

Transgender in Islamic Education: A Comparative Analysis of Buya Hamka and Amina Wadud's Thoughts

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Abstract: The transgender phenomenon has become a significant topic in global discussions on identity and human rights, prompting substantial debate among Muslims and challenging traditional interpretations of religious texts. This article examines the perspectives of two prominent Islamic intellectuals on the transgender issue. Buya Hamka, a conservative Indonesian cleric, adheres to a literal interpretation of the Quran and Hadith, considering gender change to be a violation of God's decree. In contrast, Amina Wadud, a progressive scholar from the United States, advocates a contextual interpretation that emphasises justice, humanity and acceptance of gender identity. The contrasting approaches of these two figures illustrate the diverse spectrum of Islamic thought, spanning from conservative to inclusive perspectives. This article not only discusses the theological and social implications of their views, but also highlights their relevance in the modern context. Through in-depth analysis, the article seeks to identify a middle ground that integrates respect for tradition with the need for justice and inclusiveness. This will provide valuable insights into how Islam can respond to transgender issues in the contemporary era.

Keywords: Amina Wadud; Buya Hamka; Islamic Thought; Islamic and Sains; Transgender.

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Abstrak: Fenomena transgender telah menjadi topik penting dalam diskusi global mengenai identitas dan hak asasi manusia, sehingga menjadi pemicu perdebatan signifikan di kalangan umat Muslim, menantang interpretasi tradisional teks-teks agama. Artikel ini mengeksplorasi pandangan dua tokoh intelektual Islam dalam menanggapi isu transgender. Buya Hamka, seorang ulama konservatif asal Indonesia, berpegang teguh pada interpretasi literal Al-Quran dan Hadis, menganggap perubahan gender sebagai pelanggaran terhadap ketetapan Allah. Sebaliknya, Amina Wadud, seorang sarjana progresif dari Amerika Serikat, mendukung tafsir kontekstual yang menekankan keadilan,

kemanusiaan, dan penerimaan identitas gender. Perbedaan fundamental dalam pendekatan kedua tokoh ini mencerminkan spektrum pemikiran dalam Islam, dari konservatif hingga inklusif. Artikel ini tidak hanya membahas implikasi teologis dan sosial dari pandangan mereka, tetapi juga menyoroti relevansinya dalam konteks modern. Melalui analisis mendalam, artikel ini berupaya menemukan jalan tengah yang mengintegrasikan penghormatan terhadap tradisi dengan kebutuhan akan keadilan dan inklusivitas, memberikan wawasan berharga tentang bagaimana Islam dapat merespons isu transgender di era kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: Amina Wadud; Buya Hamka; Pemikiran Islam; Islam dan Sains; Transgender.

A. Introduction

Transgender issues have been shown to have significant social and legal implications. The phenomenon has become an increasingly frequent topic in global discussions on gender identity and human rights. In the context of a society that is becoming increasingly open and pluralistic, transgender individuals continue to encounter difficulties in achieving social acceptance, accessing healthcare, and having their legal rights recognised. In response to these challenges, many countries have initiated the passage of legislation aimed at safeguarding the rights of transgender individuals, including the right to be recognised according to their gender identity (Ilmi, n.d.). It is imperative to ensure access to essential health services and to provide protection from discrimination within the workplace, educational institutions, and the broader public sphere. However, the level of acceptance and protection of transgender individuals varies considerably on a global scale, with some countries offering robust protections, while others have discriminatory policies in place (Hasbiyulloh & Rahim, 2021).

According to a report by Transgender Europe (TGEU) in 2022, the number of homicides of transgender individuals worldwide exceeded 375, with the majority of these incidents occurring in Latin America and Asia. This figure indicates that transgender individuals continue to be susceptible to violence and human rights violations, underscoring the need for comprehensive societal discourse, including within

religious frameworks (Umar et al., 2019). Recent data also demonstrates that Muslim societies encounter intricate dynamics in their responses to transgender issues. In some Muslim-majority countries, transgender individuals frequently encounter social conflicts, including restricted access to public facilities, stigmatisation from the community, and a paucity of legal protection. For instance, in Indonesia, transgender individuals frequently experience social rejection despite efforts to accommodate them in certain aspects of life, such as education and employment. This underscores the necessity for a comprehensive examination of the subject within the context of Islam, with the objective of providing Muslim communities with a more comprehensive and contextualised understanding of the issue (Rahadian et al., 2021).

