WOMEN AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN ISLAM: *MA'NĀ*-CUM-*MAGHZĀ* CRITICAL HERMENEUTIC STUDY

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Abstract: This paper describes and analyzes the textual and contextual ḥadīth on the prohibition of women's leadership in the public sphere. This study is a critical hermeneutic with *ma'nā*-cum-*maghzā* as an analytical tool, by which this study makes the literal origin (historical, explicit meaning) the starting point for understanding the central message of the text (implied meaning). The results of this study indicate that women may become leaders in public affairs because, textually and linguistically, the ḥadīth does not apply permanently (*mu'abbad*) but temporally (*mu'aqqat*). Contextually, the ḥadīth prohibited women from becoming leaders because the condition of women at the time of the ḥadīth did not allow them to handle social affairs due to the lack of knowledge and experience and the potential of deceit and greed, which

could happen to anyone who had ambitions of power, men as well as women. Meanwhile, nowadays, many women have the expertise, knowledge, and managerial-organizational experience to support these matters.

Keywords: Ḥadīth of women's leadership; Hermeneutics; Ma'nā-cum-maghzā.

Introduction

The upcoming 2024 Regional Head Elections (Pilkada) to elect governors, regents, and mayors will be held simultaneously in all regions on November 27, 2024. The General Election Commission (KPU) has appointed 18 National Political Parties (Parpol) and six local political parties to be elected. Participate in the 2024 elections. In this five-year event, there is not a bit of intrigue going on between the fans. Various religious, racial, and ethnic sentiments were raised to clash and gain votes. One of the most popular and effective is religious sentiment and gender. This can be repeated in the following regional head election and presidential election if the candidate leader is of a different religion or is a woman.[1]

For example, in Jember and Malang Regencies,[2] female leadership candidates are often hurled at issues and become objects of religious sentiment. The ḥadīth about the prohibition of women from being leaders and occupying important positions in the public sphere are used to attack their opponents. Not only this year, but the same thing also happened at events in previous years. For example, in 2017, the West Java governor candidate, Netty Heryawan, was rejected by 13 Islamic organizations because she is a woman.[3] Sentiment in the name of religion also often occurs

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[1] Muhammad Fauzinuddin Faiz, "Memangkas Bibit Kebencian Menjelang Pemilu," T*imes Indonesia*, available at https://timesindonesia.co.id/kopi-times/447755/memangkas-bibit-kebencian-menjelang-pemilu (2023).

[2] Tubagus Achmad, "Cabup Lathifah Shohib Diterpa Kampanye Hitam Sentimen Perempuan," *Jatim Times*, available at https://jatimtimes.com/baca/228842/20201116/083500/cabup-lathifah-shohib-diterpa-kampanye-hitam-sentimen-perempuan (2020).

[3] Arzia Tivany Wargadiredja, "Udah 2017, Masih Saja Muncul Aksi Menolak Perempuan Jadi Pemimpin?," in https://www.vice.com/id/article/qv48e5/udah-2017-masih-saja-muncul-aksi-menolak-perempuan-jadi-pemimpin (2017).

because of religious differences—for instance, the Ahok case in the 2016 Jakarta gubernatorial election.[4]

Religious sentiment, in particular, has proven to be a decisive factor in influencing voter behaviour. Candidates and their campaigns frequently leverage religious affiliations to create a connection with voters and garner support. This can range from invoking shared religious values and principles to aligning campaign promises with religious teachings. In some instances, religious rhetoric has been exploited to fuel tensions and mobilize voters along sectarian lines, potentially leading to clashes between different groups.[5]

Of course, a black campaign with religious sentiment as its main instrument will not happen without a cause and basis. Several verses, ḥadīths, postulations, and religious teachings explicitly seem to strengthen them until they are finally interpreted as they are for temporary purposes. This is further strengthened by the interpretation of internal figures (Islamic scholars, *kiai*, and intellectuals) who take an interpretation close to the original text.

The ḥadīth used by them regarding the prohibition of women's leadership or placing women in strategic places in the public sphere is the ḥadīth narrated by al-Bukhārī, Ḥadīth No. 4425: "Never will succeed such a nation as makes a woman their ruler."[6]

Literally, this ḥadīth contains the prohibition of society from appointing women as leaders or handing over public affairs to women because they "will not progress and prosper" (*lan yufliḥ*). What does the words mean? What is the historical context of it? And what moral ideas might the ḥadīth contain? Before answering these questions, it should be stated that one must pay attention to

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[4] Akhmad Muawal Hasan, "Kuatnya Sentimen Agama di Pilgub Jakarta," in https://tirto.id/kuatnya-sentimen-agama-di-pilgub-jakarta-ciZn (2017).

