

CrossRef DOI of original article:

# 1 The Problem of Political Feminism in Islam

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4 Received: 1 January 1970 Accepted: 1 January 1970 Published: 1 January 1970

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## 6 **Abstract**

7 It seems that the modernity with which Arab societies were shaped was utterly devoid of  
8 philosophy and methodology, Tribalism and sexual racism remained significant components in  
9 shaping the psychology of the Arab self. After the necessary distinction between Islam as a  
10 culture and fundamentalism as a political ideology, I would like to talk in this paper about the  
11 complete marginalization of the role of women in politics. Where do women sit in Islamic  
12 political history? And if they have a place, why are they marginalized? This research paper  
13 aims to shed light on the political position of women in Islam. Within the scope of the  
14 intellectual research of the Moroccan sociologist (Fatima Mernissi), she began her research  
15 with a social and historical approach, as she searched for the truth about the deep roots of the  
16 political exclusion of women in Arab history. I found that this exclusion is due to the fact that  
17 fundamentalist groups used the wrong interpretation of the religious text in order to subjugate  
18 women according to these extremist ideas, these ideas succeeded in an earlier period of time,  
19 and we are still in the aftermath of this period, to some extent.

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21 **Index terms**— women, muslim women, politics, islamic heritage, fatima marnissi.

## 22 **1 I.**

23 introduction umanity has lived for many centuries without realizing the fundamental role of women, and perhaps  
24 that is what led to the delay in their march for long periods. However, the human mind has become a high degree  
25 of maturity to accept the idea of equality and participation. Despite that, women participated in the presidency  
26 of states and, thus contributed to the march of humanity since The creation of Adam, peace be upon him. To  
27 this day, the Virgin Mary, Lady Khadija bent Khuwaylid, Queen Victoria, Margaret Thatcher, Indira Gandhi,  
28 and others.

29 The Arab feminist discourse appears to be complex because of some connotations that we can't talk about  
30 it, in an earlier period. Then addressing the issue of women in the Arab-Islamic heritage, various forms of  
31 psychological resistance often appear that curb any renewal that occurs in women's discourse, despite the calls  
32 for renewal and reform emanating from the Arab national movement, which represented a defining moment in  
33 the Arab and Islamic world; However, extremism is still setting society back.

34 Some believe that the Arab community is being hijacked by two forces: the first seems feverish in defending  
35 the inheritance from a defensive point of view only, or out of fear of unknown renewal, and the second is the  
36 search for renewal with requirements commensurate with the modern era. There is even an intermediate force  
37 that cares about women. If we look at the past (the age of enlightenment), we find that one of the first calls  
38 to liberate women from the mold prepared for them in advance by a generalized and enlightened sheik: Rifaa  
39 al-Tahtawi" (1801-1873), played a decisive role in supporting and defending women's issues, He was a pioneer of  
40 enlightenment, He is one of the top leaders of the scientific renaissance in Egypt. He was his social position was  
41 aimed at crossing society from the stage of feudalism to the bourgeois stage. (1) He has revolted critically against  
42 the many outdated customs of society that turn women into marginalized beings who have lost their freedom and  
43 dignity in society. And when we talk about the roots of the problem of women in the Arab world concerning  
44 (linguistic alienation) and (the curse of the eternal apple), until we reach what has become of their condition in

#### 4 III. THE PROBLEM OF POLITICAL FEMINISM

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45 the Arab male mentality, we realize that we are facing a spiritual issue rather than a material one. The human  
46 being in our Arab society suffers from various types of oppression. If the woman is deliberately excluded, the  
47 man is also in a state of pressure (social, economic, political, and psychological, etc.).

48 The issue of women's liberation must be preceded by human liberty in general, which is why, feminist  
49 movements, according to (Fatima Mernissi), (\*) were: A byproduct of Arab Islamic nationalism. (2) There  
50 is no doubt that the Arab world's contact with the West during the colonial and post-colonial periods played a  
51 significant role in establishing the discourse on women in the Arab world.