In Islam, the discourse on transgender individuals is characterised by its intricacy, particularly in the context of the prevailing normative teachings on gender and sexual identity as elucidated in the Qur'an and Hadith. Despite the tenets of Islam being associated with principles of justice and compassion, the prevailing social context indicates significant challenges in reconciling religious values with the imperative for gender inclusivity (Sakinah & Risqy Kurniawan, 2023). The necessity of engaging in discourse on the subject of transgender individuals within the context of Islam is predicated on the objective of establishing a balanced perspective that is not solely predicated on religious texts, but that is also capable of responding to the prevailing social realities and the needs of the populace. In this regard, Islam is poised to make a significant contribution by offering humanist solutions without relinquishing its theological tenets (Yusuf et al., 2024).

Some Muslim groups adhere to a conventional perspective that emphasises divinely ordained biological imperatives, while others are commencing a shift towards more inclusive and contextual interpretations. In the context of Muslim-majority countries, including Indonesia, discourse on transgender individuals frequently encompasses questions of compatibility with Islamic teachings and values. Islam, as a religion characterised by a rich tradition and sacred texts, is subject to diverse interpretations with regard to gender (Mannan, n.d.). On the one hand, traditional interpretations place significant emphasis on the concept of gender identity as a divinely

ordained biological reality. Conversely, there exist more inclusive and humanist interpretations that seek to comprehend gender identity in terms of justice and humanity. In order to comprehend the position of Islam with regard to transgender issues, it is essential to delve into the perspectives of prominent intellectual figures such as Buya Hamka and Amina Wadud.

Buya Hamka, born Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah, was a prominent Indonesian cleric, writer and conservative thinker who exerted a significant influence on Islamic thought in the 20th century. His views on the biological stipulations in Islam were based on a literal interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith (Khoirul Ahmmad, 2020). Buya Hamka posits that gender change or transgender surgery is an act that contravenes the provisions of Allah and sharia law. He further asserts that every individual must accept the biological nature that has been determined by Allah and strive to live in accordance with these provisions (Rohman, 2025). Buya Hamka, saw Islam as a bastion that had to maintain traditional values in the midst of rapid modernisation. His views were heavily influenced by the need to maintain social and moral stability in a changing society.

In contrast, Amina Wadud is an American Muslim scholar known for her progressive and inclusive views. She is one of the key figures in the Islamic feminism movement and often challenges traditional interpretations of religious texts (Mannan, 2018). Amina Wadud underscores the significance of justice and humanitarian values in the interpretation of religious texts. She asserts that Islam must perpetually maintain relevance in the context of evolving social and historical circumstances. Furthermore, she emphasises that gender identity is a personal aspect that ought to be respected and accepted. Her perspective on transgender individuals reflects a more humanist and inclusive stance on the diversity of gender identities. Amina Wadud's perspective on Islam is one that emphasises the religion's fundamental commitment to justice and humanity. Her experience in the United States, particularly in the context of the civil rights movement, has contributed to her development of a more inclusive and humanist perspective. She asserts that gender identity is a fundamental human right, and that

Islam must foster an environment where transgender individuals can thrive with equal dignity and rights (Huda, 2018).

The divergent perspectives held by Buya Hamka and Amina Wadud exemplify not only disparate theological interpretations but also demonstrate the manner in which religious interpretations can be influenced by social and cultural contexts. In Islamic discourse, divergent positions between conservative and progressive approaches frequently emerge during the interpretation of religious texts related to gender. The conservative approach is characterised by a literal interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith, emphasising the biological identities of men and women as ordained by God (Khoirul Ahmmad, 2020). This standpoint posits that gender identities that deviate from biological sex are considered aberrations against divine principles. Conversely, the progressive approach is predicated on a contextual interpretation of religious texts, placing emphasis on universal Islamic values such as justice, compassion and respect for humanity. This progressive stance regards gender-related issues, including those pertaining to transgender individuals, as aspects of social dynamics that necessitate an inclusive and adaptive understanding. These divergent perspectives underscore the intricate nature of religious interpretation in the context of contemporary issues, which are in a state of perpetual evolution (Nuriyati, 2020).