[5] Raul Madrid et al., "The Relevance of Religion for Political Office: Voter Bias Toward Candidates from Different Religious Backgrounds," *Political Behavior*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (June 1, 2022), 981-1001; Edwin Firdaus Agus Rahmat, "Sentimen Agama dan Gender Masih Kuat di Pilpres 2024, Hasil Temuan SMRC," in https://www.viva.co.id/berita/politik/1621893-sentimen-agama-dan-gender-masih-kuat-di-pilpres-2024-hasil-temuan-smrc (2023).

[6] Ḥadīth No. 4425, 1610: "*Lan yufliḥ qawm wa law amrahum imra'ah.*" Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Vol. IV (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1994).

aspects of language, historical context, and moral ideas to understand the ḥadīth.

This paper tries to trace, examine and analyze the text and context of the ḥadīth, which are being 'sources of problems', 'weapons to attack,' and 'instruments of religious sentiment,' especially amid political contestation in the regional head elections. This article try to study, describe, and analyze the text and context of the ḥadīth with a critical hermeneutic approach[7] and use the theory of *maʿnā*-cum-*maghzā*[8] as an analytical tool.

The *maʿnā*-cum-*maghzā* is an approach in which one explores or reconstructs the meaning and the main historical message, namely the meaning (*maʿnā*) and the main message/significance (*maghzā*) that the author of the text may mean or understand by the historical audience, and then develop the significance of the text for the present and here context. Thus, there are three important things that an interpreter should look for, namely (1) historical meaning (*al-maʿnā al-tārīkhī*), (2) historical phenomenal significance (*al-maghzā al-tārīkhī*), and (3) dynamic phenomenal significance (*al-*

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[7] According to Palmer, the definition of hermeneutics can be divided into at least six kinds: (1) the theory of biblical exegesis; (2) a general philological methodology; (3) hermeneutics is the science of all linguistic understanding; (4) the methodological foundation of the human sciences (the methodological foundation of *Geisteswissenschaften*); (5) hermeneutics as existential understanding and phenomenology of existence; and (6) a system of interpretation. See Richard E. Palmer, "Postmodern Hermeneutics and the Act of Reading," *Notre Dame English Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (August 18, 1983), 55-84; Richard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1969), retrieved from https://www.scirp.org/(S(351jmbntvnsjt1aadkposzje))/reference/ReferencesPapers.aspx?ReferenceID=1359704 (accessed on January 19, 2023).

[8] The *maʿnā*-cum-*maghzā* is a new hermeneutic approach and theory popularized by Sahiron Syamsuddin, Senior Lecturer at Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta. This approach results from elaborating and developing several approaches, for example, Fazlur Rahman, Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, Abdullah Saeed and Jorge J.E. Gracia. Sahiron Syamsuddin, *Die Koranhermeneutik Muḥammad Shaḥrūrs und Ihre Beurteilung Aus Der Sicht Muslimischer Autoren* (Ergon Verlag, 2009), 43-78; Muhammad Fauzinuddin Faiz, "Teori Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an Nashr Hamid Abu Zayd dan Aplikasinya terhadap Wacana Gender dalam Studi Hukum Islam Kontemporer," *Al-Ahwal: Journal of Family Law Studies and Islamic Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 April (2015), 23-61.

maghzā al-mutaḥarrik) for the context in which the Qur'anic text is interpreted.[9]

The method used in this paper is a library research method that seeks to discover the existing theory conceptually.[10] Related to this research, namely by examining the object under study, the author tries to explore data on women and political leadership in Islam. The above research is qualitative research that reveals a certain phenomenon by describing the true reality, formed by words based on relevant data collection and analysis techniques, not in the form of numbers and statistics.[11] This research type is deliberately used to accommodate a complete description of the object under study.

Numerous studies have explored the topic of women's leadership within the framework of Islam. However, these studies predominantly employ linguistic and interpretive approaches aligned with scholars who advocate for accepting women's leadership roles.[12] There is also research similar to this research, such as the writings of Syamsul Bakri,[13] but he uses the method of hermeneutical *takhrīj* analysis and a historical approach. These two tools are also used in the *ma'nā*-cum-*maghzā* method, but the method belonging to Sahiron Syamsuddin is the complete version.

Despite addressing an ordinary subject matter, these investigations diverge in their formal focus. In this context, the present research adopts a distinctive methodological stance by embracing the hermeneutic approach of *ma'nā*-cum-*maghzā*, as pioneered by Syamsuddin, a renowned scholar and professor in

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[9] Sahiron Syamsuddin, *Hermenutika dan Pengembangan Ulumul Qur'an*, Revised and Expanded Edition (Yogyakarta: Pesantren Nawesea Press dan Baitul Hikmah Press, 2017).

