



THE INTERPRETATION OF DOUBLE BURDEN OF WOMEN: A Comparison between al-Misbah and al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjân fi Tafsîr al-Qur'ân

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ABSTRACT

One of the factors that causes women to experience gender inequality so that they are not equal to men is the gender-biased interpretation of religious texts. Applying interpretive approach and comparative method as well as the theory of liberal feminism and double movement, this article discusses three issues, namely: (a) double burden for women in the Qur'an; (b) the interpretation of M. Quraish Shihab in *al-Misbah* and Karimân Hamza in *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjân fi Tafsîr al-Qur'ân* regarding verses of the Qur'an containing double burden for women; and (c) the assumption that the gender of the interpreter could result in a gender-biased interpretation. This research shows that Islam comes on a mission to bring about equality between mankind. Shihab's interpretation is more accommodating to women's interests than that of Hamza's, while Hamza's interpretation is more patriarchal. Preference to certain sexes is not always related to gender equality in the interpretation of the Qur'an, so the assumption that one of the factors causing women to experience gender inequality is the gender-biased interpretation of religious texts simply because the majority of interpreters are male can not be justified.

ABSTRAK

Salah satu faktor penyebab kaum perempuan mengalami ketimpangan gender, sehingga mereka belum setara adalah interpretasi teks-teks agama yang bias gender. Dengan pendekatan tafsir, metode komparatif dan teori feminisme liberal serta double movement, artikel ini mendiskusikan tiga persoalan, yaitu: (a) *double burden* perempuan dalam Al-Qur'an; (b) penafsiran M. Quraish Shihab dalam *al-Misbah* dan Karimân Hamzah dalam *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjân* tentang ayat *double burden* bagi perempuan; dan (c) asumsi bahwa jenis kelamin mufasir menimbulkan penafsiran bias gender. Penelitian ini menunjukkan Islam membawa misi kesetaraan manusia. Penafsiran Shihab lebih akomodatif terhadap kepentingan perempuan, sedangkan penafsiran Hamzah lebih bias patriarkal. Keberpihakan pada jenis kelamin tertentu tidak selalu berhubungan dengan kesamaan jenis kelamin dalam penafsiran Al-Qur'an, sehingga asumsi salah satu faktor penyebab kaum perempuan mengalami bias gender adalah interpretasi teks agama yang bias gender karena mayoritas mufasir adalah laki-laki tidak dapat dibenarkan.

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Introduction

The issues of women are lively discussed and always draw attention around the world. The assumption underlying the discussion is a patriarchal system because there is a difference between men who are considered first class creatures with all the advantages they have, and women who are considered second class beings with all the limitations attached to them.¹ This assumption is not unreasonable and based on mere perception, but is reflected in all areas of human life that are sociologically, politically, economically, culturally and institutionally recognized. This can be seen from various references in both verses of the Qur'an and hadith used to strengthen and justify such an opinion.²

Admittedly or not, dehumanization of women has been happening throughout the history, and even today, both in the Western and Islamic world, and this is indeed miserable.³ Before the Qur'an was revealed, there were many great civilizations such as Greece, Rome, India, and China. The world also recognises various religions such as Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, and Zoroaster. The fate of women was miserable amongst the Greeks and Romans: they were held captive, did not inherit, and became the gratification of men's passions. In Jewish teachings, a woman's dignity is the same as that of servants and wives who can be bought and sold, and can even be transferred to others and handed over only with a will. A father has the right to sell his daughter if she does not have brothers. According to them, women are cursed because they have caused Adam to be expelled from heaven. Christian leaders consider women to be demons, do not have a holy spirit, and were created to serve men.⁴

Before Islam came, women had been oppressed; if a baby girl was born, then she must be killed because she would only bring disaster to their family,⁵ as narrated in surah al-Nahl [16]: 58-59. This verse was revealed to eradicate all kinds of views that differentiate between men and women. Islam as a teaching which has been brought by the Prophet Muhammad places women in an equal position with men. At the time of the Prophet, there were women who participated in handling issues that were commonly done by men, such as wars.⁶ Women also

¹ A. Rafiq Zainul Mun'im, "Epistemologi Feminis Asghar Ali Engineer," *al-Adalah*, vol. 14, no.1 (June, 2011): 24.

² *Ibid.*, 24.

³ Kurdi, et. al., *Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: elSAQ Press, 2010), p. 175.

⁴ Rodiah, et. al., *Studi Al-Quran: Metode dan Konsep* (Yogyakarta: elSAQ Press, 2010), p. 127.

⁵ M. Thahir Maloko, "Partisipasi Politik Perempuan dalam Tinjauan Al-Qur'an dan Hadis," *Al-Fikr: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, vol. 17, no.1 (2013): 204.