The discourse surrounding transgender individuals within the Islamic context illuminates the intricate dynamics underlying the conceptualisation of gender identity. On the one hand, there is a need to maintain the existing divine decrees and Sharia laws, as voiced by Buya Hamka (Tsalis et al., 2023). Conversely, there is a compelling need to modernise religious interpretations to enhance their relevance to societal advancements and human requirements, as advocated by Amina Wadud. The discourse thus initiated has the potential to foster a more inclusive and nuanced understanding of gender identity within Islamic contexts, offering valuable insights for Muslims in comprehending transgender issues from diverse vantage points. Buya Hamka's conservative approach emphasises the importance of maintaining order and adherence to sharia law, while Amina Wadud's inclusive approach highlights the importance of empathy and justice in dealing with complex and diverse social realities (Syarnubi,

2022). A comprehensive understanding of Islam's position on transgender issues can be achieved by studying the views of Buya Hamka and Amina Wadud.

A review of the extant literature reveals a general division between two schools of thought. On the one hand, there are conservative views that emphasise divine decrees regarding gender. On the other hand, there are progressive views that support inclusivity and justice for transgender individuals. Hamka, Haji Abdul Malik Karim (Zulkarnaini, 2021) In Tafsir Al-Azhar, the author emphasises that gender change is against the decree of Allah and Sharia law. Hamka employs arguments from the Quran and Hadith to substantiate this perspective, accentuating the significance of preserving fitrah and social stability. Zuhayli, (Irmayunita & Fikriana Aksana, 2023) In the treatise Al-Fiqh Al-Islami wa Adillatuhu, it is asserted that the customary Islamic legal system does not recognise gender transition, and any attempt to modify one's sex is considered a violation of sharia law. (Abibararah et al., 2020) This paper sets out to explore the legal implications of transgender marriage from the perspective of positive law and Islamic law. The study will analyse how Islamic law supports the rights of transgender individuals, with a particular focus on the principles of compassion and justice taught by the religion.

Despite the extensive body of literature addressing both conservative and progressive perspectives on transgender issues within Islamic contexts, the majority of studies have been limited in scope, focusing on a single viewpoint, either conservative or progressive, without undertaking a comprehensive comparative analysis of these approaches. A significant proportion of the extant literature has not fully considered the modern social and cultural dynamics that influence the understanding and acceptance of transgender people in Muslim societies. The majority of studies adopt a theoretical approach, offering little practical guidance on how Muslim communities can operationalise the principles of justice and inclusivity in their daily lives. The present article offers a scholarly novelty by providing an in-depth comparative analysis between Buya Hamka's conservative views and Amina Wadud's progressive views on transgender in Islam. The article combines literal and contextual interpretations to provide a holistic perspective that is relevant in the modern context. Furthermore, it

identifies practical ways in which the principles of justice and inclusivity can be implemented in Muslim societies, thereby bridging the gap between theoretical concepts and practical application.

The present article aims to explore the differences and similarities between the views of these two figures, and to examine their relevance in the modern context. Through rigorous analysis, it is hoped that a middle ground can be identified, one that respects tradition while also opening up space for inclusivity and justice in Islam. This approach is not only pertinent to transgender issues, but also to various other contemporary challenges faced by Muslims around the world. In Indonesia, a country with a substantial and heterogeneous Muslim population, transgender issues are intricately interwoven with multifaceted social and religious dynamics (Amri Teguh Pribadi & Sestri, 2020). A study of the views expressed by Buya Hamka and Amina Wadud provides a valuable opportunity to understand how this issue can be addressed in a manner that is both judicious and grounded in the tenets of Islamic jurisprudence. This article aims to provide a comprehensive insight into the issue of transgender individuals in Islam, drawing upon the perspectives of two prominent figures who represent a broad and diverse spectrum of Islamic thought.

