

FATIMA MERNISSI'S THOUGHTS ABOUT WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP. (Study of Fatimah Mernissi's Criticism of Sahih al-Bukhari Hadis Number 4425)

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Abstract: In this paper, the author will discuss the thoughts of Fatima Mernissi in criticizing the hadis on women's leadership. From the results of her investigation, Mernissi criticized Abu Bakrah in relation to the narration of the hadis as follows: 1) Abu Bakrah is difficult to trace his lineage because he was originally a slave who was freed when he joined the Muslims. 2) Abu Bakrah was sentenced to qazaf, because he could not prove the charge of zina against al-Mughirah ibn Syu'bah at the time of the Caliph Umar bin al-Khattab. 3) Looking at the historical context, why did Abu Bakrah remember this hadis (which, if correctly uttered by the Prophet, means that he has passed a period of approximately 25 years) after knowing Aisha had lost the war, while the initial stance he took was neutral. Based on this rule, Mernissi concluded that Abu Bakrah was a narrator who was rejected, and his hadis was not acceptable. Based on the foregoing reasons, Mernissi concluded that even though the hadis was contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, it was still debated by the jurists. According to her, this hadis is used as an argument to displace women in the decision-making process.

Keywords: Fatima Mernissi, Women's Leadership, Hadis criticism.

INTRODUCTION

Islam, as a perfect system of religious teachings has brought blessings to all of nature, including women. For long time before Islam come, the world recognized the existence of two Greek and Roman civilizations, as well as two major religions, namely Judaism and Christianity. The Messenger of Allah came, by changing the life system that had violated Islamic law. He emphasized that one of the fundamental teachings of Islam is "Respecting Women". In the Koran, it is clearly stated how Allah has placed women in their proper place and corrects all unequal treatment related to their position and humanity.¹ The practice of social life at the time of the Prophet was recognized as having placed women in an equal position with men. The patriarchal structure during the jahiliyah era was dismantled by Islam by giving rights to women that were not granted in the past. For example, during the era of jahiliyah, women were not given the right to inherit, Islam came and gave it. If at the time Arab women hated the birth of a girl, Islam disapproved the traditions of the Arab community and promised rewards for those who treat girls as they treat boys.²

This jahiliyah traditions is not accordance with Islam. As stated in Qur'an:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ³

In this verse stated that men and women who do good will both be rewarded. There is no difference in treatment between men and women in this verse.

However, in the first period of the awakening of Islamic civilization, after the death of Khulafa al-Rasyidin, the history recorded a fundamental change in the power structure of the Islamic caliphate, from a democratic government system to an absolute monarchy system. It is true that at this time Islam was experiencing its heyday. However, along with

¹ Anisatun Muthi'ah, "Analisis Pemikiran Fatima Mernissi Tentang Hadis-Hadis Missogini," in *D{iya>' al Afka>r*, Vol. 2, p. 72-73.

² Ariana Suryorini, "Menelaah Feminisme Dalam Islam," in *Sawwa*, Vol. 7, p. 22.

³ QS: al-Nahl, 97.



these political degrades, there is also a degradation in the position of women. Once the monarchy system was implemented, kings from Islamic kingdoms that had spread to various parts of the world took over the non-Islamic concubinage system from kingdoms in Islamic areas. Worse, this action was legitimized by making false hadis along with the many counterfeits of hadis, whether for political, ideological or other reasons. Along with this, many hadis which denigrate and hate women came.⁴

Women are God's creatures as well as men. As a servant of God, she also has a humanitarian responsibility, prosper the earth and prosper humans. In these tasks, women are not differentiated from men. God gave them the potential and ability to act autonomously necessary for the responsibility of fulfilling that mandate.⁵ Among the hadis that seem to hate women are the hadis about the prohibition of women becoming leaders, women who can cancel (batal) prayers, and several other hadis. Regarding the prohibition of women becoming leaders, a Moroccan feminist gave an explanation of the results of her research. The method that she uses in examining these hadis differs from other critics of hadis. Departing from this, the author was moved to study and re-discuss this Moroccan feminist and her thoughts on the hadis about the prohibition of women becoming leaders. Therefore, in this discussion, the author will present a bit of a discussion about the social conditions in which Fatima Mernissi was born, about her personality, and about her thoughts regarding female leadership.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a qualitative research, it does not use numbers in the instrument. In terms of approach, this study uses a historical approach by taking reference sources and histories relevant to the research discussion. This research uses a historical approach. In the study or research about hadis, the historical approach generally involves criticizing sanad and criticizing matan. However, in this research, the author only focuses on a historical approach relating to the thoughts of a figure named Fatima

⁴ Ariana Suryorini, "Menelaah Feminisme Dalam Islam," in *Sawwa*, Vol. 7, p. 23.

⁵ Husein Muhammad, *Islam: Agama Ramah Perempuan*, first edition (Yogyakarta: LkiS, 2004), 165.



