Images of the first woman: Eve in Islamic *Fāl-nāma* paintings

An abstract

This chapter discusses the portrayal of Eve in Islamic paintings in relation to her image in textual Islamic sources. The paintings under discussion are taken from the highly-influential Iranian and Turkish *Fāl-nāma* volumes (books which images and text were used for divination) from the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. They present Eve in three significant moments of her and Adam's story: being adored by the angels in the Garden; the expulsion from Paradise; and the moment after the expulsion. Their analysis demonstrates, on the one hand, that the portrayal of Eve in these paintings reflects the textual Islamic traditions of the Qur'an and later sources; while on the other it shoes how the images break with these traditions, reinterpret them, and introduce new details into the scene. The first part of this chapter surveys the narratives of the transgression in the Garden in the Qur'an and Islamic traditions. The second part begins with a short introduction of the *Fāl-Nāma* codices. It then moves on to examine the portrayal of Eve in three *Fāl-Nāma* paintings, discussing them also in the broader context of other contemporaneous works. Applying a combined approach of iconography and close reading, the analysis reveals a complex, ambivalent character of Eve, who is concurrently venerated and sinful, prophetic and demonic, the source of human death and life. While such traits and contradictions also emerge from some of the textual depictions of Eve, the visual images introduce further details, which are not in line with the textual sources. The paintings thus portray Eve in a manner that goes beyond the mainstream textual narratives, and imply towards alternative narratives of Eve, which the textual tradition could not, or would not, explicitly relate.

The story of Eve and Adam and their expulsion from Paradise appears already in the earliest Islamic sources available to us. The Qur'an refers briefly to this story in three different chapters.[1] Other early Islamic sources add many more details to the concise qur'anic narratives. Some of these can also be found in earlier Jewish and Christian sources (for example, the name "Eve" for the spouse of Adam, whom the Qur'an does not name), whereas others are unique to the Islamic sources. For example, the identification of the fruit of Paradise as wheat reflects a specific Islamic interpretation of the Paradise story.[2] Both

qur'anic- and post qur'anic narratives concerning Eve and Adam are reflected, as well as interpreted, in visual representations of the couple in Islamic art, and particularly in paintings that are included in a specific literary genre of divination, known as *Fāl-Nāma*.

This chapter examines the presentation of Eve in three Islamic paintings from the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. These paintings describe three important moments in the lives of Eve and Adam: before, during and immediately after the expulsion from Paradise. The ways in which these paintings construct the image of Eve are examined in relation to her depiction in the Islamic textual sources, particularly the Qur'an and later religious literature. A close examination of these paintings reveals, alongside similarities to the textual sources, also alternative portrayals of Eve, which are in disagreement with her depictions in the mainstream religious literature.

The first part of this chapter surveys the textual depiction of Eve in Islamic narratives of the transgression in Paradise. These narratives are found in the Qur'an and later Islamic sources, such as commentaries to the Qur'an and Stories of the Prophets (*Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā'*) literature. These textual sources serve as the point of departure for the second part of the chapter, which closely analyses the iconography and specific details of the portrayal of Eve in three Islamic paintings from the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. These paintings are taken from two pictorial *Fāl-Nāma* codices: books, images and text were used for divination. Following a short introduction to this genre, three paintings are examined. The first two were included in the Persian dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* ("Book of omens"; Qazvin, Safavid Iran, late 1550s CE or early 1560), and the third in the *Fāl-Nāma* of Ahmed I ("Book of omens"; Istanbul, Ottoman Empire, assembled from 1614 to 1616).

Each of the three paintings describes an important moment in the lives of Eve and Adam: before, during and immediately after the expulsion from Paradise. A close analysis of the paintings reveals both parallels and contrasts between the construction of Eve in the paintings on the one hand, and the textual tradition on the other. The paintings often reflect the narratives of the Qur'an and exegetical tradition. However, a close reading of some of the details in these paintings reveals that at the same time they also break away with the narratives. The portrayal of Eve in these paintings is, therefore, that of an ambivalent, complex image, whose story can be told in a number of ways. The textual sources relate some of these; the paintings, however, provide a glimpse also into alternative narratives of Eve, about which the textual sources tend to keep quiet.

Eve in the Qur'an and Islamic tradition

The expulsion from the Garden in the Qur'an

The story of the transgression in the Garden with the resultant human descent to the earth appears three times in the Qur'an, in chapters 2, 7 and 20, always preceded by the fall of Satan (Iblīs).[3]

The narratives in Q 2:30–38 and Q 7:11–25 are highly similar, with Q 2:30–38 giving some more details on the fall of Satan, and Q 7:11–25 elaborating more on the human fall. According to Q 7:11–25, after God created and shaped the first human,[4] He commanded the angels to prostrate themselves before Adam. The angels obeyed, except for Iblīs (Satan). God instructed Adam to dwell in the Garden (*al-janna*) with his spouse and eat as they wished, but to stay away from "this tree", lest they became wrongdoers. Nevertheless, Satan seduced them to eat from the tree, arguing that it would turn them into angels, or immortals (Q 7:19–20). Eating the forbidden fruit made Adam and his spouse realize that they were naked. As

they started stitching the leaves of the Garden onto themselves, God reproached them for listening to Satan. They then asked God for forgiveness. God instructed them to descend to earth, being enemies to each other (humans and Satan? man and woman?). The narration in Q 2:30–38 adds at this point that Adam (alone) then received "words" from God, and that God forgave Adam (Q 2:37). God also promised divine guidance (to humanity). Those who follow this guidance should be protected from fear and sadness (Q 2:38).[5] Islam, therefore, does not regard the transgression in the Garden as an "Original Sin."

The narrative in Q 20:115–123 is similar to the narratives in Q 2:30–38 and Q 7:11–25; however, it emphasizes on the figure of Adam. It begins by stating that God has made a covenant with Adam before, but Adam forgot, and had no determination. The narrative then relates to the divine commandment to the angels to prostrate themselves before Adam. Following the disobedience of Iblīs, God warned Adam against Satan, who was an enemy to Adam and his spouse. God also informed Adam that while in the Garden, he would be protected from hunger, thirst, nakedness and heat of the sun (Q 20:115–119). However, Satan tempted Adam, and both (Adam and his spouse) ate from the tree. Their nakedness was revealed to them, and they covered themselves with the leaves of the Garden. Adam disobeyed his Lord. Then God chose Adam, forgave him and guided him (Q 20:120–122).

The qur'anic narratives of the transgression differ from the biblical story and its Jewish and Christian interpretations on a number of levels. For the current discussion, three differences are of particular interest. First, God explicitly forgives Adam, which means that (unlike some Jewish and Christian interpretations) there is no Original Sin. Second, most significant in regards to the image of the first woman, the responsibility for eating the forbidden fruit is shared between the woman and man. According to Q 2:36 and Q 7:20–22, Satan tempts Adam and his spouse at the same time. This is in contrast to Gen. 3:1–6, where

the snake is said to have first tempted the woman, who then gave the fruit to her man (Gen. 3:1-6). Furthermore, according to Q 20:120, initially it was Adam alone who was directly tempted by Satan. The joint consumption of the forbidden fruit by the spouse and Adam only followed later (Q 20:121). Several scholars, such as Jane Smith and Yvonne Haddad, Simonetta Calderini, and Denise Spellberg, have highlighted this difference between the Bible and the Qur'an, as evidence that the Qur'an presents an egalitarian version of the Paradise narrative.[6]

But whether the Qur'an indeed presents such an egalitarian version is debatable, due to a third point of interest. Within the three transgression narratives, and indeed in the Qur'an as a whole, the spouse of Adam is not mentioned by name. Rather, she is called his "spouse" (*zawj*). Furthermore, the Qur'an only refers to this unnamed spouse in relation to being tempted; eating from the forbidden tree; and being expelled from the Garden. Even within this context, God does not speak directly to her (except perhaps after the transgression, when God commands the whole lot to descend to earth), but only to Adam. Nor is the spouse granted divine forgiveness after the transgression. In response to the couple's joint request for forgiveness (Q 7:23), no acceptance of the request is mentioned. Rather, God commands the couple to leave the Garden and descend to earth.

