

## PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology

### A CRITICAL REVIEW OF WESTERN CONCEPT OF WOMEN'S INDEPENDENCE AND THE WOMEN RIGHTS DEFINED IN ISLAMIC SHARI'A

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**Dr. Najmul Sahar Ilyas, Dr. Muhammad Riaz, Uzma Shabbir, Dr. Muhammad Hamza, Hafiza Maria Hassan Padhiar. A Critical Review Of Western Concept Of Women's Independence And The Women Rights Defined In Islamic Shari'a -- PalArch's Journal Of Archaeology Of Egypt/Egyptology 20(2), 584-595. ISSN 1567-214x**

**Keywords: Cultural Practices, False Notion, Women's Liberation, Islamic Law**

#### **ABSTRACT:**

Due to the divergence of cultural practices in the Muslim world from an Islamic perspective as well as the false notion in the West that Islam subjugates women, the status of women in Islam is a topic that is still relevant today.

An objective examination of Islam's foundational texts and an examination of women's status in civilizations where Islam was practiced actually demonstrate that Islam is a special blessing for women.

Women have a unique place and status in Islam. It emphasizes women's greatness and the emancipation of women, and dismisses the Western conception of women's liberation as a lie. Women in the West are being exploited in the name of freedom. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah says:

"هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ"<sup>1</sup>

Translation: "They are your clothing, and you are theirs."

Islam views both men and women equally and does not in any way devalue women. Islamic law accords women a position and status that is unmatched in human history.

The article that follows will give a critical overview of how the Western idea of women's independence differs from the rights guaranteed by Islamic law.

### **PURPOSE OF RESEARCH:**

The liberal class frequently objects that Islam opposes giving women their rightful role in contemporary society. Those who only understand women's independence in terms of the West and are not aware of the social status that Islam has given to women raise this objection.

Islam accords men and women equal rights and does not in any manner devalue women. The argument that Islam did not give women a rightful place or that Islam places women in a subordinate position will be explored in the subject under consideration. Theories in this regard will therefore be examined after a brief introduction to Islamic teachings and the western concept of women's freedom.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

#### ***"Women in Islamic Society"***

The "Woman in Islamic Society" book, written in Urdu by Maulana Syed Jalaluddin Omari, president of the Aligarh Institute of Research and Authorship, is a significant and well-known work on the subject of women's place in Islam. Although numerous books have been written on the subject since it was first published in Urdu fifty years ago, its comprehensiveness of debate and its logic set it apart from other publications in both strength and style. The fact that it has been printed thirteen (13) times in India and more than that in Pakistan can be used to determine its popularity.

#### ***Encyclopedia Britannica***

An English language general knowledge dictionary is Encyclopedia Britannica. Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. is the publisher. Since its founding in the 18th century, the corporation has undergone numerous ownership changes.

The Encyclopedia Britannica makes an effort to condense knowledge into brief entries. Gives a basic overview of the subject and offers accurate responses in context.

### *Beyond the Veil*

Fatema Mernissi (1940–2015) was a leading advocate for women's rights in the Muslim world. In 2003, she was awarded the Prince of Asturias Award for Literature along with Susan Sontag. In this classic study, internationally renowned sociologist Fatema Mernissi argues that women's oppression is not due to Islam because this religion celebrates women's power. Women's oppression, she maintains, is due to political manipulation of religion by power-seeking, archaic Muslim male elites.

### *Tafseer Zilal-al-Quran:*

Fi Zilal al-Quran is one of the best considered commentary of the Quran, written by Sayyid Qutb Shaheed during 1951-1965. The original book was written in 30 volumes corresponding to 30 Juz of al-Quran. The book is widely translated into many languages.

### *Western concept of Women Independence:*

If we look at the history of the many countries in the world, we can see that males have always had the power in every era and in every country, which is why these laws were created and the same customs were encouraged that safeguarded men's rights. Women's rights were also disregarded. Women in Western countries did not have any form of social rights, therefore their status remained the same as that of a man's slave.

The women's liberation movement was originated in response to this societal exploitation of women, and it was founded on the principle that men and women should be treated equally in all aspects of life, including society, the economics, politics, and daily life. Women were given responsibility for all of these tasks in every field up until the reaction, which was handled solely by men. Women simultaneously received all of the privileges enjoyed by men. The same thing was referred to as equal weight for men or women's freedom.