## 52 2 II.

### 53 3 Fatima Mernissi's Discourse

54 Mernissi's speech is a mixture of several discourses which makes her discourse unique. When we look at a single  
55 work, we find ourselves in front of a variety of positions; as, she worked to shake masculine values at a steady  
56 pace, she fought what appears to be sacred in all transparency, and she even did not remain silent about her  
57 speech in prohibited areas. Mernissi's war was never gendered, as she did not aim her arrows against men, but  
58 chose victory for women away from the glamorous approaches that make men their enemy.

59 Although she fought the war with contentiousness, she was a pacifist presenting her vision to the Western  
60 and Arab world in general. With her intellectual contributions, she participated in correcting the perceptions  
61 of the other (the West) about the Arab woman, which was transferred to them by orientalists. Her main issue  
62 is an issue of social refutation of man; the problem is not religious, but rather a human problem in its highest  
63 form. She did not talk about gender, but rather about the human being who protects women in a society that is  
64 strained by his masculinity, and thus reflects the man's view of her, so it is a sign of the decline or advancement  
65 of women.

66 Mernissi started from a historical approach to reach the roots of the women's crisis, as it has become in the  
67 modern era; however, I wonder why all these relentless pressures and restrictions when we prepare to travel  
68 through the past, especially if it concerns women in the Islamic heritage? Mernissi has contributed to restoring  
69 the marginalized feminine self in the modern era. She takes refuge in history -as the most critical force known  
70 to humanity -as an eyewitness to whether a woman was treated fairly or aborted at the doorstep of the harems.  
71 She had to travel through time despite the bumpy road and the dangers of the journey, and she explains this in  
72 her book "The Political Harem": The Prophet and Women; she, says it is imperative to travel in time because an  
73 analysis of the past is necessary from a perspective that does not see it as a myth or a sanctuary, it becomes an  
74 essential matter. (3) she has chosen vast forbidden paths, refusing to live obscurely in a time of silence. Perhaps  
75 the past inspired Mernissi to utter a new present! Mernissi approaches the religious text through the authority  
76 of interpretation and in dealing with the heritage text as a network of cognitive and authoritarian relations by  
77 subjecting the heritage text to a precise and deep anatomical process that turns it into material for reading. She  
78 mixes structural treatment and historical analysis of the heritage text. (4) She read the Arab Islamic heritage  
79 using the mechanisms of criticism from the heritage in search of the writings of ancient historians.

80 In the introduction to her book, The Political Harem, she asks: Is the readers' loitering in the wilds of the vast  
81 Islamic memory a sin? Doesn't the Qur'an (according to the tongue of the Arabs) simply mean reading? The  
82 imams and politicians do not want to content themselves with managing the affairs of the present to ensure our  
83 happiness as Muslims, but rather subject the past to strict control and management, whether it concerns men or  
84 women. (5) we are unable to read and decipher the great things about heritage. (6) Although there was a female  
85 authority that has already been exercised (\*) in periods of Arab and Islamic history and the ascension of women  
86 to the throne forced the Muslims to face in a few decades what the Westerners took centuries to digest, which is  
87 democracy and gender equality; the question of social, political, and sexual inequality is being re-posed and this  
88 is what makes us lose our senses. (7) Some groups often refuse dialogue, and claim to know the absolute truth  
89 that derives from the Holy text, however, Who among us has this whole truth to have the right to express it?

## 90 4 III. The Problem of Political Feminism

91 It seems a regular feature of women's political discourse that they always fall into a disincentive process of  
92 appropriating everything they have done throughout history. Mernissi asks: "What is the source of this tension  
93 between the feminine and the political?" (8) " Why has it been forgotten? Why was it decided to bury them  
94 in unconscious depths?" (9) Perhaps the real problem is the lack of confidence in historical memory. Perhaps  
95 "memory plays the role of an accurately false mirror in the present." (10) It seems that the structure of the Arab  
96 mind reduces women to strict gender practices that wear the mantle of religion and impose its authority on them  
97 so that they become easy prey in the nets of dependence, as the woman belongs to the world of the harem, which  
98 is the hidden world when compared to the public sphere and this is the world of men.