[10] John van Maanen, "Reclaiming Qualitative Methods for Organizational Research: A Preface," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (1979), 520-26.

[11] Murray L. Wax, "Knowledge, Power, and Ethics in Qualitative Social Research," *The American Sociologist*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (1995), 22-34.

[12] Ilda Hayati, "Women's Leadership in Islamic Perspective," *AJIS: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (December 31, 2016), 163-78.

[13] Syamsul Bakri, "Womens Leadership in Islam: A Historical Perspective of a Hadith," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Literature and Muslim Society*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (2020), 219-34.

the field of ḥadīth exegesis at Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.[14]

This method facilitates a nuanced exploration of the subject matter. While sharing thematic similarities with previous inquiries, the study critically differentiates itself by delving into the hermeneutical layers of the *ma'nā-cum-maghzā* approach. By engaging with this methodology, the research endeavours to uncover multifaceted interpretations of women's leadership, transcending conventional linguistic frameworks and amplifying the discourse on the potential for female leadership roles within Islamic contexts.

The Ḥadīth on Women's Leadership

A ḥadīth of the Prophet that is often used as the basis of the argument for prohibiting women from being leaders are the ḥadīth narrated by al-Bukhārī, al-Nasā'ī, al-Tirmidhī, and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbāl.

Al-Bukhārī narrated the ḥadīth from Abī Bakrah, Ḥasan, 'Awf, and 'Uthmān b. Haytham.[15] Abu Bakrah had the full name Nufay' b. al-Ḥārith b. Kaladah b. 'Amr. He belonged to the group of *ṣaḥābah* (the Prophet's contemporaries). So clearly, he was a fair figure according to the rules of "*kullu ṣaḥābah 'udūl*" (all the companions of the Prophet Muḥammad have a fair attitude).

Meanwhile, Ḥasan, whose full name is Ḥasan b. Abī al-Ḥasan Yasār and well-known as Abū Sa'īd, belonged to the group of *tābi'īn* (second generation after *ṣaḥābah*) or *al-wusṭā min al-tābi'īn* (the middle *tābi'īn*). According to Muḥammad b. Sa'd, Ḥasan was a *jāmi'* (conscientious), *'alīm* (intelligent), *rāfi'* (having a high degree), *faqāh* (smart), *thiqah* (strong in memorization), *ma'mūn* (trusted), *'ābid* (worshiper), *kathīr al-'ilm* (a lot of knowledge), *faṣīḥ* (voluble).[16]

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[14] Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Metode Penafsiran dengan Pendekatan Ma'nā-Cum-Maghzā," in *Pendekatan Ma'nā-cum-Maghzā atas al-Qur'an dan Hadis: Menjawab Problematika Sosial Keagamaan di Era Kontemporer*, ed. Sahiron Syamsuddin (Yogyakarta: Asosiasi Ilmu Alquran & Tafsir se-Indonesia, 2020), 8.

[15] Ḥadīth No. 4425, 1610. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Vol. IV.

[16] Abū al-Ḥayy al-Luknawī al-Hindī, *al-Raf' wa al-Takmīl fī al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl* (Beirut: Maktabat al-Maṭba'ah al-Islāmīyah, 1407), 352.

As for 'Awf, whose full name is 'Awf b. Abī Jamīlah and has a nickname Abū Sahl, belonged to the ones *lam talqā li ṣaḥābah* or had never met *ṣaḥābah*, lived in Basra and died in 146 H. He was someone who is *thiqah* (strong in memorization) according to 'Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbāl, Isḥāq b. Manṣūr from Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn, and al-Nasā'. Meanwhile, according to Abū Ḥātim, he was *ṣaduq* (honest) and *ṣāliḥ* (pious/good). According to Muḥammad b. S'ad, he was a man who memorized a lot of ḥadīths.[17]

While the last name, 'Uthmān b. Haytham (his full name is 'Uthmān b. Haytham b. Jahm b. 'Isā b. Ḥasan al-Mundhir, and his nickname is Abū 'Amr), belonged to the *kibār tābi' al-atbā'* group (the leading *tābi'īn*). He lived in Basra and died in 210 AH. According to Abū Ḥātim, he is *ṣaduq* or honest.[18]

