FATIMA MERNISSI'S CRITICISM OF MISOGYNISTIC HADITHS RELATED TO GENDER EQUALITY IN THE MODERN ERA

¹Fauziah Syafitri, ²Ahmad Fauzi

^{1,2} Sunan Kalijaga Islamic State University Yogyakarta, Indonesia

fauziahfzh24@gmail.com ahmad.fauzi@uin-suka.ac.id

Abstract: The researcher aims to present a paper related to the criticisms raised by Fatima Mernissi against gender-biased misogyny traditions in accordance with her thoughts. Gender equality is a very hot issue discussed today. Equality of rights between men and women is increasingly being voiced. This also happens within the scope of Islam. The emergence of discussions about misogynistic traditions is also increasingly highlighted, especially by Fatima Mernissi who focuses on issues of gender equality. This research method uses a literature review of various relevant articles. The results of this study show that Fatima Mernissi criticizes gender-biased hadiths to be contextualized according to the conditions and situations of the times. This is to provide space for women to be more free in running their lives without being intervened by patriarchy. The importance of contextualization in understanding traditions is very important, so that all Muslims can live life better and there are no practices that override women's rights.

Keywords: Fatima Mernissi; Misogyny Hadiths; Gender Equality

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan menyajikan tulisan yang berkaitan dengan kritik-kritik yang dilayangkan oleh Fatima Mernissi terhadap hadis-hadis misogini yang bias gender sesuai dengan pemikirannya. Kesetaraan gender merupakan isu yang sangat hangat diperbincangkan dewasa ini. Kesetaraan hak-hak antara laki-laki dan perempuan semakin marak disuarakan. Hal ini juga terjadi dalam ruang lingkup Islam. Munculnya pembahasan tentang hadis-hadis misogini juga semakin disorot, khususnya oleh Fatima Mernissi yang fokus pada isu-isu kesetaraan gender. Metode penelitian ini menggunakan kajian literatur dari berbagai artikel yang relevan. Hasil dari penelitian ini menujukkan bahwa Fatima Mernissi mengkritik hadis-hadis yang bias gender untuk lebih bisa dikontekstualkan sesuai dengan kondisi dan situasi zaman. Hal tersebut guna memberikan ruang bagi para perempuan untuk lebih bebas dalam menjalankan kehidupan tanpa diintervensi oleh patriarki. Pentingnya kontekstualitas dalam memahami hadis-hadis sangatlah penting dilakukan, agar seluruh umat muslim bisa menjalani kehidupan dengan lebih baik serta tidak terjadinya praktik-praktik yang menimpangkan hak-hak perempuan.

Kata kunci: Fatima Mernissi; Hadis Misogini; Kesetaraan Gender

INTRODUCTION

In the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, gender inequality, especially in the field of employment, still occurs, both in developed countries and in developing countries including Indonesia.¹ This has become quite a hot topic among feminists to continue trying to voice equal rights between men and women. The feminism movement is fighting for women to be able to get access like men in any field and not only be burdened by family affairs, and no longer get discrimination.² So the discussion about gender equality is interesting to study.

Gender equality is a topic that is currently being discussed in the world. This is due to the development of thoughts related to feminism and figures who participate in voicing equal rights between men and women. The concept of gender that most people understand is often biased and more narrowly interpreted as a concept that only talks about women's problems with their female nature. Whereas gender is different from sex, it does not only talk about women or men, nor is it a concept about the biological differences between the two.³

This view of patriarchy is also inseparable from the inherent religious views of society so far. Because the religious doctrine, in this context Islam, that develops (in this case Indonesia) strongly views the position of women under

¹ Yeni Nuraeni and Ivan Lilin Suryono, "Analysis of Gender Equality on Employment in Indonesia", *Nahkoda: Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan* 20, no 01 (2021): 77

² Muhammad Alfan Taufiqi and Lilik Hamida, "Analisis Feminisme dalam Dakwah Ustadzah Oki Setiana Dewi: Seorang Istri Harus Patuh pada Suami di Media Sosial, *Ijougs : Indonesian Journal of Gender Studies* 3, no. 2 (2022): 47

³ Lilis Widaningsih, "Relasi Gender dalam Keluarga: Internalisasi Nilai-nilai kesetaraan dalam Memperkuat Fungsi Keluarga", Direktori File UPI (2013)

men.⁴ Within the scope of Islam, the discussion of equal roles between men and women has also been highlighted. The emergence of hadiths that are prone to gender bias has begun to be highlighted in the period after the death of the Prophet by Aisha. The figure of Aisha who at that time was very firm in addressing this matter.

