

**WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN ACEHNESE *MUFASSIR'S* PERSPECTIVE: A
COMPARISON OF ABDURRAUF AS-SINGKILY AND HASBI AS-SHIDDIEQY'S
INTERPRETATION**

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Abstract

Women's leadership is still a controversial topic among the Acehese ulama. Abdurrauf as-Singkily and Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy are two other Acehese ulama and commentators who commented on this topic. Both have worked in the field of interpretation. This study aims to compare both perspectives on women's leadership. The research uses a comparative interpretation methodology (*muqarran*). The study also uses hermeneutic methods to analyze the influence behind the interpretation of the two commentators in their works. The study results concluded that Abdurrauf as-Singkily and Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy had similar views on women's leadership. According to them, in the domestic area (household), the leadership is on the husband's side (male). Meanwhile, in the public sphere, both believe that men and women have equal opportunities to become leaders.

Keywords: *Leadership, Female, Tafsir, Aceh.*

Abstrak

Kepemimpinan perempuan masih menjadi topik kontroversial di kalangan ulama Aceh. Abdurrauf as-Singkily dan Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy merupakan dua ulama sekaligus mufassir Aceh lainnya yang berkomentar tentang topik ini. Keduanya memiliki karya dalam bidang tafsir. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membandingkan perspektif keduanya tentang kepemimpinan perempuan. Penelitian menggunakan metodologi tafsir komparatif (*muqarran*). Penelitian juga menggunakan metode hermeneutika untuk menganalisis pengaruh yang melatarbelakangi penafsiran kedua mufassir dalam karya mereka. Hasil penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa Abdurrauf as-Singkily dan Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy memiliki pandangan yang cenderung mirip tentang kepemimpinan perempuan. Menurut mereka dalam wilayah domestik (rumah tangga), kepemimpinan berada di pihak suami (laki-laki). Sedangkan dalam wilayah publik, keduanya berpandangan bahwa laki-laki dan perempuan memiliki kesempatan yang sama untuk menjadi pemimpin.

Kata Kunci: *Kepemimpinan, Perempuan, Tafsir, Aceh.*

Introduction

The discourse on female leadership in Islam has become a topic of debate by scholars¹. This debate started in the classical era in the history of Islamic civilization². In the domestic area, the problem focuses on the right to leadership in the household. In patriarchal culture, men (husbands) are understood as having the highest authority in the family. Any decisions in the family must come through the husband's permission with women (wives) as their followers (*makmum*). The wife must obey all decisions made by the husband as a form of obedience to her husband in the household. This deep-rooted culture is then understood differently by anti-patriarchal groups³.

The most debated issue in the public sphere is the legality of female leadership in public office. Intense debates occurred, especially on socio-political leadership, such as being a judge (*qâdhi*), governor, or even being a head of state.

According to Ibn Katsir, men are the leaders of women. Men are superior to women. Therefore, the matter of prophethood is only reserved for men. None of the prophets are female. This Ibn Kasir's opinion indicates that men are more honored than women because God chose them to be His messengers (the Prophet). The same is true in political matters. Men are more entitled to become kings⁴.

Wahbah Zuhaili said that the requirement to become a leader is to be a male (*zūkûrah*). According to him, leaders must have strong resistance to various challenges they face, especially in critical and emergency conditions⁵. In his view, the ability to survive in such a situation is not owned by a woman⁶.

Mustafa Husni Assibâ'i⁷ noted that the reason for the prohibition of women from becoming heads of state is because the burden and risk borne by a state leader are very heavy. Women with various shortcomings, of course, will not be able to take such a huge risk⁸.

However, many other scholars support women in becoming leaders. Muhammad Sayyid Thanthawi revealed that female leadership, in any case, is not against sharia. The story of Ratu Balqis mentioned in the Qur'an proves that the Qur'an prohibits

¹ Raihan Putry, "Kepemimpinan Perempuan Dalam Perspektif Islam," *Jurnal Mudarrisuna* 5, no. 2 (2015): 626–55, <https://doi.org/10.18860/jmpi.v2i2.5483>.

² Maimun, "Kontroversi Wanita Menjadi Pemimpin: Kajian Analisis Metodologis," *Asas: Jurnal Hukum Dan Ekonomi Islam* 4, no. 1 (2012): 1–9.

³ Zaitunah Subhan, *Al-Qur'an Dan Perempuan, Menuju Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Penafsiran* (Jakarta: Prenada Media, 2015), 31–33.

⁴ Abu al-Fida Isma'îl Ibnu Katsîr Ad-Dimasyqî, *Tafsîr Al-Qur'ân Al-Azhîm* (Riyâdh: Dâr al-Thayyibah, 1999), 323.

⁵ Wahbah Az-Zuhaili, *Al-Fiqhul Islâmi Wa Adillatuhu* (Damaskus: Dâr al-Fikr, 2007), 1192.

⁶ Abdurrahman al-Jaziri, *Kitab Al-Fiqh Ala Al-Mazâhib Al-Arba'ah*, Juz ke 1 (Beirut: Dâr al-Ilmiyyah, n.d.), 371-72.

⁷ Mustafa Husni As-Sibâ'i is a professor in law at the Syrian University. Besides teaching at the University, he is an activist with the Muslim Brotherhood. As-Sibâ'i is very actively involved in the Palestinian liberation movement and other Islamic movements. Abdullah Al-Aqil, *Mereka Yang Telah Pergi* (Jakarta: al-I'tishom Cahaya Ummat, 2010), 485.

⁸ Musthafa Husni As-Sibâ'i, *Wanita di Antara Hukum Islam dan Perundang-Undangan*, ed. Chodijah (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1997), 65.

women from leading. Had it been forbidden, this story would not have been included in the Qur'an⁹.

