

THE MEANING OF MEN'S DEGREES ARE HIGHER OVER WOMEN

(Application of Roland Barthes Semiotics Against QS Al-Baqarah [2]:228)

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Abstract

This paper discusses the meaning of the word darajah in The Qur'an in particular in QS al-Baqarah [2]:228 which seems to be used as legitimacy for gender-biased people who think that women are left behind. In the study of semiotics, the word darajah is a symbol in the delivery of messages that must be interpreted. One of the relevant semiotic theories to be used in this paper is Roland Barthes' semiotics. In general, the semiotics offered by Barthes have two stages. The first stage is called the linguistic system and the second stage is called the mythological system. Next, the author will apply Barthes' semiotic theory to understand the meaning of the word darajah in QS al-Baqarah [2]: 228. The result is namely, the linguistic system in the word darajah is defined as position, leadership, and the rank of men is higher than women. While the mythological system is the meaning of the word darajah in this verse, namely the husbands have more right to take the wife back if he wants reconciliation with good intentions. The ideology or message contained in the verse is the relationship between husband and wife who have equal rights and obligations in the household.

Keyword: Darajah; Linguistic System; Roland Barthes; Semiotics; The Mythological System

Abstrak

Tulisan ini membahas tentang makna kata darajah dalam al-Qur'an khususnya pada Q.S al-baqarah [2]:228 yang agaknya dijadikan legitimasi bagi orang-orang yang bias gender yang menganggap perempuan merupakan makhluk yang tertinggal. Dalam kajian semiotika, kata darajah merupakan simbol dalam penyampaian pesan yang harus diinterpretasikan. Salah satu teori semiotika yang relevan untuk digunakan dalam tulisan ini adalah semiotika Roland Barthes. Secara umum, semiotika yang ditawarkan Barthes mempunyai dua tahapan. Pertama disebut sebagai sistem linguistik dan tahapan yang kedua disebut sebagai sistem mitologi. Selanjutnya, penulis akan mengaplikasikan teori semiotika Barthes untuk memahami makna kata darajah dalam Q.S al-Baqarah [2]: 228. Hasilnya adalah, sistem linguistik pada kata darajah diartikan sebagai kedudukan, kepemimpinan, pangkat laki-laki lebih tinggi atas perempuan. Sedangkan sistem mitologinya adalah makna kata darajah pada ayat ini yaitu suami lebih berhak merujuk istrinya dengan niat yang baik. Adapun ideologi atau pesan yang terkandung dalam ayat tersebut adalah hubungan antara suami dan istri yang memiliki hak dan kewajiban yang setara dalam rumah tangga.

Kata kunci: Darajah; Roland Barthes; semiotika; sistem linguistik; sistem mitologi

Introduction

It is no longer surprising to hear about the issue of equality between men and women or commonly referred to as the issue of gender equality. From the past until now the issue is still popular to be discussed and debated. It is still about the views and social inequality in society between the condition and position of women and men. One of them is triggered by patriarchal values and social construction in society which results in men being considered to have a position above all else compared to women.

This has happened since time immemorial. For example, Greek society is known for its philosophical thoughts, which are silent about women's rights and obligations. Among them, women were placed or imprisoned in the palace. Meanwhile, among the lower classes, the fate of women is very sad. They are traded like goods, while women who are married are completely under the control of their husbands.¹ Even more pathetic is the Hindu and Chinese civilizations. The right to life of a woman who has a husband must stop when her husband dies, she must be burned alive with her husband's corpse. Likewise in Judaism, the dignity of women is no different from the dignity of a servant. Even if he does not have a son, a father has the right with the heart to sell his daughter. As taught, they believed by assuming that women were the source of the curse that caused Adam to be expelled from heaven. In the view of Christian leaders in the 5th century AD, women were considered as the devil's weapon to mislead humans.² This indicates that the issue existed long before the revelation of the Qur'an.

Differences on the basis of gender and class remain part of society. There are many statements in the Qur'an which show that women are valued lower than men in culture. Despite rejecting some manifestations of this, the Qur'an retains what it cannot eliminate due to social and cultural constraints. Even in some respects from the point of view of the Qur'an, women do not have the same status as men.³ That's all when understanding the Qur'an only textually. For example, the higher degree of men over women as stated in QS al-Baqarah [2]: 228, if understood textually only, will lead to the public view that men are more noble than women. And it strengthens society's stigma that women are weak creatures, which will make women even more marginalized

¹ Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Quran: Tafsir Maudhu'i Atas Pelbagai Persoalan Umat*, (Bandung: Mizan, 1996), p. 269.