99 Therefore, it is necessary to bridge the dangerous gap between the past and the present by creating bridges  
100 and participatory culture; however, is there any doubt that authoritarian practices kill any innovation?

101 Mernissi considers that the most important reasons for women's non-participation in politics are the patriarchal  
102 domination of women's relationship with politics. She says: "Those men prevent the presence of women in political  
103 work, and use this ideology to place women in the home arena as a mother and wife. This is one of the most vital  
104 factors that constitute women's political participation." (11) Although throughout his prophetic mission, whether

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105 in Mecca (610-622) or Medina (622-632), the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) accorded significant place  
106 for women in his public life. He was forty years old (some texts say 43) when he received the first revelation in  
107 610, in the arms of his first wife, Khadija, where he rested to find peace and support. (\*) And Khadija (may  
108 God be pleased with her) was his first follower. In addition, the Prophet (peace is upon him) established a  
109 religious and democratic society in which men and women would discuss the laws of the city. ?? 13) Accordingly,  
110 the wives of the Prophet; (peace be upon him) would discuss politics, and go with him to war. His women  
111 on the battlefield were not mere spectators, but they shared his strategic interests with him, so he would hear  
112 their advice, which is sometimes decisive in his thorny negotiations. For example, during the Hudaybiyah Peace  
113 (treaty) with the Meccans in the year (6 AH -628 AD), which the Companions opposed as a humiliating treaty  
114 at the level of Al-Harb, (war) after concluding the treaty, the Messenger; (peace and blessings of Allaah) gave his  
115 order to the Muslims to shave their heads and return to the state of Ihram, none of them responded to his call,  
116 which he repeated three times. Umm Salama told the prophet; do not be sad, shave your head and complete the  
117 sacrifice. The Prophet; got up and did, and as soon as his companions saw him doing this, some of them started  
118 telling others about it, and each one worked on shaving his head and offering sacrifices. (14) Mernissi tried to  
119 interrogate history by re-examining the women's history to dismantle this knowledge base and the stereotypes  
120 behind it about women and politics.

121 It seems that reviving the idea of women's political involvement in heritage is not an easy matter, as Mernissi  
122 says that women are always in secret, unable to make a political decision, but; was Aisha alone an exceptional  
123 case?

124 Aisha (may God be pleased with her) was the first woman to penetrate spatial boundaries, issue a political  
125 decision, and command an army, thus announcing the beginning of political disobedience. Aisha played a decisive  
126 role in the life of the first and second Caliphs and contributed to the destabilization of the entity of the third  
127 Caliph, ('Uthman) when she refused to help him the moment the rebels surrounded him in his house. As for  
128 the fourth Caliph, she contributed to the collapse of his caliphate and led the opposition armed against him,  
129 rejecting his legitimacy. This confrontation is called by historians (the Battle of the Camel) after the camel on  
130 whose back Aisha was fighting." (15) Where lady Aisha left Madinah and Uthman was besieged, and twenty days  
131 before his death. When she completed her umrah, she stayed in Mecca for a while, then returned to Medina, and  
132 on her way back, she was met by a man from Bani Al-Laith who told her of the killing of Othman bin Affan and  
133 the pledge of allegiance. Ali, so she went back to Mecca again, saying: (Othman was killed by God unjustly, and  
134 they demanded his blood) and thus began the labors of Aisha's position on the matter. Meanwhile, Talha and  
135 al-Zubayr went to Mecca and joined Aisha. Therefore, Mrs. Aisha became enthusiastic about this idea, whose  
136 goal was nothing but revenge on the killers of Othman, (and she tried to gather people from the cities and the  
137 people of Medina against this unjustly murdered man and take revenge on him), and many people responded to  
138 Mrs. Aisha's call and followed her position. ??16) But why did the name of the camel come instead of the name  
139 of Aisha?