As the second source of Islamic law, the hadith has an important function in the source system of Islamic teachings, especially in providing explanations and understanding of the Qur'an. However, the instructions contained in the Quran cannot be understood and absorbed comprehensively without the hadith.⁵ The patriarchal Arab culture has influenced many Muslim scholars in interpreting Islamic religious concepts. It is recognized that Islamic fiqh was born as a legal formulation covering various aspects of the life of a particular community based on the Qur'an and Sunnah.⁶ However, on the other hand, there are many traditions that are claimed to be misogynistic, i.e. Prophetic traditions that textually seem to harass, hate or marginalize women. harassing, despising or marginalizing women.⁷

Nowadays, there are many figures who speak out about feminism. Both from the western and eastern worlds. One of the figures that will be discussed in this article is Fatima Mernissi. This woman who is considered a Muslim Feminist has voiced many women's issues. Fatima Mernissi's figure is different from western feminists who tend to voice women's rights but are anti-religious. Mernissi herself examines some of these hadiths from an Islamic perspective. The concept of gender relations in Islam is not only related to gender justice in society, but also regulates the relationship between humans, nature and God theologically. Fatima Mernissi states that in seeking gender equality, we must refer to the teachings of Islam itself.⁸ This article will present some critical responses from Fatima Mernissi regarding misogyny hadiths (hatred of women) according to her point of view and also the history of the hadith and its narrators. The purpose of the research is to describe or provide information

⁴ Achmad Saeful, "Kesetaraan Gender dalam Dunia Pendidikan", Tarbawi 1 (2019): 18

⁵ Elviandri, Asrizal Saiin, and Farkhani, "Pembacaan Kaum Feminis terhadap Haditshadits Misoginis dalam Sahih Bukhari", Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam dan Kemanusiaan 19, no 2 (2019): 244

⁶ Ade Marhamah, "Hadits Misoginis Perspektif Gender dan Feminisme", At-Tibyan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadis Studies 2, no 2 (2019): 21

⁷ Yupi Agustiani and Teti Ratnasih, "Kualitas dan Interpretasi Hadis tentang Misogini: Studi Takhrij dan Syarah", Jurnal Riset Agama 2, no 2 (2022)

⁸ Leon Rohendi, Lily Suzana binti Haji Shamsu, "Gender dalam Pendidikan Islam: Perspektif Fatima Mernissi", Jurnal Iman dan Spiritualitas 3, no 2 (2023): 275

from the reader.⁹ The purpose of this article is to provide information about Fatima Mernissi's criticisms of traditions that harm women, so that they can be reviewed and adapted to her time.

DISCUSSION

Biography of Fateema Mernissi

Fateema Mernissi was born in Fez, a city in Morocco on September 27, 1940. She came from a religious nationalist family. At that time, the situation in Morocco was uncertain due to the Second World War. Her family belonged to the middle class. During her childhood, she lived with her ten cousins, both boys and girls, and enjoyed a playful and joyful time.¹⁰

Mernissi was educated in a Qur'anic school. At the school, Mernissi was taught with quite harsh methods regarding her learning. At the school, Mernissi learned to recite the verses of the Qur'an. If it is wrong to pronounce or chant it, then she and the students will be given punishment along with yelling.¹¹

Moving on to an all-girls secondary school, Mernissi began to learn about the history of religion, marked by the introduction of as-sunnah. It was at this time that Mernissi began to feel confusion and sadness when she found a hadith sourced from the book of Bukhari, "The Messenger of Allah said that dogs, donkeys and women will cancel a person's prayer if he passes in front of them, interrupting himself between the praying person and the Qiblah.¹² Hadiths like this made Mernissi begin to learn more about the history, truth, and the narrators who narrated the hadiths that put women down by men in Islam. So that these thoughts made her continue her education.