Al-Tirmidhī narrated the ḥadīth from Abū Bakrah, Ḥasan, Ḥumayd, and Khālid b. Ḥārith.[19] Abū Bakrah, who transmitted the ḥadīth, and Ḥasan has been profiled previously. Meanwhile, al-Ṭawīl, whose complete name is Ḥumayd b. Abī Ḥumayd and is known as Abū 'Ubaydah, falls under the category of *al-ṣughrā min al-tābi'īn* (the junior *tābi'īn*). He resided in Basra and passed away in 142 AH. His credibility assessment (*jarḥ wa ta'dīl*) includes endorsements of his trustworthiness (*thiqah*) from sources such as Isḥāq b. Mansūr, Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn, Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh al-'Ijlī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Ḥātim, and 'Abd Raḥmān b. Yūsuf b. Khirash. Notably, the epithet "*ṣaduq*" or honest further enhances the virtuous portrayal of al-Ṭawīl.[20]

The subsequent individual is Khālid b. al-Ḥārith b. 'Ubayd b. Sulaymān b. 'Ubayd b. Ṣufyān b. Mas'ūd b. Sukin. Popularly known as Abū 'Uthmān, he was associated with *al-wusṭā min al-atbā'*. Residing in Basra, he passed away in 186 AH. Regarding credibility assessment, al-Nasā'ī and Abū Ḥātim endorse him as a

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[17] Fārūq Ḥamadah, *al-Manhaj al-Islāmī fī al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl* (Beirut: Dār al-Salām, 2001).

[18] Stefanie Brinkmann, "Between Philology and Hadith Criticism: The Genre of Sharḥ Gharīb al-Ḥadīth," in *Hadith Commentary: Continuity and Change*, ed. Joel Blecher and Stefanie Brinkmann (Edinburgh University Press, 2023), 15-49.

[19] Muḥammad Maḥfūẓ b. 'Abd Allāh al-Tirmidhī, *Manhaj Dhawī al-Naẓr* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1974).

[20] Ibid.

trustworthy (*thiqah*) authority. Abū Zuhroh, meanwhile, characterizes him as an individual of utmost honesty (*saduq*).[21]

Lastly, Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā b. ‘Ubayd b. Qays b. Dinār. He is often referred to as Abū Mūsā, affiliated with the esteemed *kibār tabi‘ al-atbā‘* faction. His residence was in Basra, where he lived until he passed away in 252 AH. ‘Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbāl, based on Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn’s account, deems him trustworthy. Ṣāliḥ b. Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ, on the other hand, portrays him as genuinely honest (*saduq*). Abū Bakr al-Khāṭib amplifies this endorsement, adding attributes of reliability (*wāri‘an*), excellence (*faḍil*), and sagacity (*‘āqil*). Notably, al-Nasā’ī provides the reassuring note “*lā ba’s bih*” or “no problem,” solidifying his standing.[22]

Aḥmad b. Ḥanbāl narrated the Ḥadīth from Abū ‘Uyaynah, ‘Uyaynah, and Muḥammad b. Bakr.[23] Abū ‘Uyaynah, his full name is ‘Abdu al-Raḥmān b. Jawshan, his nickname and year of death is unknown, but he lived in Basra. According to Abū Zuhrah, he is a *thiqah* person. According to al-Tirmidhī, he is *ṣaḥīḥ*. According to ‘Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbāl, he is *laysa bi al-mashūr*, ‘not a very popular person.’

While ‘Uyaynah, whose full name is ‘Uyaynah b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Jawshan al-Ghaṭfānī al-Jawshanī and well-known as Abū Mālik, belonged to the *kibār al-tābi‘ī al-atbā‘*, lived in Basra but the year of his death is unknown. According to ‘Abbās b. Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn, he is *laysa bih ba’s*, or ‘there is no problem.’ As for Muḥammad b. Bakr, al-Nasā’ī gave the *thiqah* record, while Abū Ḥātim gave him *saduq*.[24]

Meanwhile, al-Nasā’ī narrated the ḥadīth from Abū Bakrah, Ḥasan, Ḥumayd, Khālid b. Ḥārith, and Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā,[25] each of which has been introduced above.

The scheme of the chain of the ḥadīth as narrated by al-Bukhārī, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nasā’ī, and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbāl is as follows:

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[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ḥadīth No. 19889. Aḥmad b. Ḥambāl, *al-Musnad*, Vol. 6 (n.p.: 1977).

[24] Bakri, “Womens Leadership in Islam.”

