

GENDER AND CONSTRUCTION OF FEMINIST INTERPRETATION IN INDONESIA

Syarifatun Nafsih

Fatmawati Sukarno State Islamic University Bengkulu, Indonesia

E-mail: syarifatunnafsi@iainbengkulu.ac.id

Abstract

The differences in biological anatomy between men and women are pretty straightforward, but the problem is the effects caused by these sex differences. The issue of differences is what then causes much debate in various circles. Biological sex differences (sex) formed through the body's anatomy also give rise to several types of judgments in the framework of thinking, which are then carried over to the behavior of everyday life, the behavior of society (customs), religion, and even the country. That cultural interpretation is then understood as gender. The structure, the social system of society, and even some interpretations which tend to be patriarchal further strengthen the ideology of society, which creates injustice for women. Ultimately, this condition is realized by women as a condition that imprisons them in a social downturn. Then a women's movement emerged, which claimed to be a feminist movement to fight for the fate of women. Because of this, there is also an interpretation from a feminist point of view. Using qualitative methods, and literature review, researchers want to explain how gender is understood and the construction of feminist interpretations in Indonesia. This is important to know the development of interpretation related to gender in Indonesia. Feminism, especially in Islam, is not a movement of rebellion against men but an understanding that wants to respect women. There is no discrimination, Marginalization, or subordination. Studies from a feminist point of view in Indonesia have continued to develop to date.

Keywords: Gender, Interpretation, Feminism, Construction.

INTRODUCTION

Male hegemony in society is a universal phenomenon in the history of human civilization in any community in the world. Traditionally, humans in various parts of the world organize themselves or are contained in building a patriarchal society (Rais, 2012). In a community like this, men are positioned superior to women in various sectors of life, both domestic and public. Men's hegemony over women gains legitimacy from social values, religion, state law, and so on, and is socialized from generation to generation. (Darwin & Carving, 2001)

The term patriarchy is increasingly popular after being associated not only with social, cultural, and political contexts but with a description of the structure of male and female society that is unequal and unfair from a religious perspective. The term also refers to a condition when patriarchy acts as a standard over others, in this case, women. (Hashim, 2001)

In Islamic studies, the main themes related to gender are gender verses, such as the creation of women, polygamy, inheritance, witnesses, and male superiority over women contained in Qs. Annisa (4): 34, about women's leadership and others. As it is known that the Qur'an is a guide and guidance, and the object it was revealed to is human beings, which consists of men and women. Meanwhile, on the other hand, some of the themes above clash with verses or the concept of justice and equality before God. Therefore, the Koran is an exciting means and object for gender studies by Muslim and non-Muslim feminists, thinkers, researchers, and academics.

There is some truth in the classical period that such interpretations did not raise any particular problems, as it is known that the role of women was simple. Education, social status, and thinking maturity are other causes that make women only have domestic parts. Likewise, with mufassir, leaders, experts, and religious figures who dominate are men in addition to the already entrenched patriarchal culture and the domination of men over women. It is not surprising, then, that in the end, gender bias interpretations emerge, which in turn form social structures and systems that tend to be patriarchal. (Robikah, 2019)

The structure and social system of society, which tends to be patriarchal, further strengthen the ideology of society, which creates injustice for women, but in the end, such conditions

Women realize this as a condition that imprisons them in a social downturn. As time goes by, women wake up from their nightmares and recognize that they have been victims of gender injustice and the injustice of social structures and systems in society. Then a women's movement emerged, which claimed to be a feminist movement to fight for the fate of women. This Feminism crawls from the term women's emancipation movement.

In Indonesia, feminist studies emerged in a transparent manner around the 1980s. This was marked by the emergence of women's movement activists, such as Herawati, Marwah Daud Ibrahim, Ratna Megawati, and so on. The emergence of these activists is due to the awareness that in the history of human civilization, including in Indonesia, women have been maltreated, even completely harassed. Nevertheless, strangely, this is done systematically because of the patriarchal domination that is so strong in human history. Therefore, sharp criticism is usually directed at issues of the patriarchal system, genderism, and sexism. (Mustaqim, 2008)

At present, gender and feminist studies have been much loved by academics, researchers, and experts as contained in several works, such as books

and articles in national and international journals, and marked by the emergence of several *mufassir* women who use the entire methodology of interpretation and relate it to various problems, social, moral, economic and political in the modern era. This stage began in the 90s. Began the emergence of thematic interpretation of women. Among them is the work of Quraish Shihab, which was later followed by several theses, theses, and dissertations among Indonesian Muslim intellectuals. Works that have been published and consumed by the public, for example, *efforts to Explore the Concept of Women in the Qur'an* by Nasaruddin Baidan, *The argument for gender equality from the perspective of the Koran* by Nasruddin Umar (Umar, 2001), *Tafsir Hate: Gender Bias Studies in Al-Qur'an Interpretation* by Zaitunah Subhan and several writings by other Indonesian Muslim feminists, such as Musdah Mulia (Mulia, 2001), Abdul Mustaqim (Mustaqim, 2008), Yunahar Ilyas (Ilyas, 2005), Husein Muhammad (Muhammad, n.d.). Until now, writings or interpretations that are gender-friendly, criticizing interpretations that are gender biased, and bringing up solutive ideas related to other gender studies have been very massive, especially nowadays in the form of scientific articles (Saifunnuha, 2021).

