

**DIALECTICS OF RELIGION AND WOMEN: A REVIEW OF THE
MANUSCRIPT OF *HADĪYAT AL-NISĀ' FĪ TARGHĪB 'USHRAT
AL-NISĀ'* BY MUHAMMAD AZHARI BIN KHATIB MA'ARUF
AL PALEMBANI**

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ABSTRACT

The Western feminist paradigm, which emphasizes individual freedom, often views religion as a source of suffering, oppression, and backwardness for women, thus religious teachings are considered an obstacle to achieving gender equality. This study aims to examine the discourse of women in the classical Islamic thought of the Indonesian archipelago through the manuscript *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Ushrat Al-Nisā'* by Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembang. This literature research uses a qualitative, descriptive-philosophical approach, with documentation and content analysis techniques, and deductive conclusion drawing. The results show that the manuscript contains rules on the rights, ethics, and roles of women in the family and society. These rules do not aim to discriminate as accused by Western feminism, but rather to protect the dignity and honor of women. This difference arises from the epistemological basis: Western feminism starts from a critique of patriarchy, while Islam is based on religion and morality. Thus, Islam places women in a noble position while protecting them from discrimination and subordination.

Keywords: *women, feminism, muhammad azhari bin khatib ma'aruf al palembani, hadīyat al-nisā', rights.*

ABSTRAK

Paradigma feminisme Barat yang menekankan kebebasan individu sering memandang agama sebagai sumber penderitaan, ketertindasaan, dan keterbelakangan perempuan, sehingga ajaran agama dianggap sebagai penghalang tercapainya kesetaraan gender. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengkaji wacana perempuan dalam khazanah pemikiran ulama klasik Nusantara melalui naskah *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Ushrat Al-Nisā'* karya Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembang. Penelitian kepustakaan ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif-filosofis, dengan teknik dokumentasi dan analisis konten, serta penarikan kesimpulan secara deduktif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa naskah tersebut memuat aturan tentang hak, etika, dan peran perempuan dalam keluarga serta masyarakat. Aturan ini tidak bertujuan mendiskriminasi sebagaimana tuduhan feminisme Barat, melainkan melindungi harkat dan martabat perempuan. Perbedaan ini lahir dari basis epistemologi: feminisme Barat berangkat dari kritik patriarki, sementara Islam berlandaskan Agama dan moralitas. Dengan demikian, Islam menempatkan perempuan secara mulia sekaligus menjaga dari diskriminasi dan subordinasi.

Keywords: *perempuan, feminisme, muhammad azhari bin khatib ma'aruf al palembani, hadīyat al-nisā', hak.*

INTRODUCTION

Women still experience social subordination due to gender constructions that place them in an inferior position compared to men. Hasanatul Jannah, “WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT IN ISLAMIC SPIRITUALITY (An Effort to Make Women Productive)”, Karsa , Vol. 19 No. 2 (2011), pp. 135–45. Western feminism has undergone an ideological transformation from a religious basis to a secular-liberal one. This ideology Margaret Walters, *Feminism: A Short Introduction* , ed. Yus. R, (1 ed.) (Yogyakarta: Ircisod, 2021)., which views religion as the source of patriarchy and women's oppression, has existed Robert T. Alise Scott F. Aikin, *The Routledge Companion to Feminism and Postfeminism, The Routledge Companion to Pragmatism* , (1 ed.) (London: Routledge, 2001). since the 17th century. Hamidah Hanim Midah, "The role of women in Islam and western feminism", *At-Tarbawi* , Vol. 12 No. 2 (2020), p. 152. Especially since the post-World War II era, when American women were relegated to domestic roles, Joanne Meyerowitz, “Beyond the Feminine Mystique: A Reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture, 1946–1958”, *Journal of American History* , Vol. 79 No. 4 (March 1993), 1445. through the principle of *coverture* , the feminist movement emerged as a resistance to the legitimacy of patriarchy in the West. R. Marie Griffith, “Submissive Wives, Wounded Daughters, and Female Soldiers: Prayer and Christian Womanhood in Women's Aglow Fellowship”, *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* , Vol. 4 No. 2 (1997), p. 160–95. In the 19th century, the Industrial Revolution ensnared women in a double burden legitimized by the church's doctrine of *separate spheres* . Karen Armstrong, *The Gospel According to Woman: Christianity's Creation Of The Sex War In The West* , (1 ed.) (London: Pan Books, 1986), p. 147.

