

# THE CONSTRUCTION OF MUSLIM WOMANHOOD IN A HADHRAMI-INDONESIAN MANUSCRIPT: A PHILOLOGICAL READING OF *DAF' AL-TURRAHĀT 'AN WĀJIBĀT AL-UMMAHĀT* (1939)

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## ABSTRACT

This article examines the construction of Muslim womanhood in *Daf' al Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al Ummahāt* (1939), a Hadhrami Indonesian manuscript authored by Habib Salim bin Jindan, to address the limited scholarly attention to early twentieth century religious manuscripts in gender studies. Existing research on Indonesian Muslim women has focused on reformist thinkers, fatwas, and modern interpretations, while the gender discourse embedded in Hadhrami textual traditions remains largely unexplored. This study fills that gap by producing a critical edition of the manuscript and analyzing its linguistic, thematic, and discursive features. The research employed qualitative philological methods, drawing on a single codex preserved at the Al Fachriyah Library. Data consist of the manuscript's textual content, which is examined through textual criticism, transliteration, and contextual analysis to reconstruct the most reliable version of the text and interpret its gender concepts. The findings show, first, that the manuscript frames Muslim womanhood as a moral and ethical identity shaped by piety, religious knowledge, and social responsibility. Second, it articulates women's roles through a biologically grounded framework that emphasizes motherhood, education of children, and moral cultivation. Third, the text reflects tensions between normative Islamic prescriptions and contemporary debates on women's education and public participation. These findings demonstrate that the manuscript functions both as a religious treatise and as a cultural response to modernity. The study concludes that early Hadhrami Indonesian texts offer valuable insights for expanding gender discourse in Nusantara Islam.

**Keywords:** *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, gender in Islam, Hadrami-Indonesia manuscripts, Muslim womanhood

## ABSTRAK

*Artikel ini mengkaji konstruksi perempuan Muslim dalam Daf' al Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al Ummahāt (1939), sebuah naskah Hadhrami Indonesia karya Habib Salim bin Jindan, untuk mengisi kurangnya perhatian akademik terhadap naskah keagamaan awal abad ke-20 dalam studi gender. Penelitian sebelumnya tentang perempuan Muslim Indonesia lebih banyak berfokus pada pemikir reformis, fatwa, dan interpretasi modern, sementara wacana gender dalam tradisi tekstual Hadhrami masih jarang diteliti. Studi ini mengisi kekosongan tersebut dengan menyusun edisi kritis naskah dan menganalisis ciri linguistik, tematik, serta diskursus yang dikandungnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode filologi kualitatif dengan data berupa satu naskah tunggal yang tersimpan di Perpustakaan Al Fachriyah. Data dianalisis melalui kritik teks, transliterasi, dan pembacaan kontekstual untuk merekonstruksi teks yang paling dapat diandalkan serta menafsirkan konsep gender yang dibangun di dalamnya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan, pertama, bahwa naskah ini memosisikan perempuan Muslim sebagai identitas moral dan etis yang dibentuk oleh kesalehan, pengetahuan agama, dan tanggung jawab sosial. Kedua, naskah merumuskan peran perempuan melalui kerangka biologis yang menekankan fungsi keibuan, pendidikan anak, dan pembentukan akhlak. Ketiga, teks mencerminkan ketegangan antara ajaran Islam normatif dan perdebatan kontemporer mengenai pendidikan perempuan serta partisipasi mereka di ranah publik. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa naskah tersebut berfungsi sebagai risalah keagamaan sekaligus respons kultural terhadap modernitas. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa teks Hadhrami Indonesia awal menawarkan kontribusi penting bagi perluasan wacana gender dalam Islam Nusantara.*

**Kata kunci:** *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt, gender dalam Islam, Hadrami-Indonesia manuskrip, Wanita Muslim*

## INTRODUCTION

Before Dutch colonialism, women in Indonesia held roles and positions equal to men, a reality reflected in various historical accounts and local traditions. Valentijn's record of the Indonesian archipelago between 1641 and 1699 highlights the presence of influential female rulers, including a queen who governed Aceh for more than fifty years, demonstrating that women's leadership was neither marginal nor exceptional in the region. This historical evidence shows that women's participa-

tion in the public sphere has long been embedded in Indonesian Islamic society, contradicting later assumptions that women's public roles were foreign or modern intrusions<sup>1</sup>. Such early examples of women's authority provide an important foundation for understanding the continuity of female agency in the archipelago.

Women hold a particularly distinct position in Aceh. Although Acehnese women have historically been shaped by Islamic law, customary norms, and social structures that often place them under male authority, their past is also marked by the remarkable leadership of four queens who ruled the Aceh Darussalam Sultanate from the 15th to the 17th centuries. This legacy has had a lasting impact on Acehnese gender discourse, offering symbolic and historical resources for contemporary struggles against gender inequality. The presence of these queens demonstrates that Acehnese society once accommodated female sovereignty, a fact that continues to inspire gender movements and scholarly discussions on women's rights in the region<sup>2</sup>.

In Minangkabau, women's involvement in social and political life expanded significantly during the late colonial period. Women established schools, joined intellectual discussion groups, and participated in nationalist movements supporting Indonesian independence. Their activism was not limited to improving women's status but also contributed to broader social transformation, reflecting the matrilineal foundations of Minangkabau society that historically granted women substantial authority in lineage and property matters. These developments

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<sup>1</sup> Widia Munira, Muhammad Akhyar, dan Djono Djono, "Women's Leadership and Gender Equality in Aceh: A Socio-Historical Perspective," *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding* 5, no. 4 (2018): 79. <https://ijmmu.com/index.php/ijmmu/article/view/187>.

<sup>2</sup> Widia Munira, Muhammad Akhyar, dan Djono Djono, "Women's Leadership and Gender Equality in Aceh: A Socio-Historical Perspective," *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding* 5, no. 4 (2018): 79.

show that women's engagement in public life was both culturally grounded and politically strategic<sup>3</sup>.

During the 19th century, however, women in many parts of Indonesia were positioned primarily as supporters rather than leaders. Both religious and secular organizations tended to view women as assistants, reinforcing dominant ideologies that framed women as secondary and dependent. Yet secular groups were more likely to establish independent women's organizations than religious groups, suggesting that gender segregation was more deeply entrenched in religious institutions than in broader cultural settings. This contrast highlights the complex interplay between religion, culture, and gender politics in early modern Indonesia<sup>4</sup>.

In Kerinci, women traditionally adhered to parental and spousal authority and were associated with traits such as *mulut manih kecimdam murah* and *budi baik baso ktuju*<sup>5</sup>, which emphasized politeness, gentleness, and moral refinement. As a traditional region, Kerinci maintained social patterns that assigned ceremonial roles to men while women managed domestic responsibilities. Under Dutch colonial rule, however, women's roles shifted dramatically as they became contract workers, including farm laborers, administrative employees, wives under paper, concubines, and domestic servants. This transformation illustrates how colonial economic structures reshaped gender relations and disrupted earlier social norms<sup>6</sup>.

Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Islam has played a significant role in liberating Javanese women from restrictive customary

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<sup>3</sup> Ilma dan Yudhi Andoni, "Representasi Dan Identitas Perempuan Minangkabau Dalam Fotografi Masa Kolonial Tahun 1900-1942," *Musawa: Jurnal Studi Gender dan Islam* 23, no. 1 (2024): 17. <https://doi.org/10.14421/musawa.2024.223.1-21>.

<sup>4</sup> Alimatul Qibtiyah, "Indonesian Muslim Women And The Gender Equality Movement," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 3, no. 1: 168. <https://jiis.uinsby.ac.id/index.php/JIIs/article/view/46>.

<sup>5</sup> This means being good at speaking, soft-spoken, and well-behaved.

<sup>6</sup> Herliana, Rina, dan Titin Nurhayati Ma'mun. "Konstruksi Gender dalam Naskah *Wa'āsyirūhunna Bi Al-Ma'rūf*," *Journal of Arabic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2019): 4. <https://doi.org/10.24865/ajas.v4i2.187>.

practices such as seclusion, child marriage, and perceptions of inferiority. Although polygamy remained a contested issue, growing religio-cultural awareness generated competing discourses among Islamic and nationalist elites, shaping an emerging Javanese Muslim female identity. The adoption of the veil between the 1920s and 1960s further reflected these negotiations. Hastuti argues that Javanese Muslim women used the veil to assert distinctiveness not only from European influences but also from non-pious Muslim women and non-Muslim Javanese women, signaling a new form of religious self-fashioning<sup>7</sup>.

Moderate Indonesian Muslims maintain that Islam grants women an important place in society and safeguards their rights. Muslim women intellectuals and activists draw on Islamic legal sources to challenge inequalities, question women's status, and propose alternative interpretations of women's rights in Islam. They also encourage women's participation in public life, especially in decision-making processes. Cooke notes that such efforts contribute to the construction of a cosmopolitan identity rooted in local culture yet connected to global Muslim experiences, facilitated by education and modernization<sup>8</sup>. This growing awareness reflects the interconnectedness of Muslim women's struggles across different regions.

Indonesian manuscripts frequently depict women as subjects of gender historiography. Studies by Zahra Taslitsiyah Khoirunisa<sup>10</sup> et al., Ida Bagus Gede Paramita<sup>11</sup>, Akhmad

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<sup>7</sup> Kurniawati Hastuti Dewi, "Javanese Women and Islam: Identity Formation since the Twentieth Century," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 01, no. 01 (2012): 109. <https://doi.org/10.20495/seas.1.1.109>.

<sup>8</sup> Miriam Cooke, "Deploying the Muslimwoman," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 24, no. 1 (2008): 93. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08038740.2014.935744>.

<sup>9</sup> Maula, Bani Syarif. "Indonesian Muslim Women: Between Culture, Religion and Politics." *Ijtima'iyya* 1, no. 1 (2016): 38. <https://doi.org/10.24090/ijtimaiyya.v1i1.930>.

<sup>10</sup> Khoirunisa, Zahra Taslitsiyah, Akmaliah Akmaliah, Mawardi Mawardi, dan Amiḡ Amiḡ. "Bias Gender dalam Naskah *Adāb Al-Mar'āh* Karya KH. Ma'mur Nawawi (Kajian Teori Feminisme)." *Jurnal Anifa: Studi Gender dan Anak* 3, no. 1 (2022): 12. <https://doi.org/10.32505/anifa.v3i1.4005>.