² Shihab, p. 297.

³ Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'ān: Towards a Contemporary Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 119.

This interpretation seems to indicate that the Qur'an shows the existence of superiority and inferiority between men and women. Whereas on the other hand the Qur'an also reveals that the difference between men and women lies in their piety to Allah.⁴ In addition, the Qur'an also upholds the value of justice. Therefore, in order to produce a universal meaning based on the verse without creating a gender biased understanding.⁵ Based on the description above, it is necessary to put a comprehensive interpretation of the meaning of the word *darajah* in QS al-Baqarah [2]: 228.

Therefore, the author will apply the relevant theory of Roland Barthes' semiotics used in interpreting the symbol, because he puts a clear method on the process of structural analysis. Roland also uses his structural analysis on textual criticism.⁶ Therefore, the author chose the meaning of the word *darajah* in QS al-Baqarah [2]: 228 which is the object of research material. While the application of Roland Barthes' semiotics to the verse was chosen as the formal object. This paper aims to determine the structure of the text and explore the meaning of the sentence *al-rija>lu 'alaihinna darajah*, more precisely the word *darajah* in QS al-Baqarah [2]: 228 by applying the semiotic approach of Roland Barthes.

Semiotics Roland Barthes

Semiotics comes from the Greek “*semeion*” which means (sign) or “*seme*” which means the interpretation of signs.⁷ Semiotics is a science or analytical method commonly used to study signs. Signs are the basis of all communication. In semiotics, a sign is considered to represent or signify something other than oneself.⁸ A sign is something that can be referred to as on the basis of previously built social conventions, it can be considered to represent something else. Initially, the sign is interpreted as something that points to the existence of something else. In terminology, semiotics can be defined as the study of a broad range of objects, events, and all cultures as signs.⁹ Semiotics was first developed and widely used in the study of sign systems. Semiotics in relation to this is an understanding of semiotics which refers to the semiotic theory of Ferdinand De Saussure, who is known as the father of modern

⁴ See Sura al-Hujurat [49]: 13.

⁵ Ulufatul Khoiriyah, “Perempuan Sebagai Harsun Dalam Al-Qur'an (Kajian Semiotika Roland Barthes)” (Skripsi, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, 2014), p. 7, <https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/13869/>.

⁶ Khikmatiar, “Konsep Poligami Dalam Al-Qur'an (Aplikasi Semiologi Roland Barthes),” 57.

⁷ Paul Copley and Litza Jansz, eds., *Introducing Semiotics* (Thriplow: Icon Books, 2005), p. 4.

⁸ Alex Sobur and Yasraf Amir Piliang, *Semiotika komunikasi* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2006), p. 15.

⁹ Indiwan Seto Wahyu Wibowo, *Semiotika Komunikasi : Aplikasi Praktis bagi Penelitian dan Skripsi Komunikasi* (Mitra Wacana Media, 2013), p. 7.

linguistics and Charles Sanders Peirce's Semiotics.¹⁰ In this case what makes the science of signs known by two popular terms, namely semiology and semiotics. Saussure is known to be one of the figures who popularized the term semiology among Europeans. They use the term in various branches of science. Among them, in addition to using this term in linguistics and literature, they also use this term in painting, architecture, interior, cultural anthropology, philosophy and social psychology. The term semiotic was popularized by Peirce among Americans. Therefore, the name is based on semiotics as a formal doctrine of signs. He also equates semiotics with logic which was developed in conjunction with philosophy of pragmatism.¹¹

Saussure (1857-1913) dividing the relationship between the signifier and the signified based on a convention called signification. Signifier can be seen as physical forms such as concepts in literary works. Meanwhile, the signified can be seen as a meaning that appears to be behind the physical form in the form of values. Significant relationships are based on social agreement in the meaning of the signs. Then the relationship between semiotics and linguistics must be realized by the nature of the bond between the two fields, which Saussure focuses on the nature of the word as a sign.¹² Saussure defines a sign as a combination of a concept called a signified and an acoustic image called a signifier.¹³ In contrast to Peirce (1839-1914), he argued that signs are divided into three types namely indexes, icons and symbols. The icon is a sign that connects between the signifier and the signified in the form of a scientific equation, then the index is a sign that shows a natural relationship between the sign and the signified that is causal or a causal relationship, while the symbol is a sign that does not show a natural relationship between the signifier and the signified.¹⁴