Mernissi regarding the ability of women to become leaders. The main source of this research is Mernissi and her thoughts. The secondary sources are books, articles and others related to Mernissi's thought, hadis, and hermeneutics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Getting to Know Fatima Mernissi

Fatima was born in 1940 AD in Qairawan (Fez) the ninth city in Morocco,⁶ about 5.000 km from Makkah and 1.000 km east of Madrid. In Morocco, several movements emerged, including the Salafi reform movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as Aby Shu`ayb al-Dukkali (d.1937).⁷ Apart from that, there was also a fundamentalist movement led by Abd al-Samad Yasin, in the 1970. His movement was directed at the political level, and once wrote a letter to King Hasan II, which called for a return to Allah's law and stop imitating the west and western domination. This is because Morocco, in 1912, was protected by France and Spain. Moroccan reformers, inspired by Muhammad Abduh's ideas, launched educational movements in Fez, Rabat, Sale and other cities, establishing schools to teach Arabic grammar, ethics, logic, Islamic history and arithmetic, but not modern science.⁸

Mernissi was born in the midst of a chaotic situation because the Christians at that time and the women did not want to accept the sacred

⁶ Morocco, also known as Maghribi, is a country with a population of approximately 27 million (26,345,000 people in mid-1991) or 99 percent of the population as Sunni Muslims. There is a Jewish minority numbering less than 8,000 (mostly Casablanca and other coastal cities). According to Ernest Gellner, throughout the history of Moroccan Islam has been torn between the religion of the literate urban bourgeoisie, the scriptural puritan, and the ritualistic-anthropolatrous, illiterate tribal religion of the countryside. Gellner argues, urban orthodox Islam is monotheistic and egalitarian which emphasizes a simple attitude, calmness of heart, and does not exaggerate in worship, including there is no intermediary between believers and Allah. Conversely, popular Islam emphasizes hierarchy and mediation between believers and Allah. See: Nur Mukhlis Zakariya, "Kegelisahan Intelektual Seorang Feminis (Telaah Pemikiran Fatima Mernissi Tentang Hermeneutika Hadits)," in *Karsa*, Vol. 19, No. 2, p. 122-123.

⁷ Rusdin, "Islam dan Demokrasi Dalam Perspektif Fatima Marnissi," in *Musawa*, Vol. 3, p. 179-180.

⁸ Zakariya, "Kegelisahan Intelektual Seorang," p.122-123.



boundaries in Islam (in Fiqh it is called hudud).⁹ Mernissi also grew up in a stream of Islamic mysticism that is widely practiced in Morocco. Mysticism which has a bad impact on the image of women in the country. Rural Moroccan women (who, at that time, 97% were certainly illiterate) were depicted as simple-minded creatures who were superstitious, incapable of sophisticated thinking, and always immersed in esoteric mysticism. This view is supported by the rapid development of industrialization in third world economies, including Morocco.¹⁰

She spent her childhood in an area that severely restricted the movements of women. She grew up in a Harem.¹¹ She comes from a middle class family. Mernissi lives in that place with her mother and grandmother and other sisters who accidentally mold her into a critical and courageous person. A harem that was closely guarded by a doorman to keep the women from coming out. Her grandmother, Yasmina, was one of her grandfather's nine wives. Meanwhile, it did not happen to her mother, her father had only one wife and was not polygamous. This is because Mernissi's parents are nationalists who reject polygamy. However, her mother still couldn't read and write because of her time in the Harem. Even though her grandmother, Yasmina is an uneducated woman, her ingenuity and enthusiasm made her a solidarity maker among the wives of Sidi Tazi (Yasmina's husband, Fatima Mernissi's grandfather). From her grandmother Yasmina, Fatima mernissi learned about equality among humans, the meaning of confinement in the Harem, and the causal relationship between the political defeats experienced by Muslims and the disadvantages experienced by women. Her grandmother Yasmina once told Mernissi that when the State was unable to voice the will of the people, women always became victims of vulnerable and violent situations. When Mernissi was born, Moroccan nationalists managed to wrest control of the State government from the

⁹ Ana Bilqis Fajarwati, "Islam dan Demokrasi; Membaca Pemikiran Fatima Mernissi," in *Jurnal Religio*, Vol. 3, p. 60.

¹⁰ Yunita, "Fatima Mernissi dan Simbol Perlawanan Terhadap Hadith-Hadith Misoginis (Kajian Terhadap Pandangan Fatima mernissi Mengenai Hadith "Wanita, Anjing, dan Keledai Membatalkan Salat " Riwayat Abu> Hurayrah)," in *Dialogia; Jurnal Studi Islam dan Sosial*, Vol. 13, p. 20.

¹¹ Ibid., 19.



French colonial hands. The nationalists who fought against France at that time promised to create a new Moroccan State, a country with equality for all.¹²

Within the Harem environment, her intellectual restlessness began. With his cousin (Chama), little Mernissi always asked about the Harem or the meaning of being isolated in a Harem. Some of her family members (who are girls) consider Harem to be a good thing. Others, including his mother who often protested against the separation of the room between her family and her uncle were non-Harem groups. Directly or indirectly, her mother's actions instilled in her the idea of women's liberation and rebellion.¹³ The opinion of her grandmother Lala Yasmina, which states that Harem boundaries are more than just the boundaries of walls that physically limit women's movement, it's also the seeds of Mernissi's awareness of women's confinement.¹⁴ Mernissi received her first education informally from her grandmother. Grandma Yasmina gave many lessons about the history of Islam, including the story of the Prophet SAW and the conditions of women before Islam. Then, the teaching from her grandmother led to the focus of her study, it's about women.¹⁵

Mernissi questioned only women who are required to maintain their virginity until she is married while men are not, why only women are obliged to monogamy and control their sexual instincts while men do not accept such restrictions: they can have as many partners as they like. (Apart from the three legal wives, each man had the right to keep as many concubines as he could afford). Why, only women are blamed for the widespread practice of prostitution, while, men who are actually the main consumers, are not. According to Mernissi, this discrimination exists and persists due to two things: the mental weakness of the women themselves

¹² Rusdin, "Islam dan Demokrasi," p. 180-181.

