



INTELLECTUAL MUSLIM RESPONSES TO THE IDEAS
OF FEMINISM IN THE POST-SUHARTO ERA

BY

AMIN FAUZI

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Uṣūl al-Dīn and
Comparative Religion

Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences
International Islamic University Malaysia

MAY 2014

ABSTRACT

This study examines the responses of Indonesian Muslim intellectuals to the ideas of feminism in the post-Suharto era. This study seeks to understand the proponents' as well as the opponents' ideas of feminism — such as gender, equality, patriarchy, misogyny and their relationship with secularism, pluralism, and liberalism. It also analyses the relationship between feminism and gender issues with the orientation of Islamic studies and the interpretation of Islamic law which involves women such as in inheritance, the right of divorce, marriage with the non-Muslim, guardian of marriage, to be witness in court, leadership, polygamy, etc.. Lastly, it highlights the points of agreement and disagreement between the proponents and opponents of feminism. This research is methodologically qualitative, involving library research and accomplished by field work for an extended period in Indonesia to gather the necessary data and to gain information as well as clarifications or responses from the primary sources, namely the scholars, intellectuals, and intelligentsia involved in the feminist discourse or its responses. This study reveals that there is a diversity of response among Indonesian Muslim scholars on the issue of feminism. There are Muslim intellectuals, either individually or collectively, coming from Muslim NGOs or institutions who supported and even promoted such an idea and made it the framework in understanding Islam on gender issues. They are popularly called “Muslim liberals” or “Muslim feminists”. On the other side, there are Muslim intellectuals who opposed such ideas either comprehensively or accepted them conditionally as long as they are compatible with the Islamic worldview and in line with Islamic principles and values. The study shows that the discourse of feminism in post Suharto Era is not inseparable from the orientation of Islamic studies in the institution of Indonesian higher learning — especially IAIN/UIN — and the specific trends of Islamic thought which were developed and promoted by individual Muslim scholars. Such trends promoted the agenda to “integrate” or “synthesize” Islamic traditional sciences — such as *tafsīr*, *ḥadīth*, Islamic jurisprudence, *kalām* (theology) — and contemporary social sciences and humanities which were coloured by the paradigm and values of modernism and postmodernism. As a result, there arose several ideas which were found to be contrary to *Sharī'ah* and mainstream Islamic positions on gender issues. This study finally suggests that the orientation of Islamic studies generally and gender issues particularly, should do justice to tawhidic Islamic worldview, principles, and values, although on new issues not covered by authoritative revealed texts, the exercise of *ijtihād* is to be encouraged. At the same time, it should also be critical in assessing Western thought either from modernism or postmodernism.