God does, however, grant forgiveness to Adam. According to Q 2:37, after the transgression God gave Adam words and forgave him; according to Q 20:122, God chose Adam, forgave him and guided him. Adam is also mentioned in the Qur'an in a variety of contexts, other than that of the transgression. God created Adam (Q 7:11) to be His vicegerent on earth (Q 2:30), and made a covenant with him (Q 20:115). He taught Adam the names (of all creatures, Q 2:31–33) and commanded the angels to prostrate themselves before him (Q 2:34, 7:11, 20:116). Adam is a progenitor of prophets (Q 19:58), and one of the

progenitors who were chosen by God (Q 3:33; 20:122). Following these highly-positive characteristics of Adam in the Qur'an, later Islamic sources consider Adam a prophet.[7]

The numerous, positive references to Adam are in stark contrast to the qur'anic depiction of his spouse. Whereas the Qur'an does not regard her as particularly responsible for the fall, it also omits all other aspects of her character that are present in the biblical story (Gen. 2–3), such as her name, in particular, but also her creation, fertility, and relationship with Adam. Unlike her spouse, she is only mentioned in the Qur'an as an illustration to the story of the expulsion. This is particularly notable when comparing the qur'anic depiction of Adam's spouse with those of some other women. Although the Qur'an only mentions one woman figure by name (Mary; e.g. Q 19), there are several other women to whom it refers, including, for example, the (positive) figures of the wife of Abraham, Queen of Sheba, and wife of Pharaoh; as well as the (negative) seductive wife of the Egyptian man who bought Joseph.[8] The Qur'an relates the independent, direct speech and actions of all these women. Adam's spouse, on the other hand, only speaks or acts as part of Adam's actions, such as eating the fruit (Q 7:122, 20:121) or approaching God (7: 23). The minor but distinctively negative role of Eve does not, therefore, comply with the "egalitarian" image that has been suggested by Smith and Haddad, Calderini or Spellberg: while not considered as particularly blameworthy for the transgression, Eve is hardly considered at all. As a person she is nearly eliminated from the qur'anic narrative.

Eve in the Islamic tradition

An ambivalent depiction of the first woman emerges also from post-qur'anic literature, such as qur'anic exegesis, collections of prophetic reports which are meant to document the sayings and deeds of the prophet Muḥammad, Stories of the Prophets literature (*Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*) and historiographical sources.

Unlike the Qur'an, all these sources refer to the spouse of Adam by the name "Eve" (Ḥawā').[9] At the same time, however, in the six most authoritative compilations of prophetic reports in Sunnī Islam, which contain thousands of such reports, the name "Eve" only appears four times. This further demonstrates the enduring tension in the Islamic tradition between acknowledging Adam's spouse and ignoring her.

An ambivalent approach towards Eve further emerges through the diverse portrayal of her image in the sources. Some reports, which can be found in exegetical, historiographical and *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* sources, present a rather positive, even egalitarian, image of Eve. For example, some Shī'ite sources, such al-Rāwandī's (d. 1178 CE) and al-Jazā'irī's (d. 1100 CE) *Stories of the Prophets* works argue that God created Eve from earth, like He created Adam.[10] In terms of physicality, both al-Kisā'ī (d. 11th century CE) and al-Rāwandī narrate that Eve was created as a good (*ḥasan*) creation, similar in shape to Adam; but feminine. Al-Kisā'ī adds that Eve was created equal to Adam in every parameter, however more delicate and more beautiful (for comparison, according to the *Babylonian Talmud*, when compared to Adam Eve seemed like a monkey).[11] Regarding the transgression, some reports follow the qur'anic narrative and describe Eve and Adam as being concurrently tempted by Satan to eat the forbidden fruit.[12] Such positive depictions of Eve are particularly typical to Shī'ite sources, possibly due to the significant role of Fāṭima, the daughter of Muḥammad, in Shī'a Islam. In Shī'ite tradition, Fāṭima holds a venerated status herself, in addition to her portrayal as the wife of an imam ('Alī, d. 661 CE) and the mother of imams (Ḥasan, d. 669 CE; and Ḥusayn, d. 680 CE). She thus serves as a positive paradigm of a feminine role model, which parallels Eve, and implies a more positive view of women in general.[13]

Other reports, however, portray Eve in a rather negative manner. These depictions are more similar to the image of Eve in Rabbinical and Christian sources. For example, many

sources relate, similar to Genesis 2, that Eve was created from Adam's rib — a secondary, inferior creation.[14] In explicit contrast to the Qur'an, various sources — historiographical as well as exegetical — record traditions which depict Eve as tempting Adam to eat the forbidden fruit.[15] Similarly, reports, which relate that the transgression resulted in punishments in addition to the expulsion (echoing Gen. 3:14–19), count more punishments as being bestowed on Eve, than on Adam or Satan; or only mention the punishments of Eve, while Adam is completely excluded.[16]

This ambivalence continues further into later centuries and other forms of cultural expression, such as Islamic paintings from sixteenth- and early seventeenth century Safavid Iran and Ottoman Turkey.

Eve in Islamic *Fāl-Nāma* paintings

The pictorial Fāl-Nāma

The sixteenth century, which marks the beginning of the early modern period (1500–1800), was in the Islamic world a time of political instability. The upcoming Islamic millennium (1591–1592) inspired millenarian worldviews and messianic expectations throughout the Safavid, Ottoman and Mughal empires, among Muslims and non-Muslims alike.[17] The messianic Jewish movement of David Reubeni and Solomon Molcho is one example of such a movement;[18] the rise of the Safavid dynasty (1501–1722), which conquered Iran, is another. The rise to power of Shah Ismā'īl (r. 1501–1524), the first Safavid ruler, was supported by a Turkmen Sufi brotherhood turned into a millenarian political movement. Shah Ismā'īl then declared his son, Shah Ṭahmāsp (r. 1524–1576), the Messiah; however, Shah Ṭahmāsp himself abandoned these utopian promises. Rather, he adopted doctrinal Shī'ism, thus breaking up with his father's antinomian spirituality.[19]

These messianic worldviews and political and religious developments also influenced the cultural systems in the Islamic world. Millenarianism and messianic movements inspired a manifest interest in divination, the occult, and eschatology, on the one hand; and didactic, often religious, paintings on the other. Several groups of illustrated manuscripts emerged in the Islamic world during the sixteenth century. Their main themes were hagiography and divination. Hagiographical art was mainly manifested through illustrations of *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* works. Divination was manifested through works of pictorial *Fāl-Nāma*s.[20]

Fāl-Nāma was a genre of large-scale works, which were used for the art of bibliomancy (divination through text). Bibliomancy was popular among ruling elites in the Islamic world since late Umayyad period (661–750). Over time, pictorial *Fāl-Nāma*s emerged as well. These were popular in the Islamic world in the sixteenth century, particularly in Iran and Turkey. Four such volumes, dating between the mid sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, are known today. Unlike other *Fāl-Nāma*s, these monumental *Fāl-Nāma*s also included the textual divinatory interpretation of the images. Together, image and text represented the augury. Notably, the pictorial *Fāl-Nāma*s had a considerable iconographical influence on other works, both contemporaneous and later.[21]

The *Fāl-Nāma*s codices also represent the political and religious transformations in the early modern Persianate world. The paintings combine both symbolic and religious meanings. They offer seekers access to concealed knowledge, but also include religious figures, and prompt the seeker to perform religious practices (for example, ritual prayers). The *Fāl-Nāma*s, therefore, reflect the middle way between messianism and structured religion, similar to Shah Ṭahmāsp's position.[22]

The themes around which the *Fāl-Nāmā*s revolve are resurrection, apocalypse, and

the battle between divine and evil powers. The second most frequent subject in these codices is Islamic and Abrahamic prophets, which serve as the bracket between creation and apocalypse, as well as principal agents of divination. Their presentation is hagiographic, focusing on iconic scenes from their lives. While the Abrahamic prophets helped with the legitimization of the practice of divination, Massumeh Farhad and Serpil Bağcı emphasize that the paintings were also given further allegorical meanings.[23] The paintings in which Eve is portrayed are part of this group.

***Eve in the pictorial* Fāl-Nāma**

The discussion below focuses on the representation of Eve at three different moments of her life, according to the Islamic tradition: before, during and immediately after the expulsion from Paradise. The paintings to be examined are part of the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* (fig. 1, 2), and the Ottoman *Fāl-Nāma* of Ahmed I (fig. 3).

The methodology used in this chapter combines an iconographic approach, with special attention to the details of the images, in particular those details which do not conform with the religious pre-text that the image presumably depicts. A close attention to such details reveals additional meanings in the images, and sometimes a contra-narrative, which can serve as an alternative to the main narrative of the pre-text. This approach is similar to the "close reading" of images, which Begüm Özden Firat applies in her analysis of Ottoman miniatures (see fig. 3 below).[24]

Firat notes that iconography, which is a prominent methodology for "traditional art-historical analysis of narrative images,"[25] reads the visual in relation to the verbal. It seeks to identify pictorial elements within the image, which comply with the pretext that the image is meant to illustrate. An informed iconographical reading therefore depends on pre-given

motifs. It results in a conservative reading of the image, and prevents the emergence of alternative interpretations that might unnerve the main narrative, to which the iconographical approach is subordinated.