Sofyan<sup>12</sup> and Risma Moniroh, Fakhriati and Fatkhu Rohmatin<sup>13</sup> reveal that representations of women in religious and social contexts are dynamic, shaped by negotiations between tradition, religious interpretation, modernity, and social change. These studies show that while religious traditions often place women in hierarchical structures, reinterpretation and evolving discourse create opportunities for more egalitarian understandings. This pattern underscores the fluidity of gender constructions in Indonesian Islamic texts. Similarly, research by Sri Harti Widyastuti<sup>14</sup> et al., Maiyang Resmanti<sup>15</sup>, and Rina Herliana<sup>16</sup> demonstrates that women's roles in Indonesia are neither passive nor singular. Women navigate tensions between patriarchal traditions, modernization, and emerging spaces of resistance. Although social structures and religious interpretations continue to influence gender roles, women increasingly reshape their identity, agency, and social position. Rizqi Handayani and Haryati Hasan further highlight a paradigm shift from women as recipients of social values to active agents in redefining gender discourse within religious and social spheres.

Despite this growing body of scholarship, research on women in Islam in Indonesia has largely focused on reformist

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<sup>11</sup> Paramita, Ida Bagus Gede. "Pendidikan Etika dan Gender dalam Teks Satua I Tuung Kuning." *Jurnal Inovasi Penelitian* 1, no. 2 (2020): 96. <https://doi.org/10.47492/jip.v1i2.54>.

<sup>12</sup> Sofyan, Akhmad, dan Risma Monirah. "Husband and Wife Relationship of Early Marriage in Tangga Ulin Village (According to the Review of the Book of Uqud Al-Lujain Fi Bayan Huquq al-Zaujain)." *Ulumul Syar'i: Jurnal Ilmu- Ilmu Hukum Dan Syariah* 9, no. 2 (2021): 72. <https://doi.org/10.52051/ulumulyari.v9i2.92>.

<sup>13</sup> Fakhriati. "Perempuan dalam Manuskrip Aceh: Kajian Teks dan Konteks." *Jumantara: Jurnal Manuskrip Nusantara* 3, no. 1 (2012). <https://doi.org/10.37014/jumantara.v3i1.449>.

<sup>14</sup> Widyastuti, Sri Harti. "Kepribadian Wanita Jawa dalam Serat Suluk Residriya dan Serat Wulang Putri Karya Paku Buwono IX." *LITERA* 13, no. 1 (2014). <https://doi.org/10.21831/ltr.v13i1.1907>.

<sup>15</sup> Resmanti, Maiyang, dan Asep Yudha Wirajaya. "Representasi Perempuan dalam Syair Ardan: Kajian Feminisme." 10, no. 1 (2022): .

<sup>16</sup> Herliana, Rina, dan Titin Nurhayati Ma'mun. "Konstruksi Gender dalam Naskah *Wa'āsyirūhunna Bi Al-Ma'rūf*." *Journal of Arabic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.24865/ajas.v4i2.187>.

thinkers, religious interpretations, and fatwas. Religious manuscripts from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century remain understudied, including Habib Salim bin Jindan's *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*. Studies on Hadhrami communities typically examine intellectual networks and social contributions rather than gender constructions within their texts. Moreover, philological approaches are rarely applied to gender discourse in Nusantara Islam, leaving gaps in understanding the literary context, argumentative style, and characteristics of the *turats* tradition in modern religious writings. These gaps make manuscript-based research essential for understanding how representations of Muslim women were shaped in the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Indonesian intellectual landscape.

Two research gaps therefore emerge. First, there is no scientific study of the *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt* manuscript as a primary text. Second, there is limited research on women's representation in the gender discourse of 20th-century Indonesian Hadhrami scholars. This study aims to address these gaps and expand gender studies in Nusantara Islam by examining religious manuscripts that have remained marginal in academic scholarship.

Philological studies uncover information about past societies, including history, customs, thought, and written works. Philology contributes to national character building by exploring moral values through manuscript research and interpretation. A deeper understanding of philological methods will increase the number of manuscripts studied and translated. The discovery of *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt* amid ongoing gender debates underscores the importance of examining women's ideology through this text, especially given its relevance to early 20th-century Islamic discourse.<sup>17 18</sup>

This research is expected to enrich Islamic scholarship, particularly in women's studies in Indonesia. As a work by a

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<sup>17</sup> Siti Baroroh Baried et al., *Pengantar Teori Filologi* (Jakarta: Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa Depdikbud, 1994)

<sup>18</sup> Oman Fathurahman, *Filologi Indonesia Teori dan Metode* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2015), 69-74.



Hadhrami scholar not widely known to the public, MDTWU offers insights that can fill gaps in Nusantara gender discourse and contribute to further research on Habib Salim bin Jindan. By analyzing this manuscript, the study provides a deeper understanding of how gender norms were articulated, negotiated, and contested within Hadhrami-Indonesian intellectual traditions.

## METHOD

This study employed a qualitative philological design<sup>19</sup> because the primary research question concerns how gender concepts are constructed within a historical manuscript. Philology is the most appropriate approach for answering this question since it enables the reconstruction, verification, and interpretation of texts from earlier periods, allowing the researcher to examine linguistic features, textual variants, and discursive patterns embedded in the manuscript. The aim of producing a reliable critical edition aligns with the core purpose of philological inquiry, which is to present a text in its closest possible form to the original while situating it within its socio intellectual context<sup>20</sup>. This design is therefore the best fit for addressing the research gap, namely the absence of scholarly studies on *Daf' al Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al Ummahāt* and the limited exploration of gender discourse in early twentieth century Hadhrami Indonesian manuscripts.

The data for this research consist of a single manuscript, a codex unicus preserved at the Al Fachriyah Library in Tangerang. The manuscript serves as the sole population and unit of analysis because no other copies were found during the manuscript inventory stage. The inclusion criterion is the manuscript's authenticity and relevance to the research focus, specifically its authorship by Habib Salim bin Jindan and its explicit discussion of women's obligations and roles. Manus-

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<sup>19</sup> Siti Baroroh Baried dkk., *Pengantar Teori Filologi* (Jakarta: Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa Depdikbud, 1994), 7.

<sup>20</sup> Samsu, *Metode Penelitian (Teori dan Aplikasi Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, Mixed Methods, serta Research & Development* (Jambi: PUSAKA, 2017), 111.



cripts that do not meet these criteria or that lack verifiable provenance are excluded. Additional supporting materials, such as paratextual notes and comparable texts from similar traditions, are used only to strengthen textual criticism and contextual interpretation, not as primary data sources.

The analysis follows a structured philological procedure. First, the manuscript is examined physically to document its codicological features, including script type, ink, pagination, and material condition. Second, the text is transcribed and translated using the Arabic Latin system of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, with necessary adjustments to preserve phonetic and orthographic characteristics. Third, textual criticism is conducted by identifying errors, inconsistencies, or damaged sections, followed by the application of editorial symbols such as brackets, ellipses, and explanatory footnotes. Fourth, comparative reading is performed using thematically related manuscripts and printed works to validate textual choices and strengthen the critical edition. Finally, the edited text is subjected to content analysis<sup>21</sup> to interpret its linguistic structure, thematic organization, and gender discourse within the socio intellectual context of early twentieth century Indonesia. This step-by-step process ensures that the findings are grounded in rigorous textual reconstruction and contextual interpretation.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### Finding

#### Manuscript Description

The manuscript *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt* written in Arabic by the Hadith scholar Habib Salim bin Jindan, is a *codex unicus* preserved in the Al-Fachriyah Foundation Library in Tangerang, Banten. Measuring 9.5 × 21 cm and comprising 50 pages, it is written in *khatt riq'ah* using black ink without diacritics. The manuscript remains in good condition, though textual editing is still required to ensure clarity and con-

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<sup>21</sup> Oman Fathurahman, *Filologi Indonesia Teori dan Metode* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2015), 69-74.



## Gender Construction of Men and Women in the Manuscript

### 1. Women's Roles

Qasim Amin described the situation of women in his time with all its setbacks. Where women do not live for themselves, but for men, they do it from birth to death. Men always look down on them and consider them unfit to deal with the problems of the world. As a result, women cannot live freely. Women are treated by men like slaves who have to restrain their desires, maintain their manners, the way they walk and the sound of their breathing. In fact, women should distance themselves from others so that they are not seen and spoken out if there is no interest.<sup>22</sup>

بواسطة المرأة قد يدرك الرجل أنّ الهيئة الاجتماعية ذات تركيب دقيق كثير التفرّع متعدد العناصر. وهذا ما لا يحظر عادة لمعاشر الرجال وهم يتناقشون في انديتهم السياسية شديدة الأثر لا يمكن قهرها وأن البشر غير مسيرين بأحكام عقولهم وهذا هو معنى قول سيد الحكماء صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم [الدنيا كلها متاع وخير متاع الدنيا المرأة الصالحة رواه ابن أبي الدنيا في كتاب الشكر وابن ماجه والطبراني].

Meaning: Women are the main educators of men. He is the one who teaches noble values, modesty, and refinement of character. Through women, men can understand that social structures are complex, full of nuances, and made up of many elements. The role of women is a reminder of things that often go unnoticed by men in their discussions that tend to be rigid and full of logic. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, *"This world is an ornament, and the best ornament of the world is a pious woman."* (HR. Ibn Abi Dunya, Ibn Majah, and Thabrani).<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Dewi Tri Yulianti, Muhajirin Muhajirin, dan Almunadi Almunadi, "Relevansi Pendidikan Wanita Perspektif Qasim Amin terhadap Pendidikan dalam Al-Qur'an," *Al-Misykah: Jurnal Studi Al-qur'an dan Tafsir* 1, no. 2 (2021): 167. <https://doi.org/10.19109/almsiykah.v1i2.9037>.

<sup>23</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, (Jakarta: Yayasan Al-Fachriyah. 1939), 43.

Habib Salim emphasized that women have a fundamental role as educators of the generation, even before school, before there was a teacher who first taught children (especially boys) about noble values, noble morals, manners, affection, and social sensitivity was their mother. Through the education of a mother or woman, a man learns that the world is not only about logic, rules, and power, but also about taste, subtlety, patience, compromise, and appreciating the complexities of social life. Habib Salim also emphasized that women play a role as a reminder, maintaining balance when men tend to be too harsh, rigid, or too rational in their views and actions.