The emergence of semiotics is a direct result of formalism and structuralism.¹⁵ Structuralism was basically born at the beginning of the 20th century, then followed by semiotics which occurred due to the stagnation of structuralism itself. The idea of signs has actually existed and has been carried out since the time of the Greeks. The Greek philosophers

¹⁰ Ambarini Asriningsari and Nazla Umayu, *Semiotika Teori Dan Aplikasi Pada Karya Sastra*, (Semarang: UPGRIS PRESS, 2018), p. 35.

¹¹ Muhammad Khoyin, *Filsafat Bahasa*, (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2013), p. 121-22.

¹² Asriningsari and Umayu, *Semiotika Teori Dan Aplikasi Pada Karya Sastra*, p. 35.

¹³ Ferdinand de Saussure, *Pengantar linguistik umum*, trans. Rahayu S . Hidayat (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada Univ. Press, 1988), p. 147.

¹⁴ Saussure, p. 36.

¹⁵ Nyoman Kutha Ratna, *Teori, metode, dan teknik penelitian sastra*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2008), p. 97.

had once thought about the function of the sign. In addition, the meaning and use of signs has also been mentioned in the period of Medieval Greek philosophy. The term semiotics was only used by Lambert (a philosopher from Germany) in the 18th century as a synonym for the word *logic*, then people only thought about the use of signs systematically and were busy discussing it in the 20th century.¹⁶

Roland Barthes is a French semiologist who has studied written language and the "sign" system, such as his study *L'Etranger* of A. Camus'. He did literary criticism as a reflection on the dominance of bourgeois culture in *Le Degré zéro de l'écriture* (1953). In addition, it also reflects the literary language and the historical conditions that shaped it.¹⁷ In addition, he is also one of the figures of communication semiotics who adheres to the semiotic structuralism flow of Ferdinand De Saussure. He is also known as one of the structuralist thinkers who was passionate about practicing Saussure's linguistic and semiological models, he was also a renowned French intellectual and literary critic. He argues that language is a sign system that reflects the assumptions of a particular society at a certain time.¹⁸

Roland Barthes is the successor of Saussure's thinking. Saussure was interested in the complex way sentences are formed and the way sentence forms determine meaning, but less interested in the fact that the same sentence may convey different meanings to different people in different situations. He continued this thought by emphasizing the interaction between the text and the personal and cultural experiences of its users, the interaction between the conventions in the text and the conventions experienced and expected by its users. Barthes' idea is known as the "*order of signification*", includes denotation (actual meaning according to the dictionary) and connotation (double meaning born from cultural and personal experience). Saussure introduced the terms signifier and signified with respect to symbols or text in a message package, so Barthes used the terms denotation and connotation to indicate levels of meaning.¹⁹

If in Saussure's semiotics only comes to the meaning of denotation or semiotics of the first stage, then Barthes adds it to the meaning of connotation or semiotics of the second stage. In Barthes' language, semiotics of the first stage is a linguistic system or denotative meaning

¹⁶ Aart Van Zoest, *Serba-Serbi Semiotika* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1991), p. vii.

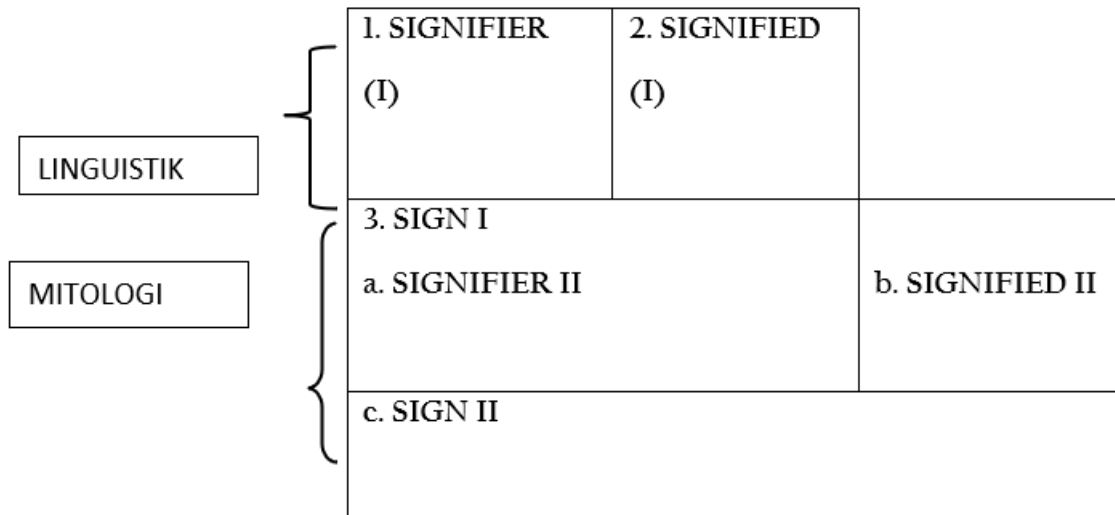
¹⁷ Baedhowi, *Antropologi Al-Quran*. (Yogyakarta: LKIS, 2009), p. 28.