خلاصة البحث

هذه الدراسة تسعى لبيان ردود المثقفين المسلمين الإندونيسيين تجاه القضايا النسوية في حُقب ما بعد سُوهارتو (Suharto). وحاولت الدراسة أن تستوعب حُجج المؤيدين لتلك الفكرة ومعارضيه في القضايا النسوية مثل المساواة بين الجنسين، والمساواة في النظام الأبوي، ونزعة كُرهِ النساء وعلاقة تلك الأفكار بالعلمانية، والتعددية الدينية، والليبرالية. فضلاً عن ذلك فالدراسة تبحث عن العلاقة بين الحراك النسوي وقضايا الجنسين وتفعيلها في اتجاهات الدراسات الإسلامية مثل قضايا الميراث، وحق الطلاق، والزواج بغير المسلمين، والولاية في النكاح، والشهادة في المحكمة، والولاية للبت، وتعدد الزوجات، وغيرها. وأخيراً، حاولت الدراسة تسليط الضوء على نقاط الاتفاق والاختلاف بين كلٍّ من المؤيدين والمعارضين للفكرة النسوية. والمنهج المستخدم في هذه الدراسة هو منهج الدراسة المكتبية بالإضافة إلى الدراسة الميدانية التي استغرقت فترة طويلة في إندونيسيا لجمع البيانات الأساسية واكتساب المعلومات والاستفسارات اللازمة، والتوضيحات من المصادر الأولية؛ من العلماء والمثقفين والأكاديميين الذين شاركوا في الخطاب النسوي أو ردوده. واكتشفت الدراسة أن هناك تنوعاً لاستجابات بين العلماء المسلمين في إندونيسيا تجاه القضايا النسوية، كما أن هناك فئة من المثقفين، بشكلٍ فرديٍّ أو جماعيٍّ من المؤسسات الإسلامية والقطاع الخاص غير الحكومي يدعمون هذا الاتجاه ويساندون هذه النزعة، بل جعلوا هذه الفكرة إطاراً عاماً لفهم رؤية الإسلام حول قضية المساواة بين الجنسين. وعُرفوا باسم "المسلمين الليبراليين" أو "النسويين الإسلاميين". وفي المقابل هناك فئات من المسلمين رفضوا هذه النزعة الفكرية رفضاً كلياً، وبعضهم يرفضها رفضاً مشروطاً، طالما كانت الفكرة متفقة مع الشريعة الإسلامية ومبادئها وقيمها قبلها. واستنتجت الدراسة أن خطاب الحراك النسوي في عهد ما بعد سوهارتو لا يمكن فصله بحال من الأحوال عن مسار الدراسات الإسلامية وتوجهها في المؤسسات التعليمية العالية، خاصة في الجامعات الإسلامية الحكومية (UIN/IAIN)، فضلاً عن الاتجاهات الخاصة التي تتعلق بالفكر الإسلامي التي يروجها بعض الأشخاص، كل ذلك بغية تحقيق مشروع دمج التراث الإسلامي وبلورته مثل علوم التفسير، والحديث، والفقه، وعلم الكلام (أصول الدين)، والعلوم الاجتماعية المعاصرة وصبغها بقيم الحداثة وما بعد الحداثة. وهذا الدمج نجم عنه نشأة عديد من الأفكار التي تخالف تعاليم الشريعة الإسلامية ومواقفها تجاه قضايا المساواة بين الجنسين. وأخيراً هذه الدراسة تقترح أن يكون التوجه في الدراسات الإسلامية بشكل عام وفي مجال المساواة بين الجنسين بشكل خاص أن يلجأ إلى إطار التصور التوحيدي الإسلامي، ومبادئ الإسلام وقيمه، حتى ولو كانت في النوازل الجديدة التي لم ترد في النصوص الشرعية، فضلاً عن ضرورة إعمال الاجتهاد وتشجيعه في تلك القضايا. وفي الوقت نفسه، يجب أن يكون ذلك التوجه ذا روح نقدية لتقوم الفكر الغربي، سواء فيما يتعلق بالحداثة أو ما بعد الحداثة.

APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis of Amin Fauzi has been examined and approved by following:

M. Kamal Hassan
Supervisor

Abdul Salam Mohamad Shukri
Internal Examiner

Faisal Ismail
External Examiner

Ismaiel Hassanein Ahmed
Chairman

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Amin Fauzi

Signature.....

Date.....

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

**DECLARATION OF COPYRIGHT AND AFFIRMATION
OF FAIR USE OF UNPUBLISHED RESEARCH**

Copyright ©2014 by International Islamic University Malaysia. All rights reserved.

**INTELLECTUAL MUSLIM RESPONSES TO THE IDEAS OF
FEMINISM IN THE POST-SUHARTO ERA**

I hereby affirm that the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) holds all rights in the copyright of this work and henceforth and reproduction or use in any form or by means whatsoever is prohibited without the written consent of IIUM. No part of this unpublished research may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form of by means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior written permission of the copyright holder.

Affirmed by Amin Fauzi

.....
Signature

.....
Date

Dedicated to my beloved mother (Hj. Lena), my beloved wife (Choirul Izzah, M.A.), and my beloved children (Nouval Fawzy Ameen & Halwa Izy Ameen)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Alhamdulillah. It is only to Allah (S.W.T.) all praises should be rendered. Without His blessing and guidance, it would not have been possible to accomplish this thesis as fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Usuluddin and Comparative Religion at International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).

It is a real pleasure on my part of acknowledge my indebtedness to my supervisor, Tan Sri Prof. Dr. M. Kamal Hassan, for his unceasing support, which played a great role in enabling me to complete my Ph. D. Programme. I wish to acknowledge my great intellectual debt to all professors and doctors at the Department of Usuluddin and Comparative Religion who have contributed enormously in shaping my academic aptitude in Islamic studies.

Lastly, I much indebted to my mother and my wife for their patience and continuous moral as well as financial support during the completion of my study. This is also to my children, their patience encouraged me to rigorously achieve this completion.