Ismail Fajrie Alatas in his research on gender and migration Hadhrami revealed that women are expected to obey aurat (modesty), both in terms of clothing, customs, customs, speech, actions, and jewellery. Women who do not abide by the rules of decency will be questioned.<sup>24</sup> In this case, Habib Salim described women as creatures who have the task of multiplying offspring.

المرأة في الحياة الإنسانية وظيفة سامية للغاية وهو حفظ النوع البشري واستدامته مما لا يأتي للرجل أن يشاركها فيه لأنه يتعلق بشكل التركيب الجسمي الأمر الذي لا يمكن التحصل عليه لتصنع ولا التقليد. وهذه الوظيفة الخاصة بالمرأة لها جملة أدوار تتعاقب عليها ولكل دور منها لوازم لا نزايها يحب الالمام بها اندرك قيمة هذه الوظيفة وخطورتها.

Meaning: Women in human life have a very noble function, which is to maintain and preserve the human type, which cannot be done by men because it is related to physical structures that cannot be obtained through artificial or artificial means. This particular function of women has a series of interrelated roles, and each role has demands that must be understood in order for us to realize the value and importance of these functions.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Ismail Fajrie Alatas dkk., "Gold and Silver, Branded Horses, and Well-Tilled Land: Gender and Hadrami Migration," 3, no. 1 (2015): 9. <https://lib.ui.ac.id/detail?id=20469388&lokasi=lokal>.

<sup>25</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 49.

Habib Salim builds a gender framework based on biological nature by emphasizing that women have an irreplaceable special function in continuing human life. Therefore, the entire social system should appreciate and adapt to the role structure. This perspective is in line with the traditional normative approach in Islam and patriarchal societies, which base social roles on *biology and God's decrees*.

Habib Salim explained in detail the purpose of the function including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and education. Anyone who ponders the beauty of this creation simply will realize that every creature has a function that depends on good performance. There may be creatures that go beyond the limits of their function, but they will be far from perfection in proportion to how far they deviate from that function, and this will affect the whole of its kind.

Qasim Amin disagrees with Habib Salim, according to him women will not get what they need from mental education by teaching them to read and write foreign languages only, but women also need to learn the principles of *science*, social and history. To know the true laws on which the movement of beings and the human condition are based, it is necessary to be taught the principles of the laws of health and physiology. They can do it until they raise their children. What is important in this education is to excite the minds of women to seek the truth, so that their longing for the truth will continue and move. In addition to this, women must learn to make food and organize the house.<sup>26</sup>

ولا يُدْرَسُ وَهَآ غَيْرَ بَعْضٍ جَمَلٍ تَعْلِكُهَا بَلْغَةٌ أَجْنَبِيَّةٌ وَبَصْفَةٌ  
أَصَوَاتٍ وَأَرْقَامٍ عَلَى مَا يَقْتَضِيهِ أَصْلَاحُ دِينِهَا وَعَقَائِدُهَا وَمَعْرِفَةُ  
سَلَفِهَا وَأَمْوَالِهَا وَتَهْذِيبُ عَقْلِهَا وَتَرْبِيَّتُهَا وَتَعْلِيمُ حَقُوقِهَا  
وَوَاجِبَاتِهَا نَحْوَ الصَّلَاةِ وَالْوُضُوءِ وَاحْكَامِ الْحَيْضِ وَالنَّفَاسِ  
وَالْوِلَادَةِ وَالْغَسْلِ وَالْعِبَادَةِ وَتِلَاوَةِ الْقُرْآنِ وَقِرَاءَةِ كُتُبِ الْعِلْمِ  
وَالْأَدَبِ

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<sup>26</sup> Amin, *Al-Mar'ah Al-Jadidah*, (Kairo: Yayasan Hindawi, 1900), 68.

Meaning: They are only taught a few sentences spoken in foreign languages either in the form of sounds or numbers, as required in religion and belief, they must know about their ancestors, perfect their intellect and education, learn their rights and obligations such as prayer, ablution, understand the laws related to menstruation, puerperium, childbirth, bathing, worship, reading the Qur'an and reading science and literature books.<sup>27</sup>

Habib Salim urged women to learn how to be mothers, understand the rules of their duties, and strive to understand the secrets of education and its miracles, which can turn the timid into the brave and the miserly into the generous. They should abandon jewelry and show off by learning a foreign language and not being excessive in decoration, because engaging in all of it would keep them away from the perfection that was the secret of their glory, and would gradually draw them into slavery and dependency.<sup>28</sup>

Rasyid Ridha, as one of the scholars who became the mecca of Habib Salim, divided the roles of husband and wife dichotomously based on the responsibility of the husband and the financial responsibility of the wife. The husband, as the leader of the wife, is responsible for protecting and guarding. Because men have physical and mental advantages over women, husbands must provide for their wives. Ridha emphasized that the excess of a man does not mean being arbitrarily free of his wife; On the other hand, with the excess of men as breadwinners, it will make it easier for wives to carry out their reproductive functions.<sup>29</sup> According to him, this provision is general; In some cases, wives may have advantages over their husbands in terms of science, profession, physical strength, and activity.

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<sup>27</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 47.

<sup>28</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 55.

<sup>29</sup> Zahra Zaini Arif, "Peran Ganda Perempuan dalam Keluarga Perspektif Feminis Muslim Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Law* 1, no. 01 (2018): 101. <https://doi.org/10.35719/ijil.v1i2.195>.

## 2. Physical Differences Between Men and Women

Women and men are not different in terms of their position and duties as human beings in thoughts, feelings, and other human attributes. However, Qasim Amin admitted that there are differences between the two in terms of their gender. Ivon Illich, as quoted by Amina Wadud Muhsin, stated that this gender difference is an important part of human functioning. The Qur'an not only recognizes the gender differences between women and men, but also recognizes the function of both as individuals and members of society.<sup>30</sup>

Helen Deutch, a contemporary psychologist, states that narcissism, passivity, and masochism are traits that women have. A woman's love and admiration for the beauty and beauty of her own body by beautifying herself is known as narcissism. Women tend to be resigned, fun, and follow men's tastes. Meanwhile, a woman's willingness to suffer and give in to violence is known as masochism.<sup>31</sup>

أما الحواس الخمس فقد أثبت الأستاذان احدهما المستر نيكولس NIKOLS والثاني المستر بيله BEILI أنها أضعف عند المرأة منها عند الرجل. فهي لا تستطيع أن تدرك رائحة عطر الليمون على بعد مخصوص إلا إذا كانت ضعف المقدار الذي يدركه الرجل فيه. وشوهد بالامتحان.

Meaning: As for the five senses, professors, one of whom is Mr. Nikols and the other Mr. Beili, have proved that the sense of smell is weaker in women than in men. Women cannot detect the scent of lemon perfume from a certain distance unless the concentration is half that which can be detected by men. This has been proven through testing.<sup>32</sup>

وأما حاسة اللمس فقد شوهد أن الرجل ادق من المرأة فيها وقد برهن الأستاذان لومبروزو. وسيرجي – وغيرهما بأن المرأة تحتمل

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<sup>30</sup> Aminah Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 34.

<sup>31</sup> Eti Nurhayati, *Psikologi Perempuan dalam Berbagai Perspektif* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Belajar, 2012), 14.

<sup>32</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 54.



الألم أكثر من الرجل مما يدل على قلة احساسها به. قال المستر لومبروزو. وهذا من حسن حظ النوع الإنساني. فإن المرأة معرضة لكثير من الآلام كالحمل والوضع وغيرهما. ولو كانت حساسة كالرجل لما استطاعت تحمل ذلك كله

Meaning: As for the sense of touch, it has been seen that men are more accurate than women. Professors, such as Lombroso and others, have proven that women are better able to endure pain than men, which suggests that they feel it less. According to Mr. Lombroso, this is a blessing for humanity, as women face many pains such as pregnancy and childbirth. If they had the same sensitivity as men, they wouldn't be able to bear any of that.<sup>33</sup>

Habib Salim's two statements above are critical responses to the discourse of women's sensory inferiority. Statements that women have weaker sensory sensitivity than men, as asserted by figures such as Mr. Nikols, Mr. Beili, and Cesare Lombroso, represent a classical form of patriarchal science that for centuries has played a role in framing women's bodies and experiences in reductionist and deterministic ways. These claims, while wrapped in scientific terminology, are essentially part of an epistemological architecture that justifies the subordination of women.

Fatima Mernissi in her analysis said that this kind of discourse is a reflection of patriarchal efforts to stabilize the social system by regulating women's bodies and movement space through what she calls *the political use of the female body*.<sup>34</sup> When a woman's body is considered less sensitive, then her resistance is overlooked, and her suffering is considered natural. This kind of view hinders the recognition of women's voices and removes the possibility of understanding women's experiences autonomously and fully. Qasim Amin criticized the physical and social conditions of urban women (urban women) who are

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<sup>33</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 48.

<sup>34</sup> Fatima Mernissi, *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam*, (Great Britain: Perseus Books, 1991), 47.

considered to lack adequate physical readiness to face their biological role as mothers, especially in the process of childbirth:

ثم إن ما تقاسيه المرأة من الآلام والمشقات حني الولادة في مرة واحدة, ربما يزيد على ما يعانيه الرجل من المتاعب طول حياته, ولا يحتمله من النساء إلا القويات المزاج, الصحاحات الأجسام كنساء القرى المتعودات على العمل البدني المتمتع بالهواء النقي, أما نساء المدن المحرومات من الحركة والتمتع بالشمس والهواء, فلا قدرة لهن على احتمال هذه المشقات؛ ولذلك فإن أكثرهن يعشن عليلات بعد الولادة الأولى, وكثيرا ما يهلكن فيها؛ فقد بلغ عدد من يموت منهن في النفاس أكثر من ثلاثين في الألف.

Meaning: What a woman experiences in the form of pain and difficulty during a single birth may be heavier than all the hardships that men experience throughout their lives. And that pain can only be borne by women who are physically strong and physically healthy, such as village women who are used to working physically and enjoying the fresh air. As for the city women who are less mobile and do not get sunlight and fresh air, they are unable to bear this hardship. Because of this, most of them become sickly after giving birth for the first time, and many also die from it. The number of women who die during postpartum even reaches more than thirty per thousand.<sup>35</sup>

Qasim Amin uses biological facts to uplift the dignity of women. Meanwhile, Habib Salim uses very different conceptions of women's bodies, biological functions, and social roles:

ويرى سما مَرَّ كله إن المرأة بضعفها أكثر تعرّضًا للمصائب الحياة من الرجل وأشدَّ استهدافًا لأنواع الأمراض منه مما يدل دلالة صريحة أن حياتها يجب أن تكون منزلية محضّة لا خبار فيه وقال العلامة المستر (تروسيه) انه بالنسبة وضعف المرأة ونمو مجموعها العصبي نرى مزاجها أكثر تهيّجًا من مزاج الرجل وتركيبها أقل مقاومة. من تركيبه فان تأديتها لوظائفها من

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<sup>35</sup> Amin, *Al-Mar'ah Al-Jadidah*, 80.