B. Methods

This research employs a library research method with a descriptive qualitative approach to analyse the views of Buya Hamka and Amina Wadud on transgender issues in Islam. The method aims to explore relevant data and literature through a literature review to provide an in-depth understanding of the topic under discussion. Primary data sources are the main works of Buya Hamka (Tafsir Al-Azhar) and Amina Wadud (Qur'an and Woman), which discuss the concept of gender and identity in Islam. Secondary data was obtained from supporting literature, including journals, books, scientific articles, and other documents relevant to transgender issues in the Islamic context. Data collection techniques involved identifying related works using academic databases such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and university libraries, as well as conducting a document analysis of the contents of relevant literature to reveal the views

of the two figures on transgender issues. The analysis was carried out using the stages of data reduction, selecting and organising relevant data from the literature, and data presentation. The arrangement of data in narrative form is employed to emphasise the distinctions and parallels between the perspectives of Buya Hamka and Amina Wadud. The conclusion drawing involves the analysis of the contributions of both figures' views to the transgender discourse in Islam. The validity of the data is ensured through source triangulation, which involves the comparison of various primary and supporting literature to obtain reliable and objective conclusions (Niam et al., 2024).

C. Results and Discussion

1. Transgender In Global Perspective

The term 'transgender' is employed to denote individuals whose gender identity differs from their biological sex assigned at birth. Gender identity, on the other hand, refers to a person's internal sense of their own gender, which may or may not align with traditional gender categories. The term 'transgender' is a broad category encompassing a wide spectrum of gender identities, and it is important to note that it is not limited to individuals experiencing gender dysphoria or those undergoing medical or social transition processes (Karim et al., 2023). The term 'transgender' is a relatively recent addition to the English language, first appearing in the 1990s (OED, 2023). It is a combination of two Latin words, 'trans' and 'gender', and was first used to refer to individuals who did not conform to gender norms (OED, 2023). The term 'transgender' is derived from the Latin words 'trans', meaning 'across', and 'gender', denoting characteristics considered to correspond to male or female. The term first began to be used in medical and social literature in the mid-20th century and grew in popularity in the late 20th and early 21st centuries as awareness and acceptance of multiple gender identities increased.

From a scientific perspective, the term 'transgender' refers to a spectrum of gender identities that encompasses a range of individual experiences that do not conform to the binary norms of male or female. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), transgender identity does not meet the criteria for a mental disorder, but is

instead considered part of the natural diversity of human identity. A transgender individual's gender identity may encompass social transitions, such as alterations in name, attire, and social roles, as well as medical transitions, including hormone therapy and gender adjustment surgery, if deemed necessary by a qualified medical professional (Association Psychological American, 2015). Recent studies have also demonstrated that transgender identity is underpinned by biological, psychological and social factors, rendering it a complex phenomenon that necessitates an inclusive and empathic approach across multiple discourses, including religion and culture.

It is imperative to draw a distinction between the terms 'transgender' and 'transsexual'. The term 'transsexual' is an older one and is often used to describe individuals who have undergone or wish to undergo medical procedures to alter their physical sexual characteristics to match their gender identity. In contrast, the term 'transgender' is a more inclusive designation that does not necessarily imply a desire or necessity for medical intervention (Stryker, 1966). The term 'transgender' is an umbrella term for a range of gender identities that do not conform to traditional binary gender categories. These include genderqueer and non-binary identities, amongst others. From a scientific perspective, gender identity is the result of a complex interaction between biological, psychological, and social factors.

A substantial body of research has indicated the potential involvement of biological factors, including genetics, prenatal hormonal influences, and brain structure, in the development of gender identity. A number of neurobiological studies have identified disparities in brain structure and function between transgender and cisgender individuals (i.e. individuals whose gender identity corresponds to their sex assigned at birth). The psychological aspect encompasses an individual's experience with their own gender identity, which often commences in childhood. A substantial proportion of transgender individuals report experiencing a discordance between their gender identity and their assigned sex at birth from an early age. Social factors, such as the recognition and societal validation of gender identity, also play a significant role (Nasr, 1987). The impact of social support, acceptance, and inclusion on the mental and emotional well-being of transgender individuals has been demonstrated to be significant.