To those above mentioned persons, indeed my colleagues and my friends to whom I cannot mention the all, my prater goes to them, may Allah (S.W.T.) bestow the uncountable rewards and blessings. May this thesis convey benefit for Islam and *ummah* at general.

Amin Fauzi
March 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Abstract in Arabic.....	iii
Approval Page	iv
Declaration Page.....	v
Copyright Page.....	vi
Dedication	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
Transliteration	xii
List of Abbreviation.....	xiii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	4
1.3 Objectives of the Study.....	5
1.4 Theoretical Framework.....	6
1.5 Methodology	7
1.6 Literature Review.....	8
CHAPTER TWO: FEMINIST IDEAS IN THE CONTEXT OF MUSLIM THOUGHT IN INDONESIA	18
2.1 The Origin and Development of Feminist Movements	18
2.2 History of Feminism.....	20
2.2.1 Liberal Feminism.....	27
2.2.2 Marxist Feminism.....	30
2.2.3 Existentialist Feminism.....	34
2.2.4 Radical Feminism	35
2.2.5 Socialist Feminism.....	37
2.2.6 Postmodernist Feminism.....	39
2.2.7 Modernization and Feminist Ideas in Muslim Context.....	42
2.3 Conclusion	46
CHAPTER THREE: GENDER ISSUES IN MUSLIM THOUGHT.....	47
3.1 Reformist and Modernist	47
3.1.1 Muḥammad ‘Abduh (1848-1905).....	48
3.1.2 Qāsim Amān (1863-1908).....	53
3.2 Neo-Modernist Orientation.....	57
3.2.1 Fazlur Rahman (1919-1988)	58
3.3 The Liberal Thinkers	63
3.3.1 Mohammed Arkoun (1928-2012).....	63
3.3.2 Naṣr Ḥāmīd Abū Zayd (1943-2012).....	67
3.3.3 Abdullahi Aḥmed Al-Na’im (B. 1950).....	70
3.3.4 Ashgar Ali Engineer (B. 1939).....	74
3.3.5 Amina Wadud (B. 1952).....	79
3.3.6 Fatima Mernissi (B. 1940)	84
3.3.7 Riffat Hassan (B. 1943)	88

3.3.8 Muḥammad Shahrūr (B. 1938).....	91
3.4 Conclusion	93

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCOURSE OF FEMINIST IDEAS IN MUSLIM THOUGHT IN THE POST-SUHARTO ERA 95

4.1 Introduction.....	95
4.2 New Order’s Policy and the Issue of Women’s Empowerment	97
4.3 The Emergence of the Theology of Gender Equality and Justice.....	112
4.4 The Idea of Pioneers of Indonesian Neo-Modernist Muslim.....	126
4.4.1 Munawir Sjadzali (1925-2004).....	128
4.4.2 Harun Nasution (1918-1998).....	133
4.4.2.1 Rational Theology of Mu‘tazilah.....	134
4.4.2.2 The Concept of Qaṭ‘ī and Ḍannī	138
4.4.3 Nurcholish Madjid (1939-2005).....	145
4.4.3.1 Islamic Renewal and Liberalization of Islamic Teachings	146
4.4.3.2 Islam, Modernity, and the Identity of Indonesia	
(Keindonesiaan).....	153
4.4.3.3 Historical and Contextual Approaches to Islam	161
4.4.3.4 Transformation of Islamic Law	164
4.4.4 The Theology of Pluralism.....	171
4.5 Reformation Era and the Issues of Gender Equality and Justice	181
4.5.1 Women in the Political Sphere.....	187
4.5.2 Regional Autonomy Law and the <i>Sharī‘ah</i> -influenced Bylaws	
(<i>Perda syari‘ah Islam</i>).....	190
4.5.3 The Issue of Polygamy and the Counter Legal Draft to the	
Compilation of Islamic Law (CLD-KHI).....	192
4.5.4 The Draft Anti-pornography Bill.....	194
4.6 Conclusion	195