[25] Ḥadīth No. 5388. Al-Nasā’ī, *Sunan al-Nasā’ī*, Vol. 4 (n.p.: 1377).
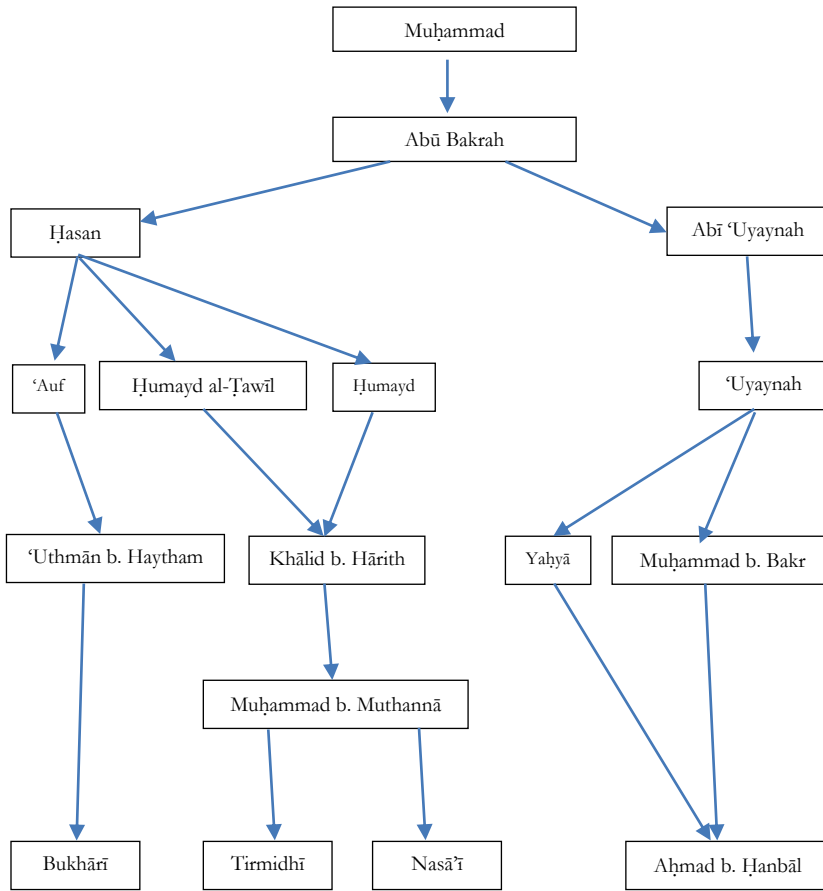
Figure 1. The scheme of the ḥadīth chain as narrated by al-Bukhārī, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nasā'ī, and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbāl.

The three paths above (al-Bukhārī, al-Tirmidhī, and al-Nasā'ī) all meet at 'Ḥasan', who received the ḥadīth from Abū Bakrah. So based on the continuation (*ittiṣāl*) of the chain of the *sanad* (the chain of citations or "backings" used to verify the legitimacy of a ḥadīth),[26] where one narrator and another has a horizontal relationship as teacher and student, as well as the credible narrators of the ḥadcith as has been assessed by the ḥadīth scholars, then the ḥadīth is *ṣaḥīḥ*.

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[26] Eerik Dickinson, *An Introduction to the Science of Hadith* (United Kingdom: Garnet publishing, 2006).

From the the descriptions above, some conclusions can be drawn. First, the chain of the ḥadīth narrated by al-Bukhārī, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nasā'ī, and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbāl is a *muttaṣil* (continuous) transmission system because the link between the narrators is unbroken until the Prophet. So the ḥadīth is included in the category of *marfūʿ*.

Second, as each *ṭabaqah* (degree) in the ḥadīth chain consists of three, two, or one narrator, the ḥadīth is then classified as *aḥad*. Third, based on the criteria for the validity of its *sanad*, the ḥadīth indicates the degree ṣaḥīḥ, namely *ṣaḥīḥ li dhātih* because the chain is continuous, and the narrators are *ḍābiṭ* (accuracy of the process of transmission, i.e. narrators must not be prone to carelessness or known to have poor memories), *thiqah*, and *shudhūdh* (irregularities, i.e. ḥadīth must not contradict a "more reliable source")[27] avaoided. If it is seen from the *jarḥ wa al-taʿdīl*, the narrators are fair, *ṣaduq*, and *thiqah*.

However, this ḥadīth gets several notes from Fatima Mernissi, mainly from the aspect of the *matn* (text),[28] especially the *sanad*. In her critique, she questioned the credibility of Abū Bakrah as a ḥadīth narrator, and why Abū Bakrah only published this ḥadīth during the political turmoil in the Jamal war between 'Ā'ishah and 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib after 23 years of the death of the Prophet Muḥammad, in which he sided with the camp of 'Alī. In Khaled Abou El-Fadl's view, this kind of thing tends to show an authoritarian attitude and is far from an authoritative attitude towards the Prophet's words. Furthermore, Fatima Mernissi added the context of the ḥadīth is focused on the case of the Kisra succession in Persia, which bequeathed the throne to her daughter, who did not have the capacity as a leader and had a deceitful

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[27] Ibn Kathīr, *Ikhtiṣār ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth*, Vol. 1 (Riyadh, K.S.A.: Maktabat al-Maʿārif, 1996).