الحمل والأمومة والارضاع يسبب لديها احوالاً مرضية قليلة أو كثيرة الخطر.

Meaning: Similarly, according to the general view, weak women are more susceptible to various difficulties in life than men and are more likely to be affected by various diseases, which suggests that their lives should be more domestic. And according to the expert, Mr. Troussier, in relation to the weaknesses of women and the development of their nervous system, we see that their moods are more easily aroused than men's, and their structures have a lower resistance. Their functions in terms of pregnancy, motherhood, and breastfeeding cause them to experience potentially dangerous conditions.<sup>36</sup>

This statement is a classic example of a patriarchal ideology that selectively uses science-biology to restrict women. By attributing women's weaknesses, emotions, and reproductive functions to their biological bodies, this statement supports the domestication of women and the limitation of their capacity to actively participate in public spaces. The assertion that women are inherently weaker, more susceptible to disease, and more easily disturbed in their moods than men is a classic form of patriarchal biology, the view that biological differences between men and women directly determine their social, moral, and intellectual differences.

Fatima Mernissi's criticism is very relevant in this context. She dismantled how religious interpretations were selectively used by patriarchal scholars to justify the subjugation of women. He asserted that the idea that women were created unequal to men was the result of historical constructions and not divine doctrine. According to her, the inequality stems from social fear of women's agency and the efforts of male elites to maintain control over the value system and religious symbols.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 53.

<sup>37</sup> Rofifah Rofifah, Asep Shodiqin dan Enok Risdayah, "Strategi Pemberdayaan Perempuan dalam Masyarakat Islam: Studi Wacana Kritis Pemikiran Fatima Mernissi dalam Buku *Beyond The Veil*," *Bayt Al-Hikmah*:

Meanwhile, Nawal El Saadawi, an Egyptian psychiatrist and feminist, traces the medical-biological roots of patriarchal ideology. She argued that modern science, particularly psychology and colonial medicine, has played an active role in constructing women's bodies as a locus of weakness and danger. Women are considered carriers of social and moral ills, mainly because of their role as mothers and symbols of sexuality.

According to Habib Salim, men have preceded women in all things and will continue to precede them in everything, regardless of the natural differences that are already known between the two, even more so if these differences continue to increase. Economists have calculated the natural differences between men and women in terms of the advantages of both using mathematical rules. In his book *System Innovation*, the philosopher (Bodoen) stated that literally the ratio of male to female power is three to two.<sup>38</sup>

In patriarchal cultures, women's weaknesses are used as a basis to support the idea that men are better than women.<sup>39</sup> Women are inherently inhabited to menstruate, get pregnant, give birth, and breastfeed, an undeniable biological fact. Men cannot do this. Human life is affected by this fact. Unlike other creatures, humans have the ability to internalize their biological traits, which results in social reality. What women or men consider to be different behaviors depends on how those biological facts are related to the principles that apply in a particular society's way of life. Therefore, the differences between males and females reflect the interaction between social life patterns and biological composition.<sup>40</sup>

According to Quraish Shihab, women's nature is not only physically biological, but also includes the psychological and gender roles that are socially attached to women. This perception

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*Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengembangan Masyarakat Islam* 1, no. 1 (2025): 61.  
<https://www.pusdig.web.id/BaytAlHikmah/article/view/371/49>.

<sup>38</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 54.

<sup>39</sup> Shirley Lie, *Pembebasan Tubuh Perempuan* (Jakarta: Grasindo, 2005), 34.

<sup>40</sup> Janet T. Spence, *Masculinity and Femininity* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978), 11.

is different from the perception held by most feminists, who believe that women's nature is physically attached to women as a means of reproduction.<sup>41</sup> According to him, this is a permanent and universal provision of God. Shihab seems to have a belief that masculine and feminine traits are related to biological differences, which makes her included in biological essentialism.<sup>42</sup>

Women are not as physically strong as men, but they have ideas and ideas that cannot be separated from their roles and functions. History has shown that Indonesian women are also involved in physical struggles. Names such as Cut Nyak Dien, Martha Tiahahu, and Yolanda Maramis have been immortalized in women's struggles against the colonizers. Rasuna Said and Trine were part of an emerging national movement. In addition, RA Kartini and Dewi Sartika have been known as supporters of women's rights to equal education.<sup>43</sup>

### 3. Mental Differences Between Men and Women

Qasim Amin argues that according to scholars, women are equal to men in mental strength, even superior to men. However, emotionally and mentally, it seems to the observer that there is a great difference between the two.<sup>44</sup> The equality in question does not mean that every strength in a woman is equal to every strength in a man, and vice versa.

فالمراة في رأي أعظم العلماء وأدقهم بحثا مساوية للرجل في  
القوى العقلية، وتفوقه في الإحساسات والعواطف، وإنما يظهر

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<sup>41</sup> Naqiyah Mukhtar, "M. Quraish Shihab, Suing the Gender Bias of Scholars," *Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 2, no. 2 (2013): 198. <https://doi.org/10.15408/quhas.v2i2.1314>.

<sup>42</sup> Biological essentialism is a concept that preserves stereotypes and discrimination by considering traits solely derived from biology. See more (Sandra L. Bem, *The Lenses of Gender: Transforming the Debate on Sexual Equality* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993)).

<sup>43</sup> Irma Riyani, *Islam, Women's Sexuality and Patriarchy in Indonesia: Silent Desire*, 1 ed. (New York: Routledge, 2021), 55.

<sup>44</sup> Amin, *Al-Mar'ah Al-Jadidah*, 33.

لِلنَّازِرِ وَجُودَ فَرْقٍ عَظِيمٍ بَيْنَهُمَا فِي الْعَقْلِ؛ لِأَنَّ الرِّجَالَ اشْتَغَلُوا  
— أَجْيَالًا عَدِيدَةً — بِمُمَارَسَةِ الْعِلْمِ، فَاسْتَنَارَتْ عُقُولُهُمْ،  
وَتَقَوَّتْ عَزِيمَتُهُمْ بِالْعَمَلِ، بِخِلَافِ النِّسَاءِ، فَإِنَّهُنَّ حَرَمْنَ مِنْ كُلِّ  
تَرْبِيَةٍ، فَمَا يَشَاهِدُ الْآنَ بَنِي الصَّنْفَيْنِ مِنَ الْفُرُوقِ هُوَ صِنَاعِي لَا  
طَبِيعِي. لَا نُرِيدُ بِهَذَا التَّسَاوِي أَنْ كُلَّ قُوَّةٍ فِي امْرَأَةٍ تَسَاوِي كُلَّ قُوَّةٍ  
فِي الرِّجُلِ، وَكُلَّ مُلْكَةٍ فِيهَا تَسَاوِي كُلَّ مُلْكَةٍ فِيهِ، وَلَكِنَّا نُرِيدُ أَنْ  
مَجْمُوعُ قَوَاهَا وَمُلْكَاتُهَا يَكْفِي مَجْمُوعَ قَوَاهِ وَمُلْكَاتِهِ، وَإِنْ كَانَ يَوْجَدُ  
خِلَافٌ كَبِيرٌ بَيْنَهُمَا؛ لِأَنَّ مَجْرَدَ الْخِلَافِ لَا يَوْجِبُ نَقْصَ أَحَدِ  
الْمُخْتَلِفِينَ عَنِ الْآخَرِ

*Meaning:* Women, in the view of the majority of scholars and the most meticulous in their research, are equal to men in the power of reason, even surpassing men in sensitivity and feeling. The great difference which appears in the intellect between men and women is only an outward impression, for men have for generations been accustomed to science, so that their intellect is enlightened and their determination is strengthened by experience. In contrast, women have been excluded from all forms of education, so the visible difference between these two types (men and women) is an artificial (social construct), not a natural one. By this equality we do not mean that every power in a woman must be exactly the same as every power in a man, or that every potential in herself must be identical to every potential in a man. But what we mean is that the totality of his power and potential is equal to the totality of man's power and potential, although there is a great difference between the two; for mere difference does not mean that one is inferior to the other.<sup>45</sup>

Ahmad Satori Ismail sees the biological perspective as the basis for different roles for men and women in society. The biological perspective is used to relegate women to the personal realm because they are considered more emotional and less intelligent than men. In contrast, men are considered more intelligent and emotional because they are born stronger than

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<sup>45</sup> Amin, *Al-Mar'ah Al-Jadidah*, 35.

women. Laws, rights, and obligations differ due to biological differences that are associated with psychological differences.<sup>46</sup>

فلماذا تشاهد تلك الفروق عينها عندهما. وهما على حالة السَّدَاجَةِ الطَّبِيعِيَّةِ الأولى التي لا يفضل أحدهما الآخر في مزية عقلية؟ ولكن لِيَهْدَأْ أنصار المدينة المادية عندنا فقد أثبت القوم أنهم كلما ازدادوا تَمَدُّناً ازداد لاختلاف بين الرجل والمرأة فقد جاء عن الأستاذ (دوفاريني) في دائرته ما نصه (الاختلاف الطبيعي يزداد وضوحاً بازدياد التمدن بحيث أصبح الفرق بين الأبيض والبيضاء أكبر بكثير من الفرق بين الأسود والسوداء –

*Meaning:* So why is this difference still visible in them? And they are in a state of nature that none of them is superior in terms of intelligence? However, the proponents of a materialist society here should be calm, as scientists have proven that the more civilized they are, the clearer the difference between men and women. Professor Dufarini states in his work that "natural differences become more pronounced as civilization increases, so that the difference between men and women becomes much greater than the difference between whites and blacks".<sup>47</sup>

Habib Salim puts forward the essentialist argument that the differences between men and women are natural and increasingly apparent in more civilized societies. He rejects the egalitarian view associated with modern-materialist societies that regard gender differences only as the result of social construction or historical inequality. Referring to the scientific statements of Professor Dufarini, he supports the idea that biological and psychological differences between men and women not only remain, but are even more prominent in more developed societies.