The 20th century marked the rise of Western feminism, secularism, and liberalism, which viewed religion as a source of women's oppression. Shulamith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution* , (1 ed.) (New York: William Morrow, 1970), p. 15. Sarah Gamble (1964–1997), Jenainati, and Groves and Ross JUDY GROVES CATHIA JENAINATI, *INTRODUCING Feminism* , (1 ed.) (Malta: Gutenberg Press, 2007). described feminism as an emancipatory movement discourse. Scott F. Aikin and Robert B. Talisse, “The Routledge Companion to Pragmatism”, *The Routledge Companion to Pragmatism* , 2022, vii. Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797) asserted that religion and socio-political structures in France had been manipulated to legitimize patriarchal domination and extract women's sexuality by directing women towards aesthetic rather than rational submission, Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights*

of Woman with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects, (1 ed.) (London: J. Johnson, 1792), p. 4. thus perpetuating women's subordination. Ibid. , p. 12. Florence Nightingale (1820–1910) also voiced this phenomenon, as conveyed by Landow (1913–1982), Florence criticized religious interpretations that positioned women as passive and domestic creatures, by assessing them as a form of spiritual and intellectual imprisonment. Laura Monros-Gaspar, "THE VOICE OF CASSANDRA: FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE'S CASSANDRA (1852) AND THE VICTORIAN WOMAN", *NEW VOICES IN CLASSICAL RECEPTION STUDIES* , Vol. 3 No. 3 (2008), 62–63.

Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986), Beauvoir criticized the Christian tradition through church dogma justifying patriarchy by subjugating women to domestic roles and denying their freedom. Simon said " The Church has always been the ally of the feudal patriarchal system; it gave to man divine authority over women ." Simone De Beauvoir, *The second sex* , ed. Sheila Malovany-Chevallier Constance Borde *Classic and Contemporary Readings in Sociology* , (1 ed.) (New York: Vintage Books, 2011), 22–24. Mary Daly (1973), emphasized the structure of traditional Christian theology is androcentric because of the construction of God regarding masculine language and symbols (God as Father), thus reproducing patriarchal domination and subordinating women " if God is male, then the male is God ." Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* , (1 ed.) (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1973), p. 40. Furthermore, Betty Friedan (1921–2006), highlighted the normalization of dissatisfaction and confinement of 20th-century women in domestic routines that limit their existence. Betty Friedan, *The Femenine Mystique* , ed. Anna Quindlen, (1 ed.) (New York: Norton paperback, 2001), 43. Ayaan Hirsi Ali, through her personal experience in a traditional Muslim family, criticized Islamic practices and norms, which subordinate women Ayan Hirsi Ali, *Infidel: My Life* , ed. Atria Books, (1 ed.) (New York: Free Press, 2008), p. 280. and restrict women's freedom. Ayan Hirsi Ali, *Heretic: Why Islam Needs a Reformation* , (1 ed.) (New York: Harper (HarperCollins), 2015). Irshad Manji supports this by arguing that patriarchy is caused by a literal interpretation of Islamic religion, fixed morals, and biased family norms, thus legitimizing male domination and restraining women. Irshad Manji, *The Trouble with Islam Today: A Muslim's Call for Reform in Her Faith* , (1 ed.) (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2005), p. 150.

Western feminist thought in the 18th-20th centuries, especially that influenced by liberalism and secularism, often clashed with Islam, so that it was criticized by Sabah Mahmood (1962-2018) , who emphasized that the accusation of Islam perpetuating patriarchy was merely reductive and Western biased, in fact Muslim women can express their agency through their consciously chosen religious framework. Saba Mahmood, *Politics of piety: the Islamic revival and the feminist subject* , (1 ed.) (United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, 1962). Amina Wadud (1999) Amina Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective* , (1 ed.) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 29. and Asma Barlas (2002) Asma Barlas, *Believing Women*” in *Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an* , (1 ed.) (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002). emphasizes that gender inequality in Muslim society stems from historical patriarchal interpretations, not from the sacred text of the Quran itself. Criticizing Western feminism regarding the rules of the veil, polygamy, and male leadership that are considered to limit women's freedom, Fatima Mernisi emphasized that Islamic law is not a form of oppression of women, but rather a system of protection for their dignity, morals, and social. Fatima Mernissi, Mernissi, Fatima. *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam* , ed. Marge Anderson, (1 ed.) (Canada: Addison-Wesley, 1991), p. 85. Leila Ahmed (1940), emphasized that since its inception, Islam has given women freedom, honor, and full rights in all aspects of their lives, including faith, marriage, education, and social life. Norlela, “Leila Ahmed's Thoughts on Feminism, Gender and Sexuality”, (SULTAN SYARIF KASIM STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY RIAU, 2021), p. 35.

In the treasury of Nusantara Islam, classical scholars such as Nuruddin al-Raniri (1600-1658), Sheikh Yusuf al-Makassari (1626-1699), Arsyad al-Banjari (1710-1812), Abdul Shomad al-Palimbani (1704-1789), and Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf al-Palembani (1860-1874), have discussed the role of women, household morality and gender relations in their works, as evidence that Islam does not use an instrument of restraint, but rather gives respect to women. Looking at several figures and works of classical Nusantara scholars, it seems that Western feminist criticism of religion often does not consider the local Islamic context. Fatima Mernissi, Marge Anderson, Op. Cit. h. 12-13.