This paper examines the construction of feminist interpretation, especially in Indonesia. This is important because, with this, it is known how the development of gender understanding and the process of forming feminist interpretations in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a type of qualitative research through a literature review.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gender and Feminism

Etymologically, "*feminism*" comes from the Latin word "*Femina*", which in English translates to *feminine*, meaning having feminine qualities. Then this word added "ism" becomes *Feminism*, which means understanding women who want to raise gender issues related to the fate of women who have not received fair treatment in various sectors of life, domestic, political, social, economic, and educational sectors. In subsequent developments, the word is used to refer to a theory of gender equality (*sexual equality*), and historically, this term first appeared in 1895. Since then, Feminism has become widely known. (Turtle, 1986)

Gender, as understood linguistically, is defined as "gender", namely the visible differences between men and women in terms of values and behavior. (Neufeldt, 1984) While the terminological understanding is the social roles constructed by society. These roles are related to duties, functions, rights and obligations, and opportunities between men and women shaped by social

provisions, prevailing values, and local culture. That is, men and women must behave and play a role following what society expects. For example, the community believes that men are mighty and women are gentle, brave, and cowardly. Men are rational. Women are emotional, and men are active, women are passive, and so on. Because of the results of community construction, gender can change, can be exchanged, and is local, meaning that each race, ethnicity, and nation has rules, norms, and culture that are unique and different from one another. Gender is distinct from sex, and sex is the sex of men and women viewed biologically. While gender is the difference between men and women socially, not biologically. (Noble, 2001)

If you look back, the embryo of this emancipation movement occurred in England by Mary Wollstonecraft by launching various criticisms of the unfair treatment of women. He poured this criticism through his writing entitled '*A Vindication of Rights of Woman*', published in 1792. This paper considerably influenced women because it also emphasized the importance of education for women. After all, at that time, many women did not have the opportunity to receive formal education. With education, women can develop their ratios and become potential citizens so that the progress of all humanity can be more open and secure. (Ihromi, 1995) After a century, this idea was continued and realized by Lady Astor and E. Pankhurst. (Nutmeg, 1997)

Renaissance, born in Italy, began awakening a new European consciousness. At that time, humanists were held who began to respect humans as individuals who were free to use their minds to determine their high position on earth. The individual is freed from intellectual restraint by the church. This increased freedom is also present in women. The liberation of reason from the shackles of church theology produced a scientific revolution in the XVII century, which prompted the birth of liberalism, which sparked the French revolution at the end of the XVIII century. (Mernissi, 1991) The women's movement in France emerged in the 18th century, in 1791, not long after the French revolution. The action is driven by motion *aufklarung* and received quite a lot of support because this movement aims to increase the position and role of women, as well as fight for equal rights between women and men as citizens, which includes freedom, property rights, security and the right to resist oppression. (Ihromi, 1995)

In the first half of the 20th century, marked by two world wars, the struggle of individualist feminists was successful with the inclusion of their right to vote and vote in various constitutions of Western countries. The trauma of the first world war caused the decline of the feminist movement in its progressive form. However, on the contrary, after the second world war, with the improvement in the economic conditions of the Western world, Feminism underwent radicalization. This began with the publication of the philosopher's book on women's existentialism—friends of the existentialist philosopher Jean Sartre and Simon de Beauvoir. Simon wrote a book in 1949 in French and

translated it into *The Second Sex* in 1953. In his ground-breaking book, he advised women not to marry if they wanted to advance in their careers. Unsurprisingly, this book became famous because many career paths were opened for women in the post-second world war era. It was these career women who later pioneered the radical feminist movement. (Muhsin, 1994)

Meanwhile, the impact of the women's movement, which had developed in Europe, began to spread throughout the world. In the Asian region, such as Japan, the Philippines and Indonesia, this women's emancipation movement emerged at the end of the 19th century. The most well-known emancipation figures in Indonesia are Cut Nyak Dien, Cut Meutia, and Nyi Ageng Serang, who fought physically and non-physically, including R.A Kartini, Rasuna Said, Rahma El-Yunusiah, Dewi Sartika, Nyi Dahlan and others. After independence and entering the development period, women's emancipation was marked by the emergence of women who were educated and started careers in the public sector. In Indonesia, Feminism was only known around the 1970s. Interest in studying Feminism initially arose among intellectuals because this group has the most potential to be flooded with modern thought.

Driven by the spirit of freedom transmitted by the Western feminist movement, Feminism in Indonesia grew as an ideology embraced by certain social groups, namely women's NGO activists and academics who study women's issues. However, it should be noted that among those who fight for women, some are 'aware' of being feminists, but others are not happy with such a title. Feminism is considered 'irrelevant' to Eastern culture and is 'against' human nature. This is reasonable because the buzz of Western Feminism heard in Indonesia only comes from radical Feminism with extreme views. This concept is still allergic to use in Indonesian society, especially in the Islamic world and the East in general. This is due to the confusion between Feminism as an ideology and Feminism as a concern for the suffering of women. (Mustaqim, 2008)

Feminism, especially in Islam, is not an ideology or movement of rebellion against men but rather an ideology that wants to respect women so that their rights and roles can be more optimal and equal without discrimination, Marginalization, and subordination (Muhammad, n.d.). In this case, Abdul Mustaqim quotes from Kamla Bashin and Nighat Said Khan that Feminism must be defined clearly and broadly so that there is no misunderstanding, even fear, of the feminist movement. (Bahsin & Khan, 1995) Because sometimes people give an inaccurate picture of Feminism. It is described as a women's movement that incenses women's loins, hates, rebels against men, and is even seen as destroying families and other social institutions. (Mustaqim, 2008)

In short, the core of the feminist movement is awareness of discrimination, injustice, and subordination of women, followed by efforts to change this situation towards a just system of society. Thus, to be a feminist does not have to be female. A man can also become a feminist if he has the attention

and awareness to change injustice and oppression against women in the family and society. In a sense, the focus of the feminist movement is the creation of something *justice* (justice) and *equality* (equality) in the system and structure of society.