There is no evidence that differences between the two sexes indicate differences in the domain of power. Furthermore,

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<sup>46</sup> Achmad Satori Ismail, *Fiqh Perempuan dan Feminisme (Membincangkan Feminisme: Diskursus Gender Perspektif Islam)*, (Jakarta: Tim Risalah Gusti, 2000), 144.

<sup>47</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 56.



this distinction does not legitimize the dominance of one gender over another. Strong enough evidence can justify the influence that has been embedded in the assumptions of society at large, among which most people still consider women to be just wives and reproductive media that pass on the family line.<sup>48</sup> If a man has greater physical and mental strength than a woman, it is only because men have been too busy with work and thoughts for generations. As a result, women are forced to live in conditions of decadence whose level of weakness varies according to place and time.<sup>49</sup>

#### 4. Women's Emancipation

Women are considered as displays and are used only when needed, this kind of thinking originally also originated from the same situation which is the state of women that is concerning. Limited movement space makes women not get a place to express and actualize themselves. On the other hand, women do not have any control over themselves and their lives. The limitations of women in getting positions in open spaces because basically in the culture of Arab society do not provide freedom for women.<sup>50</sup>

أول جيل تظهر فيه حرية امرأة تكثر الشكوى منها، ويظن الناس  
أن بلاء عظيماً قد حل بهم؛ لأن امرأة تكون في دور التمرين على  
الحرية، ثم مع مرور الزمن تتعود امرأة على استعمال حريتها  
وتشعر بواجباتها شيئاً فشيئاً، وترقى ملكاتها العقلية والأدبية،  
وكما ظهر عيب في أخلاقها يداوى بالتربية؛ حتى تصير إنساناً  
شاعراً بنفسه

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<sup>48</sup> Samsul Huda, "Neo Perempuan: Kajian Atas Pemikiran Qasim Amin," *Harakat An-Nisa': Jurnal Studi Gender dan Anak* 5, no. 2 (2020): 40. <https://doi.org/10.30631/51.37-46>.

<sup>49</sup> Amin, *Tahrīr al-Mar'ah*, (Kairo: Yayasan Hindawi, 1900), 18.

<sup>50</sup> Achmad Tohari dan Dian Pramodya Cahyani, "Evaluasi Pemikiran Qasim Amin tentang Emansipasi Wanita dalam Islam," *EL-BANAT: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Pendidikan Islam* 11, no. 2 (2021): 212. <https://doi.org/10.54180/elbanat.2021.11.2.201-216>.

Meaning: The first generation to experience the emergence of women's freedom will be filled with complaints about it, and society will think that a great disaster has befallen them; Because at that stage, women are still learning to use their freedom. But as time goes by, women will get used to living their freedom and begin to feel their responsibilities little by little. Then his intellect and morals will develop. Whenever there is a deficiency in his morals, it will be corrected through education, until finally he becomes a self-aware human being.<sup>51</sup>

Qasim Amin stated that there is nothing to prevent Egyptian women from participating in the fields of science, literature, art, and industry, like Western women. His soul will remain alive and productive if he is invited to join the community, has the determination to keep up with them in important work, and uses his mental and physical strength. He will make as much as he consumes rather than relying solely on the work of others. This will benefit his country as it will improve public welfare and intellectual output.<sup>52</sup> Habib Salim said that the development of traits in women depends on their obedience to men. Therefore, it is obligatory for him to do obedience solely for his good.<sup>53</sup>

Qasim Amin added that facilitating a woman to combine her various duties is a must, preparing her to become a wife who is able to get comfort and happiness for her family, and a mother who is worthy to raise her children.<sup>54</sup> He underlined that when women experience divorce or are abandoned by their husbands, or there are those who have husbands but are forced to earn a living, then these women cannot be prohibited from working outside the home, because there is no man to provide for them. This does not necessarily leave the obligations of marriage or family.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Amin, *Al-Mar'ah Al-Jadidah*, 42.

<sup>52</sup> Amin, *Tahrir al-Mar'ah*, 19.

<sup>53</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 51.

<sup>54</sup> Amin, *Al-Mar'ah Al-Jadidah*, 82.

<sup>55</sup> Amin, *Al-Mar'ah Al-Jadidah*, 53.

نعم لم تخلق المرأة لتستعبد فيجب عليها أن نجاهد لنيل حريتها  
المعتدلة ولكن بأي سلاح؟ سلاح وهبه الله عز وجل لها وليس  
من جنس سلاحنا وليس في مكننتنا أن نقابلها بمثله. ولكنها وأسفاه  
غافلة عنه ولا تفكر فيه وليس ذلك السلاح إلا معرفتها خطورة  
وظيفتها وسمو مقام الهبة التي منحتها والعمل على حسن  
التصرف بها.

*Meaning:* Yes, women were not created to be enslaved, so we must fight for their balanced freedom, but with what weapons? The weapons that God has given them, are not of our kind, and are not within our ability to match them. But, unfortunately, they are negligent about it and do not think about it, and the weapon is none other than their knowledge of how important their duties are and the high position of grace bestowed upon them as well as working to manage well.<sup>56</sup>

Habib Salim's statement is a narrative of women's liberation within a moral-religious framework. This can be read as a criticism of liberal feminism, as well as an attempt to offer an alternative to emancipation based on Islamic values or traditional values that are interpreted positively. However, in the public sphere, the subordination of women in Habib Salim's text is shown by restricting women in spaces that are not in their function:

هذه هي وظيفة المرأة. وهذا هو كمالها فيجب علينا أن نعمل  
كل ما يمكننا لِنَتَقَرَّبَ أَنْ كُلَّ مَا يَبْعَدُنَا عَنْ هَذِهِ الْوُضُفِيَّةِ دَاءٌ  
اجْتِمَاعِيٌّ يَجِبُ التَّأَلُّبُ عَلَى مَلَاشَاتِهِ أَوْ بِذَلِ الْجَهْدِ فِي حَضْرِهِ  
وَمَحَلِّهِ وَأَنْ نُصَرِّحَ عَلَى رُؤُوسِ الْأَشْهَادِ بِأَنْ كُلَّ امْرَأَةٍ مُهِمَّا قِيلَ  
أَنَّهَا مَكْتَشِفَةٌ لِنَجْمٍ أَوْ بِحَاثَةٍ فِي الْمِيكْرُوبَاتِ أَوْ مُعَلِّمَةٌ لَعِلْمِ  
التَّشْرِيحِ أَوْ غَيْرِ ذَلِكَ نَاقِصَةٌ وَعَاصِيَةٌ لِلطَّبِيعَةِ وَخَارِجَةٌ عَنْ  
حُدُودِ وَضُفِيَّتِهَا وَأَنْ نُكْرِّهَ النِّسَاءَ فِي احْتِدَاءِ مِثَالِهَا لَا أَنْ نُضْرِبَ  
بِهَا الْأَمْثَالَ وَنَتَّخِذَهَا نُمُودَجًا لِلْكَمَالِ.

<sup>56</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 58.

*Meaning:* This is the function of women. This is its perfection, so we must try our best to get closer to the fact that everything that distances us from this function is a social ill that we must face and work to reduce. We must declare publicly that every woman, regardless of what is said about her as a star discoverer, microbial researcher, or anatomy teacher, is lacking and violating her nature and going beyond the limits of her function. We should not take such women as examples, but rather reject them as models of perfection.<sup>57</sup>

Habib Salim's statement represents a form of patriarchal-essentialist ideology that rejects changes in gender roles in society. It places women's functions exclusively in the domestic sphere and rejects the recognition of women's achievements outside of that function. In the context of gender studies, this view is considered problematic because it narrows the meaning of perfection to traditional roles only, makes different women a social disease, and ultimately perpetuates systemic gender inequality.

Habib Salim also hinted that there is no need for Muslim women to adopt all Western ideas. His opinion is in line with Aliyah et al. that the teachings of Islam, both found in the Qur'an and hadith, regulate the relationship between man and Allah (*ḥabl min allāh*) and with man (*ḥabl min an-nās*). The principles of human justice, freedom, and equality are also filled with moral messages about how important exaltation is to human dignity and dignity. Basically, all of them strongly support the concept of emancipation. Therefore, the most important thing today is the method to spread the teachings of Islam that places men and women as equal human beings before their God, with equal responsibilities and rights. This is done without worrying about male dominance or the morality that emerges in the West.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 42.

<sup>58</sup> Ida Hidayatul Aliyah, Siti Komariah, dan Endah Ratnawaty Chotim, "Feminisme Indonesia dalam Lintasan Sejarah," *TEMALI: Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial* 1, no. 2 (2018): 143. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jt.v1i2.3296>.

## Discussion

### Habib Salim's Textual Critique of Qasim Amin on The Veil (Hijab)

As the author has previously noted, this work by Habib Salim emerged as a response to the writings of Qasim Amin, particularly his book on Muslim women, which was first published in Egypt in 1899 CE and represented a Western-style diagnosis of what was perceived as the “illness” of a backward East. Amin argued that the veil (hijab) constituted a major barrier between women and their dignity. Therefore, as asserted by feminists, Qasim Amin believed that women were the agents responsible for transforming and advancing society.<sup>59</sup>

Qasim Amin criticized the practice of wearing the hijab, arguing that women's attachment to it had negative effects on their health. He maintained that women who wore the hijab were compelled to remain inside the home, which led to restricted access to fresh air and sunlight, as well as a lack of healthy physical and mental activity.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, Qasim Amin asserted that the face veil (niqāb) was merely a cultural product rather than a religious teaching, which led him to treat it as a key issue in the process of social reform.<sup>61</sup> According to him:

فالحجاب والحرية وسيلتان لصيانة امرأة، ولكن ما أعظم  
الفرق بينهما في النتائج التي تترتب عليهما! حيث إن الوسيلة  
الأولى تضع امرأة في وصف الأدوات والأمتعة، وتجني على  
الإنسانية، والثانية تخدم الإنسانية، وتسوق امرأة في طريق  
التقدم العقلي والكمال الأدبي

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<sup>59</sup> Katherine Bullock, *Rethinking Muslim Women and The Veil (Challenging Historical & Modern Stereotypes)* (London: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2002), 18.

<sup>60</sup> Qasim Amin, *Al-Mar'ah Al-Jadidah* (Kairo: Yayasan Hindawi, 1900), 30.