Examining the Thoughts of Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi in his manuscript *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Ushrat Al-Nisā'* has its own discourse on women which is

not always identical to subordination. Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Ushrat Al-Nisā'*, (1 ed.) (Palembang: Dreamsea, 1900). This research can be an intellectual effort to refute the accusation of Western feminism that Religion is merely an instrument of patriarchy. This research reveals the construction of the thoughts of classical Nusantara scholars about women and compares this construction with Western feminist criticism of Religion. Thus, it provides a new contribution to the study of Nusantara Islam by using classical texts as a counter-criticism against Western feminist discourse. Showing that Religion is not always an instrument of discrimination, but can be an ethical basis for respect for women.

METHODS

This research is a library research study, collecting relevant literature or books. It is also qualitative and philosophically descriptive, describing an object, situation, or specific behavior, and then analyzing it philosophically.

The material object of this research is religious thought contained in a classical manuscript entitled *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Ushrat Al-Nisā'*, written by Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi. Specifically, this study focuses on the role, position and rights of women as reflected in the manuscript. The formal object of this research is feminism which is used to see the conditions, problems, speculations or western paradigms regarding women.

This study uses content analysis techniques, to analyze or describe the text of the *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Ushrat Al-Nisā'* manuscript by reading the manuscript text in depth, and then identifying and grouping the contents of the manuscript, which discuss the role, rights, and position of women, which will be used as the main analysis data in this study. Hermeneutics is also used as an *interpretative tool* or interpretation of the text, from the *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Ushrat Al-Nisā'* manuscript written by Muhmmad Azhari Bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembani, after going through the process of transcription and transliteration of the manuscript, which serves to interpret the hidden meaning in the manuscript text. This study also uses library study techniques, to explore or search for and collect supporting literature from previous research related to the focus and sub-focus of this study.

The data conclusion technique obtained and analyzed in this study uses the deductive conclusion technique, namely thinking that starts from general presentation and then specific presentation.

Saba Mahmood's Theory of Feminism

Feminism is a social, political, and ideological movement aimed at advocating for women's rights and status in various aspects of life. Christian Budiman and Christian Budiman, “Feminist Research in Cultural Studies: Intersections and Contributions”, *Jurnal Kawistara* , Vol. 11 No. 1 (2021), p. 102. Saba Mahmood is one of the leading voices in Islamic feminism. She is a renowned academic and author. Born in Pakistan, she earned a Ph.D. from Stanford University. She is best known for her work, "*Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*." Fadilla Dwianti Putri and Elizabeth Kristi Poerwandari, “The Construction of Piety, Position and Agency of Women in Religious Discourse”, *Musāwa Journal of Gender and Islamic Studies* , Vol. 22 No. 2 (2024), pp. 193–209.

In this book, Sabah Mahmood begins her investigation by examining the subject of freedom. She challenges the notion of freedom and the desire for it, embedded in the Western secular-liberal philosophical tradition, as something universalized. According to Mahmood, the Western secular-liberal feminist tradition is simply a bias based on the assumption that freedom is innate and universal to the human condition, and tied to a conception of autonomy that places the individual as the ultimate authority in determining one's destiny. Michele C. Deramo, “Reflecting on the Politics of Piety”, *The Aspect Journal* , Vol. 3 No. 1 (2017), p. 150–200,.

Sabah Mahmood explains that Western feminism often views and generalizes Muslim women as unthinking subjects who simply obey religious norms. Judith Butler, “Thinking with Saba Mahmood”, *CRITICAL TIMES* , Vol. 2 No. 1 (2019), p. 5–9. The contemporary Western concept of agency is generally understood as the capacity to resist patriarchal structures of domination and social operating systems. However, Saba Mahmood views the concept of agency not merely as a form of existence, but can also be realized through the practice of piety, submission, and the internalization of religious values as a form of autonomous and conscious choice. She emphasizes that agency is not universal but must be understood within the social, historical, and religious context in which the female subject exists. (Saba Mahmood, 1962)

In the *Pratik of Subjectivity*, Saba Mahmood emphasizes that the position of women in Islam is very noble and cannot be understood only through the lens of Western feminism, with its principles of individual autonomy and religious resistance. (Saba Mahmood, 1962) For her, women's rights and status are not merely related to formal equality, but also to the spiritual, moral, and social dimensions that shape women's subjectivity. Women's obedience to Islamic law or teachings is not a sign of oppression, but rather a form of women's active participation in realizing ethical values that provide dignity and meaning in life. Lama Abu-Odeh, "Religious Difference in a Secular Age: The Minority Report by Saba Mahmood (2016) Book Review", SSRN Electronic Journal, Vol. 2 No. 1 (2017), p. 1–12.

Saba Mahmood in *Politics of Piety* (2005), rejects the assumption of Western feminism that traditional Muslim women are only passive and oppressed, instead showing that through piety and religious obedience, women can build moral agency, honor, and spiritual strength as a form of conscious choice, thus expanding the understanding of Western feminism that agency is not always present in the form of resistance but also in the framework of obedience. Saba Mahmood, Op.Cit. p. 100.