Gender dysphoria is defined as a condition in which an individual experiences significant discomfort or distress due to a discrepancy between their gender identity and their sex assigned at birth. The condition has been shown to precipitate a range of emotional difficulties, including but not limited to stress, anxiety and depression, as well as other mental health issues. The condition is recognised in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), a compendium of psychiatric diagnostic criteria published by the American Psychiatric Association. Gender transition is defined as the process by which individuals modify various aspects of their physical appearance and/or behaviour in alignment with their gender identity. This process can include name changes, use of different pronouns, changes in physical appearance (such as haircuts and clothing), as well as medical procedures such as hormone therapy and sex reassignment surgery. It is imperative to acknowledge that gender transition is a highly personal journey, and the specific aspects of transition that an individual chooses or has access to vary significantly from person to person (Association Psychological American, 2015).

In the global context, Islamic views on transgender people vary significantly, depending on local legal and cultural approaches. In Indonesia, acceptance of transgender people is often challenged by social stigma despite inclusivity efforts in some aspects, such as education and employment. In contrast, in Iran, the government supports sex reassignment surgery as part of its efforts to uphold sharia law. However, this support is often not followed by adequate social acceptance. This shows that the implementation of Islamic principles towards transgender people still faces major challenges, both in terms of regulation and social practice (Stryker, 1966).

2. Transgender Perspective of Buya Hamka

Buya Hamka advanced the argument that an individual's gender identity is an immutable divine decree. He believed that men and women are created with clear biological roles and functions, and any attempt to change them is a violation of divine will. The practice of gender reassignment, whether through surgical intervention or other means, is regarded as an act that contravenes sharia law (Nur Aksa et al., 2023). Buya Hamka's discourse drew upon both hadith and Quranic verses, asserting that any

alteration to God's creation is tantamount to ingratitude and outright rebellion. Buya Hamka believed that gender change had the potential to disrupt social and moral stability within society. According to Hamka, the acceptance of transgender individuals can lead to societal disarray and the deterioration of the family unit and Muslim society as a whole (Netti, 2022) The following arguments, drawn from both the Qur'an and the Hadith, form the basis of Buya Hamka's perspective and are presented here for consideration:

Quranic Evidence

Surah Al-Hujurat (49:13):

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

"O people! Verily, it is evident that humanity has been brought into existence through the union of a male and a female, subsequently developing into diverse nations and tribes with the purpose of fostering mutual understanding and respect. It is asserted that, in the estimation of Allah, the most pious individual is the most noble. It is further asserted that Allah is omniscient and ever attentive."

This verse underscores the creation of human beings as male and female, a concept frequently employed by Buya Hamka to assert that gender differences are divinely ordained and immutable.

Surah Ar-Rum (30:30):

فَاقِمِ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

"The text asserts that adherents of Islam should commit to their religion and adhere to the fitrah of Allah, who is believed to have created man according to that fitrah. The assertion here is that the divine creation is unalterable. This doctrine is regarded as the unadulterated faith, yet it is one that many individuals are unaware of."

This verse is frequently cited to underscore the notion that Allah's creation, including gender identity, is a fitrah that should not be subject to alteration.

Surah An-Nisa (4:119):

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهًا ۖ وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا
اتَّبَعْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيَّنَةٍ ۚ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ
تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا

"It is evident that the individual in question will be deceived, and their imaginations will be awoken. The act of mutilating cattle will be perpetrated, and the creation of Allah will be altered. It is asserted that anyone who considers the devil to be a guardian besides Allah experiences a clear loss."

This verse is widely interpreted as a proscription against any modification of Allah's creation, including within the context of gender transition.

Hadith evidence

The following hadith is drawn from the collection narrated by Abdullah bin Mas'ud:

In the Hadith, a collection of the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, it is stated that "Allah curses those who tattoo and those who ask to be tattooed, those who pluck their eyebrows and those who ask to have their eyebrows plucked, and those who change Allah's creation." (HR. Bukhari and Muslim)

This hadith is frequently cited as evidence that any alteration to Allah's creation, including within the context of gender transition, is strictly forbidden.