140 This may have been deliberately created by some historians fearing that women's memory might associate a  
141 woman with the name of a battle, whether she won or not, for fear of being followed in her footsteps. In any  
142 case, history cannot erase exited Aisha, who with her retired, contributed to legitimizing women's participation  
143 in politics.

144 A hadith was reported in "Sunan-Nasa'I" on the authority of Abu Bakra who, said: "God has benefited  
145 me with a word that I heard from the Messenger of God (peace upon him) in the days of the battle of camel  
146 that people will not succeed if they are led by a woman." (17) The hadith is also proven in the thirteenth part of  
147 Sahihal-Bukhari, and it is also proven by personalities known for their scientific rigor, such as Ahmed bin Hanbal,  
148 the founder of the Hanbali school. This hadith is the argument to those who want to keep women away from  
149 politics. (18) However, Mernissi says that since I am a Muslim woman, nothing prevents me from doing double  
150 research: historical and methodological about the hadith and who narrated it, especially the circumstances in  
151 which it was used for the first time, who narrated this hadith, when, and why? (19) The hadith of Abu Bakra  
152 was narrated for the first time after the defeat of Aisha in the Battle of the Camel. Mernissi analyzed it, saying  
153 that Abu Bakra must have had a legendary memory because he remembered the hadith a quarter of a century  
154 after the death of the Prophet; (peace be upon him). (20) According to "Ibn Malik", it is not possible in any  
155 case for some people to transmit a single hadith. For example, it is not permissible for an ignorant to receive  
156 knowledge, nor those who are controlled by their emotions, nor those who can introduce innovations, and there  
157 are people whom I exclude as narrators of hadith, not because they lied as men of knowledge in their narration  
158 of false hadiths, but simply because I saw them lying in daily relations. (21) And if we apply this rule to (\*)  
159 Abu Bakra, then this hadith must be excluded immediately.

160 Perhaps; the evidence for the invalidity of generalizing this hadith is that the Prophet (peace and blessings  
161 of Allah be upon him) mentioned it on a specific occasion, (\*\*\*) However, the one reason this hadith is false on  
162 the authority of the Prophet (peace be upon him), is that there have been many countries successfully headed  
163 by women. These countries have achieved impressive successes, we mention (Indira Gandhi) for India, (Margaret  
164 Thatcher) presidency of Britain, and many others in ancient and modern. 22) In addition, Balqees, the Queen  
165 of Sheba, is one of the rare Arab women who are difficult to hide or veil, since she is mentioned in the Qur'an, (I  
166 found a woman who owned them, and was given of everything and she is the ruler of all things. ( country, why  
167 did Balqees have such great property according to the Qur'anic text?

168 There is a modern point of view that states that women's political work is a legal duty that is included in either  
169 the individual duty or the collective duty, so the woman does not abandon it in any case, as is the case of the man  
170 because they participated in monotheism, servitude, and succession and their submission to the Sunnah. (24)  
171 Since that hadith, Mernissi has wandered into the heritage to evaluate the view of the jurists of the first centuries  
172 and their hostility to women. This tribalism and sexual racism remained prevalent in the era of codification and  
173 the development of the history of Islamic jurisprudence? Why do we still live dependent on this codification even  
174 after more than fourteen centuries have passed? Was it because the renewal that characterized our Arab societies  
175 in the Renaissance was hollow without a method or philosophy? IV.