¹³ M. Rusydi, "Perempuan di Hadapan Tuhan (Pemikiran Feminisme Fatima Mernissi)," in *An Nisa'a*, Vol. 7, p. 74

¹⁴ Ibid., 74.

¹⁵ Limmatus Sauda', "Hadis Misoginis Dalam Perspektif Hermeneutika Fatima Mernissi," in *Mutawatir; Jurnal Keilmuan Tafsir Hadis*, Vol. 4, p. 293-294.



which did not arise after the end of the French and Spanish colonization in 1956, and the lulling of men to a patriarchal culture.¹⁶

As for his formal education, she received at an al-Qur'an school which was founded by a nationalist group from the age of three. At that time, little Mernissi began to memorize the Qur'an. Her secondary education was completed in a girls school funded by a French protectorate.¹⁷ al-Qur'an is taught with a strict learning system. This is very different from the learning received from Lalla Yasmina, who has opened the door to poetic religion. In the school of al-Qur'an, if you pronounce it wrongly you will be punished and yelled at by the teacher, Lalla Faqiha, who said that the al-Qur'an must be read exactly the same as when this book was sent down from heaven. Memorization is held every Wednesday. If there is an error in spelling, it will be punished, sometimes even accompanied by a beating by Mahdriyah, an older student.¹⁸ However, because the teacher was obsessed with pronunciation, so that she almost never explained the meaning of the words in the Qur'an, so the lesson was left untouched. This is very contradicting life at home with her grandmother, and makes Mernissi leave her city for Medina.¹⁹

Since she was young, she has made an image of himself as an activist. As a teenager, she was active in the movement against French colonialism.²⁰ When she was a teenager, she told me that the Koran seemed to fade. Her introduction to Sunnah in high school opened her heart. The teacher teaches the book al Bukha>ri> which states "*dogs, donkeys and women will cancel someone's prayer if they pass in front of them, interrupting the person praying and the Qibla*". Feelings shaken and wondering, and almost never repeating it in the hope that silence will make this hadis erased from his memory. She said, "How could the Messenger of Allah say that hadis,

¹⁶ Yunita, "Fatima Mernissi dan Simbol Perlawanan Terhadap Hadith-Hadith Misoginis," p. 21.

¹⁷ Sauda', "Hadis Misoginis Dalam Perspektif Hermeneutika Fatima Mernissi," p. 293-294.

¹⁸ Zakariya "Kegelisahan Intelektual Seorang," p. 123-124.

¹⁹ Anisatun Muthi'ah, "Analisis Pemikiran Fatima Mernissi Tentang Hadis-Hadis Missogini," in *D{iya>' al Afka>r*, Vol. 2, p. 75-76.

²⁰ Badri Yatim, "Fatima Mernissi," dalam *Ensiklopedi Islam*, Nina M. Armando, ed. New edition (Jakarta: Icdtiar Baru van Hoeve, 2005), 19.



which hurts my heart? Especially because that statement does not match their story about the life of the Prophet Muhammad.” How could the beloved Muhammad have hurt the feelings of a little girl, who while growing up tried to become a pillar of her romantic dreams.²¹

When she was an adult, her anxiety began with a question to a vegetable seller who was a customer: “Can a woman become a leader of the Muslims?” the vegetable merchant exclaimed: “*na`u>dh bi al Lah min dha>lik*” with great shock. Then a teacher I did not know attacked by saying “a people who leave their affairs to a woman will not get prosperity”. Mernissi was speechless. For her, in Islamic history, hadis is not something arbitrary. Mernissi left the shop in silence, defeated and angry. Finally, she suddenly felt an urgent need to gather information about the hadis and searched for the texts mentioned in order to understand them properly.²²

When he saw the western world in 1990, Mernissi felt surprised and shocked by the democratic world of the West in all things and never differentiated between gender, children, adults, and parents. Human rights really exist and are applied in life. It was experiences in the western world that influenced and shaped her thoughts later, especially those concerning women’s human rights. What about Islam itself, why did she find many religious texts that demean women.²³ Her first education was obtained from a traditional school founded by Moroccan nationalists.²⁴ The next intellectual journey she got at Muhammad V University in Rabbat, Mernissi took a political science program which he completed in 1965, then she continued to Paris and completed her doctoral program in sociology at Brandeis University in 1973, where *beyond the Veil* was her dissertation.²⁵

She had worked as a journalist. On his return to Morocco, she taught in the Sociology department at Muhammad V University, as well as being a lecturer at The Institute of Scientific Research, at the same

²¹ Zakariya “Kegelisahan Intelektual Seorang Feminis,” p. 124.

²² Ibid.,

²³ Muthi`ah, “Analisis Pemikiran Fatima Mernissi Tentang Hadis-Hadis Missogini,” p. 76.

²⁴ Badri Yatim, “Fatima Mernissi,” p.19.

²⁵ Rusydi, “Perempuan di Hadapan Tuhan,” p. 75.