CHAPTER FIVE: RESPONSES OF MUSLIM ORGANIZATIONS TO THE ISSUE OF FEMINISM IN ISLAM: PROPONENTS AND OPPONENTS 198

5.1 Introduction.....	198
5.2 Muslim Organizations and Gender Discourse	199
5.2.1 <i>Yayasan Paramadina</i> (Paramadina Foundation).....	200
5.2.2 <i>Jaringan Islam Liberal</i> (Liberal Islam Network).....	203
5.2.3 P3M (The Association for The Development of Islamic Boarding	
Schools and Society)	208
5.2.4 Rahima	212
5.2.5 Fatayat Nu	215
5.3 Muslim Intellectual Critique of the Gender Discourse and Liberalization	
of Islamic Thought: The Views of Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, Adian Husaini,	
Syamsuddin Arif, Anwar Ibrahim, Hasyim Muzadi, Maman Abdul Rahman,	
Yunahar Ilyas.....	219
5.4 <i>Sharī‘ah</i> and <i>Fiqh</i> (Normative and Contextual Understanding).....	239
5.5 Equality and Justice.....	262
5.6 Conclusion	276

CHAPTER SIX: RESPONSE OF INDIVIDUAL MUSLIM SCHOLARS	280
6.1 Gender Discourse and Liberalization of Islamic Thought.....	280
6.2 Response of the Opponents.....	299
6.3 <i>Sharī'ah</i> and <i>Fiqh</i> (Normative and Contextual Understanding).....	322
6.4 Equality and Justice.....	348
6.5 Conclusion	368
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION	371
7.1 Sharī'ah and Fiqh	389
7.2 Justice and Equality.....	393
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	402
GLOSSARY	416

TRANSLITERATION

Before using this Table, you must first install the AHT Times New Arabic fonts.

Table of the system of transliteration of Arabic words and names
used by the International Islamic University Malaysia.

b = ب	z = ز	f = ف
t = ت	s = س	q = ق
th = ث	sh = ش	k = ك
j = ج	ṣ = ص	l = ل
ḥ = ح	ḍ = ض	m = م
kh = خ	ṭ = ط	n = ن
d = د	ẓ = ظ	h = ه
dh = ذ	‘ = ع	w = و
r = ر	gh = غ	y = ي

SHORT: A = ' ; I = ِ ; U = ؓ

LONG: ā = اَ ; ī = اِي ; ū = او

Diphthong: ay = اِي ; aw = او

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABRI	: Military Forces of Indonesian Republic
(A.S.)	: <i>Alaihissalām</i>
CEDAW	: The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CLD-KHI	: The Counter Legal Draft of <i>Kompilasi Hukum Islam</i> (Compilation of Islamic Law)
DEPAG	: <i>Departemen Agama</i> (Department of Religious Affairs)
DDII	: <i>Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah</i> (Islamic Da'wah Counsel)
DUHAM	: Declaration of Human Rights
DW	: <i>Dharma Wanita</i> (Civil Servants' Wives).
FPI	: <i>Front Pembela Islam</i> (The Islamic Defense Front)
GBHN	: <i>Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negara</i> (Guidelines for State Policy).
GPI	: <i>Gerakan Pemuda Islam</i> (Muslim Youth Movement)
HMI	: <i>Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam</i> (The Association of Indonesian Muslim Youth)
IAIN/UIN	: <i>Institut Agama Islam Negeri</i> (National Institute of Islamic Studies/Islamic National University)
ICIP	: International Center for Islam and Pluralism
ICMI	: <i>Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia</i> (The Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals)
INSISTS	: Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought and Civilizations
JIL	: <i>Jaringan Islam Liberal</i> (The Liberal Islam Network)
JIM	: <i>Jaringan Intelektual Muda Muhammadiyah</i> (Muhammadiyah Intellectual Muslim Youth Network)
Lakpesdam NU	: <i>Lembaga pengkajian dan penelitian masyarakat NU</i> (The Institute for Study and Research of Society)