Yusuf al-Qardhawi emphasized that there is no single text in the Qur'an or hadith that forbids a woman to become a mufti, a parliament member, or even a head of the state. However, al-Qardhawi provided certain conditions that must be considered by women who become leaders. For example, they must observe Islamic etiquette and maintain a way of dressing that complies with the Shari'a.

According to Ali Jum'ah, there is no prohibition in Islam against women becoming leaders in any case. A woman's decision to become a leader is a personal decision between herself and her family or partner (husband). People who use religious arguments as justification for the castration of women's rights are wrong in understanding the texts of the Qur'an and hadith¹⁰. Islam is a religion that treats fairly every creature created by God. All humans have equal rights and obligations as a manifestation of their caliphate on earth.

The pros and cons of the role and position of women in Islamic society in Indonesia have occurred long before Indonesia's independence. This controversy arose during the kingdom of Aceh Darussalam, reigning from the XVI to the XIX centuries. The legality of women's leadership in the realm of Aceh Darussalam was controversial among the *ulama* (Islamic scholars) at that time¹¹.

Female leadership in the kingdom of Aceh Darussalam is an interesting historical fact to observe. At that time, most of the Islamic world was dominated by patriarchal understanding. However, Aceh had women who successfully played their political roles, both in the government and the military.

The glory of the kingdom of Aceh Darussalam is marked by the leadership of four queens (*sulthanah*), who became the highest leaders of the domain. Ali Hasjimi notes that the Aceh kingdom was under the reign of the queens for 59 years¹². The leadership of the *sulthanah* provided interesting and various achievements regarding the social development of their people. At that time, science was developing so rapidly. Aceh's history is also marked by the heroism of women who are known to be very brave in defending their religion and homeland.

Nevertheless, this historical fact does not make the discriminatory treatment of women in society disappear. This kind of treatment occurs in legal and socio-political

⁹ Hendri Saputra, "Pemikiran Musdah Mulia Tentang Kepemimpinan Politik Perempuan," *Manthiq* 1, no. 2 (2016): 136.

¹⁰ Ali Jum'ah, *Fatâwa Al-Mar'ah Al-Muslimah Wa Ar-Rudd 'al Syubhât Hawla Qadhâyâ Al-Mar'ah* (Kairo: Nahd Misr, 2010), 428.

¹¹ Mieke T.A. Lopes Cardozo et al., "Silent Struggles: Women Education Leaders' Agency for Peacebuilding in Islamic Schools in Post-Conflict Aceh," *Journal of Peace Education* 18, no. 3 (2022): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2022.2052826>.

¹² Ali Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka Di Bawah Pemerintahan Ratu* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1977), 32.

issues. The desire to gain political power sometimes makes some groups use religious argumentation to justify defeating their rivals in political contestation.¹³

Ulamas, as key figures in society, are forced to get involved in the controversy. The scholars are seen as having important authority in explaining this matter. Abdurrauf as-Singkily emerged as one of the scholars who supported female leadership in Aceh¹⁴. Thanks to his support, the administration of the *sulthanahs* in the kingdom of Aceh Darussalam continued for three terms after Queen Shafiyatuddin died. One of his most famous works is *Tarjuman al-Mustafid's* book of commentary. This interpretation is the first work of writing in the Malay language.

Another Acehese scholar who commented on women's issues in the Qur'an was Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy. He was a commentator who also had expertise in Islamic law in Indonesia. In *an-Nur* book of commentary, Hasbi critically elaborates on verses related to women, especially those related to leadership. His view is that women have different positions in terms of leadership when they are in the domestic and public spaces¹⁵.

Despite the great history of Acehese women and their enormous contribution to building civilization, the same controversy nowadays when discussing the female leadership in Aceh. The pros and cons are certainly interesting to study and learn academically. How does Acehese understand female leadership? In this case, the most appropriate objects of study are the *mufassirs* (commentators) who interpret the verses of the Qur'an and become spokespersons in the community regarding religious understanding.

Abdurrauf and Hasbi live in Aceh, where most people have a dominant patriarchal understanding. However, both of them have a moderate knowledge of women's issues. This paper will examine how the perspectives of both of them in interpreting issues about women's leadership. The classical Acehese *mufassir* was represented by as-Singkily. Meanwhile, the contemporary Acehese *mufassir* is represented by Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy.

This paper also examines the triggers for their moderate attitude towards women's issues amid the swift currents of patriarchy in Acehese society. This research was conducted to provide an objective and scientific understanding of the position of women's leadership in Islam, especially from the perspective of the Acehese *mufassir*. With a holistic and comprehensive experience, it will open horizons and form a new paradigm in responding to women's leadership issues in Islam.

This research is a type of library research (library research). The primary reference sources in this study are the two books of commentary by Abdurrauf as-

¹³ Ahmad Muttaqin, "Women's Identity in the Digital Islam Age: Social Media, New Religious Authority, and Gender Bias," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, no. 2 (2020): 353–88, <https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v8i2.7095>.

¹⁴ Syahrizal Abbas, *Hakim Perempuan Dalam Mir'at at-Thullâb Karya Sych Abdurrauf as-Singkily* (Banda Aceh: Penerbit Naskah Aceh & Pascasarjana UIN ar-Raniry, 2018), 138–39.

¹⁵ Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, *Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Majid an-Nur* (Semarang: PT. Pustaka Rizki Putra, 2000), 483.

Singkily and Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy. The discussion begins by explaining the biography of the two characters. Knowledge of the background of a commentator is considered urgent. It has implications for the interpretation made by the commentator. Furthermore, the performance of the two commentators on the verses related to women's leadership is presented. Then proceed with a comparative analysis of the interpretation of the two.