⁶ Women who took part in the war at the time of the Prophet are Nusaiba bint Ka'ab, the Prophet's shield, and Khaula bint Azur, the Prophet's sword.



have educational, political, civil, and self-actualization rights which are the substance of human rights.⁷

Islam does not oblige women to stay at home and only engage in domestic work. However, there are often negative views about women engaging in public spaces. They strongly oppose the existence of women who work outside the home and consider it violating social and religious ethics.⁸ Meanwhile, although some ulama can accept women's involvement in the realm of practical politics, they still insist on not allowing women to become heads of state. Their strongest pretext is the following words of the Prophet Muhammad:

أَحْبَرَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا خَالِدُ بْنُ الْحَارِثِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا حُمَيْدٌ عَنْ الْحَسَنِ عَنْ أَبِي بَكْرَةَ قَالَ عَصَمَنِي اللَّهُ بِشَيْءٍ سَمِعْتُهُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَمَّا هَلَكَ كِسْرَى قَالَ مَنْ اسْتَحْلَفُوا قَالُوا بِنْتُهُ قَالَ لَنْ يُفْلِحَ قَوْمٌ وَلَوْ أَمَرَهُمْ امْرَأَةٌ

Muhammad ibn al-Mutsannâ has reported to us saying, "Khâlid ibn al-Hârîts has told us saying, 'Hûmaid has told us from al-Hûsan from Abû Bakrah who said, 'Allah has taken care of me with something I heard from the Prophet when Kisra was destroyed, he asked, "Who did they make as a king?" The companions replied, "His daughter." He then said, "It will not be lucky for a people to submit their case to a woman."⁹

This hadith is often used to blaspheme women's leadership. According to Heba Rauf Ezzat, this hadith was intended for the Persians who were then led by a woman and conflict occurred during her reign.¹⁰ This hadith is often understood textually without looking at the *asbâb al-wurûd* (the reason of decreeing), resulting in an inaccurate understanding and giving rise to the assumption that if women hold power, the state will not prosper. Because it is casuistic in nature, this hadith cannot be generalized. According to M. Anis Qasim, this hadith is included in the category of *âhâd* hadiths that do not reach the level of *mutawâtir* hadith.¹¹

Nowadays, women not only stay at home and carry out domestic activities, but also carry out activities in public sphere by working to earn income to meet their needs in education, preaching, politics and the household sectors. One of the factors of women entering the public sphere to work is the increasing education level of women.¹² The absence of a prohibition on

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ A. Cholid Mi'raj, *Muslimah Berkarir: Telaah Fikih dan Realitas* (Yogyakarta: Kuds Media, 2004), p. 37.

⁹ Ahmad ibn Syu'aib ibn 'Alî ibn Sinân ibn Bahr ibn Dinâr, *Sunan al-Nasâ'i*, vol. VII-VIII (Lebanon: Dâr al-Fikr, 2009), p. 241.

¹⁰ Mohamad Guntur Romli, *Islam Tanpa Diskriminasi: Mewujudkan Islam Rahmatan Lil Alamin* (Jakarta: Rehal Pustaka, 2013), p. 112.

¹¹ Zaitunah Subhan, *Rekonstruksi Pemahaman Jender dalam Islam: Agenda Sosio-Kultural dan Politik Peran Perempuan* (Jakarta: el-Kahfi, 2002), p. 180.

¹² Nurul Hidayati, "Beban Ganda Perempuan Bekerja (Antara Domestik dan Publik)," *Muwazah: Jurnal Kajian Gender*, vol. 7, no. 2 (December, 2015): 108.



women from working leads to the phenomenon of double burden of women, namely the condition of women engaging in domestic and public work. In Wahba al-Zuhayli's (1932-2015) expression, apart from having to shake the swing with her right hand, she also has to struggle to earn a living outside the house with her left hand.¹³

The origin of the emergence of the separation of domestic and public territories comes from the division of labor based on sex, which is more popularly known as gender,¹⁴ in the 19th century AD. Women are increasingly aware of the fact that outside the domestic sector there has been rapid development. At the same time, they also recognize that norms in the domestic sector restrict them from performing roles in the public sphere. This restriction becomes the basis for a new desire for women to be involved in the public sphere. They demand the same rights as men, such as obtaining knowledge skills and higher education.¹⁵

There are four factors that cause women to experience gender bias (inequality) so that they are not equal to men. First, the patriarchal culture that has dominated society for so long. Second, politics that have not fully supported women. Third, the global capitalism economic system that has hit the world often exploits women. Fourth, the factor of gender-biased interpretation of religious texts. So far, the interpretation of the Qur'an has been dominated by a patriarchal ideology because most of the exegetes are men, so that they do not accommodate the interests of women.¹⁶ Controversy over whether or not women can take part in public sector should not arise, especially if the trigger is only a difference of opinion in interpreting a verse from the Qur'an, because there are a number of verses that recommend women to take part in various public activities, in economic, social, political or religious sectors.

Basically, the Qur'an does not prohibit women from working, because doing any work that is included in pious deeds is permissible for both men and women. In fact, in the Qur'an, Allah promises a good life for both men and women as it is written in surah al-Nahl [16]: 97.¹⁷ The Qur'an does not explicitly mention the verses that allow women to work, but there are

¹³ Salmah Intan, "Kedudukan Perempuan dalam Domestik dan Publik Perspektif Gender (Suatu Analisis Berdasarkan Normatisme Islam)," *Jurnal Politik Profetik*, vol. 3, no. 1 (2014): 16, <https://doi.org/10.24252/profetik.v2i1a5>.

¹⁴ Gender is the division of human roles become masculine and feminine which contains roles and characteristics that are attached by society to men and women and constructed socially and culturally. Gender actually refers to the relationships in which men and women interact. Romli, *Islam Tanpa Diskriminasi*, p. 65.

¹⁵ Nasaruddin Umar, *Argumen Kesetaraan Gender* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1999), p. 14.