LKiS	: <i>Lembaga Kajian Islam</i> (The Institute of Islamic Studies)
LSAF	: <i>Lembaga Studi Agama dan Filsafat</i> (The Institute of the Religion and Philosophical Studies)
LP3S	: <i>Lembaga Penelitian, Pendidikan, dan Penerangan Ekonomi dan Sosial</i> (The Institute of Research, Education, and Explanation of Economy and Society)
MUI	: <i>Majlis ‘Ulamā’ Indonesia</i> (Indonesian ‘Ulamā’ Council)
MPR	: <i>Majelis Permusyawaratan rakyat</i> (The People Consideration Counsel)
MMI	: <i>Majlis Mujahidin Indonesia</i> (The Council of Islamic Fighters)
NU	: <i>Nahdat al-‘Ulamā’</i>
PAN	: <i>Partai Amanat Nasional</i> (National Trusty Party)
PDI	: <i>Partai Demokrasi Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Democratic Party)
PERSAMI	: <i>Persatuan Sarjana Muslim Indonesia</i> (the Association of Indonesian Muslim Scholars)
PERSIS	: <i>Persatuan Islam</i> (Islamic Unity)
PII	: <i>Pelajar Islam Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Muslim Student)
PPP	: <i>Partai Persatuan Pembangunan</i> (United Development Party)
PKB	: <i>Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa</i> (Party of Nation Revival)
PKI	: <i>Partai Komunis Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Communist Party)
PKK	: <i>Pemberdayaan dan Kesejahteraan Keluarga</i> (Family Welfare Movement)
PKS	: <i>Partai Keadilan dan Kesejahteraan</i> (Justice and Welfare Party)
P3M	: <i>Perhimpunan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat</i> (The Association of Development of Islamic Boarding Schools and Society)
(S.‘A.W.)	: <i>Ṣallallāhu ‘Alahi Wasallam</i>
(S.W.T.)	: <i>Subhānahū Wata‘ālā</i>

TWI : The Wahid Institute
WID : Women in Development
YKF : *Yayasan Kesejahteraan Fatayat* (The Foundation of *Fatayat* Welfare)

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The encounter between Islam and the West in the modern age with colonialism, modernization and globalization has generated mixed responses in the Muslim world.¹ Science, philosophy and Western thought have great impact on Muslim thought which brought about polarized thinking regarding the proper method and dealing with them. One of the sensitive and controversial issues which triggered much debate is the gender issue propounded by Western feminism and which became mainstream in Islamic thought in many Muslim countries today.²

There are many definitions and perspectives of feminism as well as its ramifications.³ However, at least there is a similarity among them becoming its common platform, namely the efforts to deconstruct the interpretation influenced by patriarchy which does not do justice to women.⁴ The influence of feminist thought in the Muslim world is definitely significant in that it penetrated the field of Islamic studies in such a way that the established interpretation of the religious texts are

¹ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Traditional Islam in the Modern World* (London & New York: KPI, 1987), 40.

² John L. Esposito, "Women in Islam and Muslim Societies", in Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad & John L. Esposito (eds.), *Islam, Gender, & Social Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), xi.

³ Zeenath Kausar, *Feminist Sexual Politics & Family Deconstruction: an Islamic Perspective* (Kuala Lumpur: International Islamic University, 2001), 1. See another books by Zeenath Kausar: *Women in Feminism and Politics: New Directions toward Islamization* (Kuala Lumpur: Leeds Publications, 2001); *Politicization of Sex and Family Devaluation in Feminism: an Islamic Alternative* (Kuala Lumpur: Ilmiah publisher, 2003); *Modern Western Political Ideologies: an Islamic Critique* (Kuala Lumpur: Prentice Hall, Pearson, 2005); *Muslim Women at the Crossroads: Rights of Women in Islam and General Muslim Practices* (Kuala Lumpur: Thinker's Library, 2006); *Political Participation of Women: Contemporary Perspectives of Gender Feminists & Islamic Revivalists* (Kuala Lumpur: Thinker's Library, 2007).

⁴ Sa'diyya Shaikh, "Transforming Feminism: Islam, Women and Gender Justice", in Omid Safi (ed.), *Progressive Muslims on Justice, Gender and Pluralism* (Oxford: One World publication, 2004), 148.

deconstructed and reassessed. It is claimed that it has generated and even perpetuated a social structure that oppressed women and treated them as unequal and unjustly.

In the Muslim world there are those who propound feminist ideas and call themselves “Islamic feminists” as they engage themselves with the broader network and global political landscape of feminist activism around the world, particularly with their colleagues in the West.⁵ By doing this they have the chance to exchange a lot of information, experience, and tools of analysis to reassess the social structure which they think as oppressive and have patriarchy bias.

The feminist thought and movement have spread widely in some Muslim countries including Indonesia which has the greatest Muslim population in the world. The development of this idea and movement in this country has been going on since 1970s but its influence is broader since the beginning of 1990s.⁶ To support ideas and feminist thought, some NGO's established organizations which are funded by donor agents. They produced website, published journals, books, articles, and launched several activities and trainings, as means of socializing gender issues. These issues have become an agenda of contemporary Muslim thought supported by social science perspectives as well as postmodernist points of view.