Biography of Abdurrauf as-Singkily and Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy and their book of commentaries

Abdurrauf as-Singkily

Abdurrauf as-Singkily was also known by the nickname Tengku¹⁶ Syiah Kuala or Tengku di Kuala¹⁷. His full name was Aminuddin Abdurrauf bin Ali al-Jawi al-Fansuri al-Singkily¹⁸. He was born in Singkil around the year 1001 H / 1593 AD. Singkil was one of the areas on the Northwest Coast of Aceh Province which is now Aceh Singkil regency¹⁹.

The exact date of his birth is unknown because no literature mentions the date of Abdurrauf's birth. The year of his birth is deduced from the age he went to study in the Middle East. Some say he was born in 1029 H/1620 AD²⁰. However, western scholars such as D.A. Rinkes, Anthony H. Johns, and Peter Riddel state that Abdurrauf was born in 1024 H/1615 AD. Rinkes' opinion is based on his calculation of the time of Abdurrauf's return to Aceh in 1071 H/1661 AD, after studying in the Middle East for approximately 19 years²¹. He died at the age of 73 years in 1105 H/1693M. The year of his death is predicted based on the last book written by Abdurrauf. In the book, it is

¹⁶ The word "Teungku" or abbreviated "Tgk" in Aceh is used as a term to address people who are pious in the science of Islam. In contrast to the term Teuku or abbreviated as "T". Teuku is the nickname given to the descendants of the Acehnese nobility (Sultan) for men. If it is a woman, it is written as Cut at the beginning of her name, such as Cut Nyak Dhien, Cut Nyak Meutia, and others. Meanwhile, Shia is the name of the Acehnese in the past for the sheikh, which in Arabic means teacher or knowledgeable person. The people of Aceh really appreciate the services of the ulama. One form of appreciation for the services of Abdurrauf As-Singkily, especially in the field of Education, his name was used as the name of one of the largest universities in Aceh, Syiah Kuala University (USK). Cut Irna Liyana, "Penggunaan Sapaan Bahasa Aceh Dalam Keluarga Pada Masyarakat Aceh," *Community 2*, no. 2 (2016): 205.

¹⁷ Damanhuri Basyir, *Kemasyhuran Syekh Abdurrauf As-Singkily* (Banda Aceh: ar-Raniry Press, 2019), 2.

¹⁸ Mulyadi Kurdi, *Abdurrauf As-Singkily, Mufti Besar Aceh, Pelopor Tarekat Syattariah Di Dunia Melayu*, (Banda Aceh: Penerbit Naskah Aceh, 2017), 2.

¹⁹ Syahrizal Abbas, *Syekh Abdurrauf Dan Corak Pemikiran Hukum Islam* (Banda Aceh: Yayasan PeNA, 2003), 15.

²⁰ Wawan Abdullah Alyasa' Abubakar, "Manuskrip Tanoh Abec: Kajian Keislaman Di Aceh Masa Kesultanan," *Pusat Penelitian Dan Pengkajian Kebudayaan Islam*, no. 2 (1992): 24.

²¹ D. A. Rinkes, *Abdoerraof Van Singkel: Bidjrage Tot de Mystieck Op Sumatra En Java* (Heerenven: Hepkema, 1909), 25–26. Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah Dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII Dan XVIII* (Depok: Prenada Media Group, 2013), 29–30.

explained that the book was compiled in the Peunayong area around the outskirts of the *krueng* (river) of Aceh²².

His education in the Arabian Peninsula lasted for a relatively long time. The book *Umdatul Muhtajin Ila Maslak al-Mufradin* states that he studied there for approximately nineteen years. He went to several regions in the Arabian Peninsula, from Doha (Qatar), Persia (Iran), Yemen, and Jeddah, and eventually headed to Mecca and Medina. It is estimated that he left for the Arabian Peninsula around 1042 H/1642 AD and returned to Aceh around 1661 AD.

Medina became a very historic city for Abdurrauf. There he met great teachers. His famous teachers were Ahmad al-Qusyasyi (d.1082 H/1661 AD) and Ibrahim al-Kurani (d.1101 H/1690 AD). Abdurrauf received a diploma from the *Syathariyah* congregation from Ahmad al-Qusyasyi. With this diploma, he was one of the holders of the official *sanad of the Syathariyah* congregation and had the right to give the congregation diploma to his students²³. Among his students who developed the *syathariyah* assembly in the archipelago were Burhanuddin Ulakan and Muhyiddin Pamijahan. Burhanuddin Ulakan introduced the congregation to West Sumatra. Meanwhile, Muhyiddin Pamijahan brought it to the island of Java²⁴.

Abdurrauf was a very productive and creative scholar. He left many works in various fields of Islamic science. His most famous work was the interpretation of *Tarjuman al-mustafid*. These works were produced on the sidelines of his busy life teaching and becoming Mufti in the Kingdom of Aceh Darussalam.

Tarjumân al-Mustafid was the first book of commentary written in Malay covering the thirty juz of the Qur'an. The book had been printed by various world printers, including *Mathba'ah al-'Ustmâniyyah* publisher in Istanbul, Turkey. This commentary was printed twice in 1884 AD/1302 H and 1906 AD/1324 H. Then, in 1951, it was published by the publishers *Sulaimân al-Marâghî* in Cairo and *al-'Amiriyyah* in Mecca. The last edition was published in Jakarta in 1981. In addition, this commentary was also printed in Singapore, Penang (Malaysia), Mumbai (India), and several other Middle Eastern countries²⁵.

Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy

Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy was born in Lhokseumawe, North Aceh on March 10, 1904 AD / 1321 H. He was born into a family of scholars and *umara* (leaders). His father's name was Tengku Muhammad Husein bin Muhammad Su'ud.

