete meaning of the word. One may also attempt to understand the meaning of *zīna* via an examination of exegetical literature, but such an investigation identifies a wide range of understandings and interpretations of this term, which are not solely informed by the Qur'ānic text but also by historical and social factors. The sheer variety of opinions on this matter also underscores that much of what is contained within the exegetical literature point to the fact that there are factors outside of the Qur'ān that influence the opinions of exegetes. Recent scholarship has demonstrated additional interpretive problematics concerning contemporary exegesis that gravitates towards framing Qur'ānic dress prescriptions within the general concept of enjoining modesty, an abstract value which is itself not demonstrated to be rooted in the text of the Qur'ān. Furthermore, modesty-focused exegesis does not positively contribute to understanding particular dress prescriptions, since modesty is socially and contextually mutable.

In response to these problematics, this article engaged in a synchronic intratextual approach by examining all instances of the appearance of the triliteral root *z-y-n* throughout the text of the Qur'ān. This analysis has produced several findings. The first of these is that the concept of *zīna* is not absolutely negative or forbidden by the Qur'ān. Rather, there are instances in which *zīna* is presented positively or, in its verbal form, encouraged. Hence, one can conclude that in the specific context of the Qur'ān itself, *zīna* is only characterized negatively or forbidden in certain specific aspects. The second major conclusion to be drawn from this analysis is that while *zīna* is only forbidden in certain aspects, it most commonly appears in the text in a verbal form, where it usually indicates the process of making what is morally objectionable seem attractive. In the case of dress prescriptions, one can assume that *zīna* similarly involves making something foul or otherwise morally objectionable attractive. In that regard, this article argues that this specifically relates to sexual attraction, because illegitimate sexual relations are categorically characterized as immoral throughout the text. One can therefore argue that as dress prescriptions are specifically concerned, the Qur'ānic notion of *zīna* is associated with dressing in a way that is sexually attractive which makes illegitimate sexual relations seem alluring. The second most common use of *zīna* is in relation to the world, where objects in the world

or nature are described as being *zīna*. The crucial characteristic of these objects is that they are forms of temptation that invoke deep desire. We can link this back to dress prescriptions by saying that dress should not be tempting or invoke desire. This ties into what we have already said about clothing being sexually alluring. The third most common occurrence of *zīna* occurs in the context of celestial objects. When the Qur'ān talks about objects in the celestial realm, it also consistently uses the word *zīna* to describe them. Hence, there is a trait in celestial objects that is closely linked to the characteristic of *zīna*. This article has argued that this has to do with drawing the gaze. The feature of celestial objects is such that they draw the physical gaze and are eye-catching. Regarding dress, this links together with the prescription in Ṣūrat al-Nūr where the very first prescription is the commandment to restrain the gaze. By putting the primary contexts of the occurrence of *zīna* in the Qur'ān together, this article can conclude that the Qur'ān prescribes women's dress to not be sexually alluring or tempting, or invoke desire or draw visual focus.

Endnotes

1. The established Islamic jurisprudential consensus of what parts of a woman's body should be covered generally includes the entire body except for the face and the hands. Some jurists further included the face as part of a woman's body that should remain covered, except when alone or around close relatives. See for example Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Rushd, *Bidāyat Al-Mujtahid wa Nihāyat al-Muqtaṣid*, vol. 2 (Cairo: Maktaba Ibn Taymīyya, 1994), pp. 283–84. The opinion that women must cover their hair received virtually unanimous support throughout history, although there did exist certain isolated legal opinions to the contrary, such as that of Abū Muḥammad Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr (d. 714 CE). In his view, the Qur'ān itself did not mandate covering women's hair, but instead framed leaving it uncovered as reprehensible. See Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority and Women* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2001), p. 240. For examples of more stringent legal approaches to women's dress, see Abul A'lā Al-Maudūdī, specifically Abul A'lā Al-Maudūdī *Purdah and the Status of Woman in Islam* (New York: Ishi Press, 2011), and *Fatāwa Islāmīyya*, 4 vols., ed. Muḥammad bin ʿAbdul ʿAzīz al-Musnad, (Rīyāḍ: Dār al-Waṭn lil-Ṭabā'a w'al-Nashr, 1992).