Understanding gender relations within the socio-religious framework of Muslim societies must be understood within the framework of their own religious values and norms. In contemporary feminist studies, understanding gender relations cannot be separated from the socio-religious context. According to Saba Mahmood, within the socio-religious framework, it is women who choose piety and religious obedience, not merely submitting to patriarchal structures, but rather practicing moral and spiritual agency that gives meaning to their identity, social legitimacy, and position within the community. This contextual approach emphasizes that women's agency must be read through the horizon of local normative values. Thus, it must consider the plurality of women's experiences, understanding religious practices as normative strategies and subjective expressions, not merely forms of female subordination.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Discourse on Women in *the Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Usbrat Al-Nisā Manuscripts*

Kemas Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembang was a great Islamic scholar from the village of Suak Bato, 26 Ilir, Palembang. Choiriyah Choiriyah, "The Poems of Azhari al-

Palimbani in His Book *Badi' al-Zaman Fi Bayan A'qaid al-Iman: Analysis of the Goals of Da'wah*”, Wardah , Vol. 23 No. 2 (2022), pp. 245–64. He was born to his mother, Nyimas Ningdep, on Friday night, 9 Rabiul Awal 1273 H or 1856 AD, in Palembang. Septi Cahyani et al., “Philological Study of the Syara Shalawat Kubra Manuscript by Kgs. Muhammad Azhari Bin Makruf”, *Journal of Islamic History and Civilization* , Vol. 2 No. 2 (2022), pp. 216–30.

Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembani received his basic education from his father, a Sufi, and from Palembang scholars at that time, such as Kiagus H. Abdul Malik bin Kiagus HM Akib, Sayid Hasyir Jamalullail, Datuk Muhammad Rasyid and others. Then, together with his friends, Sheikh Muhammad Azhari Imam and Ki. Pedatuan, he continued his education in the holy city of Mecca for approximately 10 years. Zufardien Muhammad, “Facing Death: The Perspective of Muhammad Azhari bin Ma'ruf in Manuscripts”, Vol. 14 No. 2 (1907), pp. 371–400.

While continuing his education in the Holy City of Mecca, Sheikh Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi studied many religious disciplines with great scholars such as Sayid Abubakar bin Muhammad al Dimyathi al-Syatho' (d. 1892), Sayid Ahmad bin Zaini Dahlan (d. 1886), Sheikh Imam Nawawi Banten (d. 1897), Sayid Abdurrahman al-Masyhur al-Hadhrami (d. 1902), Sheikh Kiagus H. Abdullah bin Ma'ruf, Sheikh Zainuddin al Sumbawi (d. 1894) and others. Nurul Ihsan, “Syaikh Kemas Muhammad Azhari (1856-1932): Works and Thoughts of a Palembang Scholar”, *Regional Statistics of Kartasura District* , Vol. 2 No. 1 (2015), pp. 17–18.

In the field of science, Sheikh Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi was interested in the fields of monotheism and Sufism, so that at the age of 27 he was appointed by his teacher as a murshid. To deepen his discipline, he continued his education by studying at Al-Azhar, Egypt. Because of Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi's enthusiasm in pursuing knowledge, he was known by the community as a Sufi scholar, a waliyullah, and a great poet or writer. Mukhammad Lutfi, “*Hadīyat al-Nisā' fī Targhīb 'Ushrāt al-Nisā'* by Muhammad Azhari ibn al-Khatib Ma'aruf (1856-1932 AD): Book of Guidelines for Family by Palembang Ulama”, (Jakarta, 2023).

The poetry or writings of Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi have a very large influence in the development of the implementation of Islamic values in Indonesia. In several literatures, Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi has 18 works divided into several scientific fields, one of the famous manuscripts or works of Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf

Al Palembangi is *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Usbrat Al-Nisā'*. This manuscript he translated from the work of a great Shiite scholar from Persia (Iran) in the 19th century in 1852 AD, namely M. Al Sayyid Muhammad Al Shirazi. Kemas Andi Syarifuddin and Muhammad Noupal, Intellectual Treasure of Palembang Ulama, ed. Nyimas Amrina Rosyada, (1 ed.) (Palembang: UIN Raden Fatah Press Member of IKAPI, 2022), hv

The *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Usbrat Al-Nisā'* manuscript is a poem that explains the guidance, rights, position, and responsibilities of men and women in the household and in society at large, based on the Islamic values of the Quran and Hadith. Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, Op.Cit. p. 1.

Islam highly values the dignity of women, or wives, in wider society. Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi explains in his book that Islam creates regulations and policies regarding women as a form of concern for maintaining their dignity and honor. Ibid., p. 10.

Islam emphasizes that when socializing widely, women must dress appropriately and modestly, without revealing the beauty of their body shape, and not wearing cloth or clothing that is so thin that the color of their body is visible, but women must cover all their private parts to maintain their position and honor. Ibid., p. 19. Islam also emphasizes on women not to go alone to a quiet place, especially at night, they must have a companion to protect their honor and safety. Ibid., p. 11.

Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi explained that Islam regulates women to maintain their tone of voice so that it is not melodious, melodious or seductive, and not to speak in a loud or harsh tone, this shows Islam's concern in maintaining the noble position and honor of women in the wider social sphere. Ibid., p. 20.

Women are special individuals who hold a much higher status than men. They were created with unique qualities and inherent flaws, and therefore, they must be honored and treated with compassion and kindness in their words and actions. Ibid., p. 2.

Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi describes the noble status of women through their rights within the household. A woman has the right to physical and spiritual sustenance. When a woman commits a mistake, she has the right to be treated with wisdom, compassion, attention, and words, which must be fulfilled by a man if he wishes to correct her shortcomings or improve her strengths. Ibid., p. 4.

The noble position of women, so that Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi negated that men are not allowed to take away women's rights and change their shortcomings by force by being rough or playing physical violence like a slave to women, because in the Quran this falls into the category of forbidden acts. Ibid. , p. 5.

Islam places a very high value on women, which is reflected in their rights within the household. Women in the household have the right to food. Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi stated that the food needs of wives or women in the household must be met adequately and sufficiently, willingly and sincerely, without burdening them on a daily basis. The food provided must be appropriate to the local conditions and customs, such as meat, fish, dates, or other common foodstuffs in their area. Ibid. , p. 6.

Women also have the right to clothing, which must be provided by the men in the household. The clothing provided must be appropriate for the woman or wife without degrading her dignity. The clothing must be comparable to that worn by the husband or other male member of the household, and must conform to the customary etiquette and standards of the region in which they live, such as a gamis (dress) or a hijab (headscarf). It is recommended to provide more clothing if the husband or other male member of the household can afford it. (Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, 1900, p. h. 6)

A wife or woman in a household has the right to be provided with a suitable seat, which can be a mat, blanket, or anything else according to her ability and local customs. Women also have the right to be provided with household equipment, including cooking and eating utensils such as pots, plates, jugs, ladles, or glasses. They must also be provided with personal care and purification equipment. The husband or man in the household is obliged to provide a comb, brush, badar leaves, lamau, or other materials that help maintain the cleanliness of the wife or woman in the household.

It is also obligatory for the husband or man in the household to fulfill the health needs of his wife or woman by providing medicine and paying for all medical expenses, such as doctor's or shaman's fees and cupping treatment. Women in the household also have the right to have all their desires or desires fulfilled, within the means of the man in the household, such as a decent and comfortable home or residence. Ibid. , p. 7.

In managing all household chores, wives or women in the household have the right to be assigned a Khadam (servant) to help with household needs. The noble position of women in the

household is also reflected in their obligations and responsibilities, namely, to provide themselves solely for their husbands. If a woman or wife sincerely obeys, she will receive the utmost reward and be placed in the best paradise by Allah SWT. Ibid. , p. 8.

Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi emphasized that the Prophet Muhammad SAW said that when a man or husband wants to divorce or divorce his wife, he should not be rash or hasty without considering the long-term benefits (goodness), and use gentle kindness and do not use harsh behavior, and Islam teaches that men or husbands should not tell or spread personal shame, mistakes, secrets, body shape, sexual incidents, feelings and women or wives after divorce to other people because that is an act that is displeasing to Allah. Ibid. , p. 13.

Islam has strict rules or sharia to protect women's honor and glory. Every act that violates the Sharia must be held accountable. The Prophet Muhammad SAW said that he saw that the inhabitants of hell were mostly filled with women who did a lot of deeds. Ibid. , p. 18.

Prophet Muhammad SAW said I saw women who were tortured for some of the deeds they had done, I saw women who were hanging by their hair because they did not wear hijab, I saw women who were hanging by their tongues and fire was poured into their necks because they hurt their husbands with their words, I saw women whose feet were tied hanging by their breasts and both hands and Allah SWT sent some snakes to them because they did not clean themselves or purify themselves properly when they were impure and they played around with prayer. Ibid. , p. 17.

Islam also explains that women who fulfill and carry out their husband's calling in a way that is appropriate and does not conflict with Islamic law, Ibid. , p. 24. carry out their duties or responsibilities in the household with sincerity and pleasure, Ibid. , p. 25. then Allah will give them rewards such as Hajj and Umrah, Ibid. , p. 27. placing them in a very noble position for all creatures in the universe, even birds and fish, angels pray for broad forgiveness from Allah SWT. Ibid. , p. 21.

Women in the thoughts of Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi in his manuscript *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Ushrat Al-Nisā'* , explains that women or wives in the household have a very noble position, this position exceeds the value of equality. This noble position is reflected in the rights, attitudes, rewards, attention, and provisions that Islam regulates for women or wives in the household and wider society.