University in 1974-1981.²⁶ Her career as a senior researcher was developed through IURS in 1981-1995. The focus of her research revolves around efforts to transform research results that are pluralist-humanist and support the position of minority groups such as women in an effort to strengthen the position of civil society. In addition, she also acted as a consultant at the United Nation Agencies (UNESCO and ILO), the World Bank, the Aga Khan Commission and is actively involved in the women's movement, in addition to being a member of the Pan Arab Women Solidarity Association.²⁷ She also frequently attended conferences between countries. She was also a visiting professor at California University and at Harvard University. Meanwhile, for her social activities, Mernissi was active in movements or organizations that fight for women's rights by frequently conducting studies and research.²⁸

Fatima Mernissi's Thoughts

From the social background and some of the history contained in the stories above, it can be seen that Mernissi demands a lot of equality among humans, the meaning of confinement in the Harem, as well as a causal relationship between political defeats experienced by Muslims and adversity experienced by women. Fatima Mernissi believes that the backwardness of Muslim women is a historical aberration committed by Islamic rulers after the death of the Prophet. The history shows that what emerged later was the return of pre-Islamic values. Ironically, this practice is more or less validated by Islamic teachings developed by Muslims themselves. As a result, questioning the position of women in Islam is often responded to not only by threats from western culture but also by threats to Islam itself.²⁹

Mernissi revealed that religion must be understood progressively in order to understand social reality and its strengths, because for her, the religion has turned out to be a justification for violence. According to her,

²⁶ Ibid., p. 75.

²⁷ Ibid.,

²⁸ Sauda', "Hadis Misoginis Dalam Perspektif Hermeneutika Fatima Mernissi," p. 295.

²⁹ Anisatun Muthi'ah, "Analisis Pemikiran Fatima Mernissi," p. 73-74.



the mixture between the sacred and the profane, between Allah and his creatures, between the Koran and the fantasies of the Imams, must be deconstructed.³⁰ In this regard, according to Mernissi, the discourse of women that prevails in a community that has been shaped in such a way by a male-dominated culture and is supported by the construction of ulama by manipulating texts for men's interests must be overhauled. Therefore, she criticized the interpretation of the verses of the al-Qur'an concerning women, as well as the misogynist hadis using a historical-sociological approach and hermeneutic analysis.³¹ Mernissi's tracing of the texts of both the Qur'an and hadis is based on his individual's daily experiences when dealing with society³² as contained in Mernissi's little story in some of the discussions above. By carrying out interpretations of the Koran and Hadis, historical research and sociological analysis, Mernissi tried hard to dismantle this understanding, to then provide an alternative interpretation.³³

In some of her works, she has succeeded in proving that the domination of men in a society that has a patriarchal system is not actually standardized by religious texts or texts. However, all of that is formed by a social construction based on men's interests. Finally, the social construction was so strong, making the social structure manifest in the form of a patriarchal society, which is supported by the thought products of the scholars.³⁴ As with the understanding of the text, unlike the previous hadis scholars who gave the meaning of hadis in an idealistic way, that is everything that was relied on by the Prophet, both words, deeds, provisions, characteristics and others, Mernissi considered hadis as a reality, as she saw it. She defines hadis as a written record of everything that the Messenger of Allah said or did in everything. Later, this record became a reference for Muslims worldwide in all matters, from political, domestic,

³⁰ Rusydi, "Perempuan di Hadapan Tuhan," p. 76-77.

³¹ Ibid., p. 77.

³² Ana Bilqis, "Islam dan Demokrasi," p. 62.

³³ Fatima Mernissi, *Islam dan Demokrasi: Antologi Ketakutan* (Yogyakarta: LKIS, 1994), p. 90 that cited by Rusdin, "Islam dan Demokrasi Dalam Perspektif Fatima Marnissi," p. 182.

³⁴ Zakariya, "Kegelisahan Intelektual Seorang Feminis," p. 130.



personal and other matters. This kind of understanding led Mernissi to conclude that the hadiss reveal facts of everyday life in the 7th century which are presented in various ways, because there are various versions of the same event.³⁵

As for the emergence of hadis (the first narration), Mernissi stated that the hadis was born as a result of the division of the Muslims, precisely at the end of Ali's leadership. Each group tries to make sure that their group is the most correct, and one of the most effective ways in this case is to carry the name of the Prophet in every argument he utters.³⁶ Mernissi's thoughts and opinions in criticizing the Qur'an and hadis are contained in several of her works. From these works, it can be seen how Mernissi's ideas as a feminist at that time. From these works, they also can represent the problems of Muslim women in general. As a prolific writer, she has written numerous articles in various scientific journals as well as books.³⁷ Among her other works are *Beyond the Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in Modern Muslim Society*, *The Forgotten Queens of Islam*, *The Veil and Male Elite* (1987), *Doing Daily Battle* (1989), *Equal Before Allah* (1987), *Woman in Islam: in Historical and Theological Inquiry* (1991), *Islam and Democracy: Fear of the Modern World* (1992), and *Dreams of Trepass of a Harem Gildhood* (1994).³⁸ From works, in 2003 Mernissi received an award as a writer in the fields of al-Qur'an and Islamic studies.³⁹

Her writings are not only successful in providing knowledge to others, but are also able to make women want to think more deeply about the future of their community, and that these women actually have the same "bargaining price" as men.⁴⁰ In most of her works, Mernissi tries to illustrate that religious teachings can be easily manipulated. Therefore Mernissi also believes that oppression of women is a kind of fabricated tradition and not from the teachings of Islam. Therefore, she was very brave and not afraid

³⁵ Sauda', "Hadis Misoginis," p. 295-296.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 296.