2. The wearing of the headscarf has been a particularly acute point of controversy, having been banned in some Muslim-majority countries, such as republican Turkey (1926) and monarchist Iran (1936), while being mandated by others, such as the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Islamic Republic of Iran (post 1979). See Mostafa Hashem Sherif, "What Is Ḥijāb," *The Muslim World* 77, no. 3–4 (1987): p. 152.

3. Baber Johansen, "The Valorization of the Human Body in Muslim Sunni Law," *Princeton Papers: Interdisciplinary Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 4 (1996): p. 78.

4. "The focus of the enquiry should be on the burdens of proof in relation to the law claimed. If one wishes to maintain that the *hijāb* is mandatory and fundamental part of religion, in light of the widespread impact of the law, she/he bears a heavy burden of proof especially if he or she is arguing for a mandatory enforcement of the law." Abou El Fadl, *Speaking in God's Name*, p. 253.

5. Fazlur Rahman, "Status of Women in the Qur'an," in *Women and Revolution in Iran*, ed. Guity Nashat (Boulder: Westview Press, 1983), pp. 35–37. Rahman also provides a methodology to

isolate specifically Qur'ānic dicta concerning women's dress, versus those influenced by other sources. This methodology places central importance on the Qur'ānic text and utilizes a two-stage approach. The first stage of looks at the context and background of specific verses and from them elucidates underlying principles behind specific scriptural commands. The second stage proceeds to take this underlying principle and apply it to the modern context of specific juridical rulings. Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979); Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

6. For a survey of such debates, see Jonathan Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy In The Medieval and Modern World* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2009), pp. 197–240.

7. This article does not dismiss such subsidiary sources of Islamic jurisprudence, including the *hadīth*, but instead opts to focus specifically on the Qur'ānic stance, which can in turn inform scholarly readings of these other sources.

8. In quoting verses from the Qur'ān, I use the translation of M.A.S. Abdel Haleem, unless otherwise stated. M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, *The Qur'an* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). There is another verse, Qur'an 33:59, which also prescribes a specific mode of dress for women. However, by its own admission, this verse is based on a highly specific historical circumstance involving the harassment of female slaves. This is in contrast with the verses from Ṣūrat al-Nūr (Qur'an 24:30–31), which are unqualified and thus form the core of Qur'ānic dress prescriptions for women. See Fatima Mernissi, *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam* (New York: Basic Books, 1991).

9. The translation of this particular line can be rendered in multiple ways. An alternative translation could instead read: "And do not display their *zīna* except what appears thereof."

10. For example, Al-Qurṭubī in his exegesis states with regards to the verse: "Women would cover their heads with the *khimār* in those days, throwing it behind their backs, leaving the neck and upper region of the chest and ears uncovered, in the way of the Christians. God then commanded them to cover those parts with a *khimār*." Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmiʿ Li Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, vol. 12 (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyya, 1964), p. 226.

11. Toshihiko Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), p. 4.

12. Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), p. 6.

13. Izutsu, pp. 7–9.

14. Benjamin Lee Whorf, *Language, Thought and Reality* (Cambridge: Technology Press of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1956).

15. Valerie J. Hoffman, "Qur'anic Interpretation and Modesty Norms for Women," in *The Shaping of an American Islamic Discourse: A Memorial to Fazlur Rahman*, ed. Earle H. Waugh and Frederick M. Denny (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998).

16. Hoffman, p. 113.

17. Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ Al-Bayān ʿan Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān*, vol. 18 (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2013), pp. 149–51.

18. Al-Tabarī supports his opinion by citing what he claims as the *ijmāʿ* (juridical consensus) that a woman can uncover her face and hands in prayer insofar as they are not considered part of the *ʿawra* (pudenda). This exception for a woman's face and hands is also supported by additional *hadīth* narrations that al-Ṭabarī cites. In one example, the Prophet Muḥammad's wife Ā'isha was visited by her niece. On seeing her, Muḥammad turned away, saying: "When a woman attains majority it is not permissible for her to show [anything of her body] except her face and this,"

whereupon and he clasped half of his arm so that he left a space between his clasped arm and his wrist the space of another clasped hand. Al-Ṭabarī, vol. 18: pp. 148–52.