¹⁸ Roland Barthes, *Elemen-Elemen Semiotologi*, trans. Kahfie Nazaruddin (Yogyakarta: Jalasutra, 2012), p. 125.

¹⁹ Pawito, *Penelitian komunikasi kualitatif* (Yogyakarta: Lembaga Kajian Islam dan Sosial (LKIS), 2007), p. 38–39.

consisting of signifier I, signified I²⁰ and sign I. While the second stage semiotics is a system of mythological or connotative meaning consisting of sign I/signifier II, signified II, and sign II. From the meaning of these connotations, what is known as "myth" will be found. In Barthes' terminology, myth is a type of speech, a communication system and also a message.²¹

To clarify the view above, Barthes made a model chart that describes the suppression of the myth sign system against the language sign system as follows:



Based on the picture above, it can be illustrated that in one myth there are two semiologi systems. *First*, is language as a linguistic system. *Second*, is the myth itself. The language sign (first-level sign system) in the form of a unity between signifier and signified will turn into a mere signifier in myth (second-level sign system). The signifier in the mythical system will occupy two positions, namely full and empty. When the signifier occupies a full position, it is referred to as a meaning. Meanwhile, when the signifier occupies an empty position, it is called a *form*. As for the signified, it is still referred to as a concept because it does not cause ambiguity.

The placement of mythical signifier in these two positions greatly determines the analysis of myths. Because, mythical signifier are taken from the language system that previously had full meaning, which then experienced the evaporation of meaning. So that there is a void and all that is left is a row of letters that are ready to be filled by the concept of a mythical system. The myths that survive historically (repeated and become references in the

²⁰ Dadan Rusmana, *Filsafat Semiotika: Paradigma, Teori, Dan Metode Interpretasi Tanda Dari Semiotika Struktural Hingga Dekonstruksi Praktis* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2014), p. 201.

²¹ Khikmatiar, "Konsep Poligami Dalam Al-Qur'an (Aplikasi Semiologi Roland Barthes)," 59.

process of meaning) are what will fill the cultural codes of their society. In conditions like this, ideology is formed and attached to a particular society. Meanwhile, the signifiers in the mythical system will be part of the ideological fragment where the signifier are things that store connotative meanings.²²

Semiotics in the Interpretation of the Qur'an

Semiotics is one of the disciplines in the study of literature. However, within the scope of the interpretation of the Qur'an, semiotics is used to examine the signs of the Qur'an which are called verses that are connected by each element of the sentence, word or letter.²³ Basically, the semiotic approach in the study of the text of the Qur'an is classified as a contemporary philosophical study. As the view of Tabataba'I that classical Islamic philosophers often used philosophy in understanding the verses of the Qur'an, for example Ibn Sina and Al-Farabi who interpreted the Qur'an with their philosophical methodologies.²⁴

Semiotics was born from the school of structuralism-linguistics, while the holy book is a work that is silent and appears with the conditions as it is. Thus, analysis of the structure and sign system is the only way that can be done to understand it. The existence of the scriptures here is like a passive text that can turn into active when there is a reader who responds by interpreting it. Therefore, semiotics is one of the relevant sciences for understanding the scriptures.²⁵

At present, the application of semiotic theory in the study of the text of the Qur'an is considered as one of the right ways to understand the content of the verses of the Qur'an. Due to the structure of the language that builds the text, it can be called a sign in semiotics. So that the Qur'an which incidentally is a text with various signs in it which can be used as a very interesting study in semiotics.²⁶

Roland Barthes' Semiotics Application To Men's Higher Degree Of Women In Surah Al Baqarah [2]: 228

The focus of the study is the sentence *al-rija>lu 'alaihinna darajah* which is a sign that has a textual meaning of the degree that men are higher above women. The following verse of

²² Barthes, *Elemen-Elemen Semiotologi*, p. 93–94.