³⁷ Badri Yatim, "Fatima Mernissi," p. 19.

³⁸ Zakariya, "Kegelisahan Intelektual," p. 125.

³⁹ Sauda', "Hadis Misoginis," p. 295.

⁴⁰ Yunita, "Fatima Mernissi," p. 21.



to dismantle the traditions that are considered sacred by society so far⁴¹ as the essence of his works above. Therefore, according to Mernissi, the idea of equality is clearly stated in various terms in the Qur'an. Thus, according to Mernissi, if we claim it (equality) lately, it does not mean that we take western heritage or borrow ideas from foreign cultures, but in essence, we only claim back what really belongs to us.⁴²

Mernissi's Thoughts About Women's Leadership

Mernissi took a foothold in the issue of gender equality by developing it from the debate about whether or not women should become leaders according to Islam. According to her, this issue is as old as Islam itself. The debate about the right of women to hold public offices that gave rise to pro and contra opinion in the Muslim world, reached its peak especially when Benazir Bhutto stepped onto the political scene and was elected prime minister of Pakistan in 1988. This very important incident aroused so much passion, anger and dissatisfaction among the rulers and religious leaders about this phenomenon. According to Mernissi's critical reading of the incident, what the Muslim community at stake at that time was not the sex of the political actors, but rather the patriarchal nature of power itself.⁴³

In connection with this incident, the existence of ideological tendencies in reading religious texts and manipulating them for political purposes as criticized by Abu Zayd, did indeed occur. The opponents of women's leadership immediately issued a deadly stance by issuing a very popular hadis contained in Sahih al-Bukhari and narrated by Abu Bakrah which reads⁴⁴

حدثنا عثمان بن الصيثم حدثنا عوف عن الحسن عن أبي بكر قال: لقد نفعني الله بكلمة أيام الجمل. لما بلغ النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أن فارساً ملأوا ابنة حسرى قال: لن يفلح قوم ولو أمرهم امرأة

⁴¹ Fatima Mernissi, *Beyond The Veil (Seks dan Kekuasaan: Dinamika Pria dan Wanita Dalam Masyarakat Muslim Modern)* (Surabaya: al Fikr, 1997), p. 23. That cited by Rusdin, "Islam dan Demokrasi Dalam Perspektif Fatima Marnissi," p. 183.

⁴² Rusydi, "Perempuan di Hadapan Tuhan," p. 83.

⁴³ Rusydi, "Perempuan di Hadapan Tuhan," p. 78-79.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 79.



Uthman bin al Haytham told us, Awf bin al Hasan has told us from Abi Bakrah, he said: Allah has benefited me with the sentence on the day (of war) Jamal, when conveying to Rasulullah SAW that Princess Kisra had ruled or ruled the Persian empire. Then Rasulullah SAW said: it will not be successful for a people or society who leave (to lead) their affairs to women.

In dealing with this issue, Mernissi's first step was to criticize, both the sanad and the matan, seeing the credibility of the friend who transmitted the hadis and seeing how the historical context when the hadis was conveyed by the Prophet, also the historical context when the hadis was transmitted later. Mernissi also looked for issues on the theme from the point of view of the Qur'an.⁴⁵ The events underlying this hadis are the death of Kisra Persia and the adoption of his daughter, Buran, in his father's place. The Persian Empire at that time was faced with a formidable challenge, that is the Roman Empire which invaded Persian territory and succeeded in controlling several regions. Despite the chaotic situation of the kingdom, it is estimated that Buran did not have the ability to lead a large empire like Persia.⁴⁶

The narrative about the Persian condition was conveyed by Abdullah bin Hadhafah who had just returned from Persia. When he heard the news, the Prophet made comments through his words above. Here we can see certain events that led to the birth of this hadis (*asbab wurud*). Thus, when connected with this, the Prophet's words do not apply to the public (women in general), but conditionally (Buran).⁴⁷ Starting from this information, Mernissi then traced further the history of the Persians, especially those closely related to the information from Abu Bakrah earlier. In 628 AD, the Roman Emperor Heraclius invaded Persia and occupied Ctesiphon which is located very close to the capital of Sassanid, and at that time Khusraw Pavis, the king of Persia was killed. After that, Persia went through a period of chaos (629-632) especially after Khusraw's son also

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 79-80.