19. Abū ʿAbdallāh Al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmiʿ Li Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, 1964, vol. 12, pp. 227–29.

20. Hoffman, "Qur'anic Interpretation and Modesty Norms for Women."

21. Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Ṣābūnī, *Ṣafwat Al-Tafāsīr*, vol. 2 (Cairo: Dār al-Ṣābūnī, 2017), p. 309.

22. Abul Qāsim Muḥammad al-Zamakhsharī, *Al-Kashshāf ʿan Ḥaqā'iq Ghawāmid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 3 (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1986), p. 229.

23. Amina Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 9–10. Emphasis mine.

24. Asma Lamrabet, *Women and Men in the Qur'ān* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 161–62. Emphasis mine.

25. See for example Asma Barlas, "Believing Women" in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'ān (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002).

26. One example of the broad spectrum of religious opinion on this issue is found in the case of the controversial Turkish televangelist Adnan Oktar, who in 2018 asserted that the bikini is a sufficient covering for women. Though outlandish, such an opinion could be considered within the norms of Islamic practice when a modesty-centered paradigm of dress prescriptions is used. See '"Bikini is Islamic Veil," Turkish Televangelist Oktar Tells Police', *Hurriyet Daily News*, 2018, https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/bikini-is-islamic-veil-turkish-televangelist-oktar-tells-police-134884.

27. Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*, p. 3. Although Izutsu's approach has enjoyed considerable scholarly support in the past, its influence has waned in certain circles, especially Turkish Qur'ānic studies. Ismail Albayrak, "The Reception of Toshihiko Izutsu's Qur'anic Studies in the Muslim World: With Special Reference to Turkish Qur'anic Scholarship," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 14, no. 1 (2012): pp. 73–106.

28. Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*, pp. 3–44.

29. Izutsu, pp. 13–15.

30. Izutsu, p. 25. It should be noted that reading the Qur'ān in an intratextual manner, i.e., using the Qur'ān as a means of understanding itself, is not a novel or particularly modern hermeneutical method. Instead, this method has been referred to historically as *tafsīr Qur'ān bi'l Qur'ān* (interpretation of the Qur'ān by the Qur'ān), and has often been characterized as one of the best methods of classical exegesis. While this is not quite the semantic analysis that Izutsu advocates, the principle of understanding the Qur'ān by Qur'ān still stands. Prominent historical advocates of this approach include figures as diverse as the medieval Islamic scholar Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Taymīyya (d. 1328) and the modern reformist intellectual Muḥammad ʿAbduh (d. 1905). Concerning this method of interpretation, Ibn Taymīyya states "the best way is to interpret the Qur'ān is through the Qur'ān. Whatever is vague in one place is explained in another place and whatever is brief in one place is expanded in another." Aḥmad Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Ibn Taymīyya, *Muqaddima fī 'Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*, ed. ʿAdnān Zarzūr (Beirut: Dār al-Qur'ān al-Karīm, 1972), p. 93. For more on Muḥammad ʿAbduh's thoughts on Qur'ānic exegesis, see J. J. G. Jansen, *The Interpretation of the Koran in Modern Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 1974). For a detailed examination of theories underpinning the concept and practice of *tafsīr Qur'ān bi'l Qur'ān*, see Sohaib Saeed Bhutta, "*Intraquranic Hermeneutics: Theories and Methods in Tafsīr of the Qurʾān through the Qurʾān*" (PhD Diss., London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 2017).

31. The most common derivative of this word is the Arabic term *Jāhilīyya*, meaning the "Age of Ignorance," which in Islamic sacred history refers to the pre-Islamic period of Arabian history.

32. Toshihiko Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), p. 28.

33. Ignaz Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, vol. 1 (Halle: Niemeyer, 1888).

34. Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*, p. 28.