<sup>61</sup> Syaiful Bahri, “Wacana Pembebasan Perempuan,” *Jurnal Pengembangan Pemikiran dan Kebudayaan* 8, no. 2 (2014): 15. <https://journal.ibrahimiy.ac.id/index.php/lisanalhal/article/view/133>.

*Meaning:* The hijab and freedom are two ways to protect women, but the results they produce are vastly different. The first method positions women as objects and things, which actually harms their human values; while the second method serves humanity and guides women towards intellectual progress and moral perfection.<sup>62</sup>

Qasim Amin began with the view that Egyptian society was far behind the West. In the West, women were free to participate and work, whereas in his native Egypt they remained confined by the long-standing tradition of the hijab. Moreover, Qasim Amin regarded the hijab as an obstacle to activity, claiming that veiled women did not have easy access to employment and social interaction.<sup>63</sup>

In discussing the hijab, Nazirah Zainuddin and Fatima Mernissi do not differ significantly from Qasim Amin. Nazirah employs both rational (*‘aqlī*) and textual (*naqlī*) arguments. In her book *Al-Sufūr wa al-Ḥijāb*, she argues that Western civilization was more advanced and superior to Egyptian civilization at that time. She maintains that the West achieved such progress because it acted on the basis of reason and prioritized utility and values; she believes this contrasts with Eastern societies, which act according to their customs and traditions, leading to stagnation and a lack of advancement.<sup>64</sup>

Quranic verses, such as those found in Surah Al-Aḥzāb, verse 53, have been criticized by Fatima Mernissi because scholars use them as a legal basis for women to wear the hijab. According to her, there are limitations in this understanding, namely that only men are allowed to enter the public sector, and women are only allowed to perform domestic duties. According

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<sup>62</sup> Amin, *Al-Mar’ah Al-Jadīdah*, 40.

<sup>63</sup> Royyan Bachtiar, “Pembebasan Perempuan Qasim Amin: Telaah Kritis Pemikirannya Terhadap Hijab,” *Journal of Islamic and Occidental Studies* 1, no. 1 (2023): 52. <https://doi.org/10.21111/jios.v1i1.3>.

<sup>64</sup> Nur Fadiah Anisah, Ahmad Fauzi, dan Luthfi Raziq, “Hijab in Egyptian Feminists Exegesis,” *Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* 2, no. 2 (2023): 226. <https://doi.org/10.59005/jsqt.v2i2.246>.

to Fatima Mernissi, this interpretation must be re-examined by integrating the meaning into its original context.<sup>65</sup>

Asma Barlas reminded that the interpretation of the Qur'an should not be based on masculine power structures that are detrimental to women, but on the principles of justice, equality and universal mercy.<sup>66</sup> Muslim women should be given the opportunity to understand their religion directly without the intermediary of interpretations created by male domination. In this perspective, the hijab is not simply a garment that covers the body; it is a spiritual, existential, and even political statement that a Muslim woman can choose to shun the patriarchal capitalist system that turns her body into a commodity.<sup>67</sup> Qasim Amin differs from Habib Salim who stated:

هل ترضى المرأة عندما تعرف منه مستقبلها هذا أن ترفع  
الحجاب؟ لا، لأنّها سترى بالتحليلات العمرانية أنّ ذلك يسوقها  
إلى ما يزيد استعبادها. وهو أمر يُعْظَلُّهَا بَلْ يَصُدُّهَا عن بلوغ شأوها  
المنتظر ثم هل تميل لأن تجارى الرجال في الاشتغال؟ لا، لأن كان  
ذلك يسلخها كما ستراه مشبّا بالتجارب اليومية عن عرش ملكها  
(أسرتها) سلخًا فلا تتوصل إلى مركزها المستقبل الذي فيه  
سعادتها وحريتها.

Meaning: Will women agree to remove the hijab when they know the reality of the future? No, because they will see through social analysis that it will lead them to what increases slavery. It is something that will hinder them and even prevent them from achieving the goals they hope for. Then, will they be inclined to

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<sup>65</sup> Moch. Choiri & Alvan Fathony, "Rekonstruksi Tafsir Kebebasan Perempuan dalam Al-Qur'an: Studi Kritis Pemikiran Zaitunah Subhan dan Fatimah Mernissi," *Jurnal KACA* 11, no. 01 (2021): 40. <https://doi.org/10.36781/kaca.v11i1.3239>.

<sup>66</sup> Asma Barlas, *Believing Women in Islam*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), 33.

<sup>67</sup> Marwa dan Akhmad Dasuki, "Komodifikasi Jilbab dalam Budaya Digital: Eksploitasi Muslimah Berjilbab dalam Perspektif Asma Barlas," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu Alquran dan Tafsir* 1, no. 3 (2025): 11. <https://doi.org/10.47134/jsiat.v1i3.180>.



imitate men in their work? No, because that will deprive them of the royal throne (of their families) and will not lead them to a future position in which there is happiness and freedom.<sup>68</sup>

Habib Salim stated two things: first, removing the hijab would worsen women's position in society. This may refer to the view that ignoring certain norms (such as wearing the hijab) could lead women to a situation where they are more subject to social pressures or unfavorable expectations. Second, he argued that women should not imitate men by working outside the home, as this would diminish their primary role as family caregivers. In this view, women's happiness and freedom are believed to be achieved by focusing on the family, rather than pursuing a career outside the home.

Overall, Habib Salim emphasized the view that women should maintain their traditional roles within the family and not be influenced by social changes perceived as threatening that position. Imitating men in certain aspects, such as working outside the home or removing the hijab, is seen as detrimental and hindering their pursuit of happiness or freedom.

ولا يغرّها ما تراه من الطلاق النساء الافرنجيات والفاستات من  
المتفرنجيات في غير قومها بغير حجاب ولا تستنتج من ذلك  
أنهن أقرب منها إلى ذلك المستقبل السامي. كلا فقد جرّهن ذلك  
الانطلاق إلى طريق غير طريق سعادتهن وقد أخذ قومهنّ في  
التشكي من حالتهن كما نقلنا عن أعظمهم كل ذلك تفصيلاً.

*Meaning:* And do not be deceived by what they see of divorced Western women and women influenced by foreign cultures outside their nation without the hijab, and do not conclude that they are closer to a glorious future. No, because that freedom had led them down a path that was not the path of their happiness, and their people began to complain about their

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<sup>68</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 49.

situation, as we have already conveyed from their great figures in detail.<sup>69</sup>

The above statement represents Habib Salim's critical view of women's lifestyles influenced by Western or foreign cultures, particularly regarding the concept of more open freedom, such as women who do not wear the hijab or who have experienced divorce. He advises women not to be deceived or influenced by the seemingly freer lifestyles of Western women, as seen in divorce and the hijab-free lifestyle. Habib Salim emphasizes that although it appears that women who adopt Western lifestyles are freer, in reality, this freedom does not bring happiness or success. Instead, he argues that true happiness for women is found in following traditional norms and roles that are in accordance with their culture and religion.

ولقد افتتن ملوك المسلمين بحصر والشام وجاوي وسائر البلاد  
التي وطأها قدم الاستعمار بمرافقة الأمم الغربية في الغاء  
الحجاب لنسائهم فترى مصرًا من أكبر بلاد الإسلام فخرًا وهي  
منبع العلماء والمعاهد وفيها الأزهر الشريف الذي مرجع إليه  
الفتاوى الإسلامية من الأقطار الإسلامية

Meaning: Indeed, Muslim kings have been influenced by countries like Syria, Java, and other countries colonized by colonial powers, by following Western countries in removing the hijab for their women. You can see Egypt as one of the largest and proud Islamic countries, which is a source of scientists and educational institutions, and has Al-Azhar which is the reference for Islamic fatwas from various Islamic countries.<sup>70</sup>

Habib Salim's statement also shows that the assimilation of Western values by kings or Muslim political elites in colonized regions (such as Syria, Java, and others) has impacted social policies that touch on aspects of Islamic identity and morality, namely, in this case, the removal of the hijab for women. In his view, this phenomenon is not only considered an adoption of

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<sup>69</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 50.

<sup>70</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 19.

foreign culture, but a form of moral and spiritual decadence triggered by the domination of colonial powers. He highlights the hijab as not merely a symbol of cultural resistance to the West, and calls on Muslims to return to the authority and heritage of classical Islamic scholarship, as represented by Al-Azhar.

In line with Myra Macdonald's opinion, the hijab in colonial times was reconsidered as an important determinant of the socio-cultural position of Muslim women because it has been interpreted as a form of resistance against secularism and Western ideology, a fashion accessory, or evidence of freedom and the right to choose.<sup>71</sup> In 1906, Malik Hifni Nasif argued that the hijab had become a topic of discussion about women's status only because colonial patriarchy had made it so. For Muslim women, the hijab has the power to draw attention to discussions about Islam and women's status. This power was evident in colonial discourse.<sup>72</sup>

According to Muslim feminists, wearing the hijab is a responsibility and also an obligation for Muslim women to cover their aurat.<sup>73</sup> Katherine Bullock also emphasized that women hold multiple meanings for the practice of wearing the hijab, which cannot be simplified into a mere concept of subordination or freedom. Bullock also outlined several interpretations of the hijab, including as liberation, protection for women from a male perspective, a symbol of femininity, a woman's free choice, and a sign of religiosity.<sup>74</sup> According to Miriam Cooke, these various interpretations stem from a double critique or double conscious-

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<sup>71</sup> Myra Macdonald, "Muslim Women and the Veil: Problems of Image and Voice in Media Representations," *Feminist Media Studies* 6, no. 1 (2006): 17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680770500471004>.

<sup>72</sup> Myra Macdonald, "Muslim Women and the Veil: Problems of Image and Voice in Media Representations," 19.

<sup>73</sup> Wahidatul Hannan Nazari dan Razali Musa, "A View of Hijab Wearing From Muslim Feminism Perspective," *UFUQ International Journal of Arts and Social Science Research* 1, no. 1 (2021): 27. [https://www.academia.edu/50702497/A\\_VIEW\\_OF\\_HIJAB\\_WEARING\\_FROM\\_MUSLIM\\_FEMINISM\\_PERSPECTIVE](https://www.academia.edu/50702497/A_VIEW_OF_HIJAB_WEARING_FROM_MUSLIM_FEMINISM_PERSPECTIVE).