¹⁶ Abdul Mustaqim, *Paradigma Tafsir Feminis* (Yogyakarta: Logung Pustaka, 2008), p. 15.

¹⁷ Isna Rahmah Solihatin, "Konsepsi Al-Quran tentang Perempuan Pekerja dalam Mensejahterakan Keluarga," *Jurnal Harkat: Media Komunikasi Gender*, vol. 13, no. 1 (2017): 40, <https://doi.org/10.15408/harkat.v13i1.7714>.



verses that implicitly shows a double burden for women, as in surah al-Baqarah [2]: 233,¹⁸ al-Qashash [28]: 23, al-Ahzâb [33]: 33, and al-Naml [27]: 23.¹⁹

Applying exegesis approach and comparative methods as well as theories of liberal feminism and double movement, this article discusses three issues, namely: (a) double burden for women in the Qur'an; (b) the interpretation of M. Quraish Shihab in *al-Misbah* and Karîmân Hamza in *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjân fi Tafsîr al-Qur'ân* about the verses on double burden for women; and (c) the assumption that the sex of the interpreter gives rise to the gender bias interpretation. Although Shihab and Hamza are contemporary commentators, they have different points of view when interpreting the Qur'an, especially verses about double burden for women. Moreover, there is no research found on the comparison between the thought of Shihab in *al-Misbah* and Hamza in *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjân*. Existing research on the topic discusses women in the Qur'an which is gender biased such as *Argumen Kesetaraan Gender* by Nasaruddin Umar and *Tafsir Kebencian: Studi Bias Gender dalam Tafsir Qur'an* and *Perempuan: Menuju Kesetaraan Gender* by Zaitunah Subhan.

M. Quraish Shihab and Al-Misbah

M. Quraish Shihab was born on February 16, 1944 in Sidenreng Rappang Regency, South Sulawesi about 190 km from the city of Ujung Pandang.²⁰ He was born and raised in an educated and religious Muslim-Arab family.²¹ He started his education in Ujung Pandang and continued his secondary education in Darul-Hadits al-Faqihyyah, Malang.²² From 1958 to 1982, he continued his education from the second grade of Tsanawiyah until obtain a doctorate in the field of Qur'anic Science at the University of Al-Azhar Cairo in Egypt with the thesis entitled *al-I'jâz al-Tasyrî 'i li al-Qur'ân al-Karîm*²³ and dissertation entitled *Nadzâm al-Durar li al-Biqâ'i: Tahqîq wa Dirâsah*.²⁴

In 1992-1998, he served as a rector of IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. In 1998, he served as minister of religion and ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia in Egypt. From 1989 up to

¹⁸ Faqihuddin Abdul Qadir, *Qir'ah Mubâdalah: Tafsir Progresif untuk Keadilan Gender dalam Islam* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2019), p. 371.

¹⁹ Solihatin, "Konsepsi al-Quran," 42.

²⁰ Syaiful Amin Ghafur, *Profil Para Mufassir Al-Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Insan Madani, 2008), p. 236.

²¹ Atik Wartini, "Corak Penafsiran M. Quraish Shihab dalam Tafsir Al-Misbah," *Hunafa: Jurnal Studia Islamika*, vol. 11, no. 1 (June, 2014): 114, <https://doi.org/10.24239/jsi.v11i1.343.109-126>.

²² Shihab, *Membumikan Al-Qur'an*, p. 6.

²³ Wartini, "Corak Penafsiran," 117.

²⁴ Ibid.



now, he is a member of Dewan Pentashih Qur'an and director of Pusat Studi Al-Qur'an (PSQ) in Jakarta.²⁵ Despite being busy with his position, he keeps writing for various mass media responding to issues related to religious issues.²⁶ Some of his works are as follows: *Tafsir al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, *Tafsir al-Manar: Keistimewaan dan Kelemahannya*, *Mahkota Tuntunan Ilahi*, *Tafsir Surah Al-Fatihah*, *Membumikan Al-Qur'an: Fungsi dan Peranan Wahyu dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat*, *Studi Kritik Tafsir Al-Manar*, *Lentera Hati: Kisah dan Hikmah Kehidupan*, *Tafsir Surat-surat Pendek Berdasarkan Urutan Turunnya Wahyu*, and *Mukjizat Al-Qur'an Ditinjau dari Berbagai Aspek Kebahasaan Isyarat Ilmiah dan Pemberitaan Ghaib*.²⁷

The normative demand to think about and understand the holy book and the facts that there are many obstacles, both language and reference sources, motivates Shihab to present works of tafsir that are able to properly present the messages of the Qur'an. He embodies the motivation by continuing to study various interpretation methods of the Qur'an, applying and evaluating them from various criticisms and responses from readers.²⁸ In addition, he writes *al-Misbah* due to the request of Indonesian Muslims.²⁹ By choosing the name *al-Misbah* which means "lamp, light, and lantern", he hopes to provide enlightenment in finding guidance of life, especially for those who have difficulty in understanding the Qur'an directly due to language barriers.