Meanwhile, gender inequality in society is often manifested in the following forms; (Faqih, 1996)

1. *Marginalization*, Marginalization of women usually occurs in a community due to differences in type and condition, place and time, as well as mechanisms for the process of Marginalization of women due to gender differences, or occurs because it originates from government policies, religion, religious traditions, customs or even from scientific assumptions. This happens at home, work, and other areas of social life. As a result of this process of Marginalization is the economic impoverishment of women.
2. *Subordination*, there is an assumption that women are irrational and emotional, so women cannot appear to lead, cannot be representatives, or women prioritize feelings rather than ratios. Therefore they must be placed in an unimportant position.
3. *Stereotype*: Generally, stereotypes label or mark certain groups, such as women of the night, temptresses, entertainers, and others. There is an assumption that women dress up to attract the attention of the opposite sex, so every case of sexual violence or sexual harassment is always associated with this label. Society has a tendency to blame women as victims of rape due to this stereotype.
4. *Violence* (violence), various violence befalls women physically and psychologically because there is an assumption that women are weak compared to men, so men are free to commit violence against women.
5. *Workload (double burden)*, the notion that women are nurturing and diligent. Therefore, domestic work (home) is a woman's duty, such as raising children, cooking, washing, and so on, although she also earns a living for her family outside the home.

Departing from the phenomenon mentioned above, awareness of injustice and extortion of women, in his published dissertation, Yunahar Ilyas defines Feminism as awareness of gender injustice that befalls women, both in the family and society and conscious action by women and men to change this situation. (Ilyas, 2005) In its development, the feminist movement can no longer be said to be directed or driven solely by ideals and universals. However, the development of these ideals has become pluralistic. The objectives of Feminism have spread to all corners of the earth, following their history and acquiring a pattern that is no longer universal but contextual. For this reason, within Feminism itself, several schools have developed to answer all women's problems according to the perspective and methodology of each school in Feminism. Even

though feminists have the same basis regarding the existence of gender injustice against women in the family and society, they have different opinions in analyzing the causes of this injustice and also different views about the forms and targets to be achieved by their struggle. These different perspectives have birth (so far) to four major streams of Feminism. This division of Feminism is based on the classification made by Alison Jaggar. He classifies Feminism based on the understanding that influences women's liberation efforts and knowledge of human nature.

The four streams of Feminism mentioned above are as follows; (Kolang & Suwastini, 2013)

1. Liberal Feminism

Liberal Feminism has a long and rolling history as a response to classical liberalism since the XVII century. This flow is concerned with women's rights, which are considered lame. The equality of rights to be achieved by this stream of Feminism mainly revolves around the right to education and work. Liberal Feminism sees the State as a body that is neutral and open to political pressure (Aripurnami, 1997).

The philosophical basis of this school is liberalism, namely that all people are created to have the same rights, and everyone should have the same opportunity to advance themselves. This movement believes that these principles have yet to be given to women. Therefore they demand that these principles be immediately implemented right away. They think that the patriarchal system can be destroyed by changing the attitude of each individual, especially the perspective of women concerning men. The woman must be aware of and demand this right. This demand will make men aware. If this awareness has been evenly distributed, then with this new awareness, humans will form a contemporary society where men and women work together based on equality. (Budiman, n.d.) For Feminists, there are two ways to achieve this goal. *First*, taking a psychological approach by raising individual awareness, among others, through discussions discussing women's experiences in a male-dominated society. With the hope of increasing women's attention that they have been maltreated, they must do something to erase this. *Second*, demanding the renewal of unfavorable laws for women and changing these laws into new regulations that treat women as equals to men. (Budiman, n.d.)

2. Feminisme Marxis

Unlike bees, beavers, and ants, whose activities are governed by instinct, we create ourselves in deliberate or conscious processes to transform and manipulate nature. For liberals, individual ideas, thoughts, and values can change. For the Marxist, the material production and reproduction drive of social life is the main driving force of history.

This flow is a reaction to the thought of liberal Feminism. Marxist

Feminism believes that individuals do not cause the backwardness experienced by women on purpose but because of social, political, and economic structures closely related to capitalism. According to them, equal opportunities for women and men can only be obtained by abolishing society's class system because Marxist Feminists want to eliminate classes in society. That is the basic structure of the thinking of Marxist Feminism. (Komang & Suwastini, 2013)

In contrast to Feminism which tends to regard men or patriarchy as a problem, for Marxist Feminism, the capitalist system is the cause. That way, the solution must also be structural by changing the class structure and breaking ties with the capitalist system.

According to the perspective of Marxist Feminism, before capitalism developed, the family was a unit of production. All family members, including women, carry out all human needs to sustain life. However, after the development of capitalism, industry and the family are no longer a unit of production. Production activities and goods for human needs have shifted from homes to factories. Women no longer participate in production activities.