<sup>74</sup> Bullock, *Rethinking Muslim Women and The Veil (Challenging Historical & Modern Stereotypes)*, 183-184.

ness. She argues that it is crucial for women to navigate environmental determinants and contradictions while maintaining their identities.<sup>75</sup> Through this strategy, Muslim women can negotiate multiple identities both in local and international arenas.<sup>76</sup>

The hijab is a concept derived from Islamic law and is worn in accordance with local culture. Consequently, there are differences in the application of the hijab among different groups. For example, the hijab has been practiced for generations in Arab culture. However, in Javanese immigrant communities that have acculturated in Western countries, the hijab is seen only as a barrier to women's dress. This impacts differences in activities and spaces between men and women, as well as the amount and frequency of women's movements.<sup>77</sup> According to Hannerz, cultural phenomena are processes in which local cultures absorb symbols and meanings from global culture, then change them, give them meaning, and finally adapt certain aspects of global culture.<sup>78</sup>

Boxberger also emphasized that religion places women under social and spatial constraints. Furthermore, Boxberger found that young, unmarried women constitute the lowest social group in Hadhramaut. A girl is already distinguished by wearing the hijab—an outer covering that protects her modesty, before she reaches puberty. She is known as bint al-bait, also called the

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<sup>75</sup> Miriam Cooke, *Multiple Critique: Islamic Feminist Rhetorical Strategies dalam Laura E. Donaldson and Kwok Pui Lan, Postcolonialism, Feminism, and Religious Discourse* (New York dan London: Routledge, 2002), 149.

<sup>76</sup> Elya Munfarida, "Penafsiran Qasim Amin tentang Hijab," *Yinyang: Jurnal Studi Islam, Gender dan Anak* 9, no. 2 (2014): 159. <https://ejournal.uinsaizu.ac.id/index.php/yinyang/article/view/1194/902>.

<sup>77</sup> Roja Gholamhosseini dkk., "The Place of Public Space in the Lives of Middle Eastern Women Migrants in Australia," *Journal of Urban Design* 24, no. 2 (2019): 272. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13574809.2018.1498293>.

<sup>78</sup> Cynthia Puspitasari, dan Himasari Hanan, "The Impact of the Hijab Concept on Place Attachment in the Arab Settlement of Kutorejo, Tuban," *Journal of Settlements and Spatial Planning*, no. 12 (2022): 44. <https://doi.org/10.24193/JSSPSI.04.PADTC>.

“girl of the house,” and is not permitted to go outside during this time.<sup>79</sup>

The hijab has different interpretations in different countries based on social and cultural contexts. In Indonesia, the hijab is often seen as a symbol of cultural identity, religion, and respect for tradition, but in the West, it is often seen as a specific symbol.<sup>80</sup> It is crucial to consider the differing images of women wearing the hijab in various local and international contexts. Women wearing the hijab may face stereotypes and discrimination in Western societies, as the hijab is perceived as a symbol of backwardness. However, the hijab is often a component of cultural and religious identity in Indonesia, creating a positive image within society.<sup>81</sup>

### Gender Relations in the Contemporary Context

The racial order and colonial space (unintentionally) facilitated the application of a certain gender order brought from Hadhramaut to the Hadhrami settlements in the Dutch East Indies which highly valued gender segregation and largely limited women's agency to the domestic sphere. Ulrike Freitag points out that after Hadhramaut's modernization efforts in the early decades of the 20th century, women became the subject of discussion in the world of education. A reformer like Umar Ba Kathir realized that women's education had to be improved. The main reason, she argued, was that women should receive a proper education and know about religious and moral principles.<sup>82</sup> But he did not see the need to educate women on the same level as men.

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<sup>79</sup> Linda Boxberger, *On the Edge of Empire. Hadhramawt: Emigration, and the Indian Ocean, 1880s-1930s*, (New York: State University of New York Press, 2002), 162.

<sup>80</sup> Samsul Bahri dan Mairida, “Cadar dalam Perdebatan, Hasil Interpretasi Kitab Suci atau Produk Budaya?,” *Merdeka Kreasi* 1 (2022): 7.

<sup>81</sup> Roudhotul Mahfudhoh, “Hijab dan Kontestasi Citra Perempuan dalam Ruang Publik,” *Alhamra Jurnal Studi Islam* 5, no. 1 (2024): 3-4. <https://doi.org/10.30595/ajsi.v5i1.19567>.

<sup>82</sup> Ulrike Freitag, *Indian Ocean Migrants and State Formation in Hadhramaut: Reforming the Homeland*, (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 96.

This limitation was reinforced by the rejection of the Hadhrami, who were open-minded to what they saw abroad. Even from an open Hadhrami perspective, reform should not be too far removed or similar to the gender order that exists elsewhere, such as in Southeast Asia. If women perform in public places, they are expected to be completely closed, as public spaces and all public aspects of institutions such as commerce, religion, or education are clearly defined as the domain of men.<sup>83</sup> In addition, those who are symbolically connected to the honor of the family, especially unmarried women will be supervised and controlled. Although this gender order is almost the same as that in other parts of the Arabian Peninsula, it is different from that in Southeast Asia, especially in terms of how women play a role in public life.

وما أَخَّرَ بالمرأة أكثر مما أَخَّرَ بها أولئك الكتاب الخيالون الذين  
تملي عليهم الأهواء أراء لا تتفق مع الحقائق العلمية فيضعفون  
المرأة والرجل في مستوى واحد من كل الوجوه مع أن الرجل  
والمرأة خلقا ليتكامل لا ليتنازعا.

Meaning: What further delays the arrival of women are the delays made by fiction writers who indulge their passions, who argue that they do not conform to scientific facts, and reduce women and men to equal degrees in all respects, even though men and women were created to complement each other, not to quarrel with each other.<sup>84</sup>

Habib Salim satirizes fiction writers who follow lust and equate men and women in everything. This can be read as a critique of the influence of Western modernism, which at that time (early 20th century) began to spread the idea of women's emancipation through education, literature, and activism. In the context of Egypt and the Islamic world in general, figures such as Qasim Amin became a symbol of modernism that fought for

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<sup>83</sup> Martin Slama, "Coming Down to the Shop: Trajectories of Hadhrami Women into Indonesian Public Realms," *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 13, no. 4 (2012): 316. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14442213.2012.699089>.

<sup>84</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 45.

total equality between men and women, including the issue of hijab, education, and freedom. Habib Salim opposes this view because it is considered to ignore the differences between nature and morality in Islam.

أما المرأة فإنها تضحي بأسرها فقد كانت شبه أسيرة في بيت أبيها فصارت طليقة في بيت الزوج وبمال زوجها فقد كانت لا تنفق عشرة في بيت أبيها فصارت عشرتها مائة في بيت الزوج وبقيودها فقد كان أبوها وأُمُّها وأخوها أو وليها فصارت الحاكمة على الزوج وذويه في بيت الزوج.

Meaning: As for women, he sacrifices his whole life; She who was once almost confined to her father's house is now free in her husband's house, with her husband's property. She who did not spend ten at her father's house now spends a hundred at her husband's house. She who was bound by her father, mother, and brother was now the ruler over her husband and family in her husband's house.<sup>85</sup>

فالرجل أنه يضحي بحريته فقد كان طليقاً فتقيّد. وبِحَالِهِ فقد كان ينفق عشرةً فصارتُ عشرته مائةً. وبإرادته إذ صار له شريك فيها. وبوقته فقد كان له فصار لسواه. وبأمانيه فقد كان يحلق في كلِّ جَوْ فصار يرضى بالبيت. وبلهوه فقد كان طائرًا فوق الشجر فصار طائرًا في قفصٍ وبلدّاته. فقد حرم نفسه من معظمها حفظًا لتوازن الميزانية.

Meaning: The man sacrificed his freedom; He who was once free is now bound. He sacrificed his income; What used to be ten is now a hundred. He sacrificed his will, because now there were other people involved. He sacrificed his time; what used to belong to him now belongs to someone else. He sacrificed his hopes; who used to be able to fly anywhere now have to be satisfied at home. He sacrificed his pleasure; who used to be able to fly freely are now confined in cages. He ignored most of it for the sake of maintaining a balanced budget.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 34.

<sup>86</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 33.



Habib Salim's statement regarding the change in women's position after marriage reflects a social critique of the dynamics of gender relations, which according to him has undergone a disproportionate exchange of roles. She highlighted that women who previously lived under the limitations of authority in their father's house, actually gained freedom in their husband's house, even becoming rulers in the household by utilizing their husband's property. In Habib Salim's view, this phenomenon shows a new imbalance brought about by the excessive spirit of women's freedom a result of the influence of modernism that does not consider traditional value structures and the principle of mutual responsibility. The freedom obtained by women is not the fruit of economic or intellectual independence, but arises from the position of wife who is materially dependent on her husband.

Thus, instead of creating equal and harmonious relations, this freedom gives rise to a new dominance in which women are no longer in the framework of complementarity, but begin to take over authority in the domestic space. This criticism shows that for Habib Salim, gender modernism, which is not accompanied by a moral understanding and responsibility, actually threatens the social order and the balance of male and female relations as outlined in the traditional Islamic view.

إِتَّصَحَ مِمَّا تَقَدَّمَ اِنْ التَّضَحِيَّةُ لَا بَدَّ مِنْهَا فِي شَرَكَةِ الزَّوْجِ وَإِنَّمَا لَا  
تَكُونُ إِلَّا حَيْثُ يَكُونُ الْاِمْتِرَاجُ وَالْحُبُّ. فَلْنَفْرُضْ أَنَّ رَوْجَيْنِ مِنْ  
أَزْوَاجِ الْيَوْمِ تَحَابًّا وَلْنَلْقَ نَظْرَةً سَرِيعَةً عَلَى مَا يَضْحِي بِهِ الْفَرِيقَانِ  
فِي سَبِيلِ نَجَاحِ الشَّرِيقَةِ.

Meaning: From what has been mentioned, it is clear that sacrifice is necessary in marriage, and it will only exist where there is mixing and love. Let's assume that there are two couples today who love each other, and let's take a quick look at what they sacrificed for the success of their relationship.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 32

Habib Salim's statement about the importance of sacrifice in marriage implies an idealistic relational view, but from the perspective of feminism, this narrative needs to be critically examined. The concept of sacrifice that he proposes as a condition for the success of the household appears to require a division of emotional roles that is not always equal. In many patriarchal social contexts, women are more frequently expected to make greater sacrifices emotionally, physically, and even in terms of their careers in the name of love and domestic permanence. Feminist theories, particularly radical and existentialist feminism such as those raised by Simone de Beauvoir, highlight that love and sacrifice are often instruments that soften structural dominance over women. Thus, Habib Salim's ideas, although containing ethical values about the importance of love and emotional engagement, have the potential to maintain gender inequality if not contextualized with a critical awareness of women's positions in domestic power structures. Feminism demands that sacrifice should not be made into a unilateral moral obligation, but must grow out of equal and mutually liberating relationships between individuals, without the trappings of roles predetermined by patriarchal norms.