In interpreting the Qur'an, he follows the order of the 'Uthmâni Mushaf, starting from surah al-Fâtiḥah to surah al-Nâs. The discussion begins by providing an introduction for the verses to be interpreted which includes: (a) the name of the surah (if any) and the reason for the name accompanied by a description of the verses taken to become the name of the surah; (b) the number of verses and places where they are revealed (*makkîyah* or *madanîyah*), as well as the exclusion of certain verses if any; (c) numbering of the surahs based on revelation and writing of the mushaf, which are sometimes accompanied by the name of the surah before or after the surah; (d) the main themes and objectives as well as the opinions of scholars on the

²⁵ Taufikurrahman, "Kajian Tafsir di Indonesia," *Mutawâtir: Jurnal Keilmuan Tafsir Hadith*, vol. 2, no.1 (June, 2012): 22, <https://doi.org/10.15642/mutawatir.2012.2.1.1-26>.

²⁶ Ghafur, *Profil Para Mufassir*, p. 238.

²⁷ Hasani Ahmad Said, *Diskursus Munasabah al-Quran dalam Tafsir Al-Misbah* (Jakarta: Amzah, 2015), p 116.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Dedi Junaedi, "Konsep dan Penerapan Takwil Muhammad Quraish Shihab dalam Tafsir al-Misbah," *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama dan Sosial Budaya*, vol. 2, no. 2 (December, 2017): 226, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jw.v2i2.1645>.



themes discussed; (e) the relationship between the verse and other verses before and after the verses; and (f) the reasons for the revelations (*asbâb al-nuzûl*) of the surah or verses.³⁰

The tafsir of *al-Misbah* applies is *tahlîlî* method with an analysis of the vocabulary which is the keyword. The surahs which are the object of interpretation are taken based on the order in which the revelation was derived.³¹ By applying the *tahlîlî* method, he analyzes each word from the aspects of language and meaning. The analysis of the language aspects includes the beauty of sentence structure, *i'jâz, badi', ma'ânî, bayân, haqîqah, majâz, kinâyah, and isti'ârah*. The analysis on the aspects of meaning include the aims of the verse, law, faith, morals, orders, prohibitions, and wisdom.³² The style of the tafsir of *al-Misbah* is *adâbî-ijtimâ'î*, which is a style of interpretation explaining the verses of the Qur'an based on the accuracy of the expressions arranged in straightforward language and emphasizes the main objectives of the Qur'an, then correlates them with everyday life, such as solving problems of the people and the nation in accordance with the development of society.³³

Karîmân Hamza and al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjân fi Tafsîr al-Qurân

Karîmân Hamza was born in 1948 AD in Egypt.³⁴ Her real name is Fâthima Karîmân Hamza 'Abd al-Lathîf. Her mother is Umm Darmân and her father is 'Abd al-Lathîf Hamza, a journalism professor at the Faculty of Information and chancellor at Cairo University in Egypt. She started her career in the press as a journalist after graduating from the Faculty of Adab at Cairo University in 1969 and continued her master degree in 1970. She founded *al-Tsaqâfah* magazine, which was previously named *al-Saghîrah*.³⁵ She is a frequent host of well-known

³⁰ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Misbah: Pesan dan Kesan Keserasian al-Qur'an*, vol. I (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002), p. v.

³¹ Islah Gusman, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia dari Hermeneutika hingga Ideologi* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2013), p. 109.

³² Kadar M. Yusuf, *Studi Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: n.p, 2009), p. 143.

³³ Lufaei, "Tafsir al-Mishbah: Tekstualitas, Rasionalitas dan Lokalitas Tafsir Nusantara," *Substantia: Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Ushuluddin*, vol. 21, no.1 (April, 2019): 32, <http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/substantia.v21i1.4474>.

³⁴ Retrieved December 29, 2019 from <https://kurio.id/app/articles/17457204> at 19.04 Western Indonesia Time.

³⁵ Muhammed Liyaudheen, K. P., *Women Writers in Modern Islamic Literature in Arabic A Performance Evaluation* (Thesis, Department of Arabic, University of Calicut, Kerala, 2017), p. 220.



scholars such as Muḥammad Mutawallī al-Sya'rāwī (1911-1998), Muḥammad al-Ghazālī (1917-1996), and Yūsuf al-Qardlāwī.³⁶

Around 1990, he was one of the famous women. One of the reasons is that because she was a female journalist who broadcasts on television wearing a headscarf. She is also a pioneer of Islamic studies in the Egyptian government media. In 2008 and 2010, the works of Fauqiya Sherbini and Karīmān Ḥamza were appreciated by Al-Azhar University, because they had contributed to the interpretation of the Qur'an.³⁷ In addition to being a journalist and doing religious television programs, she was also a productive writer. This can be seen in her writings, which include the following: *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjān fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, *Rihlati min al-Sufūr li al-Hijāb*, *Rifqan bi al-Qawārīr*, *Tazawwajtu Mujriman*, *Ādam wa Ḥawwā'*, *'Alī ibn Abū Thālib: al-Fāris al-Faqīh al-Ābid*, *Qābil wa Hābil*, *Abū Dzarr al-Ghifārī*, *Ḥabīb al-Fuqarā'*, *Ahl al-Kahf*, *Li Allāh Yā Zamrī*, *al-Islām wa al-Thifl*, *Khamsūna Hill li Khamsīna Musykilah*, and *Mausū'ah Anāqah wa Ḥasymah*.³⁸

It took her three years with the support of several commentators, such as al-Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alī, 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Najjār, 'Umar Syarīf, and 'Abd al-Raḥmān Abū al-'Azīm to write, complete, and publish *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjān fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*.³⁹ The background to writing this interpretation begins with a question that was asked during a television program, namely about Ḥamza's purpose in interpreting the Qur'an, because at that time there were already many tafsir books.⁴⁰ Because she was pressed, she tried to write by asking Allah for help and the spirit of preaching Islam that pushed her to take this opportunity.⁴¹ She had to go through many processes so that *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjān* could become a complete 30 juz tafsir book. However, thanks to persistence, the spirit of preaching, and always asking for help from Allah, finally this tafsir book was completed.