²² Damanhuri Basyir, *Kemasyhuran Syekh Abdurrauf As-Singkily*. Salman Harun, "Hakekat Tafsir Tarjuman Al-Mustafid Karya Syekh Abdurrauf Singkel" (IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 1988), 12–13. T. Iskandar, "Abdurrauf Singkel Tokoh Syatahariah Abad Ke 17," in *Tokoh-Tokoh Melayu Klasik*, ed. M. D Mohammad (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1987), 72–73.

²³ Harun Nasution, "Ensiklopedi Islam Indonesia" (Jakarta: Djambatan, 2002), 1047.

²⁴ Muhammad Imron Rosyadi, "Pemikiran Hadis Abdurrauf As-Singkily Dalam Kitab Mawa'iz Al-Badi'ah," *Diroyah: Jurnal Ilmu Hadis* 2, no. 1 (2017): 57.

²⁵ Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah Dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII Dan XVIII*.

While his mother's name was Tengku Amrah. She was the daughter of Tengku Abdul Aziz who was a Qadhi Chik Maharaja Mangkubumi²⁶.

Hasbi grew up in a devout and religiously fanatical family. Since childhood, his father taught him Islamic knowledge and morals. When he was about six years old, his mother died. After the departure of Hasbi's mother, he was raised by his aunt, Teuku Syamsiah. After two years of being raised by his aunt, his aunt also passed away. Hasbi was raised by his eldest sister, Aisyah (Teungku Manch). He preferred to stay at his sister's house because his father had remarried. However, Hasbi continued to study the Qur'an from his father to memorize 30 juz of the Qur'an. On the sidelines of memorizing the Qur'an, he also deepened his father's knowledge of tajwid and qir'ah.

Hasbi's journey in pursuing knowledge from one *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) to another in various places in Aceh took approximately 20 years. He studied Arabic with an Arab scholar named Muhammad ibn Salim al-Kalali. In 1916, Hasbi studied at the Teungku Idris Chik Islamic boarding school in Tanjungan Barat, Samalanga. He deepened the science of jurisprudence for two years in this place. Then he moved to Aceh Besar (Aceh Rayeuk) to study at the Teungku Hasan Krueng Kalee Islamic boarding school (Teungku Chik in Krueng Kalee). After obtaining a diploma at Krueng Kalee in 1920, Hasbi returned to Lhokseumawe to spread his knowledge to society²⁷.

Hasbi devoted and deepened the knowledge he had acquired in his homeland. In 1926, Hasbi went to Surabaya with his teacher al-Kalali to study at Madrasa *Muallimin Al-Islah Wa al-Irsyad* majoring in Arabic science. The madrasa is led by Umar Hubes, a student of Ahmad Surkati. Hasbi entered the madrasa in the last year and graduated in 1927. After studying at *al-Irsyad*, Hasbi continued to practice his self-taught habits. He was also diligently visiting teachers he deemed worthy of researching and discussing.

His ideas and thoughts, as outlined in books and articles in various other media, caught the attention of many parties. In 1975, the Islamic University of Bandung (Unisba) and IAIN Sunan Kalijaga awarded him Doctor Honoris Causa. His progressive thoughts on Islamic law in Indonesia led him to be elected chairman of the Indonesian Islamic Fiqh Institute (Lefisi)²⁸.

One of Hasbi's most famous works was *Tafsir an-Nûr*. The full name of this commentary was *Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Majid an-Nûr*. This interpretation had been compiled for approximately nine years in Yogyakarta. The compilation of this commentary began in 1952 and was completed in 1961. Its report was first printed in

²⁶ Saiful Amin Ghofur, *Profil Para Mufassir Al-Qur'an*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Insan Madani, 2008), 202.

²⁷ Ghofur, *Profil Para Mufassir Al-Qur'an*.

²⁸ Nasution, "Ensiklopedi Islam Indonesia."

1961²⁹ by CV. Bulan Bintang consisted of 30 volumes containing one juz of the Qur'an. This first batch of prints lasted until 1995³⁰. After surviving for a long time, the book of commentary was printed for the second time in 2000 by the publisher PT. Pustaka Rizki Putra. In the second printing, this commentary underwent several changes and editing by Hasbi's two sons, Nouruzzaman ash-Shiddeiqy and Fuad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy³¹.

Interpretation of Verses on Women's Leadership in *Tafsir Tarjumân al-Mustafid* and *Tafsir an-Nûr*

Research on women's leadership is carried out by tracing the verses in the Qur'an that talk about leadership and women. Of the many verses that talk about women, one verse specifically talks about leadership correlated with men and women. Leadership in this verse is more directed to leadership in the family (household). The poem is Surah an-Nisa' 4: 34.

In addition to Surah *an-Nisa' 4: 34*, several other verses also talk about the role of women in the public sphere. These verses are scattered in various surahs in the Qur'an, namely: at-Taubah/9:71, al-Ahzâb /33:33, and an-Naml/27:29-44. Although these verses do not directly talk about women's leadership, they correlate substantially with this topic.

Interpretation of Verses on *Qiwamah*

Qiwamah comes from the word *qawāma*, which means to take care, protect and be responsible³². The term *qiwamah* then became a topic of academic discussion among Muslim scholars related to understanding the Qur'anic verse regarding female leadership in Surah an-Nisa' [4]: 34. Allah SWT says:

"The men are the maintainers (and protectors) of the women because Allah has made some of them excel the others and because they spend out of their property (for the women as bridal money and livelihood). Therefore the improved women (the women who do the soul's cleansing) are devoutly obedient. As Allah has guarded (their property and virtue), they (too) defend in the unseen (in their husband's absence themselves as well as their husband's property and honor). As for those (women) from whom you fear disobedience (opposition), admonish them (first) and leave them alone

²⁹ Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, *Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Majid an-Nur*. Muhammad Anwar Idris, "Pemetaan Kajian Tafsir Al-Qur'an Di Indonesia: Studi Atas Tafsir An-Nur Karya T.M Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy," *Al-Tadabbur: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 5, no. 1 (2020): 6.