The development of feminist ideas is also backed up by the translation into Indonesian language of some works written by Muslim feminists such as Amina Wadud, Faṭīma Mernissi, and Ashgar Ali Engineer. Moreover, the feminist ideas also got its momentum when they were introduced in the curriculum of education at the *Institut Agama Islam Negeri*—IAIN/UIN (the Institute of Islamic Studies of Indonesia) as part of the reorientation and the shifting of paradigm to combine

⁵ Ibid., 154.

⁶ Budhy Munawar-Rachman, *Islam Pluralis; Wacana Kesetaraan Kaum Beriman* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2001), 390; Wahyuddin Halim, *Gender, Culture and Development: Muslim Perspectives from South Sulawesi* (Nova Scotia: Dalhousie University Halifax, 2001), 50.

classical and traditional methodology of Islamic studies with the social sciences and Western philosophy and thought.⁷ This means the socialization of gender issues receives its support institutionally from the government through the Department of Religious Affairs which is responsible to enhance the progress of the development of institutions of Islamic studies in Indonesia.

In 1998 the Reformation Era began by substituting the New Order Era with the fall of Suharto's regime who remained in power for thirty two years. The euphoria of democracy was celebrated by Indonesian people by establishing political parties including Islamic parties such as PKB, PKS, PAN, PBB, Neo-Masyumi, and so on.⁸ One of the agenda they propagated, especially by those coming from the Reformist Muslim background, is implementation of the *Sharī'ah* which in the later development engendered controversy and provoked harsh challenge and reaction either from secular nationalist or from those who belong to the Liberal Islam Network. For them, one of the negative implications of the implementation of *Sharī'ah* is the oppression and the discrimination against women.⁹

Actually both groups intend to protect the position and status of women in contemporary society, but they have different perspectives. These differences, in turn, caused serious polarization either among the common people or Muslim intellectuals. Some of them feel self-sufficient and convenient with the established interpretation on women's issues based on traditional Islamic religious texts and deny using Western ideas and philosophy in this regard; on the contrary, their opponents, by using gender

⁷ M. Mastuhu & Deden Ridwan (eds.), *Tradisi Baru Penelitian Agama Islam: Tinjauan Antardisiplin Ilmu* (Bandung: PUSJARLIT & Angkasa, 1998), x.

⁸ Azyumardi Azra, "Political Islam in Post-Suharto Indonesia", in Virginia Hooker & Amin Saikal (eds.), *Islamic Perspectives on the New Millennium* (Singapore: ISEAS series on Islam, 2004), 140.

⁹ Nicolaus Teguh Budi Harjanto, *Islam and Liberalism in Contemporary Indonesia: the Political Ideas of Jaringan Islam Liberal (the Liberal Islam Network)* (Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences of Ohio University, 2003), 8.

analysis from postmodern feminists, object to the traditional interpretation and propose new interpretation which they regard as more comprehensive and just to women. This controversy is still going on until now with each group holding on to its own perspective. The ideas of feminism in the Post-Suharto Era in which the discourse and debate on the those issues still remain is the subject of this thesis.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The issue of feminism has become a controversial issue in Indonesian Muslim community because the Muslim proponents of feminism are perceived as trying to propagate and advance a secular Western perspective on the nature, identity and role of the female gender in modern societies. Many of the ideas propagated by the Muslim feminists appear to be contrary to mainstream Islamic teachings and values regarding the place and role of the women in society. Influenced by the human rights discourse and the trend of liberalism and religious pluralism, the feminist views tend to challenge the well-established principles of Islam. As a result, a strong opposition and hostile responses to the feminist discourse have arisen from amongst the mainstream of Indonesian Muslim intellectuals and scholars. Those intellectuals and scholars come from different organizations such as Muhammadiyah, N.U., Persis (Islamic Unity), DDII (Islamic *Da'wah* Counsel), INSISTS, and so on. Their positions and responses shall be analyzed objectively in the light of the authenticity and integrity of mainstream Islamic theology, exegesis of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* and Islamic views of reformers and renewelists. Therefore, this study is an analysis of the critical responses of several mainstream Muslim organizations, groups and intellectuals vis-à-vis the feminist discourse. The study of the Muslim intellectual responses will help us to answer the following questions:

1. How do mainstream Indonesian Muslim intellectuals understand the ideas of feminism such as gender, equality, patriarchy, misogyny?
2. What is the understanding of Indonesian Muslim intellectuals regarding the reinterpretation of Islamic law which involves women such as in inheritance, the right of divorce, marriage with the non-Muslim, guardian of marriage, to be witness in court, leadership, and polygamy?
3. What are the criteria used by the critical Indonesian Muslim intellectual in evaluating or disagreeing with the views of the feminists?
4. Are there any common ground or points of agreement between the proponents of feminism and the opponents?
5. What is the extent of the influence or impact of liberalism, religious pluralism or secular human rights discourse on the proponents of feminism?