The structure of *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjān* follows the order of the mushaf (*tartīb mushḥafī*), which is interpreting the Qur'an starting from surah al-Fātiḥah to surah al-Nās. *Al-Lu'lu' wa al-*

³⁶ M. Afifudin Dimiyathi, "Dari Nushrat al-Amin Sampai Bint Syathi': Inilah Mufasir Perempuan dan Karya-karyanya," retrieved December 30, 2019 from <https://afkaruna.id/dari-nushrat-al-amin-sampai-bint-syathi'-inilah-para-mufasir-perempuan-dan-karya-karyanya/>, at 09.30 Western Indonesia Time.

³⁷ Johanna Pink, *Muslim Qur'anic Interpretation Today: Media, Genealogies and Interpretive Communities* (Bristol: Equinox Publishing, 2019), p. 172.

³⁸ Liyaudheen, *Women Writers*, p. 225.

³⁹ Karīmān Ḥamzah, *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjān fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, vol. I (Cairo: Maktabah al-Syurūq al-Dawliyah, 2010), p. 8.

⁴⁰ Liyaudheen, *Women Writers*, p. 226.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 228.



Marjân centers on the breadth of the meaning of the Qur'an by emphasizing an easy, attractive, and clear language style, so that the language is closer to beginners of all ages, both children and youth. By taking into account the title, analysis and purpose of the interpretation, *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjân* is known as *al-Wādliḥ fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān li al-Syabāb wa al-Syabībah*. It is not oriented only towards women, because the Qur'an is addressed to both men and women. Likewise in terms of *taklifi*, it is aimed at men and women, both young and old. It is presented to young men and women with a noble maternal spirit with soft language, so that it touches the minds and hearts of the readers. This book was completed when Hamza was 40 years old, consisting of 30 juz, 1000 pages, and three volumes. This book prioritizes a good and comprehensive opinion as a means to arouse the Islamic community to stick to the Qur'an and hadith.⁴²

Al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjân applies the *tahlīli-ijmālī* method⁴³, that is a global, easy and practical discussion so that the message of the Qur'an is easy to grasp. The source of Hamza's interpretation is *bi al-iqtirān*, that is, in addition to using her own *ijtihād* (reasoning and reflection), she also refers to classical and modern commentaries in interpreting the verses of the Qur'an.⁴⁴ The characteristic of ⁴⁵ *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjân* is *adabī-ijtimā'ī* based on the social conditions of Hamza and society at that time. According to Abdul Mustaqim, the characteristic of tafsir is also called a special nuance⁴⁶ in a tafsir, so that the nuance of *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjân* is a social nuance that focuses on the explanation of the verses of the Qur'an both in terms of the precision of the writing and the content of the verses with the main objective is to describe the purpose of the Qur'an, the accentuation that stands out on the main purpose described in the verse, and the interpretation in relation to the *sunnatullāh* applied in society.⁴⁷

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ *Tahlīli* means explaining the verses of the Qur'an by examining aspects and revealing all the meanings from the description of the meaning of the vocabulary, the meaning of the sentence, the meaning of each expression, the connection between the separators (*munāsabah*), the reasons for the revelations (*asbāb al-nuzūl*), and the narrations from the companions and *tabi'in*. Rosihon Anwar and Asep Muharom, *Ilmu Tafsir* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2015), p. 162.

⁴⁴ Hamzah, *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjân*, vol. I, p. 9.

⁴⁵ The style in the Indonesian-Arabic dictionary is defined as لون (color) and شكل (form). Nasiruddin Baidan, *Wawasan Baru Ilmu Tafsir* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2005), 387. The style of interpretation referred to here is a special nuance or special character that gives its own color to the interpretation. Abdul Mustaqim, *Dinamika Sejarah Tafsir Al-Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: Idea Press, 2016), p. 112.

⁴⁶ According to Islah Gusmian, nuances of tafsir is the dominant space as a point of view of a work of tafsir such as language, theology, social-society, psychology and sufism nuances. Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir*, p. 258.

⁴⁷ Ibid.



Shihab and Hamza's Interpretation on the Double Burden of Women

The Qur'an does not explicitly and textually mention about the double burden of women. However, there are verses that implicitly show double burden of women, namely surah al-Baqarah [2]: 233⁴⁸ al-Qashash [28]: 23, al-Aḥzāb [33]: 33 and al-Naml [27]: 23.⁴⁹ Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 233, al-Naml [27]: 23, and al-Qashash [28]: 23 are the teachings that had occurred during the time of the prophets before the Prophet Muhammad. However, islamic scholars agree that the sharia of the prophets before the Prophet Muhammad can be a source of law for Muslims as long as there is no text against it (*mansūkh*).⁵⁰

Meanwhile, the context of surah al-Aḥzāb [33]: 33 is at the time of the Prophet Muhammad. Allah says in surah al-Aḥzāb [33]: 33 as follows:

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ
الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

“And abide in your houses and do not display yourselves as [was] the display of the former times of ignorance. And establish prayer and give zakah and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah intends only to remove from you the impurity [of sin], O people of the [Prophet’s] household, and to purify you with [extensive] purification”.