³⁰ Agung Perdana Kusuma, "Kajian Ulum Al-Qur'an Dalam Pandangan Mufassir Nusantara Tgk. Hasbie Asshidiqie," *Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 6, no. 2 (2017): 77. Andi Miswar, "Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Majid 'Al-Nur' Karya T.M. Hasbi Ash Shiddieqy (Corak Tafsir Berdasarkan Perkembangan Kebudayaan Islam Nusantara)," *Jurnal Adabiyah* XV, no. 1 (2015): 86.

³¹ Miswar, "Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Majid 'Al-Nur' Karya T.M. Hasbi Ash Shiddieqy (Corak Tafsir Berdasarkan Perkembangan Kebudayaan Islam Nusantara)." Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, *Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Majid an-Nur*.

³² Ahmad Warson Munawir, *Kamus Al-Munawwir Arab-Indonesia* (Surabaya: Pustaka Progresif, 1997), 1174.

in their beds (then) and (if they go on disobeying) hit them; then if they obey you, do not seek a way against them; surely, Allah is Most Exalted, the Greatest. (An-Nisa' [4]:34).

According to Abdurrauf, this verse proves the husband's (male) leadership over his wife (female) in the household. The husbands' leadership is because they have moral and financial responsibilities toward their wives. Abdurrauf interprets it as follows: "*bermula segala laki-laki dikuasakan mereka itu atas segala perempuan dengan sebab dilebihkan Allah ta'ala segala laki-laki itu atas segala perempuan dengan ilmu dan akal dan wilayah dan dengan sebab dibiayakan mereka itu atas mereka itu dari pada segala arta mereka itu.* (In the beginning, they ruled over all women because Allah, the Exalted, preferred men over women with knowledge and reason and territory and because they paid for it from all their wealth)³³"

This interpretation has the same meaning as what is interpreted by as-Suyûthi in the *al-Jalâlain* book of commentary. In *al-Jalâlain*, this verse is also mentioned as a justification for the husband's leadership in the family because of the moral and financial responsibilities they bear.

The interpretation is also in line with those of al-Baidhâwi, as-Suyûthi, ath-Thabarî, az-Zamakhshari, ar-Razi, Ibn Kathir, and al-Alûsi. Despite essentially having the same meaning, these commentators use different narratives in their interpretation. Each has his stressing points in expressing the reasons for the husband's leadership over his wife.

Muhammad Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy explained several basic reasons why men are positioned as leaders and protectors for women. These are:

- a. War in Islam is only obligatory on men, not on women.
- b. The task of providing for the family is not borne by women but by men.
- c. Men inherit more than women because they have greater obligations than women.

Some contemporary Muslim scholars have criticized such an interpretation. They consider the performance made by the commentators to be related to the context and social reality that occurred at that time. The patriarchal culture of Arabic society tends to influence their interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an. Changes in social context and reality require a new interpretation of the concept of *qiwāmah*, which the classical commentators understand.

According to them, the interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an, which is fixed only on the textual paradigm, will result in a rigid meaning of the Qur'an. The Qur'an contains a complex and broad definition that must be understood elegantly and methods. Among these is by selecting the right lexicon and grammatical structure in

³³ Abdurrauf As-Singily, *Tarjumân Al-Mustafîd* (Medan, n.d.), 86.

interpretation. Such selection will provide a new paradigm in the performance of the Qur'an that affects the doctrine and the resulting legal implications³⁴.

Taufiq Rokhman stated that to get a deeper understanding of the verse, it is necessary to analyze the language of some of the major lexicons in verse³⁵. This language analysis needs to be done to get a comprehensive and correct understanding of the verse that can be implemented in today's social life³⁶.

According to Asghar Ali Engineer, male leadership in the family is contextual and not normative. Family leadership can change according to changing social contexts. If this verse is understood as a normative statement, it will bind women to recognize male leadership at all times and circumstances. However, times and events are always changing. In some cases, the husband does not have the personal integrity or financial capacity required by the Qur'an³⁷.

Referring to *maqâshid ash-syarî'ah* proposed by ash-Syathibi, the issue of household leadership in Islam is included in the realm of *ijtihad al-Maqâshidy*. It means texts and laws depend on their purpose (*annushûsh wa al-ahkâm bi maqâshidiha*).³⁸ Therefore, this *qiwamah* issue will continue to be a hot discussion throughout the ages. The problems that arise will certainly differ from one place to another. Likewise, the culture and traditions of a class are different from others. The text of the Qur'an never changes, but interpretations may vary as long as the main principles stay the same.

Interpretation of the Verse on the Mutualism of Men and Women

Men and women are two beings who need each other. Men cannot live without women, and vice versa. Harmonious cooperation between these two creatures makes life continue until the world's end. In the Qur'an, Allah explains more specifically that every believer, male or female, should help one another. Allah SWT says:

³⁴ Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an Towards a Contemporary Approach* (New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2006), 112–13.

³⁵ In the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI) lexicon is defined with several meanings, including: vocabulary, a simple dictionary, a list of terms in a field arranged alphabetically and equipped with explanations, a language component that contains all information about the meaning and use of words in the language, richness of words possessed by a language. The lexicon here is more accurately defined as the main term in the verse that has a great influence on the understanding of the verse. E. Aminudin Aziz, "Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI)," Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa, Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia, 2016. <https://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id/entri/leksikon>. Diakses pada 9 Februari 2021.

³⁶ Taufiq Rokhman, "Kepemimpinan Keluarga Dalam Al-Qur'an (Kajian Surat Al-Nisa' [4]: 34)," *Muwazah* 5, no. 2 (2013): 44.