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To understand objectively the reasons behind the emergence of the Muslim feminist discourse in the present-day Indonesia.
2. To understand the impact of unislamic ideas or trends in the feminist discourse in contemporary Indonesian state.
3. To understand the reasons which contribute to the intellectual conflict in the Muslim community.
4. To understand the limits of human freedom in the Islamic worldview as compared to the secular Western conception of human rights.

5. To identify the existence of shared values and common ground between the proponents and opponents of the Muslim feminist movements.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study of Muslim discourse of gender equality or feminism ideas and movement in Muslim society by Western scholars or secularist Muslim thinkers usually adopt philosophical theories and approaches such as phenomenology, class struggle of Marxism, feminism, poststructuralism, postmodernism and hermeneutics.¹⁰ From the perspective of Islamic worldview these approaches do not do justice to the philosophical and religious underpinnings of Islamic teachings regarding the nature of human beings, the role and place of men and women in society. It raises the problem of the definition and role of religion itself which determines how to see and deal with the limits of human behavior and freedom. Those Western theories and approaches are normally colored by biases and reflect the particular experience and perspectives of Christian religion.

Therefore, my approach and analysis of the phenomenon of feminism and its Islamic responses will be based upon the mainstream Islamic thought grounded in the belief that the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* are the Divine sources of ultimate values and norms governing the behavior of the believers in Islam.¹¹ Feminism as advocated by the Western proponents in the modern period is thus perceived as deviating from the

¹⁰ Carl Olson, *Theory and Method in the Study of Religion: a Selection of Critical Readings* (Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2003).

¹¹ To know the principles or rules of interpretation of Islamic religious texts by Muslim religious scholars, see Muhammad Ḥusein al-Dhahabī, *Al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn, vol. 1* (Beirut: Dār al-Yūsuf, 2000), 285-287; *Buḥūth fī 'Ulūm al-Tafsīr wa al-Fiqh wa al-Da'wah* (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2005); Shaykh Khālīd 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-'Ak, *Uṣūl al-Tafsīr wa Qawā'iduhū* (Beirut: Dār al-Nafā'is, 1994), 81-83; Sayyid Ismā'īl 'Alī Sulaimān, *Asbāb al-Inḥirāf fī al-Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm, vol. 1* (Cairo, 2000), 41-62; 'Abd al-Majīd Muḥammad Ṣūṣūh, *Dirāsah fī al-Ijtihād wa Fahm al-Naṣṣ* (Beirut: Dār al-Basā'ir, 2003), 193-196; Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, *Al-Ijtihād al-Mu'āṣir baina al-Inḍibāt wa al-Inḥirāf* (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-Islāmī, 1998), 98-106; Nūr al-Dīn 'Abbāsī, *Al-Ijtihād al-Istiṣlāḥī: Maḥmūmuhū, Ḥujjiyyatuhū, Majāluḥū, Ḍawābīṭuhū* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Hazm, 2007), 247-249.

norm established by the two Divine sources.¹² As such the Indonesian discourse in feminism or gender equality all be seen as another manifestation of liberal secular influences in the minds of those who propagate the controversial ideas.¹³

1.5 METHODOLOGY

This study is methodologically qualitative which includes library research and accomplished by field work for an extended period in Indonesia to gather the necessary data and to gain information as well as clarification or response from the primary sources, namely the scholars, intellectuals, and intelligentsia involved in the feminist discourse or its responses.

The field work will include in-depth interviews with several Muslim intellectuals in Indonesia. The choice of the Muslim intellectual will be based on the following criteria:

1. They are among the most prominent intellectuals or scholars who are critical of the Muslim feminist ideas.
2. They are regarded as representing the position or viewpoint of an Islamic organizations or groups.
3. They are easily accessible to the researcher and they are easily to be interviewed.