Then the result arises. Namely, there is a sexual division of labor, where men work in the public sector, which is productive and has economic value. In contrast, women work in the domestic industry, which is unproductive and has no monetary value. Because material possessions determine the value of one's existence, women in the domestic and inefficient sectors are valued lower than men because they are in the public and productive industries. Thus, according to them, one of the ways to liberate women from family oppression is that women must enter the public sector, which generates economic value (money) so that the concept of women's domestic work no longer exists. Even if necessary, the abolition of the family institution is also carried out because the family is seen as an institution that gave birth to capitalism. Instead, create a collective family where domestic work is carried out collectively, including the care and education of children. (BENDER, 2020)

3. Radical Feminism

Radical Feminism emerged as a reaction to the culture of sexism or social discrimination based on sex in the West in the 1960s. These radical feminists do not see between personal goals and political goals, sexual or biological elements, so in analyzing the causes of oppression of women by men, they consider it rooted in the male gender and its patriarchal ideology. Then radical feminists believe that men's physical domination of women, such as sexual relations, is a form of oppression against women. For them, patriarchy is the ideological basis of pressure, a sexual hierarchical system where men have power *superior* and *privilege* the economy. (Tong, n.d.)

The radical feminist movement is a women's movement that struggles with sexual Reality. Therefore, this movement questions how to destroy patriarchy as a value system that has been deeply rooted and institutionalized in society. The radical feminist strategy in realizing its ideals is the liberation of women, which can be achieved by, *First*, through separate and autonomous women's organizations. *Second* *docultural Feminism*, so that a women's worker unit, Learning, emerged martial arts, condoning lesbian practices. Therefore, in the 1960s, extreme radical feminist groups emerged. They are trying to cut ties with men, and they want to call themselves *lesbian*. According to him, as long as women continue to have relationships with men, it will be difficult or even impossible to fight against men. (Mustaqim, 2008)

It can be said that radical feminists focus their struggle on the problem of eliminating the gender system and creating an egalitarian society. There is no patriarchal compromise for this flow, and it must be removed and destroyed. Radical feminists call for women to break away from men's lives. That is what is called women's freedom.

4. Socialist Feminism

Socialist feminists seem to have been more influenced by 20th-century thinkers like Louis Althusser and Jurgen Habermas. More than that, Socialist feminists also emphasize that the fundamental cause of the oppression of women is not "*sexism*" or "*classism*" but a highly complex relationship between capitalism and patriarchy. (Tong, n.d.) They think that even though the focus is left on gender, women's problems are rooted in a social structure that creates alienation.

Socialist feminists argue that the relationship between women's economic participation is necessary but will not necessarily increase women's status. The low level of participation correlates with the inferior quality of women. However, women's involvement in the economy is seen as leading them to their own devices because they will be enslaved. For them, the increased participation of women in the economy results in roles of sexual antagonism rather than status. Therefore, it is not due to biological differences between men and women but rather because of judgments and assumptions of *social construction* against that difference. Injustice is also not due to production or reproduction activities in society but because of the manifestation of gender inequality, a social construction. Therefore, what they are fighting is the construct of the vision and ideology of society as well as structures and systems built on gender bias. (Faqih, 1996)

Women and Factors in the Emergence of Feminist Interpretation

1. General description of Indonesian women

It is a fact that the women themselves do not realize the weak position of

women in society. Some women's groups felt happy even though it was a group of women others were concerned. Regarding a phenomenon, sometimes a group of women worries about it, but other groups of women still perceive it as something normal.

In history, women have contributed to the struggle for social justice, for example, by abolishing slavery in the early 19th century and trade union struggles in the late 19th century and other human rights struggles. In Indonesia, for example, women's heroes of the work for independence, such as Cut Nyak Dien, Kartini, Rasuna Said, etc. But the tendency of these things is forgotten.

In various cultures, the relationship between men and women is constructed by myths. Starting from the tale of the ribcage, the origin of the occurrence of women, to the legends of menstruation. These myths impress women as *the second creation* and *the second sex*. Matter settles in women's subconscious for so long that women accept that they are subordinate to men and not worthy of being equal. The myths surrounding women are complicated because they intersect with religious issues. Suppose a tale is poured into religious language. In that case, its influence will strengthen because the holy book for its adherents is not a myth but originates from God, who knows everything (Anggoro, 2019). In this regard, in his book Nasruddin Umar quotes D.L Cormodi's statement that some myths cannot be rejected because they have become part of the beliefs of various religions (Umar, 2001). The influence of the stories in multiple scriptures is referred to as *unmythological aspects*. Because according to him, the mythology mentioned in a holy book increases the status of a belief. (Carmody, 1992)

In Indonesia, it is acknowledged or not that the status and role of women in Indonesian society today are still ambiguous and *subordinate* and have not reached the position of equal partners with men. This inequality is reflected mainly in the quality of life and reflected in cases of harassment, rape, slavery, prostitution, and low levels of health and nutritional status. Apart from fitness, other aspects that illustrate women's low position and position in Indonesia are education, economy, and politics. However, the data shows that some aspects show better improvement, especially in terms of maternal and child health. Maternal health in Indonesia has also improved, as can be seen from the increasing proportion of pregnancy check-ups from 95.2% (Riskesdas 2013) to 96.1%, the ratio of pregnancy check-ups (ideal k1) from 81.3% (Riskesdas 2013) to 86%, the proportion of pregnancy checks (k4) from 70% (Riskesdas 2013) to 74.1%, the proportion of deliveries in health facilities of 66.7% (Riskesdas 2013) to 79.3% (Widyawati, 2018).