In order to overcome these shortcomings, Firat draws on the work of Mieke Bal and Naomi Schor in proposing to complete the iconographical reading with a close reading of the details in the image.[26] Such a reading begins where the iconographical reading stops, since it focuses on those details, which do not agree with the textual sources and are therefore iconographically dysfunctional. By turning the detail from a marginal element into the prism through which the entire image is interpreted, such a reading emphasizes the differences between the image and the text. It can therefore change the conventional interpretation of an image, by allowing the meaning of the image to develop in alternative directions.

Such a reading is particularly suitable for the *Fāl-Nāma* paintings, which are meant to be read for divination purposes. As Bağcı has noted, these paintings do not interpret a narrative. Rather, each *Fāl-Nāma* painting has an adjoining narrative, which interprets the painting by elaborating its divinatory meaning. Within the *Fāl-Nāma* codices, the image is always on the right hand page, and the related text follows on the left hand page. The order of the images within each volume is random (regardless of the historiographical chronology of the depicted episodes), to increase chance when consulting them. Both formally and conceptually, therefore, the paintings precede their corresponding texts, and stand in their own right as the major mode of communication in this genre.[27]

Angels bow before Eve and Adam in Paradise

[Here Fig. 1: Angels bow before Adam and Eve in Paradise.]

Fig. 1: Angels bow before Adam and Eve in Paradise. The Dispersed *Fāl-Nāma*: Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.:

Purchase — Smithsonian Unrestricted Trust Funds, Smithsonian Collections Acquisition Program, and Dr. Arthur M. Sackler, S1986.254, late 1550s or early 1560s. Qazvin, Iran, Safavid period. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper; 59.3x44.5 cm.

The so-called dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* (Book of omens) is one of the most notable works, which combines images and texts, of sixteenth century Iran. Of the group of monumental *Fāl-Nāma* manuscripts, it is the earliest, and most published one. Thirty leaves of this *Fāl-Nāma* are known today. The artistic and historical circumstances of its creation are uncertain. Contemporary scholars, such as Farhad, as well as Rachel Milstein, Karin Ruhrdanz and Barbara Schmitz, maintain the view of Edgar Blochet from 1929 (later repeated by Stuart Cary Welch) that it was probably completed in Qazvin for Shah Ṭahmāsp (r. 1524–1576), himself a painter and a calligrapher, and a distinguished patron of illustrated books.[28]

The style of paintings in the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* is, according to Bağci and Farhad, the most homogeneous of the existing *Fāl-Nāma* copies. Their style can be related to the court milieu of Qazvin, where they were probably made by a number of artists. Welch attributed these paintings to the court painters Āqā Mīrak and ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz.[29] The divinatory texts of this *Fāl-Nāma* are commonly attributed to the sixth Shīʻite Imam, Jaʻfar al-Ṣādiq (d. 765), however Farhad and Bağcı note that it is more likely that the text emerged from later oral and written hagiographical sources.[30]

Figure 1, “Angels bow before Adam and Eve in Paradise,” was probably the first painting (fol. 1b) in the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* when the work was in its complete form.[31] It depicts Eve and Adam in Paradise, surrounded by adoring angels. Although the adjoining text for this painting is missing, this identification of the subject is supported through a similar painting from the Dresden *Fāl-Nāma* (E445; f. 13b), probably inspired by fig. 1, which the

adjoining text (f. 14a) identifies as "the sign of the Paradise of Adam and Eve."[32]

The dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* painting (fig. 1) is the first instance in Islamic art of an illustration of Eve and Adam in the Garden, and its iconographic influence was substantial. In addition to the Dresden *Fāl-Nāma*, this subject appears also in two later *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* works; and nine works of *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* include illustrations of the angels adoring Adam alone. Furthermore, this painting also influenced the composition and iconography of two paintings of Solomon and the queen of Sheba (Bilqīs). Similar to Eve and Adam, also Bilqīs and Solomon are depicted as sitting on a dais, and surrounded by angels (as well as demons, animals and humans). The close stylistic similarity made Binyon, Wilkinson and Gray (1933) mistake Eve and Adam in fig. 1 for Bilqīs and Solomon.[33]

The painting shows Eve (to the left) and Adam on a dais, against a flowery background of abundant vegetation. They are surrounded by angels, who fly above them, prostrate themselves before them, or serve them with food, drink, or presents. At the top left side, the darkened figure of Iblīs can be spotted. Unlike many Christian paintings of the couple, here Eve and Adam are portrayed as fully clothed. This concurrently reflects the scarcity of unclothed figures in Islamic paintings (see below), as well as the textual Islamic tradition concerning Eve and Adam. Whereas Gen. 2:25 relates that the woman and man were unclothed in the Garden prior to the transgression, in Q 20:118–119 the couple is assured that while in the Garden they will not be naked, nor suffer the heat of the sun.

The composition of this painting is unique in that it depicts the angels as prostrating themselves before Eve and Adam alike. In the Qur'ān (e.g., Q 2:34) God specifically commands the angels to prostrate themselves before Adam; Eve is not mentioned in this context. The qur'anic text only introduces her at a later point in the narrative, when God

instructs Adam that both him and his spouse should dwell in the Garden (Q 7:19). The inclusion of Eve in the prostration scene is, therefore, an expansion of the qur'anic narrative. The result puts Eve in an elevated status, equal to that of Adam.

For Milstein *et al.* the apparent discrepancy between the painting and the qur'anic text suggests that this painting, to which they refer as "the enthronement of Adam and Eve",[34] does not depict the qur'anic episode. In the Qur'an as well as the *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* narratives, the angels only prostrate before Adam. According to most *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* narratives, Eve was only created later. Also Bağcı indicates that the Qur'ān "(Q 7:11–25 in particular) mentions the angels' veneration of the newly created Adam, but this takes place before God has fashioned Eve (who is not mentioned by name in the Koran) from one of Adam's ribs."[35] Milstein *et al.* further add that the angelic prostration is said to have occurred before Eve and Adam entered Paradise, whereas the painting depicts Eve and Adam inside the Garden. Finally, they point out that the Dresden *Fāl-Nāma* manuscript, which also contains a painting of this episode (fol. 13b), includes an additional, separate painting (fol. 4b) of the angels prostrating to Adam alone. They thus conclude that the painting from the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* (fig. 1) does not represent the angels' prostration before Adam, but rather a different, unidentified event.[36]

It would, however, seem rather unlikely that this painting relates to an unknown episode. The *Fāl-Nāma* paintings tend to depict iconic scenes from the lives of the prophets and, according to Milstein *et al.*, are often self-explanatory.[37] The setting of the scene inside Paradise is, curiously, typical also of later illustrations, which specifically depict the qur'anic scene of the angels prostrating before Adam (alone). For example, in H.1227, fol. 11a, Adam is portrayed (alone) on a dais in the Garden, with the angels prostrating themselves before him and showering him with light.[38] Presumably, the linkage between the pre-fall Adam (and

Eve) and Paradise superseded the qur'anic chronology. Also Milstein *et al.* mention additional cases of discrepancies between texts and images, such as illustrations of the expulsion from Paradise in which Adam has no halo, although according to the text he maintained his halo.[39] That is, such discrepancies are not unheard of. Rather, they enable us to consider alternatives to the mainstream narrative.

Notably, God's command to the angels to prostrate themselves before the newly-created Adam is indeed quite specific. However, the Qur'an does not at all mention the creation of Eve (or Adam's spouse), and the creation from rib is a biblical theme, which is absent from the Qur'an, and appears in Islamic exegetical and historiographical traditions only. Rather, in the Qur'an the existence of Adam's spouse is a given. She is first introduced through God's words to Adam "Dwell you and your spouse in the Garden" (Q 7:19). Furthermore, the verses which precede the commandment to the angels relate to the creation of humanity, rather than Adam. This becomes evident as the Qur'an uses here the plural form: "We have created you (pl.: *khalaqnā**kum***), then shaped you (pl.: *ṣawwarnā**kum***)" (Q 7:11). Therefore, an assumption (by the artist or oral tradition) that Eve already existed at the time of the angelic prostration does not contradict the explicit qur'anic text, and would not necessarily seem inconceivable.