He went on to study at the University of Muhammad V in Rabat, where he majored in Sociology and Political Science, which he earned in 1965. He continued his education in Paris, where he became a journalist, in 1973. He was awarded his doctorate in sociology from Brandeis University. With a dissertation entitled: Sexe Idiologie et Islam, he returned to Morocco in 1974-1981, and became a lecturer at the Department of Sociology at the University of Muhammad V, as well as a lecturer at the Institute of Scientific Research, at the

⁹ Ahmad Fauzi, dkk, Metode Penelitian. (Purwokerto Selatan: CV. Pena Persada, 2022): 10

¹⁰ Fatima Mernissi, Islam and Democracy : Fear of The Modern World. (Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002).

¹¹ Fatima Mernissi, Wanita di dalam Islam. Terj. Radianti, Yaziar. (Bandung: Pustaka, 1994).

¹² Ibid...

same university. He was a regular participant in international conferences and seminars, as well as a visiting professor at the University of California at Berkeley and Harvard University. In addition, she has served as a consultant to United Nations Agencies, and is actively involved in the women's organization movement, and is a member of the Pan Arab Woman Solidarity Association.¹³

Mernissi's works include are Beyond the Veil : Male/Female Dynamics in Modern Muslim Society (1975), The Veil and The Male Elite : A Feminist Interpretation of Woman's Rights in Islam (1987), Woman and Islam : A Historical and Theological Enquiry (1991), Islam and Democracy : Fear of the Modern World (1992), The Forgotten Queens of Islam (1993), The Dream of Trespass : Tales of Harem Girlhood (1994).¹⁴

Mernissi's book voices many women's issues, especially from an Islamic perspective. In contrast to western feminist figures who tend to be anti-religious in voicing their thoughts. Mernissi even criticizes hadith narrators who are still very influential in the Islamic world, such as Abu Hurairah and Abu Bakrah, who are related to the delivery of the Prophet's words related to women.

Mernissi tried to criticize the history and narrators of the misogyny hadith so that it needed to be reviewed so as not to cause perceptions that were detrimental to the rights and position of women in Islam if it was not reviewed. However, Mernissi's efforts in reviewing the misogyny hadith were very shocking at the time, because she was considered liberal and influenced by western feminism because she studied there for a long time so she dared to criticize the hadiths that she believed were detrimental to women.

It is these thoughts that began to become a concern in the world of Islamic feminism as material for study and criticism of her. Mernissi passed away on Monday, November 30, 2015 at the age of 75 after suffering from an illness.¹⁵

An Overview of Fateema Mernissi's Criticism of Hadith Misogyny

Mernissi's thinking about equality between men and women is not only about how women get equal rights in studying, but also the figure of a woman

¹³ Siti Yumnah, "Pemikiran Fatima Mernissi tentang Pendidikan Islam dalam Perspektif Gender", Ta'limuna 10, no 01 (2021): 28

¹⁴ Anita Handayani, "Fatima Mernissi: Riwayat Hidup dan Perjuangannya dalam Mewujudkan Demokrasi dan Hak-hak Perempuan di Maroko (1992-1997)", Repository UIN Jakarta, 27 Desember 2023, <u>https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/bitstream/123456789/19339/1/ANITA%20HANDAYA</u> NI-FAH

¹⁵ Ja'far Assagaf. Dekonstruksi Pemahaman Fatima Mernissi terhadap Perawi Hadis Abu Bakrah, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2022)

who can also become a leader. This happens when Mernissi criticizes misogyny hadiths.

Misogyny hadiths are hadiths that lead to hatred of women. In her presentation, Mernissi once criticized Abu Bakrah who had heard the Prophet stating that

"There will be no success for a people who entrust their affairs to a woman". This hadeeth is a saheeh hadeeth that was accepted by al-Bukhori.

When viewed historically, the hadith was delivered by the Prophet related to the conditions when he learned that Kisra, the leader of Persia was killed so that there was chaos in the region so that many at that time claimed the next throne including women.¹⁶ Here is the full hadith:

عنْ أَبِي بَكْرَةَ، قَالَ: لَقَدْ نَفَعَنِي اللَّهُ بِكَلِمَةٍ سَمِعْتُهَا مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلًّمَ أَيَّامَ الجَمَلِ، بَعْدَ مَا كِدْتُ أَنْ أَلْحَقَ بِأَصْحَابِ الجَمَلِ فَأْقَاتِلَ مَعَهُمْ، قَالَ: لَمَّا بَلَغَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ بِنْتَ كِسْرَى، قَالَ: «لَنْ يُفْلِحَ قَوْمٌ وَلَّوْا أَمْرَهُمُ امْرَأَةً

It was narrated that Abu Bakrah said: "Allah guarded me with something that I heard from the Messenger of Allah at the battle of Jamal, when I was about to join the horsemen to fight with them". Abu Bakrah continued: When the Emperor of Persia died, the Messenger said: "Who will be his successor?" They replied: His daughter. Then the Prophet said: "There will be no success for a people who entrust their affairs to a woman."