Islam was the first religion to introduce the concept of gender equality, freeing women from the centuries-long shackles of male servitude. However, this equality is distinct from the Western notion of gender equality. Men and women are treated equally as human beings in Islam. Additionally, they are the best and most exceptional creation among all the species in the cosmos in terms of their creation and characteristics. They are a singular work of nature.

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنْكُمْ مِّمَّنْ ذَكَرِ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ  
مِّنْ بَعْضِكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْضٍ<sup>2</sup>

Translation: Then their Lord agreed to their request that He not let any of the workers among them—whether they were male or female—waste their labor. Allah does not let anyone's deeds go to waste. Men and women are not different species; they are one and the same. In the hereafter and upon achieving ranks with Allah, men and women are on an equal footing.

In reference to Tafsir Zilal al-Qur'an:

The act that Muslims refer to as the culmination of all acts of worship. And everyone will enjoy this fruit. Either men or women should perform this. Gender is not a requirement in this process. Due to the equality of men and women in humanity. They are each other's constituents, forebears, and equals in the resurrection scales.<sup>3</sup>

***Regular use of the term "Women's liberation":***

This phrase was first used in a formal sense in the 18th century A.D. when European philosophers and scholars raised their voices in opposition to society to defend individual rights and shouted the slogan of personal freedom. These thinkers' architects then overthrew the oppressive and exploitative system that had previously existed and instituted a brand-new one. Presented contemporary concepts for creation, leading to the French Revolution, which gave men and women equal access to social rights and personal freedom. It was enforced by males, indicating that at the time, men were not enjoying even the most basic human rights; nevertheless, during the French Revolution, women did not receive full but rather partial rights, and later, when men worked in the same factories as women, women received full rights. She had to leave the house to find work because there weren't enough people, which exposed her to a new environment and inspired her to continue fighting for her rights. The women's rights movement formally got started from this point.

The first conference was planned in New York from June 5 to June 9 as a result of this effort. The suggestions from this meeting are as follows:

Housewives need to be paid on a regular basis for their caregiving and reproductive efforts.

••Member nations should place a strong emphasis on sexual education, marital rape legislation, and criminalizing men in family courts.

It should be deemed a woman's right to have an abortion.<sup>4</sup>

The Encyclopedia of Britannica mentions Mary Wollstonecraft as the first woman to advocate for women's rights in her book.

The first Feminist manifesto was Mary Wollstonecraft's vindication of the rights of women.<sup>5</sup>

However, his book was unable to have an impact on his contemporaries; as a result, John Stuart Mill's book was adopted as the curriculum for women's liberation in England, according to Encyclopedia Britannica:

The book John Stuart Mill's subjugation of Women, published two generations later in 1869, served as the movement's official text in England.

In his book, Mill states: I shall have no difficulty persuading anyone who claims to agree with me on the issue of woman's equality that I feel that woman's infirmity in other respects is so entrenched as to make her subordinated in domestic life. Most men find it intolerable to share a home with a peer. It is unfair to assume that they are unfit or unfit for jobs that are open to men of law, or even if they are fit, for jobs that are open to them, just based on their birth. Prohibition would simply have kept them all reserved for the advantage of men; where is the justice in that? For the past two centuries, women have been subject to limitations just because they are female.<sup>6</sup>

This manifesto offered women additional motivation for their cause, which advanced ahead of the race for women's rights. The phrase "Equality for Men" came first, then the idea of "women's freedom," and finally the subsequent evolutionary milestones.

### *Eras of Feminist Movement:*

#### *Early Women rights movement*

Following the French Revolution, the Early Women's Rights Movement is referred to as the first era.

The second time period, known as the women's travel movement, runs from 1890 to 1925.

The modern era known as the "Modern Feminist Movement" is the third period. This time frame began at the turn of the century and is still present now.

The fight for women's fundamental rights was the focus of the first two periods, but in the third, which lasts up until the present, this feminism movement evolved into one for women's emancipation. Animosity towards men.

#### *Women's rights defined in Islamic law:*

Some tribes in pre-Islamic Arab society would bury their newborn daughters alive right away. It is stated that whomever violates this rigorous pledge in the Holy Qur'an will be held accountable to Allah on the Day of Judgement.