⁴⁶ Sri Suhandjati Sukri, "Perempuan Sebagai Kepala Negara" Sri Suhandjati Sukri, ed., in *Pemahaman Islam dan Tantangan Keadilan Jender*, first edition (Yogyakarta: Gama Media, 2002), p. 118.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 118.



died. In this situation many people claimed the right to the Sassanid throne, including two women. The final part of the historical record, which Mernissi suspects, is closely related to Abu Bakrah's earlier statement.⁴⁸

Abu Bakrah recounted the hadis about women's leadership that was mentioned by the Prophet during the camel war where `Ali's troops defeated `Aishah's troops and caused many Muslims die reminded Abu Bakrah of the hadis about female leadership.⁴⁹ At that time `Aisyah was defeated politically, and 13.000 of her supporters had died on the battlefield. Ali took control of the city of Basrah, and anyone who chose not to join Ali's army had to come up with an excuse to justify their actions.⁵⁰ Before the war, `Aishah sent many letters to the Muslim leaders, explaining to them the reasons that drove her to rebellion against Ali, and to ask for their support. However, many of those who refrained from being involved in the incidents of civil war included Abu Bakrah.⁵¹

Judging from the words of the Prophet and when Abu Bakra recounted the hadis there was a long period of time between the two events, which is estimated to be around 25 years ago. Given this long interval, several possibilities can be stated; *first*, Abu Bakrah had personal interests, so he returned to narrating a hadis that he had heard from the Prophet. *Second*, Abu Bakrah recounted the hadis as a spiritual reminder of the Prophet.⁵² Mernissi, in the book *Setara di Hadapan Allah* which has been translated into Indonesian from the book *Equal From Allah* states that it is clear that Abu Bakrah used the hadis to "take the face" of the ruling party. In it, it is also explained that the history of camel warfare makes Abu Bakra's opportunities even more real. At that time many friends did not participate in the battle between Ali ibn Abi Talib and the ummul mu'minin, Aishah. The reason is that civil war will only divide the people and turn them against each other. Even though they both defended themselves on the

⁴⁸ Sauda', "Hadis Misoginis," p. 298.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 298.

⁵⁰ Fatima Mernissi and Riffat Hasan, *Setara di Hadapan Allah: Relasi Laki-Laki dan Perempuan dalam Tradisi Islam Pasca Patriarkhi*, terj. Team LSPPA, first edition (Yogyakarta: Media Gama Offset, 1995), p. 214.

⁵¹ Muthi'ah, "Analisis Pemikiran Fatima," p. 79.

⁵² Mernissi, *Setara di Hadapan Allah*, p. 210.



principle taught by the Prophet Muhammad not to participate in a dispute that caused division between groups of people, only Abu Bakrah made gender one of the reasons for his refusal to participate in the war, after Aishah's defeat.⁵³

In connection with this hadis, there are the scholars who agree with the prohibition of female leadership. There are also those who allow female leadership. There are the scholars who allow for the following reasons:⁵⁴

First, the reason for the emergence of this hadis that one day the Prophet Muhammad sent Abdullah bin Mudhafah al Sahmi to deliver a letter to Bahraini officials, then he gave it to Kisra. After reading the letter, Kisra refused the invitation in the letter and even tore up the letter. Not long after that, the Persian Empire was thrown into chaos and there were assassinations by the king's immediate family. In the end, a granddaughter of Kisra named Buwaran bin Shayrawayh bin Kisra was appointed as queen of Persia. In terms of the reasons for its emergence, above hadis deals with the events that befell the Persian empire so that it cannot be generalized to other nations. Even if the Persian empire got into chaos even before the appointment of a queen named Buwaran, and the Prophet predicted that a nation (Persia) that left the affairs of its leadership to women would not have success, it could not be applied to all nations that made women their leaders. This opinion uses the ushul principle: *al 'ibrah bi khusus al sabab la bi 'umum al lafad*{, what is concerned is the specificity of the cause and not the generality of the lafad.

Second, above hadis from Abu Bakrah narrated by al Bukhari appears when Abu Bakrah was in doubt whether to participate in the battle with Aisyah under 'Ali bin Abi Talib during the camel war or not. It seems that Abu Bakrah did not go to war because he analogized Aisha's leadership with the Persian queen, Buwaran, who was predicted by the Prophet would not succeed. Both are female leaders. *Third*, above hadis is informative (*khbari*) and is not an order or prohibition (*insya'i*) so that it does not have the power of law which indicates prohibition. The Prophet only told us that if a nation was led by a woman, that nation would not

⁵³ Ibid., p. 210.

⁵⁴ Idri, *Hadis dan Politik* (Surabaya: CV. Putra Media Nusantara, 2011), p. 178-179.



succeed. The Prophet did not say, for example, that you should not appoint women as leaders, which shows that it is forbidden.

From the results of her investigation, Mernissi criticized Abu Bakrah in relation to the narration of the hadis as follows: 1) Abu Bakrah is difficult to trace his lineage because he was originally a slave who was freed when he joined the Muslims. Whereas in the Arab tribal and aristocratic tradition, if a person does not have a clear lineage, his status is not recognized socially, even according to Mernissi, Imam Ahmad who conducted biographical research of his friends admitted that he had simply missed Abu Bakrah and did not investigate it in more detail. 2) Abu Bakrah was once subject to qazaf punishment,⁵⁵ because he could not prove the accusation of zina against al-Mughirah ibn Syu`bah at the time of Caliph Umar bin Khattab. 3) Looking at the historical context, why did Abu Bakrah remember this hadis (which if the Prophet correctly pronounced it, means that he had passed a period of +25 years) after knowing Aisha had lost the war, while the initial stance he took was neutral.⁵⁶ Based on this rule, Mernissi concluded that Abu Bakrah was a narrator who was rejected, and his hadis was not acceptable.⁵⁷

Based on the foregoing reasons, Mernissi concluded that although the hadis was published in Sahih al-Bukhari, it was still debated by the jurists. According to her, this hadis is used as an argument to displace women in the decision-making process. But al-Tabari cast doubt on this, saying there was not enough reason to deprive women of their decision-making abilities and that there was no reason to justify their exclusion from political activities.⁵⁸ Mernissi concluded that this hadis contradicts the fundamental principles of equality and justice which are the foundation of Islam itself. In this case, Mernissi strengthened her opinion by presenting

⁵⁵ According to Imam Malik, it is not sufficient that someone ever lived with the Prophet to be a source of hadith, but certain other considerations are also needed, even to the extent that it is possible to say: "Forgetful people must be ignored". Memory deficiency and intellectual capacity are not the only criteria for evaluating hadith narrators, the most important criterion is moral. See: Muthi'ah, "Analisis Pemikiran Fatima," p. 79.