Habib Salim also has a view on a balanced and realistic marriage relationship, as well as an appreciation for the role of women within the limits of their nature and morals:

بل هي تلك التي لم تكن تمدّ رجلها إلّا على قدر البساط ولا  
تفتخر إلّا بخدمة البيت ولا تباهى إلّا بإجادة الطبخ ولا تَعْتَرّ إلّا  
بالاقتصاد وحسن التربية البنين والبنات. وإذا حَلَفَتْ أقسمت  
بالزوج قبل الولد فلم تكن من الإماء ولم يكن من البعيد بل كانا  
شريكين في السراء والضراء فاضلحت الشركة وعرف كلُّ حدّه  
فلم يَتَعَدّه فكان الحب وكان الوفاق وكان السلام.

*Meaning:* But it is he who does not spread his legs except as far as he can reach, does not boast of himself except in the matter of serving the house, does not boast of himself except in the matter of cooking skills, and does not complain except in matters of good economy and education for his sons and

daughters. If she swears, she swears in the name of her husband before her child, then she is not classified as a slave nor far from her husband, they are friends in joy and sorrow, Each knows the limits of his abilities and does not exceed them, so there is love, harmony and peace.<sup>88</sup>

على إني لا أريد بذلك ان تكون حياة الزوجة سلسلة تضحيات.  
فإن بعض النساء تضحين كثيرًا في سبيل إرضاء الأزواج بل أريد  
أن التضحية لا بد منها ويجب أن تكون من الجانبين – ولقد  
يقال إن زوجة الأمس كانت أكثر هناء من زوجة اليوم ح وهو  
قول لا يخلو من الصواب في الاغلب الأعم -لما بين الزوجتين  
من البون العظيم والتناقض الكثير في التربية والأخلاق.

*Meaning:* However, I do not want to say that the life of a wife is a series of sacrifices. Some women sacrifice a lot to please their husbands, but I want to emphasize that there must be sacrifices on both sides. Some say that the wife of the past was happier than the wife of the present, and this is not entirely false, since there are great differences and many contradictions in education and morals between the two wives.<sup>89</sup>

The main similarity of Habib Salim's two statements is the idea of a harmonious and complementary household, in which women are valued not for their sacrifices alone, but for their faithfulness to the role they play consciously, honestly, and compassionately. And in all of that, the balance of relationships and moral integrity is the main requirement for the happiness of husband and wife.

The Hadhrami community itself began to receive modern influence in the Dutch East Indies at the beginning of the 20th century, especially in the field of education. The Islamic reformist organization Al-Irsyad founded by Hadhrami in 1914 AD attracted girls to attend school there and later established a separate school for them. As in boys' schools, girls are also taught Islamic subjects. In the same period, other Hadhrami

<sup>88</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 29.

<sup>89</sup> Salim, *Daf' al-Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al-Ummahāt*, 29.

organizations such as the Indonesian Arab Union (PAI) were founded, the organization aimed at a stronger integration of the Hadhrami into the majority population.<sup>90</sup> PAI progressively makes gender relations one of its main issues. Journal of Baroe Flow<sup>91</sup> published between 1938 and 1941, which specifically addressed the fate of women in the Hadhrami community.

Other topics are also discussed such as polygamy and the marriage of young girls to much older men. There are stories of first-generation migrants who demanded that their Indonesian-born wives wear body coverings. Similar topics have arisen in Slama's anthropological research, such as two conservative Hadrami businessmen in Solo requiring Hadrami women to wear *burqas*<sup>92</sup>. The men protested that the Hadhrami women no longer covered the entire body, were over-exposed on the street, lost their shyness, and that there was no difference between Javanese women and Arab women.

The example shows how public perception of the dominant gender order in Hadhramaut in the Arab region of the Dutch colony, including among the modernist Hadhrami organizations. In addition, they show that the community increasingly opposed the restrictions on women in the gender order at the end of the colonial period. For example, a Hadhrami woman living in Manado, North Sulawesi, protested to her parents for not sending her to school, even though she was eager to learn to read and write. He said that women at that time were not allowed to leave

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<sup>90</sup> Huub de Jonge dan Nico Kaptein, *Transcending Borders: Arabs, Politics, Trade and Islam in Southeast Asia* (Leiden: KITLV, 2002), 79-80.

<sup>91</sup> Aliran Baroe (often written as *the New Movement*) is a movement or renewal thought in the history of modern Islamic thought in Indonesia, which developed around the beginning of the 20th century. The term is often associated with the emergence of the spirit of Islamic modernism which was influenced by the idea of renewal from the Middle East, especially the thoughts of figures such as Jamaluddin al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, and Rashid Ridha—and spread to the Islamic world including Indonesia.

<sup>92</sup> The outer garments worn by some Muslim women cover the entire body and face, leaving only the eye part visible through a net or thin cloth.

the house. They are also always accompanied by their parents if they go.<sup>93</sup>

In terms of feminism and gender issues, Islam sees human beings, both male and female, as spiritual beings who are metaphysical, have the ability to act independently and must consider moral aspects. Because freedom without morality and religion is the abyss of misery, and freedom that leads to actions contrary to human nature is not an option. Free action means the ability to choose the best, so humans must know what is good and bad.<sup>94</sup>

Younger and educated Muslim women faced the issue of women's control over their bodies and sexuality as an important resource in women's empowerment. Women who are more religiously and religiously aware of their sexual rights compared to women who have traditional marriage arrangements, they are more likely to be involved in mate selection, have more children, and enjoy relatively egalitarian marital relationships.<sup>95</sup> Women have an equal opportunity to raise their sons and daughters as mothers. They believe that men and women have the same religious values, the only difference is the value of piety. They want to correct gender discrimination in culture or in Islam, starting with their own families.<sup>96</sup>

The difference between women and men is not an indicator that must distinguish the realm of power of each sex, let alone legitimize the superiority of the dominance of one sex over the other. Women's belief that their condition (fate) is the result of

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<sup>93</sup> Slama, "Coming Down to the Shop: Trajectories of Hadhrami Women into Indonesian Public Realms," 319.

<sup>94</sup> Nur Sari Wangi dan A. Halil Thahir, "Iman dan Keadilan Gender: Menjawab Legitimasi Pemikiran Kaum Feminis Liberal Tentang Ketidakadilan Gender dalam Islam," *Akademika* 16, no. 1 (2022), 40. <https://doi.org/10.30736/adk.v16i1.691>.

<sup>95</sup> Masoumeh Velayati, "Gender and Muslim Families," dalam *Encyclopedia of Family Studies*, oleh Constance L. Shehan, 1 ed. (2016): 3. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119085621.wbefs353>.

<sup>96</sup> Cahya Edi Setyawan, "Pemikiran Kesetaraan Gender dan Feminisme Amina Wadud Tentang Eksistensi Wanita dalam Kajian Hukum Keluarga" *Zawiyah* 3, no. 1 (2017), 73. <https://doi.org/10.31332/zjpi.v3i1.710>.

God's destiny has been influenced by their beliefs about various femininities and women in society.<sup>97</sup> This idea also has an impact on the general assumptions about various femininities and women in society, most people continue to believe that women's lives are only to be wives and reproductive media that pass on the family line.

Habib Salim establishes contemporary gender relations as a harmonious relationship between classical Islamic values and modern reality, where women are respected, protected, educated, and given the opportunity to contribute actively. All of this is done while remaining within the corridor of ethics and sharia law. This concept is not rigid patriarchy or liberal egalitarianism. Rather, it is a complementary relationship based on affection, responsibility, and manners. Just like thinking The same is true of Mernissi's thoughts, which are also relevant in the face of modernization and globalization, which often raises questions for Muslim women. It has the potential to reinforce existing patriarchal habits. In addition, Merinsisi argues that Muslim women should actively participate in facing these challenges in a critical and informed manner, to ensure that the basic values of justice and equality are not undermined by modernization.<sup>98</sup>

## Conclusion

This study concludes that *Daf' al Turrahāt 'an Wājibāt al Ummahāt* constructs Muslim womanhood through a framework that combines moral, religious, and biological arguments. The manuscript positions women primarily as ethical subjects whose identity is shaped by piety, religious knowledge, and social responsibility, while grounding their social roles in motherhood, education of children, and moral cultivation. These findings directly answer the research question by demonstrating that

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<sup>97</sup> Samsul Huda, "Neo Perempuan: Kajian Atas Pemikiran Qasim Amin," 39.

<sup>98</sup> Shodiqin dan Risdayah, "Strategi Pemberdayaan Perempuan dalam Masyarakat Islam: Studi Wacana Kritis Pemikiran Fatima Mernissi dalam Buku *Beyond The Veil*," *Bayt Al-Hikmah* 1, no. 1 (2025): 58. <https://www.pusdig.web.id/BaytAlHikmah/article/view/371/491>.

Habib Salim bin Jindan's text functions not only as a prescriptive religious treatise but also as a cultural response to early twentieth century debates on women's education, emancipation, and public participation within the Hadhrami Indonesian milieu.

This research is limited by its reliance on a single manuscript, a codex unicus, which restricts the ability to compare textual variants or trace the evolution of the work across different copies. The philological method used, while rigorous, depends heavily on the physical condition of the manuscript and the interpretive decisions of the editor, which may influence the reconstruction of the text. In addition, the contextual analysis is constrained by the availability of supporting materials from the same period, which limits the depth of socio intellectual comparison.

Future studies may expand this work by examining other Hadhrami Indonesian manuscripts that discuss gender, morality, or family ethics to build a broader understanding of textual traditions in the region. Comparative research with reformist writings of the same era could also illuminate ideological tensions and intellectual exchanges within Indonesian Islam. Theoretically, this study contributes to gender discourse in Nusantara Islam by demonstrating how traditional scholars articulated women's roles in response to modernity. Practically, the findings offer insights for contemporary discussions on women's education, family ethics, and the reinterpretation of classical texts in shaping gender norms today.

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