176 **5 Conclusion**

177 Fatima Mernissi's developmental discourse was never against Islam; she, explained through her discourse that  
178 the Prophet (peace be upon him) supported women and their rights to the fullest extent. She considers that  
179 equality between men and women is an asset in the religious text and that what must be done is to study  
180 the sacred texts that refer to gender discrimination. We are working on recounting them and researching the  
181 reasons for their revelation, and this is what Mernissi's interpretive text and her cognitive digging were built  
182 on. On the neutrality between men and women, and throughout her books, she does attack men, but rather  
183 vigorously defended women. It seems that the real accusation is that she exposed women's legacy of oppression  
184 and persecution, and this is considered by some to be a sin in an Islamic country, especially since the speaker  
185 is an Arab Muslim woman. Her approach to the unspoken was bold. She maybe been treated violently for her  
186 explosive rhetoric, as she sought to make up for the forgotten history of the male mentality.

187 The problem of women in the Arab discourse is one of the most important and dynamic problems, so it is  
188 not over yet. Mernissi tweeted "Anthem of Freedom" in her book "Fear of Modernity: Islam and Democracy,"  
189 "saying that the Arab world will set off. This is not a prophecy; it, is a woman's intuition. It will be launched  
190 for the simple reason that all people, especially the fundamentalists, want change. (25) she quickly predicts  
191 that women will fuel more violent debates in the next decade, as globalization will force Muslim countries and  
192 their citizens to redefine themselves and create new cultural identities, with economic roots rather than religious  
193 ones." (26) The main feature of Fatima Mernissi's discourse is her openness to various texts, and her project is  
194 characterized by diversity due to overlapping addresses. It is possible to talk about her on more than one level,  
195 and she can be read on several groups. Mernissi has been able to provide a new reading of the heritage in the  
196 hope of contributing to changing the social and civilized reality of Arab women. Therefore, I find it challenging  
197 to cover all the exciting contents of her discourse on this narrow path.

198 **6 Global Journal of Human Social Science**

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200        (\*\*\*) The Prophet; (peace and blessings be upon him), was sent with Abdullah bin Hudhafa, may God be  
201 pleased with him, and he was in it: (In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, from Muhammad,  
202 The Messenger; of God, peace be upon him, to Khosrau, the great Persia. The messenger God on the authority  
203 of their prayers and peace be upon him, sent his letter to (Kisra) with Abdullah bin Hudhafa al-Sahmi, and he  
204 ordered him to pay it to the ruler of Bahrain, so the ruler of Bahrain gave it to Kisra, who tore it up before he  
205 could read it). And what the Messenger of God, may God's prayers and peace be upon him, had called for took  
206 place. His son Qubad, nicknamed Sherwayh, seized the throne of Khosrau, and Khosrau was killed, humiliated,  
207 and humiliated, and his kingdom was torn apart after his death and became a game in the hands of the sons of  
208 the ruling family. His throne in four years is ten kings, and this is how the prayer of the Prophet, may God bless  
209 him and grant him peace, was fulfilled. Al-Hafiz al-Bayhaqi narrated from the hadith of Hammad bin Salama, on  
210 the authority of Hamid, on the head al-Hasan, on the power of Abu Bakra, that a man from the people of Persia  
211 came to the Prophet. The Messenger of God, peace be upon him, said: "My Lord has killed your Lord tonight,"  
212 meaning Khosrau. He said: He was told -that the Prophet; Peace be upon him -He appointed his daughter as  
213 successor, and said: "A people ruled by a woman will not succeed." See, Katheer, Ibn.

214 [Ibid] , Ibid . p. 31.

215 [Ibid] , Ibid . p. 45.

216 [Ibid] , Ibid . p. 232.

217 [Ibid] , Ibid . p. 130.

218 [Ibid] , P Ibid . 65.

219 [Ibid] , Ibid . p. 68.

220 [Mernissi ()] \*) *He testified and praised her virtue when he said: The Messenger of God (peace be upon him) said to (Lady Aisha): "God has not exchanged for me something better than her. See, Al-Qurtubi, F Mernissi . 2000. p. . (Are you immune to the harem? translation, Nahla Baydoun, Arab Cultural Center. Assimilation in the Knowledge of the Companions" Ibn Abd al-Bar)*

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