⁵⁶ Rusydi, "Perempuan di Hadapan Tuhan," p. 81.

⁵⁷ Sauda', "Hadis Misoginis," p. 299.

⁵⁸ Fatima Mernissi, *Wanita Dalam Islam*, p. 68. That cited by Zakariya, "Kegelisahan Intelektual," p. 131.



Gazzali's view⁵⁹ who based his argument on Q.S. al-Naml (27): 23 "I found a woman who ruled them and she was blessed with everything; and she has a great throne ". According to Gazzali, al-Qur'an is a holy book based on revelation, because it is of a higher level than hadis, that is the reporting of the companions of the Prophet who are considered to know the deeds and hear the Prophet's words. In the Koran, the queen of Saba is described as a woman who uses her power as best as possible to guide her people to obey Prophet Sualayman. Therefore, she has become a very positive role model for a woman who becomes the head of state.⁶⁰

Apart from that, Muhammad Abed al-Jabiri's mindset also greatly influenced her thinking, which mentions his works *Nah{nu wa al-Sarwa* and *Taqwi>n al-`Aql al-`Arabi*. He (al-Jabiri) criticized the Muslims and Arab politicians for not being fair in their attitude towards the changes that were taking place. The thinking of the Arab community must be changed in response to progress and modernism, especially by changing the method of thinking.⁶¹ Generally, Islam does not prohibit women from becoming heads of government. This is because men and women are fellow servants of Allah (QS. 51:56) who have the same position in front of Allah (QS. 49:13) and they will get the same reward for their deeds (QS. 16:97). The Qur'an also provides an example of a woman who became the head of state, that's the queen of Balqis who ruled the country of Saba'.⁶²

Based on research conducted on historical data that has such authority, Mernissi argues that women in Islamic history have the same role as men. There are many queens of Islamic leaders who appeared on the stage of Islamic history. The tradition of women being leaders in Islam is not something new, but has been around for a long time.⁶³

Analysis

⁵⁹ A scholar from Azhar University Cairo whose competence in the religious field is unquestionable. In his book *al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyah* approved of women's leadership. Gazzali's thoughts really inspired Mernissi in constructing her later feminist thoughts. See: Rusydi, "Perempuan di Hadapan Tuhan," p. 79.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 80.

⁶¹ This al-Jabiri thought is cited by Mernissi in her work *Wanita dalam Islam*. Lihat Zakariya, "Kegelisahan Intelektual Seorang Feminis," p. 126.

⁶² Sukri, "Perempuan Sebagai Kepala Negara," p. 118.

⁶³ Zakariya, "Kegelisahan Intelektual," p. 127.



Judging from the flow of feminism, there are four; liberal feminism,⁶⁴ marxist feminism,⁶⁵ radical feminism,⁶⁶ and socialist feminism,⁶⁷ so Fatima Mernissi deserves to be categorized in socialist feminism, where the socialist feminism movement is more focused on raising women's awareness of their oppressed position. According to them, many women are not aware that they are a group oppressed by the patriarchal system. For example, by highlighting the issue of how women are treated inhumanely, being locked in a golden cage, to the issue of why

⁶⁴ The foundation of the philosophy of liberal feminism is that all people are created with equal rights and that everyone has the same opportunity to advance themselves. There are two ways to achieve this goal. *First*, taking a psychological approach by raising individual awareness, among others, through discussions that discuss women's experiences in societies controlled by men. *Second*, by demanding legal reforms that do not benefit women, and changing these laws into new regulations that treat women as equal to men. Regulations that have been successfully fought for, for example, in the United States, wives can divorce their husbands regardless of who is wrong and the validity of a contract marriage. figures of this genre are Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill, and Betty Friedan. See: Yunahar Ilyas, *Feminisme Dalam Kajian Tafsir al-Qur'an Klasik dan Kontemporer*, first edition (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1997), p. 47-48.

⁶⁵ Marxist feminism argues that the backwardness experienced by women is not caused by deliberate individual actions but due to the socio-political and economic structure which is closely related to the capitalist system. According to them, it is impossible for women to get the same opportunities as men if they still live in a class society. According to Engels, to further develop Karl Marx's theory of materialism on the family, the husband is a reflection of the bourgeoisie and the wife is the oppressed proletariat. To free women from oppression in the family, Engels invited women to enter the public sector which can make women also productive (produce material or money). Thus, the concept of domestic women no longer exists. In fact, efforts to abolish family institutions need to be done, because the family is considered an institution that gave birth to capitalism. See: Ibid., p. 48-49.