Rather than an unknown scene, the discrepancies with the qur'anic text probably reflect a combination of the angelic prostration with another episode from the biography of Eve and Adam. According to Milstein *et al*., such combinations are typical of religious iconographic styles.[40] This additional episode might be Eve and Adam's glorious entry into Paradise, which is also suggested by Bağcı; or their wedding. According to al-Kisā'ī, upon the creation of Eve, God married her to Adam. Although the wedding took place outside the Garden, its description recalls the scene in the painting: Eve and Adam were put on a throne

of pearls, surrounded by the angels, who were showering paradisiacal candies (or coins) over them. In the painting, the two angels on the top right hand side are showering the couple with light. Alternatively, al-Kisā'ī's narrative relates that once inside the Garden, Eve and Adam were "crowned, diademed and honored." They then sat on a splendid dais, and were offered the fruit of Paradise. All these elements are present in the painting.[41]

Finally, the distinction in the Dresden *Fāl-Nāma* between the two prostrations might be a later reaction to the notion of angelic prostration before Eve. For one, the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* does not (as far as we know) include an additional prostration scene. Further, Milstein *et al.* indicate that two later *Qiṣaṣ* works also include illustrations of Eve and Adam on a dais, surrounded by angels in the Garden.[42] These manuscripts do not include separate illustrations of the angels prostrating before Adam. Moreover, one of them depicts Eve and Adam on the dais inside the Garden, with the angels serving them with fruit; however, it completely omits the angelic prostration, and only Adam is portrayed with a halo.[43] It would thus seem that the emphasis of these paintings was not so much on the chronology of events, but rather on questioning the highly positive portrayal of Eve in fig. 1 from the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma*. Their response was either to omit the elevating motifs, such as the halo and angelic prostration; or omit Eve herself.

Indeed, the presentation of Eve in this painting as the subject (together with Adam) of prostration by the angels is evident of a highly positive, inclusive, and elevating perception of her character. Seeing that the *Fāl-Nāma* was created in Iran, it might reflect the aforementioned generally more positive attitude of Shī'a Islam towards women characters, following the adoration of Fāṭima, daughter of Muḥammad. This might also reflect earlier discussions in Islam, regarding the possibility of there having been (usually four or six) women prophets, among whom Eve is also mentioned.[44] That Eve is depicted here as a

prophetic figure is also suggested through her halo.

Both Eve and Adam are depicted as having golden-green, flaming halos (although Eve's halo is smaller). According to Milstein *et al.*, a flame-shaped halo signifies a prophetic status.[45] The fiery edge of this halo is typical of angels and prophets, and the fire represents the notion of light: according to Shīʿa Islam, there exists a universal line of divine light, which begins with Adam and thereafter continues through the chain of prophets to Muḥammad and the Shīʿite imams.[46] That the halo in this painting is significant becomes evident through other paintings of the angelic prostration to Eve and Adam in the Garden, where only Adam has a halo.[47] Likewise, also Mary, for whom the claim for a prophetic status was more popular,[48] is sometimes portrayed with a (fiery) halo,[49] but not always; whereas Bilqīs, who features (together with Solomon) in enthronement scenes which are closely-related to this painting, is not portrayed with a halo.[50]

An inclusive approach towards Eve in this painting emerges also through the blackened character of Iblīs. Milstein *et al.* interpret his dark skin as representing his being the embodiment of evil.[51] In this particular context, however, the color black seems to have an additional significance. The Arabic expression "to darken," or blacken one's face means "to humiliate." According to some Islamic traditions, when God intended to create Adam, He sent angels to bring some earth for this purpose. But the earth refused to give of itself for the creation of a sinful creature, and sought refuge in God against them. Eventually God sent Iblīs, who ignored the pleas of the earth and brought some of it to God. God therefore informed Iblīs that He would create from this earth a creature that would "blacken your face," that is, humiliate Iblīs.[52] The portrayal of Iblīs in the painting recalls this story. By so doing, it again extends this pre-creation episode to include Eve as well, similar to the angelic prostration and prophetic halo. The image of Eve which emerges from this painting is,

therefore, highly positive and inclusive. At this pre-fall moment, she is provided with prophetic traits, and in many aspects is equal to Adam, to the extent that later illustrators of this scene, while influenced by this painting, felt it necessary to omit some of these traits. A rather different scene is presented in figure 2, which relates to the moment of the expulsion.

Adam and Eve expelled from Paradise

[Here Fig. 2: Eve and Adam expelled form Paradise, S1986.251a]

Fig. 2: Eve and Adam expelled form Paradise. The Dispersed *Fāl-Nāma*: Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.: Purchase — Smithsonian Unrestricted Trust Funds, Smithsonian Collections Acquisition Program, and Dr. Arthur M. Sackler, S1986.251a, late 1550s or early 1560s. Qazvin, Iran, Safavid period. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper; 59.7x44.9 cm.

Another painting of Eve and Adam in the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* depicts the expulsion of Eve and Adam from Paradise. This painting was probably belonged between the twentieth and thirtieth pages of this *Fāl-Nāma* before it became dispersed. Dating from the second half of the sixteenth century, it is the first illustration of the expulsion from Paradise in Islamic art, which was soon repeated in several works of *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* later in the sixteenth century. Of the twenty-one full *Qiṣaṣ* manuscripts examined by Milstein *et al.*, eleven include paintings of the expulsion. The expulsion also appears as an omen in the Topkapi Persian *Fāl-Nāma* (H.1702), and the Ahmed I copy in the Topkapi Palace Library H.1703 (see fig. 3 below). It is therefore evident that the *Fāl-Nāma* was indeed "forging new visual language for illustrations of religious manuscripts."[53]

The illustration in the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* depicts the expulsion as a turbulent and dramatic event. The transgressors are located in the center, amidst two rows of observing angels, many of whom seem astonished and grieved. At the bottom left the blackened-yet-

satisfied character of Iblīs can be spotted.

Notably, the angels, who bowed before Eve and Adam upon their entrance into the Garden (fig. 1) now observe their expulsion from it. The location of the angels in two rows, from above and below, is somewhat reminiscent of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea upon leaving Egypt (Exod. 14:15-30; Q 26:63–68), partly due to the curved line (yellow above, pink below), which resembles river curves, and delineates between the transgressors and the angels. Both the Bible and the Qur'an depict how, in order to save the Israelites, God split the sea in two, so that the Israelites could pass in the middle. The passage of Eve, Adam and their company between the angelic rows counter parallels this scene, but also highlights that the expulsion (like the Exodus) concurrently signifies an end and a new beginning.

The company of transgressors includes four figures: Eve, Adam, and their respective riding beasts: a peacock and a dragon-like snake. All of them are literally being driven out of Paradise, as a character holding a long rod and dressed in a Safavid court dress and a turban, prods the snake to hurry her.[54]

Adam, riding the snake, is at the front, with Eve close behind him, on a smaller-size peacock. The riding motif is unknown from textual descriptions of the expulsion, and appears here for the first time; it recurs in illustrations of this scene in later *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* works.[55] Milstein *et al.* suggest that the meaning of this motif might be symbolic. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī (d. 1273) describes the carnal nature as a peacock, who tempts one towards vanity. The riding could thus be a metaphor of either an attempt to control carnal passions, or riding evil inclination towards sin.[56]

More inclined towards the latter explanation, the riding motif can also be a counter-parallel to Eve and Adam's entrance parade into Paradise, according to Islamic traditions. Al-

Kisāʾī records a report which describes how, upon introducing them into the Garden, God honored Adam with riding a magnificent horse, and Eve followed behind him on a wonderful she-camel, with the angels surrounding them.[57] Their riding out of the Garden is thus an inverted parade of shame. Contrary to Bağcı's view of them as "sitting tall on their mounts and conversing with cheery animation,"[58] it rather seems more likely that this apparent high position only emphasizes their shame, not the least because they are presented naked in public.

Hoffman notes the rarity of unclothed figures in Islamic art, arguing that such figures are generally limited to scientific, astronomical and magical texts, and to beings "derived from scientific and mythological personifications of late antiquity."[59] Possibly as part of the boldness of the *Fāl-Nāma* genre, both the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* (fig. 2) and the *Fāl-Nāma* of Ahmed I (fig. 3 below) portray Eve and Adam as naked. According to the Qur'an, while in the Garden Eve and Adam were protected from being naked. However, following the consumption of the forbidden fruit, their private parts became apparent to them, and they attempted to cover themselves with leaves (Q 20:118–121).[60]

Eve's nakedness reflects the physical transformation she has undergone following the transgression. Some of her body is darkened, in particular her hands (which picked the fruit and gave it to Adam) and tummy (which consumed the fruit). Although Adam, too, consumed the forbidden fruit, and despite a literary tradition that describes his complexion as blackened following the transgression (see below), in this painting the darkened limbs are applied to Eve alone. This distinction between Eve and Adam represents the view that she has an increased responsibility for the transgression. An active participant in the temptation of Adam, she is depicted as physically resembling Iblīs, who is also painted here with dark face, neck and hands. This sinister, demon-like characterization of Eve is reminiscent of the

biblical narrative (Gen. 3:6), and of post-qur'anic traditions, which often depict Eve as actively tempting Adam into eating the forbidden fruit. In contrast, the Qur'an describes Satan as either tempting both Adam and his spouse together at the same time (Q 2:30–38; 7:11–25), or as tempting Adam alone (Q 20:115–123).