The Implications of the Theory of Women in the Manuscript of *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī*

***Targhīb 'Usbrat Al-Nisā'* by Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembani**

Women are special subjects who have a very noble social and moral position or standing. Women were created with privileges and also with their imperfections, Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, Loc.Cit.so that their treatment should pay attention to the principles of respect, ethical interaction, and normative attention, which emphasize moral relations and social values. (Saba Mahmood, 1962)The nobility of women or wives in Islam is depicted in their freedom, rights, and social interactions, as explained in *the Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Usbrat Al-Nisā' manuscript* that, women have the freedom to develop themselves and interact in the social sphere of society. On the other hand, women's rights in the household are very beginning, women have rights that must be fulfilled in every aspect, such as moral sustenance, food, clothing, purification tools, houses, domestic helpers, household equipment, including sustenance in fulfilling all their desires, with an emphasis on the values of justice and equality.Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, Loc.Cit.

In normative attention reflected in actions or behavior, Islam also emphasizes to men, to treat women with kindness and full attention, such as speaking politely and gently, not hurting them, not hitting them, punishing them with the principle of kindness, attention and protecting them in every aspect. In this social freedom, Islam gives full attention to women with several rules or sharia to maintain the dignity of women, such as dressing properly and modestly, by not showing the beauty of their body shape, not wearing cloth or clothing so thin that their body color is visible, not lirting when talking to the opposite sex, using perfume in moderation, not walking meanderingly and so on. (Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, 1900)Of course, this sharia is a form of treatment of the principle of Islamic respect for women, and as a form of conscious agency, where women can build identity, social legitimacy, and moral strength through religious practices and piety in internalizing their moral and religious norms, not only measured solely by the standards of individual autonomy ala Western feminism.(Saba Mahmood, 1962)

The Western feminist paradigm is built on the foundation of absolute equality and individual freedom. Alexander J Arike, “Liberal Feminism and Intersectional Self-Ownership”, *Journal of Philosophy* , Vol. 2 No. 1 (2020), p. 48-49.In this Western paradigm, women or wives in the household are seen as agents who must break free from the bonds of tradition, family, and religion,

which are considered sources of discrimination against women or wives in the household, so that women or wives in the household can achieve full independence. Catriona Mackenzie and Natalie Stoljar, *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self*, (1 ed.) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 26. The principle of individual autonomy implemented by Western feminism does not fully open up space for freedom for women; instead, it presents new problems: the loss of the social dimension, spiritual values, and relational aspects of women's identity. Nensilanti Nensilanti et al., "Freedom of Female Characters in the Novel *Pada Sebuah Kapal* by NH Dini: A Feminist Study", *SeBaSa*, Vol. 7 No. 2 (2024), p. 366.

The concept of individual autonomy applied in the West does not completely liberate women. Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi emphasized that in Islam women are naturally created with extraordinary privileges and have their own imperfections. Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, *Op.Cit.* p. 3. These natural privileges and shortcomings of women are what place women in the Islamic religion in a noble position. *Ibid.*, p. 4. Zaynab Ghazali (1917), one of the feminist figures from Egypt, assured that women's freedom cannot be separated from responsibility, a woman's priority task is to be a mother and wife. Only when these responsibilities can be fulfilled can women take a role in public activities. Nur Fadiyah Anisah et al., "AFTER AMIN: Hijab in Egyptian Feminist Exegesis", *Journal of Qur'anic Studies and Tafsir*, Vol. 2 No. 2 (2023), p. 222. Saba Mahmood strengthens her view that women's loyalty to religious norms can be understood as a basic choice that shapes their religious identity. (Saba Mahmood, 1962)

Western feminism views freedom and gender relations as the foundation of the conflict framework between men and women. Patriarchy is a system of political power of men over women. Radical feminist figures such as Shulamith Firestone believe that traditional family relations and religion are the basis for women's oppression, which must be replaced through social revolution, such as freedom and equality of power between the sexes. (Shulamith Firestone, 1970) Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, in his text, emphasized that the relationship between men and women must be in accordance with Islamic gender ethics, which emphasizes the values of harmony and justice in husband-wife relations.

Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi emphasized that the bond of household is not just a social contract, but a mandate that must be carried out with full moral responsibility and mutual respect, this shows that gender relations in Islam are not identical to

subordination, but are based on the principle of complementarity and upholding justice, there are rights of the wife over the husband and there are rights of the husband over the wife. Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, *Op.Cit.* p. 7.

The second wave of feminism, which is influenced by liberal-secular ideology, focuses on the issue of liberating women's rights and position directly from reproduction, child care, sexual violence, women's sexuality and domesticity issues. This ideology believes that the patriarchal power of religious dogma operates in institutions such as marriage, child rearing and sexual life. In this patriarchal dogma, women are forced to be apolitical, yielding and meek. This second wave focuses on religious dogma making women an oppressed group, especially in terms of their body authority. Ni Komang Arie Suwastini, "The Development of Western Feminism from the Eighteenth Century to Postfeminism: A Theoretical Review", *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, Vol. 2 No. 1 (2013), p. 205.