²³ Khikmatiar, "Konsep Poligami Dalam Al-Qur'an (Aplikasi Semiotologi Roland Barthes)," 60.

²⁴ Umaroh, "MAKNA 'ABASA NABI MUHAMMAD DALAM AL-QUR'AN (APLIKASI SEMIOTIKA ROLAND BARTHES TERHADAP Q.S 'ABASA[80]," 120.

²⁵ Komarudin Hidayat, *Memahami Bahasa Agama : Sebuah Kajian Hermeneutik*, Cet. 1 (Paramadina, 1996), 116.

²⁶ Ali Imron, *Semiotika Al-Qur'an; Metode Dan Aplikasi Terhadap Kisah Yusuf* (Yogyakarta: Teras, 2015), 41.

the Qur'an which will be the discussion in this paper contained in Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 228, Allah says:

وَالْمُطَلَّاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنُنَّ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۗ وَبِعَوْلْتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوا إِصْلَاحًا وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

"Divorced women remain in waiting [i.e., do not remarry] for three periods, and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs if they believe in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands have more right to take them back in this [period] if they want reconciliation. And due to them [i.e., the wives] is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable. But the men [i.e., husbands] have a degree over them [in responsibility and authority]. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise."²⁷

The linguistic system that becomes the first level of semiotic reading is by looking at the word *darajah* in terms of its denotative meaning. That means, the first level of semiotics is the textual meaning of the word *darajah* in QS al-Baqarah [2]: 228. The word *darajah* in the Arabic dictionary has the meaning of *al-manzilah*, namely position, rank, dignity, degree,²⁸ high position, and levels (*taba>qat*) of several levels.²⁹ Al-Raghib Al-Ashfahani explained, the word *darajah* has the same meaning as position, but sometimes it is mentioned with a level when juxtaposed with height or elevation not with, such as the sentence *darajah al-sat}hi* which means the height of the roof, or *darajah al-sullami* which means stairs. And sometimes the word *darajah* is interpreted with a high position. Then he gave an example with this verse QS al-Baqarah [2]: 228, with reasons as a reminder of the high position of husbands compared to their wives in thinking and devising, which is associated with QS An-Nisa' [4]: 34.³⁰

Al-Qurtubi interprets the sentence that the man has a higher degree than the woman with the intention of being superior to his position, while the word *darajah* is interpreted with a level taken from the word *da-ra-ja*, which is something that can be climbed one by one. While the word *al-rija>l* is the plural form of *rajulun*, whose initial meaning is strength which is associated with a term *arjalu al-rajuli>n* which means the strongest person among them or like the expression that says *farasun raji>lun* with the meaning strong horse. Also a limb taken from this word, namely *rijlun* (foot), on the grounds that the limb which is considered the strongest is used for walking or other things. The level of a man against a woman also lies in

²⁷ See in Saheeh International, *The Noble Quran*, Surah Al-Baqarah v. 228, accessed August 30, 2021, <https://quran.com/al-baqarah?locale=en&font=v1&reading=false&translations=20>.

²⁸ Ahmad Warson Munawwir, *Al-Munawwir: kamus Arab-Indonesia* (Surabaya: Pustaka Progresif, 1997), p. 396.

²⁹ al-Azhari, "Tahzib Al-Lughah, al-Maktabah al-Syamilah," accessed May 23, 2021, <http://www.alwarraq.com/>.

³⁰ Al-Raghib Al-Ashfahani, *Kamus Al-Qur'an Jilid 3*, trans. Ahmad Zaini Dahlan (Depok: Pustaka Khazanah Fawa'id, 2017), p. 728–29.

his intellect and strength to provide a living, pay diyat, inherit, or fight.³¹ Likewise with Ibn Kathir who interprets the sentence with advantages in position, body shape, obedience to orders, giving a living, fulfilling various obligations and interests, as well as advantages in this world and the hereafter. As in Surah An-Nisa' [4]: 34.³² "Men (husbands) are charge of women, by [right of] what Allah has given one (men) the others (women), and what they spend [for maintenance] their wealth..."³³