As for education, the percentage of women who graduate from higher education level to reach 10.06 percent in 2021. Provisionally men have a portion of 9.28 percent. Almost 10 out of 100 girls aged 15 and over in Indonesia have successfully earned a diploma.

When broken down, the percentage of women who succeeded in obtaining a college diploma in urban areas reached 13.51 percent, while for men, it was 12.56 percent. Then, in rural areas, 5.57 percent of women successfully obtained a college diploma, while men only achieved 4.76 percent. But on the other hand, 16.09 percent of women aged 15 years and over above do not have a diploma. Nearly 2 out of 10 women in Indonesia still need a certificate. Meanwhile, the level of illiteracy in Indonesia is still dominated by women, with a percentage of 5.35 per cent (Angelia, 2022).

As aspects of employment and the economy, the potential for women to contribute to the current development is considered not optimal. Level the average education of women is higher than that of men. However, level On the other hand, women's Labor Force Participation (TPAK) is lower than male TPAK, which is only 55%. According to the Survey of The 2018 National Labor Force released by BPS, the proportion of men in the formal employment sector is almost double that of women. Regrettably, in the last ten years, the proportion trend has tended to be stagnant, and even working women are still very vulnerable to exposure to economic shocks. Still, from BPS data, around 26% of female workers are workers in domestic sector households. In addition, most female workers are domestic workers with medium to soft skills, whose proportion reaches 89% or around 43.8 million people (KEMENPPA, 2019).

Women's involvement in public or political spheres is also felt to be low, as seen from the world of politics, where the number of women holding parliamentary seats still needs to reach the affirmative limit of 30% percent of women's representation. Although, in practice, not all women working in politics have the authority to make strategic decisions. But at least they can represent the presence and voice of the aspirations of women at the government policy level. Even at the managerial level, the number of women occupying organizational, field, and professional levels is still low (KEMENPPA, 2019).

An overview of the condition of Indonesian women highlighted from several of these aspects explains how low their social position is women in Indonesia. Therefore, it is very relevant to continue discussing the emancipation efforts among women.

2. Factors Causing the Emergence of the School of Feminism in Interpretation

a. Internal factors

Feminists believe that, basically, Islamic religious teachings emphasize gender equality between men and women. Although in the Koran, there are verses that show a patriarchal attitude, in substance (morally), it erases the subordination experienced by women before Islam. Thus, the expressions of the Koran are full of liberation, including, in this case, the emancipation of women from male domination and

exploitation (Zulaiha, n.d.).

For this reason, *mufasssir* Feminists see the need to explore the contents of the Koran, which are full of justice to eliminate male domination over women so that there is no marginalization, discrimination, or unfair treatment of women. There is an assumption that religion is the source of the problem and even a scapegoat in cases of gender injustice. This is certainly very disturbing. Feminists examine this assumption in more depth. Does it originate from the character of religion itself, or does it create from religious understanding, interpretation and thought which does not rule out the possibility of being influenced by patriarchal traditions and culture, capitalist ideology or other views? Therefore, it is necessary to explore this issue by conducting case studies in Islam regarding the ideal principles of Islam in positioning women (Robikah, 2019) (Rohmatul Izzad, 2018). In short, the internal reason is that there is a view that the Koran carries a mission of justice, even though it sometimes looks more favoured than men.

b. External Factors

In addition to the causal factors above, this feminist interpretation arises due to external causes that influence contemporary interpreters. The factors include;

1). Social Reality;

Most feminists live in a patriarchal environment. They see and observe cultural patterns that do not benefit women. Awareness of this is one of the factors causing the importance of 're-reading' the Qur'anic texts, which seem to put aside Women. For example, Riffat Hasan stated in his autobiography that in his time and place, it was customary to celebrate the birth of a boy and mourn the birth of a girl. Pakistan is a country whose religious system is known to be very traditional. (Baidhowi, 2012)

In addition, Asghar Ali Engineer is a male feminist from India. Her struggle for equality is also motivated by India's social conditions, which place women in deficient and weak families. Apart from cases prevalent cases of domestic violence. Regarding social, economic, and educational, Indian Muslims are very backward. Moreover, Islamic fundamentalist groups, which according to him, are very shallow in understanding religion, often become a source of problems for his reform efforts. (Faqih, 1996)

2). Contact with Western civilization;

In addition to the social conditions that influence the background of the ideas of feminist interpreters, there is contact with a Western culture that shapes their Feminism. For example,

Amina Wadud, Asghar, and Rifat Hasan have a knowledge base in social sciences, and science *notes well* from the West and religious sciences that influence their views. This ability they use to understand religious phenomena, which so far have only departed from spiritual knowledge. They are very aware that social science from the West is essential to understand (criticize) the religious phenomena that have existed in Islam so far. Suppose the patriarchal tendency arises partly because of a textual-scriptural understanding of sacred texts. In that case, the three feminists use the instruments of social sciences to produce an interpretation that is very different from that put forward by the classical commentators.

3). Global Development;

The rapid advancement of information technology today forces Muslims to reformulate various Islamic thoughts. The upheaval of "emancipation", "democracy", "modernization", and so on in other regions of the world has become very easy for Muslims to access, and this has dramatically affected their lives. This is not without effect on the demands of women to cope with life those who have been considered "secondary" to be more independent both in society and the family.