³⁷ Asghar Ali Engineer, *Hak-Hak Perempuan Dalam Islam, Ter. Farid Wajidi Dan Cici Farkha Assegaf*, (Yogyakarta: Yayasan Bentang Budaya, 1994), 62. Yunahar Ilyas, *Konstruksi Pemikiran Gender Dalam Pemikiran Mufassir* (Jakarta: Program Peningkatan Kualitas Pelayanan Publik, Ditjen Bimas Islam dan Penyelenggaraan Haji, 2005), 277.

³⁸ Ahmad Raysûnî, *Nadhâriyat Al-Maqâshid Inda Al-Imâm Asy-Syâthibi* (Maroko: Dâr al-Amân, 1991), 335.

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

Translation: "The believers, both men and women, are guardians of one another. They encourage good, forbid evil, establish prayer, pay alms-tax, and obey Allah and His Messenger. It is they who will be shown Allah's mercy. Surely Allah is Almighty, All-Wise. (QS. At-Taubah [9]:71).

According to Abdurrauf, this verse explains that all human beings, male and female, need each other. These two beings have the same responsibility. Men and women help uphold truth and justice and work hand in hand in preventing evil and damage.

Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy interpreted this verse as a command for every male and female believer to help one another. These actions are carried out in various conditions, both in a state of peace and even more so in a state of war. The attitude of mutual assistance and helping each other manifests the believers' nature. Every believer is a brother to other believers. If one has difficulty, others must help him³⁹.

Both commentators have the same substance in understanding this verse. Both seem to state that this verse speaks of the obligation of every believer, male and female, to help each other. Both also agree that there is no difference in responsibilities between men and women to produce good deeds (*makruf*) and refrain from negative actions (*Munkar*). Men and women must cooperate to create a better life in all aspects.

The explanation confirms that there is no difference between men and women in the obligation to uphold the truth. Likewise, they also have the same commitment to preventing crime. QS. at-taubah [9]:7 is God's confirmation that these two creatures must understand their respective obligations. Awareness of these obligations will create harmony in human life which will lead to the benefit of all parties. Thus, no one party should negate the role of the other party.

Interpretation of Verses about Space for Women's Expression

Women are seen as having a different space for movement from men. The space for expression and actualization of women is considered limited. This mindset is rooted in society. Women are always required to be in the domestic sphere (household). Meanwhile, men have free movement space without being limited by certain barriers. The limitation paradigm has been around for a long time. One of the arguments that form the basis for this limitation is the verse of the Qur'an surah al-Ahzab[33]: 33 as follows:

³⁹ Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, *Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Majid an-Nur*, Jilid. 2, 1697.

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَىٰ ۗ وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتِينَ
 الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ
 وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾

Translation: "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". (QS. Al Ahzab [33]: 33).

Abdurrauf states that this verse is an order for Muslim women to maintain their self-respect by keeping careful association. Abdurrauf explains one important point about this verse. When interpreting the *walâ tatabarajna tabarrujal jâhiliyatil la*, he states that women are forbidden to act like the women of the old times. Among attitudes that must be avoided is that they like to tell other people about their troubles and household problems. Abdurrauf calls it "pain". A good woman or wife always keeps her family secret. Especially the shortcomings that exist in married life. All bitterness and difficulties experienced by the family should be kept well while looking for a way out together. Not to be exposed outside, let alone tell it to other men.

Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy interprets the verse as part of an order to the wives of the Prophet to maintain their dignity and self-respect. They are the companions of the Messenger of Allah and the believers. Allah SWT ordered the wives of the Prophet to set a good example for the Muslims. They are required to be role models in the association for all Muslims. The wives of the Prophet were required to leave the habit of the ignorant women of the past who liked to flaunt their jewelry in public. They did it to pride themselves and attracted the attention of men.

The command to watch the association and attitude also aims to maintain their dignity as the wives of the Prophet. If the wife of the Prophet is not able to set a good example in socializing, it will have a bad impact on the da'wah of the Prophet. The family of the Prophet is a reference for Muslims in behavior and attitudes as well as other things in everyday life. Therefore the wives of the Prophet are mentioned specifically to maintain their dignity and self-respect.⁴⁰

Referring to the interpretations of Abdurrauf and Hasbi, it can be concluded that this verse is not a limitation on the space of expression for women. Abdurrauf said this verse is an order to maintain etiquette in socializing in public spaces to avoid negative effects. At the same time, Hasbi stated that this verse was devoted to the

⁴⁰ Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, 3278.

wives of the Prophet to maintain the authority of the Prophet's family and become an example for the people.

Interpretation of Verses about the story of Queen Balqis

Saba' was a kingdom in the 8th century BC located in the Yemen area. The kingdom of Saba was famous for its prosperity and high civilization⁴¹. Queen Balqis was one of the tallest leaders of the domain (queen) who ruled during the time of Prophet Sulaiman. The location of the kingdom of Saba' was very strategic because it connected several countries then, namely India, Ethiopia, Somalia, Syria and Iraq. The Qur'an describes the land of Saba' as a prosperous land filled with God's forgiveness (*baldah al-thayyib wa Rabb al-ghafûr*)⁴².

The story of Queen Balqis is mentioned in the Qur'an in surah an-Naml/27: 20-44. Abdurrauf and Hasbi elaborated the story of the queen in their interpretation as a story of female leadership that contains many lessons. Queen Balqis is described as a wise leader. Her destiny as a woman did not make her weak. She managed to run a government so well that it brought his people to prosperity⁴³.

The story of Queen Balqis provides several valuable lessons in political ethics.⁴⁴ First, Queen Balqis was a woman who had independence in politics (*al-Istiqlal as-Siyâsi*)⁴⁵. She led with confidence even though she lived in a society that was generally ruled by men (a male-dominated society). Second, Queen Balqis was a firm and courageous leader. Third, Queen Balqis was a democratic leader⁴⁶. Fourth, Queen Balqis was a leader who put the interests and safety of the people above defending her ego. Fifth, Queen Balqis was a leader who was quick to respond to the truth⁴⁷.