Wahbah Zuhaili explained in the sentence *Al-Rija'lu 'alihinna darajah* that men have a higher position over women in leadership and managing family affairs. Just like Ibn Kathir who connects this with Surah an-Nisa'[4]: 34. Then He divided two factors that made men higher in rank and got the rank of leader: *first*, he was created by Allah with the advantages of experience, mental balance, and reason, and was prepared to carry the burden, struggle, and work. *Second*, he is required to provide for his wife, pay a dowry and meet the necessities of life (clothing, food, shelter, medical treatment, etc.).³⁴ Just like Az-Zuhaili, Quraish Shihab argues that men have rank above them with leadership³⁵ in the household and Hamka said that it is a natural thing in the household to want to stand firm.³⁶ Likewise in *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya*, the word *darajah* is interpreted as the husband's superiority because he is responsible for the safety and welfare of the household.³⁷

From some of the explanations above, it can be concluded that the meaning of the word *darajah* in the verse is that a man has advantages over women in terms of leadership, position, strength, level, dignity. Whether it's in politics, material, jihad, household, or inheritance. This is based on the opinion of the scholars who interpret it so. Then it can be seen, the word *darajah* becomes a signifier and the signified is position.

The Mythological System

³¹ Al-Qurthubi, "تفسير القرطبي | 2:228 | الباحث القرآني," accessed August 30, 2021, <https://tafsir.app/qurtubi/2/228>.

³² Ibnu Katsir, "تفسير ابن كثير | 2:228 | الباحث القرآني," accessed August 30, 2021, <https://tafsir.app/ibn-kattheer/2/228>.

³³ See in Saheeh International, "The Noble Quran, Surah An-Nisa," v. 34, accessed May 23, 2021, <https://quran.com/an-nisa?locale=en&font=vl&reading=false&translations=131%2C20>.

³⁴ Wahbah Az-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Al-Munir : Aqidah, Syariah, Manhaj*, trans. Abdul Hayyie al-Kattani, 1 (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2018), p. 541.

³⁵ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbâh : Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian al-Qur'an*, 1 (Jakarta: Lentera Haiti, 2012), p. 491.

³⁶ Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, 1 (Jakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2015), p. 538.

³⁷ Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan tafsirnya*, Ed. yang disempurnakan, 1 (Jakarta: Lentera Abadi, 2004), p. 36-37.

After we reveal the first level of semiotics, then the second stage of Roland Barthes' semiotic theory is a mythological system or connotative meaning, namely by revealing the word *darajah* in terms of its connotative meaning to get a broader and deeper meaning which will then be found in the second level semiotic meaning. In other words, the second level of semiotics is the contextual meaning of QS al-Baqarah [2]: 228.

Asbabun-Nuzul from QS al-Baqarah [2]: 228 can be traced in the history of Abu Dawud and Ibn Abi Hatim, narrated from Asma' bint Yazid ibn al-Sakan al-Ansari, said: I was divorced by my husband when the Messenger of Allah (saw) still alive. At that time the woman who was divorced did not have *'iddah*. Then Allah revealed of *'iddah* for divorce: "Women who are divorced shall refrain (waiting) three times *quru'*".³⁸ And also through other history, Ats-Tsa'labi, Hibbatullah bin Salamah in the book of *al-Nasikh* and Muqatil narrated that The Messenger of Allah, Isma'il bin Abdullah al-Ghifari divorced his wife, Qatilah, and he did not know that she was pregnant, so he referred her back. Then his wife gave birth, but the child died. So Allah said, " *three times quru'* ".³⁹

In accordance with its *asbabun-nuzul* and in context with this verse seems to talk about talaq or divorce. This verse is part of a continuation of a series of verses that contain about divorce starting from QS Al-Baqarah [2]: 227-237. This verse talks about a wife who is divorced by her husband and has to undergo an *'iddah* period of three *quru'* (pure or *menstruation*) and the wife must be open and not lie about her condition (*menstruation*) to her husband, in order to know that her womb is still empty from the fetus so that there is no mixing of lineages.⁴⁰ Then the husband has the right to reconcile, with a sincere intention to make islah without the slightest intention to hurt. The divorce handed down to the wife is *raj'i* divorce, which is a divorce that can still be reconciled before the end of the *'iddah* period. According to al-Jazairi, the *'iddah* period is a period that gives the husband an opportunity to return to his wife if the divorce is talak *raj'i*.⁴¹

As explained by Wahbah Zuhaili, the husbands have more right to take wife back if he wants reconciliation during the *'iddah* period. This is because Islamic law tries to maintain the marriage bond that has been established between husband and wife. There is no lawful thing

³⁸ Az-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Al-Munir : Aqidah, Syariah, Manhaj*, p. 535.