Nevertheless, and despite the loss of their clothes, both Eve and Adam still have their halos. Some other illustrations of the expulsion also depict them with halos, however this is not always the case. In some *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* works neither of them has a halo. In other works only Adam has one, again suggesting a differentiation between Eve and Adam in regards to the transgression. In the present context (fig. 2) both maintain their halos, which could imply to a more egalitarian view. However, it should also be noted in this particular painting that the halos have specific flaming edges. The color of these edges is fiery orange, and they are distinctly separated (by lines) from the main halo. For comparison, the halos in fig. 1 above and fig. 3 below are clearly more homogenous. Another unusual detail concerning the halos in fig. 2 is that the halo of Eve is larger than that of Adam; in other paintings this would often be the other way around.[61] It is possible that in this painting the halos serve to symbolize the transformation which the couple has gone through following the transgression, with the flames being more about fire than light; for which Eve is here presented as more blameworthy than Adam.

Eve's increased fault (which is completely absent from the Qur'an) is further demonstrated through the composition of the characters. Adam turns his body back towards Eve, his hands pointing at her, as if saying, "this is all your fault." This motif reappears in later *Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā'* manuscripts.[62] The location of Adam in the painting is higher than that of Eve, so that he literally speaks down to her. This element, too, can be found in later paintings of the expulsion.[63] It expresses a perception of presumed masculine supremacy over

women. Similarly, the depiction of Eve as riding behind Adam represents a patriarchal social norm of masculine priority over the female. This motif is present not only in fig. 2, which depicts the expulsion, but also in the aforementioned narratives concerning Eve and Adam's ride into the Garden. Furthermore, according to al-Kisā'ī, during their walks in the Garden, Eve used to walk behind Adam.[64] The presentation of this patriarchal norm as a primordial, divine ruling further supports and legitimizes it, in the same way that Gen. 3:16 has God say to the woman "And your desire is to your man, and he shall govern over you."

Whereas Adam looks at Eve, Eve and the peacock gaze accusingly at the snake. Like Adam, also the head of the snake is turned back, towards both Eve and Adam; her mouth, in which Iblīs hid himself in order to enter Paradise (see below),[65] is wide open, as if ridiculing them; notably, also the horse on which Adam rode into the Garden was, according to al-Kisā'ī, talking to Adam.[66] The peacock, on the other hand, seems rather gloomy, with his tail and colors being reminiscent of (hell) fire. This game of gazing recalls the biblical narrative in Gen. 3:11–13, where Adam blames Eve, and Eve blames the snake. Indeed, the presence in this painting of the snake and peacock (as well as in illustrations of the expulsion in later *Fāl-Nāma* works)[67] reflects biblical, qur'anic exegetical and *Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā'* traditions. Although the Qur'an only mentions Satan as tempting the couple, many narratives in the Islamic tradition also include the snake and peacock as helping him in this. Since, according to the Qur'an, God expelled Iblīs from heavens before He let Adam and his spouse into the Garden, the question emerges, how did Iblīs get into the Garden in order to tempt the primordial couple? One proposal is that, using flattery, and promising that the fruit of Paradise will grant them with eternal youth, beauty, and immortality, Iblīs convinced the peacock to let him in the Garden, and the snake to hide him in her mouth and lead him to Eve, with whom she had a close relationship. Iblīs then convinced Eve to consume the

forbidden fruit, and later Eve gave it to Adam as well.[68]

An interesting parallel can be drawn between the two animals and Eve. All of whom are portrayed in the textual sources as actively helping Iblīs. Both the Islamic tradition and the painting to an extent depict the snake and the peacock as fanciful,[69] vain, naïve and treacherous. The snake (*ḥayya*), in particular, is a grammatical feminine in Arabic, and the Islamic sources treat this snake as a feminine being, which is beautiful, adorned, and treacherous.[70] These characteristics are often used as derogative stereotypical feminine traits. Also the person in the painting who prods the she-snake with the rod appears in another illustration of the expulsion, which is included in a *Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā'* manuscript. There, he hurries Eve herself out of the Garden.[71] As will be demonstrated below, Eve's reluctance to leave the Garden is a reoccurring motif in illustrations of the expulsion scene.

The different portrayals of Eve in fig. 1 and fig. 2, both of which were originally included in the currently dispersed *Fāl-Nāma*, possibly reflect the transformation that Eve went through following the transgression. Unlike fig. 1 above, which portrays the pre-transgression Eve in a highly positive way, fig. 2 represents a mixed image of Eve. On the one hand, she is depicted as inferior to Adam and bearing a greater responsibility than him for the transgression; on the other, she still maintains her halo. Notably, Eve is not depicted in a completely negative manner, perhaps thanks to the positive image of Fāṭima in Shī'ite Islam. The public expulsion still bears some remnants of Eve and Adam's glorious entry into the Garden, and allows for hope of a new beginning, leading to a potentially positive future. A similarly composite view is reflected through the symbolic meaning of the expulsion in the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma*. The adjoining text interprets this painting as a sign of great misfortune, which will then be superseded by a greater good outcome.[72]

Figure 3, which presents Eve and Adam in the moment right after the expulsion, again portrays Eve in a new, different light.

Eve and Adam leaving the Garden

[Here: Fig. 3: Adam and Eve leaving Paradise. The *Fāl-Nāma* of Ahmed I: Topkapı Palace Museum, Istanbul, Turkey, H.1703, f.7b]

Fig. 3: Adam and Eve leaving Paradise. The *Fāl-Nāma* of Ahmed I: Topkapı Palace Museum, Istanbul, Turkey, H.1703, f.7b, ca. 1610-1615. Attributed to Nakkaş Hasan Pasha. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper; 49x36.4 cm.

The *Fāl-Nāma* of Ahmed I (TSM H.1703) is the only extant pictorial *Fāl-Nāma* with text in Ottoman Turkish. It is also the only one with a detailed preface. The preface states that it was compiled as a gift for Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–1617) by Kalender, a high Ottoman courtier, probably during 1614–1616, when he served as the vizier of the Sultan.[73] This *Fāl-Nāma* resembles earlier works assembled by Kalender, which reflect Safavid thematic influence, with an emphasis on Abrahamic prophets, who were meant to serve as lessons for the readers. Of the thirty-five paintings in this *Fāl-Nāma*, most were earlier existent images, to which Kalender added relevant text.[74]

The painting of Eve and Adam leaving Paradise (fig. 3), however, was probably commissioned especially for this volume. It is attributed to Nakkaş Hasan Pasha (d. after 1620), a notable government official and artist who had a considerable influence on book illustrations from 1580–1620. Whereas most other paintings in this volume combine a synthesis of Ottoman and Safavid themes, the style of this particular painting is, according to Bağcı, “more Ottoman.”[75]

Similar to fig. 2 from the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma*, also this painting depicts the expulsion

of Eve and Adam from the Garden. However, the Ottoman painting depicts a slightly later moment: here, Eve and Adam are already outside the Garden. Their transition from the celestial sphere to the earthly one is emphasized through their location on the dark land, beyond the vegetative area. Firat considers this empty land as barren;[76] however, black soil is usually highly fertile. It is still empty because Eve and Adam are yet to fulfill this potential.

Bağcı notes that, since this painting focuses on the results of disobedience (post-Paradise existence), it highlights the moral dimension of the fall. [77] While it can be argued that he human moral responsibility is further emphasized through the absence of Iblīs from this painting, Milstein *et al.* interpret this absence as highlighting the prophetic (rather than fallen) aspect of Adam [and Eve].[78] This motif, therefore, offers ambivalence; which is also evident from other aspects of the painting.