This paper sets out to explore the hadith, or Islamic tradition, concerning men who resemble women and vice versa.

The Prophet is reported to have issued a curse upon those who resemble one another, whether male or female. (HR. Bukhari)

This hadith is employed to underscore the Islamic prohibition on men and women adopting each other's appearance, frequently interpreted as a proscription against actions that obfuscate gender distinctions.

The following arguments demonstrate how Buya Hamka employs the Quran and Hadith to substantiate his perspective that gender identity constitutes a divine decree that ought not to be subject to alteration. This perspective is founded upon a literal

interpretation of sacred texts, which underscores the significance of preserving human nature in accordance with divine ordinance (Sidratiya, 2022). This perspective is indicative of a conservative approach to the understanding and application of Islamic teachings with regard to transgender issues. Buya Hamka, through his Al-Azhar commentary, underscores the significance of preserving human nature as divinely ordained. Buya Hamka's hermeneutical approach is rooted in a literal interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith, rejecting any form of change to God's creation.

3. Transgender Perspective of Amina Wadud

The concept of justice and humanity in Islam: Amina Wadud posits that Islam is inherently bound to uphold the principles of justice and humanity. She is of the opinion that all individuals, including those identifying as transgender, should be treated with respect and be granted equal rights. The complexity of gender identity as a personal aspect is emphasised, and the view is expressed that it should not be used as a justification for discrimination. Amina Wadud employs a contextual interpretation approach in her exegesis of the Quran (Huda, 2018). The argument is posited that the holy verses must be understood in their relevant social and historical context. This suggests that Islamic teachings should be adapted to the contemporary era and the requirements of the populace. Wadud underscores the significance of empathy and compassion in addressing transgender concerns. She contends that gender transition should not be perceived as a form of defiance against divine authority, but rather as a journey towards the discovery of one's true self. According to Wadud, Islam is a religion that encourages respect and understanding for the journey of self-discovery and the search for one's true self (Munthe & Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, 2024). The following are some of the Quranic and Hadith arguments that Amina Wadud might use to support her views, as well as relevant contextual interpretations:

Quranic Evidence

Surah Al-Hujurat (49:13):

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

"O people! Verily, it is evident that humanity has been brought into existence through the union of a male and a female, subsequently developing into diverse nations and tribes with the purpose of fostering mutual understanding and respect. It is asserted that, in the estimation of Allah, the most pious individual is the most noble. It is further asserted that Allah is omniscient and ever attentive to all that transpires."

Amina Wadud's interpretation of this verse suggests that an individual's honour in the eyes of Allah is determined by their piety rather than their sex or gender identity. The emphasis on diversity as a means of fostering mutual understanding can also be interpreted as a call for inclusivity and respect for difference.

Surah An-Nisa (4:1):

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ
مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

"The following assertion is made: It is imperative to evince a sense of trepidation towards the Almighty, the originator of humankind, who, through the agency of a solitary soul, gave form to the human race. This initial soul was then paired with another, resulting in the creation of humankind as a dual entity. The Almighty has, through His divine will, multiplied the human race into a multitude of genders. It is imperative to have profound respect for Allah, the entity that governs all matters, by whose name individuals seek guidance and uphold relationships. It is imperative to recognise that Allah, in His infinite wisdom and omniscience, is perpetually attentive to all His creations."

This verse underscores the notion that all humans originate from a singular soul, a concept that can be interpreted as a call for equality and universal humanity. It is possible that Wadud is employing this verse to underscore the notion that human identity transcends the confines of biological gender.

Surah Al-Baqarah (2:286):

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ ۗ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا
إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا ۗ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ ۚ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا ۗ رَبَّنَا وَلَا
تَحْمِلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ ۚ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا ۚ أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ
الْكَافِرِينَ ۚ

"It is an established tenet of Islam that Allah does not burden anyone except according to his ability. Merit is rewarded, while transgressions are punished. The supplication invoked by the faithful is as follows: 'O our Lord, do not punish us if we forget or err. O our Lord, do not impose on us a heavy burden as You imposed on those before us. O our Lord, do not impose on us that which is beyond our capacity to bear. Forgive us our sins, pardon us, and have mercy on us. You are our Protector, so help us against those who disbelieve.'"