To answer this challenge, Muslims are required to renew Islamic thought so that it is relevant to Islam *arcs* and *time* and able to answer problems and challenges of an increasingly complex era. Therefore, the discourse of Feminism in the interpretation of the Koran is inseparable from today's global developments (Anggoro, 2019).

4). The idea of human rights;

The West's accusation that Islam does not respect women's rights has influenced the emergence of feminist thinking in Islam. This accusation cannot be denied (although not entirely accurate) because, in fact, (most) Islamic countries show that the position of women in the social structure is often inferior.

Western attacks (criticisms) on Islam have awakened Islamic thinkers to reformulate Islamic teachings, which defend egalitarianism and the equality of men and women. But what moves them more is the challenge of the modern world, which guides the implementation of human rights. The emergence of a new interpretation of the Qur'anic verses regarding the relationship between men and women cannot be separated from human awareness in modern society, which is conditioned by the concept of human rights and human dignity. The interpretation of gender texts by classical interpreters who are male-biased is a problem that

is considered contrary to human rights because it positions the male sex in a superior position compared to women. (Baidhowi, 2005)

Construction of Feminism Interpretation in Indonesia

The beginning of the 20th century was a period of struggle for independence and the emergence of nationalists. This was marked by the emergence of several mass organizations by the Indonesian people interested in education, culture, politics, and religion. Among the popular organizations are Budi Utomo, Sarekat Islam and Muhammadiyah. Budi Utomo and Muhammadiyah are engaged in education and social affairs, while Sarekat Islam is involved in politics. The reason for establishing this organization is almost the same, namely a desire of the Indonesian people to win independence (Indonesian unity). In Harry J. Benda's notes, the Dutch oppression of Islam made Islam able to lay the foundations of the identity of the Indonesian nation. In addition, Islam is also used as a symbol of resistance to imperialism. Not only limited to the lower classes, the nobility and sultans united to support the Islamic cause. Islam is not only a religion but a *way of life*. Apart from that, it also gave rise to a new awareness of the Indonesian people uniting forces through this organization's organization (Firdaus et al., 2022).

At that time, there were three major groups: the Nationalist group, the Islamic group (Sarekat Islam), and the Socialist group (Nasakom). In addition, according to Deliar Noer, within the body of the Islamic group itself, there is intense competition between the traditionalist group and the (modern) reformer group. The traditionalist group reflects the old people group, while the modernist group reflects the young people group. The traditionalist group is more concerned about religion and worship. For them, Islam is fiqh. And in this connection, they acknowledge taqlid and reject ijtihad.

In contrast, modern groups generally pay more attention to the nature of Islam. For this group, Islam conforms to the provisions of the times and conditions. Islam also means progress because religion will not hinder the advancement of science, the development of science, women's position, and so on. For them, religion consists of two parts: faith, in the narrow sense, is worship with all its provisions. The second is religion, in the broadest sense, concerned with world problems. In the first part, all conditions follow God, while in the second part, God explains globally, while man makes efforts according to his intellect.

In terms of education, at the beginning of the 20th century, Islamic schools in Indonesia had made much progress. However, the subject was still oriented toward classical Arabic works, especially in Islamic boarding schools. The books taught are as follows *Tafsir Jalalain*, *Arba'in* the works of Imam Nawawi, and *Nailul Authar* Asy-Syaukani's work. Meanwhile, the results of

modern writers (Islamic reformers) are like books *Tafsir Al-Kabir* works of Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridha have also been recognized by some modernist groups in their classes but are different from what is generally. (Ilyas, 2005).

During this period, there was still a general view among the public that translating the Koran into languages other than Arabic was haram. However, Muhammad Yunus, as an alumnus of Al-Azhar Cairo, ventured to translate the Koran into Indonesian in 1922 by publishing three chapters of the Koran, which was finished a few years later. As explained by his teacher in Egypt that the purpose of translating the Koran into Indonesian is to help non-Arab Muslims understand the Islamic teachings contained in the Koran, so solving the Koran is also legal. *Obligatory duty* because it is functional.

Then moving on in the 30s until the Japanese occupation, the study of the interpretation of the Koran began to progress. This is marked by the emergence of several translations and interpretations of *juz 'amma* by the title *Al-Burhan* HAMKA's work, followed a few years later by Ahmad Hasan (1930), who wrote a commentary on *Juz Amma* by the title *Hidayah*, and several other commentaries works. However, the works of explanation at that time were still partial and needed a complete interpretation. However, they can be categorized as pioneers in interpreting the Koran in Indonesia because they are trying to make efforts to solve the Koran. At the same time, other scholars still consider it taboo and even forbidden. As for the studies on women, especially in terms of interpretation in this period, they still need to be visible. Studies on women are still in the form of quotations from the classic books of the commentators. Munirul Abidin called this early period (the 20s-60s) the stage of laying the foundation and translation (Abidin, 2011).