According to Shihab, there are scholars who argue that the word *qarna* derives from the word *qurrah* ‘ain which means “something pleasing to the heart”. This verse means “let your house be a place that pleases your heart”. It also contains guidelines for being at home and not leaving the house unless it is necessary. Many scholars read this verse with *kasrah* on the letter *qaf*, namely *qirna* which derives from the word *qarar*, which means “to be in place”. This verse instructs the Prophet’s wives to be in their homes. Ibn ‘Athīyah opens the possibility that the word *qirna* derives from the word *waqar*, which means “dignity and respect”. The words *tabarrajna* and *tabarruj* derive from the words *baraja* which means “to appear and rise up”. The prohibition of *tabarruj* means the prohibition of displaying jewelry in a general sense, which is usually not shown by good women, or wearing something that is not normal to wear, such as overdressing or waddling around.⁵¹

The word *al-jāhiliyah*, which derives from the word *jahala*, is used in the Qur'an to describe a condition in society that ignores divine teachings and does inappropriate things, either on the

⁴⁸ Qadir, *Qirā'ah Mubādalah*, p. 371.

⁴⁹ Solihatin, “Konsepsi al-Quran,” 42.

⁵⁰ Darlis, “Feminisme Qur’ani: Tafsir Ayat Wanita Karir,” *Musāwā*, vol. 7, no. 2 (December, 2015): 196.

⁵¹ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah*, vol. I, p. 465.



impulse of lust, temporary interests, or narrow views. This term does not refer to pre-Islamic period, but to the characteristics of society that are contrary to Islamic teachings, whenever and wherever. It is characterized by *al-ûlâ*, namely the past. There are many interpretations of the past boundary line. There are many scholars who say that it was the time of Prophet Noah or before the Prophet Abraham. According to Shihab, the past is the period before Islam brought by the Prophet Muhammad. At that time, the society ignored divine challenges. The word *al-bait* literally means “house”, namely the house where the Prophet Muhammad’s wives lived.⁵²

According to Shihab, the order of *wa qarna* or *wa qirna fi buyûtikunna* was addressed to the Prophet’s wives. The issue discussed by the scholars is whether or not women other than the Prophet’s wives were also included in the order. Al-Qurthubî (1214-1273) argues that the meaning of this verse is an order to stay at home. He emphasizes that religion is filled with guidelines for women to stay at home and not go out unless it is an emergency. Shihab also quotes the opinion of al-Maudûdi (1903-1979), a contemporary Muslim thinker from Pakistan, in the book of *al-Hijâb* that the place of women is at home. They may leave on condition that they pay attention to the aspect of self-purity and maintain shame.⁵³

The problem is in what boundaries are women allowed to leave the house, for example, can they go to work? Quoting Muḥammad Quthb’s (1919-2014) opinion in *Ma‘rakah al-Taqâlid*, Shihab explains that this verse does not mean that women should not go to work because Islam does not prohibit women from working, but Islam does not like and does not encourage this. Islam allows them to work in emergencies and does not make it a basis.⁵⁴ In *Syubuhât haula al-Islâm*, Quthb explains that in the beginning of Islam they worked when conditions required them to work. The problem does not lie in the presence or absence of their right to work, but the problem is that Islam does not encourage women to leave the house except for jobs that are considered necessary, required by society or based on certain needs of women, such as working for there is no one to pay for their life or because those who bear his life are not able to fulfill her needs.⁵⁵

According to Sayyid Quthb (1906-1966), *qarna* means “heavy, sedentary, and steady”, but this does not mean that they should not leave the house, but it implies that the household is their main duty, while other places are the place where they do not live or are not their main

⁵² Ibid., p. 467.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.



tasks. Sa'īd Hawwā (1935-1989), one of the Egyptian scholars, gives an example of what is meant by necessity, namely visiting parents, studying, and working to meet needs for those who have no one responsible for bearing their life.⁵⁶ According to Shihab, in principle, Islam does not prohibit women from working in or outside their homes independently or together, with the private sector or the government, day or night, as long as the work is carried out in a respectful manner, can maintain religious guidance, and can avoid negative impacts of the work they do on both themselves and the environment. Working can become mandatory for a woman if circumstances require it, such as for a midwife. Moreover, there were many women who worked at the time of the Prophet.⁵⁷

Unlike Shihab, Hamza interprets surah al-Aḥzāb [33]: 33 saying that women should stay at home and should not leave the house unless they need something. Women are also forbidden to adorn (*tabarruj*) and beautify themselves like people at the age of *jāhiliyah* (age of ignorance). Quoting the opinion of Musthafā al-Marāghī (1881-1945), Hamza divides *jāhiliyah* into two parts namely: first, *al-jāhiliyah al-ūlā* or *al-jāhiliyah al-qadimah* which is the behavior of ignorant people before Islam. Second, *al-jāhiliyah al-ukhrā* or *jāhiliyah al-fusūq* is the behavior of women who follow the behavior of *al-jāhiliyah al-ūlā* even though Islam has come.⁵⁸