⁶⁶ The radical feminism movement considers that the main factor causing the sexual division of labor is the patriarchal system in which men control women with power. In contrast to the liberal feminism movement, it is not only to abolish men's privileges, but especially to eliminate sexual differences itself. Sexual differences between humans must be removed culturally. The process of bearing children by one type of sex for the benefit of both parties must be replaced. At least women should be given the opportunity to give birth on their own, or give birth to children artificially, or not to give birth at all. The most extreme groups of the radical feminist movement have even attempted to cut ties with men. This extreme group calls itself lesbian feminists. They say, at the heart of lesbian feminist politics is to try to show that heterosexual relations as an institution and an ideology are the main threads of male power. See: Ibid., p. 50-51.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 47-48. Also see: Siti Muslikhati, *Feminisme dan Pemberdayaan Perempuan Dalam Timbangan Islam*, first edition (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2004), p. 32.



women have to make coffee for their husbands and so on. The emergence of this awareness will make women rise up emotionally, and as a group it is expected to have direct conflict with the dominant group (men). The higher of the level of conflict between the women's class and the dominant class, it is expected that the patriarchal system will collapse.⁶⁸

Above character seems to be appropriate if it is related to the feminist movement model of Mernissi. It does not demand regulations that show the equality of men and women (like liberal feminism), nor does it demand equality of men and women culturally (like radical feminism), nor does it challenge the socio-political and economic elements which are closely related with capitalism (as with Marxist feminism), but Mernissi challenged the patriarchal culture that was rooted in her life at that time. Her feminist spirit arose from her scope, where she grew up in a Harem that severely restricted women's movements and anxiety as a child after hearing the study of traditions which she considered cornering women. This thinking grew influenced by his intellectual growth, where she studied in Paris. There she saw that women were given their rights, different from that in his country, Morocco. These ideas were later stated in several of her works. In several of her works, Mernissi criticized texts which according to her discredited women using a hermeneutic approach. She is also active in women's empowerment organizations.

From a hermeneutical perspective, Mernississ discourse is one of the studies that deserves attention. When referring to the three schools of hermeneutics; theoretical hermeneutics, philosophical hermeneutics, and critical hermeneutics, then Mernissi deserves to be categorized as thinkers who are in the philosophical stream. This flow emphasizes the role of the reader in determining the text or other objects of interpretation. The method used is objective. Assistive science used is historical or historical. By looking at the historical side, the reader will know the context of the text's existence and then review it with the context of the reader's existence. Thus, the

⁶⁸ Ilyas, *Feminisme Dalam Kajian Tafsir*, p. 53.



meaning produced by interpretation is a new meaning based on a combination of meanings from the past and present contexts.⁶⁹

Above character seems appropriate when it comes to Mernissi's model and style of criticism. When Mernissi criticized the hadis about the prohibition of women becoming leaders, she saw it from various aspects, both from the author (the first narrator, namely Abu Bakrah), the text (the hadis about the prohibition of women being leaders), also about the context, namely the historical context when the hadis was uttered by the Prophet. and also the context when the author (the first narrator) recited the hadis. Apart from that, Mernissi also reviewed similar themes in the Koran as the main source of Islamic teachings. Finally, Mernissi concluded that the hadis contradicts the basic principles of equality and justice which constitute the foundation of Islam itself and are irrelevant to be used in the context of Mernissi's existence as a reader.

As for the patriarchal culture that applies to society, according to Mernissi, it is not the result of an understanding that is standardized by the text, but is a problem of social construction to borrow from Peter L. Berger's term which is based on certain interests, both individually and in a patriarchal community system. According to Mernissi, the occurrence of injustice, discrimination, alienation and domestication of women has actually been created by a patriarchal social structure, or in other words, *gender bias* has been shaped by a patriarchal society.⁷⁰

CONCLUSION

From several discussions that the author presents, there are several points of conclusion. Among them: *First*, Fatima spent her childhood in an area that severely restricted the movements of women. She grew up in a Harem. A harem that was closely guarded by a doorman to keep the women from coming out. Since she was young, she has made an image of himself as an activist. As a teenager, she was active in the movement against French colonialism. *Second*, from the results of his investigation Mernissi criticized

⁶⁹ See: Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Kebenaran dan Metode; Pengantar Filsafat Hermeneutika*, first edition (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2004). Also see: Abdullah Khozin Afandi, *Hermeneutika* (Surabaya: Alpha, 2007).

⁷⁰ Zakariya, "Kegelisahan Intelektual Seorang," p. 129.



Abu Bakrah in terms of the narration of the hadis as follows: 1) Abu Bakrah is difficult to trace his lineage because he was originally a slave who was freed when he joined the Muslims. 2) Abu Bakrah was sentenced to qazaf, because he could not prove the charge of zina against al-Mughirah ibn Syu'bah at the time of the Caliph Umar bin Khattab. 3) Looking at the historical context, why did Abu Bakrah remember this hadis (which, if correctly uttered by the Prophet, means that he has passed a period of approximately 25 years) after knowing Aisha had lost the war, while the initial stance he took was neutral. Based on this rule, Mernissi concluded that Abu Bakrah was a narrator who was rejected, and his hadis was not acceptable. Based on the foregoing reasons, Mernissi concluded that even though the hadis was contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, it was still debated by the jurists. According to her, this hadis is used as an argument to displace women in the decision-making process.

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