Feminist thinker Simone de Beauvoir said that women must seize the opportunity to achieve equality with men. Margaret Walters, Yus. R, *Loc. Cit.* In America, de Beauvoir's opinion was developed by Betty Friedan, Kate Millett, and Shulamith Firestone. Friedan argued that to be equal to men, women must leave the trap of the household by religious dogma that binds women in a construct that subordinates them. (Suwastini, 2013, p. h. 206)

The position of women in religion has long been a point of contention between Islamic tradition and Ba'at feminism. Muhammad Azhari, the daughter of Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, through her texts places women in a noble position as wives, mothers, and members of society, protecting and fulfilling their rights under Islamic law. Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, *Op.Cit.* p. 2.

Islam created sharia or laws for women within the family not to restrict their freedom, but rather as a form of empathy and an effort to recognize and protect women's privileges within the household and society, along with their responsibilities. M. Amin Abdullah, *Islam, Religions and Human Values*, ed. Ahmad Muttaqin Moch Nur Ichwan, (1 ed.) (Yogyakarta: CISForm, 2013), p. 112. A fundamental debate arises as to whether religious rules are a form of protection or a shackle of freedom.

Saba Mahmood, in *Politics of Piety*, in line with the thoughts of Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, emphasizes the rejection of liberal feminist standards that measure

women's freedom solely by rejecting the ability of social norms. Mahmood shows that Egyptian women's willingness to submit to religious rules is not a constraint or lack of agency, but rather a form of expression of religious authority. Anisa Isdiyanti, "Gender Protest Politics in Yemeni Public Space During the Mansour Hadi Government", *ULIL ALBAB: Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal* , Vol. 2 No. 1 (2022), p. 180. Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembani also sees it as an effort to uphold the values of piety and social ethics.

However, Western feminism questions, how can a hierarchical or patriarchal structure be called a form of justice principle? Analyzing the thoughts of Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembani in the perspective of the Quran, it can be said that male leadership has a very big duty, mandate and responsibility to women, the principle or concept is not a tool to oppress women but as a form of Islam that honors women Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, Loc.Cit.. Mahmood also reads this situation in her piety movement as an arena where women can negotiate their rights, demand their livelihood, and gain respect from men, so that agency remains present in the relation. The concept of Islamic feminism according to her departs from the concept of performativity proposed by Judith Butler in her book *Geder Trouble: Feminism and Subversion of identity* (1990).

This concept of performativity rejects the universal conception of female agency as embodiment in favor of a conceptual agency shaped and institutionalized in both speech and action by Western feminism. Saba Mahmood rejects the secular-liberal feminist concept of agency because it equates agency with resistance and denies the possibility of alternative forms of agency. Mahmood argues that while Pratik, with female agency articulated as an understanding of the subject, does not adequately explain the position of local Muslim women. Cut Novita Srikandi, "Representation of Cut Nyak Dien as an Alternative Feminist Agency in the Film *Tjoet Nja'Dhien*", *Litera* , Vol. 20 No. 3 (2021), p. 392.

Western feminism demands absolute equality for women in all areas. This differs from the perspective of Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembani, who emphasizes proportional justice in accordance with the nature and responsibilities of each gender. Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, Loc.Cit. This approach to Western feminist principles ignores the spiritual dimension and physical norms of women.

The Islamic definition of women's responsibilities is often perceived by Western feminists as a form of subordination. Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembani, on the other hand, views this as a noble role, a foundation for the wider community. Saba Mahmood also views this as a noble role, not a domestic system, but rather a space where women can build their own moral and spiritual authority.

Lizabeth Cady Stanton's liberal-secular Western feminism accusing scholars of religious scriptures and dogma as agents or compromisers of patriarchal concepts. Liberal Western feminism holds the view that women can have full and individual freedom, rooted in rationality and the separation between the private and public realms, within the framework of free competition and have equal status with men. lizabeth Cady Stanton, *The Woman's Bible* , (1 ed.) (New York: European Publishing Company, 1895). Secular feminism holds the view that the oppression that occurs against women is caused by a patriarchal religious system that shackles women's rights and freedoms to male domination. Siti Dana Retnani, “Feminism in the Development of Schools of Thought and Law in Indonesia”, *Journal of Legal Studies: ALETHEA* , Vol. 1 No. 1 (2017), pp. 100-1. However, Mahmood emphasizes that viewing women's agency cannot be based solely on liberal standards of freedom, but can see the meaning of life, women's rights and status through obedience, rights, worship, and social responsibilities. All perspectives of Islamic agency are depicted in Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembani's text through women's rights and status.