Unlike the dramatic setting of the expulsion scene in the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* (fig. 3), this painting seems almost tranquil, "the calm after the storm." A crowned angel, possibly Riḍwān the gate keeper, stands at the doorway of Paradise, watching, surprised (as indicated by his finger) as Eve and Adam, followed by the snake and peacock, slowly walk away from the Garden (which arcade walls resemble the archways of the Topkapi Palace).[79]

Like in fig. 2 above, here too, Eve and Adam both have halos. Different to the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* paintings, the halos here are not fiery, but rather green-colored (green being the color associated with the Prophet Muḥammad).[80] The halo of Adam is bigger. At the same time, the complexion of Adam is significantly darker than that of Eve, possibly representing the narrative in some of the *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* works which counts a dark complexion as one of Adam's punishments for the transgression.[81] Notably, Eve is portrayed with a pale skin, like that of the angel. Firat notes that these different complexions are also

found in illustrations of the poem *Ḥadīqat al-Su'adā'* (The Garden of the happy) by the Ottoman poet Fuḍūlī (d. 1556), which retells the story of the expulsion. The angelic association creates a role reversal between Eve and Adam. Whereas in the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* (fig. 2) Eve is depicted with blackened limbs, similar to Iblīs, in fig. 3 she is located higher than Adam in the celestial hierarchy, thanks to her angelic pale feature.[82] Possibly, this higher location also made it more difficult for Eve to accept the expulsion.

Contrarily Adam, who is portrayed as being in the midst of stepping away from the Garden, seems to fully accept the divine decree. He firmly holds in his hand the hand of Eve, who stands in one place, somewhat leaning backwards, while Adam seems almost to be pulling her forward. They face each other, but their gazes do not meet. Adam's right foot firmly turns forward, whereas Eve's left (sinister) foot expresses doubt (a satanic feature). Following Na'ama Brosh and Milstein, Firat notes that the holding hands motif probably reflects Fuḍūlī's poem, which includes this motif. Firat further suggests that Eve is reluctant to follow Adam, and considers taking her own independent journey (thus reflecting the Islamic tradition about Adam falling in India and Eve in Jeddah).[83] However, Eve does not seem to be going anywhere. Even her halo turns backwards, with the pointed tip towards the gate of the Garden, whereas Adam's clearly bents forward, directing further away from the Garden. Apparently, she again fails to obey the divine command, and refuses to leave the Garden and its vicinity. Her reluctance to leave is apparent also in other illustrations of the expulsion, in *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* works.[84]

This difference in the couple's coming to terms with the new conditions is also reflected in more ways in the painting. Eve and Adam are portrayed as leaving the Garden wearing only a girdle of fig leaves (echoing Gen. 3:7). Following their consumption of the forbidden fruit, they both now realize their nakedness. However, only Adam attempts to

cover his bare breast with his hand; Eve stands shamelessly, her hands spread to the sides of her exposed body. This is particularly remarkable considering that even the animals seem shameful — the snake hides behind the leaves of the bush next to the door, and the peacock hides his head in his tail. Similar to the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* image (fig. 2), a parallel between Eve and the peacock is evident here as well. Like Eve, he too is adorned (with a fancy tail), and seems reluctant to leave, still standing at the threshold of Paradise.[85]

Notably, while Eve and Adam lost all other garments, Eve does not leave empty-handed. She still maintains her earring. According to the *Qiṣaṣ* work of al-Kisāʾī, when God created Eve and married her to Adam, He adorned Eve with all kind of jewelry.[86] The golden earring is the only remnant of these — possibly a reminder to next time *listen* better, but also a symbol of materialism, vanity, sensuality and subordination. Restrained sexuality is also reflected through the clips that hold her long hair, whereas Adam's remains loose. Furthermore, in her left (sinister) hand Eve still holds six stalks. The stalks represent a prevalent Islamic view, that the forbidden fruit of Paradise was wheat. According to a report recorded by al-Kisāʾī, Eve picked seven stalks from the Paradise tree.[87] The image portrays her as carrying the six remaining stalks (one would have been consumed) down to earth. Eve is thus portrayed as a trickster figure: shameless and remorseless, she destructed the existing divine order by causing the expulsion from Paradise. But at the same time she also creates the beginning of a new order (life on earth), by bringing new knowledge: the use of wheat (previously unavailable to humans). Wheat being a symbol of civilization and sedentary life, Eve thus holds the seeds for earthly nutrition, and symbolizes the transformation from a paradisiacal gatherers community into an agricultural civilization. Her disobedience is thus Promethean, rather than demonic.

Finally, a significant detail that further emphasizes the differentiation between Eve

and Adam in this painting is that Adam has a navel, which indicates that Adam is a human, who was born from his mother's womb. Firat notes that the concurrent absence of a navel from Eve's body (since she was created, rather than born) allows us to speculate that she was Adam's mother.[88] The biblical and Islamic tradition narrative about Eve being created from Adam is thus reversed, as Eve becomes the mother of *all* living. Firat concludes that together the wheat, Eve's autonomy against Adam's position, her angelic complexion and Adam's navel create an image of Eve that is very different from that of the mainstream cultural tradition. For firat, the close reading enables reading this episode for the "victim" (Eve), rather than for the "main character".[89]

But it is exactly these details which make the term "victim" unsuitable in this context. Firat, while recognizing that this painting offers an alternative image of Eve, chooses to stop at this point. However, put together her characteristics — land fertility, procreation, primordial motherhood, celestial qualities, and autonomy — create the image of an exiled fertility goddess, who is understandably reluctant to leave the divine realm.

Summary

A combined approach of informed iconography and close reading of the portrayals of Eve in the *Fāl-Nāma* paintings reveals that these paintings complete the Islamic textual tradition about Eve, by revealing aspects of this tradition, which otherwise are difficult to trace in the literary sources. Similar to the religious Islamic tradition, these paintings portray Eve as a complex and ambivalent character. The spouse of a prophet, potentially a prophet in her own right and the primordial mother of humanity, she is also held blameworthy for the transgression in Paradise. The paintings seem to push these contrasts even further: similar to Adam, Eve too has a prophetic halo; still, at the same time she is also portrayed as not only disobedient but physically demonic.

But a close reading of the details in the paintings reveals that the *Fāl-Nāma* paintings also break with the textual tradition about Eve, by suggesting alternative narratives of her story, which the textual sources could not, or would not, relate. Figure 1 depicts Eve within the divine realm, so to speak, before the transgression, that is, still obedient. However, already here she is characterized in a way that does not coincide with her mainstream textual depictions: she has a prophetic halo; the angels prostrate themselves before her; her existence is expanded beyond and before the event of the transgression; and in many ways she is portrayed as equal to Adam. The level of subversion of this portrayal of Eve becomes evident through later illustrations of the same episode. Many such illustrations were influenced by fig. 1, however they omit those motifs, which elevate Eve, such as the halo and angelic prostration.

Of the three paintings, fig. 2 appears to be most in line with the textual tradition. An iconographic reading of this painting presents Eve as inferior to Adam, bearing the main responsibility for the transgression, and physically related to the demonic realm. Nevertheless, here, too, Eve still maintains some of her elevating characteristics, such as the halo (although an ambivalent one). A close reading discloses a promise of a new beginning. Eve is thus portrayed as a trickster figure, partly demonic, but also Promethean, in her contribution towards the fulfillment of a potentially better future, which the expulsion embodies. Her middle position, which is characteristic of such figures, is evident through the combination of the blackened limbs with the prophetic halo. Notably, also the adjoining text of this image within the dispersed *Fāl-Nāma* interprets this painting as predicting a great misfortune, to be followed by a greater good outcome.

Figure 3 is probably the most subversive of the three paintings. Outside the Garden, Eve is portrayed as an active, independent figure. A manifest trickster, she has destructed the

old paradisiacal order, and carries in her hand the wheat, which is the key for the emergence of a new one. A close reading characterizes Eve as a primordial goddess of earth and fertility. Contrary to the textual tradition, she is the progenitor of Adam, and humanity as a whole. Sent out of the divine realm, she maintains her nurturing quality by carrying the celestial wheat to the mundane, barren land. The black land, which is reminiscent of the blackened body of Eve in fig. 2, following her consumption of the celestial wheat, contrasts with Eve's angelic white hand, now carrying this wheat. By bringing the wheat to earth, Eve integrates her celestial (fig. 1) and earthly (fig. 2) nature, and fulfills her fertility potential (fig. 3). Eve's celestial nature, which is revealed through these *Fāl-Nāma* paintings, thus completes, as well as breaks with, her image in the Islamic textual tradition.

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[1] Q 2:30–38; 7:11–25; 20:115–123.

[2] Zohar Hadromi-Allouche, "The wheat and the barley: Feminine (in)fertility in Eve and Adam narratives in Islam," in *Texts in transit in the medieval mediterranean*, eds. Y. Tzvi Langermann and Robert G. Morrison (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016), 116–127.