The divine guidance is found in the Holy Qur'an:

وَإِذَا الْمَوْءُدَةُ سُئِلَتْ بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ<sup>7</sup>

When the girl who was buried alive is questioned about the fault for which she was executed,

Allah states in the Holy Qur'an another time:

وَكَذَلِكَ زَيْنَ لَكثيرٍ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ قَتَلَ أَوْلَادِهِمْ شُرَكَائِهِمْ لِيُرْدُوهُمْ وَلِيَلْبِسُوا عَلَيْهِمْ دِينَهُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا فَعَلُوهُ فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ<sup>8</sup>

And likewise, the killing of their children was made pleasing to many of the polytheists, so that they might bring them back and make them miserable. 7 their religion, and if God had willed, they would not have done it, so leave them alone, and they do not fabricate. Islam has set equal rights for both men and women

Allah guides in the Holy Qur'an

هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ<sup>9</sup>

Translation: They are clothing for you and you are clothing for them.

Explaining this in Tafsir al-Zilal al-Qur'an, it is written that:

"A garment is a veil. It safeguards the warmth from the cold. The husband-wife connection serves as a curtain for both parties. It safeguards them. Islam views people in terms of their actuality. The terms of reality itself. Additionally, it satisfies his innate wants, thus this method grabs the guy by the collar and leads him to new heights.

As if love, sincerity, loyalty, the keeping of secrets, and covering one's face are also necessary conditions for a husband and wife relationship in addition to their physical union.

Above all else, this relation transforms it into a source of honor, pride, and comfort because it expresses a person's ornamentation in the same way as clothes does.

Because of this bond of man and woman, a very strong family system is established in a Muslim society.

Ms Fatima Mernissi has written about this in her book:

"The Shariah has shaped the legal and ideological history of the Muslim family structure and consequently of relations between the sexes. One of the most enduring characteristics of this history is that the family is assumed to be unchangeable, for it is considered to be divine."<sup>10</sup>

***A woman has been made the Influential within the boundaries of the house:***

In Islam, the woman has traditionally focused her efforts on the home while the man was initially responsible for preserving the state and society. Her true role is not that of a market dealer, an administrative assistant, a court judge, or an army soldier. Its actual area of influence is the household.

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى<sup>11</sup>

Translation: Settle in your houses and refrain from acting in the manner that women did in the "pre-Islamic" era. “

When she is permitted to leave the house for a significant reason or when a group worship service is deemed beneficial or important for her, actions are taken to ensure that she is protected from this sensation each and every time. Claims that where she is in reality is the same as where she was when she left. She hasn't crossed the line into manhood just because she leaves the house.<sup>12</sup> Allah's Messenger (May peace be upon him) declared the woman responsible for the house and said

وَالْمَرْأَةُ رَاعِيَةٌ فِي بَيْتِ زَوْجِهَا وَمَسْئُولَةٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهَا<sup>13</sup>

Translation: A woman is accountable to her subjects and to her husband's household.

Islam sees women as highly strong and resilient, not helpless and weak. It seems to be fragile. However, it has a powerful and capable interior. In the viewpoint of Islam, a woman's capacity is so great that she is given the duty of guarding and guarding the family. This protector is so strong that he can prevent any threats to the herd from coming from the family Centre, and he never regrets taking on this job.

It is a man's duty to oversee the household finances. But it is the woman's duty to safeguard it.

### ***Financial Responsibility:***

Islam accords women financial rights. In every situation, the man is responsible for providing for the woman. As a daughter, the father is responsible for paying for her maintenance. As a sister, the brother is responsible for paying for her maintenance. If a wife, the husband is responsible for paying for her maintenance. As a mother, the son is responsible for paying for her costs. In this case, a woman's self-respect and dignity are safeguarded.

However, a woman's maintenance is required of her husband if she voluntarily bequeaths her money, land, or other assets to her son, husband, or brother. In this case, it is her own will.

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ وَعَلَى  
الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَا تُضَارَّ  
وَلَدَةٌ بِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَالِدَةٍ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا  
عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا  
أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا  
أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ<sup>14</sup>

Translation: Mothers are allowed to exclusively breastfeed their children for a full two years, if they so want. Fathers are responsible for providing for their moms and for dressing them appropriately. No one is given more responsibility than they can handle. No father should suffer because of his child, and no mother should suffer because of her child. Additionally, the heir of the [father] is obligated in the same way as the father. Additionally, neither of them is to blame if they both choose to wean each other by mutual permission and discussion. Furthermore, as long as you make the appropriate amount, there is no fault on your part if you want a substitute to take care of your children. Fear Allah and understand that Allah is seeing of what you do.