³⁹ Jalaluddin As-Suyuthi, *Asbabun Nuzul; Sebab Turunnya Ayat Al-Quran*, trans. Abdul Hayyie al-Kattani, (Gema Insani, 2008), p. 97.

⁴⁰ Az-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Al-Munir : Aqidah, Syariah, Manhaj*, p. 535.

⁴¹ Abu Bakar Jabir Al-Jazairi, *Minhajul muslim: pedoman hidup harian seorang muslim*, trans. Taufiq Aulia Rahman and Ikhwanuddin Abdullah, (Ummul Qura, 2019), p. 857.

that Allah hates more than divorce. A wife must fulfill her husband's desire to reconciliation, as long as the goal is to improve the relationship between husband and wife. As for the other way around, if the goal is only to take revenge, make his wife suffer, and prevent her from marrying another man. So such a man is sinful in the sight of Allah because he makes his wife miserable and prevents her from marrying another man.⁴² Allah has made their husbands more entitled to refer to him if what they want is good, and Allah forbids them to harm each other, and Allah informs them both what is obligatory and what is rights. And what is obligatory on both of them is to prevent losses that will be experienced by one of the two parties.⁴³

Ibn Qayyim in his book *Za'd al-Ma'ad*, explains that reconciliation is the right of the husband as he has the right to divorce his wife.⁴⁴ The rights of husbands and wives during the *'iddah* period cannot be separated from their obligations in fulfilling their respective rights. As for the rights of the husband during the *'iddah* period, namely to refer to his ex-wife, the right for his wife not to marry during that period, and the husband has the right for his wife not to leave the house. As for the wife's rights during the *'iddah* period, including the right to receive a living, the right to receive good treatment from her husband, because the *'iddah* period *talak raj'i* is not a real separation period.⁴⁵

In general, the existence of divorce does not mean it is possible for husband and wife to unite again. Dhevi Nayasari said that *talak* does not necessarily make the husband and wife relationship cut off forever. However, both of them can unite in fostering a life like life before the divorce, namely through the husband being given the right and opportunity to refer his ex-wife, provided that the conditions that have been set have been fulfilled, both the requirements in law and Islamic law.⁴⁶ In this case, the wife also has the right, namely the need for the wife's permission to reconcile the husband, as stated by Wardah Nuroniyah who refers to the KHI Foundation Article 163-165 concerning the wife's permission to reconcile the husband is to use the argument of the letter al-Baqarah verse 228 with the quote: "*wa bu'ūlatuhunna aḥaqqu bi raddihinna*", meaning: " *And their husbands have more right to take them*". Then Wardah

⁴² Az-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Al-Munir : Aqidah, Syariah, Manhaj*, p. 536.

⁴³ Al-Thabari, "تفسير الطبري | 2:228 | الباحث القرآني" accessed May 23, 2021, <https://tafsir.app/tabari/2/228>.

⁴⁴ Ibn Qayyim Al-Jauziyyah, *Zadul Ma'ad: Jalan Menuju Ke Akhirat*, trans. Kathur Suhardi, (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2011), p. 340.