Then in the 1970s, it was marked by the existence of commentary books which provided broader comments on texts and their translations. Interpretation at this stage is still a continuation of the previous stage. But *mufasssir* Indonesia has made efforts to understand the content of the Koran comprehensively. Among the works of exegesis which marked the emergence of this tapas are *Tafsir Bayan* by Hasbi Ash-Shiddiqy, *Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Karim* by Halim Hasan, and *Tafsir Al-Azhar* by Hamka. The three interpretations have begun to emphasize the teachings of the Koran and its context in understanding women's verses. Each of these interpretations includes the complete verse, its translation, explanatory notes, an index, and lists of essential terms. In 1967, two books were compiled by order of the Ministry of Religion, which became national standards in translating and interpreting the Koran. The two books are *The Quran and Its Translation* and *The Qur'an and its interpretation*. In this stage, Hamka's work is the most influential compared to other assignments. This is because Hamka has connected his interpretation, especially verses about women, with certain conditions in Indonesia. While the other works are considered not to refer to the

general situation of Muslims in *arcs* and time specific (Saifunnuha, 2021).

However, almost all interpretations are peeling regarding women, which is still traditional. The main points of discussion are adapted to the interests and abilities of the interpreter, where interpretation is still carried out by examining verse by verse sequentially. There is no attempt to place and group similar verses into thematic discussion points to obtain a more comprehensive and accurate understanding. This stage is called the partial interpretation stage.

The next stage is the development stage, which is meant by this stage where *mufassir* not only uses one methodology in interpreting the Koran but many methodologies and approaches so that the understanding he gets, according to Amina Wadud Muhsin, is more holistic. This stage is marked by the emergence of several *mufassir* women who use the entire methodology of interpretation and relate it to various problems, social, moral, economic and political, in the modern era. This stage began in the 90s. Began the emergence of thematic interpretation of women. Among them is the work of Quraish Shihab, which was later followed by several theses, theses and dissertations among Indonesian Muslim intellectuals. Works that have been published and consumed by the public, for example, *efforts to Explore the Concept of Women in the Qur'an* by Nasaruddin Baidan, *The argument for gender equality from the perspective of the Koran* by Nasruddin Umar, *Hate Interpretation: A Study of Gender Bias in Al-Qur'an Interpretation* by Zaitunah Subhan and several writings by other Indonesian Muslim feminists. The approach in this work uses thematic, where the discussion focuses on specific discussions analyzed using various methodologies.

At the end of the 90s, women's interpretation in Indonesia progressed rapidly. The progress made by Indonesian Muslims since the early 20th century has gradually awakened the Muslim community, *mufassir* of the importance of adjusting the understanding of the Koran to the situations and conditions that develop through contextual interpretation (Abidin, 2011).²

In the modern-contemporary era, it is different from the classical period. Mufassir uses a hermeneutic approach, although there are still pros and cons. As a new trend in interpretation, hermeneutics seeks to interpret the Qur'an as a book of guidance viewed from all related angles. The Qur'an is not seen as dead but alive, sent down in a cultured age and space, not in a vacuum. In this trend, contemporary thematic interpretations are often found. (Robikah, 2019) (Rohmatul Izzad, 2018)

Concerning feminist interpretations in Indonesia in this era, it can be said that for the complete interpretation of the Koran, Quraish Shihab's Tafsir Al-Misbah is considered gender-friendly. In his Tafsir, the various themes raised include polygamy, human creation, women's rights, leadership in the household, headscarves, inheritance, and others referenced in articles related to gender

verses. Previously Tafsir Al Azhar has also been considered gender-friendly in explaining verses related to gender. Because Hamka repeatedly emphasized the equal rights and obligations of men and women. This can be seen in how he was very enthusiastic in interpreting the verse about the creation of humans in Surah Annisa verse 1. Hamka's interpretation differs from the previous interpretation in the 90s, identical to the interpretation of gender bias regarding the superiority of men over women (Nafsi, 2016). Now you can find many writings related to gender themes in scientific journals, both verse studies and research results related to the relevance of gender-friendly interpretation (Saifunnuha, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Before arriving at the interpretation of the Koran, Indonesia was coloured by debate about whether or not it was permissible to translate the Koran. It was only in the 1920s, in 1992 to be precise, that Mahmud Yunus began translating the Koran into Indonesian, with the motivation that Indonesian people could understand the contents of the Koran. After that, in the 1930s, interpretation in Indonesia showed progress. HAMKA started with interpretation *Juz 'Ammah* by the title *Al-Burhan*, and Ahmad Hasan with interpretation *Juz 'Ammah* title *Al-Hidayah* and other interpretations. Interpretation at this stage is still in partial form. However, interpretation at this time is categorized as a pioneer stage in interpreting the Koran in Indonesia. As for the study of women, it is still in the form of quotations from the classic books of the commentators.

In the 1970s, continuing the previous stage, *mufassir* Indonesia made efforts to understand the contents of the Koran comprehensively, marked by commentaries on the text and its translations that provide broader comments, among the works of exegesis which marked the emergence of this stage are *Tafsir Bayan* by Hasbi Ash-Shiddiqy, *Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Karim* by Halim Hasan, and *Tafsir Al-Azhar* by Hamka. These three interpretations have begun to emphasize the teachings of the Koran and its context in understanding women's verses. However, almost all of the interpretations dealing with women are still traditional in that the main points of discussion are adapted to the interests and abilities of the interpreters. The verses are interpreted based on the order of the verses, and there needs to be more effort to group themes related to women to get a comprehensive and accurate interpretation.

The next stage of development was in the 1990s when *mufassir* did not only use one methodology in interpreting the Koran but used many methodologies and approaches so that the understanding he gets is more holistic. This stage is marked by the emergence of several *mufassir* women who use the entire methods of interpretation and relate it to various problems, social, moral, economic, and political, in the modern era. Among them is the work of Quraish Shihab, which was later followed by several theses, and dissertations among Indonesian Muslim intellectuals. The approach in these works uses thematic, which focuses on specific discussions analyzed using various methodologies.