Comparative Analysis of Abdurrauf as-Singkily and Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy's Interpretation of Female Leadership

Substantially, Abdurrauf as-Singkily and Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy's interpretations of verses about female leadership are alike and even have similarities in several respects. However, there are also some differences between the two. The difference can

⁴¹ Ali Audah, *Nama Dan Kata Dalam Al-Qur'an* (Bogor: Pustaka Litera Antar Nusa, 2001), 628.

⁴² Muhammad Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002), 201.

⁴³ As-Singkily, *Tarjumân Al-Mustafîd*. Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, *Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Majid an-Nur*.

⁴⁴ Syafieh Syafieh and Nurbaiti Nurbaiti, "POTRET KARAKTERISTIK KEPEMIMPINAN PEREMPUAN (Analisis Semiotika Surat Al-Naml: 23-44)," *JURNAL At-Tibyan: Jurnal Ilmu Alquran Dan Tafsir* 3, no. 1 (August 9, 2018): 42–55, <https://doi.org/10.32505/tibyan.v3i1.477>.

⁴⁵ Musdah Mulia, *Eksiklopedi Muslimah Reformis: Pokok-Pokok Pikiran Reinterpr- Etasi Dan Aksi* (Jakarta: Dian Rakyat, 2019), 409.

⁴⁶ Afrizal Nur Ahmad Fadhil Rizki, Sudirman M. Johan, "Menguak Nilai-Nilai Kedamaian Dalam Musyawarah (Telaah Terhadap Kisah Politik Ratu Balqis Di Dalam Tafsir Al-Munir Wahbah Al-Zuhaili)," *Al-Fikra: Jurnal Ilmiah Keislaman* 19, no. 1 (2020): 13.

⁴⁷ Subhan, *Al-Qur'an Dan Perempuan, Menuju Kesetaraan Jender Dalam Penafsiran*. 421-427. Fathurrosyid Fathurrosyid, "Ratu Balqis Dalam Narasi Semiotika Al-Qur'an," *Palasteren Jurnal Studi Gender* 6, no. 2 (2016): 245.

be seen in their style and method of interpretation. Abdurrauf used the *ijmali* method in his performance. Meanwhile, Hasbi's understanding is more inclined to the *tahlili* method. These differences are also influenced by several other factors such as educational background, social conditions, as well as differences in attitudes and religious understanding.

Below is a comparative analysis of their thoughts regarding female leadership.

Family Leadership

Family leadership is often referred to as domestic leadership. Leadership in the family is usually focused on decision-making related to problems that occur in the family and its surroundings. Even though it looks simple, family leadership has big implications and effects in life.

The verse of the Qur'an used as a reference in the context of family leadership is Surah an-Nisâ' [4]: 34. Abdurrauf and Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy provided an interpretation with the same substance in verse. According to them, the leadership in the family is in the hands of men or husbands. Women (wives) are those who are led or governed by the husband. The husband has greater authority in the family to give orders and other important decisions⁴⁸.

The two commentators also revealed that even though the leadership in the family lies with the man (husband), it does not mean they can take arbitrary action against their wife and family. A husband (male) who was given the leadership mandate must be able to lead fairly and wisely. A husband must be a good guide and manager in the family.

Abdurrauf and Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy's understanding of leadership in the family is not much different from what is understood by most classical commentators and some contemporary ones. This understanding is slightly different from some modern Muslim intellectuals, especially from feminist circles. According to them, the interpretation of Surah an-Nisâ'/4:43 has a patriarchal nuance. The arrangements made by classical commentators are considered gender-biased. The classical performance departs from the socio-cultural conditions of a patriarchal society⁴⁹.

Public and Political Leadership

Leadership in the public sphere is leadership outside the family, commonly referred to as public leadership. It has a very broad space and dimension. Every leadership process outside the family environment can be classified as public leadership. Public leadership has very broad implications for the life of the people. It covers various areas of people's lives.

⁴⁸ As-Singkily, *Tarjumân Al-Mustafid*, 85. Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, *Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Majid an-Nur*.

⁴⁹ Asghar Ali Engineer, *Hak-Hak Perempuan Dalam Islam, Ter. Farid Wajidi Dan Cici Farkha Assegaf*. Mulia, *Eksiklopedi Muslimah Reformis: Pokok-Pokok Pikiran Reinterpr- Etasi Dan Aksi*, 410-411

After analyzing Abdurrauf and Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy's interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an related to leadership in the public sphere, neither forbid women from becoming public leaders. While in the public sphere, both tend to provide equal opportunities for both men and women to lead. In family leadership, both tend to prioritize the men (husbands) to become the leader.

Abdurrauf and Hasbi interpreted surah at-Taubah [9]: 71 by stating that men and women are partners to help each other and cooperate. They help each other do things that lead to benefit (*ma'ruif*). Men and women also work together to prevent acts that cause damage and disasters (*Munkar*)⁵⁰.

This interpretation indicates that the two do not have different opinions regarding whether or not female leadership is allowed in the public sphere. Women are given the widest opportunity to participate and make positive contributions to the community in various fields of life. But all of that depends on their readiness to carry out the mandate.

Being a leader is not an easy job. It takes a variety of preparations, both physical and mental readiness. A leader needs to be physically strong and healthy. They must also have a strong mentality and broad scientific insight into the task. If all these conditions are met, anyone can become a leader. These two commentators did not prohibit women from becoming public leaders.