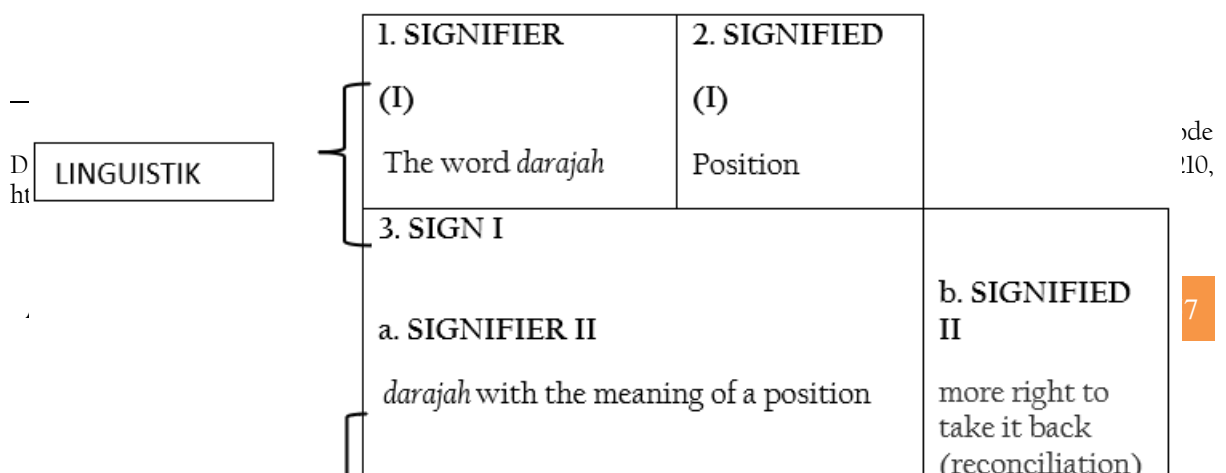
⁴⁵ Arifin Abdullah and Delia Ulfa, "Kedudukan Izin Rujuk Suami Dalam Masa 'Iddah (Analisis Perspektif Hukum Islam)," *SAMARAH: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 2, no. 2 (May 29, 2019): p. 422, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v2i2.4746>.

⁴⁶ Dhevi Nayasari Sastradinata, "Pelaksanaan Ruju' Pada Kantor Urusan Agama Kecamatan Lamongan," *Jurnal Independent* 2, no. 1 (June 1, 2014): 85, <https://doi.org/10.30736/ji.v2i1.20>.

said, KHI also used the language interpretation of the verse to stipulate that reconciliation must be with the wife's consent. The interpretation of the verse is not only based on the explicit meaning of *naṣ* (*dalālah al-‘ibārah*), but also the implied meaning (*dalālah al-ishārah*), when the husband is entitled to (*aḥaqq*) in the matter of reconciliation, it means that the wife also has rights even though it is little and is passive.⁴⁷

In addition, according to Quraish Shihab in this verse there is another context of the husband and wife relationship, namely the rights of husband and wife that must be fulfilled and obligations that must be carried out in the household. Among them, the wife must get the rights of marriage that must be carried out by the husband, equivalent to the rights of the husband which must be fulfilled by the wife in a good way according to the Shari'a, such as good association, not suffering, and so on.⁴⁸ Thus, this guidance demands good cooperation, a fair division of labor between husband and wife, so that harmonious cooperation is established between the two, even all family members. Although working to earn a living is the main task of men, it does not mean that wives are not expected to work as well. On the other hand, even though the wife is responsible for the household, it does not mean that the husband leaves his wife alone to do it without being assisted even in household-related tasks.⁴⁹

In accordance with the QS contextual explanation. Al-Baqarah [2]: 228, that the sentence *darajah* is the husbands have more right to take wife back if he want reconciliation before the end of her *'iddah* period and who is in the status of talak *raj'i*, if it is accompanied by a good without any other intention to harm. And of course the wife can accept or reject it. The message contained in the verse is an ideology of feminism because basically the degrees of women and men are equal before God. In this verse there is the context of the husband and wife relationship, namely the rights of husband and wife that must be fulfilled and obligations that must be carried out. And what is obligatory on both of them is to prevent losses that will be experienced by one of the two parties. Thus, the word *darajah* in this verse has nothing to do with superiority over leadership or other advantages. The following is a table of the application of Roland Barthes' semiotics to QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 228.



Conclusion

From a series of discussions about concepts word *darajah* in Sura al-Baqarah [2]: 228, it can be concluded that in semiotics the first stage of the study of linguistics said *darajah* resulted in the construction of meaning denotation new is that the word is defined as, a man has advantages over women in terms of leadership, position, power, level, dignity. While the second stage of semiotics or the study of its mythology produces a new connotative meaning, namely that the word *darajah* in the verse has nothing to do with superiority over leadership or other advantages. Instead, the husbands have more right to take wife back if he wants reconciliation before the end of his *'iddah* period and who is in the status of talak *raj'i* if it is accompanied by a good will for *islah*. without any other intention to hurt.

The message contained in the verse is an ideology of feminism because basically the degrees of women and men are equal before God. In this verse there is the context of the husband and wife relationship, namely the rights of husband and wife that must be fulfilled and obligations that must be carried out. And what is obligatory on both of them is to prevent losses that will be experienced by one of the two parties.

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