Allah said that No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child, meaning, the mother should not decline to rear her child to harm its father even after divorce. The mother does not have the right to refrain from suckling the child after giving birth, unless she suckles him/her the milk that is necessary for his/her survival. Later on, she is allowed to give up custody of the child as long as she does not do that intending to harm the father. In addition, the father is not allowed to take the child from his mother to harm the mother.

لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ  
وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا<sup>15</sup>

Translation: Men must leave a share of what their parents and other close family members leave, and women must leave a share as well, whether it be a small or significant portion.

"This is the overarching premise by which Islam granted women the same privileges as males at the time—1400 years ago. This choice was based on moral principles. In the same manner as orphans' rights were safeguarded, the rights of children and orphans were typically suppressed in that culture because, throughout the Dark ages of human, the value of people was judged not by their humanity but rather by their ability to produce goods.

How useful they are and then how useful they are in war. Islam offered a heavenly philosophy in these circumstances that prioritized treating people as human beings. Even now, it cannot be separated. The basic status is that of a human. And following that come all other social or familial ranks.

In Islam, the girl's viewpoint has been given weight while discussing marriage. The choice of husband is now also required to have the girl's approval and consent.

The Prophet of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, stated, "A married woman should not be married until she is consulted, and a virgin should not be married without her permission."



### *Women and Education:*

Knowledge is essential for human progress. Any country or individual cannot survive without information. In Islam, both men and women are required to have an education; knowledge is not reserved for any one class or gender. Special focus is placed on the education of girls in the Prophet's teachings. It is narrated by Jabir Bin Abdullah that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ كُنَّ لَهُ ثَلَاثُ بَنَاتٍ يُؤَرِّبُهُنَّ وَيَرْحَمُهُنَّ وَيَكْفُلُهُنَّ وَجَبَتْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةُ الْبَتَّةُ قَالَ قِيلَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ كَانَتْ اثْنَتَيْنِ قَالَ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ اثْنَتَيْنِ قَالَ فَرَأَى بَعْضُ الْقَوْمِ أَنْ لَوْ قَالُوا لَهُ وَاحِدَةً لَقَالَ وَاحِدَةً

"Whoever brings up three girls, educates them, marries them and treats them well (even later), then Paradise is for him." It was said, "O Messenger of Allah, what if he has only two?" The Prophet said, "**Even two.**" Some people thought that if they had said to him one, the Prophet would have said even one.<sup>16</sup>

The man was bound by the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and called the man equal to the woman. He was not convinced of complete equality between men and women. This is explained by the verses of Almighty.

The Prophet of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, is reported to have said: "Whoever raises three girls, educates them, marries them, and treats them well (even later), then Paradise is for him."

He declared that men and women are equal under the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. He did not believe that men and women were completely equal. Modern Education which is influenced by west drive women away from faith and are death to the peace and harmony of the family system.

Islam undoubtedly emphasize the importance of educating women, but it should be done in a way that develops their personalities rather than just imparting knowledge that encourages immorality and irresponsibility.

### *Man is made superior to woman:*

الرَّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ. 17

Translation: Men are guardians of women because Allah has made one of them superior to the other and because men spend their wealth on women.

The fundamental principle of Islam, which granted women the same rights as men at the time, was established fourteen hundred years ago. This choice was based on moral principles. The rights of children and orphans were typically destroyed in the society at the time, although the rights of orphans were safeguarded. And these rights were eliminated because, throughout the dark ages, the value of people was not assessed on the basis of their inherent worth,

but rather on the basis of their utility in the manufacturing process and, later, in times of conflict. Come. In these conditions, Islam offered a divine philosophy that put the human being first. Because under no circumstances can human status be isolated from it. Human status is the basic status. And all other statuses within a family or within a society come after that.