The surah which consists of 73 verses is called al-Aḥzāb which means “allies” because in this surah there are several verses that tell about the war of Aḥzāb. Scholars agree that this surah belongs to the *madanīyah* surah. This surah was revealed at the end of the fifth year of Hijrah.⁵⁹ *Asbāb al-nuzūl* of surah al-Aḥzāb [33]: 33 is implicitly for the wives of the Prophet Muhammad because women's movement space is still restricted. The Arab community in Medina at that time was still characterized by the patriarchal lineage, namely the system of lineage drawn from the line of father or man. So the leaders in the household, organization, and the community are men. This is a common tradition.⁶⁰ Women have a very small portion to occupy public positions, including roles in the social sphere and working outside the home to earn a living. So, based on a system of lineage or pattern of society with patriarchal characteristics, it is very

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 469.

⁵⁸ Hamzah, *al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjān*, vol. III, p. 47.

⁵⁹ Naili Fauziah Lutfiani, “Hak-hak Perempuan dalam Surat al-Aḥzāb [33]: 33: Sebuah Pendekatan Hermeneutik,” *eL-Tarbawi: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, vol. X, no. 2 (2017): 70, <https://doi.org/10.20885/tarbawi.vol10.iss2.art5>.

⁶⁰ Ibid.



reasonable that at that time the wives of the Prophet were forbidden to leave the house unless there was a reason that was really urgent and allowed by religious guidance.

Shihab and Hamza seem to have different points of view when interpreting surah al-Ahzâb [33]: 33; Shihab's interpretation seems to be gender biased and supports a woman working outside the home as long as she can take care of herself, while Hamza's interpretation seems to be patriarchal biased and immersed in the perception of classical interpretation, i.e. she does not agree with a woman who leaves the house unless for something urgent although herself is a public figure with the profession as a journalist.

Based on the theory of liberal feminism, surah al-Ahzâb [33]: 33 allows women (wives) to work in public sphere such as in the world of politics, *da'wah*, and education. There are many factors that influence a woman to work outside the home, namely: first, the economic constraints of the family, so that she helps her husband to earn a living. Second, the intention to contribute her ideas and aspirations for the progress of the nation such as being an educator and politician, who indirectly also participates in educating the nation's generation. However, a woman (wife) who works in the public space must pay attention to her position and obligations as a mother for her child and a wife for her husband.

Based on Fazlur Rahman's (1919-1988) double movement theory, surah al-Ahzâb [33]: 33 is textually for the wives of the Prophet Muhammad to keep staying at home and that they are prohibited from doing *tabarruj* because women's space is restricted. Apart from the patriarchal system, it was also influenced by the traditions of the Arab community at that time, namely the husband as the absolute breadwinner and the woman (wife) as the absolute housewife at home taking care of the household and children. However, it cannot be denied that at the time of the Prophet there were many female companions who worked outside the home, such as Umm Sâlim bint Malhân who worked as a bridal make-up and Qilât Umm bint 'Ammâr who worked as a trader and even there were some female companions who took part in warfare, such as Umm 'Athîyah. This does not mean that today's society should turn away from the existing legal provisions, but they must look for alternatives at present because the current situation and conditions are different from those of the Arab society in the past.

The reality of women today which is different from the reality in the past forces a new breakthrough with regards to the position of a husband and wife. Currently, women have a great opportunity to carry out their activities. Many women are more skillful than men in carrying out their professions in public sector. It is not only men who can work in the public



sector, such as politicians, preachers and educators. In general election, there are about 30% of the seats in the government to be filled by women. Therefore, according to Sihab, in principle, Islam does not prohibit women from working inside or outside the home independently or together, with the private sector or government, day or night, as long as the work is carried out in a respectful manner, maintaining religious guidance, and avoiding negative impacts of the work done by women.⁶¹

Based on the analysis of feminist and Rahman's double burden theory of surah al-Aḥzāb [33]: 33, women (wives) are allowed to work in public spaces as long as the work is not contrary to goodness, brings benefit to the people, and with the permission of their husband. In doing that, a woman must not forget the responsibility as a wife of her husband and a mother of her child. The role a wife as a housewife is sometimes disrupted when the wife is more concerned with her role as a career woman than as a mother. Supposedly, a wife who is involved in an employment should still prioritize children's education above anything else. She must be able to position herself when to become a career woman, when to become a mother, and when to become a wife. A husband must also be able to compensate for the duties of his wife by not handing all household and childcare matters over his wife. This is to support family integrity and the peace of the family. A wife as a mother does not mean denying the role of the father to jointly educate children

Career women are almost certainly faced with several crucial issues that are considered absolute truth for women, namely: leadership, *'aurah* (part of the body which may not be visible), *mahram*, as well as rights and responsibilities in the family, and even the assumption that women are the second only to men, all of which are supported by religious texts. Husain Syaḥātah mentions some requirements for career women, encompass: husband's permission, balance between household and work demands, not doing *khalwah* (staying alone with the opposite sex), and avoiding jobs that are not in accordance with women's character.⁶² Muḥammad al-Ghazālī argues that women are allowed to work if they bring benefits to society because the jobs have advantages, the jobs are appropriate for women such as educators and midwives, and helping their husbands by working, like many women in rural areas who help

⁶¹ M. Quraish Shihab, *Perempuan* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2018), p. 396.