[28] According to scholar Daniel Brown, in traditional hadith studies, "the possibility" of criticizing the matn as well as the isnad "was recognized in theory, but the option was seldom systematically exercised." Scott C. Lucas, "Misquoting Muhammad: The Challenge and Choices of Interpreting the Prophet's Legacy by Jonathan A. C. Brown," *Journal of Shi'a Islamic Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (2015), 245-49.

character.[29] So the core or *maghzā* of the ḥadīth is actually in 2 aspects, the first is about the deceitful process, and the second is about the leader's capacity far below the standard of ability. And if the *maghzā* is "woman," not the two aspects above, there will be legal confusion. And the fiqh that is built is not authoritative fiqh but authoritarian fiqh.[30]

Women Leadership on Islamic Texts and Their Contexts

Textually, to understand the ḥadīth about women's leadership, one must pay attention to aspects of language, historical context, and moral ideas. Regarding the language aspect, the ḥadīth contains some vocabulary that must be analyzed carefully. First, the letter *lan,* which in Arabic linguistic discipline (grammatical-cum-morphology) has the function of making *fiʻl muḍāriʻ* turned into *ʻāmil naṣb* (*tanṣib fiʻl al-muḍāriʻ*), and it also has a function *al-nafy* or 'negation' of actions in the present (*ḥāl*) and future (*mustaqbal*).[31] For example, the Arabic sentence "*lan udakhkhin*" (I would not smoke) means that I will not smoke now and in the future.

However, the question is whether the provision is temporal (*mu'aqqot*) or permanent (*mu'abbad*). Abū al-ʻIzzī ʻAlī b. ʻAlī quoted a statement from Jalāl al-Dīn b. Mālik stated: "*Man raʼā al-nafy bi 'lan' mu'abbadā* [it is al-Muʻtazilah], *fa qawluh 'urdud' wa siwāh fa'diddā*"[32] (Whoever thinks that *lan* negates deeds permanently (*mu'abbad*), then reject that assumption, and believe in other opinions, that *lan* does not mean *nafy* forever).

If the letter *lan* negates an action indefinitely, or forever, then surely it cannot be limited in time for its denial. Even in the Qur'an there is the use of diction *lan*, which is limited in time, as in

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[29] Miriam Cooke, "Fatima Mernissi 1940-2015," *Review of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 49, No. 2 (August 18, 2015), 217-19.

[30] Daoud Rosser-Owen, "Islam and Global Dialogue: Religious Pluralism and the Pursuit of Peace," *American Journal of Islam and Society*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (2007), 127-140; Khaled Abou El Fadl, "Law of Duress in Islamic Law and Common Law: A Comparative Study," *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (February 18, 1991), 305-50.

[31] Ḥasan al-Kafrāwī, *Sharḥ al-ʻAllāmah al-Shaykh Ḥasan al-Kafrāwī ʻalā Matn al-Jurūmiyah* (Surabaya: Percetakan al-Hidayah, n.d.).

[32] Shadruddin, *Syarḥ al-Ṭaḥawīyah* (UEA: Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Waqf, Daʻwah and Ershad, 1418), 157.

sūrah Yūsuf [12]: 80: "…*fa lan abraḥ al-arḍ ḥattā ya'dhan lī abī…*" (therefore will I not leave this land until my father permits me).

In this verse, it appears that the negation of leaving the land of Egypt-using the word *lan* is not forever but limited in time, namely: 'Until my father allows me (to return).'

The word *yufliḥ* has a meaning that revolves around the meaning of Success.[33] It can also be interpreted as victory or triumph.[34] At the same time, the word *qawm* has been absorbed or adopted into Indonesian. It can mean 'People' or 'Class.' In the ḥadīth, this word is in the form of indefinite (*nakirah*), which contains a general and indefinite meaning that means 'failure' - as the ḥadīth above wants, it will happen to any people.

Contextually, the ḥadīth about the prohibition of women's leadership did not come down in a vacuum, meaning there was a dialectical process behind the ḥadīth when it was said by the Prophet, which in the study of ḥadīth science is called *asbāb al-wurūd*.[35] Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mubārakfūrī in *Tuḥfah al-Aḥwadhī*[36] relates the context of events that took place in the Persian Empire.