[3] The fall of Iblīs also appears independently in the Qur'an: Q 15:26–44, 17:61–65, 18:50, and 38:71–85.

[4] Literally: "We have created you, then shaped you" (Q 7:11).

[5] Q 2:30–38 adds some details concerning the general angelic objection to the divine intention of creating Adam. See also Leigh Chipman, "Adam and the angels: An examination of mythic elements in Islamic sources," *Arabica* 49 (2002): 429–455. Haim Schwartzbaum, "Jewish and Moslem sources of a Falasha creation myth," in *Studies in biblical and Jewish folklore*, eds. Raphael Patai, Francis Lee Utley and Dov Noy (Bloomington: University of

Indiana Press, 1960), 48.

[6] S. Calderini, "Woman, sin and lust," in *Religion and sexuality*, eds. M.A. Hayes, Wendy Porter and David Tombs (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press), 46–63. Jane I. Smith and Yvonne Y. Haddad, "Eve: Islamic image of woman," *Women's Studies int. Forum* 5 (1982): 135–144. D.A. Spellberg, "Writing the unwritten life of the Islamic Eve: Menstruation and the demonization of motherhood," *Int. J. Middle East Stud.* 28 (1996): 305–324.

[7] See, for example, Roberto Tottoli, "Adam," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam THREE*, eds. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas and Everett Rowson, Consulted online on 14 June 2016.

[8] Q 11:71, 29: 51 (wife of Abraham), 27:29–44 (Queen of Sheba), 9:28, 11:66 (wife of Pharaoh), 12:23–32 (seductive Egyptian).

[9] The name "Eve" (Ḥawā') for Adam's spouse appears already in one of the earliest Islamic sources available to us: Muḥammad Ibn Isḥāq (d. 150 AH/ 767 CE), *al-Mubtada' fī qiṣaṣ al-anbiyyā'*, ed. Muḥammad Karīm al-Kawwāz (Beirut: Arab Diffusion Company, 2006), 58.

[10] Ni'matallāh al-Jazā'irī (d. 1112 AH/ 1701 CE), *Al-Nūr al-mubīn fī qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā' wa'l-mursilīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Andalus, n.d.), 28 ,52–53. Quṭb al-Dīn Sa'd bin Hibatallāh al-Rāwandī (d. 573 AH/ 1178 CE), *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā',* ed. Ghulām Riḍā 'Irfanyān al-Yazdī (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Mufīd, 1989), 57–58.

[11] Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh al-Kisā'ī (d. 6th century AH/ 11th century CE), *Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā'*, ed. Isaac Eisenberg (Leiden: Brill, 1922), 31. b.B.Bat.58a.

[12] Muqātil Ibn Sulaymān (d. 150 AH/ 767 CE), *Tafsīr Muqātil Ibn Sulaymān*, ed. Ahmad Farid (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2003), 1:42 (sūra 2), 1:386 (sūra 7:20–21). Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310 AH/ 923 CE), *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* (Beirut: Dār al-

Fikr, 1405 A.H. [1984 C.E.]), 12:347–349, 351 (sūra 7:20–21). Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310 AH/ 923 CE), *Ta'rīkh al-Ṭabarī*, ed. Ṣadīq Jamīl al-'Aṭṭār (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1998), 1:77.

[13] Kohlberg, however, notes some contradictory views of Eve in Shī'ite sources, for example that she and Adam were jealous of Fāṭima and the imams, and this jealousy led them into temptation. Etan Kohlberg, "Some Shī'ī views of the antediluvian world," *Studia Islamica* 52 (1980): 41–66. Serpil Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," in *Falnama: The book of Omens*, by Massumeh Farhad and Serpil Bağcı, with contributions by Maria Mavroudi, Kathryn Babayan, Cornell H. Fleischer, Julia Bailey, Wheeler M. Thackson, Jr., and Sergei Tourkin (London: Thames and Hudson, 2009), 97–115.

[14] Ibn Isḥāq, *Al-Mubtada'*, 58. Abū Isḥāq Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Naysābūrī al-Tha'labī (d. 427 AH/ 1035 CE), *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā' al-musammā 'arā'is al-majālis*, ed. Muḥammad Sayd (Cairo: Dār al-Fajr li'l-turāth, 2001), 45. Muḥammad b. Manī' al-Hāshimī al-Baṣrī Ibn Sa'd (d. 230 AH/ 845 CE), *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā* (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiya, 1997), 1:34. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, 1:75. Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:514 (sūra 2:35). Muḥammad Fakhr al-Dīn b. Ḍiyā' al-Dīn 'Umar al-Rāzī (d. 606 AH/ 1209 CE), *Tafsīr al-Fakhr al-Rāzī* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2005), 13:88 (sūra 6).

[15] Ibn Isḥāq, *Al-Mubtada'*, 61–62. Al-Tha'labī, *Qiṣaṣ*, 47. Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'īl Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1992), 27. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, 1:78. Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:530 (sūra 2:36). Al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, 3:14 (sūra 2).

[16] According to a tradition that is recorded by al-Tha'labī, Adam was punished with 5 curses, Satan with 10 curses, and Eve received 15 curses. Al-Tha'labī, *Qiṣaṣ*, 48-52. Other reports only mention the punishments of Eve and the earth, or Eve and the snake — but not of Adam

or Satan: al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, 1:76–77. Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:526 (sūra 2:36), 12:355–356 (sūra 7:22).

[17] Rachel Milstein, Karin Ruhrdanz and Barbara Schmitz, *Stories of the prophets: Illustrated manuscripts of Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā',* Islamic art and architecture series, vol. 8 (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda Publishers, 1999), 4. Kathryn Babayan, "The cosmological order of things in early modern Safavid Iran," in *Falnama*, by Farhad and Bağcı, 245–255.

[18] See for example, Moti Benmelech, "History, politics, and messianism: David Ha-Reuveni's origin and mission," *AJS Review* 35 (2011): 35–60.

[19] Babayan, "Cosmological order," 246–254.

[20] Babayan, "Cosmological order," 248. Serpil Bağcı, "The Falnama of Ahmed I (TSM H.1703)," in *Falnama*, by Farhad and Bağcı, 68–76. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, VII, 1–5.

[21] Massumeh Farhad and Serpil Bağcı, "The Falnama in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries," in *Falnama*, by Farhad and Bağci, 27–40. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 4, 95.

[22] Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 33. Babayan, "Cosmological order," 246–251. Massumeh Farhad, "Between the past and the future: The *Fālnāma* (book of omens) in the 16th and early 17th centuries," in *People of the Prophet's House: Artistic ritual expressions of Shi'i Islam*, ed. Fahmida Suleman (London: Azimuth Editions in association with the Institute of Ismaili Studies [and] in collaboration with the British Museum's Department of the Middle East, 2015), 137–145.

[23] Serpil Bağcı and Massumeh Farhad, "The art of bibliomancy," in *Falnama*, by Farhad and Bağcı, 19–25. Farhad and Bağcı, "The Falnama in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,"

35–37. Babayan, “Cosmological order,” 246–25. Roger Savory, *Iran Under the Safavids* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 50–75, 129. Īraj Afšār, “Fāl-nāma,” *Encyclopædia Iranica*, IX/2: 172-176, available online at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/fal-nama (accessed on 20 January 2012). H. Massé, “Fāl-Nāma,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, second edition, eds. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel and W.P. Heinrichs, consulted online on 05 November 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_2256>.

[24] Begüm Özden Firat, *Encounters with the Ottoman miniature: Contemporary readings of an imperial art* (London, New York: I..B. Tauris, 2015), kindle edition, “Introduction” and Ch. 1.

[25] Firat, *Encounters*, location 709.

[26] Mieke Bal, *Reading “Rembrandt”: Beyond the word/image opposition* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University press, 1991). Naomi Schor, *Reading in detail: Aesthetics and the feminine* (New York: Methuen, 1987).

[27] Babayan, “Cosmological order,” 246–251. Farhad and Bağcı, “The Falnama in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,” 27–40. Firat, *Encounters*, “Introduction” and Ch. 1.

[28] Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 7, 66. Farhad, “Between the past and the future,” 137.

[29] Farhad and Bağcı, “The Falnama in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,” 38. Massumeh Farhad, “The manuscripts: The dispersed Falnama,” in *Falnama*, by Farhad and Bağci, 41–51. Farhad, “Between the past and the future,” 144, 145, n. 28. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 66.

[30] Farhad and Bağcı, “The Falnama in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,” 31.

[31] Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 83. Farhad, "The manuscripts: The dispersed Falnama," 43.

[32] Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 97.