35. Izutsu, pp. 28–29. This can be illustrated by an anecdote that appears in traditional biographies of the Prophet Muḥammad. Islamic tradition narrates that after the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet sent missionaries to various tribes. Khalid ibn Walīd was sent to the tribe of Banū Jadhīma. When the people saw him, they readied their weapons, anticipating a fight. When Khalid assured them of their safety, however, they laid down their weapons, whereupon Khalid began to tie them up and behead them. When news of this reached the Prophet, he exclaimed "O God, I am innocent of what Khalid has done." He then commanded his cousin and son-in-law Alī to "go to the people, examine thoroughly the affairs and trample down the customs of *Jāhilīyya* (*ʿijʿal amr al-jāhilīyya*) in the midst of Islam." Izutsu, p. 30.

36. Qur'an 48:26.

37. Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*, p. 31.

38. Izutsu, p. 32. We can also cite other verses to support this from the following Qur'anic suras: Q 27:55–6; Q 6:33–35; Q 6:111; Q 28: 55, Q 39:64–5; Q 7:134–6; and Q 9:27–9.

39. Elsaid Badawi and M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, *Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur'anic Usage* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), p. 410; Muḥammad Fuād Abd al-Bāqī, *Al-Muʿjam al-Mufahras Li'alfāẓ al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyya, 1945).

40. Take for example the triconsonantal root *ḥ-b-b*, which is usually related to the concepts of "love" or "loving." Nonetheless, there exists a word (*ḥubb*), deriving from this root which that instead means water container. This discrepancy is explained by Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn Durayd (d. 933 CE) as being due to the fact that this term is a corrupted loanword, borrowed from the Persian *hunb*. Kees Versteegh, *The Arabic Language*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), p. 123.

41. Versteegh, pp. 89–90; Kees Versteegh, ed. *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, "Derivation." Leiden: Brill, 2007, p. 573. This kind of derivation was termed as *ishtiqāq al-ṣaghīr* (simple derivation). However, the crucial status of the root's radicals for Arabic semantics also generated what was known as *ishtiqāq al-kabīr*. In contrast to the former form of derivation, this one held that the order of the radicals was not necessary, and a word would still imbue the same meaning should the radicals occur in a different order. Such can be seen in the example of the roots *j-b-r, j-r-b, b-j-r, r-j-b,* all which have meanings related to "strength" or "sternness." Ramzi Baalbaki, *The Arabic Lexicographical Tradition From the 2nd/8th to the 12th/18th Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), p. 234; Kees Versteegh, ed., *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, "Derivation." Leiden: Brill, 2007; Kees Versteegh, *The Arabic Language*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), pp. 89–91,122–124. Despite stem derivation being adopted as the building blocks of Arabic morphology, the roots were still essential tools for classical grammarians in understanding Arabic lexicon. Versteegh, *The Arabic Language*, p. 91.

42. Edward William Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon* (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1984), pp. 1279–80.

43. The default listing of the verse numbers is in verb form II. Asterisks indicate an appearance of the noun form (*zīnatun*), whereas verses in bold italics represent verb form V (*tazayyana*). Their concordance can be found in Abd al-Bāqī, *Al-Muʿjam al-Mufahras Li'alfāẓ al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*.

44. Qur'an 7:31–2. Abdel Haleem translates the verse as "dress well," instead of the more literal translation, provided here, of "take up your *zīna'*." In classical Qur'ānic commentaries (*tafāsīr*), *zīna* is also read alongside the other two actions mentioned here, namely eating and drinking, as a negation of the pre-Islamic practices that restricted worship at the Ka'ba to using only clothing and

food provided by the local Quraysh tribe. Muḥammad ibn Ahmad al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmiʿ Li Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, vol. 7 (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyya, 1964), pp. 195–200.

45. An alternative translation of this verse, which continues into the next clause, can read as: "They are for those who believe in the life of this world, and will be exclusively for them on the Day of Judgment."

46. See Qur'an 7:26–7, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb*, vol. 14 (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1999), pp. 228–32. Al-Ṭabarī also mentions Abu Isḥāq making the same point. Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ Al-Bayān ʿan Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān*, 2013, vol. 18, p. 149.

47. In addition to verses that identify God or Satan as the active agent, there is a subset of verses that utilize passive constructions. See Qur'an 6:122; 13:33; 9:37; and Qur'an 10:12.