When news of the death of Kisrā b. Barwayz, King of the Persian Empire, reached the the Prophet, then he asked, "Who succeeded him as king in Persia?" The companions replied that the one who succeeded him as king was his daughter (meaning his granddaughter) named Buwaran b. Shayruwayh b. Kisrā. It is said that Shayruwayh killed his father to realize his desire to become king of Persia. His *coup d'etat* was indeed successful. It is just that this action was previously known by her father, who then

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[33] "Translation and Meaning in English Arabic Dictionary of All Terms," in https://www.almaany.com/en/dict/ar-en/ (accessed January 19, 2023).

[34] Muhammad Fauzinuddin Faiz, *Kamus Kontemporer Mahasantri, Tiga Bahasa: Indonesia-Inggris-Arab* (Surabaya: Penerbit Imtiyaz, 2012).

[35] In its development, *asbāb al-wurūd* is divided into micro-*asbāb al-wurūd* (context of events) and macro-*asbāb al-wurūd* (context of situations). Iftikhar Zaman, "The Science Of 'Rijāl' As A Method In The Study Of Hadiths," *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (August 18, 1994), 1-34; Suryadi, *Metodologi Ilmu Rijalil Hadis* (Yogyakarta: Madani Pustaka Hikmah in collaboration with the Department of Tafsir and Hadith Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2005), 76.

[36] Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mubārakfūrī, *Tuḥfat al-Aḥwadhī*, Vol. 4 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 2001), 334.

engineered to kill him as well. His father's engineering was successful, and six months after his death, Shayruwayh died due to the poison his father had engineered on him.

Shayruwayh's death caused new problems because he did not have a brother who could replace him as king of Persia because he had killed them due to his fear of their revenge for the death of their father. Moreover, he did not have a son to replace him. The royal family, who did not want the fall of the royal throne in the hands of others, immediately appointed Princess Shayruwayh to be the Queen of the Persian Empire. Her name is Buwaran b. Shayruwayh. Not long after, Persian rule fell apart. Thus, a glimpse of the events accompanying the Prophet Muḥammad's words.

In another narration, it is stated that the Queen rejected the Prophet's correspondence to the nation, and even his letter was torn up.[37] An interesting note from the above narration is how the character of the Persian leader at that time was quite deceitful and greedy for power. And it just so happens that this character is inherent in female leaders. However, it is not fair if the connecting line that is taken is the female figure and not the evil character. Deceitful disposition, envy, greed for power, etc., can happen to anyone, male or female. So based on the context of the event and the context of the situation in the ḥadīth, what the Prophet said would be doomed, not progressing, and so on was a people or society led by a leader who was deceitful, greedy, angry, and who justified all means to rule. In addition, the patriarchal culture that was still strong at that time further strengthened the position of women's inferiority over men.[38]

The previous context of the above ḥadīth can be understood. First, the ḥadīth of Abu Bakrah is special in the case of succession in Persia. The Prophet is considered commenting on an event, not setting a legal precedent. Second, political leadership is a big thing, so to forbid or oblige something, having *mutawātir* verses from the Qur'an and ḥadīth is necessary.

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[37] The incident is contained in the ḥadīth "*An yumazziq kull mumazziq*." For more details, see Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Fatḥ al-Bārī* (Beirut.: Dār al-Salām, 2001), 159.

[38] Mary Becker, "Patriarchy and Inequality: Towards a Substantive Feminism," *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, No. 1 (1999), 3.

Women Leadership in Contemporary Texts and Contexts

If there is an opinion that a nation will not succeed if women lead it, this is an attitude that is not dialogical and tends to be in a hurry, which is caused by understanding the Prophet's words as they are without looking at the context and situation in which the Prophet delivered them.

In Islamic history, many Muslim women have emerged as leaders. 'Ā'ishah, the wife of the Prophet Muḥammad, was recognized as a *muftī* (a Muslim or Muslimah legal expert who is empowered to give rulings on religious matters).[39] Even history records that she had been a commander in the Jamal war. Al-Shifā, a woman who was good at writing, was assigned by the Caliph 'Umar b. Khaṭṭāb as the head of the market in the city of Medina.[40] The Qur'an also mentions Queen Balqis of the Prhophet Sulaymān, who led her people well, full of wisdom and justice.[41]

In understanding a ḥadīth, it must be from the spirit and its *'illah* (legal causes) as the rules of fiqh proposal:[42] *al-ḥukm yadūr ma'a 'illatih wujūd wa 'adam* (the ruling is linked to its reason, existing and non-existing). While the *'illah* of the Prophet's statement was that the condition of women at that time did not allow them to handle public affairs due to their lack of knowledge and experience. Moreover, there is a deceitful nature that can happen to anyone who has ambitions of power, male or female.