The verse under scrutiny here asserts the principle that Allah does not burden a person beyond his or her ability. In this particular context, Wadud's interpretation suggests that Allah is cognisant of the challenges faced by transgender individuals in navigating and embracing their identities. The verse, as interpreted by Wadud, implies that Islam should provide support and guidance for transgender individuals in this process of self-discovery and identity exploration.

Hadith Evidence

Hadith concerning Compassion:

The doctrine stipulates that those who demonstrate benevolence and compassion will be granted favour by the Merciful. It is further stated that acts of mercy towards the living will be reflected in the mercy bestowed upon those in the afterlife. (HR. Tirmidhi)

This hadith is employed by Amina Wadud to underscore the significance of compassion and empathy in the treatment of all individuals, including transgender people. Compassion is regarded as a fundamental Islamic principle that should be incorporated into all social interactions.

Hadith on Justice:

"It is an established fact that Allah issues a decree entailing the obligation to act with justice and to perform virtuous deeds." (HR Muslim)

It is evident that Amina Wadud may have employed this hadith to underscore the notion that justice constitutes a fundamental tenet within the Islamic framework. According to Wadud, justice encompasses the rights of transgender individuals to be recognised and treated with dignity.

Contextual Interpretation

Social and Historical Context:

Amina Wadud underscores the significance of comprehending Quranic verses within the sociohistorical milieu in which they were originally revealed. She contends that numerous scriptural texts frequently employed to discredit non-binary gender identities should be reinterpreted in the context of advances in human knowledge and understanding of gender and sexuality. Utilising feminist hermeneutics, Wadud explores the values of justice and inclusivity in Islam, adopting a contextualised approach (Huda, 2018). Wadud's position is that the interpretation of religious texts must be informed by contemporary social contexts in order to align with the *maqashid* of sharia, particularly with regard to the protection of the rights of transgender individuals. These approaches reflect a spectrum of thought within Islam, ranging from the maintenance of a literal tradition to the exploration of contextual reforms.

Social and Theological Implications:

The views held by Muslim communities regarding transgender individuals, which can be categorised as either conservative or progressive, have a significant impact on the community as a whole. It is evident that conservative approaches frequently result in the social exclusion of transgender individuals, thereby contributing to the perpetuation of discrimination and marginalisation. Conversely, the more inclusive progressive approach has the potential to engender a space for dialogue and engender a sense of acceptance. From a theological perspective, this distinction underscores the challenge confronting Muslims in maintaining the integrity of religious teachings while navigating evolving social landscapes.

The following principles are to be observed in order to ensure humanity and inclusivity:

In Wadud's perspective, Islam is a religion that is characterised by its promotion of justice, humanity and inclusivity. Consequently, all interpretations should be oriented towards promoting these principles. She contends that the challenges faced by transgender individuals in terms of acceptance and recognition should be evaluated within the context of compassion and justice, principles that are integral to the Islamic framework. The approach adopted by Amina Wadud in addressing transgender concerns is characterised by a focus on the values of justice, humanity, and inclusiveness, which she considers to be fundamental tenets of Islamic teachings (Azera et al., 2024). Utilising the framework of contextual interpretation, Wadud underscores the imperative for Islam to demonstrate capacity to respond to social transformation and the evolution of human needs. The arguments drawn from the Quran and Hadith, as employed by Wadud, underscore the foundational principles of Islam that advocate for acceptance and respect of gender identity, thereby establishing a framework for transgender individuals to live with equal dignity and rights.

4. An analysis of the differences between Buya Hamka and Amina Wadud with regard to transgender issues

A comparison can be drawn between the approaches of Buya Hamka and Amina Wadud and the thought of Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who is known to espouse the concept of wasathiyah or moderation in Islam. Qaradawi emphasises the importance of maintaining a balance between religious teachings and adaptation to social change. This research positions Buya Hamka as a representative of traditional thought, Amina Wadud as a reformist figure, and Qaradawi as a moderate, thereby providing a comprehensive overview of the contemporary Islamic discourse related to transgender issues (Yusuf et al., 2024).