Historical facts show that Abdurrauf was the main supporter of the leadership of the *sulthanahs* who ruled the kingdom of Aceh Darussalam in the 17th century. At that time, he became the kingdom's mufti and was called *qâdhi Malikul' Adil*. During his time, five *sulthanahs* ruled in succession. They headed for approximately fifty-nine years.

According to Abdurrauf, men and women have the same position in humanity. Both also have the same opportunity to do various good deeds and virtues. Abdurrauf also stated that men and women have the same right to act on their assets, become guardians, judges, or even heads of state⁵¹. He had an egalitarian attitude towards women amid patriarchalism in Aceh at that time. It was an unpopular attitude that transcended its time.

Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy was a pioneer of Indonesian fiqh. His paradigm of thinking was far beyond his time. Many fiqh products at that time were considered standardized, which could not be contested. Hasbi appeared boldly reinterpreting some of these fiqh products. He said that classical fiqh taught in Indonesia is an imported product that requires adjustments to Indonesia's prevailing culture and customs ('urf). The adjustment aims to provide benefits and goodness (*mashlahat*). Thus, as one of the most important parts of Islamic teachings, fiqh can be implemented properly in

⁵⁰ As-Singkily, *Tarjumân Al-Mustaffid*. Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, *Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Majid an-Nur*.

⁵¹ Abdurrauf As-Singkily, *Mir'at at-Thullâb Fî Tashîl Ma'rifat Al-Ahkâm Asy-Syarî'ati Lî Al-Malik Al-Wahhâb* (t.tp: t.p, n.d.), 3–6. Syahrizal Abbas, *Hakim Perempuan Dalam Mir'at at-Thullâb Karya Sych Abdurrauf as-Singkily*.

Indonesia. According to him, Indonesia has several differences in culture from Middle Eastern countries, which are producers of classical fiqh⁵².

In his interpretation of verse 71 of surah at-Taubah, Hasbi firmly stated that every human being who believes (believers), both men and women have the same task of doing good deeds. Likewise, they have the same responsibility and duty to prevent evil deeds. So the duties of *Amar ma'rûf* and *nahi Munkar* are not imposed on one gender only. Everyone who claims to have believed in Allah and His Messenger is obligated to do what is right and wrong. One way to do this is to become a leader of the people. The leaders have greater authority in carrying out the duties of *Amar ma'rûf* and *nahi Munkar*. They have various facilities to perform these tasks⁵³.

Based on the above explanation, it can be understood that the two commentators, Abdurrauf and Hasbi, have the same views on women's leadership. Despite living in different times and socio-cultural settings, their thoughts on women's leadership tend to have much in common. Both believe that in the domestic area (household), the family's leadership lies with the man (husband). Meanwhile, women have the same opportunities in the public sphere, including political leadership. The option is wide open to both of them, provided they have the requirements to become leaders, such as physical health, leadership knowledge, and so on.

The similarity of the views of these two commentators did not happen by chance. Although no literature explains the influence of Abdurrauf's thoughts on Hasbi, at least their thoughts on this issue show a common thread between the two. As an Acehese expert in the field of interpretation, it is impossible for Hasbi not to know the performance and thoughts of Abdurrauf as-Singkily. Abdurrauf was a famous Acehese cleric who was an expert in the field of interpretation. In terms of time, he was far more senior than Hasbi. However, it does not mean that their thinking is the same in various matters.

Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that the Qur'an has a comprehensive leadership concept. Every Muslim is a leader at their level. A leader is required to have certain competencies both physically and mentally. A leader also needs to have good spiritual values and superior morality.

The discourse of female leadership in Islam reaps the pros and cons. A somewhat sharper controversy occurs in the discussion about female leadership in the public sphere, especially political leadership. Scholars have different opinions about the permissibility of a woman to become head of state (*al-imâm al-'uzhma*). Most classical scholars and some contemporary ones believe that women should not become state leaders. According to them, women have many weaknesses, so they cannot carry out

⁵² Rusydi Ali Muhammad, "Kontribusi Pemikiran Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy Terhadap Perkembangan IAIN Di Indonesia," in *T.M. Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy Dan Pembaharuan Hukum Islam Di Indonesia* (Darussalam, Banda Aceh: ar-Raniry Press, 2004). 130-133

⁵³ Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, *Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Majid an-Nur*.

big tasks and mandates. Meanwhile, most contemporary scholars believe there is no prohibition against women becoming political leaders, including being heads of state, as long as they meet the qualifications and requirements required to become one.

Substantially Abdurrauf as-Singkily and Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy have the same views on female leadership. This similarity can be seen from their interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an, both related to domestic leadership (household) and public leadership. In the domestic sphere, both of them hold the view that men are the leaders of the household. This conclusion can be seen in their interpretation of Surah an-Nisa'/4:34. While in public leadership, both provide equal opportunities for men and women to become leaders. This opportunity must be accompanied by certain competencies and qualifications required by a leader. A woman who becomes a public leader must also protect herself from negative things prohibited by religion. This conclusion can be seen from their interpretation of the QS. atTaubah [9]:71, QS. al-Ahzab [33]:33, and QS. an-Naml [27]:29-44. Although substantially their interpretation is the same, in some respects, there are differences. Abdurrauf used the *ijmâli* method in his interpretation, while Hasbi used the *tahlîlî* method. They also have different perspectives in interpreting the QS. al-Ahzab [33]:33. According to Hasbi, this verse applies specifically to the wives of the Prophet only. However, Abdurrauf views the verse as generally applicable to all Muslim women.

Socio-cultural and political conditions greatly influenced the works of interpretation of Abdurrauf as-Singkily and Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy. The different scientific traditions and power relations also affected their thoughts. Abdurrauf's religious understanding and attitude appeared to be more moderate than Hasbi's. Abdurrauf was considered an icon who reconciled the religious conflicts during his time. Hasbi showed a different perspective. He was brave enough to be different and criticize the views and thoughts of groups other than his.

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