Meanwhile, nowadays, many women have knowledge and experience in these matters. A notable shift has emerged in contemporary times, showcasing the increased presence of knowledgeable and experienced women in various fields. The current global landscape reflects a significant departure from historical norms, when several countries, including those with a Muslim-majority population, are being helmed by women leaders.[43] Angela Merkel served as the Chancellor of Germany, exhibiting

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[39] Syamsuddin, "Metode Penafsiran."

[40] Amr G. Sabet, "Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought," *American Journal of Islam and Society*, Vol. 20 (2003).

[41] Al-Naml [27]: 23-24.

[42] Ḥamīd al-Ḥamīd, "Sharḥ Manẓūmah al-Qawā'id al-Fiqhīyah," in https://shamela.ws/book/37791/55 (accessed January 19, 2023).

[43] "Facts and Figures: Women's Leadership and Political Participation," in https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures (accessed 2022).

successful leadership. In neighbouring Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina's tenure as Prime Minister has garnered international recognition for its achievements. Similarly, Sheikh Haya Rashed Al Khalifa of Bahrain has made significant contributions as President of the United Nations General Assembly.[44]

Conversely, some endeavours faced challenges. For instance, Benazir Bhutto's leadership experienced both triumphs and setbacks in Pakistan, indicating the complexity of navigating a traditionally male-dominated political landscape. Despite these variations, the evolving narrative underscores women leaders' potential and influence across diverse cultural and religious contexts.[45]

In the Asian context, Tsai Ing-wen, the President of Taiwan, has demonstrated her expertise in global relations, effective pandemic response, and technological advances. His leadership was crucial in elevating Taiwan's status in the international arena.[46] In Indonesia, Megawati Soekarno Putri, the daughter of Sukarno, is also a successful president.[47]

In the present context, it is certainly different from the past.[48] Women have been provided access to information, managerial knowledge, strategy, and organization, as well as men; there is no distinction between the two. In other words, men and women have the same access, potential, and failure as leaders. So contextually, the diction of the ḥadīth would be: 'Never will succeed such a nation if it is led by men or women who are not experts in their fields and are dishonest and greedy in their leadership.'

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[44] Francine D'Amico, "Women National Leaders," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*, retrieved from https://oxfordre.com/internationalstudies/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.001.0001/acrefore-9780190846626-e-364.

[45] Jane S. Jensen, *Women Political Leaders; Breaking the Highest Glass Ceiling* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

[46] Andreea Brînză, "Tsai Ing-Wen : A New Type of Female Leader in Asia," in https://thediplomat.com/2016/05/tsai-ing-wen-a-new-type-of-female-leader-in-asia/ (accessed January 2023).

[47] Shahla Haeri, *The Unforgettable Queens of Islam*, ed. Shahla Haeri (Cambridge University Press, 2020), 183-218.

[48] Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism, and Other Writings*, translated by Andrew Bowie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 30.

Conclusion

The use of the ḥadīth from Abū Bakrah as an argument for the prohibition of women from becoming leaders is not necessarily correct because this ḥadīth begins with the letter *'lan'*, which, according to the scholars of *'uṣūl fiqh* does not mean permanently/*mu'abbad* (negating for eternity) and does not function as *ta'kīd* (strengthens the *nafy*). In addition, the editorial of the ḥadīth is *kalām khabar* (news) and not *kalām ṭalab* (instructive), which by itself does not mean the necessity to carry it out. The meaning of the ḥadīth, which is newsworthy, must be related to the *sabab al-wurūd* (things that lie behind the emergence of the ḥadīth).

Therefore, ḥadīth must be understood with a socio-historical approach by looking at social history and settings at the time when the ḥadīth was spoken. Indeed, textually, women are not entitled to serve as heads of state, community leaders, judges, or various positions of the same level. The ḥadīth was uttered by the Prophet when he heard reports about the succession of female leadership named Bauran b. Shayrawayh b. Kisrā in Persia in 9 AD., when the Persian Emperor, King Yazdarid III, who had the title 'Kisrā' died without a son. Meanwhile, Bauran's condition is known to be weak regarding leadership to occupy the position of emperor. And at that time, in terms of Persian history, the position of head of state was only held by men. The degree of women in the eyes of the society was still considered minor compated to men. Women are not trusted to care for the public interest, especially state affairs. In addition, the princess who asked to be the ruler was deceitful and greedy for power. It is these contexts that underlie the Prophet's words.

However, it is not fair if the connecting line taken is the female figure and not the evil character. Deceitful disposition, envy, greed for power, etc., can happen to anyone, male or female. So based on the context of the event and the situation in the ḥadīth, what the Prophet said was about people or society led by a leader who was dishonest, greedy, angry and who justified all means to rule. In addition, the patriarchal culture that was still strong at that time further strengthened the position of women's inferiority over men.

Acknowledgement

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