According to Mernissi, this is what made Abu Bakrah conclude the Prophet's view of women. Whereas if reviewed further, the Prophet stated this conditionally not eternally. That's what made Mernissi voice to review the application of the hadith today.

Mernissi also considers that the hadith passage is used as a weapon by the male elites for their interests so as not to dispel certain goals that can be reduced by women. Likewise with Abu Bakrah. Where he chose to convey the Prophet's attitude about the bad things that would happen if a people were led by women (in this case when Aisha was involved in a civil war with Ali bin Abi Talib, and asked Abu Bakrah to help because Abu Bakrah was the leader of the city of Basrah at that time). Abu Bakrah's attitude was considered misogynistic where everyone honored the figure of Aisha, regardless of the war that occurred at that time.

¹⁶ Mernissi 1994, Op.cit

Malik bin Anas once said that a person cannot be trusted as a transmitter of hadith if he is in the following circumstances:

- 1. Knowledge [al-'ilm] cannot be received from a safih (mentally retarded person)
- 2. One who is in the grip of lust
- 3. One who has committed an innovation
- 4. A liar who tells everything to others
- 5. One should not accept knowledge from a shaykh, even if he is an honorable and pious person, if he is not well versed in the teachings he is about to convey. ¹⁷

If examined from his history, Abu Bakrah can be removed from those who are trusted in conveying the hadith of the Prophet. Because one of his biographies mentions that he was once punished and flogged by the caliph Umar bin Khatab for giving false testimony about accusations of adultery against a prominent friend and politician, namely Al-Mughirah bin Shu'bah.¹⁸ If Abu Bakrah is the perpetrator of slander, how can we not doubt his words? So this hadith needs to be revisited in the present day, because if a woman has the ability to lead (in terms of politics), then there is no doubt to make her a leader.

For example, in the Qur'an surah An-Naml verse 23

إِنِّى وَجَدتُ ٱمْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ "Behold, I found a woman ruling over them, and she was endowed with all things and had a great throne." (Q.S. An-Naml : 23)

This Qur'anic verse tells the story of a region in Saba, Queen Balqis during the time of Prophet Solomon. It is said that Queen Balqis led her region well and wisely. And it shows that women with their wisdom and good abilities can also become leaders.

If we examine further, Mernissi's criticism of Abu Bakrah is loud enough to even look for Abu Bakrah's previous history and track record to ensure his appropriateness as a trusted hadith narrator. Mernissi refers to the story of Abu Bakrah who was once a false witness in a case of adultery, making it difficult to accept his delivery of the Prophet's hadith.

But if you refer to other references, it is conveyed that Abu Bakrah is a companion who was freed by the Prophet as a slave. He was also one of the

¹⁷ Ibid...

¹⁸ Ibid...

honorable worshipers in Basrah, and he also had many students.¹⁹

Regarding the status of Abu Bakrah who was punished for giving false testimony in the case of adultery committed by Mughirah, several things were found in other literature:

- 1. After being flogged, Abu Bakrah still insisted that Mughirah committed adultery. He was not afraid of being flogged by Umar for the second time
- 2. Abu Bakrah did not repent from his testimony, because he was convinced that what he saw was true
- 3. Abu Bakrah wrote a vow close to his death, and made his martyrdom and said Mughirah had actually committed adultery in 17 A.H
- 4. After the incident, Umar regretted that he witnessed Mughirah and Ummu Jamil together somewhere
- 5. Umar finally did not accept Mughirah's testimony
- 6. Mughirah gave a number of favors to Ummu Jamil when he returned to office during the time of Muawwiyah
- 7. Abu Bakrah narrated the hadeeth about the sin of those who bear false witness, and he was not alone in narrating it.²⁰