48. Specifically, Q 6:43, Q 8:48, Q 16:63, Q 15:39, Q 16:63, Q 27:24 and Q 41:25.

49. This verse is traditionally considered to have been revealed around the time of the battle of Badr, before which Satan is said to have appeared to the Quraysh in the form of a tribal leader. Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmiʿ Li Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, vol. 8 (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriya, 1964), pp. 26–27.

50. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥali and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Tafsīr Al-Jalālayn* (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, n.d.), p. 186.

51. Abul Qāsim Muḥammad al-Zamakhsharī, *Al-Kashshāf ʿan Haqā'iq Ghawāmid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1986), pp. 68–70; Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ Al-Bayān ʿan Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān*, vol. 8 (Beirut: Dār Ibn Hazm, 2013), pp. 56–58.

52. Qur'an 15:36–42.

53. The motif of raising the dead is commonly used in the Qur'ān as a metaphor for spiritual awakening, with the light here referring to spiritual guidance. (Al-Tabarī, *Jāmiʿ Al-Bayān ʿan Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān*, 2013, vol. 8, pp. 31–32.) This association is clear in other verses where messengers are sent to bring people out from darkness into the light. See Q 2:257; Q 5:16; Q 14:5; Q 33:43; Q 57:9 and Q 65:11. The verse in question, Q 6:22, is also mentioned in exegetical literature as a reference to the Meccan notable Amr ibn Hishām, aka Abū Jahl (d. 624 CE) and the Prophet's uncle Hamza. In one report, Hamza is said to have come to the Prophet's defense after he was insulted by Abu Jahl. This verse was subsequently revealed, signifying that Ḥamza was unlike Abu Jahl, who remained trapped in darkness. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb*, vol. 13 (Beirut: Dār Ihyā' Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1999), pp. 132–35.

54. See Q 23:1–7; Q 70:19–31; Q 4:116; and Q 60:12.

55. M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, *Exploring the Qur'an: Context and Impact* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2017), p. 90. Traditionally these are referred to as *hudūd* (limits) set by God directly in the Qur'ān, due to their high moral significance.

56. See Q 24:3; and Q 24:26.

57. Translation modified for style.

58. The verse concerns a group of wealthy Qurayshī notables who indicated that they would listen to the Prophet's teachings as long as he did not associate himself with some of his more impoverished followers. Here the verse instructs the Prophet not to desire the *zīna* of this world, i.e., not to abandon his poor followers for wealthier ones. Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ Al-Bayān ʿan Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān*, vol. 15 (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2013), pp. 288–90.

59. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, p. 1614.

60. Al-Rāzī notes that "here they are Lord leading others astray" can also be read as "so they may lead others astray." The verse is therefore Moses observation of what could occur with the *zīna* that was given to the Pharaoh. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb*, vol. 17 (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1999), p. 291.

61. Abū al-Fiḍā' Ismail Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr Qur'ān al-ʿAẓīm*, vol. 8 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyya, 1999), pp. 197–98.

62. Abū Jaʿfar Muhammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ Al-Bayān ʿan Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān*, vol. 7 (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2013), pp. 309–14.

63. This interpretation appears more convincing based on the context of these verses, which are preceded by Abraham's criticism of idolatry int Q 6:75. Al-Rāzī, *Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb*, 1999, vol. 13, pp. 38–46.

64. Muhammad ibn hmad al-Qurtubī, *Al-Jāmiʿ Li Akām al-Qur'ān*, vol. 16 (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyya, 1964), pp. 269–70.

65. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātih Al-Ghayb*, vol. 11 (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2012), p. 344.

66. Qur'an 28:76–78, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmiʿ Li Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, vol. 13 (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Misriya, 1964), pp. 309–15.

67. al-Qurtubī, vol. 13, p. 316. This is frequently interpreted to mean the rabbis and the priests.

68. It is not clear whether "al-Sāmirī" is intended as an individual name, or if it is a name derived from the al-Sāmira tribe, to which this person may have belonged. Al-Zamakhsharī, *Al-Kashshāf ʿan Ḥaqā'iq Ghawāmid al-Tanzīl*, 1986, vol. 3, p. 81.

69. Qur'an 20:83–89.

70. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb*, vol. 22 (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' turāth al-ʿArabī, 1999), p. 86.