The following table presents an analysis of the differences and similarities between the perspectives of Buya Hamka and Amina Wadud on the subject of transgender individuals within the context of Islam:

Table 1. Result of Analysis

Aspect	Buya Hamka	Amina Wadud	Equation
General Outlook	The political orientation of the subject is conservative and traditional.	The approach is characterised by its progressive and inclusive nature.	Both figures are influential intellectuals in Islamic thought, and both aim to interpret Islamic teachings according to their own understanding.
Gender Identity	The concept of gender identity is considered to be an immutable attribute, ordained by a divine entity and thus resistant to alteration or modification.	Gender identity is a complex aspect of the individual and must be respected.	Both characters recognise the importance of gender identity in the lives of individuals.
Gender Change	The subject has expressed a rejection of gender change, considering it to be in violation of divine decrees and Sharia law.	It is vital to uphold the right of individuals to self-determine their gender identity, perceiving gender transition as a quest for authentic self-identity.	Both figures discuss gender change in the context of Islamic teachings.
Theological Basis	The adherence to a literal interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith, which emphasises the biological decrees of God, is the fundamental principle underpinning this doctrine.	The utilisation of contextual interpretations is of paramount importance, with a particular emphasis placed on the principles of justice, humanity, and the relevance of Islamic teachings within the context of both social and historical settings.	The two figures in question utilise the Quran and Hadith as the primary references in shaping their respective views.
Social Acceptance	The argument is put forward that a shift in gender can potentially lead to a disruption in the social and moral stability of society.	It is imperative to accentuate the significance of social acceptance and inclusivity for the optimal well-being of transgender individuals.	Both figures consider the social impact of transgender issues.
Human Rights	The establishment of order and adherence	The promotion of human rights,	Both scholars pay close attention to the

	to extant Sharia law are of paramount importance.	including those pertaining to gender identity, is recognised as an integral component of the tenets of justice and humanity inherent within the Islamic framework.	significance of fundamental values in Islam.
Approach to Sharia Law	The emphasis is placed on the significance of upholding stringent Sharia law.	The argument is put forward for a reinterpretation of Sharia law that would result in more justice and humanity.	Both figures address the relevance of sharia law in the context of transgender issues.
Experience and Context	The following study will examine the challenges faced by individuals residing in Indonesia during the 20th century, with a particular focus on the preservation of traditional values in the face of modernisation.	The individual in question is involved in the international Islamic feminist movement and is currently residing in the United States, where their primary focus is on issues of civil rights and individual freedoms.	It is evident that both of these phenomena are influenced by their respective social and cultural contexts.
Final Destination	It is imperative to ensure the preservation of the moral and social stability of the Muslim community, a task that can be achieved by the maintenance of traditional values.	The creation of an inclusive and equitable society for all individuals, inclusive of transgender people, is of paramount importance.	The two scholars sought to interpret the teachings of Islam in a manner that they believed to be optimal for Muslims.

D. Conclusions

The discourse surrounding transgender issues in Islam, as articulated by the perspectives of Buya Hamka and Amina Wadud, exemplifies the diversity and richness inherent within the Islamic intellectual tradition. Buya Hamka, with his conservative and traditional approach, emphasised the importance of maintaining divine decrees and social stability. He believed that gender change was tantamount to rejecting God's creation and a violation of sharia law. This perspective is indicative of a need to preserve established moral and ethical values within Muslim societies.

In contrast, Amina Wadud, adopting a progressive and inclusive stance, underscores the significance of justice, humanity, and the relevance of Islamic teachings within evolving social and historical contexts. She advances the argument that gender identity constitutes a fundamental human right, meriting respect and acceptance. In this sense, she contends that Islam is duty-bound to uphold the rights of transgender individuals to live with equal dignity and well-being. Wadud's approach demonstrates the capacity for Islam to evolve and adapt to changing human needs.

To address the divide between conservative and progressive views within the Muslim community, it is essential to develop a maqashid sharia-based approach that prioritises justice, compassion and the protection of individual rights. The promotion of inclusivity through education, inter-religious dialogue, and the formulation of policies that support equality are identified as strategic measures to cultivate a Muslim community that is receptive to diversity.

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