[33] *Idem*, 97–115. Laurence Binyon, Wilkinson and Gray, *Persian Miniature painting: A descriptive catalogue of the miniatures exhibited at Burlington House, January-March 1931* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933). Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 107–108. Wheeler M. Thackston, Jr., trans., "The dispersed Falnama," in *Falnama*, by Farhad and Bağcī, 257–264. Sergei Tourkin, trans., "The Falnama of Ahmed I (TSM H.1703)," in *Falnama*, by Farhad and Bağci, 295–305.

[34] Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 83.

[35] Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 97.

[36] Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 70, 83.

[37] Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 33.

[38] Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, H.1227, text by Naysābūrī, 1574–1575 or 1575–1576, fol. 11a. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, B.249, text by Naysābūrī, fol. 6b. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 33, 205 (Ms. T–1), 213 (Ms. T–7); figs. 25, 57.

[39] Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 27.

[40] *Idem*, 29.

[41] Al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ*, 31–35. Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 97. Wheeler M. Thackston, Jr. *Tales of the Prophets (Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā')* by Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allah al-Kisā'ī (Chicago: Great books of the Islamic world, 1997), 35–36.

[42] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, persan 54, text by Naysābūrī, calligraphy by Kujī Mīr b. Muḥibb 'Alī Rashīdī, 1581, fol. 6a. New York Public Library, Spencer Collection,

Persian Ms. 46, text by Naysābūrī, 34.7x22.5, fol. 9a. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 70, 199–201 (mss. N–2 and P–1); plate XIII.

[43] New York Public Library, Spencer Collection, Persian Ms. 46, fol. 9a.

[44] E.g., Aḥmad bin ʻAlī Abū al-Faḍl Ibn Ḥajar al-ʻAsqalānī (d. 852 AH/ 1449 CE), *Fatḥ al-bārī: Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, eds. Muḥammad Fuʾād ʻAbd al-Bāqī and Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (Cairo: Al-Maktaba al-Salafiyya, n.d.), 6:473–474. Ibn Ḥajar quotes the views of a number of scholars, such as al-Ashʻarī (d. 324 AH/ 935 CE) and al-Qurṭubī (d. 671 AH/ 1273 CE), who supported this view. On the controversy in Islam regarding the prophecy of women see Maribel Fierro, "Women as prophets in Islam," in *Writing the feminine: Women in Arab sources*, eds. Manuela Marín and Randi Deguilhem (London and New York: L.B. Tauris, 2002), 183–198.

[45] Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 106.

[46] Uri Rubin, "More light on Muhammad's pre-existence: qurʾanic and post-qurʾanic perspectives," in *Books and written culture of the Islamic world: Studies presented to Claude Gilliot on the occasion of his 75th birthday*, eds. Andrew Rippin and Roberto Tottoli, Brill, Islamic History and Civilization 113 (Leiden: Boston, 2015), 288–311.

[47] E.g., New York Public Library, Spencer Collection, Persian Ms. 46, fol. 9a. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the prophets*, 109, 199–200 (ms. N–2).

[48] Fierro, "Women as prophets in Islam," 183–198.

[49] London, Keir Collection, text by Naysābūrī, fol. 244a. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, H. 1225, text by Naysābūrī, fol. 209b. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 194–196 (ms. K; plate XXXV), 210–211 (ms. T–5; fig. 18). Istanbul, Topkapi Palace Museum, H.1703, ca. 1570s–1580s, fol. 32b. Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 110.

[50] Thackston, "The dispersed Falnama," 257.

[51] Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 28, 106, 109.

[52] ʻAbdallāh bin Muḥammad bin Jaʻfar, Abū Muḥammad al-Iṣbahānī (d. 274 AH/ 979 CE), *Kitāb al-ʻaẓama*, ed. Riḍāʾallāh bin Muḥammad Idrīs al-Mubārakfūrī (Riyad: Dār al-ʻĀṣima, 1408 AH [1987 CE]), 5:1563–1564. ʻAbd al-Raḥmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 910 AH/ 1505 CE, *Al-Durr al-manthūr fī ʾl-tafsīr al-maʾthūr* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1993), 1:119–120. See also Leigh Chipman, "Mythical aspects of the process of Adam's creation in Judaism and Islam," *Studia Islamica* 93 (2001): 5–25.

[53] Massumeh Farhad and Serpil Bağci, "Beyond the Falnama," in *Falnama*, by Farhad and Bağcı, 198–217. Massumeh Farhad, "The manuscripts: The dispersed Falnama," 44. Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 98. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 70, 108.

[54] Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 98.

[55] Istanbul, Bezayet Devlet Kütüphanesi, ms. 5275, text by Daydūzamī, fol. 47a. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, H.1225, fol. 14b. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, H.1228, text by Naysābūrī, fol. 8a. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 190–191 (ms. I–1), 210 (ms. T–5), 214 (ms. T–8).

[56] Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 98. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 70, 109.

[57] Al-Kisāʾī, *Qiṣaṣ*, 33–34.

[58] Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 98.

[59] Eva R. Hoffman, "The beginnings of the illustrated Arabic book: An intersection between art and scholarship," *Muqarnas* 17 (2000): 37–52. A portrayal of biblical (or pre-Islamic) unclothed personages is found at the Morgan ms. of *Manāfiʻ al-ḥayawān* (1297–1300). There is disagreement in regards to whether the characters in this painting represent Adam and Eve

or the Persian Mashī and Mashyānī. Hoffman further notes that unclothed characters in Umayyad desert palaces were probably "adaptations of the pre-Islamic indigenous Greco-Roman visual vocabulary of mythological personifications," and served for private purposes. Hoffman, "The beginnings," 50, n. 38.

[60] Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 98.

[61] Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussicher Ulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez A fol. 3, text by Naysābūrī (1577), fol. 13b. Istanbul, Bezayet Devlet Kütüphanesi, ms. 5275, fol. 47a. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, text by Naysābūrī, 8a. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, H.1228, R. 1536, text by Naysābūrī, ﬀol. 16b. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, H.1225, fol. 14b. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 109, 185 (ms. B; fig. 2), 190–191 (ms. I–1), 208 (ms. T–3; fig. 40), 210 (ms. T–5; fig.48).

[62] E.g. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, fol. 16b. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 208 (ms. T–3; fig. 40).

[63] E.g. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, H.1225, fol. 14b. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 210 (ms. T–5; fig. 48).

[64] Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ*, 35.

[65] *Idem*, 37–38.

[66] *Idem*, 34.

[67] The Topkapi Persian *Fāl-Nāma* [H.1702] and the Ahmed I *Fāl-Nāma* [H.1703]). Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 98.

[68] Al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ*, 36–39. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 108.

[69] Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 98.

[70] Al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ*, 37. Al-Tha'labī, *Qiṣaṣ*, 45–47.

[71] Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussicher Ulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez A fol. 3, fol. 13b. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 185 (ms. B; fig. 2).

[72] Thackston, "The dispersed Falnama," 262.

[73] Serpil Bağcı, "The Falnama of Ahmed I (TSM H.1703)," 68–76. Farhad and Bağcı, "The Falnama in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries," 28.

[74] Bağcı, "The Falnama of Ahmed I," 69–75. Farhad, "Between the past and the future," 145, n. 29.

[75] Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 100. Bağcı, "The Falnama of Ahmed I," 69, 317 (n. 16). For the differences see: Michael Rogers, "Safavids versus Ottomans: The origins of the decorative repertoire of the Aleppo-Zimmer," in *Angels, peonies, and fabulous creatures: The Aleppo room in Berlin*: *International symposium of the Museum für Islamische Kunst* (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin 12–14 April 2002), 127–31.

[76] Firat, *Encounters*, location 814.

[77] Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 100.

[78] Firat, *Encounters*, location 871. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the prophets*, 108.

[79] al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ*, 33. Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 100.

[80] John Renard, *Islam and the heroic image: Themes in literature and the visual arts* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1999), 144.

[81] Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 100.

[82] Firat, *Encounters*, location 864.

[83] Firat, *Encounters*, locations 765, 828. Na'ama Brosh and Rachel Milstein, *Biblical stories in Islamic painting* (Jerusalem: Israel Museum, 1991), 26–29.

[84] Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussicher Ulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez A fol. 3,

fol. 13b. Milstein *et al.*, *Stories of the Prophets*, 185 (ms. B; fig. 2).

[85] Bağcı, "Abrahamic traditions," 100.

[86] Al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ*, 31–32.

[87] Al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ*, 39, Hadromi-Allouche, "The wheat and the barley," 118.

[88] Firat, *Encounters*, location 911.

[89] Firat, *Encounters*, locations 374, 953, 958.