Then in the modern-contemporary era, there are many scientific writings or articles related to the interpretation of gender versus seen from various points of view to produce holistic meanings and accommodate gender equality.

REFERENCE

- Abidin, M. (2011). *The paradigm of Women's Interpretation in Indonesia*. UIN MALIKI Press.
- Angelia, D. (2022). *Indonesian Women's Education Status, More Graduate College Than Men*.
<https://goodstats.id/article/status-pendidikan-perempuan-indonesia-lebihanak-tamatkan-perguruan-tinggi-daripada-laki-laki-dyanS>
- Anggoro, T. (2019). The Concept of Gender Equality in Islam. *And the thoughts*, 15(1). <https://doi.org/10.18196/aiijis.2019.0098.129-134>
- Bahsin, K. Dan, & Khan, N.S. (1995). *Main Issues Concerning Feminism and Its Relevance* (S. Harlina (ed.)). Gramedia.
- Baidhowi, A. (2005). *Women's Studies in the Koran and Contemporary Mufassir*. Nuance.
- Baidhowi, A. (2012). Feminist Sects in the Interpretation of the Qur'an. *ESSENCE*, 3, No. 1.
- BENDAR, A. (2020). FEMINISM AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS. *AL-WARDAH*, 13(1), 25. <https://doi.org/10.46339/al-wardah.v13i1.156>
- Budiman, A. (n.d.). *Sexual Division of Labor, A Sociological Discussion on the Role of Women in Society*. Gramedia.
- Carmody, D.L. (1992). *Mythological Women, Contemporary Reflections on Ancient Religious Stories*. Crossroad.
- Darwin, M., & Carving. (2001). *Suing Patriarchal Culture*. PPK UGM.
- Faqih, M. (1996). *Shifting Conceptions of Gender and Social Transformation*. Student Library.
- Firdaus, M. Y. (2022). VIEWING THE FEMINIST INTERPRETATION IN INDONESIA ALA FROM THOMAS KHUN. *Answers*.
- Hashim, S. (2001). *Unthinkable Things About Women's Issues in Islam: A Documentation*. Libra.
- Ihromi, T. . (1995). *Women in Development Studies*. The Torch Foundation.
- Ilyas, Y. (2005). *Construction of Gender Thinking in Mufassir's Thought*. Directorate General of Islamic Community Guidance and Hajj Organizers MORA RI.
- KEMENPPA. (2019). Indonesian women profile—*profile of Indonesian Women*, xviii+216 pages.
- Komang, N., & Suwastini, A. (2013). THE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN FEMINISM FROM THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY TO POSTFEMINISM: A

- THEORETICAL REVIEW. *journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* / (Vol. 2, Issue 1).
- Mernissi, F. (1991). *Women and Islam: An Historical and Theological Enquiry* (Y. Radianti (ed.)). Pustaka.
- Muhammad, H. (n.d.). *FEMINIST TREATMENT IDEA*.
- Muhsin, A.W. (1994). *Al-Qur'an and Woman* (Y. Radianti (ed.)). Pustaka.
- Mulia, S. M. (2001). *Justice and Gender Equality Islamic Perspective*. Ministry of Religion's Women's Empowerment Team.
- Mustaqim, A. (2008). *The paradigm of Feminist Interpretation: Reading the Qur'an with Women's Optics*. Library Log.
- Nafsi, S. (n.d.). *GENDER THOUGHTS OF QURAISH SHIHAB IN TAFSIR AL MISHBAH*.
- Neufeldt, V. (1984). *Webster's New World Dictionary* (V. Neufeldt (ed.)). Webster's New Word Cleveland.
- Pala, W. N. (1997). *Women and the Church, Efforts to Find Identity and Personality*. Fac. Sanata Dharma Theology.
- Rais, H.El. (2012). *Popular Scientific Dictionary*. Student Library.
- Robikah, S. (2019). Shifting Paradigm of Al-Quran Interpretation: An Analysis of Feminist Interpretation in Indonesia. *Analysis: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 19(1), 105– 128. <https://doi.org/10.24042/ajsk.v19i1.3376>
- Rohmatul Izzad. (2018). THE CONCEPT OF GENDER EQUALITY IN ISLAM. *AL ITQAN: Journal Study Al-Qur'an*, 4(1), 29–52. <https://doi.org/10.47454/itqan.v4i1.678>
- Saifunnuha, M. (2021). Discussion of Gender in Interpretation in Indonesia (Research Based on Systematic Literature Review). *Exchange*, 20, No. 2.
- Tong, R. P. (n.d.). *Feminist Thought*.
- Tutle, L. (1986). *Encyclopedia of Feminism*. Fact Of File Publication.
- Umar, N. (2001). *Gender Equality Argument from Al-Qur'an Perspective*. Paramadina.
- Widyawati. (2018). *Indonesian Health Portrait from RISKESDES 2018. BY YEAR*. <https://sehatnegeriku.kemkes.go.id/baca/umum/20181102/0328464/potret-healthy-indonesia-riskesda-2018/>
- Zulaiha, E. (n.d.). *FEMINIST INTERPRETATION: HISTORY, PARADIGM AND STANDARDS OF VALIDITY OF FEMINIST Interpretation*.