***Men are superior to women for a variety of reasons.***

History tells that Men ruled the world as prophets, caliphs, and imams and always engage in jihad, horseback riding, and archery. They own the Imamati-Sagheera and Imamati-Kubra. Imamati-Sagheera refers to the Imamati of prayer, and Imamati-Kubra refers to the governance and kingdom. The obligation for men to testify during Adhan, Khutb, Hudud, and Qisas is the same. All of these verses demonstrate the superiority of men over women. Men have the freedom to marry, divorce, remarry, and have many marriages at the same time. Men spend their cash on women in the form of dowries and for their maintenance, which is the second reason why they reign over them. Keep in mind that while not every guy is better than every woman but in general observation, male sex is superior to female sex. Some women, such as Hazrat Aisha Siddiqah, may Allah be pleased with her, was more knowledgeable and judicious than many men. Millions of men are nothing compared to Umm al-Momineen. Not on par with dust. The same is true for Sahabi women and Sahabi elders.

Islam accorded women a high standing of honour and dignity. After the Prophet's death, Amhat Al-Muminin provided academic services for approximately 50 years. In terms of knowledge, Hazrat Ayesha Siddiqah, may Allah be pleased with her, occupies a high place. The eminent Companions of Jalil-ul-Qadr used to visit your Majlis to learn. He made a substantial contribution to the Muslim Ummah's academic, practical, social, individual, and collective education and training.

Islam has made a point of emphasizing women's rights in particular and otherwise threatening God's punishment.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَقُوقَ الْأُمَّهَاتِ<sup>18</sup>

Translation: God has forbidden you to be disobedient to mothers.

And appointed him for his children at the place where greatness ends, that is

”الْجَنَّةُ تَحْتَ أَقْدَامِ الْأُمَّهَاتِ“<sup>19</sup>

Translation: “Paradise is under the feet of mothers”

Mother has been given a very important responsibility by Allah. First, she carries the burden of children physically. And pain after pain gives birth to it. Then she nurtures him and the most important duty that nurtures generations is

training-And Islam has made the duty of training even more sensitive by declaring the mother's lap as the first seminary. The responsibility of training has also been assigned to the mother because she has been given the patience, courage and endurance that is necessary for the training of children. And above all, she was liberated from the responsibilities of guardianship so that he could train his children with fairness and in return the children were ordered to obey him.

### ***Results/Outcomes of Islamic teachings and the teachings of West:***

- Islam provided protection to the woman by insisting on the veil, while the West auctioned off her honor by making her a product of marketing.
- Islam has put the responsibility of protecting a woman's life and property, honor and reputation on the man as a father, brother and husband. While the West took away all the relationships from the woman and left her alone in the field of life.
- Islam made woman a symbol of loyalty, love and modesty, while Western civilization made her a practical masterpiece of vulgarity, obscenity and nudity.
- Western civilization believes in the equality of men and women. According to them, there is no difference between men and women, both have the same capabilities, both can carry the same responsibilities and burdens. According to Islam, a man is a man and a woman is a woman. Both are equal partners in running the system of life, but considering the natural difference, Islam has put the principle of division between the two and not the principle of homogenization.
- Western civilization has given economic responsibilities to men as well as women and placed them side by side with men. While Islam has placed the economic burden on the shoulders of men and women are exempted from economic struggle. However, if she wants, she can voluntarily contribute to the financial obligations.
- Western civilization has put women in the market and is trading on her femininity, while Islam has taught respect for women and taught them to treat her well.
- Western civilization has destroyed the family system and introduced the term old-age homes to the younger generation, while Islam has elevated women to the level of mothers and made her service a means of attaining heaven.
- The West considered marriage a burden and the term 'girlfriend' became common. While Islam made marriage a pure and sacred relationship and emphasized to be connected with that relationship.
- The West made monogamy legal and legitimate, but made it common practice to have girlfriends without any limit on the number of them. While Islam allowed men to have four marriages as a condition to do justice, and in case of not doing justice, asked them to settle for just one.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Islam is the only religion that gives women all the rights which were claimed by West. It is Islam which gives value, protection, shelter, honor and dignity to the women. No other religion or state gives all these rights to a women. There is no comparison of Islam and any other religion, state and country. Besides Islam has provided freedom to women that the West has claimed to provide.

There are anti-woman wolves lurking everywhere in society, Islam persuades that women should be protected and a society should be established where males guard the femininity of the women.

The development of a moral and upright society is what Islam teaches to achieve by putting these things into practice. Islam offers women a setting where they can make better use of all of their skills. Otherwise it is against the nature, and its violation invariably causes distortion and disorder in society.

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