¹² Regarding the interpretation of Qur'anic text, Isma'īl Rājī al-Farūqī, the prominent Muslim intellectual in comparative religion, states:

Controversies have arisen, as they certainly may, in the interpretation of the Qur'anic text. What is being affirmed here is the fact that the Qur'anic text is not bedeviled by a hermeneutical problem. Differences of interpretation are apodictically soluble in terms of very same categories of understanding in force at the time of revelation of the text (611-32 CE), all of which have continued the same because of the freezing of the language and the daily intercourse of countless millions of people with it and with the text of the Holy Qur'an. Ismā'īl Rājī al-Farūqī, *Islam and Other Faiths* (edited by Atallah Siddiqui) (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation & IIT, 1998), 155.

¹³ Analyzing the discourse of gender equality through the Islamic perspective in this research does not mean presenting the ideas of either the proponents or the opponents of such ideas not objectively. Their ideas will be presented in the chapter 2 and 3. Likewise, it does not mean setting aside the critical assessment based on the logical reasoning, chiefly from Islamic point of views.

Later on, the result of the interview will be compared with their writings or works to see their correspondences and consistencies. Analysis of their background either related with their comments, works, or position, is also important to understand their stand vis-à-vis gender issues in the social and political context of Indonesia.

Lastly, since the discourse of feminism is related with the interpretation of Islamic religious texts, the researcher will base his evaluation on the principles or rules of interpretation of Divine texts as what have been established by most of Muslim religious scholars in the fields of Islamic religious knowledge, such as *'ulūm al-Qur'an*, *'ulūm al-ḥadīth*, *uṣūl al-fiqh*, and *fiqh*. The opinions and exegesis of Muslim religious scholars either from classical or contemporary period also will be referred to understand the issues proportionally and to reduce the subjectivity of researcher's interpretation.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature discussing gender and feminism in the framework of Islamic religious studies in Indonesia can be categorized generally into two approaches or models. The first uses a theoretical approach by studying some gender or women issues based on normative, or philosophical point of views including the opinions of the social scientist. The second, comprises of studies which were conducted and produced as reports of some agenda or programs which empower women's consciousness of their rights as well as their status and role in society, and the field researches which recorded some comments either from common people or intellectuals revolving around the gender issues.

The theoretical and normative studies, among others, are those of Syafiq Hasyim (2001), *Hal-hal yang tak Terpikirkan Tentang Isu-Isu Keperempuanan dalam*

Islam: Sebuah Dokumentasi (Unthinkable Issues of Womanhood in Islam: a Documentation) and Budhy Munawar-Rachman (2001), “*Penafsiran Islam Liberal Atas Isu-Isu Gender dan Feminisme*” (*The Liberal Islam's Interpretation on Gender Issues and Feminism*), in his book *Islam Pluralis: Wacana Kesetaraan Kaum Beriman (Pluralist Islam: the Discourse on Gender Equality Among Believers)*.

The other studies taking the form of report or field research on the gender issues are either among Indonesian Muslim people or foreign intellectuals such as Emzi Netri (1997) “*Al-Tafkīr Al-Islāmī ‘an Tahrīr al-Mar’ah bi Indūnīsiyā*” (*Islamic Thought on Liberation of Women in Indonesia*) ; Jajang Jahroni (2003), “*Al-Islām wa al-Mar’ah: Qaḍiyyat al-Mar’ah ‘inda al-Dārisīn bi al-Jāmi’āt al-Islāmiyyah al-Hukūmiyyah bī Indūnīsiyā*” (*Islam and Women: Women's Issues According to the lecturers of Institute of Islamic Studies in Indonesia*) ; Masdar F. Mas‘udi, Sciortino F. & Lies Marcoes (1997), “*Learning from Islam: Advocacy of Reproductive Rights in Indonesian Pesantren*”; Kathryn Robinson (2004), “*Islam, Gender, and Politics in Indonesia*”; Andree Feillard (1997), “*Indonesia’s Emerging Muslim Feminism: Women Leaders on Equality, Inheritance and Other Gender Issues*”, and Wahyuddin Halim (2001), *Gender, Culture and Development: Muslim Perspectives from South Sulawesi*.

Syafiq Hasyim (2001) in his book has documented a discourse of gender issues in a wider scope comprising of some gender issues regarding marriage, divorce, polygamy, inheritance, to be witness in the court, to the issue of women leadership. This work of his is based on his reflection and experience for years in advocating women's empowerment for justice and equality.

From the way he writes it seems that he tries to reconcile both the traditional Islamic knowledge —*fiqh*, *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *tafsīr* and *ḥadīth*— and social sciences