However, when viewed from the hadith narration path, the hadith is classified as an ahad (single) hadith. One of the narration paths is agreed to be a saheeh hadith by Bukhori.²¹

¹⁹ Sulaemang L, "Kepemimpinan Wanita dalam Urusan Umum (Hadis Abi Bakrah)", Al-Munzir: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu-ilmu Komunikasi dan Bimbingan Islam 8, no 1 (2015)

²⁰ Assagaf, Op cit

²¹ Sulaemang, Op cit

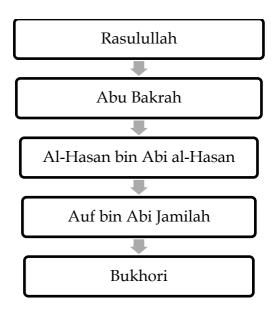


Table 1. Path of transmission of Sahih Hadiths by Bukhori

Mernissi also criticized another hadith about women being able to cancel prayers when passing by people who are praying and blocking the qiblah.

Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "When one of you wants to pray, you should make a barrier in front of him that looks like a piece of wood placed over a riding animal; if there is no barrier in front of him like a piece of wood placed over a riding animal, his prayer will be interrupted by a donkey, a woman, and a black dog."

If we look at the language of the hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah, women are aligned with donkeys and dogs. It is very demeaning to women when juxtaposed with animals that can cancel one's prayers. The hadith was once challenged by Aisha who said that women are invalidators of prayer. In a narration, Aisha said :

Isma'il ibn Khalil narrated to us, 'Ali ibn Mushir narrated to us, from al-A'masy, from Muslim, i.e. Ibn Subaih, from Masruq, from ' \overline{A} 'ishah: Verily it was said (a question) near 'A'ishah about what can break the prayer? The Companions (audience) replied (that) dogs, donkeys and women can break the prayer. Then ' \overline{A} 'ishah said: "Indeed you have made us (women) equal to dogs. Indeed I saw the Prophet (peace be upon him). praying and I was lying on the bed between the Prophet and the Qiblah (in his presence). Then there was a need for me and I did not want to face him, so I withdrew slowly."

From Aisha's response, it strongly indicates that Aisha's rejection of what was conveyed by Abu Hurairah, because Aisha herself once lay down in front of the Prophet and faced the qiblah but he continued his prayer. This is the basis for Mernissi in criticizing the validity of the hadith from Abu Hurairah.

The placement of women who are aligned with donkeys and dogs is what makes this hadith gender biased. Whereas men can also trigger the invalidation of one's prayer if they indicate a position blocking the Qibla when praying.

Mernissi claims that Abu Hurairah is an anti-woman hadith narrator. Because, in a narration, it is conveyed that Abu Hurairah prefers to be called Abu Hurr (Father of a male cat) rather than Abu Hurairah (Father of a female cat), because males are better than females. (Mernissi, 1994). But on further examination, choosing between male or female cats cannot be classified as a form of anti-woman action.

However, scholars state that the meaning of the hadith does not refer to the invalidation of a person's prayer because of a woman, but rather that it can break the solemnity of a person's prayer if it is obstructed, not canceling it and having to repeat the prayer.

CONCLUSION

Discrimination against women is an act that does not symbolize justice in life. Moreover, in the teachings of Islam, the figure of women is truly glorified even by the Prophet. Fatima Mernissi is one of the women who voiced gender equality in the Islamic perspective. Mernissi's efforts in criticizing hadiths related to injustice against women are quite appreciated, considering that she finds out the history of the hadith, even the genealogy of the narrators with various references. So that it is re-examined to be examined and sought the historical truth. One of them is about the hadith of women's leadership and also women as invalidators of prayer.

The purpose of Mernissi criticizing the hadiths and narrators is solely to get the truth and reject discrimination against women. Similarly, regarding women's leadership, if a woman has a very good ability to organize groups in a place and is even supported by intellectual and logical thinking skills, the author argues that it does not rule out the possibility that the woman can become a good leader as well.

Mernissi's criticism is quite sharp towards the narrators of the hadith, so that it becomes a concern for Muslims about it, especially when she conveys a political review of the narrators of the misogyny hadith. However, in this case the author examines that Mernissi's criticism is quite skeptical and excessive in responding to her thoughts on the narrators who are considered anti-women or even lead to hatred (misogyny).

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