⁶² Asriaty, "Wanita Karir dalam Pandangan Islam," *Jurnal Al-Maiyyah*, vol. 07, no. 2 (December, 2014): 184.



their husbands in agricultural businesses, and women are also allowed to work to meet their needs when there is no one guarantee their needs.⁶³

Islam does not prohibit women from engaging in public and domestic spheres. The most important thing is that if a woman who wants to show her existence in public sphere already has a husband, she must have the permission of her husband. If she has been allowed, then the wife must be able to position herself as moderate as possible between her family and work, and should not leave her obligations as a wife and mother to her child, because she is a special figure for the family. If the woman who is involved in the public sphere is not married, she has to have the permission from her parents. Women who take part in the public sphere want to bring benefit to the people, help the economy of the family, and prove that the mission of the Qur'an which does not differentiate between men and women in the social sphere is correct. A good career woman must pay attention to the boundaries and ethical values of women, namely: keeping good manners (surah al-A'râf [7]: 199), having noble character (surah al-Isrâ' [17]: 37), keeping her self respect and honor (surah al-Nisâ' [4]: 25), working based on professionalism (surah al-Isrâ' [17]: 84), the work she does is in accordance to the nature of women (surah al-Isrâ' [17]: 84), and maintaing the family goals in the form of *sakinah* (surah al-Rûm [30]: 21).

The assumption of Abdul Mustaqim in *Paradigma Tafsir Feminis* that one of the factors that causes women to experience gender inequality so that they are not equal, including in the public sphere, is gender-biased interpretation of religious texts which is including the realm of interpretation of the Qur'an which is dominated by patriarchal ideology because most of the exegetes are men, so that they do not accommodate the interests of women, cannot be justified. Based on available data, the gender of the interpreters does not always in favor the interests of their gender. Male interpreters do not always take sides and favor the patriarchal system in their interpretations, especially in terms of equality in the social sphere. On the other hand, women interpreters do not always side with women's interests in their interpretations, especially in terms of equality in the social sphere. Shihab and Hamza, for example, have different points of view when interpreting surah al-Ahzâb [33]: 33; Shihab's interpretation is more accommodating to women's interests, while Hamza's interpretation is more patriarchal and influenced by the perception of the classical interpretation.

⁶³ Shihab, *Perempuan*, p. 394.



Ah. Fawaid argues that bias on particular sex is not only related to the same sex. This means that female exegetes do not always side with the female sex. Accordingly, male exegetes do not always take side with the male gender. One aspect of the tafsir view that has developed seen from the perspective of “gender conflict” cannot be generalized to all models of tafsir of the Qur’an, namely all models of interpretation of the Qur’an by men must “hate” the gender of women, as all models of interpretation of the Qur’an by women must “hate” the male gender.⁶⁴

Not all male interpreters come to the same conclusion in their interpretation of gender relations in the Qur’an. The problem of interpretation related to issues of gender relations is not merely a matter of competition between men and women, but is more related to methodological issue in interacting with the Qur’an.⁶⁵ According to al-Qardlâwî, one of the *maqâshid al-Qur’ân* (the main objectives of the Qur’an revelation) is the formation of families and justice for women, one of which is justice for women and their release from the wrongdoing of ignorance. Thus, the interpretations and perspectives applied should be adjusted to the purpose and content of the Qur’an in general.⁶⁶

Conclusion

A double burden is a condition when women carry out both domestic and public tasks. These roles are generally related to the role of women in the domestic sphere, as housewives, as well as the role of women in the public sphere, one of which is in the political field. Islam comes with a mission of equality between mankind, because glory in the sight of Allah is the value of piety that is owned. The Prophet has taught the principles of equality for men and women.

The Qur’an does not explicitly mention the verse textually about women being allowed to work outside the home or in public spaces, but there are verses that implicitly indicate the right to work for women, namely in surah al-Baqarah [2]: 233⁶⁷ and al-Qashash [28]: 23, al-Aḥzâb [33]: 33 and al-Naml [27]: 23. M. Quraish Shihab and Karîman Ḥamza have different points of view when interpreting surah al-Aḥzâb [33]: 33 which associated with the double burden of women. Shihab’s interpretation is more accommodating to women’s interests, while Ḥamza’s

⁶⁴ Ah. Fawaid, “Mempertimbangkan Tafsir Adil Gender: Studi Pemikiran “Mufasir” Perempuan tentang Isu-isu Perempuan,” *Karsa: Journal of Social and Islamic Culture*, vol. 23, no.1 (June, 2015): 75, 10.19105/karsa.v23i1.609.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.



interpretation is more patriarchal and influenced by the perceptions of the classical interpretation. However, based on liberal feminist and double movement theory, Islam does not actually prohibit women from working inside or outside the home. Women can work inside or outside the home as long as they bring benefits to the people and get permission from their husbands or parents.

The assumption that one of the factors that causes women to experience gender inequality so that they are not equal, including in the public sphere, is gender-biased interpretation of religious texts which is including the realm of interpretation of the Qur'an which is dominated by patriarchal ideology because most of the exegetes are men, so that they do not accommodate the interests of women, cannot be justified. Bias on particular sex is not only related to the same sex. This means that female exegetes do not always side with the female sex. Accordingly, male exegetes do not always take side with the male gender.

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