In the socio-religious context of the Indonesian archipelago, the texts of classical scholars discussing women have a dual function, namely as moral-religious guidelines and instruments of social and domestic arrangement. Scholars such as Nuruddin al-Raniri (*Sirat al-Mustaqim*, *Bustan al-Salatin*), Muhammad Afdillah, “The Book of *Tibyan fi Ma'rifat al-Adyan* and *Bustan al-Salatin* by Nuruddin ar-Raniri and its Contribution to Comparative Religious Studies in Indonesia”, (SUNAN AMPEL STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY SURABAYA, 2015). Sheikh Yusuf al-makassari (*Safinat an-Najah*), Samsinas, “Sheikh Yusuf al-Makassari: A Study of the History of Da'wah and Intellectuals in Indonesia”, *Al-Mishbah Journal* , Vol. 8 No. 2 (2012), pp. 157–74. Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari (*Sabilal Muhtadin*), Sri Ulfa Rahayu, “The Book of *Sabilal Muhtadin* by Sheikh Muhammad Arsyad Albanjari”, *SHAHIH (Journal of Islamic Revelation)* , Vol. 5 No. 2 (2022), p. 62., Abdul Shomad al-Palimbani (*Nasihat al-Muslimin wa Tazkirat al-Mu'minin*), and Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf al-Palembani (*Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Ushrat Al-Nisā'*), Azyumardi

Azra, *Network of Ulama of the Middle East and the Indonesian Archipelago in the 17th & 18th Centuries.* , (1 ed.) (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2004).wrote special treatises on women to codify household ethics, the role of wives, and gender relations.MC Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1200* , (1 ed.) (Stanford: Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

This classic manuscript not only functions as a religious-normative instrument, but also as a social legitimacy in maintaining family harmony and the structure of the Palembang women's community in the 18th/19th century, Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* , (1 ed.) (CHICAGO: THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1960).as well as being a transmission of values as in the perspective of agency theory which emphasizes that obedience and internalization of religious values can be understood as a form of conscious and productive female agency in building their moral authority identity.(Saba Mahmood, 1962)

The position of women in Palembang society during that century is understood through the lens of relational and moral roles, where women are not only responsible for the household, but also have a function as social mediators who maintain family and community harmony. This classic manuscript shows that women's piety, ethics, and obedience are integral parts of the formation of the social and moral structure of the Islamic society of the archipelago, and shows that the position of women is not always interpreted as subordination, but as an active subject in upholding moral and religious norms, which must be read through the horizon of local and historical values.(Saba Mahmood, 1962)

A study of classical Indonesian ulama manuscripts, particularly those addressing household ethics, women's roles, and gender relations, demonstrates the continuity of normative and moral values that remain relevant in addressing contemporary gender relations issues. Although written between the 17th and 19th centuries, the principles they embody emphasize social responsibility, family harmony, and relational ethics, which can serve as a contextual foundation for women.

The relevance of classical texts to modern issues lies in their ability to demonstrate that Islam does not necessarily restrict women, but rather provides a normative framework for the formation of ethics, morals, and social identity. Therefore, from the perspective of contemporary Muslim feminism, the problem of gender inequality can be understood as being caused more by patriarchal interpretations of the texts, rather than the teachings of Islam itself, as reflected in the thoughts of Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf al Palembangi in his texts.

The thoughts of Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi bring a new solution and alternative theory of individual freedom to western feminism, so that women do not have to separate themselves from family responsibilities and relationships to be able to have freedom.

CONCLUSION

The paradigm built by Western feminism has misjudged religious teachings that are considered to be the cause of women's oppression. Women in the thoughts of Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi in his manuscript *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Ushrat Al-Nisā'* which is based on the Quran and hadith, explains that women or wives in the household and social society have very noble rights and positions. This position exceeds the values of equality or freedom of individual autonomy in the West. This noble position is reflected in the rights, attitudes, rewards, attention, and provisions that Islam regulates for women or wives in the household and social society at large to maintain this privilege and dignity.

Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi, on the one hand, still reflects a patriarchal pattern that places men as leaders, but on the other hand, in his text there is a strong emphasis on the value of justice, the prohibition of discriminating against women, and placing women in a noble position which is reflected in women's rights that must be fulfilled.

The thoughts of Muhammad Azhari bin Khatib Ma'aruf Al Palembangi about women in his manuscript *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Ushrat Al-Nisā'* also serve as strong evidence and rebuttal to the accusations and principles of western feminism against Religion. In fact, Islam created sharia or regulations for women not to limit women's freedom, but rather a form of empathy and an effort by Islam to pay attention to and maintain the privileges and dignity of women in the social sphere with their responsibilities.

This thinking is in line with Saba Mahmood's theory, which emphasizes that women's agency does not always have to be understood in terms of resistance to patriarchy, as constructed by secular-liberal Western feminism. Through her work *Politics of Piety*, Mahmood shows that women in the Islamic piety movement in Egypt actually express agency through their religious practices and obedience, spiritual experiences, and consciously chosen moral internalization. Thus, through the text *Hadīyat Al-Nisā' Fī Targhīb 'Ushrat Al-Nisā'*, it can be depicted that piety is not a form of passivity or subordination, but a process of self-cultivation that gives existential meaning, social

legitimacy, and moral autonomy to women. This thinking opens up space for Western feminist discourse, to understand the plurality of Muslim women's experiences and reject the single standard of Western feminism in assessing freedom and gender equality. Women's agency can be present through religious obedience, not solely through resistance.

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